

Preface

This book deals with ultrasonic nondestructive evaluation (NDE) inspections where high frequency waves are used to locate and characterize dangerous flaws (such as cracks) in materials. Ultrasonic NDE flaw inspections involve a very complex combination of electrical, electromechanical, and acoustic/elastic components so that it is important to understand the behavior of those components and their interactions in order to make quantitative flaw measurements. It will be shown that through the use of models and measurements it is now possible to characterize all the elements of an ultrasonic NDE flaw inspection system. Those elements include the pulser/receiver, the cabling, the transducers, and the wave propagation and scattering processes present in an ultrasonic NDE flaw measurement. It will also be demonstrated how to combine models and measurements of those elements to form ultrasonic measurement models which can simulate the flaw signals seen in ultrasonic NDE tests. This comprehensive modeling and measurement capability is described for the first time in this book.

There are important engineering applications of this new technology. For example, these ultrasonic models and measurements can be used to design new ultrasonic inspections as well as optimize existing ones. This technology can also help one to extract information on the nature of the flaw present from the measured ultrasonic flaw signals that can then be used to evaluate the safety and reliability of the material being inspected.

The topics covered in this book include Fourier analysis, linear system theory, and wave propagation and scattering theory for fluids and solids. A series of Appendices provide some background materials for all these topics. Additional background information in these areas can be found in *Fundamentals of Ultrasonic Nondestructive Evaluation – A Modeling Approach* by L. W. Schmerr Jr. This book will also provide many details of the fundamentals of the ultrasonic measurement process but the primary purpose here is to show how the elements of an ultrasonic measurement system combine to generate a measured signal received from a flaw in a material and to give models and measurements that make it practical to simulate those measured flaw signals. In addition to giving the

equations and models that govern the behavior of an ultrasonic system we also develop some simple but powerful MATLAB functions and scripts. Those functions/scripts can be used by the reader to conduct simulated inspections and to quickly learn how to implement this modeling technology. The validity of the models discussed is also demonstrated by comparing them to experiments.

There are two parts of this book that warrant special notice. First, a recently developed pulse-echo method for measuring the sensitivity of an ultrasonic transducer is given in Chapter 6. This method makes the experimental characterization of transducers much easier than previous methods. Since transducer characterization is an important part of the series of measurements needed to characterize completely all the components an ultrasonic measurement system, having this simple method for calculating sensitivity also makes that entire chain of measurements more practical. Second, in Chapter 9 we give a complete description of Gaussian beam theory and its use for simulating the wave fields generated by ultrasonic transducers in the form of a multi-Gaussian beam model. Although there are other methods for calculating these wave fields, multi-Gaussian beam models are generally the most effective ultrasonic beam models available. Gaussian beams have been described in other application areas such as Laser science and Geophysics, but the underlying theory as it relates to NDE problems has not been previously given in a complete and unified manner. Chapter 9, therefore, provides a detailed discussion of Gaussian beams as used for modeling sound beams in fluids and isotropic, homogeneous elastic solids. Because the general treatment in Chapter 9 necessarily leads to a lengthy and detailed description of Gaussian beam theory, Appendix F describes the propagation and transmission/reflection of circularly symmetric Gaussian beams along a single direction, a simple case where the properties of these beams can be more clearly illustrated and explained.

This book is an outgrowth of over thirty years of ultrasonic NDE modeling research by the two authors, their colleagues from around the world, and many students. It is designed to communicate that research in an organized fashion and to serve as the foundation for solving many important ultrasonic NDE problems. However, it is also our vision that this modeling technology is not just for the “modelers”. We believe that modeling can affect the NDE community at all levels. Thus, the book was developed as part of a workshop series sponsored by the World Federation of NDE Centers (www.wfndec.org). One purpose of that series is to “teach the teacher”, that is to provide materials to those with a responsibility for supervising and educating others in the NDE field so that they in turn could communicate the materials and resulting knowledge to others. This

book is written at an advanced undergraduate or graduate education level, but by combining the concepts presented here with the simulation capabilities that the MATLAB functions provide one can use or deliver this material at a number of levels. We hope that the reader will enjoy learning about how ultrasonic NDE systems work as much as we have and will pass that learning on to others. We have placed exercises at the end of some of the Chapters and Appendices (most of them MATLAB-based) to help in that learning process.

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