Noise robustness of a combined phase retrieval and reconstruction method for phase-contrast tomography

Classical reconstruction methods for phase-contrast tomography consist of two stages: phase retrieval and tomographic reconstruction. A novel algebraic method combining the two was suggested by Kostenko et al. [Opt. Express 21, 12185 (2013) [CrossRef], and preliminary results demonstrated improved reconstruction compared with a given two-stage method. Using simulated free-space propagation experiments with a single sample-detector distance, we thoroughly compare the novel method with the two-stage method to address limitations of the preliminary results. We demonstrate that the novel method is substantially more robust toward noise; our simulations point to a possible reduction in counting times by an order of magnitude.

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Contributors: Kongskov, R. D., Jørgensen, J. S., Poulsen, H. F., Hansen, P. C.
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