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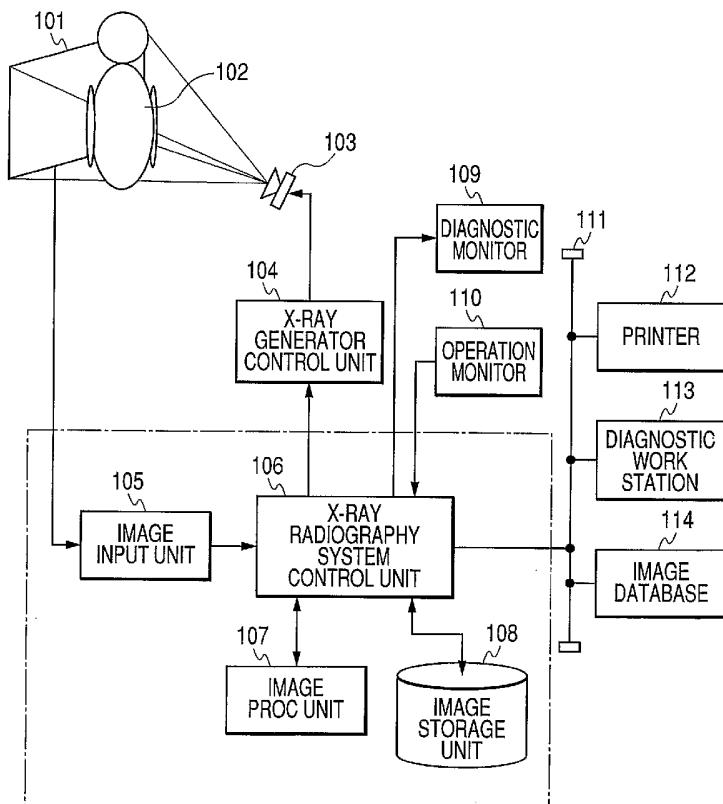
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(54) Title: RADIATION IMAGING DEVICE FOR CORRECTING BODY MOVEMENT, IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD, AND COMPUTER PROGRAM



(57) Abstract: To high-accurately execute as much as possible correction of a body movement for reducing an artifact occurring in case of creating a tomographic image from an X-ray projected image, the coordinates of the respective corresponding points are acquired between the projected images of which the projected angles overlap each other (e.g., 0° and 360°), and the geometric transformation parameter is acquired through affine transformation or the like by using the set of the acquired coordinates. When an estimated amount of the acquired parameter is equal to or larger than a predetermined amount, the geometric transformation parameter for geometric correction is determined by using the acquired geometric transformation parameter, the geometric transformation (correction of body movement) is executed by using the determined geometric transformation parameter, and the tomographic image is created by using the corrected projected images.

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DESCRIPTION

RADIATION IMAGING DEVICE FOR CORRECTING BODY
MOVEMENT, IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD, AND COMPUTER

5

PROGRAM

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a radiation imaging device, an image processing method for the 10 radiation imaging device, and a computer program for causing the radiation imaging device to execute the image processing method. In particular, the radiation imaging device and the image processing method according to the present invention can be 15 suitably used to reduce in radiography an artifact which occurs in a tomographic image due to movement of a body to be tested (this movement is called body movement hereinafter).

20 BACKGROUND ART

Fig. 9 is a diagram showing a concept of a cone beam X-ray CT (computed tomography) device in which a plane sensor is used.

In Fig. 9, an X-ray which is radiated from an 25 X-ray source 901 is transmitted through a body 903 to be tested, and the transmitted X-ray is detected

by a plane sensor 902 provided at the position opposite to the X-ray source 901. Here, it should be noted that the body 903 to be tested is also called a subject 903 hereinafter. Then, as 5 radiating the X-ray and detecting the radiated X-ray, the cone beam X-ray CT device executes control so that the X-ray source 901 and the plane sensor 902 together rotate around the subject 903.

Alternately, it is possible to constitute the cone 10 beam X-ray CT device so that the X-ray source 901 and the plane sensor 902 are fixed and instead the subject 903 itself rotates.

As above, when one rotation from 0° to 360° is executed, each of the X-ray source 901 and the 15 plane sensor 902 stands again its initial position. Alternately, when the subject 903 rotates from 0° to 360° , the subject 903 faces the initial direction at the initial position.

Incidentally, at that time, the projected 20 image initially acquired by the plane sensor 902 at the angle 0° has to be the same as the projected image acquired after the rotation of 360° .

However, in the actual radiography, there is no assurance that a patient being the subject 903 25 does not move. That is, if the patient moves during the radiography, the projected image initially

acquired by the plane sensor 902 at the angle 0° is resultingly different from the projected image acquired after the rotation of 360° . Therefore, if the tomographic image of the subject 903 is created 5 by using such different projected images, a streak artifact appears on the created tomographic image.

To reduce the artifact which appears due to such body movement, in the conventional X-ray CT device in which the one-dimensional sensor is used, 10 a method of correcting deviation or misregistration of the subject occurring due to its body movement by executing interpolation within a range of certain angles is known (for example, see Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. H06-114052).

15 Subsequently, this method will be explained with reference to Figs. 10A, 10B and 10C. Here, Figs. 10A to 10C show the method that the body movement is corrected by using a sinogram in which the channels of the detector are plotted on the 20 axis of abscissa and rotation angles are plotted on the axis of ordinate. Here, it should be noted that each of curved lines 1001 to 1003 on this sinogram indicates the trajectory of a certain point within the subject 903.

25 If the subject 903 does not move during the radiography (that is, there is no body movement of

the subject 903), as shown in Fig. 10A, a detector channel position A of the point at the time of a start of scan (0°) conforms to a detector channel position B on the point at the time of an end of 5 the scan (360°). On the other hand, if the body movement of the subject 903 occurs, as shown in Fig. 10B, the detector channel position of the point at the time of the end of the scan (360°) which should be essentially the position B shifts to a position 10 B'.

To correct such deviation or misregistration of the subject 903 occurring due to its body movement, as shown in Fig. 10C, the detector channel position A of the point at the time of the 15 start of the scan (0°) is shifted to a position A' and the detector channel position B' on the point at the time of the end of the scan (360°) is likewise shifted to a position B" both by an amount half as much as a deviation amount between the 20 detector channel position A of the point at the time of the start of scan (0°) and the detector channel position B' on the point at the time of the end of the scan (360°), so as to conform the position A' and the position B" to each other. Then, 25 an interpolation process is executed to the data between the position A' and the position B" with

respect to all the channels to acquire the data string as indicated by the dotted curved line 1003 shown in Fig. 10C.

By using the above method, in the conventional 5 X-ray CT device in which the one-dimensional sensor is used, it is possible to reduce the artifact which appears due to the body movement of the subject 903. However, in the cone beam X-ray CT device in which the plane sensor 902 is used, if 10 the above method is applied with respect to each of the horizontal lines constituting the plane sensor 902, there is a problem that consistency between the adjacent horizontal lines cannot be sufficiently attained, whereby the body movement of 15 the subject cannot be accurately corrected resultingly.

Moreover, if it is judged by using the magnitude of deviation or misregistration of each horizontal line whether or not the body movement of 20 the subject occurs, there is a problem that accurate judgment for the body movement cannot be attained, whereby there is a fear that the body movement is needlessly corrected resultingly.

25 DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

The present invention has been made in

consideration of the above problems, and the object thereof is to high-accurately correct a body movement as much as possible for reducing an artifact which appears on a tomographic image.

5 A radiation imaging device according to the present invention is characterized by comprising:
 a geometric transformation parameter solving unit adapted to acquire, from among plural projected images of which projected angles of a
10 radiation are different from others, geometric transformation parameters between at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other;
 a changing unit adapted to gradually change the geometric transformation parameters acquired by the geometric transformation parameter solving unit, within a predetermined range of the projected angles of the radiation; and
 a body movement correction unit adapted to
20 execute a correction of a body movement by executing geometric transformation to the plural projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are different, by using the respective changed geometric transformation
25 parameters.

Moreover, an image processing method according

to the present invention is characterized by comprising:

5 a geometric transformation parameter solving step of acquiring, from among plural projected images of which projected angles of a radiation are different from others, geometric transformation parameters between at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other;

10 a changing step of gradually changing the geometric transformation parameters acquired in the geometric transformation parameter solving step, within a predetermined range of the projected angles of the radiation; and

15 a body movement correction step of executing a correction of a body movement by executing geometric transformation to the plural projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are different, by using the respective changed geometric transformation parameters.

20

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing one example of the whole constitution of an X-ray CT system according to the embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a flow chart for explaining one example of the operation to be executed by the X-ray CT system in case of radiographing a subject and thus acquiring a tomographic image, according 5 to the embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 3 is a flow chart for explaining one example of the operation to be executed in a pre-process and a reconstruction process of the X-ray CT system, according to the embodiment of the 10 present invention;

Fig. 4 is a conceptual diagram for explaining the corresponding points between two projected images of which the projected angles overlap each other, according to the embodiment of the present 15 invention;

Fig. 5 is a conceptual diagram for explaining the fixed points on one of the two projected images of which the projected angles overlap each other, according to the embodiment of the present 20 invention;

Figs. 6A and 6B are conceptual diagrams for explaining how to acquire the corresponding points by means of matching, according to the embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 7 is a conceptual diagram for explaining 25 geometric transformation parameters for correcting

body movement, according to the embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 8 is a conceptual diagram for explaining the coordinates which show the status before the 5 geometric transformation is executed and the coordinates which show the status after the geometric transformation was executed;

Fig. 9 is a conceptual diagram for explaining a conventional cone beam X-ray CT device; and 10 Figs. 10A, 10B and 10C are conceptual diagrams for explaining conventional geometric transformation parameters for correcting body movement.

15 BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

Hereinafter, the embodiment of the present invention will be explained with reference to the attached drawings.

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing one example 20 of the whole constitution of an X-ray CT system according to the embodiment of the present invention.

In Fig. 1, an X-ray is generated from an X-ray source (or X-ray generator) 103 which is controlled 25 by an X-ray generator control unit 104, the generated X-ray is transmitted through a patient

102 which is treated as a subject, and the transmitted X-ray is then detected by an X-ray detector 101. Incidentally, in the present embodiment, the case where the X-ray is used will 5 be explained by way of example. However, it is needless to say that the radiation to be processed in the present embodiment is not limited to the X-ray, that is, electromagnetic waves such as an α -ray, a β -ray, a γ -ray and the like may be used.

10 The X-ray detected by the X-ray detector 101 is then input as a projected image to an image input unit 105. Incidentally, the X-ray source 103 and the X-ray detector 101 such as a plane sensor or the like collect the projected image with 15 respect to each of predetermined rotation angles as together rotating around the patient 102. However, it is alternatively possible to rotate the patient 102, as the subject, who is fixed to a rotary table, as maintaining the positional relation of the 20 patient 102 with respect to the X-ray source 103 and the X-ray detector 101.

Here, an image processing unit 107 corrects the X-ray detector 101, executes a pre-process including logarithmic transformation to the input 25 projected image of each of the rotation angles, and further executes image processes such as a

reconstruction process and the like to the input projected image. Thus, a group of tomographic images (or called a tomographic image group) is created through the above processes. After then, 5 the created tomographic image group can be displayed on a diagnostic monitor 109, and also stored in an image storage unit 108. In addition, it is possible to output the created tomographic image group to a printer 112, a diagnostic work 10 station 113 or an image database 114 through a network 111.

Incidentally, a tester or a diagnostician handles an operation unit 110 to execute various operations such as a display window operation on 15 the diagnostic monitor 109 or the like, a switching display operation of the tomographic image in the body axis of the patient 102, a cross section transformation operation of the tomographic image, a three-dimensional surface display operation, and 20 the like. In the present embodiment, the above operations are totally managed by an X-ray radiography system control unit 106 which consists of a microcomputer and the like.

Fig. 2 is a flow chart for explaining one 25 example of the operation to be executed by the X-ray CT system in case of radiographing the subject

(CT radiography) and thus acquiring the tomographic image.

Initially, in a step S201, radiography conditions such as an X-ray tube voltage, an X-ray tube current, an exposure time and the like, patient information such as a patient's name, a patient's age, a patient's gender and the like, and test information such as a test ID (identification) and the like are set through the operation by the 10 tester on the operation unit 110.

Next, in a step S202, the X-ray generator control unit 104 controls the X-ray source 103 in accordance with the radiography conditions set in the step S201. Thus, the X-ray is generated from the X-ray source 103 to radiograph the patient 102, and the projected image acquired by the radiography 15 is input to the image input unit 105.

Subsequently, in a step S203, the image processing unit 107 executes the pre-process to the projected image acquired in the radiography. Then, 20 in a step S204, the image processing unit 107 further executes the reconstruction process to the projected image subjected to the pre-process in the step S203. By doing so, the tomographic image of the patient 102 is created.

After then, in a step S205, the tomographic

image created in the step S204 is displayed on the diagnostic monitor 109. Thus, the tester confirms the tomographic image displayed on the diagnostic monitor 109, and handles the operation unit 110 in accordance with the confirmed result. Subsequently, in a step S206, the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 judges whether or not it is indicated that the X-ray radiography succeeds, based on the content of the handling by the tester.

Then, when the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 judges that it is indicated that the X-ray radiography does not succeed, the flow returns to the step S202 to again radiograph the patient 102. That is, the processes in the steps S202 to S206 are repeated until the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 judges that it is indicated that the X-ray radiography succeeds. On the contrary, when the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 judges that it is indicated that the X-ray radiography succeeds, the flow advances to a step S207. In the step S207, the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 transfers the tomographic image created in the step S205 to the image storage unit 108, the image database 114 and the like.

Subsequently, in a step S208, the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 judges whether or not next

radiography is indicated, on the basis of the handling by the tester on the operation unit 110. Then, when the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 judges that the next radiography is indicated, the flow returns to the step S201 to execute the next radiography. On the contrary, when the X-ray radiography system control unit 106 judges that the next radiography is not indicated, the operation to be executed by the X-ray CT system ends.

Fig. 3 is a flow chart for explaining one example of the operation to be executed in the pre-process and the reconstruction process of the X-ray CT system, according to the present embodiment.

In Fig. 3, at the first place, the coordinates of the corresponding points between the two projected images of which the projected angles overlap each other are acquired (step S301). Here, in the following, a concrete example of the process to be executed in the step S301 will be explained.

More specifically, for example, if the set of the X-ray source 103 and the X-ray detector 101 scans the patient 102 as just making a round (360°) of the patient 102, the projected angles which overlap each other may be set as 0° and 360° respectively. Besides, if the set of the X-ray

source 103 and the X-ray detector 101 executes the scan of 360° or more ($(360 + \alpha)^\circ$), the projected angles which overlap each other may be set as θ° ($< \alpha$) and $(360 + \theta)^\circ$ respectively.

5 Then, Fig. 4 is a conceptual diagram for explaining the corresponding points between the two projected images of which the projected angles overlap each other. That is, as shown in Fig. 4, the coordinates of the corresponding points (the 10 small black square points shown in Fig. 4) between a projected image 401 (for example, an image at scan angle 0°) and a projected image 402 (for example, an image at scan angle 360°) of which the respective projected angles overlap each other are 15 acquired. Here, it should be noted that the number of corresponding points has to be equal to or larger than the number of geometric transformation parameters, and accuracy of the geometric transformation parameters improve in proportion to 20 increase in the number of corresponding points.

However, if the number of corresponding points increases, a necessary calculation time becomes long at the same instant. Therefore, in consideration of such a fact, it has only to 25 determine the number of corresponding points substantially in accordance with the system itself.

In any case, the sets of the coordinates of the respective corresponding points of the projected images 401 and 402 are acquired as much as the number of corresponding points. To achieve this, 5 first, plural fixed points are set on one (e.g., projected image 401) of the two projected images. Here, for example, it is preferable to use the most characteristic points as the fixed points. For example, with respect to the image of a chest, the 10 end points of a rib, the branch points of lung blood vessels, and the like are suitable for the most characteristic points. Therefore, the end points of the rib, the branch points of the lung blood vessels or the like are set as the fixed 15 points. In contrast, even if the characteristic points are not used as the fixed points, for example, as shown in Fig. 5, it has only to divide the entirety of the projected image 401 into numbers of small rectangles, and then set the 20 respective central points of the divided small rectangles within the range of the subject as the fixed points.

Thus, if the plural fixed points are set with respect to one of the two projected images, the 25 coordinates, on the other (e.g., projected image 402) of the two projected images, of the points

respectively corresponding to these fixed points are acquired. To achieve this, it has only to use a matching method which is generally used in stereo analysis and the like. Hereinafter, an example of 5 how to acquire the sets of the corresponding points by using the matching method will be explained with reference to Figs. 6A and 6B.

As shown in Fig. 6A, a template image 603 of a predetermined size is cut out on the basis of the 10 fixed point on the projected image 401. Then, as shown in Fig. 6B, a search area 604 of a predetermined size larger than the size of the template image 603 is set on the projected image 402 of which the projected angle overlaps the 15 projected angle of the projected image 401. Here, it should be noted that the coordinates of the central point of the search area 604 are the same as the coordinates of the fixed point on the projected image 401.

20 Then, the position of the central point is shifted sequentially from the upper left to the lower right within the search area 604. At the same time, a reference image of the size same as that of the template image 603 is cut out from the 25 projected image 402. Subsequently, an estimated value est concerning the matching between the cut-

out reference image and the template image 603 is acquired.

Here, if it is assumed that the coordinates of the reference image are given as $r(x, y)$ and the 5 coordinates of the template image 603 are given as $t(x, y)$, the estimated value est of the matching can be acquired by the following equation (1).

$$10 \quad est = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^n \sum_{l=1}^m \{r(k,l) - \bar{r}\} \cdot \{t(k,l) - \bar{t}\}}{\sqrt{\sum_{k=1}^n \sum_{l=1}^m \{r(k,l) - \bar{r}\}^2} \cdot \sqrt{\sum_{k=1}^n \sum_{l=1}^m \{t(k,l) - \bar{t}\}^2}} \quad \dots (1)$$

Here, it should be noted that, in the above equation (1), the symbols n and m respectively denote pixel sizes of the template image 603, and the horizontal lines (-) added above the characters (r and t) indicate the respective average values.

Incidentally, when it is requested to execute the calculation at high speed, the estimated value 20 est of the matching may be acquired simply by the following equation (2).

$$est = \sum_{k=1}^n \sum_{l=1}^m |r(k,l) - t(k,l)| \quad \dots (2)$$

25 That is, the position of the reference image at which the estimated value est of the matching

becomes minimum is equivalent to the coordinates of the corresponding points.

In any case, when the coordinates of the corresponding points between the projected images 5 401 and 402 of which the projected angles overlap each other are acquired in the step S301, the geometric transformation parameter is acquired from the set of the coordinates of the corresponding points (step S302). For example, affine 10 transformation may be used in such geometric transformation.

It should be noted that the affine transformation can be represented by the following equation (3).

15

$$\begin{pmatrix} x' \\ y' \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} \\ a_{21} & a_{22} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} a_{01} \\ a_{02} \end{pmatrix} \dots (3)$$

Then, the set of the corresponding points is 20 defined as the set of the point of the coordinates (x_n, y_n) and the point of the coordinates (X_n, Y_n) (n is 1, ..., N). Subsequently, geometric transformation parameters $a_{01}, a_{02}, a_{11}, a_{12}, a_{21}, a_{22}$ for the affine transformation by which a least 25 squares error err between the coordinates (x_n', y_n') acquired by transforming the coordinates (x_n, y_n)

with use of the above equation (3) and the coordinates (X_n, Y_n) is minimized are acquired.

Incidentally, the least squares error err is represented by the following equation (4).

$$5 \quad err = \sum_{n=1}^N \sqrt{(X_n - x'_n)^2 + (Y_n - y'_n)^2} \dots (4)$$

Here, the coordinates x_n' and y_n' are the functions which use the geometric transformation parameters $a_{01}, a_{02}, a_{11}, a_{12}, a_{21}, a_{22}$ for the affine transformation as variables. Therefore, also the least squares error err by the equation (4) is the function which uses the geometric transformation parameters $a_{01}, a_{02}, a_{11}, a_{12}, a_{21}, a_{22}$ for the affine transformation as variables.

For this reason, if the least squares error err is subjected to partial differentiation based on each of the variables of the geometric transformation parameters $a_{01}, a_{02}, a_{11}, a_{12}, a_{21}, a_{22}$ for the affine transformation to set "0" and then the simultaneous equations are solved, it is possible to acquire the geometric transformation parameters $a_{01}, a_{02}, a_{11}, a_{12}, a_{21}, a_{22}$ for the affine transformation by which the least squares error err becomes minimum.

In this way, when the affine transformation is

executed, the geometric transformation parameters a_{01} , a_{02} , a_{11} , a_{12} , a_{21} , a_{22} for the affine transformation are acquired. However, when the affine transformation is executed, the geometric 5 transformation in which also enlargement of the image and shearing of the image are admitted. Consequently, in case of executing the geometric transformation only for rotation of the image and movement of the image without permitting the 10 enlargement of the image and the shearing of the image, Helmert transformation is used. Here, it should be noted that the Helmert transformation can be represented by the following equation (5).

$$\begin{pmatrix} x' \\ y' \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \cos\theta & \sin\theta \\ -\sin\theta & \cos\theta \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} a_{01} \\ a_{02} \end{pmatrix} \dots (5)$$

That is, the geometric transformation 15 parameters in case of the Helmert transformation are three, i.e., θ , a_{01} , a_{02} . Therefore, these 20 parameters can be acquired in the same manner as above.

In addition to the affine transformation and the Helmert transformation, even if secondary 25 projective transformation, high-order polynomial transformation or the like is used, it is possible to acquire the geometric transformation parameters

as well as the case where the affine transformation, the Helmert transformation or the like is used.

In any case, when the geometric transformation parameter is acquired in the step S302, it is then 5 judged whether or not an estimated amount of the acquired geometric transformation parameter is larger than a predetermined amount (step S303).

Here, it should be noted that the estimated amount of the geometric transformation parameter is 10 the amount for estimating the magnitude of the body movement while the scan is being executed. More specifically, the estimated amount of the geometric transformation parameter is used to estimate how far from the geometric transformation parameter in 15 case of no body movement.

Incidentally, for example, it is assumed that the geometric transformation parameters are set as $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots, \lambda_n, \dots, \lambda_N$, and the geometric transformation parameters in case of no body 20 movement are set as $\lambda'_1, \lambda'_2, \dots, \lambda'_n, \dots, \lambda'_N$. On such a premise, an estimated amount est2 of the geometric transformation parameter can be acquired by the following equation (6).

$$est2 = \sqrt{\sum_{n=1}^N (\lambda'_n - \lambda_n)^2} \dots (6)$$

Here, it should be noted that the right side of the above equation (6) may not be necessarily the square root. That is, instead of the above equation (6), it is possible to more simply acquire 5 the estimated amount est2 of the geometric transformation parameter by the following equation (7).

$$est2 = \sum_{n=1}^N |\lambda'_n - \lambda_n| \dots (7)$$

10

By the way, if the affine transformation is adopted as the geometric transformation, the following equations (8) are satisfied.

$$\begin{aligned} \lambda_1 &= a_{01}, \lambda_2 = a_{02}, \lambda_3 = a_{11}, \lambda_4 = a_{12}, \lambda_5 = a_{21}, \\ 15 \quad \lambda_6 &= a_{22} \\ \lambda_1' &= 0, \lambda_2' = 0, \lambda_3' = 1, \lambda_4' = 0, \lambda_5' = 0, \lambda_6' = 1 \\ &\dots \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

Moreover, if the Helmert transformation is adopted as the geometric transformation, the 20 following equations (9) are satisfied.

$$\begin{aligned} \lambda_1 &= \theta, \lambda_2 = a_{01}, \lambda_3 = a_{02} \\ \lambda_1' &= 0, \lambda_2' = 0, \lambda_3' = 0 \end{aligned} \quad \dots \quad (9)$$

In any case, when it is judged in the step S303 that the estimated amount of the geometric 25 transformation parameter acquired as above is equal to or smaller than a predetermined amount, it is

possible to judge that there is no body movement of the level for which the correction is necessary. Therefore, in this case, the flow advances to a step S306 without executing the correction of the 5 body movement so as to reconstruct the projected image and thus create the tomographic image.

On the other hand, when it is judged in the step S303 that the estimated amount of the geometric transformation parameter acquired as 10 above is larger than the predetermined amount, the correction of the body movement is executed.

More specifically, to execute the correction of the body movement, the geometric transformation parameter for geometric correction is first 15 determined so that the projected images of which the projected angles overlap each other conform to each other and gradually change within a predetermined angle (step S304).

In the correction of the body movement, only 20 half of the correction amount is gradually subjected to the correction according to the angles within the range, e.g., from 0° to 180°.

Subsequently, within the range from 180° to 360°, the correction is gradually executed according to 25 the angles in the direction opposite to the direction of the correction within the range from 0°.

to 180°, whereby it is possible to achieve the smooth correction of the body movement.

With respect to the geometric transformation parameters for executing the above correction of 5 the body movement (geometric correction), only half of the geometric transformation parameters acquired in the step S302 may be determined so as to gradually change within the range, e.g., from 0° to 180°. Besides, only half of the minus geometric 10 transformation parameters acquired in the step S302 may be determined so as to gradually change within the range, e.g., from 180° to 360°.

In addition, the body movement is gradually corrected according to the angles within the range 15 from 0° to 90°, by half of the correction amount of the body movement. Within the range from 90° to 270°, the body movement is not corrected. Then, within the range from 270° to 360°, the body movement is gradually corrected according to the 20 angles, by half of the correction amount of the body movement, in the direction opposite to the direction of the correction within the range from 0° to 90°.

More specifically, the meaning that the 25 projected image gradually changes within the predetermined angle and the body movement is

gradually corrected according to the angles is as follows. That is, the geometric transformation parameter is divided by the predetermined angle to acquire a change amount of the geometric 5 transformation parameter with respect to each unit angle, and the change amounts of the geometric transformation parameters of the respective unit angles are gradually added to others.

Here, one example of the method of determining 10 the geometric transformation parameters for executing the correction of the body movement (geometric correction) will be explained with reference to Fig. 7.

That is, Fig. 7 shows the projected angles in 15 the direction along the axis of abscissas and the geometric transformation parameters in the direction along the axis of ordinate, with respect to each of the respective geometric transformation parameters. In Fig. 7, the angles from 0° to 360° 20 are given as the projected angles. However, when the scan of an angle exceeding 360° ($(360 + \alpha)^\circ$) is executed, the projected angle may be set from θ° ($< \alpha$) to $(360 + \theta)^\circ$.

Here, it takes the case of n-th parameter as 25 an example. The geometric transformation is executed by half of the body movement with respect

to the projected image of 0° , whereby its parameter $\mu_n(0)$ is given by the following equation (10).

$$\mu_n(0) = \lambda_n' + (\lambda_n - \lambda_n')/2 \quad \dots (10)$$

Then, for example, it is assumed that the
 5 above predetermined angle is ω° . In such a case, since the geometric transformation is not executed within the range from ω° to $(360 - \omega)^\circ$, the parameter of the projected angle within this range is assumed as λ_n' for the sake of convenience. Here,
 10 within the range from 0° to ω° , it is controlled to gradually change the parameter from $\mu_n(0)$ to λ_n' . That is, the parameter $\mu_n(\beta)$ in case of $\beta^\circ (< \omega)$ is given by the following equation (11).

$$\mu_n(\beta) = \lambda_n' + \{(\lambda_n - \lambda_n')/2\} \times \beta/\omega \quad \dots (11)$$

15 Similarly, the geometric transformation is executed by half of the body movement with respect to the projected image of 360° , whereby its parameter $\mu_n(360)$ is given by the following equation (12).

$$\mu_n(360) = \lambda_n' - (\lambda_n - \lambda_n')/2 \quad \dots (12)$$

Then, within the range from $(360 - \omega)^\circ$ to 360° , it is controlled to gradually change the parameter from λ_n' to $\mu_n(360)$. That is, the parameter $\mu_n(\gamma)$ of the range from $(360 - \omega)^\circ$ to 360° is given by the
 25 following equation (13).

$$\mu_n(\gamma) = \lambda_n' + \{(\lambda_n - \lambda_n')/2\} \times \{\gamma - (360 - \omega)\}/\omega$$

... (13)

These parameters are respectively used to execute the geometric correction by half with respect to the side of 0° and also to execute the 5 geometric correction by half with respect to the side of 360° . However, the parameter may be determined so that the whole transformation is executed within the predetermined angle with respect to either the side of 0° or the side of 10 360° .

Then, when the geometric transformation parameters for correcting the body movement are acquired, the geometric transformation is executed to the projected image of each of the projected 15 angles by using the acquired geometric transformation parameter (step S305). However, it should be noted that the geometric transformation is not executed within the range from ω° to $(360 - \omega)^\circ$.

20 Subsequently, one example of the geometric transformation will be explained with reference to Fig. 8. In Fig. 8, it is assumed that, through the geometric transformation, a point (X, y) indicated by numeral 803 on a projected image 801 which is 25 acquired before the geometric transformation is executed (hereinafter, called before-geometric

transformation image 801) is transformed into a point (X' , y') indicated by numeral 804 on a projected image 802 which is acquired after the geometric transformation is executed (hereinafter, 5 called after-geometric transformation image 802).

When an image is created through the geometric transformation, the process opposite to the above is used. That is, the point (X , y) on the before-geometric transformation image 801 to be 10 transformed into the point (X' , y') on the after-geometric transformation image 802 is acquired. Here, it should be noted that the point (X' , y') indicates the coordinates of the integer value corresponding to each pixel on the after-geometric 15 transformation image 802. Then, by using the inverse transformation of the geometric transformation with respect to the coordinates, the point (X , y) corresponding to the point (X' , y') can be acquired. However, since the point (X , y) 20 does not have the coordinates of an integer value, interpolation is executed by using the pixel values of the four points closest to the point (X , y), and the interpolated value is set as the pixel value of the point (X' , y'). This process is executed to all 25 the pixels, whereby the image can be created through the geometric transformation.

Incidentally, when the image is created through the geometric transformation as above, the geometric transformation is not directly used, but the inverse transformation of the geometric 5 transformation is used. For this reason, the geometric transformation parameter may be set in advance as the parameter for the inverse transformation of the geometric transformation in the step S304.

10 In any case, when the correction of the body movement through the geometric transformation ends, the reconstruction is executed by using the corrected projected images, and the tomographic image is thus created (step S306).

15 As described above, in the present embodiment, the coordinates of the respective corresponding points between the projected images 401 and 402 of which the respective projected angles (for example, 0° and 360°) overlap each other are first acquired.

20 Then, the geometric transformation parameters $\mu_n(0)$ and $\mu_n(360)$ are acquired through the affine transformation or the like by using the sets of the coordinates of the corresponding points.

25 Subsequently, when the estimated amount of the geometric transformation parameter is larger than the predetermined amount, the correction of the

body movement is executed, and the tomographic image is then created by using the projected image 802 which has been subjected to the correction of the body movement.

5 More specifically, when the correction of the body movement is executed, as described above, the geometric transformation parameter for executing the geometric correction with respect to the projected angles from ω° to $(360 - \omega)^\circ$ is assumed
10 as λ_n' for the sake of convenience. Then, the geometric transformation parameter $\mu_n(\beta)$ for executing the geometric correction is determined so that the parameter gradually changes from $\mu_n(0)$ to λ_n' (as indicated by the equation (11)) within the
15 range of the projected angles from 0° to ω° . Moreover, the geometric transformation parameter $\mu_n(\gamma)$ for executing the geometric correction is determined so that the parameter gradually changes from λ_n' to $\mu_n(360)$ (as indicated by the equation
20 (13)) within the range of the projected angles from $(360 - \omega)^\circ$ to 360° . After then, the geometric transformation (i.e., body movement correction) is executed to the projected images having the projected angles from 0° to ω° and to the projected
25 images having the projected angles from $(360 - \omega)^\circ$ to 360° .

As described above, according to the present embodiment, the body movement (that is, the movement of the subject) is not grasped with respect to each horizontal (landscape) line, but 5 the body movement is grasped as the image. Thus, the body movement can be accurately grasped and seized, whereby it is possible to achieve high-precision correction of the body movement, and it is also possible to achieve the smooth correction 10 of the body movement. In consequence, it is possible to create the tomographic image on which an artifact has been reduced by correcting the body movement.

(Other Embodiments Of The Present Invention)

15 Incidentally, the present invention includes in its category a case where the program codes of software for realizing the functions of the above embodiment is supplied to a computer provided in an apparatus or a system connected to various devices 20 so as to actually operate these devices for realizing the functions of the above embodiment, and thus the computer (CPU or MPU) in the system or the apparatus reads and executes the supplied and stored program codes and operates these devices.

25 In this case, the program codes themselves of the software realize the functions of the above

embodiment. Therefore, the program codes themselves and a means, such as a recording medium storing these program codes, for supplying the program codes to the computer constitute the present 5 invention. As the recording medium for storing these program codes, for example, a flexible disk, a hard disk, an optical disk, a magnetooptical disk, a CD-ROM, a magnetic tape, a nonvolatile memory card, a ROM or the like can be used.

10 Moreover, it is needless to say that the present invention includes not only a case where the functions of the above embodiment are realized by executing the supplied program codes with the computer, but also a case where the program codes 15 cooperate with an OS (operating system) running on the computer or another application software to realize the functions of the above embodiment.

Furthermore, it is needless to say that the present invention also includes a case where, after 20 the supplied program codes are written into a function expansion board inserted in the computer or a memory of a function expansion unit connected to the computer, the CPU or the like provided in the function expansion board or the function 25 expansion unit executes a part or all of the actual processes on the basis of the instructions of the program codes, and thus the functions of the above

embodiment are realized by such the processes.

According to the present embodiment, the body movement can be grasped as the image. Thus, the body movement can be accurately grasped and seized.

5 In addition, the geometric transformation parameters are smoothly changed between the projected angles, whereby it is possible to achieve high-precision correction of the body movement as much as possible. In consequence, it is possible to
10 create the tomographic image on which an artifact has been reduced as much as possible.

According to another aspect of the present invention, the magnitude of the body movement is estimated by using the acquired geometric
15 transformation parameters, and the correction of the body movement is executed only in the case where the magnitude of the body movement is equal to or larger than the predetermined magnitude. Thus, useless correction of the body movement can be
20 avoided, whereby it is possible to shorten the time necessary for executing the correction of the body movement.

25 This application claims priority from Japanese Patent Application No. 2004-141490 filed May 11, 2004, which is hereby incorporated by reference herein.

CLAIMS

1. A radiation imaging device comprising:
 - a geometric transformation parameter solving unit adapted to acquire, from among plural projected images of which projected angles of a radiation are different from others, geometric transformation parameters between at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other;
 - 5 a changing unit adapted to gradually change the geometric transformation parameters acquired by said geometric transformation parameter solving unit, within a predetermined range of the projected angles of the radiation; and
 - 10 a body movement correction unit adapted to execute a correction of a body movement by executing geometric transformation to the plural projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are different, by using the
 - 15 respective geometric transformation parameters changed by said changing unit.
2. A radiation imaging device according to Claim 1, further comprising an estimation unit adapted to estimate magnitude of the body movement by using the geometric transformation parameter acquired by said geometric transformation parameter solving unit,

wherein said body movement correction unit executes the correction of the body movement in a case where it is judged by said estimation unit that the magnitude of the body movement is equal to 5 or larger than predetermined magnitude.

3. A radiation imaging device according to Claim 2, further comprising a tomographic image creation unit adapted to

create, in the case where it is judged by said 10 estimation unit that the magnitude of the body movement is equal to or larger than the predetermined magnitude, a tomographic image by reconstructing the projected images of which the correction of the body movement has been executed 15 by said body movement correction unit, and

create, in a case where it is judged by said estimation unit that the magnitude of the body movement is smaller than the predetermined 20 magnitude, the tomographic image by using the projected images of which the correction of the body movement is not executed by said body movement correction unit.

4. A radiation imaging device according to Claim 1, wherein

25 said geometric transformation parameter solving unit acquires coordinates of corresponding points on at least the two projected images of

which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other, and acquires, by using the acquired coordinates of the corresponding points, the geometric transformation parameters between at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other, and

5 said body movement correction unit gradually changes, within the predetermined range of the projected angles of the radiation, the geometric transformation parameters acquired by said geometric transformation parameter solving unit, determines the changed geometric transformation parameters as geometric transformation parameters 10 of geometric correction, and executes the geometric transformation to the projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are within the predetermined range by using the determined geometric transformation parameters of the 15 geometric correction, and executes the geometric transformation to the projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are within the predetermined range by using the determined geometric transformation parameters of the 20 geometric correction.

5. A radiation imaging device according to Claim 1, wherein said geometric transformation parameter solving unit acquires the geometric transformation parameters between at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other, by using any one 25 of affine transformation, Helmert transformation,

secondary projective transformation and high-order polynomial transformation.

6. A radiation imaging device according to Claim 4, wherein said geometric transformation parameter solving unit acquires the coordinates of the corresponding points on at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other, by using a matching method.

10 7. An image processing method comprising:
a geometric transformation parameter solving step of acquiring, from among plural projected images of which projected angles of a radiation are different from others, geometric transformation parameters between at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each other;

15 a changing step of gradually changing the geometric transformation parameters acquired in said geometric transformation parameter solving step, within a predetermined range of the projected angles of the radiation; and

20 a body movement correction step of executing a correction of a body movement by executing a geometric transformation to the plural projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are different, by using the respective

changed geometric transformation parameters.

8. An image processing method according to
Claim 7, further comprising an estimation step of
estimating magnitude of the body movement by using
5 the geometric transformation parameter acquired in
said geometric transformation parameter solving
step,

wherein said body movement correction step is
adapted to execute the correction of the body
10 movement in a case where it is judged in said
estimation step that the magnitude of the body
movement is equal to or larger than predetermined
magnitude.

9. An image processing method according to
15 Claim 8, further comprising a tomographic image
creation step of

creating, in the case where it is judged in
said estimation step that the magnitude of the body
movement is equal to or larger than the
20 predetermined magnitude, a tomographic image by
reconstructing the projected images of which the
correction of the body movement has been executed
in said body movement correction step, and

25 creating, in a case where it is judged in said
estimation step that the magnitude of the body
movement is smaller than the predetermined
magnitude, the tomographic image by using the

projected images of which the correction of the body movement is not executed in said body movement correction step.

10. An image processing method according to
5 Claim 7, wherein

said geometric transformation parameter solving step is adapted to acquire coordinates of corresponding points on at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the 10 radiation overlap each other, and acquire, by using the acquired coordinates of the corresponding points, the geometric transformation parameters between at least the two projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation overlap each 15 other, and

said body movement correction step is adapted to gradually change, within the predetermined range of the projected angles of the radiation, the geometric transformation parameters acquired in 20 said geometric transformation parameter solving step, determine the changed geometric transformation parameters as geometric transformation parameters of geometric correction, and execute the geometric transformation to the 25 projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are within the predetermined range by using the determined geometric transformation

parameters of the geometric correction.

11. An image processing method according to
Claim 7, wherein said geometric transformation
parameter solving step is adapted to acquire the
5 geometric transformation parameters between at
least the two projected images of which the
projected angles of the radiation overlap each
other, by using any one of affine transformation,
Helmert transformation, secondary projective
10 transformation and high-order polynomial
transformation.

12. An image processing method according to
Claim 10, wherein said geometric transformation
parameter solving step is adapted to acquire the
15 coordinates of the corresponding points on at least
the two projected images of which the projected
angles of the radiation overlap each other, by
using a matching method.

13. A computer program for causing a computer
20 to execute:

a geometric transformation parameter solving
step of acquiring, from among plural projected
images of which projected angles of a radiation are
different from others, geometric transformation
25 parameters between at least the two projected
images of which the projected angles of the
radiation overlap each other;

5 a changing step of gradually changing the geometric transformation parameters acquired in said geometric transformation parameter solving step, within a predetermined range of the projected angles of the radiation; and

10 a body movement correction step of executing a correction of a body movement by executing geometric transformation to the plural projected images of which the projected angles of the radiation are different, by using the respective changed geometric transformation parameters.

FIG. 1

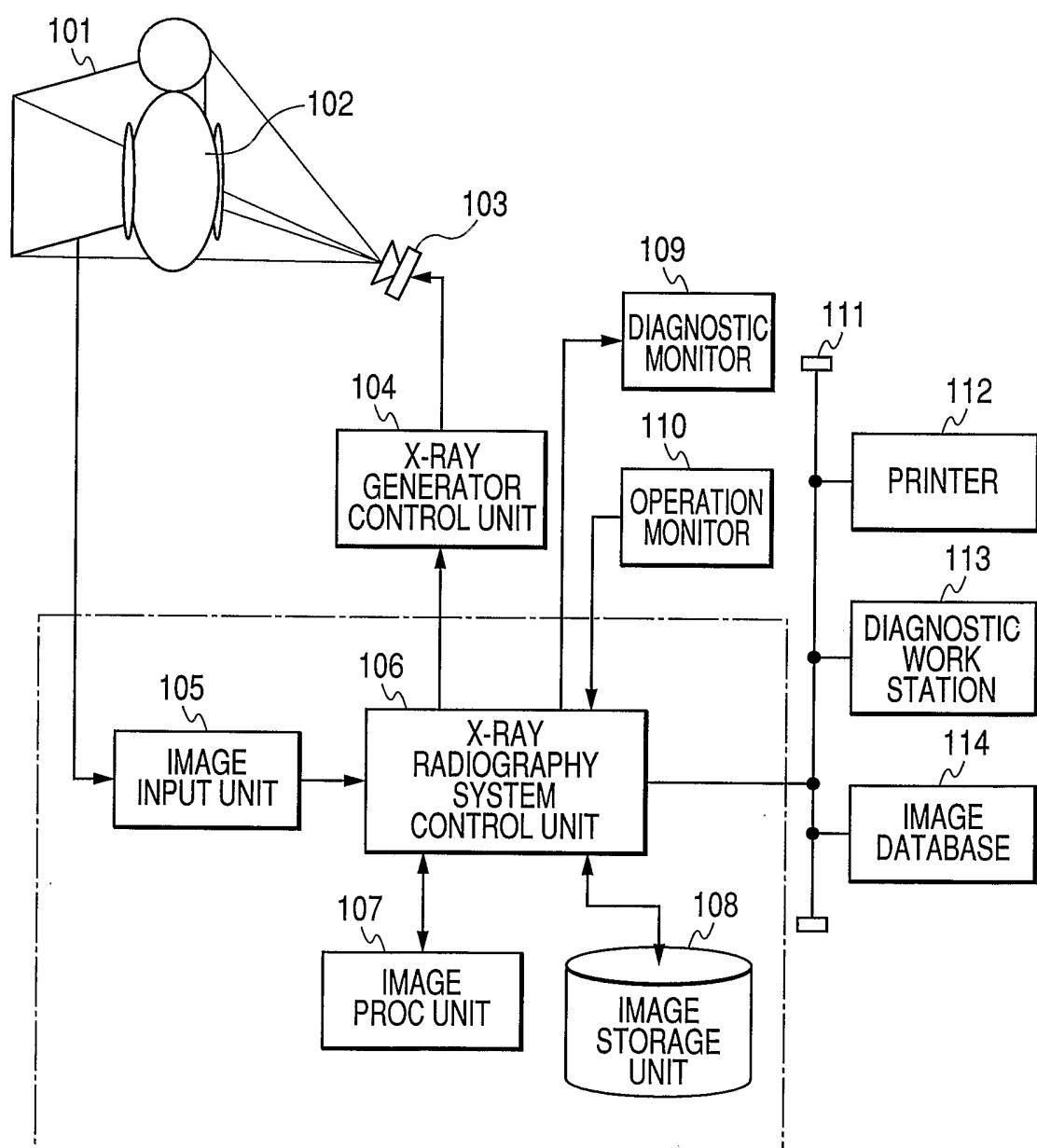


FIG. 2

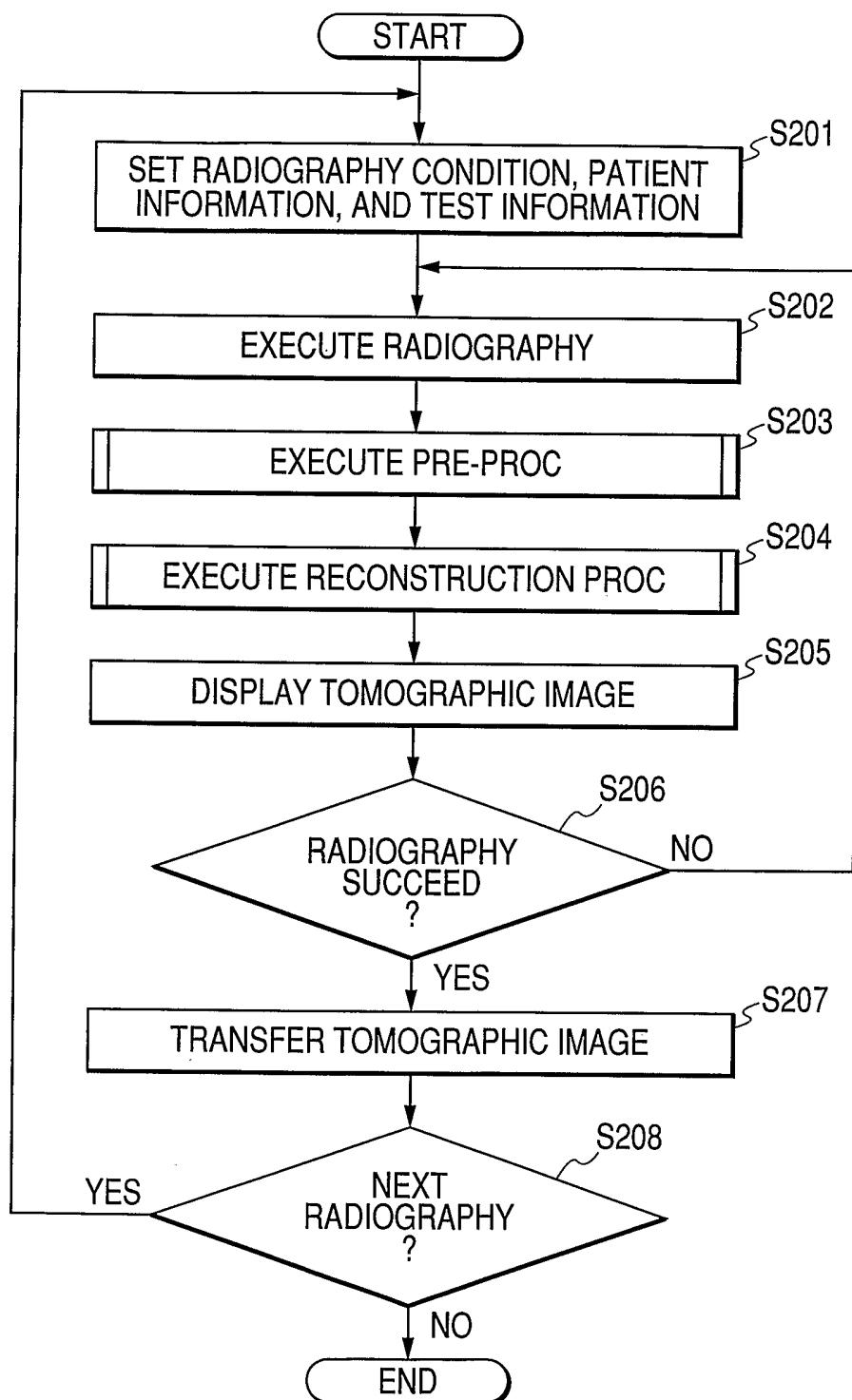


FIG. 3

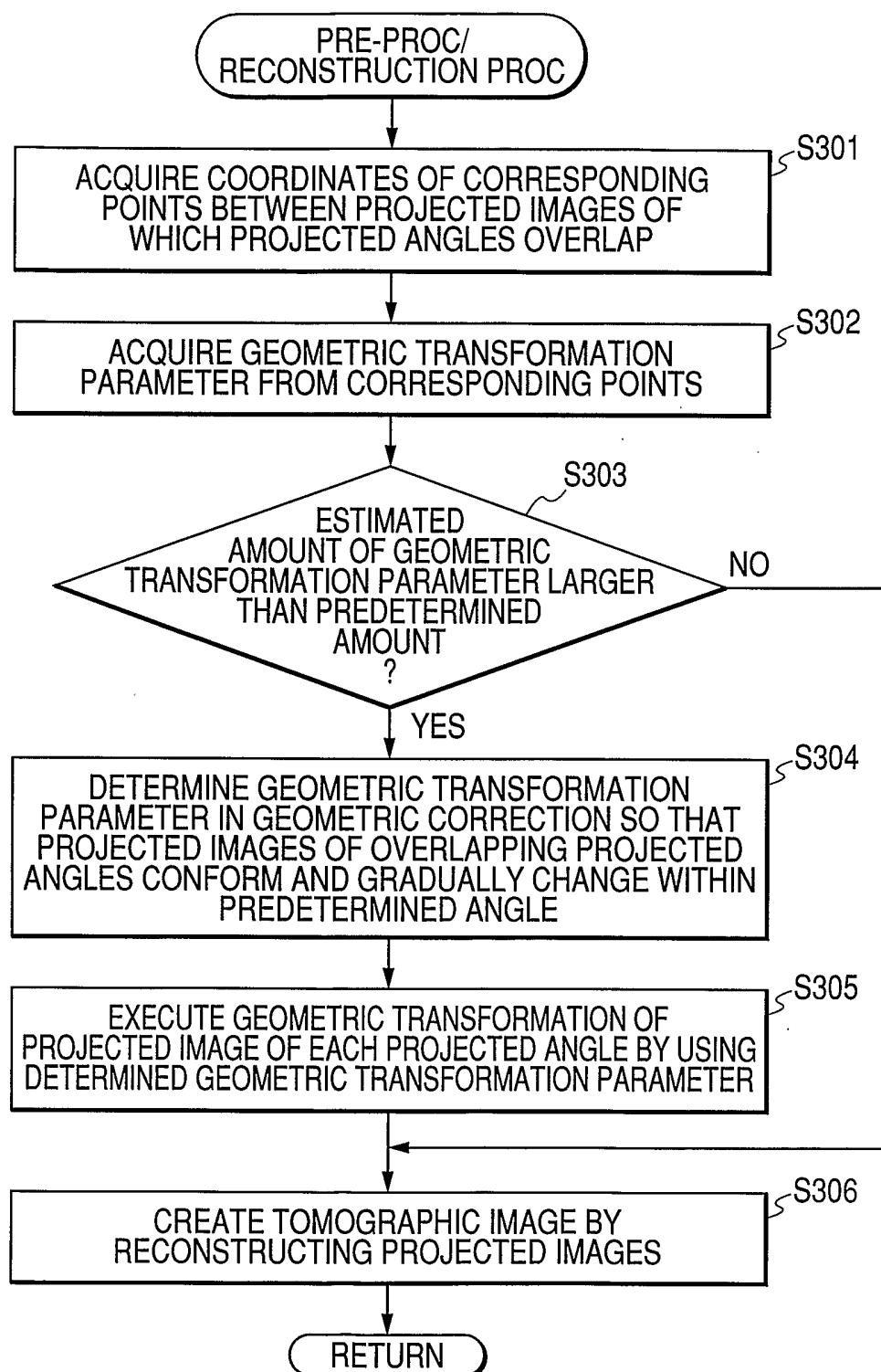


FIG. 4

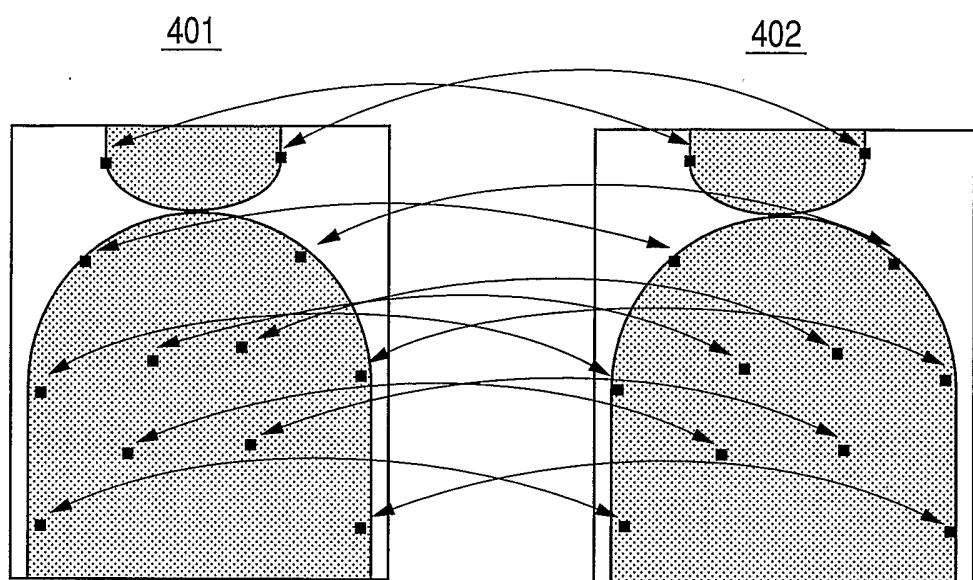
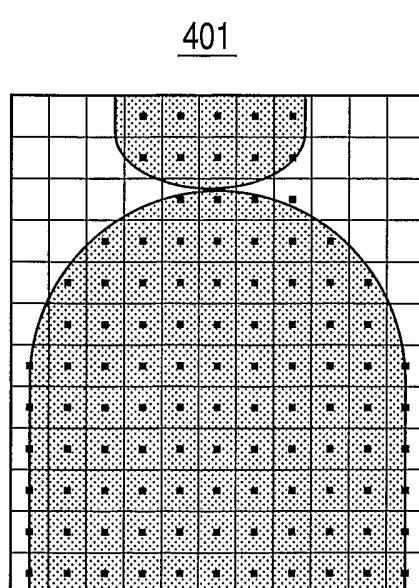


FIG. 5



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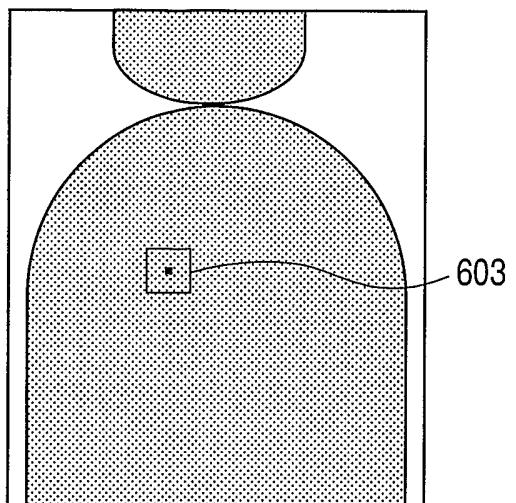
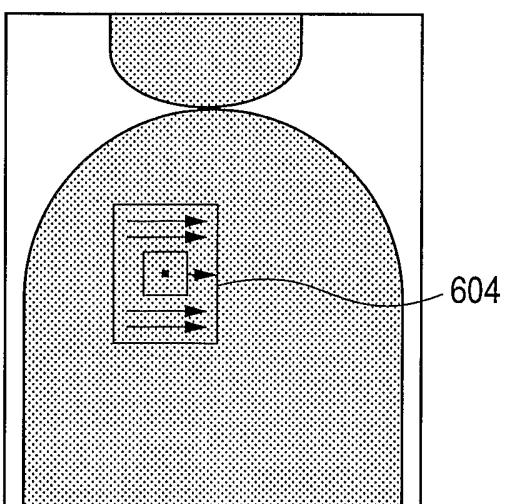
*FIG. 6A*401*FIG. 6B*402

FIG. 7

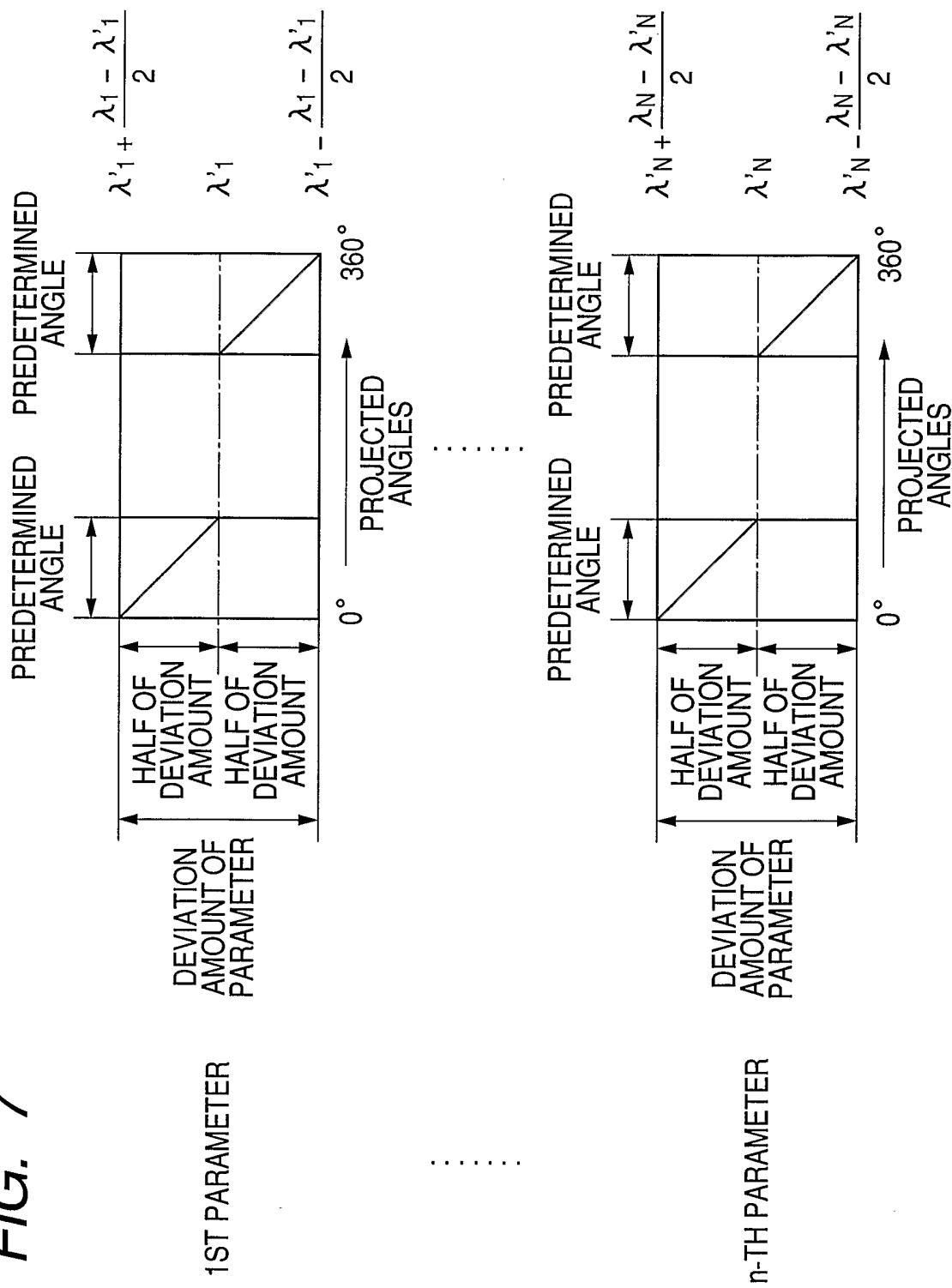


FIG. 8

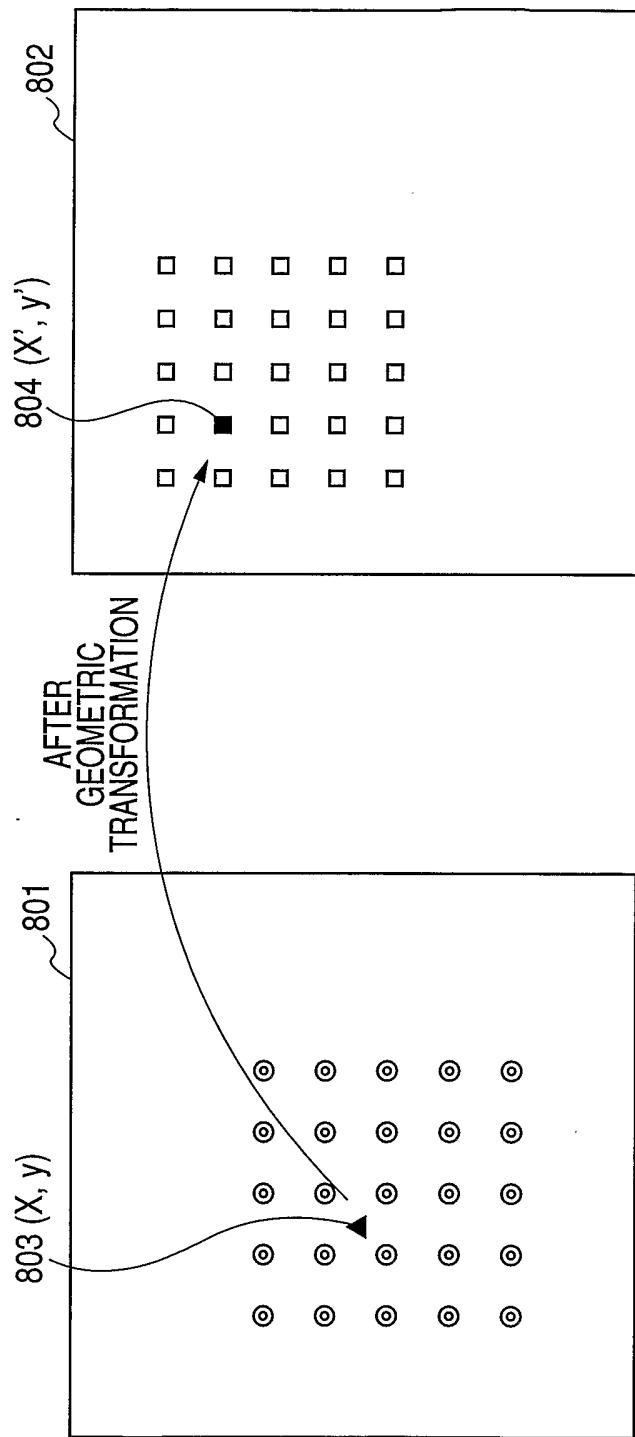
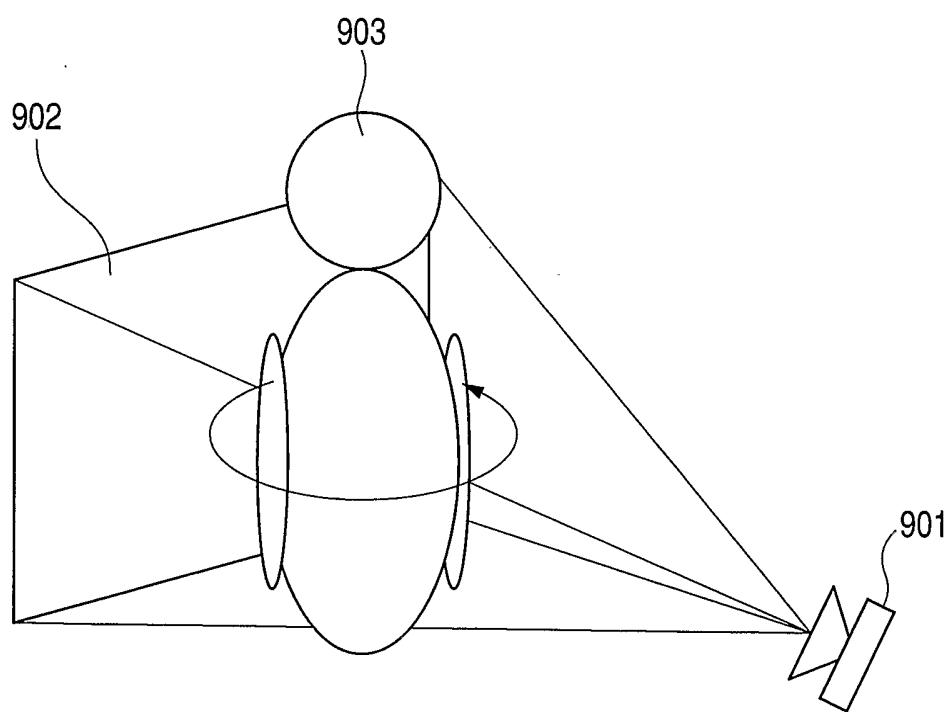
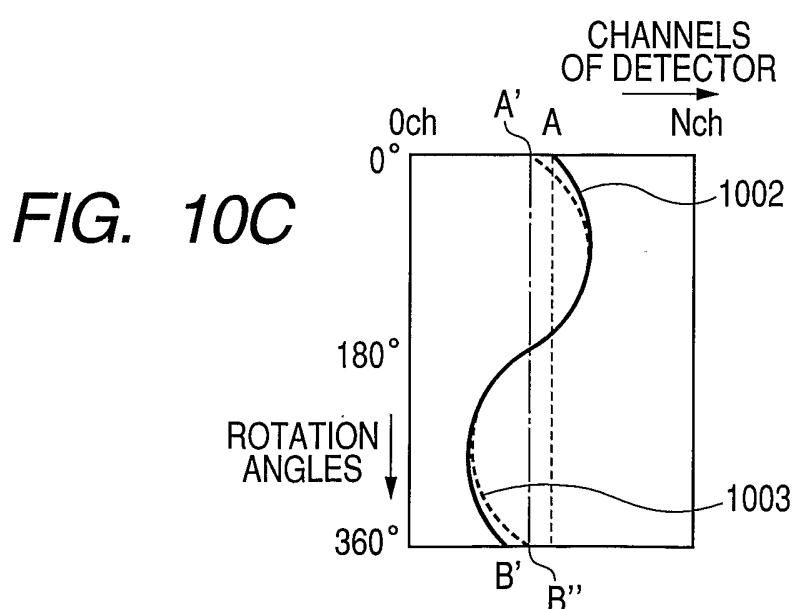
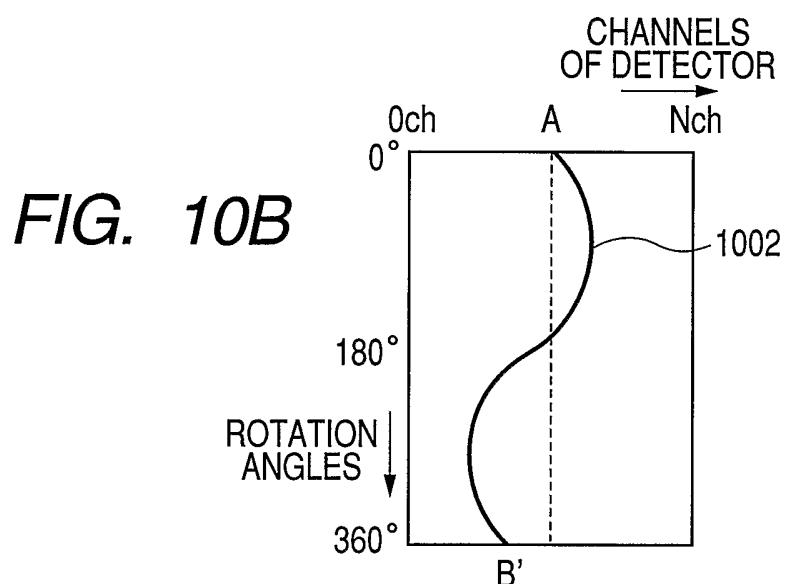
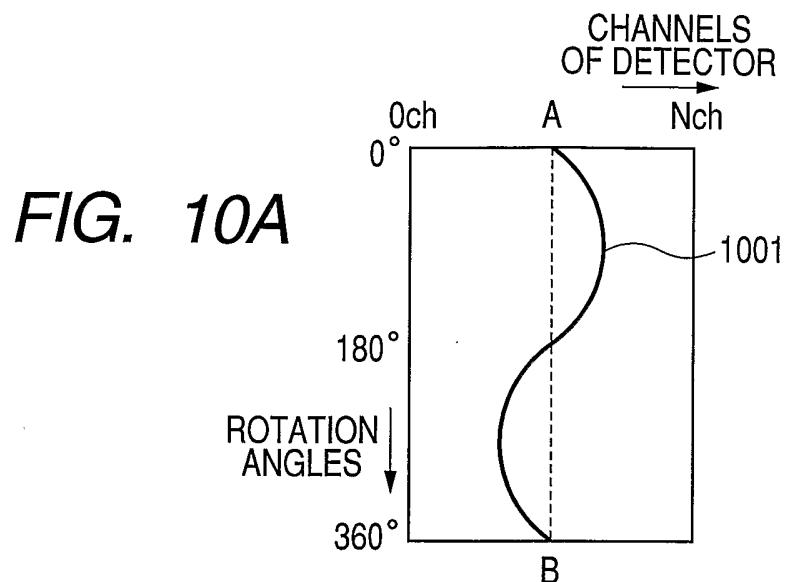


FIG. 9



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/JP2005/008817

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int.Cl.⁷ A61B6/03

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Int.Cl.⁷ A61B6/00-6/14

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Published examined utility model applications of Japan 1922-1996

Published unexamined utility model applications of Japan 1971-2005

Registered utility model specifications of Japan 1996-2005

Published registered utility model applications of Japan 1994-2005

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
P, A	JP 2005-137472 A (Canon KK) 2005.06.02, whole document (Family: none)	1-13

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

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"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

01.08.2005

Date of mailing of the international search report

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