POLARIZED ELECTRONS IN SURFACE PHYSICS

R. Feder

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Foreword

Surface physics, dealing with physical (and thence also chemical) properties and processes related to the solid/vacuum boundary, has developed into a vast field of still growing scientific and technological importance. (An extensive survey and references may be found in four volumes recently edited by King and Woodruff (1981-1984)). Electrons are essential for surface physics in two respects: firstly, bound electrons are a constituent part of any surface system, essential not only for the very existence of the system (its local bonding and geometry), but also for its vibrational, magnetic and chemical properties; secondly, free electrons provide - in a wide variety of scattering and emission techniques - powerful means of studying surface properties. Particularly interesting and useful phenomena occur, if the ensemble of electrons under consideration is polarized, i.e. if the number of electrons with spin parallel to a preferential direction differs from the number with spin antiparallel. For electrons bound to the surface system, this is associated with ferro- or ferrimagnetic ordering. In electron spectroscopy techniques, one is dealing with a beam of polarized electrons which is incident on the surface or emerges from it. (A general introduction to polarized free electrons and their use in atomic, solid state and high-energy physics is given in a monograph by Kessler (1976 and, updated, 1985)). Interacting with the surface system via exchange or spin-orbit coupling, polarized electron beams have - due to substantial advances in producing them ("sources") and analysing their spin polarization ("detectors") - within the past decade established themselves as a unique tool for studying magnetic, electronic and even geometrical surface properties.

In view of the achievements already made, the rapidly growing interest in and the future promise of this field, the time appears ripe for a comprehensive presentation, which initiates the non-specialist (with a general physics background at the graduate level) and

reviews the current state of the art. This is the aim of the present book. It consists of a coherent sequence of fourteen chapters written by top level experts, who have significantly promoted progress in the respective sub-areas of the field.

The book is organized in two main parts: (I) theoretical foundation, (II) experiments and (experimental and theoretical) results.

Part I (Chapters 1 to 4) introduces fundamental concepts and theoretical approaches. Chapter 1 is devoted to the electronic and magnetic structure of clean and adsorbate-covered surfaces at temperatures well below their ferromagnetic transition temperature. After setting the theoretical framework of local spin-density-functional formalism and thin film approximation, the currently most fruitful first-principles theory for calculating the spin-polarized electronic ground state is introduced, and numerical results for a variety of typical transition metal surfaces and overlayers are presented and discussed. While ferromagnetism of the infinite solid ("bulk") at low temperatures is well understood (in particular itinerant Stoner model for 3d transition metals and Heisenberg Model for rare-earth systems) (cf. standard textbooks on Solid State Physics, e.g. Ashcroft and Mermin (1976), Callaway (1976), Harrison (1970)), transition metal ferromagnetism near the Curie temperature is a subject of very recent controversy and progress. Since an understanding of the "bulk" is a prerequisite for understanding the surface, and since polarized electrons (in photoemission) have provided valuable new insight, key concepts (spin fluctuations, local moments, short-range magnetic order) and theoretical state of the art are therefore included in the present book (Chapter 2). This is naturally followed by a survey of surface ferromagnetism near the Curie temperature (Chapter 3), i.e. "critical behaviour", including scaling theory, renormalization group and Monte Carlo simulations. Chapters 1 to 3 having dealt with the spin-polarized (ferromagnetic) structure of surface systems "by themselves", Chapter 4 addresses the interaction of polarized free electrons with magnetic and non-magnetic surface systems

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(semi-infinite solid with clean or adsorbate-covered surface), which is fundamental to a wide variety of electron scattering and emission techniques for investigating surface properties. Observable spin polarization effects may arise from ferromagnetic exchange interaction and/or from spin-orbit coupling, which are both formally incorporated in a one-electron Dirac Hamiltonian containing an effective magnetic field. The theory of elastic spin-polarized low-energy electron diffraction (LEED) is presented in some detail, firstly because of its intrinsic importance and secondly because the "LEED state" (or its time reverse) is an essential ingredient for quantitative theories of other methods like photoemission, inverse photoemission and inelastic electron scattering, which are subsequently discussed. General results due to symmetry properties are presented, and principles of deducing, with the aid of theory, surface properties from experimental data are explained.

Part II (Chapters 5 to 14) deals with experimental techniques, experimental results and physical information obtained by comparing experimental data with their theoretical counterparts. Chapter 5 introduces the essential experimental tools: sources of polarized electrons, spin polarization detectors (polarimeters), synchrotron radiation (linearly and circularly polarized) and photon detectors. Elastic spin-polarized low-energy electron diffraction is presented for non-magnetic and for ferromagnetic surfaces in Chapters 6 and 7, respectively. In particular, the determination of the surface geometry, of the layer-dependent-magnetization at low temperatures and of the ferromagnetic critical behaviour of surfaces is illustrated. The subsequent two Chapters are devoted to spin-dependent electron-electron collision processes. The techniques, which are presented, include in particular high-resolution electron energy loss spectroscopy from ferromagnets, culminating in a "triple scattering" experiment involving both a polarized primary beam and spin analysis of inelastically scattered electrons (Chapter 8), and secondary electron emission (especially Auger emission and the very-low-energy "cascade") (Chapter 9). In addition to revealing details of the electron-electron interaction and ferromagne-

tic surface and bulk properties, these studies have led to the technologically important development of a magnetic scanning electron microscope. Chapters 10 to 12 are devoted to spin-resolved photoemission due to radiation in the (vacuum) ultraviolet range (photon energies up to about 70 eV). Chapter 10 focuses on semiconductor surfaces, for which spin-orbit coupling together with circular light polarization produces highly polarized photoelectrons, which carry information on the bulk band structure, on doping with impurities and - due to a most recently discovered spin precession effect in non-centrosymmetric crystals - on the spatial extent of the band-bending region near the surface. For non-magnetic metal surfaces, spin-, angle- and energy-resolved photoemission experiments performed with circularly polarized ultraviolet synchrotron radiation permit a direct observation of the symmetry types of the occupied states and promise detailed information on the electronic structure of adsorbed overlayers (Ch. [illegible] 11). For ferromagnets (Chapter 12), spin-resolved photoemission by linearly polarized or unpolarized light reveals the majority- and minority-spin (quasi-particle) bulk and surface band structures. While photoemission observes the occupied electronic states, its inverse, bremsstrahlung induced by polarized electrons (Chapter 13), provides complementary information on the unoccupied states (in particular in the vicinity of the Fermi level). The retrieval of physical information from experimental photoemission and bremsstrahlung data by means of theoretical model calculations is illustrated in Chapter 14 for ferromagnetic Fe and Ni. In particular, the determination of short-range magnetic order near the Curie temperature is demonstrated, and some light is shed on the influence of chemisorption on surface magnetism. The final Chapter 15 gives a synopsis and an outlook on future prospects for polarized electrons both in fundamental surface physics research and in technological applications.

The organization of Part II is such that physical properties of specific materials are presented in conjunction with the polarized-electron method by which they were revealed. An alternative classifica-

tion of the results according to materials is indicated in the following "cross reference" table, which may also serve as a Reader's guide to Chapters 6 to 14.

Method \ Material	ferromagnetic			non-magnetic	
	metals 3d	metals 4f	non-metals	metals	semi-conductors
elastic scattering	7	7		6	
inelastic scattering	8	8		8	
secondary emission	9		9	9	
photoemission	12,14	12	12	11	10
bremsstrahlung	13,14				

Table: Chapters, in which results for different types of material as obtained by polarized-electron methods are presented.

Having outlined the scope and contents of the present book, it seems pertinent to briefly mention some related methods for studying ferromagnetic surfaces, which have not been included. About a decade ago, a substantial research effort was devoted to field emission, i.e. to extracting polarized electrons from ferromagnets by applying a strong electric field (for reviews and references cf. Kessler 1976 and 1985, Campagna et al. 1976, Feuchtwang et al. 1978, Celotta and Pierce 1980). The development of spin-, angle- and energy-resolved photoemission (cf. Chapters 10-12) has, however, superseded field emission as a magnetic surface diagnostic technique, and the polarized-electron source based on field emission from an EuS-coated W tip has - despite its merits of about 90 % polarization and high brightness - not survived in the competition against the presently most widely used and even commercially available GaAs-photoemission source (cf. Chapter 5). Polarized field emission has therefore - to our knowledge -

not been pursued further since about 1980, and belongs to the history of surface physics.

Since we concentrate on techniques involving free polarized electrons, tunneling between superconductors and ferromagnets (cf. e.g. Tedrow et al 1982, Feuchtwang et al. 1978), which yields information on the spin polarization of electron states very close to the Fermi energy, has not been included. For the same reason, Mössbauer spectroscopy (cf. review by Keune 1985) is not represented nor is another interesting nuclear-physics method known as "Electron Capture Spectroscopy" (cf. review by Rau 1982) , in which deuterons impinging at grazing angles on a ferromagnetic surface pick up conduction electrons and thus carry information on surface magnetism. Another recent technique, which yet has to prove its quantitative merits, employs a polarized beam of low-energy positrons and measures the spin dependence of the positronium formation rate at the magnetic surface (Gidley et al. 1982) (cf. also a monograph on positron studies: ed. Mills and Canter 1985). Further, an atomic-physics method, in which spin-polarized metastable atoms are ionized at a ferromagnetic surface and subsequently neutralized in a polarization-dependent conduction-band Auger process, appears promising (Onnelion et al. 1984).

In conclusion of this Foreword, may we express a personal thought? The authors hope that the book is not only useful and enjoyable to you, dear Reader, but that you may also share some of their enthusiasm about this flourishing area of surface physics.

Roland Feder

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CONTENTS

Foreword xiii

Part I: Theoretical Foundation

1. Electronic and Magnetic Structure of Solid Surfaces
A. J. Freeman, C. L. Fu, S. Ohnishi & M. Weinert 3
1.1 Introduction 5
1.2 Theoretical Framework 8
1.2.1 Local Spin Density Functional Theory 9
1.2.2 Thin-Slab Approximation 12
1.3 Approach and Methodology 13
1.3.1 FLAPW Method for Thin Films 13
1.3.2 Energetics of Surfaces: All-Electron Total Energy Approach 19
1.4 Magnetism of Transition Metal Surfaces 20
1.4.1 Ferromagnetic Fe(001) Surface 20
1.4.2 Ferromagnetic Ni(001) Surface 25
1.4.3 On the Possibility of Surface Magnetism V(001) 29
1.4.4 Surface Magnetism of Cr(001) 35
1.4.5 Induced Magnetism and Knight Shift of Pt(001) 41
1.5 Magnetism at Bimetallic Interfaces 44
1.5.1 Magnetism at the Ni/Cu Interface 44
1.5.2 Magnetism of the Fe(001) Surface Overlayered with Ag 48
1.6 Effects of Adsorbates on Magnetic Surfaces: p(1 × 1)H/Ni(001) 50
1.7 Two-Dimensional Magnetism of Metallic Overlayers, Interfaces and Superlattices 54

2. Ferromagnetism of Transition Metals at Finite Temperatures
H. Capellmann 67
2.1 Introduction 69
2.2 Finite Temperature Properties; What Drives the Phase Transition? 75

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2.3 The Paramagnetic Phase 78
2.4 Concluding Remarks 89

3. **Critical Behaviour at Surfaces of Ferromagnets**
K. Binder 93
3.1 Introduction 95
3.2 Mean Field Theory for the Semi-Infinite Ising Model 101
3.3 Scaling Theory and Renormalization Group Results 107
3.4 Monte Carlo Simulations 115
3.5 Summary 121

4. **Principles and Theory of Electron Scattering and Photoemission**
R. Feder 125
4.1 Introduction 127
4.2 One-Electron Picture 130
4.2.1 Relativistic Electron-Ferromagnet Hamiltonian 130
4.2.2 Effective One-Electron Potentials 133
4.3 Elastic Low-Energy Electron Scattering 141
4.3.1 Basic Concepts 141
4.3.2 Time Reversal and Spatial Symmetries 146
4.3.3 Single-Site Scattering 151
4.3.4 General Many-Site Scattering 156
4.3.5 Diffraction by Two-Dimensionally Periodic Systems 158
4.3.6 Disorder and Lattice Vibration Effects 164
4.3.7 Determination of Magnetic and other Surface Properties . . 165
4.4 Inelastic Scattering and Secondary Electron Emission 170
4.4.1 Loss Mechanisms and Spin-Dependence 171
4.4.2 Electron-Hole Pair Excitation 173
4.4.3 Spin Fluctuations 178
4.4.4 Imaginary Potential and Mean Free Path 181
4.4.5 True Secondary Electron Emission 183
4.5 Photoemission 185
4.5.1 Basic Concepts 186
4.5.2 General Theoretical Framework 188
4.5.3 Relativistic One-Step Theory for Ferromagnets 192
4.5.4 "Golden Rule" Form and Three-Step Model 195
4.5.5 Nonrelativistic Limit and Electric Dipole Approximation . . 198

4.5.6 Non-Magnetic Solids with Spin-Orbit Coupling 201
4.5.6.1 One-Step-Model Features and Selection Rules . . . 201
4.5.6.2 Bulk Interband Transitions 214
4.5.6.3 Transport Effects 218
4.5.6.4 Surface Transmission 222
4.5.6.5 Emission from Adsorbates 224
4.5.7 Transition Metal Ferromagnets 225
4.5.7.1 At Low Temperature 226
4.5.7.2 Near the Curie Temperature 228
4.6 Bremsstrahlung (Inverse Photoemission) 230
4.6.1 Principles 231
4.6.2 Theory 231
4.7 Concluding Remarks 234

Part II: Experiments and Results

5. Sources and Detectors for Polarized Electrons
J. Kirschner 245
5.1 Sources of Polarized Electrons 247
5.1.1 Introduction 247
5.1.2 Photoemission Sources 248
5.1.3 The Field Emission Source 259
5.2 Detectors for Polarized Electrons 264
5.2.1 Introduction 264
5.2.2 Mott Detectors 265
5.2.3 The Absorbed Current Detector 271
5.2.4 The LEED Detector 276

6. Elastic Spin-Polarized Low Energy Electron Diffraction from Non-Magnetic Surfaces
F. B. Dunning & G. K. Walters 287
6.1 Introduction 289
6.2 Spin-Dependent Elastic Scattering – Basic Concepts 290
6.3 Experimental Considerations 294
6.4 Experimental Results and Comparisons with Theory 301
6.4.1 Tungsten 301
6.4.1.1 W(001)(1 x 1) 301
6.4.1.2 Adsorbate- and Temperature-Induced Reconstruction 304
6.4.1.3 Surface Barrier Resonances 307

6.4.2 Gold 309
6.4.3 Platinum 311
6.4.4 Nickel 312
6.4.4.1 Ni(001) 313
6.4.4.2 Ni(001)c(2 x 2)Te 314
6.4.5 Cu_3Au: Order-Disorder Transformations 316
6.5 Conclusions and Future Prospects 318

7. Elastic Spin-Polarized Low-Energy Electron Scattering from Magnetic Surfaces
U. Gradmann & S. F. Alvarado 321
7.1 Introduction: Spin Polarized Electron Scattering in Comparison with other Experimental Probes of Surface Magnetism 323
7.2 Surface Magnetization of 3d-Magnets at Low Temperatures 326
7.3 Surface Magnetism and Chemisorption at 3d-Magnet Surfaces 334
7.4 Critical Behavior of Ni-Surfaces 338
7.5 Enhanced Surface Curie Temperature and Surface Magnetic Reconstruction of Gd(0001) 341
7.6 Ferromagnetic Glasses 344

8. Inelastic Electron Scattering by Ferromagnets
J. Kirschner 353
8.1 Introduction 355
8.2 Spin-Dependence of the Electron Mean Free Path 355
8.3 Two-Electron Scattering Processes 359
8.4 Stoner Excitations 365
8.4.1 Amorphous Glasses 367
8.4.2 Single Crystals 370
8.5 Outlook 380

9. Spin Polarized Secondary Electron Emission from Ferromagnets
M. Landolt 385
9.1 Introduction 387
9.2 Spin Polarization of True Secondary Electrons 389
9.2.1 Energy Distribution of the Secondary Electron Spin Polarization 389
9.2.2 Magnetic Domain Microscopy 394
9.2.3 Magnetic Depth Profiling 397

9.3 Spin Polarized Auger Spectroscopy 402
9.3.1 The MMM Auger Process 403
9.3.2 The LMM Auger Process 409
9.4 Electron Spin Polarization in Inner Shell Excitations in a Solid . . . 412
9.5 Summary 417

10. Spin Polarized Photoemission by Optical Spin Orientation in Semiconductors
F. Meier 423
10.1 Introduction 425
10.2 Principles of Optical Spin Orientation in Solids 429
10.3 Applications of Optical Spin Orientation 438
10.3.1 Hybridization of Energy Bands 438
10.3.2 Lifting of the Spin-Degeneracy in Non-Centrosymmetric Materials 445
10.3.3 Structural Phase Transitions 447
10.3.4 Enhancement of Resolution in Photoelectron Spectroscopy by Measuring the Spin Polarization 452
10.3.5 Spin Exchange Scattering 457

11. Spin-Resolved Photoemission from Nonmagnetic Metals and Adsorbates
U. Heinzmann & G. Schönhense 467
11.1 Introduction 469
11.2 Energy-, Angle- and Spin-Resolved Photoelectron Emission Technique 471
11.2.1 Experimental 471
11.2.2 The "Complete" Photoionization Study 474
11.3 Symmetry-Resolved Bandmapping of Pt(111) 477
11.3.1 Relativistic Bandstructure 477
11.3.2 Spin-Resolved Photoelectron Spectra and Bandmapping . . 478
11.3.3 Temperature Dependence 480
11.3.4 Comparison with Quantitative Theoretical Calculations . . . 482
11.4 Hybridization Effects and Special Regions of Energy Bands 485
11.4.1 The W(100) Case 485
11.4.2 The Λ-Direction of Pt and Au 487
11.5 Off-Normal Photoelectron Emission 490
11.5.1 Surface Transmission Effects 490
11.5.2 Dependence of the ESP Vector on the Emission Angle 492

11.6 Photoelectron Spinpolarization Spectroscopy of Physisorbed Rare Gases 495
11.6.1 Level Splitting 495
11.6.2 Resonance Behavior of the Spin Polarization 500
11.6.3 Influence of Substrate, Overlayer Structure and 2D Phase Transitions 504
11.7 Adsorbate-Induced Changes in Substrate ESP Spectra 506

12. Spin- and Angle-Resolved Photoemission from Ferromagnets
E. Kisker 513
12.1 Introduction 515
12.2 Experimental Set-Ups for Spin- and Angle-Resolved Photoemission 518
12.3 Experimental Results and Discussion 521
12.3.1 Ni(110) 521
12.3.2 Fe(100) 524
12.3.3 Co(110) 528
12.3.4 Oxygen Adsorption Studies 529
12.3.5 Auger Electrons and Resonant Photoemission from 3d-Transition Metals 530
12.3.6 Study of the Ferromagnetic to Paramagnetic Phase Transitions of Fe and Ni 534
12.3.6.1 Introduction 534
12.3.6.2 Fe(100) 536
12.3.6.3 Ni(110) 539
12.4 Concluding Remarks 541

13. Spin Dependent Inverse Photoemission from Ferromagnets
V. Dose & M. Glöbl 547
13.1 Introduction 549
13.2 Experimental 551
13.3 Room Temperature Data for Iron 553
13.4 Measurements at Elevated Temperature 559
13.5 Outlook 562

14. Photoemission and Bremsstrahlung from Fe and Ni: Theoretical Results and Analysis of Experimental Data
R. Clauberg & R. Feder 565
14.1 Introduction 567

14.2 Analysis at Low Temperature 567
14.2.1 Fe(001) and Fe(110) 568
14.2.2 Ni(110) 577
14.2.3 Ni(110)(2 x 1)-O 583
14.3 Analysis Near the Curie Temperature 588
14.3.1 Fe(001) 589
14.3.2 Ni(110) 597

15. **Polarized Electrons in Surface Physics: Outlook**
M. Campagna 605

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