

mctracer

photon propagation in complex sceneries

mindset and how to use

by

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Contents

Contents	I
1 Abstract	1
2 The Atmospheric Cherenkov Plenoscope (ACP)	2
2.1 Create an ACP scenery	2
2.2 Run the light field calibration	4
2.3 Simulate ACP responses to Extensive Atmospheric Showers (EAS)	4
2.4 Explore the siumlated events	4
2.5 Light Field calibration	4
3 1D functions	5
3.1 Domains and their limits	5
3.2 Constant	6
3.3 Polynom3	6
3.4 Linear interpolation look up table	7
3.5 Concatenation	8
3.6 Access	8
4 How to set up a scenery in source code	10
References	10

Chapter 1

Abstract

The mctracer is a simulation for geometrical optics. It can propagate photons in a complex 3D scenery. The mctracer simulates reflection, refraction and absorption. It does not cover diffraction. For the investigation of optical devices or phenomena, mctracer records the full photon's trajectory starting with the production, through all the photon's interactions until its final absorption. A small set of primitive surfaces is provided in mctracer to form simple optical devices, such as lenses, imaging mirrors, light concentrators and aperture stops. Further, complex objects can be simulated using triangular meshes. To produce photons, mctracer comes with a set of light sources to illuminate your scenery. For more complex light sources, photons can be read from external files. mctracer can handle very complex sceneries with million of primitives while being fast and accurate on a scientific level. You can feed your scenery into mctracer using common CAD files for triangular meshes and a custom mctracer xml file which describes the primitives provided by mctracer itself. When the provided tools do not cover your demand you have the chance to implement the features yourself. The mctracer was originally created for simulations in Astro Particle Physics. Imaging Atmospheric Cherenkov Telescopes like FACT and the CTA MST made use of mctracer to investigate and improve their performance. The Atmospheric Cherenkov Telescope (ACP) was born in this simulation.

Chapter 2

The Atmospheric Cherenkov Plenoscope (ACP)

The mctracer can simulate ACPs. An ACP consists out of two main parts. First, an imaging system like e.g. a segmented imaging reflector as it is used for classic Imaging Atmospheric Cherenkov Telescopes (IACTs). Second, a light field sensor.

2.1 Create an ACP scenery

Lets create an example scenery of an ACP called PLERITAS, which is a plenoptic version to a VERITAS IACT.

```
| \Bash{  
| /demo$ mkdir pleritas  
| /demo$ cd pleritas/
```

All the resources needed to describe PLERITAS have to be in a folder.

```
| demo/pleritas$ vi scenery.xml
```

Create a xml file called scenery.xml and describe your scenery in there. For our PLERITAS we use a basic VERITAS like imaging reflector (created using the segmented reflector tool),

```
demo/pleritas/scenery.xml  
18      <segmented_reflector>  
19          <set_frame name="imaging_reflector" pos="[0,0,0]" rot="[0,0,0]" />  
20          <set_surface reflection_vs_wavelength="mirror_reflection" />  
21          <set_segmented_reflector  
22              focal_length="12.0"  
23              max_outer_aperture_radius="5"  
24              min_inner_aperture_radius="0.2"  
25              DaviesCotton_over_parabolic_mixing_factor="0.0"  
26              facet_inner_hex_radius="0.3"  
27              gap_between_facets="0.01" />  
28      </segmented_reflector>
```

a light field sensor

demo/pleritas/scenery.xml

```

36     <light_field_sensor>
37         <set_frame name="light_field_sensor" pos="[0,0,12.0]" rot="[0,0,0]" />
38         <set_light_field_sensor
39             expected_imaging_system_focal_length="12.0"
40             expected_imaging_system_aperture_radius="5"
41             max_FoV_diameter_deg="3.5"
42             hex_pixel_FoV_flat2flat_deg="0.1"
43             housing_overhead="1.3"
44             number_of_paxel_on_pixel_diagonal="5"
45             lens_refraction_vs_wavelength="lens_refraction"
46             bin_reflection_vs_wavelength="mirror_reflection"
47         />
48     </light_field_sensor>

```

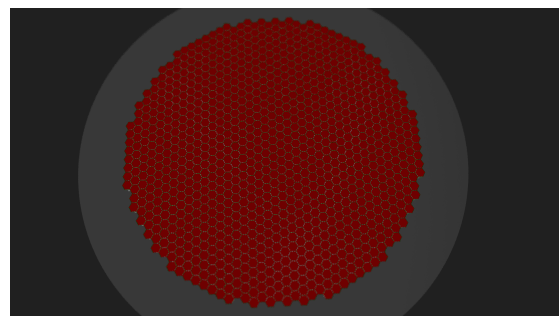
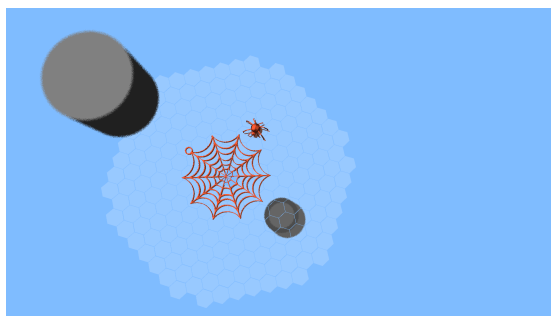
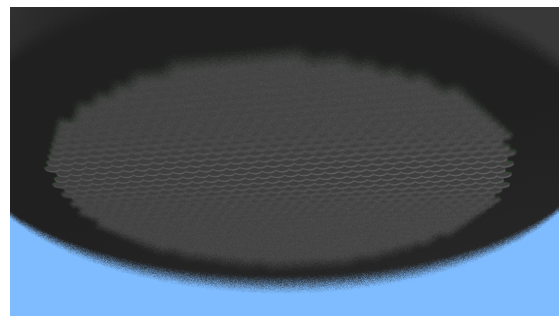
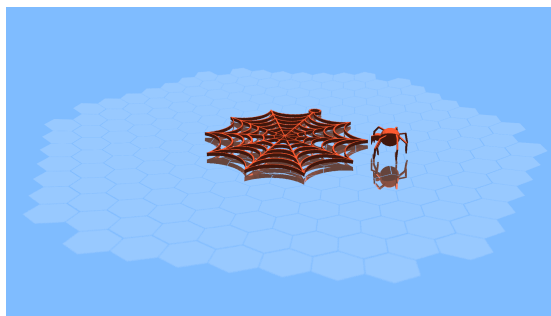
and a spider web which causes shadowing and is described in a CAD file named spider.stl which is also in the scenery folder.

demo/pleritas/scenery.xml

```

30     <stl>
31         <set_frame name="spider" pos="[-1.5,-1.75,-0.4]" rot="[0,0,0]" />
32         <set_stl file="spider.stl" scale="0.12" />
33         <set_surface reflection_vs_wavelength="zero" color="[255,91,49]" />
34     </stl>

```



All resources like the CAD file of the spider web must be placed in the scenery folder.

```

| /demo/pleritas$ ls
| scenery.xml spider.stl

```

Explore your scenery using mctShow.

```

| /demo/pleritas$ mctShow -s scenery.xml

```

2.2 Run the light field calibration

```
| /demo$ mctPlenoscopeCalibration -i scenery -o pleritas_calibration -n 3
| Plenoscope Calibrator: propagating 3M photons
| 1 of 3
| 2 of 3
| 3 of 3
| /demo$
```

Inside the calibration output folder we find a copy of the scenery folder in the input folder and the results in 3 binary blocks.

```
| /demo$ cd pleritas_calibration/
| /demo/pleritas_calibration$ ls
| input
| light_field_sensor_geometry.header.bin
| lixel_positions.bin
| lixel_statistics.bin
```

2.3 Simulate ACP responses to EAS

```
| /demo$ mctPlenoscopePropagation -c propagation_config.xml
| -l pleritas_calibration -i /some/simulation/gamma1.RUN41.dat -o my_run
| event 1, PRMPAR 1, E 225.569 GeV
| event 2, PRMPAR 1, E 168.365 GeV
| event 3, PRMPAR 1, E 46.5717 GeV
| ...
```

2.4 Explore the simulated events

2.5 Light Field calibration

Each read out channel (lixel) on the light field sensor of the ACP corresponds to a specific ray in the light field. Each of these rays has a support on the principal aperture plane at position x and y on and a direction vector described by c_x and c_y . Further, each of these lixel has a specific time delay t_{delay} which the light needs to travel when coming from the principal aperture plane and each lixel has its own efficiency η due to its specific geometrical position in the set up. So in the light field calibration we determine η , x , y , c_x , c_y and t_{delay} for each lixel. The calibration is done by throwing photons into the ACP, where we randomly draw both the photons intersection on the principal aperture plane x , y and their incoming direction c_x , c_y . In the calibration, many photons are used and several of them will be absorbed in the lixels. For each lixel, there is list of the photon properties (x , y , c_x , c_y and t_{delay}) of the photons that reached this lixel. From this list, the lixel is assigned the averages of all these properties, as well as their standard deviations. The number of photons reaching the lixel during the calibration gives the efficiency η .

```
../Plenoscope/Calibration/LixelStatistics.h
21 struct LixelStatistic {
22     float efficiency, efficiency_std;
23     float cx_mean, cx_std;
24     float cy_mean, cy_std;
25     float x_mean, x_std;
26     float y_mean, y_std;
27     float time_delay_mean, time_delay_std;
28     LixelStatistic();
29 };
```

Chapter 3

1D functions

The `Function::Func1D` class provides 1D mapping for floating numbers.

$$y = f(x) \tag{3.1}$$

$$x \in X \tag{3.2}$$

All functions have limits which need to be respected. Any call of a function $f(x)$ with $x \notin X$ will throw an exception. We are strict about this behaviour to enforce that no propagation passes silently where e.g. your mirror's reflective index is only defined up to 600 nm but you shoot 800 nm photons onto it. Functions live in their own namespace.

```
../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
```

3.1 Domains and their limits

First we define limits for the domains of our functions. `../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp`
11 Limits limits(0.0, 1.0);

The limits here include the lower bound 0.0 and exclude the upper one 1.0. A limit can assert that a given argument is in its domain. If not, it will throw an exception.

```
../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
13       EXPECT_THROW( limits.assert_contains(-0.1), Limits::OutOfRange );
14       EXPECT_NO_THROW( limits.assert_contains(0.0) );
15       EXPECT_NO_THROW( limits.assert_contains(0.5) );
16       EXPECT_THROW( limits.assert_contains(1.0), Limits::OutOfRange );
```

All functions have a domain within their limits. The limits are given to the functions during

construction. `../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp`
18 Constant con(1.337, limits);

```
../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
20       EXPECT_THROW( con(-0.1), Limits::OutOfRange );
21       EXPECT_NO_THROW( con(0.0) );
22       EXPECT_NO_THROW( con(0.5) );
23       EXPECT_THROW( con(1.0), Limits::OutOfRange );
```

Functions assert, the argument to be inside their domain.

3.2 Constant

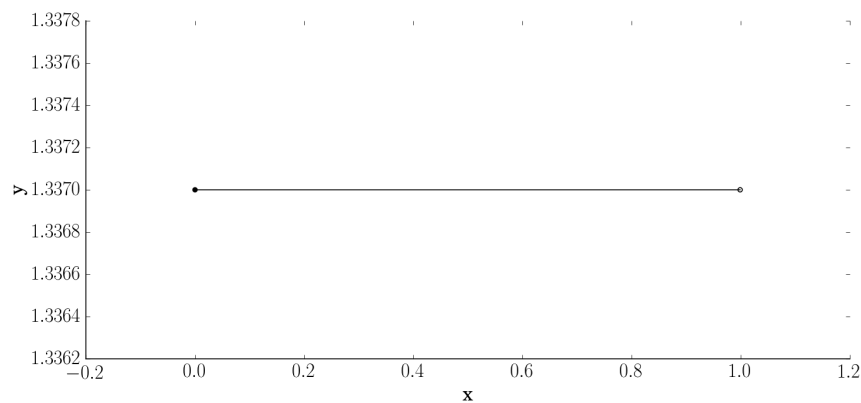
Sometimes it needs a constant function which will return the same value for any argument inside their domain limits.

$$y = f(x) = c \quad (3.3)$$

A constant function is created given its single constant value e.g. 1.337 and its domain limits.

```
its. ../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
30      Constant c(1.337, Limits(0.0, 1.0));
```

When called, within the limits, it will always return its constant value. `../Tests/Examples/set_up_scener`



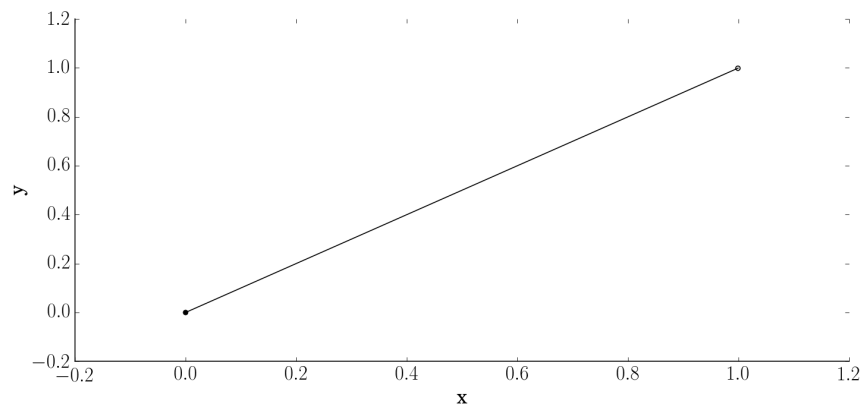
3.3 Polynom3

The versatile polynomial to the power of 3 is defined by its four parameters a, b, c and d .

$$y = f(x) = ax^3 + bx^2 + cx^1 + dx^0 \quad (3.4)$$

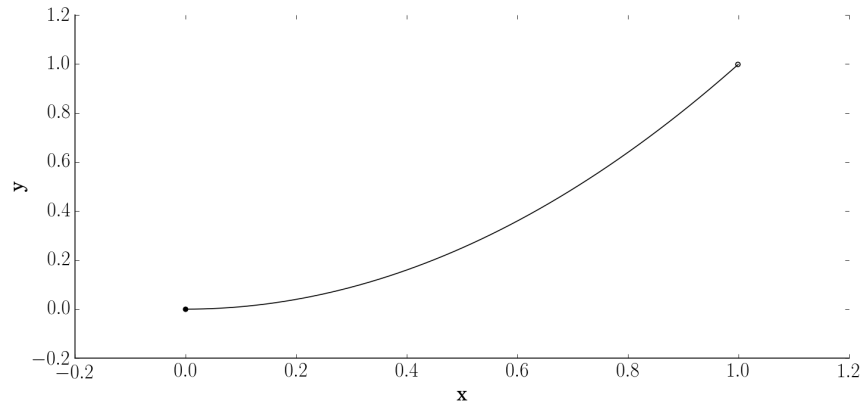
We initialize the Polynom3 using a, b, c, d and the limits. By setting the higher orders to

```
zero, we create e.g. a linear mapping. ../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
46      Polynom3 p3(0.0, 0.0, 1.0, 0.0, Limits(0.0, 1.0));
```



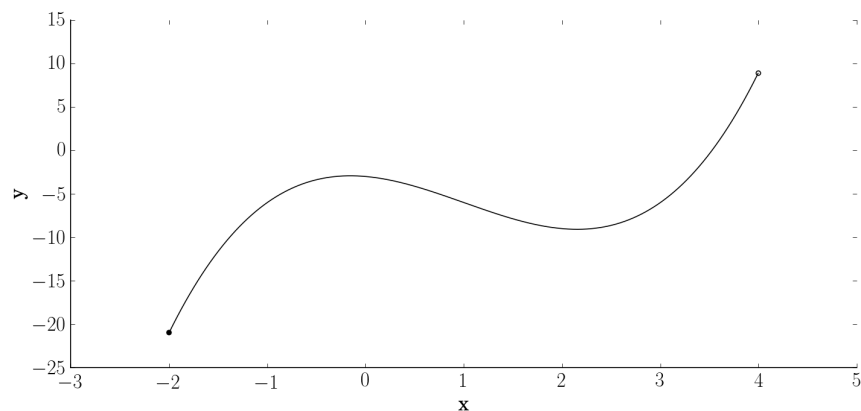
We can do a quadratic mapping.

```
../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
58     Polynom3 p3(0.0, 1.0, 0.0, 0.0, Limits(0.0, 1.0));
59
60     EXPECT_NEAR( 0.0, p3(0.0) ,1e-9);
61     EXPECT_NEAR( 0.25, p3(0.5) ,1e-9);
62     EXPECT_NEAR( 0.04, p3(0.2) ,1e-9);
```



The full polynom to the power of 3.

```
../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
70     Polynom3 p3(1.0, -3.0, -1.0, -3.0, Limits(-2.0, 4.0));
```

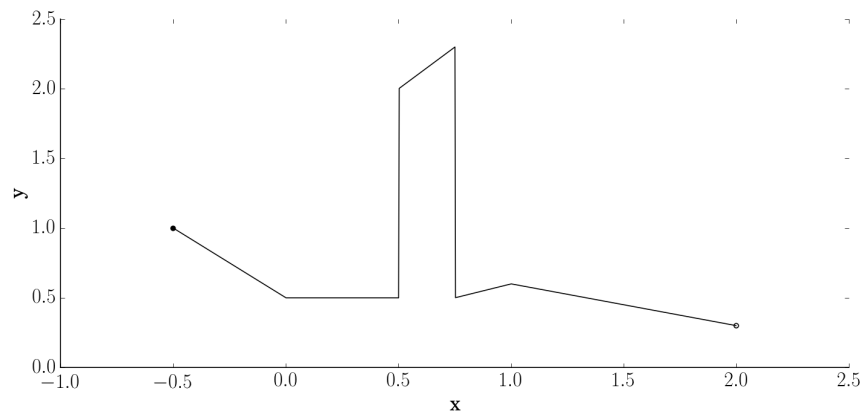


3.4 Linear interpolation look up table

In some cases, it can be tough to model an analytic 1D function. In these cases one can still use the a look up table with linear interpolation. The input table also defines the domain

limits, so no limits have to be given during construction.

```
../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp
78     std::vector<std::vector<double>>> table = {
79         {-0.5, 1.0},
80         { 0.0, 0.5},
81         { 0.5, 0.5},
82         { 0.50001, 2.0},
83         { 0.75, 2.3},
84         { 0.75001, 0.5},
85         { 1.0, 0.6},
86         { 2.0, 0.3}
87     };
88
89     LinInterpol ip(table);
```



3.5 Concatenation

Functions can be concatenated when their domain limits match. The functions to be concatenated can be of any kind, even concatenated functions themselves. Since the concatenated function can deduce its domain limits from the input functions, no limit has to be

given during construction.

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```

Using the `ascii io`, a function can be exported into a text file. `../Tests/Examples/Func1DExample.cpp`
122 `AsciiIo::write_table_to_file(p3.get_samples(7),`

The output text file is a two column matrix. First column is the argument x , second is the function value $f(x)$.

1	-2	-21
2	-1.142857143	-7.268221574
3	-0.2857142857	-2.982507289
4	0.5714285714	-4.364431487
5	1.428571429	-7.635568513
6	2.285714286	-9.017492711
7	3.142857143	-4.731778426

Chapter 4

How to set up a scenery in source code

We will build a little scenery of a house with a roof and chimney as well as a simple tree. Further we add a small telescope with a reflective imaging mirror. First we will define the geometry and their surfaces, second we will declare the relations between them. Third and finally we will update all frames relation w.r.t. the root frame to enable fast tracing (post initializing). First we define the main frame of our scenery. The main frame, often called

```
world, will be the root of the scenery tree ??.
```

```
../Tests/Examples/set_up_scenery.cpp
22     Frame world;
23     world.set_name_pos_rot("World", Vec3::null, Rot3::null);
```

Second we define frames that hold individual structures like a tree which will be composed from several objects. The tree will be placed in $x = 5$ m w.r.t. its later mother frame, i.e.

```
../Tests/Examples/set_up_scenery.cpp
25     Vec3 tree_pos(5.0, 0.0, 0.0);
26     Frame* tree = world.append<Frame>();
27     tree->set_name_pos_rot("My_Tree", tree_pos, Rot3::null);
28
29     Color leaf_green(0, 128, 0);
30     Sphere* leaf_ball = tree->append<Sphere>();
the wolrd. 31     leaf_ball->set_name_pos_rot("leaf_ball", Vec3(0.0, 0.0, 2.0), Rot3::null);
32     leaf_ball->set_outer_color(&leaf_green);
33     leaf_ball->set_radius(0.5);
34
35     Color wood_brown(64, 64, 0);
36     Cylinder* tree_pole = tree->append<Cylinder>();
37     tree_pole->set_name_pos_rot("tree_pole", Vec3(0.0, 0.0, 0.5), Rot3::null);
38     tree_pole->set_outer_color(&wood_brown);
39     tree_pole->set_radius_and_length(0.1, 1.0);
```

Also part of the tree is the wooden pole. `../Tests/Examples/set_up_scenery.cpp`

and the rest of the source... `../Tests/Examples/set_up_scenery.cpp`