

Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Applications	2
1.2 Efficiency and Output Considerations	2
1.3 Stable or Unstable Resonators	4
2. Rotational-Vibrational Structure of CO₂	8
2.1 The Normal Modes of Vibrations	8
2.2 Wave Equation	10
2.3 Rotational Line Distribution	16
2.4 Fermi Resonance	18
2.5 Transitions of the Regular Bands	19
2.6 The Gain Ratios of Regular Bands	20
2.7 Absolute Frequencies of CO ₂ Isotopes	22
3. Laser Processes in CO₂	53
3.1 Spontaneous Emission	53
3.2 Stimulated Emission	56
3.3 Laser Gain	58
3.4 Line Shape	58
3.5 Gain Saturation	62
3.6 The Temperature Model of the Laser Process	64
3.7 Vibrational Excitation of the Upper Laser Level	64
3.8 Relaxation Phenomena and Vibrational Temperatures	68
3.9 Gain Measurements and Vibrational Temperatures	71
3.10 The Role of He, H ₂ O, and Xe in the Laser Mixture	74
3.11 Power Extraction	76
4. Continuous Discharge Lasers	81
4.1 The Behavior of the Discharge	81
4.2 Elementary Theory of the Positive Column	83
4.3 The Similarity Rules	85
4.4 Thermal Effects and Similarity	87
4.5 Optical Aspects of Single Mode Operation	92
4.5.1 Gain of a Gaussian Beam	94

4.5.2	Width of a Gaussian Beam in an Oscillator	97
4.5.3	Saturation Parameter Measurements	101
4.6	Sealed-off CO ₂ Lasers	104
4.7	Single Mode CO ₂ Lasers	108
4.8	The Sequence- and Hot-Band Lasers	111
4.9	Transition Selection with Adjustable Outcoupling	112
4.9.1	Analysis of Three-Mirror Configuration	114
4.9.2	Experiments with a Tunable Outcoupling	117
4.9.3	Performance at High Stability	118
4.10	Frequency and Output Stabilization by the Opto-Voltaic Effect	119
4.10.1	Opto-Voltaic Signal in the Water-Cooling Jacket	125
5.	Fast Flow Systems	127
5.1	Convection-Cooled Laser	127
5.2	Principles of Laser Design	129
5.3	Gain and Saturation Parameter	134
6.	Pulsed Systems	138
6.1	Basic Principles of Laser Operation	139
6.2	Electron-Energy Transfer and $I - V$ Characteristics of Laser-Gas Mixtures	140
6.3	Derivation of Boltzmann's Equation	141
6.3.1	Near-Isotropic Expansion of Boltzmann's Equation	142
6.3.2	Energy Transport by Elastic Collisions	144
6.3.3	Energy Transfer by the Applied Field	147
6.3.4	Energy Transfer by Inelastic Collisions	148
6.3.5	Stationary Boltzmann's Equation for the Electron Energy Distribution	149
6.4	Solving Boltzmann's Equation for the CO ₂ -Laser Discharge	150
6.4.1	Transport Coefficients	155
6.4.2	Predictions of Optimum Laser Efficiency	157
6.4.3	Operating E/N Values for Self-Sustained Glow Discharges	161
6.5	Analysis of the Pulse-Forming Process	162
6.6	Double-Discharge UV Preionized Systems	168
6.7	Uniform-Field Electrode Profile (Chang Profile)	170
6.8	Minimum-Width Electrode (Ernst Profile)	174
6.9	Dielectric Corona Preionization	178
6.10	Single-Discharge Corona Preionized Systems	182
6.11	Electron-Beam Controlled Systems	185
6.11.1	Recombination-Limited Plasma	187
6.11.2	Cold Cathode	190
6.11.3	Simulation of e-Beam Sustained Discharge	191

6.11.4	Optimized Output from the e-Beam Sustained System	192
7.	AM Mode Locking of TEA Lasers	195
7.1	Acousto-Optic Modulation	196
7.2	Time-Domain Analysis of AM Mode Locking	204
7.2.1	Self-Consistency of the Ideal, Circulating Pulse	205
7.2.2	Self-Consistency of the Circulating Pulse with Detuning	208
7.3	Frequency-Domain Analysis of AM Mode Locking	210
7.4	Experimental Investigations of AM Mode Locked Systems	217
7.4.1	Stabilization of an AM Mode Locked TEA Laser with an Intracavity Low-Pressure CO ₂ -Laser Amplifier	219
7.4.2	Stabilization of an AM Mode-Locked TEA Laser with Injection of Continuous Radiation	222
7.4.3	The Transient Evolution of an AM Mode Locked TEA Laser	224
7.4.4	Numerical Results of the AM Mode Locking	229
8.	FM Mode Locking of TEA Lasers	232
8.1	Electro-Optic Phase Modulation	232
8.2	Time-Domain Analysis of FM Mode Locking	236
8.2.1	Self-Consistency of the Circulating Pulse with Detuning	238
8.3	Frequency-Domain Analysis of FM Mode Locking	241
8.4	Experiments with FM Mode-Locked TEA Lasers	249
9.	Passive Mode Locking	251
9.1	Basic Principles	251
9.2	Mode Locking with Fast Saturable Absorption	253
9.2.1	The Fundamental Equation	253
9.2.2	Saturable Absorber and Laser Gain	256
9.2.3	Pulse Form	258
9.2.4	General Mode-Locking Criteria	261
9.2.5	Mode Locking the CO ₂ System	262
9.3	Mode Locking by P-Type Germanium	264
9.3.1	Active and Passive Mode Locking	265
9.3.2	Colliding Pulse and Locking	266
10.	Short-Pulse Amplification	267
10.1	Pulse Propagation in a Two-Level System	268
10.2	Pulse Propagation with Rotational Relaxation	270
10.2.1	Rotational Relaxation	270

10.2.2	Short Pulse Multiline Energy Extraction with Rotational Relaxation	272
10.2.3	The Effect of Rotational Relaxation on the Inversion and Pulse Form	276
10.2.4	Multiband Energy Extraction	279
10.3	Experimental Technique for Generating Multi-Line Short Pulses	281
10.3.1	Experimental Set-up	282
10.3.2	Multi-Line Experiments	283
10.4	Single Pulse Selection	285
10.5	Prepulse, Retropulse and Parasitic Radiation Protection	288
10.6	Experimental Studies of Short Pulse Multi-Line Energy Extraction	290
10.7	Multiple-Pass Pulse Amplification	293
10.7.1	Intramode Vibrational Relaxation	295
10.7.2	Fermi Relaxation	296
References		299
Subject Index		307