Image Formation and Analysis
(Formation et Analyse d'Images)

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Lesson 4　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　19 Oct 2010

Lesson Outline:

1 The Physics of Light

1.1 Photons and the Electo-Magnetic Spectrum

A photon is a resonant electromagnetic oscillation.
The resonance is described by Maxwell's equations.
The magnetic field is strength determined the rate of change of the electric field, and the electric field strength is determined by the rate of change of the magnetic field.
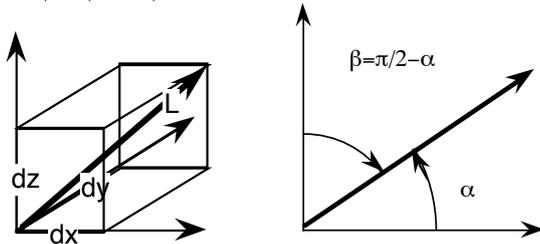
The photon is characterized by
1) a direction of propagation , $\vec{D}$,
2) a direction of oscillation (polarity), and
3) a wavelength, λ, and its dual frequency, f : $\lambda = \dfrac{1}{f}$

Direction of propagation and direction of polarity can be represented as a vector of cosine angles.

$$\vec{D} = \begin{pmatrix} \cos(\alpha) \\ \cos(\beta) \\ \cos(\gamma) \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \Delta x/L \\ \Delta y/L \\ \Delta z/L \end{pmatrix}$$


Photons are created and absorbed by abrupt changes in the orbits of electrons. Absorption and creation are probabilistic (non-deterministic) events.

Photons sources generally emit photons over a continuum of directions (a beam) and continuum of wavelengths (spectrum).

The beam intensity is measured in Lumens, and is equivalent to Photons/Meter^2.
The beam spectrum is gives the probability of a photon having a particularly wavelength, $S(\lambda)$.

The human eye is capable of sensing photons with a wavelength between 380 nanometers and 720 nanometers.
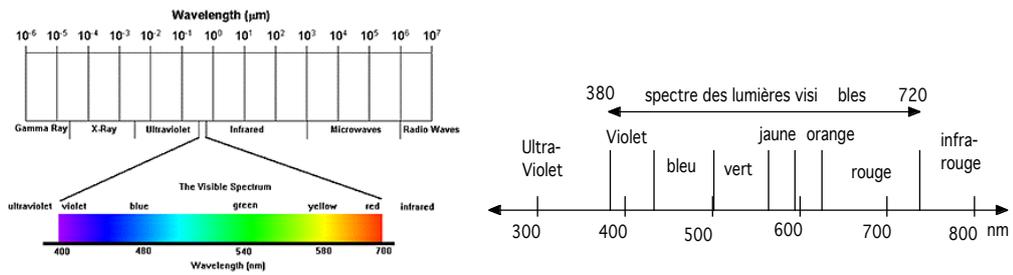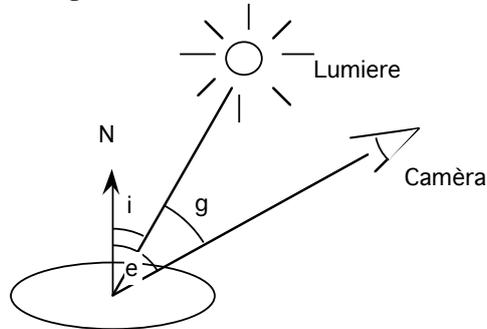
Perception is a probabilistic Phenomena.

1.2   Albedo and Reflectance Functions

The albedo of a surface is the ratio of photons emitted over photons received. Albedo is described by a Reflectance function

$$R(i, e, g, \lambda) = \frac{\text{Number of photons emitted}}{\text{Number of photons received}}$$

The parameters are
  i: The incident angle (between the photon source and the normal of the surface).
  e: The emittance angle (between the camera and the normal of the surface)
  g: The angle between the Camera and the Source.
  λ: The wavelength

For most materials, when photons arrive at a surface, some percentage are rejected by an interface layer (determined by the wavelength). The remainder penetrate and are absorbed by molecules near the surface (pigments).

3
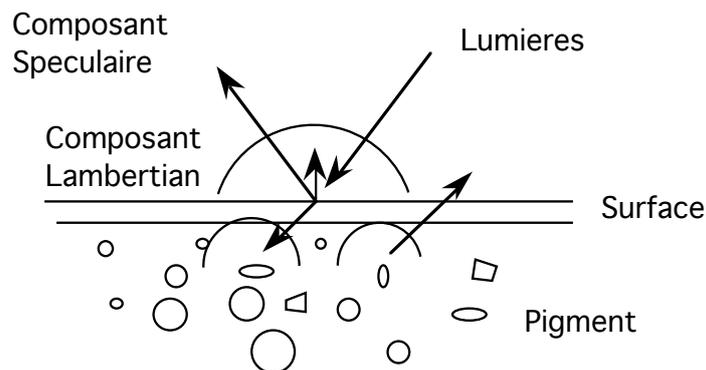
Most reflectance functions can be modeled as a weighted sum of two components: A Lambertian component and a specular component.

$$R(i, e, g, \lambda) = c\,R_S(i, e, g, \lambda) + (1-c)\,R_L(i, \lambda)$$

Specular Reflection

$$R_S(i, e, g, \lambda) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } i = e \text{ and } i + e = g \\ 0 & otherwise \end{cases}$$

An example of a specular reflector is a mirror.
All (almost all) of the photons are reflected at the interface level with no change in spectrum.
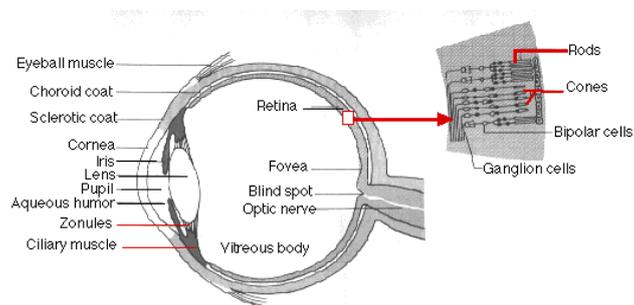
Lambertion Reflection

$$R_L(i, \lambda) = P(\lambda)\cos(i)$$

Paper, and fresh snow are examples of Lambertion reflectors.

2   The Human Visual System

2.1   The Human Eye

The human eye is a spherical globe filled with transparent liquid.
An opening (iris) allows light to enter and be focused by a lens.
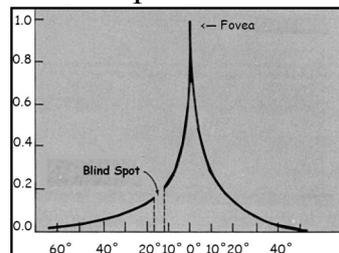Light arrives at the back of the eye on the Retina.

2.2   The Retina

The human retina is a tissue composed of a rods, cones and bi-polar cells.
Cones are responsible for daytime vision.
Rods provide night vision.
Bi-polar cells perform initial image processing in the retina.

Fovea and Peripheral regions
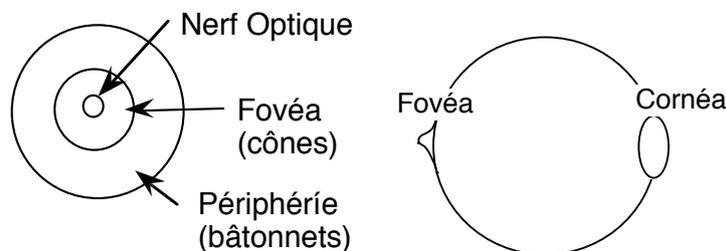
The cones are distributed over a non-uniform region in the back of the eye.
The density of cones decreases exponentially from a central point.
The fovea contains a "hole" where the optic nerve leaves the retina.

The central region of the fovea is concentrates visual acuity and is used for recognition and depth perception. The peripheral regions have a much lower density of cones, and are used to direct eye movements.

3 Color Spaces and Color Models

3.1 Color Perception

The human retina is a tissue composed of rods, cones and bi-polar cells.
Cones are responsible for daytime vision.
Bi-polar cells perform initial image processing in the retina.

Rods provide night vision. Night vision is achromatique. It does not provide color perception. Night vision is low acuity - Rods are dispersed over the entire retina.
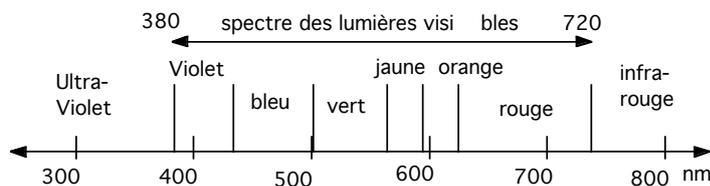

Rods are responsible for perception of very low light levels and provide night vision.
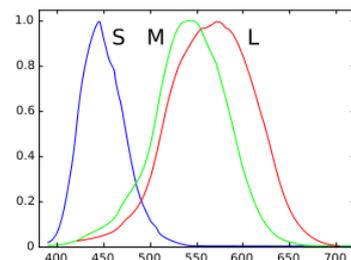Rods employ a very sensitive pigment named "rhodopsin".

Rodopsin is sensitive to a large part of the visible spectrum of with a maximum sensitivity around 510 nano-meters.

Rhodopsin sensitive to light between 0.1 and 2 lumens, (typical moonlight) but is destroyed by more intense lights.

Rhodopsin can take from 10 to 20 minutes to regenerate.
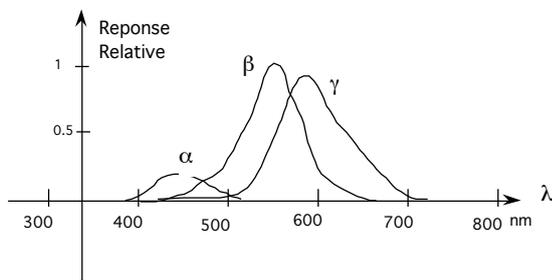
Relative Sensitivities

Normalised Sensitivities

Cones provide our chromatique "day vision". Human Cones employ 3 pigments :
  cyanolabe α 400–500 nm peak at 420–440 nm
  chlorolabe β 450–630 nm peak at 534–545 nm
  erythrolabe γ 500–700 nm peak at 564–580 nm

Perception of cyanolabe is low probability, hence poor sensitivity to blue.
Perception of Chlorolabe and erythrolabe are more sensitive.
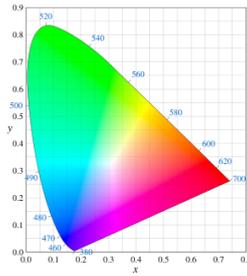
The three pigments give rise to a color space shown here (CIE model).

Note, these three pigments do NOT map directly to color perception.
Color perception is MUCH more complex, and includes a difficult to model phenomena known as "color constancy".

For example, yellow is always yellow, despite changes to the spectrum of an ambiant source

Many color models have been proposed but each has its strengths and weaknesses.

3.2   The RGB Color Model

One of the oldest color models, originally proposed by Isaac Newton. This is the model used by most color cameras.

The RGB model "pretends" that Red, Green and Blue are orthogonal (independent) axes of a Cartesian space.
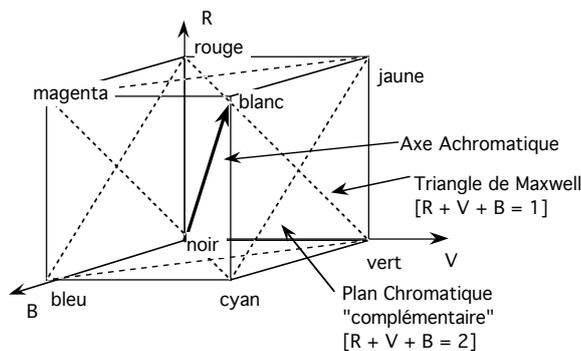
The achromatic axis is R=G=B.
Maxwell's triangle is the surface defined when R+G+B = 1.
A complementary triangle exists when R+G+B = 2.

For printers (subtractive color) this is converted to CMY (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow).

$$\begin{pmatrix} C \\ M \\ Y \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} R_{max} \\ G_{max} \\ B_{max} \end{pmatrix} - \begin{pmatrix} R \\ G \\ B \end{pmatrix}$$
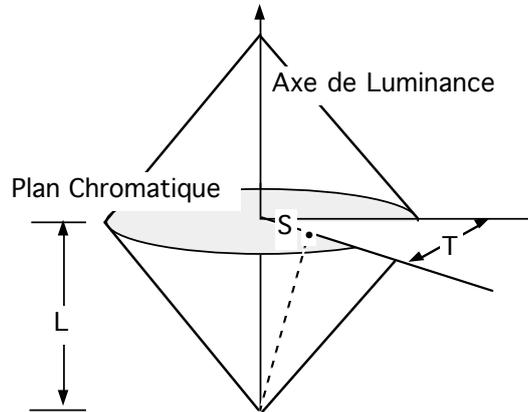
3.3   The HLS color model

HLS: Hue Luminance Saturation - called TLS in French.

Often used by artists.
HLS is a polar coordinate model for and hue (perceived color) and saturation.
The polar space is placed on a third axis. The size of the disc corresponds to the range of saturation values available.

One (of many possible) mappings from RGB:

Luminance : $L = (R + B + B)$

Saturation : $1 - 3*min(R, G, B)/L$

Hue : $x = \cos^{-1}\left(\dfrac{\frac{1}{2}(R-G) + (R-B)}{\sqrt{(R-G)^2 + (R-B)(G-B)}} \right)$

if B>G then H = x else H = 2π–x.

3.4   Color Opponent Model

Color Constancy: The subjective perception of color is independent of the spectrum of the ambient illumination.

Subjective color perception is provide by "Relative" color and not "absolute" measurements.

This is commonly modeled using a Color Opponent space.

The opponent color theory suggests that there are three opponent channels: red versus green, blue versus yellow, and black versus white (the latter type is achromatic and detects light-dark variation, or luminance).

This can be computed from RGB by the following transformation:

Luminance : $L = R+G+B$

Chrominance: $C1 = (R-G)/2$
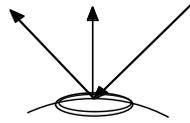
$C2 = B - (R+G)/2$

as a matrix :

$$\begin{pmatrix} L \\ C_1 \\ C_2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 \\ -0.5 & -0.5 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} R \\ G \\ B \end{pmatrix}$$
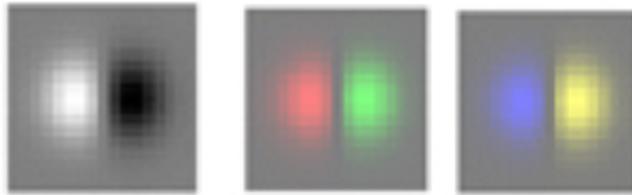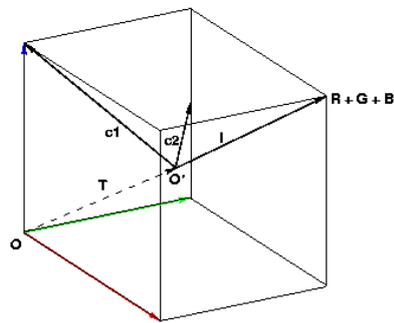
Such a vector can be "steered" to accommodate changes in ambient illumination.

3.5   Separating Specular and Lambertian Reflection.
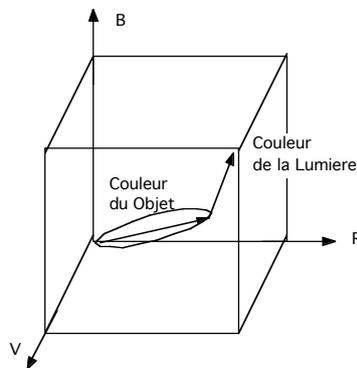
Consider what happens at a specular reflection.

The specularity has the same spectrum as the illumination.
The rest of the object has a spectrum that is the product of illumination and pigments.

This scan be seen in a histogram of color:

$$\forall \vec{C}(i,j) \quad : \quad H(\vec{C}(i,j)) = H(\vec{C}(i,j)) + 1$$

Two clear axes emerge:
One axis from the origin to the RGB of the product of the illumination and the source.
The other axis towards the RGB representing the illumination.