

LD 双端泵浦高功率声光调 Q Tm:YAP 激光器

袁振, 令维军*, 陈晨, 王翀, 杜晓娟, 王文婷, 薛婧雯, 董忠**

天水师范学院激光技术研究所, 甘肃 天水 741000

摘要 以两个 65 W 的 793 nm 激光二极管(LD)作为泵浦源,采用 U 型谐振腔结构进行高功率声光调 Q 运转实验研究。采用三种 *b* 轴切割的板条状镀金 Tm:YAP 晶体作为增益介质,分析比较三种增益介质和不同腔参数组合对激光输出性能的影响。当最大泵浦功率为 130 W 时,连续激光输出的最大功率为 42.5 W,斜率效率为 42.5%。经过声光(AO)调制后,当重复频率为 10 kHz 时,调 Q 激光的最大平均输出功率为 33.2 W,脉冲宽度为 200 ns。将重复频率提高至 40 kHz 时,获得最短脉冲宽度为 64 ns,相应平均功率为 30 W,中心波长为 1944 nm 的激光输出。采用 MATLAB 软件仿真输出脉冲激光光斑的三维能量分布,光斑能量呈典型的高斯分布,可见光束质量较好。高功率 Tm:YAP 激光器可作为 3~5 μm 中红外光学参量振荡器的泵浦源,在众多领域具有良好的应用前景和巨大的发展潜力。

关键词 激光器; 激光二极管(LD); Tm:YAP 晶体; 声光 Q 开关

中图分类号 TN248.1

文献标志码 A

doi: 10.3788/CJL202148.0501018

1 引言

2 μm 中红外激光处于人眼安全区域波段,损伤阈值是 0.4~1.4 μm 波段激光的 2000 倍,且处于大气的弱吸收带,因此被广泛应用于大气环境气体检测、医学临床诊断、激光手术以及光通信等领域,是近几年中红外波段激光的研究热点^[1-4]。同时 2 μm 波段激光对大气和烟雾的渗透力强,具有大气消光比低的优点,因此也被广泛应用于相干多普勒测风激光雷达、3D 扫描雷达和无扫描式激光三维成像雷达等军事领域^[5-8]。尤其是高重复频率、高功率的 2 μm 脉冲激光在定向红外干扰、热寻踪或红外焦平面阵列成像、光电对抗、激光隐藏等方面的应用广泛^[9-11]。近几年随着军用光电探测器的不断升级和性能的提升,光电探测系统已经逐渐覆盖到 3~5 μm 和 8~12 μm 中远红外波段,对大功率泵浦光源需求旺盛,为实现这些波段的激光输出,最为有效的办法是用 2 μm 大功率激光器作为泵浦源,通过

光学参量振荡器(OPO)技术来获得这些波段的可调谐激光^[12-15]。

Tm:YAP 晶体是负双轴晶体,具有自然双折射的特性,可通过消除热引起的双折射损耗来提升自身承受泵浦功率的能力,在腔内没有插入偏振器的情况下就可以输出线偏振光。该晶体的发射截面是 Tm:YAG 的 2 倍,具有机械强度大、导热性好、硬度大等特点,因此 Tm:YAP 晶体适用于高功率激光运转^[16-17],尤其是板条 Tm:YAG 激光器支持更高功率运转^[18-19],通常采用电光调 Q 或声光调 Q 技术获得高功率、高重复频率的纳秒脉冲激光。自 1997 年 Elder 等^[20]首次在室温下实现 Tm:YAP 激光连续运转以来,学者们就开始了对其脉冲产生的研究。2008 年 Cai 等^[21]首次采用声光调 Q 技术实现了 Tm:YAP 的调 Q 运转,最大输出功率为 2 W。2015 年,哈尔滨工程大学报道了一种声光调 Q Tm:YAP 拉曼激光器,在重复频率为 1 kHz 时,获得了最大输出功率为 880 mW,最大单脉冲能量为

收稿日期: 2020-10-28; 修回日期: 2020-11-21; 录用日期: 2020-12-28

基金项目: 国家重点研发计划(2017YFB0405204)、国家自然科学基金(11774257, 61564008)、甘肃省高等学校产业支撑计划项目(2020C-23)、天水师范学院研究生创新引导项目(TYCX2035)

* E-mail: wjlingts@sina.com; ** E-mail: dz0212@foxmail.com

0.88 mJ, 脉冲宽度为 400 ns 的激光^[22]。2019 年, 长春理工大学报道了 795 nm LD 双端泵浦 Tm:YAP 声光调 Q 激光器, 在重复频率为 1 kHz 时, 实现了最大平均功率为 16 W, 最窄脉冲宽度为 38.04 ns, 中心波长为 1.99 μm 的激光输出, 相应的斜率效率为 29.42%^[23]; 2020 年该研究小组又采用电光调 Q 技术在 10 kHz 的重复频率下获得了最大平均功率为 21.96 W 的调 Q 输出^[24]。综上所述, 开展 Tm:YAP 高功率调 Q 激光器相关研究可为中远红外光学参量振荡器提供理想的抽运源^[25-26]。目前, Tm:YAP 激光晶体损伤阈值的局限性以及高功率下严重的热效应等问题, 使得调 Q 脉冲输出功率一般都低于 30 W。因此, 获得大于 30 W 高重复频率的调 Q 脉冲输出是具有挑战性的课题。

本文对 LD 双端抽运高功率声光调 Q 板条 Tm:YAP 激光器的输出特性进行了实验研究, 将三种 *b* 轴切割的不同长度和掺杂浓度的镀金板条 Tm:YAP 晶体作为激光增益介质, 并对三种晶体参数下的输出激光性能进行对比分析; 重点分析了腔长、输出镜的透过率以及不同曲率半径腔镜组合等因素对输出激光参数的影响。当泵浦功率为 130 W 时, 获得了最大输出功率为 42.5 W 的连续激光, 相应的光-光转换效率为 32.7%, 斜率效率为 42.5%。当腔内加入声光调 Q 晶体, 在 10, 20, 30, 40 kHz 重复频率下, 调 Q 脉冲的最大平均输出功率分别为 33.2, 32.5, 32, 30 W, 对应的脉冲宽度分别为 200, 120, 94, 64 ns。

2 实验装置

LD 双端泵浦高功率 Tm:YAP 声光调 Q 激光器实验装置如图 1 所示, 泵浦源采用中心波长为 793 nm, 最大输出功率为 65 W 的光纤耦合输出的半导体激光器, 其纤芯的芯径为 200 μm , 数值孔径

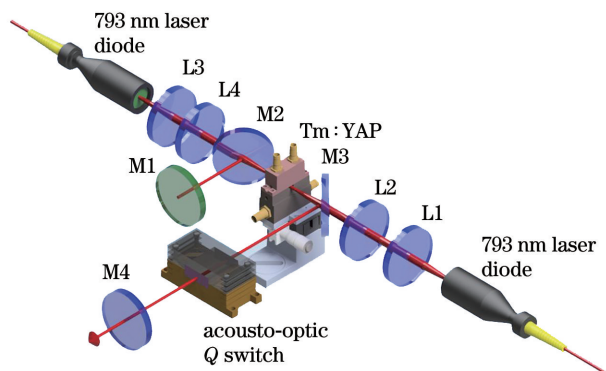


图 1 声光调 Q Tm:YAP 激光器的实验装置

Fig. 1 Setup of acoustic-optic Q-switched Tm:YAP laser

为 0.22。实验采用“U”型谐振腔结构。L1 和 L3 是焦距 $f_{1,3} = 25$ mm 的平凸透镜, L2 和 L4 是焦距 $f_{2,4} = 100$ mm 的平凸透镜, L1 和 L2 构成激光器左端准直聚焦系统, L3 和 L4 构成右端准直聚焦系统, 其扩束比均为 1:4。左端泵浦光经过 L1 和 L2 准直聚焦到 Tm:YAP 晶体靠近左端 1/3 处, 右端泵浦光经过 L3 和 L4 准直聚焦到 Tm:YAP 晶体靠近右端 1/3 处, 这种双向泵浦机制避免了晶体中心增益太大、两端增益太小的弊端, 使整个晶体增益分布相对均匀。M1 是曲率半径 R_1 为 200 mm 或 300 mm 的平凹镜, M2 和 M3 均为 45° 平面泵浦镜, 双面均镀增透膜, 对 793 nm 抽运光的透过率大于 99%, 单面镀高反膜, 对 1900~2100 nm 振荡光的反射率大于 99.9%, 利用 M2 和 M3 使振荡腔形成 U 型结构, 方便双向泵浦。M4 是曲率半径 R_4 分别为 130, 150, 200, 300 mm, 透过率 T_4 分别为 20%、30%、35% 的平凹输出耦合镜(OC)。实验采用 *b* 轴切割的三种不同长度和掺杂浓度的 Tm:YAP 晶体作为激光增益介质, 三种晶体的参数分别为: 1) 掺杂浓度(原子数分数, 下同)为 3%, 尺寸为 1 mm × 6 mm × 16 mm; 2) 掺杂浓度为 3%, 尺寸为 2 mm × 6 mm × 16 mm; 3) 掺杂浓度为 2%, 尺寸为 1.5 mm × 6 mm × 30 mm。晶体的两端面均镀有 793 nm 和 1.94 μm 的高透膜, 为了便于散热, 晶体上下散热面均镀金膜, 这种镀金板条设计大大缓解了晶体的热透镜效应, 更适合高功率激光泵浦。为了有效减少激光运转时晶体中产生的热透镜效应, 将晶体用铝箔包裹后放在紫铜水冷热沉上, 并对晶体进行恒温冷却, 水温控制在 10 °C 左右。本实验采用的恒温水冷循环设备(HX-2050, 北京博医康实验仪器有限公司生产)控制精度为 ± 0.2 °C。AO 是声光 Q 开关(SGQ41-2000-2QB, 中国电子科技集团第二十六研究所研制), 其由声光调 Q 晶体和驱动电源两部分组成, 通光孔径为 4 mm, 工作频率为 (40.68 ± 0.1) MHz, 工作波长为 (2000 ± 100) nm, 声光介质为石英晶体, 在 1940 nm 波段透过率大于 99.2%, 在进行声光调 Q 实验时, 也需要对调 Q 晶体进行水冷散热。采用水冷恒温循环设备(HX-1050, 北京博医康实验仪器有限公司生产)将温度控制在 12 °C 左右。该声光 Q 开关具有关断能力强、重复频率高、开关速度快、结构紧凑、功耗低、机械稳定性好等优点。

3 分析与讨论

在实验中, 首先采用 *b* 轴切割, 将掺杂浓度为

3%, 尺寸为 $1\text{ mm} \times 6\text{ mm} \times 16\text{ mm}$ 的晶体作为激光增益介质进行连续光实验。实验中 M1 为 $R_1 = 200\text{ mm}$ 的平凹镜, M4 为 $R_4 = 150\text{ mm}$, 透过率 $T_4 = 20\%$ 的输出耦合镜。连续光的输出功率随泵浦功率的变化曲线如图 2 所示, 其出光阈值为 22 W 。由输出功率曲线可知: 随着泵浦功率的增大, 光-光转换效率逐渐增大; 当泵浦功率为 64 W 时, 连续光输出功率为 14 W , 斜率效率为 30.6% ; 但当泵浦功率增加到 65 W 时晶体发生脆裂。仔细分析了晶体脆裂原因后认为, 对于厚度仅为 1 mm 的晶体, 抽运光产生的热在晶体表面和内部形成了很强的温度梯度和应力梯度, 因此当抽运功率很高时, 晶体很易沿着晶体解理方向脆裂。

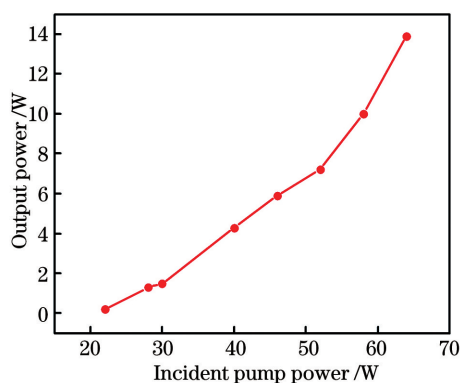


图 2 $1\text{ mm} \times 6\text{ mm} \times 16\text{ mm}$ 的 Tm:YAP 晶体激光器连续光输出功率随泵浦功率的变化曲线

Fig. 2 Continuous-wave output power changed with pump power in Tm:YAP laser with the size of $1\text{ mm} \times 6\text{ mm} \times 16\text{ mm}$

由于厚度为 1 mm 的 Tm:YAP 晶体在高功率激光泵浦下易发生脆裂, 将其更换为沿 b 轴切割, 掺杂浓度为 3% , 尺寸为 $2\text{ mm} \times 6\text{ mm} \times 16\text{ mm}$ 的 Tm:YAP 晶体再次进行连续光实验。为了避免振荡光斑太小, 实验中采用 M1 为 $R_1 = 300\text{ mm}$ 的平凹镜, M4 输出耦合镜采用曲率半径 R_4 为 $130, 150, 200\text{ mm}$, 对应的输出镜透过率 T_4 分别为 $30\%, 20\%$ 和 35% 。经过不同曲率半径的 M1 镜和 M4 镜组合, 最终发现当输出耦合镜 M4 的曲率半径 $R_4 = 150\text{ mm}$ 且透过率为 20% 时, 输出激光性能最佳。接下来, 进一步优化 U 型谐振腔腔长。由于不同腔长对应不同的振荡光斑, 进而影响模式匹配和输出功率, 因此实验研究了不同腔长的输出激光特性。由于实验中采用了非对称的谐振腔结构, 因此存在两个稳区, 在一个稳区向另一个稳区过渡时会出现功率下降甚至不出光的现象。如图 3 所示, 当泵浦光的泵浦功率在 $60 \sim 90\text{ W}$ 之间, 输出功率出现下降,

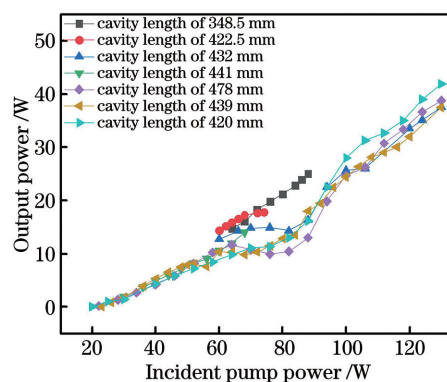


图 3 不同腔长下 Tm:YAP 激光器连续光输出功率随泵浦功率的变化曲线

Fig. 3 Continuous-wave output power changed with pump power in Tm:YAP laser with different cavity length

有些腔长对应的输出功率急剧下降, 甚至出现激光器不出光的现象, 但随着泵浦功率进一步增大, 激光运转进入第二稳区, 晶体中热焦距随着泵浦功率的增大而变短, 对应的振荡光斑开始增大, 与泵浦光模式的匹配更加合理, 输出功率呈近似线性增加。相比较而言, 腔长为 420 mm 时输出激光性能更为理想, 出光阈值低至 20 W , 最大输出功率为 41.8 W , 对应的斜率效率为 38.1% 。

最后, 使用沿 b 轴切割, 掺杂浓度为 2% , 尺寸为 $1.5\text{ mm} \times 6\text{ mm} \times 30\text{ mm}$ 的 Tm:YAP 晶体, 端镜 M1 为 $R_1 = 300\text{ mm}$ 的平凹镜, M4 输出镜曲率半径 R_4 为 $130, 150, 200\text{ mm}$, 对应的输出透过率 T_4 分别为 $30\%, 20\%$ 和 35% 。采用不同透过率的输出镜时, 连续激光的输出功率与泵浦功率的关系如图 4 所示。实验结果表明, 采用曲率半径 $R_4 = 200\text{ mm}$ 且输出镜透过率 $T_4 = 20\%$ 的 M4 时输出激光性能最好。当泵浦功率为 130 W 时, 获得连续光

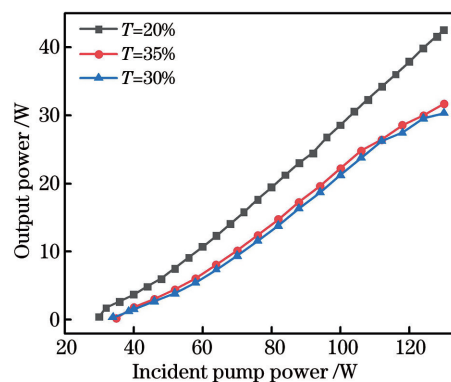


图 4 不同透过率下 Tm:YAP 激光器连续光输出功率随泵浦功率的变化关系

Fig. 4 Relationship between continuous-wave output power and pump power of Tm:YAP laser with different transmissivities

的最大输出功率为 42.5 W, 光-光转换效率为 32.7%, 斜率效率为 42.5%。

综合以上三种晶体, 发现采用尺寸为 1.5 mm×6 mm×30 mm 的镀金板条 Tm:YAP 晶体作为增益介质时输出激光性能最好, 基于对板条 Tm:YAP 激光器的热透镜及腔模理论的分析^[27-28], 30 mm 的晶体长度保证了约 78% 的泵浦光吸收效率, 低的掺杂浓度有效降低了热透镜效应, 更有利于高功率激光运转, 实验结果表明不仅输出功率增长平稳, 而且斜率效率最高, 因此选用连续光输出功率最大时对应的腔参数组合进行调 Q 实验。如图 1 所示, 将声光调 Q 晶体插入到 M3 与输出镜 OC 之间, 首先测量了连续光输出功率, 接着研究了重复频率为 10, 20, 30, 40 kHz 时的输出功率和脉冲宽度。从图 5 可以看出, 在腔内插入调 Q 晶体后, 激光振荡阈值变化不大, 当输出调 Q 脉冲功率均为 30 W 时, 重复频率为 10, 20, 30, 40 kHz 分别需要的泵浦功率为 121, 122.5, 124.2, 130 W, 整体相差不大。当泵浦功率为 130 W 时, 在 10, 20, 30,

40 kHz 的重复频率下, 调 Q 脉冲最大平均输出功率为 33.2, 32.5, 32, 30 W, 对应的脉冲宽度分别为 200, 120, 94, 64 ns, 对应的峰值功率分别为 16.6, 13.5, 11.3, 11.7 kW。

当重复频率为 10, 20, 30, 40 kHz 时, 调 Q 脉冲宽度与泵浦功率之间的关系曲线如图 6 所示。可以看到: 在相同的泵浦功率下, 重复频率越高, 对应的输出脉冲宽度越窄。在相同的重复频率下, 脉冲宽度会随着泵浦功率的增加而逐渐变窄。当重复频率为 40 kHz 时, 脉冲宽度整体趋于稳定; 当达到最大泵浦功率时, 获得最窄脉冲宽度(64 ns)。图 7(a) 和图 7(b) 分别为重复频率为 40 kHz 时的典型脉冲序列和最窄脉冲宽度示意图。可以看到, 脉冲宽度并没有随着重复频率的增加而增大, 实验得到了与大多数调 Q 实验结果相反的结果。对主动调 Q 激光器而言, 当调制周期与激光晶体上能级寿命相当时, 可获得最窄脉冲宽度, 这就意味着, 脉冲宽度并不总是随调制频率的增大而变宽。本实验结果表明调制频率与脉冲宽度的关系还处于下降通道。

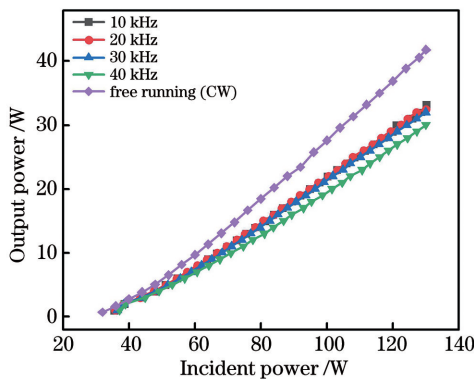


图 5 连续运转和调 Q 运转下输出功率特性曲线

Fig. 5 Output power characteristic curves under continuous operation and Q-switched operation

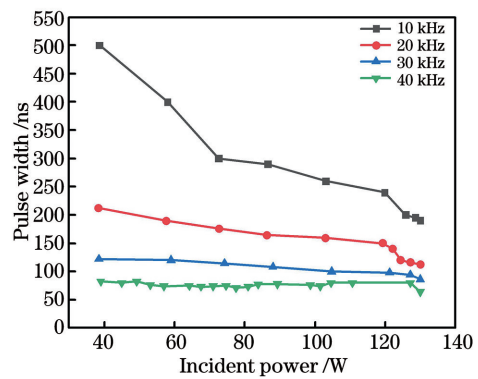


图 6 不同重复频率下脉冲宽度随泵浦功率的变化关系

Fig. 6 Pulse width changed with pump power at different repetition frequencies

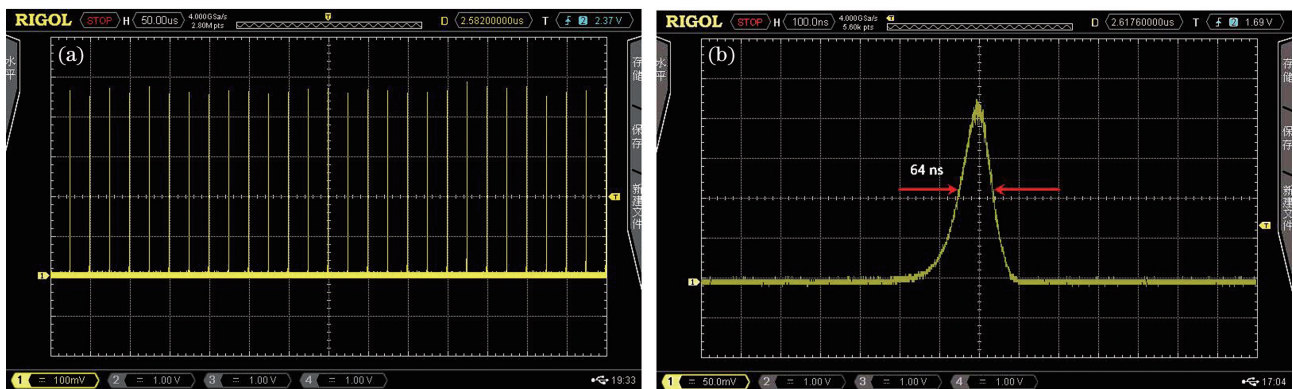


图 7 重复频率为 40 kHz 时的典型脉冲序列和最窄脉冲宽度。(a) 脉冲序列; (b) 64 ns 最窄脉冲宽度的脉冲波形

Fig. 7 Typical pulse train and narrowest pulse width with a repetition rate of 40 kHz. (a) Pulse train; (b) pulse waveform of narrowest pulse width of 64 ns

使用爱万提斯的光谱仪测量激光器输出激光波长,其型号为 NIR256-2.5TEC,输出激光的中心波长为 1944 nm,在整个泵浦波长范围内,光谱中心波长保持不变。为了测量输出激光的光束质量,采集了输出功率为 30 W,重复频率为 40 kHz 时输出激光光斑,然后利用 MATLAB 软件分析输出激光光斑的光束质量,结果如图 8 所示。可以看到,输出脉冲激光的光斑能量近似呈高斯分布,说明光束质量较好。

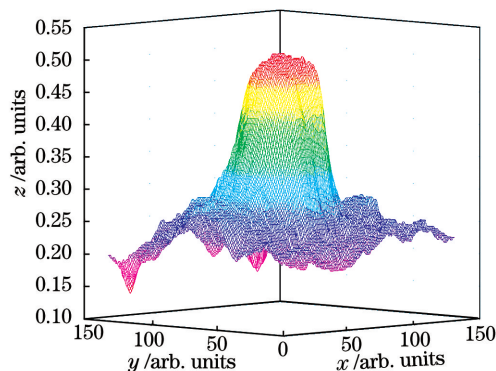


图 8 输出脉冲激光三维能量分布

Fig. 8 Three-dimensional energy distribution of pulse laser

4 结 论

对 LD 双端泵浦高功率声光调 Q Tm:YAP 激光器的输出特性进行了实验研究,首先将三种不同长度和掺杂浓度的镀金板条 Tm:YAP 晶体作为激光增益介质,采用适合于双端泵浦的 U 型腔结构,通过不同透过率和曲率半径的输出耦合镜和不同曲率半径的腔镜组合,研究了 Tm:YAP 连续激光输出特性。实验结果表明,采用掺杂浓度为 2%,尺寸为 1.5 mm×6 mm×30 mm 的镀金板条 Tm:YAP 晶体作为增益介质时,输出激光特性最好,不仅输出效率高,而且输出功率平滑稳定。当 LD 泵浦功率为 130 W 时,连续光的最大输出功率为 42.5 W,光-光转换效率为 32.7%,斜率效率高达 42.5%。在连续激光运转实验获得最佳激光参数后,进一步对调 Q 激光器输出特性进行研究。当泵浦功率为 130 W 时,获得了最大平均输出功率为 33.2 W,最窄脉冲宽度为 64 ns,最高峰值功率为 16.6 kW,中心波长为 1944 nm 的脉冲激光。在接下来的实验中,通过进一步优化谐振腔参数,提高泵浦功率到 160 W,改变输出镜的透过率等方式,有望获得 40 W 的调 Q 激光输出。由于 2 μm 高功率激光器泵浦的 ZGP-OPO 弥补了 1.06 μm 泵浦 PPLN 晶

体在 4.3 μm 处的吸收损耗,且在该波段增益高,因此可作为中远红外光学参量激光器的泵浦源,在生产 3~5 μm 和 8~12 μm 中红外激光脉冲中具有良好的应用前景。

参 考 文 献

- [1] Chen T Y. Research of LD end-pumped Q-switched Tm:YAP slab laser [D]. Changchun: Changchun University of Science and Technology, 2019: 9-10.
陈天宇. LD 端面抽运板条 Tm:YAP 调 Q 激光器研究[D]. 长春: 长春理工大学, 2019: 9-10.
- [2] Sun R, Chen C, Ling W J, et al. Dual-wavelength passively Q-switched mode-locked Tm:LuAG laser operating at 2017 nm and 2029 nm [J]. Acta Optica Sinica, 2019, 39(12): 1214004.
孙锐, 陈晨, 令维军, 等. 2017 nm 和 2029 nm 双波长调 Q 锁模 Tm:LuAG 激光器 [J]. 光学学报, 2019, 39(12): 1214004.
- [3] Ling W J, Sun R, Chen C, et al. Passively Q-switched mode-locked Tm:LuAG laser with reflective MoS₂ saturable absorber [J]. Chinese Journal of Lasers, 2019, 46(8): 0808002.
令维军, 孙锐, 陈晨, 等. 基于反射式 MoS₂ 可饱和吸收体调 Q 锁模 Tm:LuAG 激光器 [J]. 中国激光, 2019, 46(8): 0808002.
- [4] Sorokin E, Sorokina I T, Mandon J, et al. Sensitive multiplex spectroscopy in the molecular fingerprint 2.4 μm region with a Cr²⁺:ZnSe femtosecond laser [J]. Optics Express, 2007, 15(25): 16540-16545.
- [5] Wei L, Hu X H, Han L, et al. Laser diode-dual-end-pumped Tm:YAP laser [J]. Chinese Journal of Lasers, 2011, 38(5): 0502005.
魏磊, 胡学浩, 韩隆, 等. 激光二极管双端抽运 Tm:YAP 激光器 [J]. 中国激光, 2011, 38(5): 0502005.
- [6] Cai J, Ding Y. High power double-end-pumped Tm:YAP slab laser [J]. Electro-Optic Technology Application, 2017, 32(2): 9-14.
蔡军, 丁宇. 高功率双端抽运 Tm:YAP 板条激光器 [J]. 光电技术应用, 2017, 32(2): 9-14.
- [7] Wen Y, Li T Y, He Q F, et al. Laser-diode dual-end-pumped electro-optic Q-switched slab Tm:YAP laser [J]. Infrared Physics & Technology, 2020, 105: 103215.
- [8] Song X D. Research on LD high repetition frequency Tm:YAP Q-switched laser [D]. Changchun: Changchun University of Science and Technology, 2014: 6-11.
宋雪迪. LD 抽运高重复频率 Tm:YAP 调 Q 激光器的研究[D]. 长春: 长春理工大学, 2014: 6-11.
- [9] Meng P B, Yao B Q, Li G, et al. Comparison of

- RTP electro-optic Q-switch and acousto-optic Q-switch in Tm, Ho:GdVO₄ laser[J]. Laser Physics, 2011, 21(2): 348-351.
- [10] Cole B, Goldberg L, Hays A D. High-efficiency 2 μm Tm:YAP laser with a compact mechanical Q-switch[J]. Optics Letters, 2018, 43(2): 170-173.
- [11] Berthomé Q, Grisard A, Faure B, et al. Actively Q-switched tunable single-longitudinal-mode 2 μm Tm:YAP laser using a transversally chirped volume Bragg grating[J]. Optics Express, 2020, 28(4): 5013-5021.
- [12] Wei L, Xiao L, Han L, et al. ZGP optical parametric oscillator pumped by Tm:YAP laser[J]. Chinese Journal of Lasers, 2012, 39(7): 0702006.
魏磊, 肖磊, 韩隆, 等. Tm:YAP 激光抽运 ZGP 晶体光参量振荡器[J]. 中国激光, 2012, 39(7): 0702006.
- [13] Wang L, Yang J W, Cai X W, et al. 2.09 μm nanosecond holmium laser pumped ZnGeP₂ optical parametric oscillator[J]. Chinese Journal of Lasers, 2014, 41(1): 0102008.
王礼, 杨经纬, 蔡旭武, 等. 2.09 μm 纳秒钬激光抽运的磷锗锌光参量振荡器[J]. 中国激光, 2014, 41(1): 0102008.
- [14] Cole B, Goldberg L, Chinn S, et al. Compact and efficient mid-IR OPO source pumped by a passively Q-switched Tm:YAP laser[J]. Optics Letters, 2018, 43(5): 1099-1102.
- [15] Cole B, Goldberg L, Chinn S, et al. Compact and efficient mid-IR OPO source pumped by a passively Q-switched Tm:YAP laser[J]. Optics Letters, 2018, 43(5): 1099-1102.
- [16] Liu C, Zhao S, Li Y, et al. Stable kilo-hertz electro-optically Q-switched Tm, Ho:YAP laser at room temperature[J]. Optics & Laser Technology, 2016, 81: 189-193.
- [17] Li L J, Yao B Q, Wang Z G, et al. Continuous wave and AO Q-switch operation of a b-cut Tm, Ho:YAP laser with dual wavelengths pumped by a laser diode of 792 nm[J]. Laser Physics, 2010, 20(1): 205-208.
- [18] Han L, Yao B Q, Duan X M, et al. High power slab Tm:YAP laser dual-end-pumped by fiber coupled laser diodes[J]. Optical and Quantum Electronics, 2015, 47(5): 1055-1061.
- [19] Cheng X J, Xu J Q, Hang Y, et al. High-power diode-end-pumped Tm:YAP and Tm:YLF slab lasers[J]. Chinese Optics Letters, 2011, 9(9): 091406.
- [20] Elder I F, Payne J. Diode-pumped, room-temperature Tm:YAP laser[J]. Applied Optics, 1997, 36(33): 8606-8610.
- [21] Cai S S, Kong J, Wu B, et al. Room-temperature CW and pulsed operation of a diode-end-pumped Tm:YAP laser[J]. Applied Physics B, 2008, 90(1): 133-136.
- [22] Zhao J Q, Li Y, Zhang S, et al. Diode-pumped actively Q-switched Tm:YAP/BaWO₄ intracavity Raman laser[J]. Optics Express, 2015, 23(8): 10075-10080.
- [23] Wen Y, Zhang H L, Zhang L, et al. 1.99 micron Tm:YAP acousto-optical Q-switch laser[J]. IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering, 2019, 563: 032007.
- [24] Wen Y, Li T Y, He Q F, et al. Laser-diode dual-end-pumped electro-optic Q-switched slab Tm:YAP laser[J]. Infrared Physics & Technology, 2020, 105: 103215.
- [25] Kieleck C, Hildenbrand A, Eichhorn M, et al. OP-GaAs OPO pumped by 2 μm Q-switched lasers: Tm; Ho fiber laser and Ho:YAG laser[J]. Proceedings of SPIE, 2010, 7836: 783607.
- [26] Cai X Y, Wang Y, Li J F, et al. Crystal growth and spectroscopic investigations of Dy:YAlO₃ and Dy, Tm:YAlO₃ crystals for ~3 μm laser application[J]. Journal of Luminescence, 2020, 225: 117328.
- [27] Cheng X J, Fan M, Cao J D, et al. Research on the thermal effect and laser resonator of diode-pumped thin-slab Tm:YAP lasers[J]. Optik, 2019, 176: 32-37.
- [28] Huang H Z, Hu H W, Hu H W, et al. Anisotropic thermal analyses of a high efficiency Tm:YAP slab laser and its intra-cavity pumping for Ho lasers[J]. Optics Express, 2020, 28(14): 20930-20942.

A High-Power LD Double-End-Pumped Acousto-Optic Q-Switched Tm:YAP Laser

Yuan Zhen, Ling Weijun*, Chen Chen, Wang Chong, Du Xiaojuan, Wang Wenting,
Xue Jingwen, Dong Zhong**

Institute of Laser Technology, Tianshui Normal University, Tianshui, Gansu 741000, China

Abstract

Objective The 2- μm mid-infrared laser is located in the weak absorption band of the atmosphere and the safe region of the human eye; thus, it is widely used in atmospheric environmental gas detection, clinical medical diagnosis, laser surgery, optical communication, and other fields. Recently, the 2- μm laser is a research hotspot in mid-infrared lasers. High-peak-power 2- μm pulse lasers are efficient pump sources for mid-infrared lasers using nonlinear frequency down-conversion. Importantly, it can be used as an ideal pump source for the 2.5- μm mid-infrared solid-state lasers such as Cr:ZnSe and Cr:ZnS and the 3–5-, 8–12- μm mid- to far-infrared optical parametric oscillators (OPOs) such as ZnGeP, GaSe, and CdSe. The 3–5- μm band laser can monitor the industrial waste gas and polluted gases and the main light source for optoelectronic countermeasures, which is very important in national military security. The 3–5-, 8–12- μm tunable OPO pump sources produce high-quality tunable mid-infrared band laser, which can be used in petroleum exploitation, atmospheric greenhouse-gas detection, data communication, and laser spectroscopy research. The 3–5- μm band laser mainly uses the acousto-optic Q-switched 2- μm laser as the pump source realized by nonlinear frequency conversion. In this study, we reported a pulsed laser with an output power of 33.2 W, a pulse width of 64 ns, and an adjustable repetition rate, which can help design 3–8- μm OPO pump sources and understand the performance parameters selection for Tm:YAP crystals application.

Methods We used Tm:YAP crystal, acousto-optic Q-switch, and U-shaped resonant cavity as the research objects. Using the cavity design software, we designed the U-shaped resonant cavity and the experimental device, as shown in Figure 1. We used three different specifications of slab-shaped Tm:YAP crystals. We selected and performed a continuous-wave experiment. We obtained the crystal with the highest average output power and the highest slope efficiency and selected the best cavity length. Using the best parameter crystal and the cavity length, we performed the following steps: 1) performing the Q-switching experiment; 2) inserting the acousto-optic Q-switched crystal into the laser resonator; 3) adjusting the output TTL level signal of the function generator; 4) setting the frequency to 10 kHz; 5) connecting the output TTL level signal to the Q-switch driver; 6) setting the adjustable regulated power supply output DC to 24 V; 7) connecting the $I < 3$ A voltage to the driver; 8) adjusting the laser carefully until the output Q-switched signal is stable; 9) measuring the Q-switched pulse signal frequency and pulse width; and 10) continue adjusting the function generator to 20, 30, and 40 kHz TTL level signal. We repeated the aforementioned experimental steps until the best Q-switching parameters were obtained.

Results and Discussions We performed a continuous-wave experiment, in which we found that the crystal's best doping concentration (atom number fraction) is at 2% and size at 1.5 mm \times 6 mm \times 30 mm for the experiment. When the pump power reached 65 W, crystal embrittlement occurs, caused by the heat generated by pumping light to the 1-mm-thick crystal, forming a strong temperature gradient on the crystal's surface and inside it. When the pumping power is high, the stress gradient occurs because the crystal is easy to be brittle along the crystal cleavage direction. Hence, we selected the Tm:YAP crystal with a doping concentration of 2% and a size of 1.5 mm \times 6 mm \times 30 mm. When the M4 radius of curvature $R = 200$ mm and the transmittance of the output mirror $T = 20\%$, the laser output characteristic is the best. Figure 4 shows the output characteristic curve. When the pump power reached 130 W, we obtained the maximum output power of continuous-wave at 42.5 W, the light-to-light conversion efficiency of 32.7%, and the slope efficiency of 42.5%. In the Q-switching experiment, the maximum Q-switched pulse average output power and the pulse width at 10-kHz repetition frequency are 33.2 W and 200 ns, respectively. When the repetition frequency is increased to 40 kHz, we obtained the shortest pulse width at 64 ns, the corresponding average power at 30 W, and the center wavelength at 1944 nm. Figure 6 shows the relationship between the pulse width and the pump power at different repetition frequencies. Compared with the results of most Q-switching experiments, our Q-switching experiment does not increase the pulse width with the repetition frequency increase; hence, we found opposite results. For active Q-switched lasers, the narrowest pulse width can

be obtained when the modulation period is equivalent to the energy level's life on the laser crystal, which means that the pulse width does not always widen with the modulation frequency. This experimental result showed that the relationship between modulation frequency and pulse width is still in the downward path.

Conclusions In this study, we designed a set of pump sources for mid-infrared OPOs. The experimental results showed that the Tm:YAP crystal with a doping concentration of 2% and size of 1.5 mm × 6 mm × 30mm gold-plated lath had the best laser output characteristics: high output efficiency and smooth and stable output power. When the LD pump power reached 130 W, we obtained the maximum output power of continuous-wave at 42.5 W, with the light-to-light conversion efficiency of 32.7%, and the slope efficiency of 42.5%. Furthermore, we studied the output characteristics of the Q-switched laser. When the pump power reached 130 W, we obtained a pulsed laser with a maximum average output power of 33.2 W, a narrowest pulse width of 64 ns, a maximum peak power of 16.6 kW, and a center wavelength of 1944 nm. In the next experiment, it is possible to obtain a Q-switched laser output of 40 W by further optimizing the cavity parameters, increasing the pump power to 160 W, and changing the output mirror's transmittance. The ZGP-OPO pumped by the 2- μm high-power laser compensates for the absorption loss of the 1.06- μm pumped PPLN crystal at 4.3 μm , and the gain is high in this band. The absorption loss of the 1.06- μm pumped PPLN crystal at 4.3 μm is compensated by the 2- μm high-power laser pumped ZGP-OPO, and the gain is high in this band. It can be used as the pump source of mid- to far-infrared OPO laser, and it has broad application prospects in generating 3 - 5-, 8 - 12- μm mid-infrared laser pulses.

Key words lasers; laser diode; Tm:YAP crystal; acousto-optic Q switch

OCIS codes 140.3460; 140.3480; 160.3380; 140.3540