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Characterization of Partially Polarized Light Fields

 Springer

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Preface

Polarization involves the vectorial nature of light. In theoretical topics and technological applications of current interest in optical science, the electromagnetic description of the light disturbance and polarization-related phenomena have turned out to be crucial. In fact, they have gained importance in recent years, attracting the attention of numerous scientists in the last decade. Photonics devices, biological optics, optical communications, atmospheric optics, and sensor technologies are examples of research areas where the vectorial features of light are relevant.

In practice, optical radiation exhibits randomness and spatial nonuniformity of the polarization state. These kinds of realistic and general situations are most frequently encountered in the literature, and drastically depart from the simplest model of harmonic plane waves. Keeping in mind the framework of classical optics, this book deals with the analytical problem of describing and characterizing the polarization and spatial structure of nonuniformly polarized fields, along with their evolution when light propagates through optical systems. This is the aim of this work.

In particular, the scope and the contents of the book are essentially focused on the contributions of the authors to four main issues, which correspond to approaching the problem under study from different angles. Thus, in Chap. 1, after a short introduction to the main standard representations of the polarization, we analyze in some detail several recently proposed measurable parameters, of practical use for characterizing, in a global way, the polarization of nonuniformly polarized beam-like fields. Chapter 2 also proposes an overall description, but now the alternative formalism allows a characterization of the polarization distribution and the shape of partially polarized, partially coherent beams. A family of measurable and meaningful parameters is defined, whose determination involves certain averages over the region of the transverse profile where the beam irradiance is significant.

On the other hand, in recent years, the coherence theory, well established for scalar beams, has been investigated with regard to partially polarized fields. It has been shown that, for stochastic electromagnetic beams, the properties concerning coherence and polarization features are, in general, connected with each other. Consequently, fundamental concepts, such as the degree of coherence and the fringe visibility in Young interferometers, should be revisited. This is done in some detail in Chap. 3.

Finally, Chap. 4 is devoted to nonparaxial electromagnetic fields, which arise when light is strongly focused and the beam reaches a waist size even smaller than the wavelength. The theoretical analysis deals with certain kinds of nonparaxial exact solutions of the Maxwell equations. Their polarization features are discussed and, in those cases in which the evanescent waves are significant (highly nonparaxial regime), their field structure is also described.

Although short surveys are provided to review some basic formalisms, the reader is assumed to be familiar with well-known concepts treated in many optics textbooks.

The research work leading to the results reported in this book have been obtained in collaboration with a number of researchers. We would like to acknowledge here their fundamental contribution. We also thank Prof. H. Weber for his interest, helpful suggestions and continuous kindness, which include support during all the experimental work described in Sect. 2.4.3 and performed at the Optisches Institut of the Technische Universität in Berlin. We are indebted to Prof. F. Gori, Dr. M. Santarsiero and Dr. R. Borghi, at the University of Rome 3, for helpful discussions concerning partially polarized Gaussian Schell-model beams. In addition, we are also grateful to Dr. M. Santarsiero and Profs. S. Bosch and A. Carnicer, at Barcelona University, for their kind reading of Chaps. 3 and 4.

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Contents

1	Representations of the Polarization of Beamlike Fields	1
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Standard Representations of the Polarization	1
1.2.1	The Jones Calculus	2
1.2.2	Coherence-Polarization Matrices	4
1.2.3	The Stokes-Müller Calculus	6
1.2.4	Local Degree of Polarization	8
1.3	Weighted Degree of Polarization	10
1.4	Linear and Circular Polarization Content of Totally Polarized Beams	11
1.4.1	Key Definitions and Physical Meaning	12
1.4.2	Application to an Example	13
1.4.3	Measurability	15
1.5	Radial and Azimuthal Polarization Content of Totally Polarized Beams	16
1.5.1	Key Definitions	16
1.5.2	Relations with the Stokes Parameters	19
1.5.3	Relations with the Output of Radial and Azimuthal Polarizers	20
1.5.4	Measurability	21
1.6	Partially Polarized Gaussian Schell-Model Beams	24
1.6.1	Gaussian Schell-Model Beams: Scalar Case	24
1.6.2	Gaussian Schell-Model Beams: Vectorial Case	26
1.6.3	The Van Cittert-Zernike Theorem	28
1.6.4	Experimental Synthesis of GSM fields	31
	References	32
2	Second-Order Overall Characterization of Non-uniformly Polarized Light Beams	37
2.1	Introduction	37
2.2	Second-Order Overall Characterization: Scalar Case	38
2.2.1	Formalism and Key Definitions	38

2.2.2	Propagation and Measurement of the Irradiance Moments	43
2.3	Second-Order Overall Characterization: Vectorial Case	44
2.3.1	The Wigner Matrix	44
2.3.2	The Stokes Matrices	45
2.3.3	Propagation Laws and Measurement	48
2.3.4	Invariant Parameters	51
2.4	Generalized Degree of Polarization	54
2.4.1	Definition and Properties of Generalized Degree of Polarization	54
2.4.2	Physical Meaning and Measurement	55
2.4.3	Generalized Degree of Polarization of Beams Emerging from Optically-Pumped Nd:YAG Rods	58
2.4.4	Classification Scheme of Partially Polarized Beams	62
2.5	Beam Quality Parameter of Partially Polarized fields	63
2.6	Overall Parametric Characterization of PGSM Beams	65
2.7	Beam Quality Improvement: General Considerations	69
2.8	Beam Quality Improvement After Propagation Through Optical Phase Devices	75
2.8.1	Propagation Through Anisotropic Pure-Phase Plates	76
2.8.2	Propagation of Radially and Azimuthally Polarized Beams Through Quartic Phase Plates	78
2.8.3	Propagation Through Spiral Phase Elements	82
2.9	Global Beam Shaping with Non-uniformly Polarized Beams	84
	References	88
3	Polarization and Coherence of Random Electromagnetic Fields	93
3.1	Introduction	93
3.2	Scalar Framework	94
3.2.1	Spectral Degree of Coherence	94
3.2.2	Young's Interference Experiment	96
3.3	Vectorial Framework: Key Definitions	98
3.3.1	Young's Experiment Revisited	98
3.3.2	Degrees of Coherence of Random Electromagnetic Fields	100
3.3.3	Relation Between Degrees of Coherence of Electromagnetic Fields	103
3.4	Maximum Visibility Under Unitary Transformations	107
3.5	Position-Independent Stochastic Behavior of Random Electromagnetic Fields	112
3.6	Mean-Square Coherent Light: Maximum Young's Fringe Visibility Through Reversible Devices	118
3.7	Comparing Special Types of Random Electromagnetic Fields	122
	References	124

- 4 Non-Paraxial Electromagnetic Beams** 127
 - 4.1 Introduction 127
 - 4.2 Formalism and Key Definitions 128
 - 4.2.1 Angular Plane-Wave Spectrum 128
 - 4.2.2 Propagating and Evanescent Waves 131
 - 4.2.3 TE- and TM-Decomposition of the Propagating Field . . 131
 - 4.2.4 Significance of the Longitudinal Field Component 134
 - 4.3 Propagation of Non-paraxial Beams with Radial or Azimuthal Polarization Distribution at a Transverse Plane 136
 - 4.3.1 Radial and Azimuthal Components 136
 - 4.3.2 Radial Case: Free-Space Propagation 138
 - 4.3.3 Azimuthal Case: Free-Space Propagation 142
 - 4.3.4 Application to a Particular Set of Fields 145
 - 4.3.5 Radially-Polarized Fields at Any Transverse Plane 148
 - 4.4 Closest Field 151
 - 4.4.1 Definition and Meaning 151
 - 4.4.2 Application to the Uniformly-Polarized Gaussian Model . 152
 - 4.4.3 Transverse Polarization Structure of the Closest Field Associated to the Gaussian Model 157
 - 4.4.4 Other Examples 161
 - 4.5 Evanescent Waves Associated to Highly Non-paraxial Beams 165
 - 4.5.1 Formalism 165
 - 4.5.2 Numerical Examples 167
 - 4.6 Partially Coherent Electromagnetic TE-Fields 172
- References 177
- Index** 181

Notation

Symbol	Name	First appearance in the text (Subsection)
$[\alpha\beta]_{ij}, i, j = s, p;$ $\alpha, \beta = x, y, u, v$		2.3.2
Det	determinant of a matrix	1.2.1
\mathbf{E}	electric field vector	1.2.1
$\tilde{\mathbf{E}}, \tilde{\mathbf{H}}$	spatial Fourier transform of \mathbf{E} and \mathbf{H}	4.2.1
$\mathbf{e}_1(\phi), \mathbf{e}_2(\rho, \phi)$		4.2.3
$\tilde{\mathbf{E}}_0(\rho, \phi)$		4.2.1
\mathbf{E}_{azim}	azimuthally polarized field	4.3.3
$\mathbf{E}_{closest}, \mathbf{H}_{closest}$	closest electric and magnetic fields	4.4.2
$\mathbf{e}_{ev}(\rho, \phi)$		4.5.1
$\mathbf{E}_{pr}, \mathbf{E}_{ev}$	propagating and evanescent terms of \mathbf{E}	4.2.2
$\mathbf{E}_R, \mathbf{E}_\theta$	radial and azimuthal components of \mathbf{E}	1.5.1
\mathbf{E}_{rad}	radially polarized field	4.3.2
$\mathbf{E}_s, \mathbf{E}_p$	transverse components of \mathbf{E}	1.2.1
$\mathbf{E}_{TE}, \mathbf{E}_{TM}$	transverse-electric and transverse-magnetic terms of \mathbf{E}	4.2.3
$\Gamma(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, \tau)$	mutual coherence function	1.2.2
$\hat{\Gamma}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, \tau)$		1.2.2
$g_{12} \equiv g(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$		3.4
\mathbf{H}	magnetic field vector	4.2.1
$\mathbf{H}_{TE}, \mathbf{H}_{TM}$	transverse-electric and transverse-magnetic terms of \mathbf{H}	4.2.3
$h(\mathbf{r}, \eta, z)$	Wigner distribution function	2.2.1
$\hat{\mathbf{H}}(\tilde{\mathbf{r}}, \tilde{\eta}, z)$	Wigner matrix	2.3.1
$\hat{\mathfrak{J}}$	Jones matrix	1.2.1
$\hat{\mathbf{J}}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, z)$	coherence-polarization matrix	1.2.2
$j(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$	complex degree of coherence	1.6.1
$J_{sc}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$	mutual intensity	1.6.1
k	wavenumber	1.2.1
K	Kurtosis parameter	2.9
λ	wavelength	1.2.1
M^2	beam propagation factor	2.5

Symbol	Name	First appearance in the text (Subsection)
$\hat{\mathcal{M}}$	Müller matrix	1.2.3
$\mu(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$	spectral degree of coherence (scalar case)	3.2.1
μ_s and μ_I	intrinsic degrees of coherence	3.3.2
μ_{STF}^2	electromagnetic degree of coherence	3.3.2
μ_w	Wolf's spectral degree of coherence	3.3.2
\tilde{P}	weighted degree of polarization	1.3
P_G	generalized degree of polarization	2.4.1
$P(\mathbf{r})$	local degree of polarization	1.2.4
P_{st}	standard degree of polarization	1.2.4
Q	beam quality parameter	2.5
$\tilde{\mathbf{r}} \equiv r\mathbf{k}$	dimensionless position vector	2.3.1
$\tilde{\rho}$	linear/circular polarization content	1.4.1
$\tilde{\rho}_R, \tilde{\rho}_\theta$	radial and azimuthal polarization content	1.5.1
\mathbf{S}	Stokes vector	1.2.3
$s(\rho, \phi)$		4.2.3
$s_{ev}(\rho, \phi)$		4.5.1
$s_i, i = 0, 1, 2, 3$	Stokes parameters	1.2.3
$\hat{S}_i, i = 0, 1, 2, 3$	Stokes matrices	2.3.2
$\hat{\sigma}_i, i = 0, 1, 2, 3$	Pauli matrices	1.2.1
$\tilde{\sigma}_p$	variance associated to \tilde{P}	1.3
σ_ρ	variance associated to $\tilde{\rho}$	1.4.1
σ_R, σ_θ	variance associated to $\tilde{\rho}_R, \tilde{\rho}_\theta$	1.5.1
$\langle \cdot \rangle_t$	temporal average	1.2.2
Tr	trace of a matrix	1.2.1
$\mathbf{u}_R, \mathbf{u}_\theta$	radial and azimuthal unitary vector	1.5.1
\mathcal{V}	visibility	3.2.2
ω	angular frequency	1.2.1
$W(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$	cross-spectral density function	2.1
$\hat{W}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$	cross-spectral density matrix	2.3.1
$\langle x^m y^n u^p v^q \rangle$	beam irradiance moments	2.2.1
$\xi_i, i = 0, 1, 2, 3$		2.3.4
z_R	Rayleigh length	2.7

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Name
APF	azimuthally polarized field
APP	anisotropic pure phase plate
BCP matrix	beam coherence-polarization matrix
CDT	cross-spectral density tensor
CSD	cross-spectral density
GSM field	Gaussian Schell-model field
MSC field	mean-square coherent field
MZT system	Mach-Zehnder-type system
NP field	nonpolarized field
NUPP field	nonuniformly partially polarized field
NUTP field	nonuniformly totally polarized field
PGSM field	partially polarized Gaussian Schell-model field
RPF	radially polarized field
RPM field	radially-polarized-maintained field
SA	spherical aberration
SDC	spectral degree of coherence
SDT	spectral density tensor
SPE	spiral phase element
SUPA system	spatially-uniform polarization altering system
UP field	uniformly polarized field
UPP field	uniformly partially polarized field
UTP field	uniformly totally polarized field
WDF	Wigner distribution function