

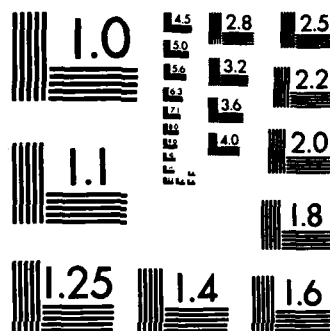
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HOLOGRAPHICALLY CORRECTING SYNTHETIC
APERTURE ABERRATIONS

THESIS

David M. Tripp
Captain, USAF

AFIT/GEO/ENP/87D-5

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APERTURE ABERRATIONS

THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the School of Engineering
of the Air Force Institute of Technology

Air University

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Electrical Engineering

David M. Tripp, B.S.
Captain, USAF

December 1987

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Preface

One mission of the Strategic Defense Initiative is the discrimination of targets and decoys in a space environment. The resolution needed for such a task can be provided by a synthetic aperture. The aberrations generated by the inherent misalignment of the synthetic aperture's individual optical elements must be corrected in real time before a synthetic aperture optical space system can be deployed.

Electro-optic crystals provide a means of implementing real time holographic aberration correction. Through the modulation of the crystal's refractive index by an incident optical field, a hologram can be recorded and read out within fractions of a second. The use of electro-optic crystals for real time filtering of synthetic aperture aberrations is of special interest to the Air Force and deserves further research.

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Lt Col James P. Mills, for his guidance and support. In addition, I wish to thank Ron Gabriel for his indispensable advice in the assembly of the experimental optical systems. Finally, I want to sincerely thank my wife, Leslie, for her love, patience and understanding.

- David M. Tripp



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Abstract

The effectiveness of using a bismuth silicon oxide (BSO) electro-optic crystal to holographically correct synthetic-aperture aberrations is investigated. A theoretical analysis of hologram formation in electro-optic crystals was performed. Experiments were then conducted to determine the diffraction efficiency and hologram erasure rate characteristics of the BSO crystal. The BSO crystal successfully performed real time aberration correction of a single-lens optical system; but due to the experimental synthetic-aperture optical system design, it was impossible for the crystal to correct the synthetic-aperture aberrations.

Holographically Correcting Synthetic-Aperture Aberrations

I. Introduction

Problem and Scope

The problem of correcting synthetic-aperture aberrations must be solved in order for synthetic apertures to be effective. The objective of this thesis effort is to correct synthetic-aperture aberrations through the use of holograms formed in photorefractive crystals. The thesis effort includes a theoretical analysis of hologram formation in photorefractive crystals followed by a series of experiments to determine the effectiveness of using these crystals to correct synthetic-aperture aberrations.

Background

One of the most pressing problems facing the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) is the discrimination between targets and decoys in a space environment. The minimum resolvable angular separation between two objects when imaged through a single aperture is given by the Raleigh criteria:

$$\Delta\phi_{\min} = 1.22 \lambda / d \quad (1)$$

where λ is the wavelength and d is the diameter of the optical element (14:354). Since the response of devices

used for detection of objects in space is usually limited to certain wavelength bands, the only other way to achieve greater resolution is by increasing the size of the optics. For SDI applications, this implies that very large diameter optical elements (>5m) are needed. Optical elements of this size are extremely difficult and costly to fabricate; and once obtained, there exists an even greater problem of how to get them into space. An optic of this size exceeds the available cargo space in the shuttle. Therefore, another method to achieve the discussed resolution must be used.

A promising method of obtaining greater resolution from smaller optics is through synthetic apertures. A synthetic aperture is realized by using one or more smaller optical elements to achieve the resolution of a single, large optic (11:26). The synthetic aperture shown in Figure 1 is a representation of how smaller optical elements can be assembled to obtain the resolution of a larger optic.

There are, however, problems associated with using synthetic apertures. The synthetic aperture can not collect as much light as a larger optic thus obtaining a dimmer image. By far the worst problem is the aberrations created by the inherent misalignment of the smaller optical elements .

Aberrations are phase distortions which prevent the

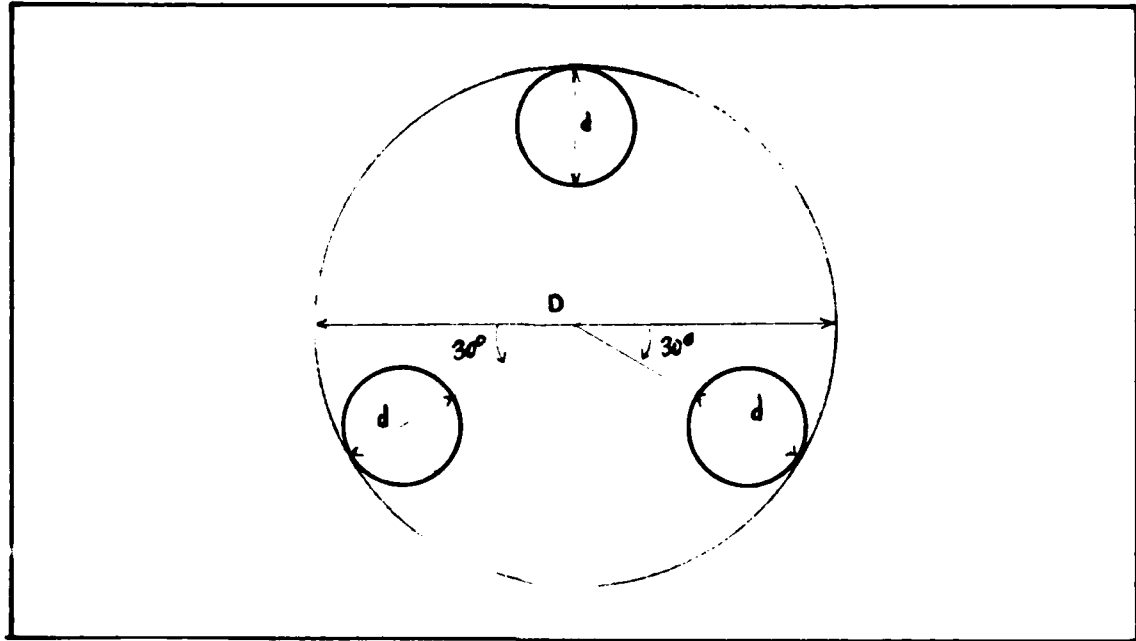


Figure 1. Synthetic Aperture Geometry

wavefront exiting the imaging element from being perfectly spherical. This keeps the object wavefronts from being focused to the ideal geometrical image point, thus distorting the image (10:120). These aberrations can become so severe that the enhanced resolution obtained from the synthetic aperture is destroyed by a blurred image. In order for synthetic apertures to be useful in optical space systems, the aberration problem must be corrected. One way to undo the effects of aberrations is through the use of holography. Upatnieks and Leith first demonstrated the feasibility of aberration correction of a single-lens system using holography in 1965 (26:589). In 1974 Kuzilin and Sinston reported that they had successfully applied

this technique to a synthetic aperture (18:352). Since that time, holographic correction of aberrations has been the subject of considerable research. For the past three years the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) has maintained ongoing research in this area. Detailed explanation of how holograms can correct aberrations as well as the intensity patterns produced by the synthetic aperture in Figure 1 can be found in these thesis efforts (15:6-21; 8:7-56).

Most holograms are recorded on photographic plates with a light sensitive emulsion (usually silver halide) on one side. High sensitivity, low cost, commercial availability, and stability after processing make fine-grain, silver halide, photographic emulsion a very desirable holographic medium (13:636). The requirement for a time consuming development process (~8 hours), however, renders photographic plates useless for space systems where real time (less than seconds between recording and reading the hologram) aberration correction is needed. For this reason, the use of electro-optic materials such as lithium niobate (LiNbO_3), barium titanate (BaTiO_3) and bismuth silicon oxide ($\text{Bi}_{12}\text{SiO}_{20}$ or BSO) for holograms has been the thrust of recent research. An early demonstration of a near real time hologram using LiNbO_3 was reported by Chen in 1968 (3:223). These crystals exhibit what is called the "photorefractive effect" which results from a polarization change in the

crystal caused by a photo-induced charge transfer (12:199). The most used figure of merit associated with hologram formation in electro-optic materials is diffraction efficiency. Diffraction efficiency is "the ratio of power diffracted into one first-order wave to the power illuminating the hologram" (5:224). The most recent research effort conducted at AFIT established the feasibility of using LiNbO_3 to correct aberrations but the effort suffered from poor diffraction efficiency (8:57).

There are, however, drawbacks associated with using electro-optic crystals. The most significant problem associated with using these crystals for holograms is their wavelength sensitivity. While fast and efficient holograms can be recorded in these crystals at one wavelength, the use of the same wavelength light will destroy the existing hologram before it can be effectively read out (3:224). One way to perform non-destructive readout is by using different wavelength light (usually a longer wavelength since the crystal is less sensitive at longer wavelengths) (4:3390). The successful use of electro-optic crystals for real time aberration correction could be the key to deploying a synthetic-aperture optical system.

Approach

This thesis effort was conducted in three stages. First, the theory behind hologram formation in electro-

optic crystals was investigated. Second, a synthetic-aperture optical system was designed which best depicted how an actual space system would operate. Finally, experiments were conducted to characterize the BSO crystal used, then using this crystal, to correct single-lens system and synthetic-aperture system aberrations.

II. Theory

Overview

In 1966 the photorefractive effect (first referred to as "laser damage effect") was first observed at Bell Laboratories (2:72). Since that time extensive research has been conducted on the photorefractive properties of electro-optic crystals. While a general explanation of the hologram formation process is well understood, there have been numerous works pertaining to the exact details of how charges migrate under certain conditions within the crystal (1:22; 4:3389; 6:1297; 9:223; 16:3279; 17:949; 24:1042; 25:5188; 27:3510; 28:264). This chapter consists of a general description of how holograms are formed in electro-optic crystals and a discussion of the two key parameters associated with synthetic aperture applications -- diffraction efficiency and hologram erasure rate. Since a BSO crystal was used in the experimental portion of this thesis effort, the latter sections relate specifically to the diffraction efficiency and hologram erasure rate of BSO crystals. An in-depth analysis of the theory involving grating formation in electro-optic crystals can be found in the thesis effort performed at AFIT by Captain Marciniak (21:5-90).

Hologram Formation

Assume that two coherent light beams of wavelength and intensities I_1 and I_2 are incident on the face of an

electro-optic crystal as shown in Figure 2.

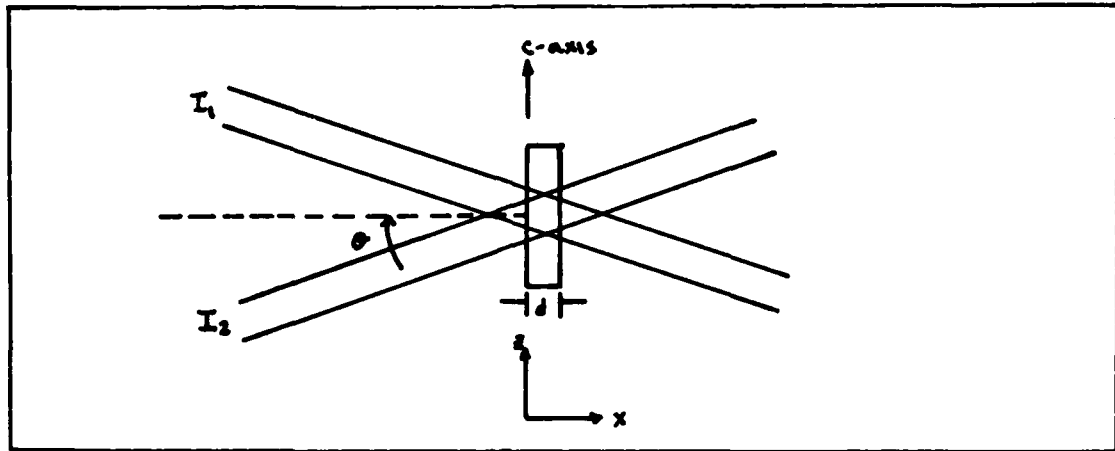


Figure 2. Hologram Formation in Electro-optic Crystal

Let the bisector of the two beams be normal to the crystal face and the c-axis. With this crystal orientation, the resulting interference fringes will be perpendicular to the c-axis. The associated intensity pattern is:

$$I(z) = I_0 (1 + m \cos Kz) \quad (2)$$

where $I_0 = I_1 + I_2$, m is the modulation ratio ($m = 2(I_1 I_2)^{1/2} / I_0$) and K is the spatial frequency ($K = 2\pi/\Lambda$). The fringe spacing (Λ) is the distance between intensity maxima and is given by:

$$\Lambda = \lambda / 2 \sin \theta \quad (3)$$

Assume that two types of charges exist in the crystal -- charges that can be photo-excited and an equal number of

charges that cannot be photo-excited. In the presence of the intensity distribution given in Eq (2), electrons are excited in the areas of illumination and migrate to the areas of no illumination where they become trapped. The migration mechanism can be diffusion, drift in an applied field, and drift due to photovoltaic field depending on the type of crystal used and the experimental setup. After migration, the resulting separation of charges generates a static electric field due to Poisson's equation. This field is parallel to the direction of the interference fringes. The strength of this static electric field depends on the number of charges which were photo-excited and the migration mechanism. Assuming no applied field, the static electric field is given by:

$$E(z) = -(K_0 T/q) mK / (1 + (K/K_0)^2) \sin Kz \quad (4)$$

where $K_0 T$ is the thermal energy of the lattice, q is the charge of the mobile charge carriers and K_0 is a material constant related to the number density (N) of available charge carriers (7:423). The equation for the material constant K_0 is:

$$K_0 = (Nq^2 / \epsilon \epsilon_0 K_0 T)^{1/2} \quad (5)$$

where ϵ is the static dielectric constant and ϵ_0 is the free-space electric permeability. In the above

expression for the light induced electric field, it is assumed that the diffusion length between trapping sites is much less than the spatial frequency of the intensity pattern. This static electric field then causes a change in the crystal's refractive index, $\Delta n(z)$, by the linear electro-optic (Pockel's) effect. The strength of $\Delta n(z)$ will depend on the symmetry of the electro-optic tensor related to the type of crystal used and the light induced static electric field. This modulation of the crystal's index of refraction produces a volume phase grating within the crystal thus forming a hologram.

Diffraction Efficiency and Erasure Rate for BSO

As previously mentioned, the strength of the crystal's refractive index changes. Thus, its diffraction efficiency is related to the crystal orientation. BSO is a paraelectric, electro-optic and photoconductive material having the cubic point group symmetry $\bar{4}3m$ (12:240). Crystals of this type are optically isotropic until an electric field is applied where they become birefringent due to the non-vanishing Pockel's coefficient. The orientation, dimensions and direction of the principle coordinate system (PCS) of the BSO crystal used in this thesis effort is shown in Figure 3. With vertically polarized light incident on the 110 crystal face, the direction of the interference fringes indicate that the resulting static electric field will have both an x and y

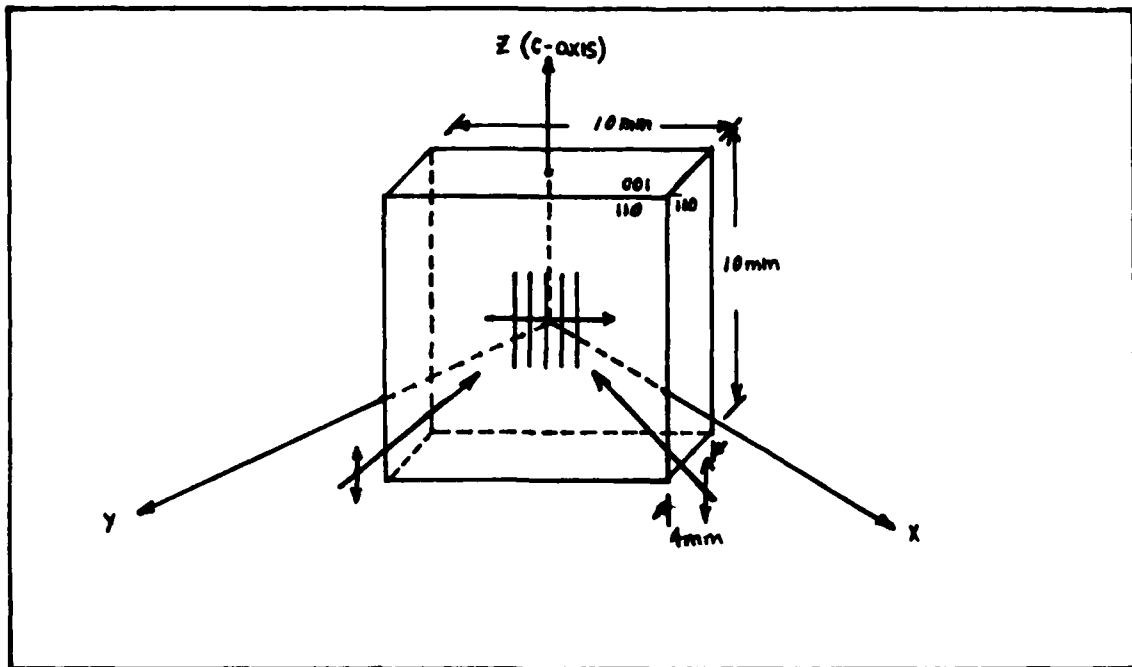


Figure 3. BSO Crystal Dimensions and Orientation

component. For the case of no applied field, diffusion will be the dominate charge migration mechanism and the resulting refractive index change will be

$$\Delta n = n^3 r_{41} E \quad (6)$$

where n is the crystal's refractive index, r_{41} is the Pockel's coefficient and E is the magnitude of the static electric field. The above orientation provides for maximum diffraction efficiency since there is no gain between the beams entering and exiting the crystal. Another criteria for optimum diffraction efficiency is for the ratio of the writing beams to be equal to one (12:267).

Assuming no gain and $I_1 = I_2$, the equation for diffraction efficiency becomes:

$$\eta = (\delta E_p d / 2)^2 (E_q / (E_p + E_q))^2 \exp(-\alpha d) \quad (7)$$

where α is the crystal's absorption coefficient and d is the crystal's thickness (22:133).

After the hologram is recorded and the writing beams shut off, the BSO is capable of storing (dark storage) the hologram for approximately 30 hours (23:3690). To determine the time constant of the diffracted beam, the erasure rate of the hologram must be determined. To do this the static electric field must be calculated with respect to time as well as position. In the absence of applied field, the erasure rate is mainly due to the drift in the photo-induced static field (23:3688). Assuming the cross sections of the trapping sites are all equal and the read beam intensity uniform, the erasure rate can be expressed as:

$$t_e = (N/q_0)(K^2 L_o'^2 + 1)/(K^2 L_o'^2) \quad (8)$$

where N is the number of photo-excited charges, q_0 is the rate at which the photo-excited charges are generated, and L_o' is the diffusion length. The generation rate (q_0) is

determined by:

$$q_0 = \Phi \propto I_0 / h\nu \quad (9)$$

where Φ is the quantum efficiency for exciting a charge carrier, I_0 is the read beam intensity and $h\nu$ is the photon energy. The diffusion length is given by:

$$L'_0 = (D\tau)^{1/2} \quad (10)$$

where D is the diffusion coefficient and τ is the free carrier lifetime ($\tau = 1/\gamma_R N$; $\gamma_R \equiv$ carrier recombination constant).

With complete knowledge of the crystal's material characteristics, the diffraction efficiency and erasure rate can be calculated using the above equations. Without all the crystal characteristics the theoretical calculations of diffraction efficiency and erasure rate are estimates which may or may not agree with the experimental data taken.

III. Experimental Apparatus

Overview

The equipment used for the following experiments were of commercial quality and obtained from the existing inventory of AFIT's laboratory. All the optical systems used were of original design and were assembled on a 12 x 4 foot shock isolated optics table. Since holograms in the BSO had to be recorded at one wavelength and read out at another, two light sources were used. The light sources for each experiment were a Spectra Physics model 2020-03 Argon-ion laser equipped with an inner-cavity etalon tuned for an output wavelength of 488 nm and a Hughes model 4142 helium neon (HeNe) laser. The first optical system covered in this chapter dealt with determining the BSO crystal characteristics. The following sections detail the setup for the single lens aberration correction and synthetic aperture aberration correction experiments.

Experiment 1 Optical System

Figure 4 shows a diagram of the optical system used in the first experiment. The Argon-ion laser provided the monochromatic (488 nm or blue) light beams for recording the hologram within the BSO crystal. A periscope was used to position the blue beam 17 cm above the table. The beam was divided by a variable beam splitter and reflected toward the crystal by two mirrors mounted on shock

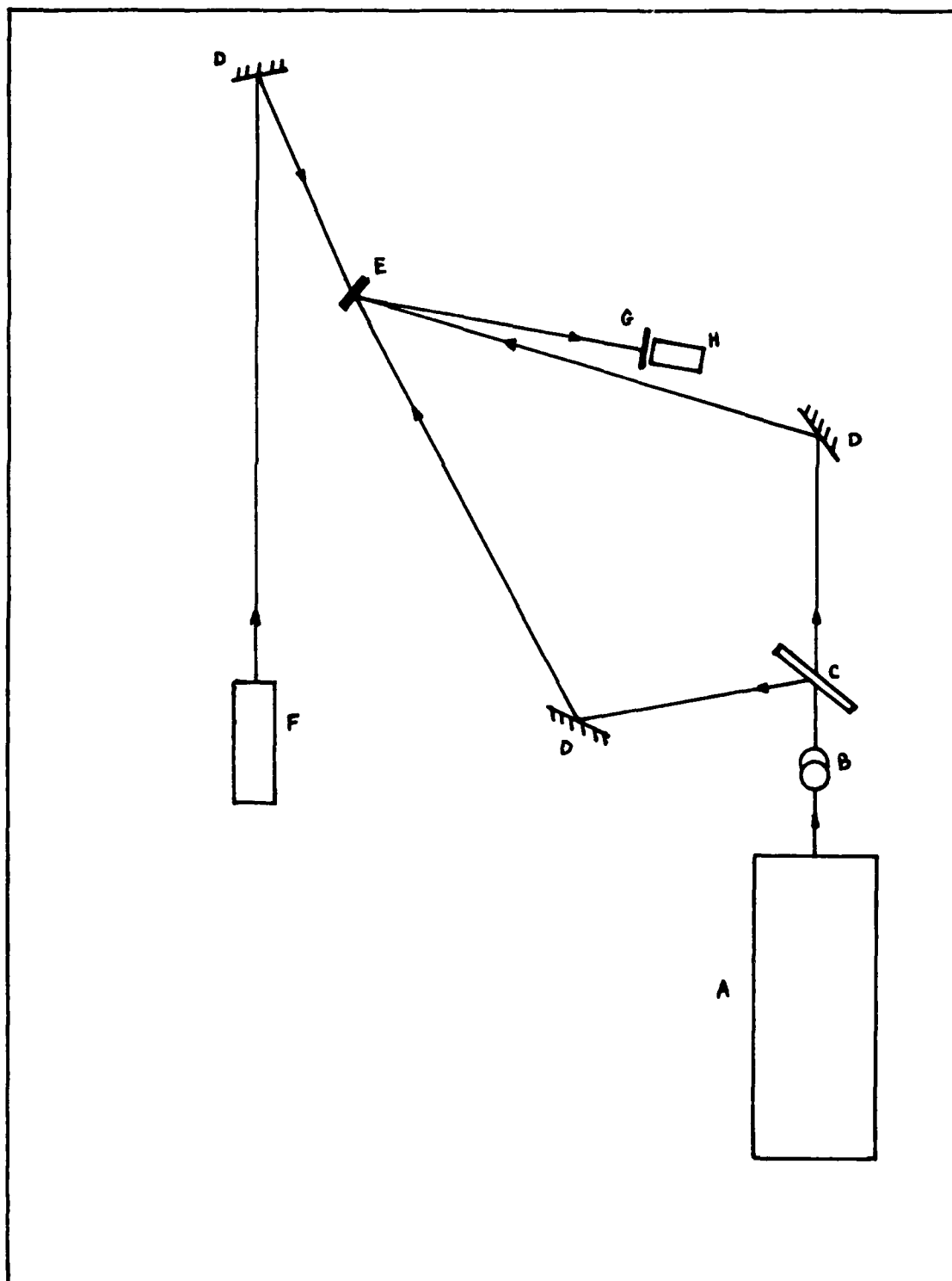


Figure 4. Schematic of Experiment 1 Optical System
 (A table providing the description and
 characteristics of each system element
 is presented on page 20)

absorbing poles. The crystal was positioned at a point where the bisection of the two writing beams was normal to the 110 crystal face. The mount holding the BSO crystal was equipped for adjustments in the x (along the optical axis), y (horizontal), and z (vertical) directions as well as angular rotation in the plane containing both writing beams. The HeNe laser provided the longer wavelength (632.8 nm) light for the read beam. The HeNe laser was positioned parallel to the Argon-ion laser but on the opposite end of the table. From this location the read beam could be reflected into the back of the crystal at the Bragg diffraction angle for 632.8 nm light. A radiometer was placed at the appropriate point to obtain the power of the diffracted red beam. The radiometer was equipped with an 110 nm bandwidth filter centered at 634 nm which blocked the stray intensity of the blue writing beams.

Experiment 2 Optical System

The optical system depicted in Figure 5 was used for the aberration correction of a single lens. In order to image an Airy pattern through the objective lens, the source beams were filtered, expanded and collimated into a plane wave. A standard spatial filter mount containing a 10x microscope objective and a 25 μm pinhole was used in conjunction with an 86 mm focal length collimating lens to produce the blue plane wave. The blue beam was split into an object and reference beam by a variable beam splitter

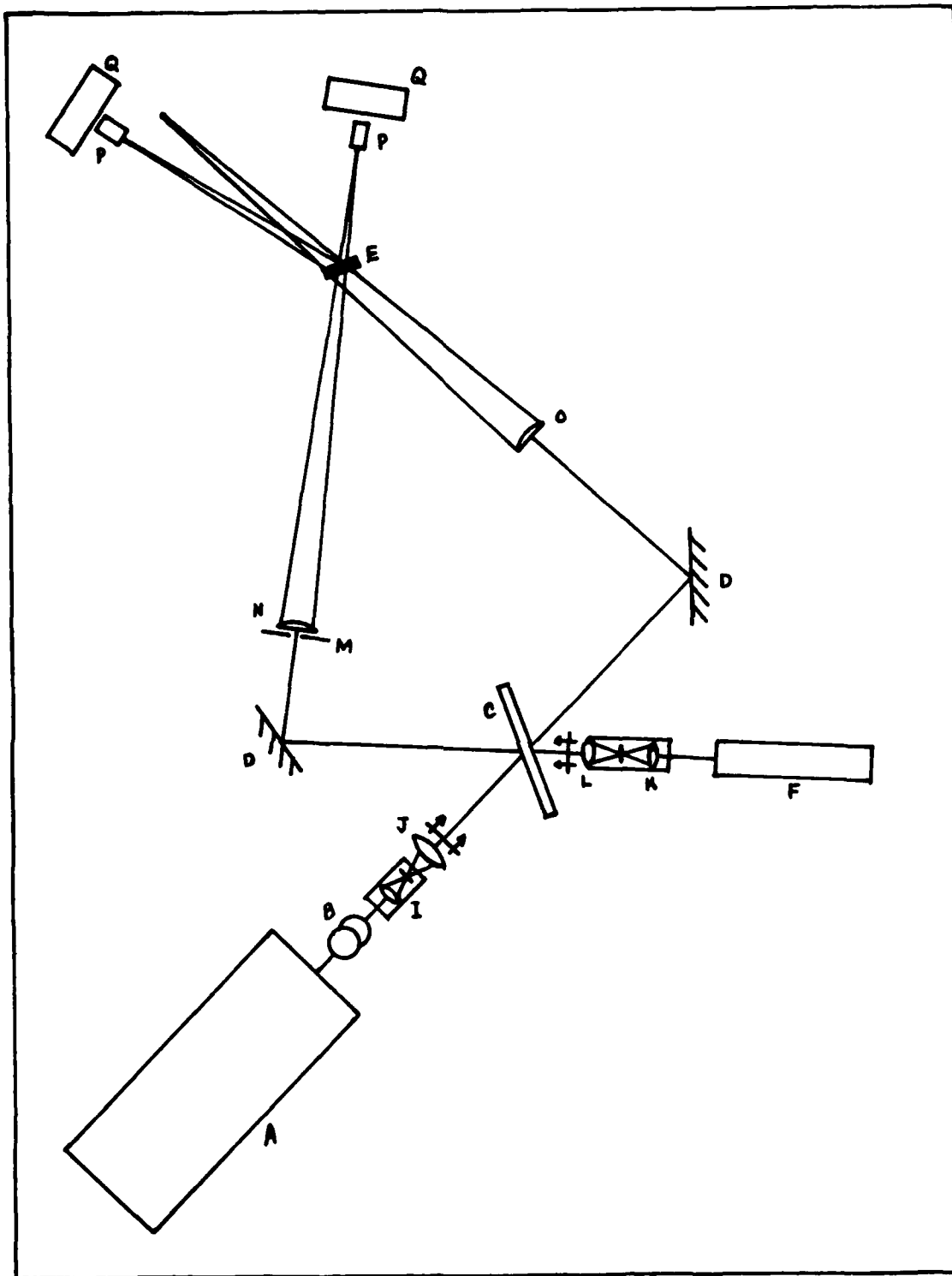


Figure 5. Schematic of Experiment 2 Optical System
 (A table providing the discription and
 characteristics of each system element
 is presented on page 20)

which could be adjusted to allow the object and reference beam intensities to be equal. The reflecting mirrors directed the object and reference beams toward the BSO crystal (using the same mount as in Experiment 1) which was, again, positioned with the bisector of the writing beams normal to 110 crystal face. A high quality plano-convex lens ($f = 146$ cm) was placed in the path of the object beam with an iris positioned as close to the front of the lens as possible. Along with its tilt adjustments, the objective lens was mounted to facilitate adjustment in the x, y, and z directions while the iris could only be adjusted in the y and z directions. Another 146 cm focal length lens was placed in the path of the reference beam in order to focus the 1.5 cm diameter beam within the 1 cm² crystal. Microscope objectives were positioned at the focal point of each lens for viewing purposes. A 35 mm camera attached to a tripod was used to photograph the image obtained from the microscope objectives.

The HeNe laser was carefully positioned to allow the red beam to travel down the same path as the blue beam. The red plane wave was obtained from a 40x microscope objective, 25 μ m pinhole and a Jodon collimating lens which could be fastened onto the spatial filter mount.

Experiment 3 Optical System

A schematic of the optical system used in Experiment 3 is shown in Figure 6. The blue beam from the Argon-ion

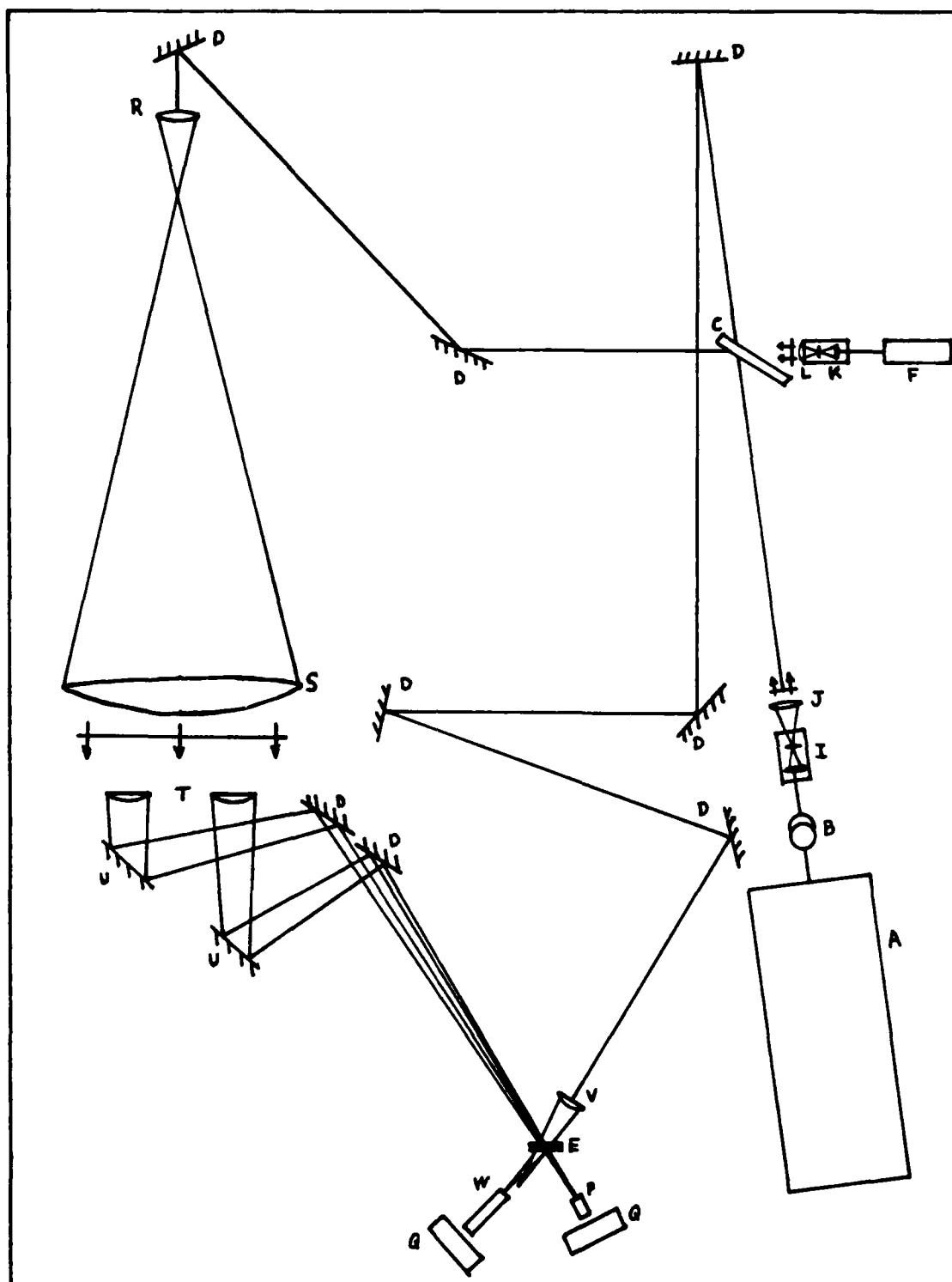


Figure 6. Schematic of Experiment 3 Optical System
 (A table providing the description and
 characteristics of each system element
 is presented on page 20)

Table I
Elements of the Optical Systems

<u>Element</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Make & Model</u>	<u>Focal Length</u>	<u>Comments</u>
A	Laser	SP 2020-03	-	Argon-ion
B	Periscope	NRC-675	-	-
C	Variable Beam Splitter	NRC	-	-
D	Mirror	NRC	-	2" dia.
E	BSO crystal	Sumitomo	-	10x10x4mm
F	Laser	HAC-4142	-	HeNe
G	Filter	Oriel: 53090 #9	-	634nm center 110nm BW
H	Radiometer	United Detector Technologies	-	-
I	Spatial Filter	Jodon	-	10x 25 μ m
J	Collimating Lens	Unknown	86mm	Bi-convex
K	Spatial Filter	Jodon	-	40x 25 μ m
L	Collimating Lens	Jodon	-	Screw in Type
M	Iris	Unknown	-	4.5mm dia.
N	Objective Lens	Ealing: 34-2834	1460mm	Plano- Convex
O	Focusing Lens	Ealing: 34-2834	1460mm	Plano- Convex
P	Microscope Objective	Bausch & Lomb	-	40x

Table I (continued)

<u>Element</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Make & Model</u>	<u>Focal Length</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Q	35mm Camera	Pentax K-1000	-	135 ASA B&W Kodak film
R	Expanding Lens	Unknown	86mm	Bi-convex
S	Collimating Lens	Kodak Telephoto	1524mm	Surplus Lens
T	Synthetic Aperture Lens	Ealing: 34-2834	1460mm	Plano- Convex
U	Mirror	NRC	-	4" dia.
V	Focusing Lens	Unknown	140mm	Plano- Convex
W	Telescope	National Scientific	-	4x 10x

laser was filtered and collimated as in Experiment 2 to produce a plane wave. The blue plane wave was divided by a variable beam splitter. The object beam was reflected by two mirrors then expanded by an 86 mm focal length lens. A large diameter ($f=1524$ mm) lens was positioned to recollimate the beam into a plane wave which could uniformly illuminate the synthetic aperture. The synthetic aperture consisted of three high quality plano-convex lens positioned as shown in Figure 1. The two lower lenses were mounted on shock absorbing poles and the upper lens was mounted on a magnetic base. Each lens mount was equipped for adjustment in the x, y, and z directions as well as tilt. Two sets of mirrors reflected the three emerging light beams toward the BSO crystal which was mounted and oriented as in the previous experiments. The reference beam was reflected by four mirrors toward the BSO crystal. A focusing plano-convex lens ($f=140$ mm) was positioned in the reference beam path to focus the reference beam within the edges of the 1 cm² BSO crystal. A telescope equipped with a 4x microscope objective and 10x eyepiece was mounted on a magnetic base. This allowed movement of the telescope to either the combined focal point of the diffracted beam or the focal point of the reference beam. The system impulse response was viewed through a 40x microscope objective positioned at the focal point of the synthetic-aperture. The same 35 mm camera used in Experiment 2 provided photographs of the images

obtained from the microscope objective and telescope.

The red beam from the HeNe laser was positioned behind the beam splitter and aligned such that the red beam was superimposed upon the blue beam. The red plane wave was produced in the same manner as in Experiment 2.

IV. Experimental Procedure and Results

Overview

The experimental portion of this thesis effort was designed to determine the characteristics of the BSO crystal; and from the results of this characterization, use the BSO crystal to correct synthetic-aperture aberrations. The designs of the optical systems in the latter two aberration correction experiments were developed to coincide, as closely as possible, with the operation of a synthetic aperture in space. For this reason, a section detailing the author's conceptual synthetic-aperture space system design has been included in this chapter and will be covered first. The next section will detail the procedure of the BSO characterization experiment and be immediately followed by a section describing the results of the characterization. This format will be followed until the results of the synthetic-aperture aberration correction experiment are presented at the end of this chapter.

Conceptual Synthetic Aperture Space System

Figure 7 provides a schematic of the author's conceptual synthetic aperture space system. The individual synthetic aperture elements are a meter in diameter and the center to center spacing between each element is three meters. In this arrangement, the resolution of a single optic with a diameter of

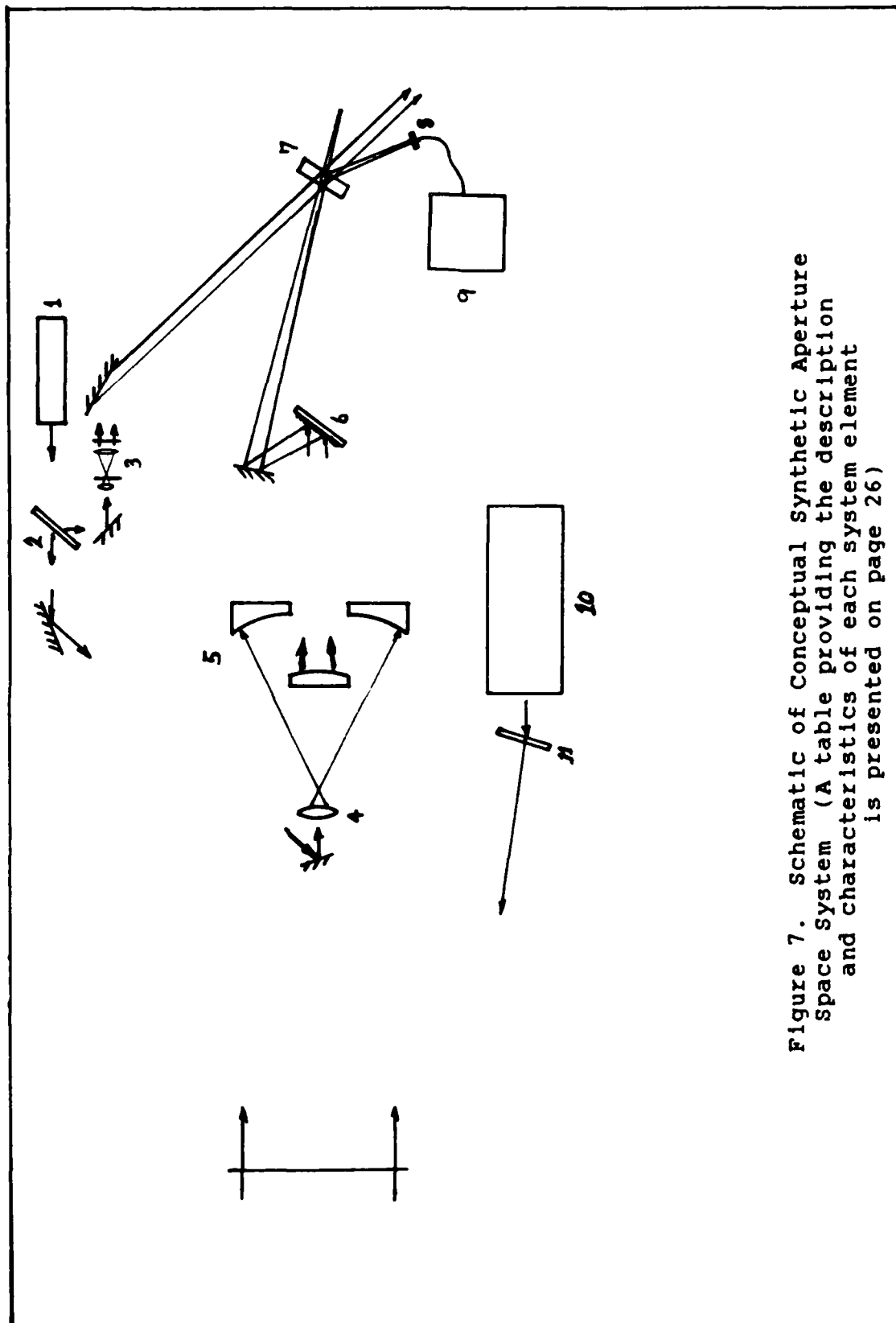


Figure 7. Schematic of Conceptual Synthetic Aperture space system (A table providing the description and characteristics of each system element is presented on page 26)

Table II

Elements of the Conceptual Synthetic-Aperture Space System

<u>Element</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	Laser operating at λ_1
2	Beam Splitter
3	Plane Wave Generating Optics
4	Diverging Lens
5	Synthetic-Aperture Reflective Optics
6	Diffraction Grating
7	Electro-Optic Crystal
8	Optical Filter & Detector
9	Signal Processor
10	Laser Operating at λ_2
11	Beam Steering Device

approximately five meters can theoretically be obtained. Reflective optics are utilized to minimize the aberrations as much as possible. The use of an electro-optic crystal as a holographic recording medium requires that the hologram be recorded at one wavelength and read out at a longer wavelength. A laser operating at λ_1 is used to record the synthetic-aperture aberrations within the crystal. The laser beam is split into a reference plane wave and an object wave. The object wave is diverged into a large spherical wave which is focused by the synthetic aperture. A highly reflective diffraction grating is placed in the path of the object beam to diffract the different wavelength light at the appropriate angles for entering the crystal. This is an active system which uses a laser (operating at wavelength λ_2) and a beam steering device to illuminate the target in question. Since the target will be several kilometers away, the reflected object wave will be spherical at first then slowly diverge to a plane wave before it reaches the synthetic aperture. This plane wave is focused by the synthetic aperture and diffracted by the grating to enter the crystal at the Bragg diffraction angle for λ_2 ($\lambda_2 > \lambda_1$). The reconstructed wave is diffracted onto a detector equipped with a filter which blocks any stray light incident on the detector. The detector output is signal processed to determine if the target is a threat or a decoy.

There are two problems associated with this design.

The light rays from the target are incident on the synthetic aperture at different angles than the light rays used to record the hologram. This could cause the target beam to enter the crystal at the wrong angle thus hindering the aberration correction. One way to minimize this problem is to enable slight adjustments of the mirror located in the target beam path in relation to the range of the target. The more obvious problem with this design is the location of the mirror and diverging lens which blocks a portion of the target beam. This might not be a significant problem if the physical size of the mirror and lens is small in comparison to that of the synthetic aperture.

The system design presented here is one way in which a synthetic aperture might be deployed in space. The author realizes that this design can, at best, be described as preliminary.

Experiment 1: Procedure

The optical system shown in Figure 4 was constructed. Marrakchi and Huignard determined in their experimental work that for no applied field, the diffraction efficiency for BSO was greatest when the hologram fringe spacing was less than one micron (22:131). From Eq (3) a fringe spacing (Λ) of one for 488 nm wavelength light relates to an angular separation between the writing beams of 28.2° . Therefore, in order for Λ to be less than one micron, the mirrors and crystal were positioned for a 30° angular

separation between the writing beams. The angle at which the HeNe read beam needed to enter the crystal was also determined from Eq (3). Since BSO is very optically active, the diffraction efficiency (for no applied field) saturates at writing beam intensities as low as 300 $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$ (22:135). The writing beam intensities were kept equal and above 10 mW/cm^2 during the experiment. The crystal was probed with the red beam while simultaneously being illuminated by the blue writing beams. This allowed the highest power of the diffracted red beam to be measured with the radiometer for that particular writing angle. By moving the crystal closer to or farther away from the reflecting mirrors, the writing angle could be varied. Measuring the power of the diffracted red beam at different crystal positions provided the diffraction efficiency versus fringe spacing characteristics of the crystal.

The erasure rate of the stored hologram was determined by turning off the writing beams and allowing the read beam to erase the hologram. For a fringe spacing of 3 μm , measurements of the diffracted power were taken at five second intervals to determine the diffraction efficiency versus time (erasure rate) characteristics of the BSO crystal.

Experiment 1: Results

The diffraction efficiency versus fringe spacing curve for the BSO crystal is shown in Figure 8. The maximum

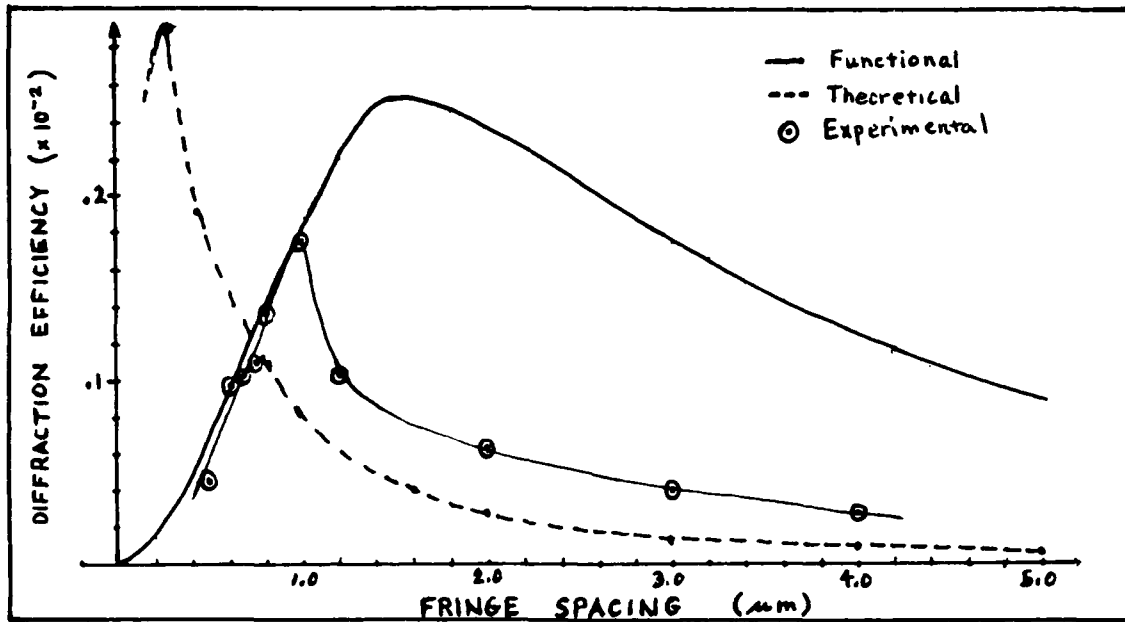


Figure 8. Plot of Diffraction Efficiency vs Fringe Spacing for BSO (Functional curve from 6:1300 and the theoretical curve from Eq 7)

diffraction efficiency was obtained at a fringe spacing of $0.96 \mu\text{m}$ which relates to a 29.3° angular separation of the writing beams. The experimental curve has the same functional form as the theoretical curve but peaks at a lower value of diffraction efficiency and a different fringe spacing. The functional relationship between diffraction efficiency and fringe spacing is also shown in Figure 8. The theoretical curve was plotted from Eq (7) with $N = 1 \times 10^{21} \text{ m}^{-3}$, $\alpha = 2.2 \times 10^{-2} \text{ m}^{-1}$, $n = 2.54$ and $r_{41} = 1 \times 10^{-12} \text{ m/V}$. The lower experimental diffraction efficiency peak was caused by lower actual values of the charge density and electro-optic coefficient related to the BSO crystal used in this effort. The fact that the two

curves peaked at different fringe spacings is somewhat harder to explain. It is believed that the separation of the two peaks was caused by mechanical vibrations of the laser which resulted in a slightly unstable fringe pattern incident on the crystal. Similar results of diffraction efficiency versus fringe spacing for a BSO crystal (same manufacturer as crystal used in this effort) were obtained in the thesis research of Captain Leatherman (19:49). Since the functional form of the two curves is the same, the experimental data is taken to be an accurate account of the diffraction efficiency versus fringe spacing characteristics of the BSO crystal used in this thesis effort.

Figure 9 depicts the erasure rate of the BSO crystal. Both the theoretical and experimental curves reflect a decaying exponential. The theoretical curve starts at a higher diffraction efficiency and decays at a faster rate. The reason for both phenomenon is the theoretical points were obtained for a BSO crystal which had 3 kV applied voltage. The applied voltage increases the crystals change in refractive index thus increasing the diffraction efficiency. The charge mobility of the crystal is also enhanced by the applied voltage thereby allowing the hologram to erase faster. With no applied voltage, the charges migrate slower. This is reflected by the experimental curve since the diffraction efficiency did not fall to the $1/e$ point for at least 300 seconds.

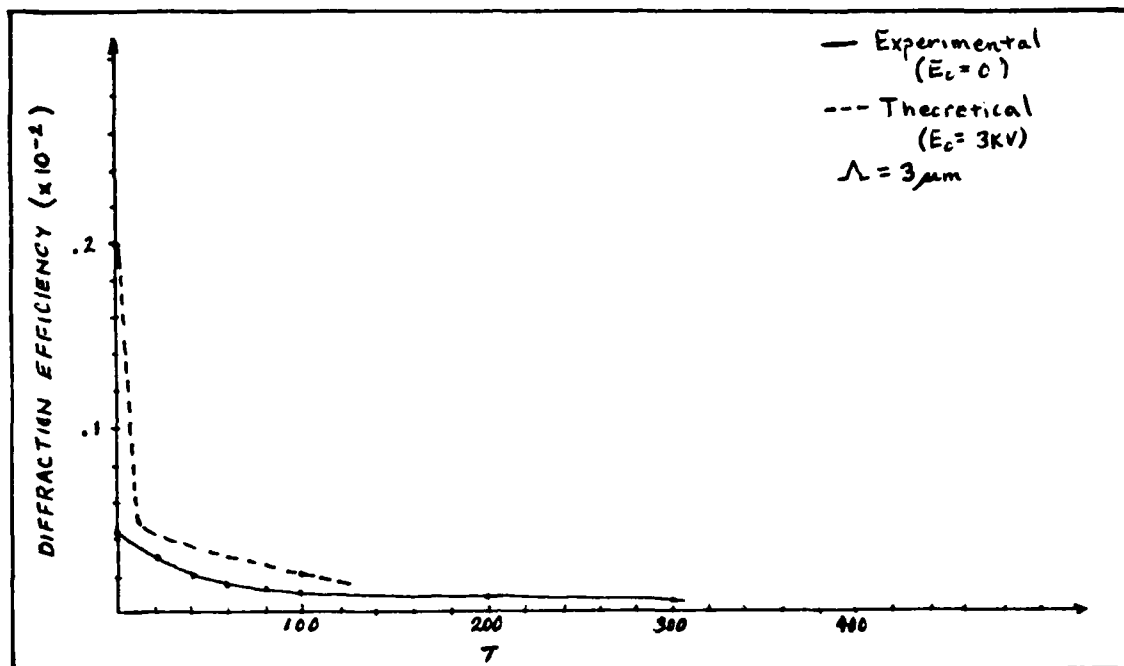


Figure 9. Plot of Hologram Erasure Rate for BSO
(Theoretical curve from 23:3687)

Experiment 2: Procedure

Using the results of Experiment 1, the optical system depicted in Figure 5 was assembled with a 29° angular separation between writing beams. The objective lens was positioned where the largest object beam diameter possible would pass through the crystal and still have the focal point within the optic table boundaries. The object and reference beam paths were set at 126 cm. The iris positioned in front of the objective lens was opened to a diameter of 4.5 mm. Alignment of the objective lens produced an image, from the microscope objective, of the system Airy pattern impulse response. Figures 10 and 11 show the Airy pattern impulse response for the blue and red

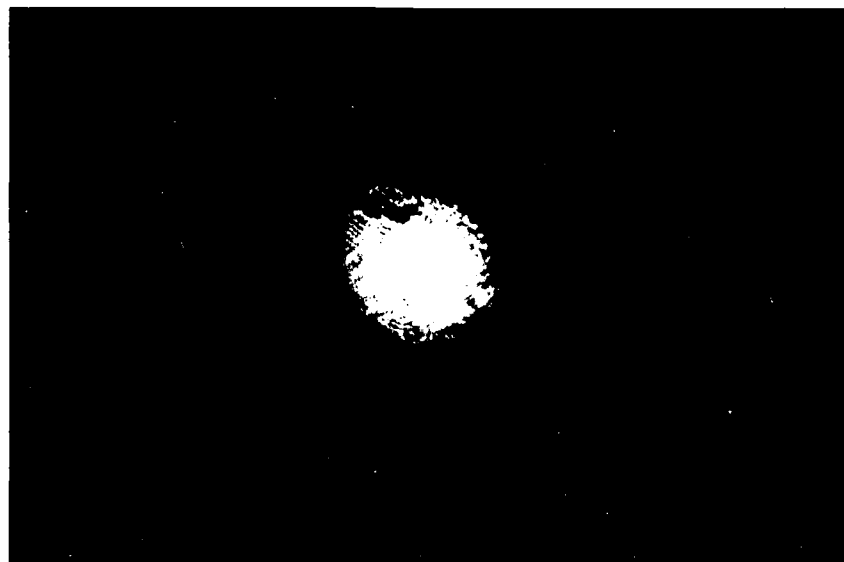


Figure 10. Single Lens System Impulse Response
for Blue Beam

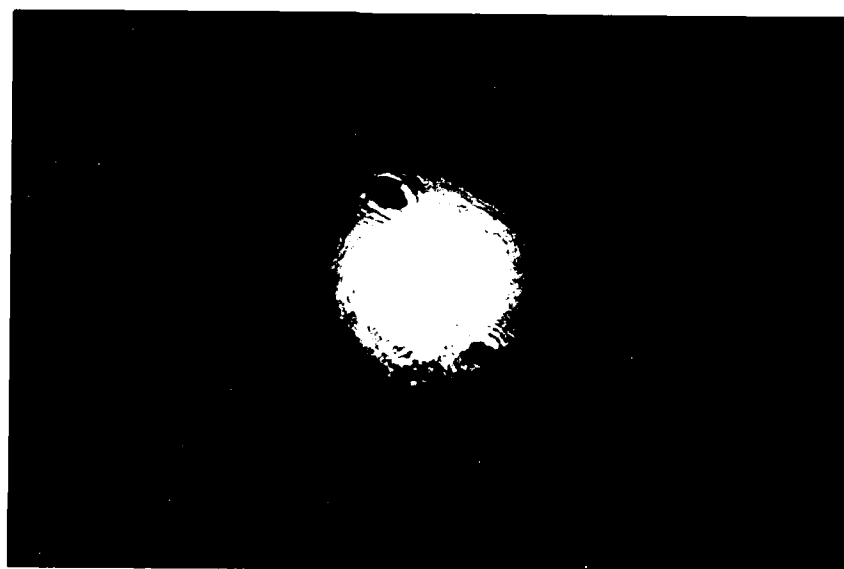


Figure 11. Single Lens System Impulse Response
for Red Beam

beams, respectively. The reference beam was focused to a beam diameter which filled the front surface of the crystal without hitting the edges. A hologram of the aligned system was recorded and then the blue beams were shuttered off. After blocking the reference path, the red beam was turned on. In order for the readout beam to enter the crystal at the correct angle, the crystal was slowly rotated until the diffracted beam emerged. A microscope objective was positioned at the diffracted beam focal point and Figure 12 depicts the image of the systems diffracted impulse response. This figure reflects the best

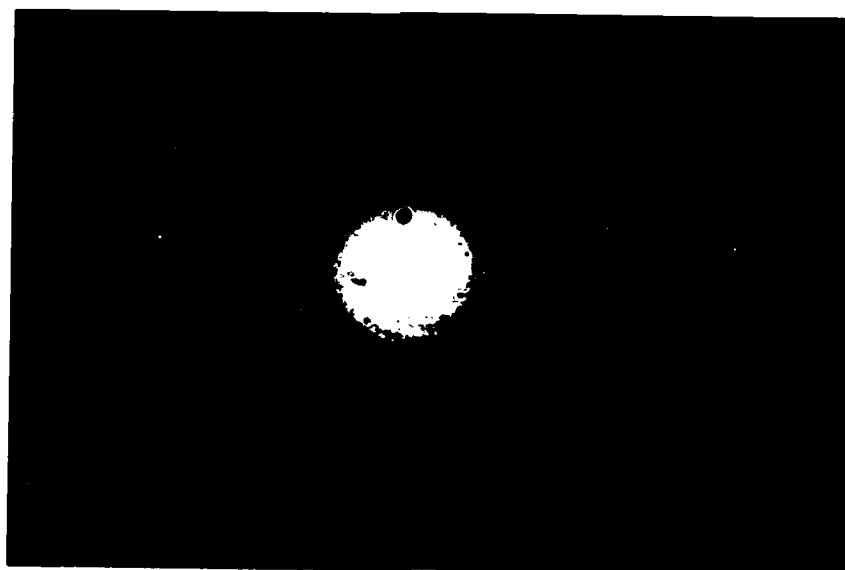


Figure 12. Reconstruction of Aligned Single Lens System

holographically obtainable and provides a benchmark with which the aberration correction quality can be measured.

The system was aberrated by moving the iris horizontally (~ 2 mm) off the optic axis. The aberrated impulse response is shown in Figure 13. With the HeNe laser off, a hologram of the aberrated system was recorded. the diffracted or reconstructed wave was obtained using the same technique as before.

Experiment 2: Results

The reconstructed impulse response is depicted in Figure 14. The reconstruction has clearly restored the central maxima and the first minima of the aberrated Airy pattern. About half of the first maxima is dimly visible. Since the diffracted beam of the aligned system was also dim, the faintness of the two beams can be attributed to low diffraction efficiency. This problem could be solved with the application of a voltage across the crystal. The missing half of the first maxima in the reconstructed impulse response is due to the red readout beam focusing at a slightly different focal point than the blue (chromatic aberrations). Repositioning the crystal closer to the objective lens would have enhanced the reconstruction because the different color beams would have had less distance in which to separate. This, however, could not physically be achieved within the table dimensions and have the optimum writing angle between the recording beams.

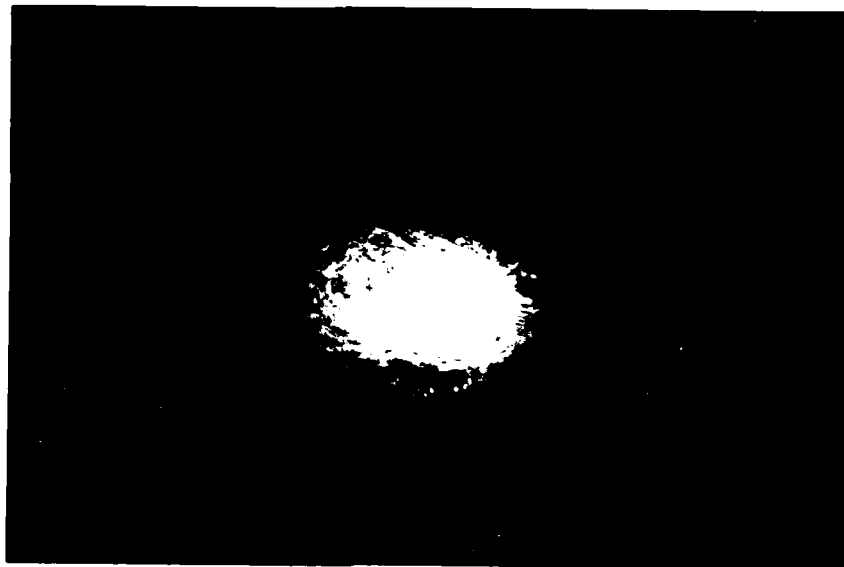


Figure 13. Aberrated Single Lens System Impulse Response

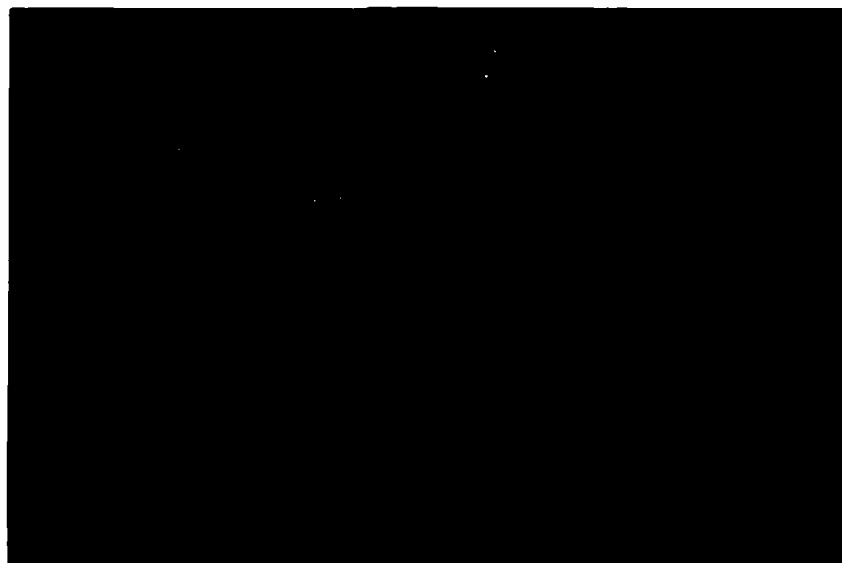


Figure 14. Reconstruction for Aberrated Single Lens System Impulse Response

Experiment 3: Procedure

The experiment began by constructing the optical system shown in Figure 6. The path length of both the object and reference beams was set at 470.5 cm. The angular separation of the writing beams was 30° . The determination of a plane wave output from the big collimating lens was made using the shear-plate interferometric analysis described by Malacara (20:105-148). The synthetic aperture was aligned in accordance with the synthetic-aperture alignment technique of Gill (8:61-64). The intensity patterns of the system impulse response for the blue and red beams are shown in Figures 15 and 16.

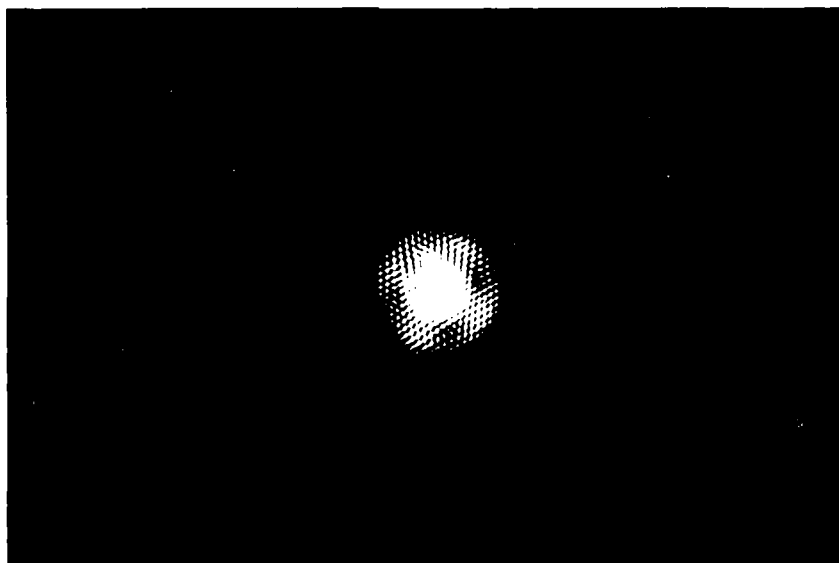


Figure 15. Synthetic Aperture System Impulse Response
for Blue Beam

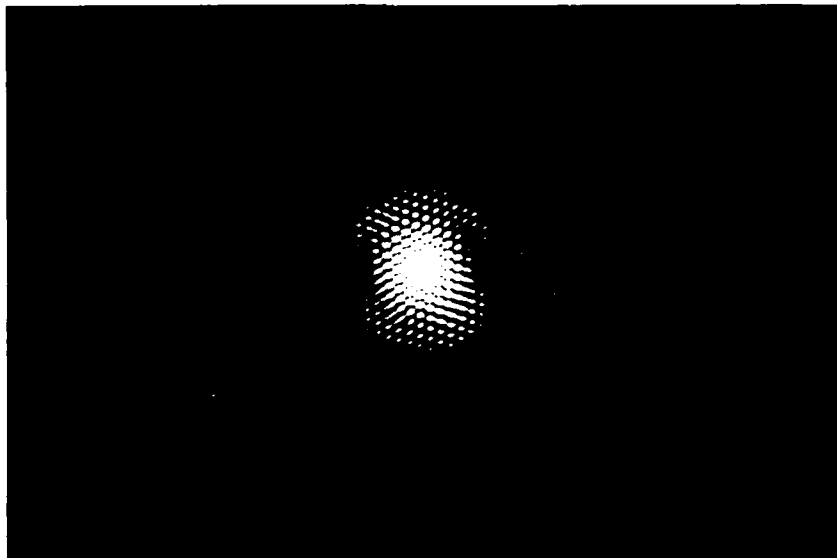


Figure 16. Synthetic Aperture System Impulse Response
for Red Beam

These impulse responses suffered from slight stigmatic aberrations in the two lower synthetic-aperture elements. The alignment of the synthetic aperture was repeated several times but slight aberrations from the two lower lenses persisted.

Other problems were encountered. In order to get all three synthetic-aperture beams inside the crystal surface area, the crystal had to be positioned close to the synthetic-aperture focal point. This meant that the individual beam diameters intersecting the crystal were very small which caused the grating area to also be small. The effective area of the grating was reduced even further

when the crystal was rotated to accept the readout beam. The mirrors directing the synthetic-aperture beams toward the crystal were repositioned to decrease the angular separation of the beams. This enabled the crystal to be moved closer to the synthetic aperture thus allowing the largest individual beam diameters to intersect the crystal. The chromatic aberrations of the synthetic aperture created the most significant problem. The farther the object beams traveled the farther the two beams separated. By the time the beams reached the crystal, the red beams were offset inside the blue beams. The red beam was diverged at the source under the pretense of slightly increasing the red beams focal point to equal the blue beam focal point. This might have worked except the divergence of the red beam decreased the intensity at the crystal to the point where the diffracted beam was not visible. Another problem was experienced with the reference beam. The lens used to focus the reference beam in Experiment 2 was needed for the synthetic aperture and the only other plano-convex lens available had a focal length of 140 mm. The reference beam needs to be as aberration free as possible in order to achieve quality reconstruction. The focusing lens used was aligned to produce an undistorted Airy pattern but the short focal length caused the crystal to introduce aberrations in the reference beam. An iris positioned in front of the focusing lens would reproduce the undistorted Airy pattern but the beam was stopped down

to the point that the beam would not cover the three synthetic-aperture beams. Figure 17 shows the reference beam Airy pattern without entering the crystal and Figure 18 depicts the reference beam Airy pattern after intersecting the crystal. A hologram was recorded with the blue writing beams but the above problems had severe affects on the quality of the reconstruction wave.

Experiment 3: Results

Figure 19 depicts the reconstruction wave obtained from the above procedure. The reconstruction does not resemble either of the impulse responses shown in Figures 15 and 16. The low diffraction efficiency mentioned in

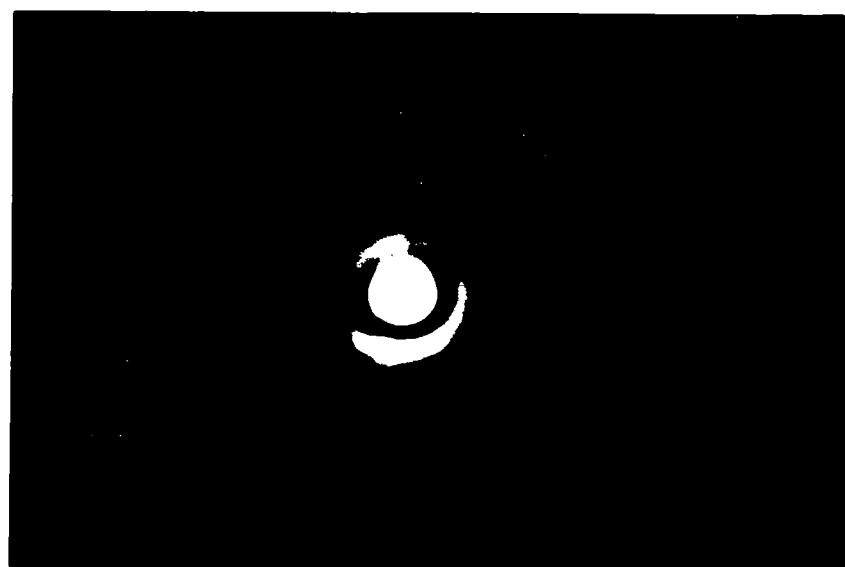


Figure 17. Reference Beam Airy Pattern without Intersecting Crystal

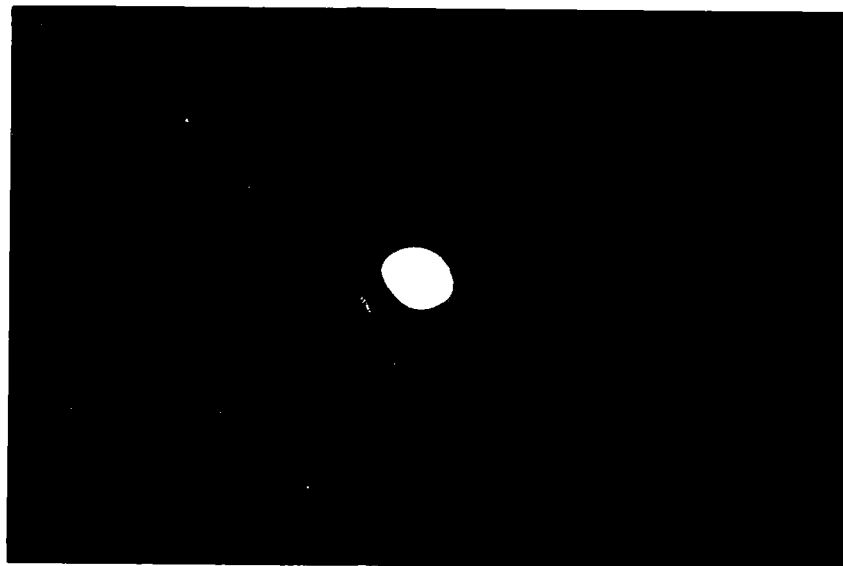


Figure 18. Reference Beam Airy Pattern after Intersecting Crystal



Figure 19. Diffracted Synthetic Aperture System Impulse Response

Experiment 2 became an even worse problem in this experiment as evidenced by the extremely faint reconstruction. The diffracted beams could only be viewed with the help of a telescope. The poor reference beam quality and the chromatic aberrations were problems that made aberration correction for the synthetic aperture impossible. A longer focal length lens to focus the reference beam would have helped the reconstructed impulse response but something must be done to create a common focal point for the red and blue object beams before aberration correction for this synthetic-aperture design can be achieved.

V. Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

This thesis effort was designed to determine the effectiveness of using electro-optic crystals to correct synthetic-aperture aberrations. Using the BSO crystal characteristics obtained in Experiment 1, successful real time (40 seconds between reading and writing) aberration correction for a single lens was performed in Experiment 2. This experiment suffered slightly from two problems which were magnified in Experiment 3. Poor diffraction efficiency and different focal points for the red and blue object beams rendered the successful correction of synthetic- aperture aberrations impossible.

The application of a voltage across the crystal would greatly enhance its diffraction efficiency. Efficiencies as high as 20% have been reported for an applied voltage of 9 kV (23:3687). The inherent problem of different focal points for the blue writing beam and the red readout beam will require further research before it can be corrected. Based on the experimental results, there is no doubt that BSO crystals can perform real time lens aberration correction. However, the problems of low diffraction efficiency and different focal points for the two object beams must be solved before the synthetic-aperture optical system depicted in this thesis effort can be of any use to the Air Force.

Recommendations

The foremost area needing further research is creating a common focal point for the different wavelengths of the writing and readout beams. One way to make this problem less severe is to use achromatic lenses for the synthetic aperture. This allows the two different color beams to focus at the same longitudinal point. The drawback is an achromat must be designed for two specific wavelengths and the magnification difference associated with the different colors of incident light can not be corrected. An in-depth study of various electro-optic materials available should be conducted to determine the material best suited for synthetic-aperture aberration correction. Another material which does not require readout at a different wavelength might be available. The best way to eliminate chromatic aberrations is through the use of reflective optics. Eventually, an experimental synthetic-aperture optical system employing reflective optics must be designed and researched in order to prove the use of electro-optic crystals for synthetic-aperture aberration correction.

The low diffraction efficiency was very evident in the synthetic aperture experiment. As previously mentioned, a voltage applied across the crystal would increase the diffraction efficiency significantly. Special care must be taken if the applied voltage is more than 2 kV. Investigation into the equipment and design needed to

supply as much as 8 kV across the crystal should be performed.

Another problem that developed in Experiment 3 was the poor quality of the reference beam. The acquisition of a long focal length (1500 mm), high quality, plano-convex lens would solve this problem. A spatial filter and collimating lens assembly which could be adjusted for different plane wave beam diameters would negate the need for a lens to focus the reference beam. Such equipment needs to be acquired before further synthetic-aperture experiments are conducted.

The final recommendation is to perform a theoretical analysis of exactly where different light rays are focused by a synthetic aperture consisting of reflective optics. The analysis should also include the type equipment and an appropriate design needed to experimentally verify that electro-optic crystals can effectively correct synthetic-aperture aberrations.

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Vita

Captain David M. Tripp was born on 6 June 1957 in Tullahoma, Tennessee. He graduated from high school in Winchester, Tennessee in 1975. He later attended Motlow State Community College where in 1981 he received an Associates of Science degree in Engineering. He then graduated from Tennessee Technological University in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering. Upon graduation from Officer Training School, he was commissioned into the Air Force on 9 September 1983. His first assignment was at the Air Force Space Technology Center, Kirtland AFB where his duties included the management of infrared detector development programs for the Strategic Defense Initiative. He entered the electro-optics graduate program at Air Force Institute of Technology in May 1986.

Permanent address: Route 4 Box 310
Tullahoma, Tennessee 37388

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→ The effectiveness of using a bismuth silicon oxide (BSO) electrooptic crystal to holographically correct synthetic-aperture aberrations is investigated. A theoretical analysis of hologram formation in electrooptic crystals was performed. Experiments were then conducted to determine the diffraction efficiency and hologram erasure rate characteristics of the BSO crystal. The BSO crystal successfully performed real time aberration correction of a single-lens optical system; but due to the experimental synthetic-aperture optical design, it was impossible for the crystal to correct the synthetic-aperture aberrations. *Keywords → to field 8*

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