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ERNEST C. OKRESS

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PREFACE

This book introduces the new electronics technology of microwave power and its applications. This technology emphasizes microwave (and eventually quantum) electronics for direct power utilization and transmission purposes rather than exclusively for information and communications applications. Because only fixed frequencies are involved in most present applications, phase and delay distortions as well as bandwidth and coherence considerations, associated with information transmission systems, are less important. Essentially, microwave power can be divided into microwave heating, microwave processing, microwave dynamics, and microwave power transmission involving generation and power amplification, direct power utilization, and closed waveguide or radiation beam propagation for remote utilization and rectification. Emphasis is on: (1) the microwave frequency spectrum, in relation to minimum size, specific weight (i.e., power/unit weight), and cost considerations; (2) constant or continuous wave (CW) rather than periodic pulsed power; (3) very high efficiency; (4) reliability; and (5) long life.

While the proceedings of the first symposium on this subject have been reviewed in the October, 1964 issue of *IEEE Spectrum*, a thorough coherent introduction to this subject now seems timely. In particular, this book seeks to present a review of the state-of-the-art accomplishments with respect to components, systems, and applications and their prevailing limitations in the light of modern knowledge of the microwave power technology. Recommendations are included with respect to what can be done to accelerate a balanced growth of the subject and to attract more creative interest and support.

The dominant microwave state-of-the-art generators and power amplifiers, with respect to power capabilities and efficiency, include the magnetron, the Amplitron, and the klystron, whereas the magnetron has been found most suited to the widely varying impedances associated with batch processes. The dominant state-of-the-art microwave rectifiers, in this same respect, include the thermionic (ultra-close spaced, vacuum, electrostatic) diode, the point contact and Schottky barrier semiconductor diodes, and the (electrostatically focused) inverse klystron. Other theoretically promising microwave rectifiers include the transverse wave and traveling-wave devices.

Microwave heating and other processes of materials, including food, utilize the magnetron predominantly, and also the klystron, in drying and freeze drying, sealing, cooking, reheating, thawing, moisture leveling, etc. Other applications include (1) microwave ionized gases presently on an experimental basis for chemical processing, space (propulsion), and scientific (controlled nuclear fusion) purposes; (2) particle accelerators for scientific, medical, and industrial purposes; (3) military and aerospace for phased array focused microwave energy, experimental vehicle hovering, etc; and (4) dynamics, for experimental microwave motors and experimental waveguide vehicle transport, etc. Besides these applications of microwaves and those under

development, there are also considerations of radiation hazards and other biological factors.

Microwave rectification applications are presently predominantly experimental for diode array antenna of experimental hovering aerospace vehicles, experimental microwave motors, experimental waveguide vehicle transport, etc. Much higher power rectification will be required for microwave power transmission and distribution, vehicle transport, etc., whenever these become practical realities for which high power microwave rectifiers are in a very primitive state of development.

Waveguide power transmission has the advantage that it is not affected by the weather, but also has the serious disadvantage that its (ohmic) attenuation for efficient long distance CW power transmission must be at least one thousandth of that which is tolerable for communications. Such low attenuation (i.e., 0.001 dB/km), for example, may be realized with the circular electric mode (i.e., TE_{01}^O) in oversized circular waveguide having a diameter of approximately 10λ , provided the generation of spurious modes can be minimized at least as successfully as it has been for communications purposes. This problem has received scant attention until recently, even in the light of the fact that waveguide power capacity is no barrier. For example, waveguide power capacity can match and exceed that of even the future super high voltage transmission line capable of the order of 4 GW. It is appropriate to mention in this context that the oversized rectangular waveguide has received considerable attention recently for relatively short waveguide runs. With cross-sectional dimensions equal to approximately 2λ , an order of magnitude increase can be obtained in CW power transmission compared to standard size waveguide.

Radiation beam (or "wireless" power) transmission has received encouraging laboratory attention as a direct result of international developments in CW power microwave electronics, especially at *S* and *X* bands. Aerospace and military requirements now provide significant incentive for developing a novel relatively large area, but extremely light weight, unfurl, self-rectifying diode array antenna for hovering aerospace vehicles or perhaps even orbiting or synchronous space vehicles. The much more cumbersome and much heavier precision parabolic sheet antenna is limited to the order of 1000 sq ft for hovering aerospace and/or space vehicles at the desired distances (e.g., in near space or up to synchronous orbit) though are presently impractical.

The remaining topics concern the state-of-the-art of these various components, systems, and especially the applications of this new electronics technology, both from a theoretical and experimental applied basis. Most of the experimental work has been done in microwave generation and power amplification and their applications and to a lesser degree in microwave rectification and transmission of microwave power.

Those units utilized in the particular industry or activity represented by the article were incorporated as a matter of mutual convenience.

CONTENTS

List of Contributors	v
Preface	vii
Contents of Volume 1	xvi

Chapter 5. APPLICATIONS

5.1 Microwave Heating

5.1.1 Introduction	1
------------------------------	---

Robert V. Decareau and Paul W. Crapuchettes

I. Food Field	1
II. Materials Field	2
Reference	5

FOOD FIELD

5.1.2 Ovens	6
-----------------------	---

David A. Copson and Robert V. Decareau

I. Introduction	6
II. General Theory of Low Power Oven Design	6
III. Modular Systems	17
IV. High Powered Microwave Systems	20
V. Discussion	23
Symbols	26
References	27

5.1.3 Energy Conversion in Closed Microwave Cavities	28
--	----

C. Robert James, Wayne R. Tinga, and W. A. Geoffrey Voss

I. Introduction	28
II. Multimode Theory	29
III. Source Bandwidth	31
IV. Energy Distribution Measurements	32
Symbols	36
References	36

5.1.4 Freeze Drying	38
-------------------------------	----

W. N. Parker

I. Introduction	38
II. Theoretical Analysis	39
III. Experimental Microwave Freeze-Drying since 1962	49

IV. Continuous Flow Systems	59
V. Economics of Microwave Freeze-Drying	61
Symbols	62
References	63
5.1.5 Finish Drying of Potato Chips	65
<i>John P. O'Meara</i>	
I. Introduction	65
II. Microwave Processing in Relation to Raw Potato Procurement and Storage	67
III. Product and Process Evaluation	68
IV. Economic Considerations	71
V. Microwave Equipment Considerations	72
References	73
5.1.6 Thawing of Frozen Food	74
<i>Robert V. Decareau</i>	
I. Introduction	74
II. Review of the Literature	75
III. Theoretical Aspects of Microwave Thawing	75
IV. Commercial Scale Microwave Thawing	77
V. Discussion and Conclusions	77
References	79
5.1.7 Heating of Precooked Food	80
<i>Robert V. Decareau</i>	
I. Introduction	80
II. Hospital Food Service	81
III. Unique Food Service Systems	81
IV. Domestic Food Service	82
References	83
5.1.8 Cooking and Baking of Food	84
<i>Robert V. Decareau</i>	
I. Introduction	84
II. Potato Chip Finish Drying	84
III. Continuous Microwave Poultry Cooking	85
IV. Microwave Baking	87
V. Microwave Blanching	90
VI. Discussion and Conclusions	93
References	94
5.1.9 Conditioning of Flour	96
<i>David A. Copson</i>	
I. New Properties of Microwave Treated Flour	96
II. Confused Flour Beetle	96
References	97

5.1.10 Sterilization	98
--------------------------------	----

Robert V. Decareau

I. Introduction	98
II. Review of the Literature	98
III. Discussion and Conclusions	99
References	100

MATERIALS FIELD

5.1.11 Destruction of Dry Rot Fungus in Wood and Brick	101
--	-----

Alexander Watson

I. Introduction—The Origin of the Method	101
II. Experimental Approach	101
III. Radiation Hazard	103
IV. Dry Rot in Timber	103
References	104

5.1.12 Destruction of Woodworm in Timber	105
--	-----

Alexander Watson

I. Introduction	105
II. The Microwave Equipment	105
III. The Experiment	105
IV. Results	106
V. Application	107
VI. Conclusion	107
References	107

5.1.13 Curing of Concrete	108
-------------------------------------	-----

Alexander Watson

I. Introduction	108
II. The Experiment	108
III. Application of the Method	110
Reference	110

5.1.14 Breaking of Concrete	111
---------------------------------------	-----

Alexander Watson

I. Introduction	111
II. Theory	111
III. Apparatus	112
IV. Applications	112
V. Future Work	113
References	114

5.1.15 Sealing of Plastics	115
--------------------------------------	-----

Jerome R. White

I. Introduction	115
II. Sealing Operation	116
III. Conclusion	125

5.1.16 Traveling Wave Dryers	126
--	-----

Neil I. Heenan

I. Introduction	126
II. Dryer Types	126

III. Principles of Microwave Dryers	127
IV. The Traveling Wave Dryers Designs	128
V. Typical Examples of Dryer Designs	133
VI. Future Applications and Developments	140
VII. Conclusions	143
Symbols	143
References	143
5.1.17 Forest Products.	145
<i>W. A. Geoffrey Voss and Alan E. Supplee</i>	
I. Introduction	145
II. Applicator Systems and Power Absorption	147
III. Dielectric Parameters	151
IV. Softwood Veneer Drying	159
V. Hardwood Drying	163
VI. Coatings, Overlays, and Laminates	168
VII. Discussion	171
Symbols	172
References	172
5.1.18 Processing of Dielectric Sheets	175
<i>Norman H. Williams and H. C. Warner</i>	
I. Applicators in General	175
II. A Specific Case—The Slotted Waveguide	176
III. The Leveling Constant.	182
Symbols	187
References	187
5.1.19 Materials Evaluation and Measurement Techniques	189
<i>W. A. Geoffrey Voss and W. R. Tinga</i>	
I. General Principles	189
II. Partially Loaded Waveguide Techniques	190
III. Some Experimental Results	194
IV. Dielectric Effects in Drying Applications	196
V. Discussion	197
Symbols	198
References	198
5.1.20 Conclusions	200
<i>Robert V. Decareau and Paul W. Crapuchettes</i>	
I. Food Field	200
II. Materials Field	204
References	212
5.2 Microwave Biophysics	
5.2.1 Introduction	213
<i>Herman P. Schwan</i>	
Text	213

5.2.2 Radiation Biology, Medical Applications, and Radiation Hazards . 215

Herman P. Schwan

- I. Electrical Properties of Tissues at Microwave Frequencies 215
- II. Mode of Propagation through Tissues 217
- III. Nonthermal Field Effects 223
- IV. Medical Applications (Diathermy and Diagnostic Applications) 228
- V. Microwave Radiation Hazards 230
- References 232

5.2.3 Scientific Uses 235

Herman P. Schwan and P. O. Vogelhut

- I. Microwave Studies of Biological Systems 235
- II. Microwave Properties of Bound Water and Macromolecules 236
- Symbols 241
- References 241

5.2.4 Conclusions 244

Herman P. Schwan

- Text 244

5.3 Aerospace and Military

5.3.1 Introduction 245

John S. Burgess

- Text 245

5.3.2 High Power Tubes for Phased Array Applications 249

Benjamin I. Hill

- I. Introduction 249
- II. Criteria for Microwave Phased Array Transmitter Power Amplifiers 250
- III. Comparison of Tubes 253
- IV. Future Trends 254
- References 254

5.3.3 Amplifier per Subarray versus Amplifier per Element 256

John C. Toomay

- I. Introduction 256
- II. Cost Relationships 256
- III. Assessing Costs 258
- IV. Cost Comparisons 259
- V. Conclusion 260
- Symbols 260
- References 260

5.3.4 Focused Microwave Energy 261

John S. Burgess

- I. Introduction 261
- II. Discussion 262

III. Conclusion	266
Symbols	267
References	267
5.3.5 Microwave-Powered Aerospace Vehicles	268
<i>William C. Brown</i>	
I. Introduction	268
II. Experimental Progress on the Microwave-Powered Helicopter	270
III. The Combination Receiving Antenna and Rectifier	273
IV. Helicopter Rotor Design	276
V. The Beam-Riding Feature	277
VI. The Relationship between Over-All System Configuration and the System Cost	279
VII. Payload Fraction of the Microwave-Powered Vehicle	281
VIII. The Future Development of the Microwave-Powered Helicopter	283
IX. Other Aerospace Applications of Microwave Power Transmission	284
Symbols	285
References	285
5.3.6 Synthetic Noise Power	286
<i>Raymond S. Berkowitz</i>	
I. Introduction	286
II. Characteristics of Gaussian Noise	287
III. Generation and Transmission of Noise Signals	290
IV. Conclusions	292
Symbols	292
References	292
5.3.7 Conclusions	293
<i>Ernest C. Okress</i>	
Text	293
5.4 Microwave Electron Accelerators	
<i>Craig S. Nunan</i>	
I. Introduction	296
II. Techniques for Acceleration	297
III. Techniques for Beam Handling and Use	308
IV. Scientific Applications	313
V. Medical Applications	318
VI. Industrial Applications	320
VII. Conclusions	324
Symbols	324
References	324
5.5 Ionized Gases	
5.5.1 Introduction	326
<i>Ernest C. Okress</i>	
Text	326

5.5.2 Chemical Processing in a Microwave Discharge	329
<i>Raymond F. Baddour and Peter H. Dundas</i>	
I. Introduction	329
II. Advantages of Low Temperature Plasmas	330
III. A Theoretical Approach to the Choice of Microwaves	331
IV. Experimental System	337
V. A Review of Microwave Chemistry	339
VI. Plasma Chemistry of MIT	340
VII. Discussion and Conclusions	342
Symbols	344
References	344
5.5.3 Plasma Heating and Confinement—Controlled Nuclear Fusion.	347
<i>Albert J. Hatch</i>	
I. Controlled Fusion	347
II. High-Frequency Properties of Plasma	350
III. Plasma-Loaded Cavities	353
IV. Typical Systems	355
Symbols	362
References	363
5.5.4 Microwave-Powered Plasma Space Propulsion	365
<i>Henry G. Kosmahl</i>	
I. Introduction	365
II. Theory of Plasma Acceleration with Microwaves	367
III. Applications to Space Propulsion	374
IV. Concluding Remarks	375
Symbols	375
References	376
5.6 Microwavedynamics	
5.6.1 Introduction	378
<i>Ernest C. Okress</i>	
Text	378
5.6.2 Microwave Motors	379
<i>R. C. Garnier, Jr., and T. Koryu Ishii</i>	
I. Introduction	379
II. The Motor	380
III. Conclusion	387
References	387
5.6.3 Waveguide Vehicle Transport	389
<i>Dean N. Arden, John A. Bradshaw, and Kenneth E. Mortenson</i>	
I. Introduction	389
II. Power Transfer by Low-Loss Mode	390
III. Power Generation and Rectification	393
IV. Conclusions	394
Symbols	395
References	395
AUTHOR INDEX	397
SUBJECT INDEX	404

CONTENTS OF VOLUME 1: GENERATION, TRANSMISSION, RECTIFICATION

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 General Introduction and Scope of the Book by *Ernest C. Okress*

2. GENERATION

- 2.1 Introduction by *Joseph F. Hull*
- 2.2 Magnetrons as Generators of Microwave Power by *Paul W. Crapuchettes*
- 2.3 Crossed-Field Amplifiers
 - 2.3.1 The Amplitron by *William C. Brown*
 - 2.3.2 Crossed-Field Amplifiers by *George K. Farney, and Hunter L. McDowell*
 - 2.3.3 Nonreentrant Crossed-Field Amplifiers by *Joseph F. Hull, Philip N. Hess, and Gerald P. Kooyers*
- 2.4 Crossed-Field Noise Generation Devices by *Hunter L. McDowell and George K. Farney*
- 2.5 Power Klystrons and Related Devices by *W. John Pohl*
- 2.6 Power Triodes by *James E. Beggs and Norman T. Lavoo*
- 2.7 Beam-Plasma Amplifiers by *Charles S. Biechler*
- 2.8 Quantum Electronic Devices by *Arthur A. Vuylsteke*
- 2.9 Semiconductor Devices by *Robert M. Ryder*
- 2.10 Conclusions by *Ernest C. Okress*

3. TRANSMISSION

- 3.1 Introduction by *Harold M. Barlow*
- 3.2 Oversize Tubular Metallic Waveguides by *John P. Quine*
- 3.3 Surface Waveguides
 - 3.3.1 Single-Conductor Surface Waveguides by *Georg Goubau*
 - 3.3.2 Screened Surface Waveguides by *Harold M. Barlow*
- 3.4 Beam Waveguides by *Georg Goubau and Paul D. Coleman*

- 3.5 Free Space Beam Transmission by *Georg Goubau and Felix Schwering*
- 3.6 Economic Feasibility of Microwave Power Transmission in Circular Waveguide by *Donald A. Dunn and W. Loewenstern, Jr.*
- 3.7 Conclusions by *Ernest C. Okress*

4. RECTIFICATION

- 4.1 Introduction by *William C. Brown*
- 4.2 Solid-State Power Rectifiers by *R. H. George*
- 4.3 Thermionic Diode Rectifier by *William C. Brown*
- 4.4 Transverse-Wave Rectifier by *Curtis C. Johnson, K. I. Talbot, and David C. Watson*
- 4.5 Crossed-Field Rectifier by *William C. Brown*
- 4.6 Klystron Rectifier by *Se-Puan Yu*
- 4.7 RF-to-dc Energy Conversion in Beam-Type Devices by *Joseph E. Rowe and Vijai K. Tripathi*
- 4.8 Conclusions by *Ernest C. Okress*

Author Index—Subject Index

APPLICATIONS

5.1 Microwave Heating

5.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Robert V. Decareau and Paul W. Crapuchettes

I. Food Field	1
II. Materials Field	2
Reference	5

I. Food Field

There is a certain amount of similarity between the food and (nonfood) materials fields with respect to microwave processing, especially in the electronic aspects of the equipment, yet there are also vast differences. In many cases, nonfood materials have fixed and uniform dimensions; e.g., in such applications as plywood bonding, veneer drying, and paper drying. Food materials on the other hand may vary in all dimensions with no two pieces exactly alike in shape or composition; take, for examples, shrimp, lobster tails, and cut-up poultry parts. As a consequence, it may be necessary to size grade a product in order to avoid extremes in size and thereby minimize over and under heating. Since size grading is an operation with which food plant operators are familiar, this additional operation presents no particular problem.

Size changes are not uncommon in food processing, such as in the baking of bread in which volume and therefore, product density change. Dielectric properties usually undergo significant changes during processing, as in dehydration in which a product which initially represented a good load becomes a progressively poorer load. Compensation in power input must be made for these changes. Even more substantial changes in dielectric properties occur

during microwave thawing of frozen foods, in which a product changes from essentially transparent to relatively opaque. In all such cases, compensation must be made in equipment design. This can be accomplished perhaps most easily in process equipment in which the energy can be profiled; i.e., various sections can be operated at different power levels. Batch ovens for food service use, however, must be a compromise design at best, with comparatively elaborate instructions for their use for a wide variety of foods to be thawed, cooked, or just heated. Three sections of this book are devoted to microwave ovens, their plumbing aspects, and the problem of energy conversion.

For the freeze-drying process, if microwave energy is used to accelerate the drying cycle, it is necessary to cope with a very low pressure environment. The normal operating pressure for this process is that at which corona discharge is easily triggered, particularly as the product approaches dryness and the load becomes an extremely poor one. This is considered by the food industry to be a very important process and considerable space is devoted in this volume to it and to solutions to the corona problem.

Several pages are devoted to a discussion of microwave finish drying of potato chips, a process in which there is industry interest to the extent of about 800 kW of operating equipment. The market potential is estimated at 10 000 kW by one writer, but this figure could easily be exceeded. This is a use of microwave energy into a relatively poor load, yet the advantages it brings to the potato chipper are substantial enough so that it may become an essential procedure in this industry.

The only other food application which is currently a user of production microwave equipment involves the continuous cooking of poultry in a microwave and steam environment. This 130 kW installation is an example of the multiple generator design philosophy and is discussed and compared with the single high powered generator approach in the section on microwave ovens. Numerous other food applications could profit from a judicious use of microwave energy, in most cases, in combination with other forms of thermal energy. Although a very substantial start has been made, this is an industry with literally a huge reservoir of untapped applications. The following sections will undoubtedly suggest to the reader many new uses.

II. Materials Field

Microwave heating is rapidly becoming the key to new techniques and processes. This technique has begun to proliferate as the cost of its use has come within range of an increasing number of users. The range of applicability of microwave heating is determined by economic factors which include but may not be limited to (1) the price per pound of the finished product, (2) the existence of special preferences such as instantaneous heat programing or