

1. Referring to figure 14.9, we see that for the photon propagation direction  $\mathbf{n}$ , the polarization direction of the positive and negative helicity are correspondingly

$$\epsilon_{\pm} = \frac{\epsilon_{\parallel} \pm i\epsilon_{\perp}}{\sqrt{2}} \quad (1)$$

By (14.74), the vectorial amplitude inside the absolute sign is

$$\mathbf{A}(\omega) = -\epsilon_{\parallel} A_{\parallel}(\omega) + \epsilon_{\perp} A_{\perp}(\omega) \quad (2)$$

therefore to get the frequency-angle spectra of radiation with positive/negative helicity, we take the scalar product of  $\mathbf{A}$  and  $\epsilon_{\pm}^*$  before taking the absolute square, i.e.,

$$\frac{d^2 I_{\pm}}{d\omega d\Omega} = \frac{e^2 \omega^2}{4\pi^2 c} |\mathbf{A}(\omega) \cdot \epsilon_{\pm}^*|^2 \quad (3)$$

The scalar product can be calculated as

$$\mathbf{A}(\omega) \cdot \epsilon_{\pm}^* = [-\epsilon_{\parallel} A_{\parallel}(\omega) + \epsilon_{\perp} A_{\perp}(\omega)] \left( \frac{\epsilon_{\parallel} \mp i\epsilon_{\perp}}{\sqrt{2}} \right) = \frac{-A_{\parallel}(\omega) \mp iA_{\perp}(\omega)}{\sqrt{2}} \quad (4)$$

From (14.77), (14.78) we have

$$A_{\parallel}(\omega) = \frac{\rho}{c} \left( \frac{1}{\gamma^2} + \theta^2 \right) \cdot \frac{2i}{\sqrt{3}} K_{2/3}(\xi) \quad (5)$$

$$A_{\perp}(\omega) = \frac{\rho}{c} \theta \left( \frac{1}{\gamma^2} + \theta^2 \right)^{1/2} \cdot \frac{2}{\sqrt{3}} K_{1/3}(\xi) \quad (6)$$

giving

$$\frac{d^2 I_{\pm}}{d\omega d\Omega} = \frac{e^2}{6\pi^2 c} \left( \frac{\omega\rho}{c} \right)^2 \left( \frac{1}{\gamma^2} + \theta^2 \right)^2 \left| K_{2/3}(\xi) \pm \frac{\theta}{\left( \frac{1}{\gamma^2} + \theta^2 \right)^{1/2}} K_{1/3}(\xi) \right|^2 \quad (7)$$

2. Similar to (10.8), we can define the degree of circular polarization as

$$\Pi_c \equiv \frac{d^2 I_+ - d^2 I_-}{d^2 I_+ + d^2 I_-} = \frac{2\alpha K_{2/3}(\xi) K_{1/3}(\xi)}{K_{2/3}^2(\xi) + \alpha^2 K_{1/3}^2(\xi)} \quad \text{where } \alpha \equiv \frac{\theta}{\sqrt{1/\gamma^2 + \theta^2}} \quad (8)$$

- (a) High frequencies ( $\omega \gg \omega_c$ ), all angles.

The discussion around (14.86) and (14.87) is relevant. From (14.87), the critical angle is

$$\theta_c = \frac{1}{\gamma} \left( \frac{2\omega_c}{3\omega} \right)^{1/2} \quad (9)$$

so all appreciable radiation has  $\gamma\theta \ll 1$ , hence  $\alpha \approx \gamma\theta \ll 1$ . Moreover when  $\xi \gg 1$ ,  $K_{2/3}(\xi) \approx \sqrt{\pi/2\xi} e^{-\xi} \approx K_{1/3}(\xi)$  so  $K_{2/3}(\xi) \gg \alpha K_{1/3}(\xi)$  due to small  $\alpha$ . Therefore  $\Pi_c \approx 0$  and the radiation is linearly polarized in the orbital plane (in the direction of  $\epsilon_{\parallel}$ ).

- (b) Low/intermediate frequencies ( $\omega \ll \omega_c$ ), large angles ( $|\theta| \gg 1/\gamma$ ).

Here  $\alpha \approx \text{sgn}(\theta)$ . Since  $K_{2/3}$  and  $K_{1/3}$  are both positive and of comparable magnitude for  $\xi$  of order unity (where the bulk of the emission occurs, near  $\theta \sim \theta_c$ ), one helicity strongly dominates:

$$\Pi_c \approx \frac{2K_{2/3}(\xi) K_{1/3}(\xi)}{K_{2/3}^2(\xi) + K_{1/3}^2(\xi)} \text{ sgn}(\theta) \approx \text{sgn}(\theta) \quad (10)$$

The radiation is nearly circularly polarized, with the sign of helicity matching the sign of  $\theta$ .

- (c) Low/intermediate frequencies ( $\omega \ll \omega_c$ ), very small angles ( $|\theta| \ll 1/\gamma$ ).

Here  $\alpha \approx \gamma\theta \ll 1$  and  $\xi \approx \omega\rho/(3c\gamma^3) = \omega/2\omega_c \ll 1$ , where  $K_{2/3}(\xi)$  dominates  $K_{1/3}(\xi)$ . So the circular polarization is doubly suppressed (by  $\alpha$  and by the smallness of  $K_{1/3}$  relative to  $K_{2/3}$ ). The radiation is again linearly polarized in the orbital plane.

The overall picture: in the orbital plane, the radiation is always linearly polarized (by symmetry, the perpendicular component vanishes at  $\theta = 0$ ). Moving off-plane, the ellipticity grows. At low frequencies the critical angle  $\theta_c \sim (3c/\omega\rho)^{1/3} \gg 1/\gamma$  is large, so there is a wide angular range with  $|\theta| \gg 1/\gamma$  where circular polarization dominates. At high frequencies  $\theta_c \ll 1/\gamma$ , and the radiation is essentially linearly polarized at all angles of appreciable intensity.