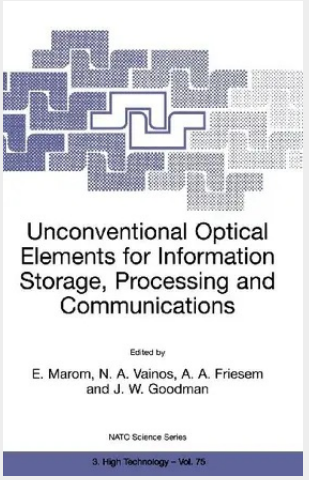
Marom / Vainos / Friesem

Unconventional Optical Elements for Information Storage, Processing and Communications



The field of optics has been accelerating at an unprecedented rate, due both to the tremendous growth of the field of fiber-optic communications, and to the improvement of optical materials and devices. Throughput capabilities of fiber systems are accelerating faster than Moore's law, the famous growth rate of silicon chip capability, which has propelled that industry relentlessly over decades. In addition, new optical storage techniques push the limits of information density, with an ever decreasing cost per bit of storage. Economic investment in photonics is at an all-time high. At the same time, other fields of optics, adaptive optics for instance, are bringing new capabilities to more classical applications such as astronomical imaging. New lasers continue to be developed, with applications in display, sensing, and biomedicine following at ever-shorter intervals after the initial discoveries. Given this background, the NATO Mediterranean Dialog Advanced Research Workshop on Unconventional Optical Elements for Information Storage, Processing and Communications, held in Israel on October 19-21, 1998, came at an opportune moment in the history of optics. Its aim was to overview the current state-of-the-art and encourage cooperation in the Mediterranean region, with a view to highlighting and enhancing the existing potential for further development and innovation. The workshop included participants from Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and USA.

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