



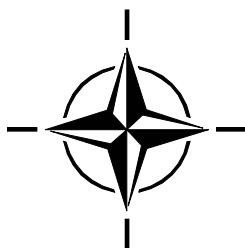
**RTO EDUCATIONAL NOTES**

**EN-SET-081**

# **Radar Polarimetry and Interferometry**

(La polarimétrie et l'interférométrie radar)

The material in this publication was assembled to support a Lecture Series under the sponsorship of the Sensors and Electronics Technology Panel (SET) presented on 14-15 October 2004 in Brussels, Belgium;  
18-19 October 2004 in Washington, DC, USA;  
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# Radar Polarimetry and Interferometry

## (RTO-EN-SET-081)

### Executive Summary

Radar Polarimetry and Radar Interferometry deliver and use the complete information which can be gained with electromagnetic wave remote sensing about targets of any kind. Therefore, the use of high resolution full polarimetric SAR is indispensable for surveillance, reconnaissance, and remote sensing, and the related fields SAR Polarimetry and SAR-Interferometry are advancing rapidly.

Scientists and engineers already engaged in the fields of radar surveillance, reconnaissance and scattering measurements, for instance, generally gain their specialist knowledge in Polarimetry by working through scientific papers and specialised literature available on the subject. Presently, the treatment of basic Polarimetry concepts, in the currently available literature, lacks a coherent framework of theory, and, moreover, several basic definitions and conventions are not yet unified sufficiently under the light of physical principles. This Lecture Series is an attempt to redress this problem. The aim of this Lecture Series is to provide a substantial and balanced introduction to the basic theory, scattering concepts, systems and applications typical to polarimetric and interferometric radar reconnaissance and surveillance, to introduce the cutting-edge technologies, and new ideas and methodologies as well. Application examples are presented, and, additionally, each chapter contents an excessive reference list which covers the most important publications in these fields of the last decade.

Each target is a specific polarization transformer and, therefore, these technologies are increasing the target identification and classification capability decisively. With multi polarization the target fine-structure, target orientation, symmetries and material constituents can be re-covered with considerable improvement above that of standard ‘amplitude-only’ radar. With radar interferometry the target’s spatial structure can be explored and differential interferometry, presently, is the most sensitive all weather technique for change detection. In ‘Polarimetric Interferometric SAR’ it is possible to recover co-registered textural and spatial information simultaneously, including the extraction of ground based stealth targets, the development of Digital Elevation Maps etc. as well. Among surveillance and reconnaissance techniques, the polarimetric & interferometric SAR attracts currently the most appreciable and outranking attention because of its capabilities for 3-D high resolution imaging with abundant additional information. Then, by either designing ‘Multiple Dual-Polarization Antenna POL-IN-SAR’ systems or by applying advanced ‘POL-IN-SAR image compression techniques’ this will result in ‘Polarimetric Tomography’, which is an important progress in Foliage Penetration and Ground Penetration Radar as well.

In this Lecture Series the successive advancements are sketched beginning with the fundamentals, and highlighting the salient points of these diverse remote sensing techniques. The following topics are addressed: Basics, advanced concepts and applications of both radar Polarimetry and SAR interferometry. For Interferometry cross track and along track interferometry, single and dual pass interferometry, interferometry errors and accuracies, and differential interferometry as well as permanent scattering interferometry. Basics of Polarimetry are presented also like electromagnetic vector wave and polarization descriptors, vector wave scattering operators and the polarimetric scattering matrices. The Polarimetric Radar optimization for coherence is discussed as well as processing and image analysis, and the most important decomposition theorems. A general formulation for vector wave interferometry is presented and the strong polarization dependence of the coherence is addressed as well as an analytical solution for optimum polarization states that maximizes the interferometric capability of a SAR. A new coherent

decomposition theorem for interferometric applications based on the singular value spectrum of a  $3 \times 3$  complex matrix which allows the decomposition of polarimetric interferometric problems into a set of coherent scattering mechanisms is presented as well as a decomposition theorem for interferometric applications based on the Singular value spectrum of a  $3 \times 3$  complex matrix which allows the decomposition of polarimetric interferometric problems into a set of coherent scattering mechanisms. Beside different airborne systems the following spaceborne systems are addressed: SIR-C/X-SAR, SRTM, ERS-1/2, both RadarSAT 1 and 2, ENVISAT/ASAR, TerraSAR, SAR-Lupe and, as example for a future possible System, CARTWHEEL.

# La polarimétrie et l'interférométrie radar

## (RTO-EN-SET-081)

### Synthèse

La polarimétrie et l'interférométrie radar fournissent et exploitent l'ensemble des informations pouvant être acquises sur toutes sortes de cibles par la télédétection par ondes électromagnétiques. Par conséquent, le SAR polarimétrique intégral à haute résolution est indispensable à la surveillance, à la reconnaissance et à la télédétection. Aussi, les domaines associés de la polarimétrie SAR et l'interférométrie SAR sont en rapide évolution.

En général, les scientifiques et les ingénieurs travaillant déjà dans les domaines de la surveillance radar, la reconnaissance et le contrôle de la diffusion par exemple, acquièrent leurs compétences techniques en polarimétrie et en interférométrie en étudiant les communications techniques et la littérature spécialisée disponibles sur le sujet. A l'heure actuelle, la discussion des concepts de polarimétrie de base, telle que présentée dans la littérature, manque de cadre théorique, et, en outre, bon nombre de définitions et de pratiques convenues restent à standardiser du point de vue de leurs principes physiques. Ce cycle de conférences tente de résoudre ce problème. Il a pour objectif de fournir une introduction détaillée et cohérente aux théories de base, aux concepts de diffusion, aux systèmes de base ainsi qu'aux applications spécifiques à la reconnaissance et à la surveillance radar polarimétriques et interférométriques. Il présente également les technologies de pointe, les nouveaux concepts et les nouvelles méthodologies. Des exemples d'applications sont donnés, et chaque chapitre contient une liste de référence très complète couvrant les publications les plus importantes qui ont paru dans ces domaines au cours de la dernière décennie.

Chaque cible représente un transformateur de polarisation spécifique et, par conséquent, ces technologies ont pour effet d'augmenter considérablement les capacités d'identification et de classification des systèmes radar. La multipolarisation permet de récupérer la structure fine des cibles, l'orientation des cibles, les symétries et les éléments constitutifs matériels avec des résultats largement supérieurs à ceux obtenus par les radars classiques « à amplitude ». L'interférométrie radar permet d'examiner la structure spatiale de la cible, tandis que l'interférométrie différentielle est la technique de dissimilarité tous temps la plus sensible qui existe à l'heure actuelle. Les systèmes SAR interférométriques et polarimétriques permettent de récupérer simultanément des données spatiales et texturales co-enregistrées, y compris l'extraction de cibles furtives au sol, d'élaborer des cartes de sites numériques, etc... Parmi les techniques de surveillance et de reconnaissance actuellement disponibles, le SAR polarimétrique et interférométrique suscite le plus d'intérêt en raison de sa capacité de fournir de l'imagerie 3-D à haute résolution, accompagnée d'une abondance d'informations supplémentaires. Par la suite, la « tomographie polarimétrique » sera obtenue, soit par la réalisation de « systèmes multiples POL-IN-SAR à antenne à polarisation double », soit par des techniques avancées « POL-IN-SAR » de compression d'image. La tomographie polarimétrique représentera également une avancée importante pour les radars de pénétration du feuillage et les géoradars.

Ce cycle de conférences résume les progrès successifs réalisés, en partant des débuts, et en soulignant les caractéristiques principales de ces techniques de télédétection. Les sujets suivants y sont abordés : les éléments de base, les concepts avancés et les applications de la polarimétrie radar et de l'interférométrie SAR. Dans le domaine de l'interférométrie : l'interférométrie transversale et longitudinale, à une seule passe et à deux passes, les erreurs et la précision, l'interférométrie différentielle, ainsi que

l'interférométrie à diffusion permanente. Les principes de l'interférométrie sont présentés, comme par exemple, les descripteurs d'ondes vecteur électromagnétiques et de polarisation, les opérateurs de diffusions des ondes vecteur et les matrices de diffusion polarimétriques. L'optimisation de la cohérence des radars polarimétriques est examinée, ainsi que le traitement et l'analyse de l'image, et les théorèmes de décomposition les plus importants. Une formulation générale pour l'interférométrie des ondes vecteur est présentée. La forte dépendance de polarisation de la cohérence est examinée, ainsi qu'une solution analytique des états optimums de polarisation qui maximise les capacités interférométriques d'un SAR. Un nouveau théorème de décomposition cohérente est présenté, basé sur le spectre de valeurs unique d'une matrice complexe  $3 \times 3$ , qui permet de décomposer les problèmes interférométriques polarimétriques en une série de mécanismes de diffusion cohérente. En plus de différents systèmes aéroportés, les systèmes spatiaux suivants sont examinés : SIR-C/X-SAR, SRTM, ERS-1/2, les RadarSAT 1 et 2, ENVISAT/ASAR, TerraSAR, SAR-Lupe et, comme exemple de futur système possible, le CARTWHEEL.



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Data acquisition	Polarimetric SAR	Synthetic aperture radar	
ENVISAT/ASAR	Polarimetry	Target acquisition	
ERS-1/2	Radar signals	Target signatures	
<b>14. Abstract</b>			
<p>Scientists and engineers already engaged in the fields of radar surveillance, reconnaissance and scattering measurements, for instance, generally gain their specialist knowledge in both polarimetry and interferometry by working through scientific papers and specialised literature available on the subject. Usually, this is a time consuming exercise, as it is difficult to collate respective material tailored to newcomers. This Lecture Series is an attempt to redress this problem.</p> <p>The aim of this Lecture Series was to provide a substantial and balanced introduction to the basic theory, scattering concepts, systems and applications typical to polarimetric and interferometric radar reconnaissance and surveillance and to introduce the cutting-edge technologies, new ideas and methodologies.</p> <p>Topics covered were: basics, advanced concepts and applications of both radar polarimetry and SAR interferometry and the combination of both techniques as well with respect to cross track and along track, single and dual pass configurations; the interconnection between interferometry measurement errors and SAR system accuracy with respect to both platform flight path geometry and attitude, and principal radar system accuracies; polarimetric SAR processing and image analysis and the most important decomposition theorems; polarimetric interferometry and differential interferometry and the respective SAR image analysis, processing principles and calibration problems; and applications especially with respect to Digital Elevation Models and target classification; realized and future airborne and spaceborne systems as Examples (E-SAR, SIR-C/X-SAR, SRTM, ERS-1/2, RadarSAT, ENVISAT/ASAR, CARTWHEEL) together with a concluding outlook in the future development airborne and space borne polarimetric SAR with interferometry capability.</p>			





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