

## 高效率 LD 角侧泵浦 Nd:YAG 电光调 Q 激光器

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**摘要** 实验设计和研究了一种激光二极管(LD)角侧泵浦 Nd:YAG 电光调 Q 激光器,实现了高效率 1064 nm 脉冲激光输出。以低掺杂 Nd:YAG 晶体为增益介质,将 Sm:YAG 吸收材料键合在 Nd:YAG 晶体四周(非激光方向)用于抑制放大自发辐射(ASE)和寄生振荡,将 YAG 晶体键合在 Sm:YAG 晶体上以构成复合板条激光晶体。采用对称角侧泵浦方式直接抽运,泵浦光在复合板条激光晶体中多次全反射,多次被 Nd:YAG 晶体吸收,可用于实现长光程吸收,提高泵浦光吸收效率。在重复频率为 5 Hz、输入电流为 170 A 的条件下,获得了单脉冲能量为 106 mJ、脉宽为 15 ns 的激光输出,光光转换效率为 30.1%,输出能量动静比高达 94.64%。实验结果表明:所设计的复合板条激光晶体结构有效抑制了 ASE 和寄生振荡,所提方法为 1064 nm 调 Q 脉冲激光的高效率输出提供了有效途径。

**关键词** 激光器; Nd:YAG; 电光调 Q; 放大自发辐射

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## 1 引言

激光二极管(LD)泵浦 Nd:YAG 调 Q 激光器的体积小、重量轻、寿命长、转换效率高,输出的 1064 nm 脉冲激光具有峰值功率高、脉宽窄等优点<sup>[1]</sup>,被广泛应用于材料加工、激光雷达和激光测距等领域<sup>[2-4]</sup>。近年来,随着激光技术的发展<sup>[5-6]</sup>,各种应用需求不断增多,对 Nd:YAG 调 Q 激光器效率和输出能量的要求也越来越高。目前,LD 泵浦 Nd:YAG 电光调 Q 激光器的光光转换效率一直保持在 20% 左右。提高激光器光光转换效率可以在相同能量输出条件下,有效减小激光器体积和重量,拓宽其应用范围。

影响 Nd:YAG 调 Q 激光器光光转换效率的因素主要有量子亏损、泵浦光吸收效率、放大自发辐射(ASE)和寄生振荡等<sup>[7]</sup>。量子亏损与泵浦波长和激光发射波长有关,当泵浦源和输出激光波长确定时,能量损失是一定的。提高泵浦光吸收效率可以有效提高激光器输出效率。在 LD 泵浦 Nd:YAG 电光调 Q 固体激光器中,侧面泵浦是获得大能量 1064 nm 调 Q 激光的重要技术手段,但由于吸收效率的限制,光光转换效率较低,在 15% 左右<sup>[8-9]</sup>。端面泵浦的吸收率相较于侧面泵浦较高,但由于受泵浦光束耦合结构的限制,泵浦功率一般不高,输出激光的单脉冲能量较低,一般只

有几十 mJ,光光转换效率在 20% 左右<sup>[10]</sup>。角泵浦方式与以上两种泵浦方式相比,泵浦光吸收效率高,同时可获得大能量的脉冲激光输出<sup>[11]</sup>。Nd:YAG 调 Q 激光器存在能量存储过程,在此过程中有明显的放大自发辐射,容易出现寄生振荡,消耗反转粒子数,降低激光器输出能量。低掺杂增益介质可以降低 ASE 对激光器输出功率和光光转换效率的影响<sup>[10,12]</sup>;在增益介质侧面增加激光吸收材料,可以抑制 ASE、克服寄生振荡,提高激光输出效率<sup>[13-15]</sup>。Huss 等<sup>[16]</sup>利用 Sm:YAG 晶体对 1064 nm 激光具有高吸收率且对 808 nm 泵浦光具有高透过率的特性,将 Sm:YAG 作为 Nd:YAG 陶瓷棒包层,激光输出的光光转换效率相比于未包裹 Sm:YAG 时提高了 10.2%。

本文设计了一种基于复合板条激光晶体的 LD 角侧泵浦 Nd:YAG 电光调 Q 激光器。采用角侧泵浦方式增加了泵浦光吸收光程,实现了泵浦光的高效率吸收,并以低掺杂 Nd:YAG 作为增益介质,在 Nd:YAG 晶体侧面键合 Sm:YAG 晶体,通过抑制 ASE 和寄生振荡,提高了激光器的输出效率。

## 2 实验装置

LD 角侧泵浦 Nd:YAG 电光调 Q 激光器的结构示意图如图 1 所示,其中包括复合板条激光晶体、泵浦

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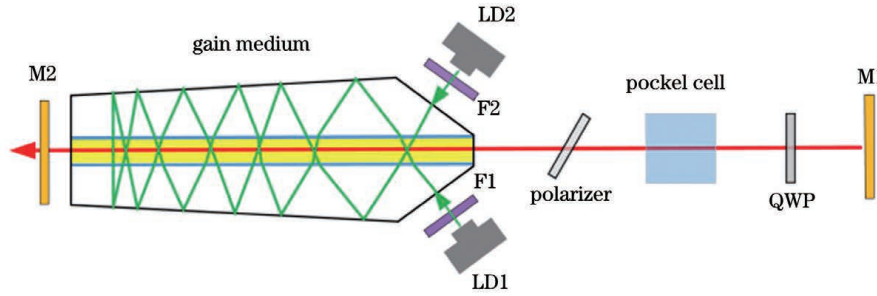


图 1 电光调 Q 激光器的结构图

Fig. 1 Structural diagram of electro-optical Q-switched laser

源(LD1 和 LD2)、快轴准直镜(F1 和 F2)、1064 nm 偏振片、电光调 Q 晶体、1/4 波片(QWP)、全反腔镜(M1)和耦合输出镜(M2)。

半导体堆栈 LD1 和 LD2 的中心波长为 808 nm, 每个堆栈包括 6 个巴条, 巴条间距为 0.73 mm, 整体发光面积为 3.8 mm×10 mm, 单个堆栈的输出最大能量为 340 mJ@5 Hz。快轴准直镜 F1 和 F2 被直接固定在巴条上对泵浦光进行准直处理, 慢轴发散角为 5°, 准直后的泵浦光快轴发散角为 7°。泵浦光垂直入射泵浦面, 直接抽运复合板条激光晶体, 泵浦光源与晶体泵浦面之间的距离约为 0.5 mm, 入射到晶体上的泵浦光斑尺寸约为 3.89 mm×10.06 mm。平面腔镜 M1 上镀有 1064 nm 高反膜, 平面输出镜 M2 的透过率为 70%@1064 nm, M1 和 M2 共同构成激光谐振腔, 腔长为 210 mm。利用偏振片对 1064 nm 激光进行起偏处理以获得线偏振光, 电光调 Q 晶体的两通光面均镀有 1064 nm 增透膜, 1/4 波片用来改变偏振方向。偏振片、电光调 Q 晶体和 1/4 波片共同构成调 Q 系统, 在四分之一波电压为 3700 V 的驱动电压条件下进行调 Q 工作。使用四通道数字延迟/脉冲发生器控制泵浦信号与调 Q 信号间的延时, 实现调 Q 激光脉冲的输出。

所使用的复合板条激光晶体结构如图 2(a)所示, 增益介质为横截面尺寸为 4 mm×4 mm 的掺杂浓度

(原子数分数)为 0.1%的低掺杂 Nd:YAG 晶体。通过降低 Nd:YAG 晶体的增益密度, 减小 ASE 和寄生振荡的影响; 通过增加晶体吸收长度, 保证泵浦光的高吸收率和激光器输出能量, 提高激光器光光转换效率。1 mm 厚的掺杂浓度(原子数分数)为 3%的 Sm:YAG 晶体被键合在 Nd:YAG 晶体四周(非激光方向)用于抑制 ASE 和寄生振荡, 未掺杂的 YAG 晶体被键合在 Sm:YAG 晶体上用于增加泵浦光吸收光程和散热。3 μm 厚的 SiO<sub>2</sub> 膜被制备在 Sm:YAG 和 YAG 晶体的键合表面, 减少泵浦光在晶体和空气之间界面上的反射损失。复合板条激光晶体的总长度为 70 mm。泵浦光从复合板条激光晶体的角面入射, 其传输路径如图 2(b)所示, 泵浦光被限制在复合板条激光晶体内传输, 经过切角为 θ<sub>r</sub> 的长侧面多次全反射, 随着反射次数的增多, 反射角度逐渐减小, 在经历一定次数的反射后折返回来。泵浦光多次经过增益介质, 实现了长光程吸收。在复合板条激光晶体结构中, 与 z 方向的切角为 θ<sub>i</sub> 的短侧面作为泵浦光入射面, 镀有 808 nm 增透膜; 与 z 方向切角为 θ<sub>r</sub> 的长侧面作为泵浦光反射面, 镀有 808 nm 高反膜。增益介质前后端面镀有 1064 nm 增透膜。复合板条激光晶体上下大面均覆盖一层铝箔, 被夹在两个水冷铝热沉之间进行冷却, 水温控制在常温 25 °C。

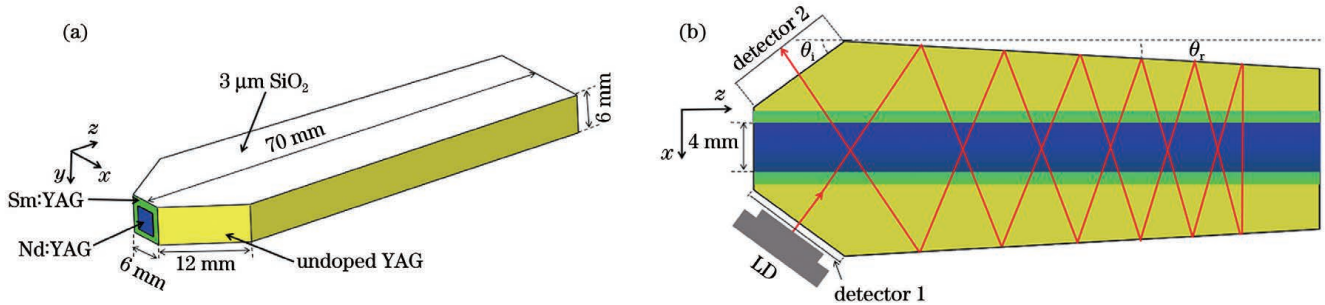


图 2 复合晶体结构图及其内部的光传输路径。(a)复合板条激光晶体的结构图;(b)泵浦光的传输路径示意图

Fig. 2 Structural diagram of composite crystal and internal optical transmission path. (a) Structural diagram of composite slab laser crystal; (b) schematic of pump light transmission path

泵浦光从复合板条激光晶体角面入射, 多次被 Nd:YAG 晶体吸收, 泵浦光的光强<sup>[17]</sup>变化为

$$I = I_0 \exp(-\alpha L), \quad (1)$$

式中:  $I_0$  为泵浦光入射到 Nd:YAG 晶体内部之前的光强;  $I$  为泵浦光在 Nd:YAG 晶体中传输距离  $L$  之后的光强;  $\alpha$  为 Nd:YAG 晶体对泵浦光的吸收系数。掺杂浓

度(原子数分数)为 0.1% 的 Nd:YAG 晶体对波长为 808 nm 的泵浦光的吸收系数为  $0.07 \text{ mm}^{-1}$ , 泵浦光经过 Nd:YAG 晶体 13 次, 总吸收长度大于 52 mm, 根据式(1)模拟计算的泵浦吸收效率达到 97.4% 以上。

基于光线追迹法, 使用模拟软件 Zemax 的非序列模式对泵浦光的吸收效率和泵浦均匀性进行分析。复合板条激光晶体泵浦面的切角  $\theta_i$  越小, 增益介质长度越小; 全反射面切角  $\theta_r$  越小, 泵浦光反射次数越多。最终确定复合板条激光晶体泵浦面切角  $\theta_i$  为  $36^\circ$ , 泵浦光全反射面切角  $\theta_r$  为  $3^\circ$ 。使用 Zemax 软件分析复合板条激光晶体的泵浦光吸收效率, 如图 2(b) 所示, 在一个泵浦面上放置一个二极管激光器组, 探测器 1 的测量泵浦功率为 1 W, 在另一个泵浦面上放置探测器 2, 测量的剩余泵浦功率为 0.004 W, 泵浦光的吸收效率达到 99.6%, 这一结果与根据式(1)模拟计算的泵浦吸收效率基本一致。使用模拟软件 Zemax 中的体探测器测量泵浦光吸收通量分布, Nd:YAG 晶体中心截面的泵浦光吸收通量分布如图 3 所示。不均匀度

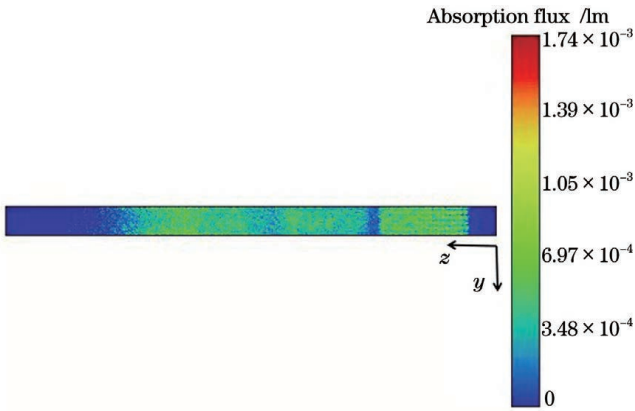


图 3 Nd:YAG 晶体中心截面上的泵浦光吸收通量分布  
Fig. 3 Absorption flux distribution of pump light on central cross-section of Nd:YAG crystal

定义为最大吸收功率密度与最小吸收功率密度的比值<sup>[18]</sup>, 取增益介质横截面为  $xy$  平面, 使用体探测器测量泵浦吸收功率分布, 测量的最大吸收功率密度为  $7.2 \text{ W/mm}^2$ , 最小吸收功率密度为  $6 \text{ W/mm}^2$ , 不均匀度值为 1.2。

### 3 实验结果

在重复频率为 5 Hz、泵浦脉宽为  $230 \mu\text{s}$  的条件下, 测量激光器自由运转输出和调 Q 脉冲输出, 结果如图 4 所示。首先在实验装置中不插入 1/4 波片, 电光调 Q 晶体不施加驱动电压, 测量激光器自由运转时的输出能量。自由运转输出能量随泵浦电流的增大而呈近似线性增大。在泵浦电流为 180 A 时, 激光器自由运转最大输出单脉冲能量为 124 mJ。然后在实验装置中插入 1/4 波片, 并在电光调 Q 晶体外施加四分之一波脉冲驱动电压, 测量激光器调 Q 脉冲输出能量。在泵浦电流为 180 A 时, 调 Q 输出最大单脉冲能量为 114 mJ, 随着泵浦电流的增大, 调 Q 脉冲激光输出的光光转换效率先增大后减小, 在泵浦电流为 170 A 时, 光光转换效率达到最大 30.1%, 比普通电光调 Q 激光器提高了约 10%<sup>[1,8-11]</sup>。此时, 自由运转输出单脉冲能量为 112 mJ, 调 Q 输出单脉冲能量为 106 mJ, 动静比高达 94.64%。实验结果表明, 在增益介质四周键合 Sm:YAG 吸收层可有效抑制 ASE 和寄生振荡, 在高泵浦能量条件下系统依然保持高的动静比, 为获得高效率、高能量的 1064 nm 脉冲激光提供了有效的方法。同时, 当驱动电流大于 170 A 时, 如 180 A, 调 Q 脉冲激光输出的光光转换效率开始下降, 猜测随着增益介质内部泵浦密度的增加, Sm:YAG 吸收层的厚度不够, 抑制 ASE 的效果减弱。

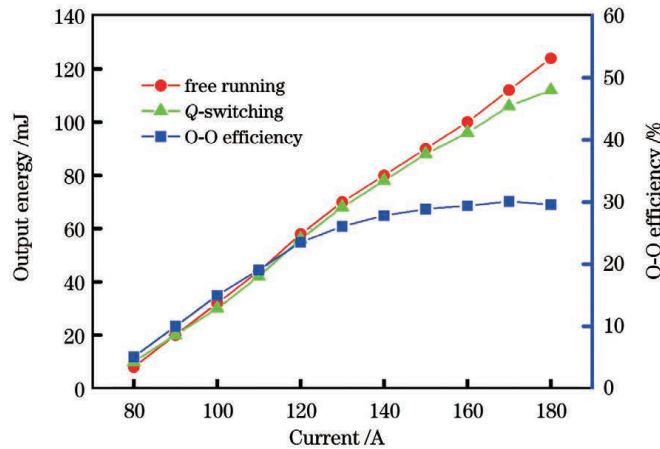


图 4 不同电流下的自由运转和调 Q 输出能量及光光转换效率  
Fig. 4 Output energy under conditions of free running and Q-switching and O-O efficiency

使用示波器和高速响应光电探测器对重复频率为 5 Hz、单脉冲能量为 106 mJ 的 1064 nm 脉冲激光进行测量, 结果如图 5(a) 所示, 输出调 Q 激光脉冲宽度

约为 15 ns。使用楔形镜对重复频率为 5 Hz、单脉冲能量为 106 mJ 的输出激光进行分束取样, 并用焦距为 150 mm 的透镜对取样激光进行聚焦。在焦点两侧多



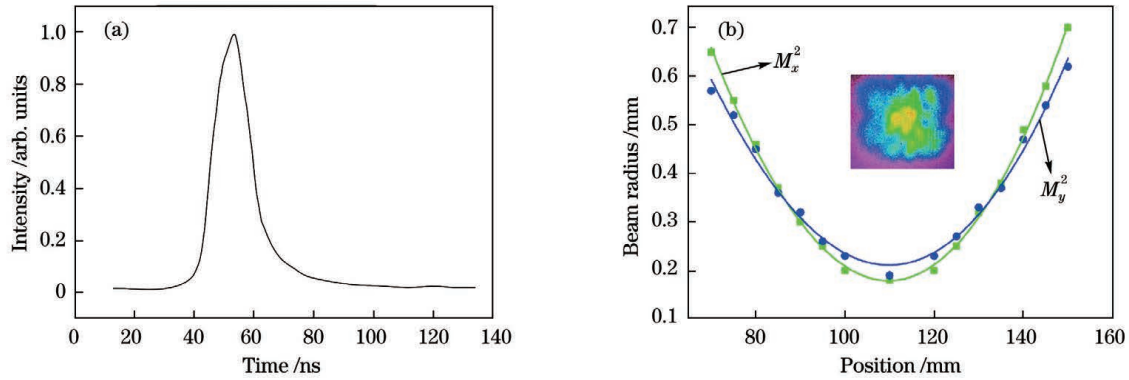


图 5 激光参数测量结果。(a) 输出激光的调 Q 脉冲宽度;(b) 光束质量和远场光斑

Fig. 5 Measurement results of laser parameters. (a) Q-switched pulse width of output laser; (b) beam quality and far-field spot

个位置,使用光束分析仪测量聚焦后的脉冲激光的  $1/e^2$  光束半径,拟合的光束质量结果及远场光斑如图 5(b)所示,光束质量为  $M_x^2=4.43$ ,  $M_y^2=4.79$ 。

## 4 结 论

设计了高效率输出的 Nd:YAG 电光调 Q 激光器。采用复合板条激光晶体结构,芯层为掺杂浓度(原子数分数)为 0.1% 的 Nd:YAG 晶体,四周键合 Sm:YAG 吸收材料,有效抑制了 ASE 和寄生振荡。采用角侧泵浦方式提高了泵浦光的吸收效率。在重复频率为 5 Hz、泵浦脉冲宽度为 230  $\mu$ s 的条件下,获得单脉冲能量为 106 mJ、脉宽为 15 ns 的调 Q 脉冲激光输出,光光转换效率为 30.1%,动静比高达 94.64%。所提方法为获得高效率、高能量的 1064 nm 调 Q 脉冲激光提供了有效途径。

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# High-Efficiency LD Corner-Side-Pumped Nd:YAG Electro-Optical Q-Switched Laser

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## Abstract

**Objective** Laser diode (LD)-pumped neodymium-doped yttrium aluminum garnet (Nd:YAG) Q-switched laser has the advantages of small volume, lightweight, long service life, and high conversion efficiency. It is widely used in material processing, lidar, and laser ranging. Recently, the development of laser technology has necessitated an increase in the efficiency and output energy of Nd:YAG Q-switched laser. Presently, the output optical-to-optical conversion efficiency of LD-pumped Nd:YAG electro-optical Q-switched laser has been maintained at  $\sim 20\%$ . Improving the optical-to-optical conversion efficiency of the laser can effectively reduce the volume and weight of the laser under the same energy output conditions. Various approaches to improve the optical-to-optical conversion efficiency have been reported. One way is to enhance the pump energy absorption. Another way is to reduce energy loss by suppressing amplified spontaneous emission (ASE) and parasitic oscillation to enhance the output optical-to-optical conversion efficiency of Q-switched laser. In this study, we propose a high-efficiency LD corner-side-pumped Nd:YAG electro-optical Q-switched laser using a composite slab laser crystal. By improving the pump light absorption efficiency and suppressing ASE, we improve the output optical-to-optical conversion efficiency of the Nd:YAG electro-optical Q-switched laser. We hope that our research can be helpful in improving the output energy and efficiency of Q-switched solid-state lasers.

**Methods** This study is based on a composite slab laser crystal. First, the gain medium is a Nd:YAG crystal with atomic fraction of 0.1% and cross section size of 4 mm $\times$ 4 mm. Four pieces of Sm:YAG crystals with atomic fraction of 3% and thickness of 1 mm are thermally bonded around the side surfaces of the Nd:YAG crystal to inhibit ASE and parasitic oscillation. Next, undoped YAG bulk crystals are sequentially bonded to the Sm:YAG crystal. Then, we determine the size of the composite slab laser crystal. Note that using an improved corner-side hybrid pump structure achieves a high absorption efficiency for the pump light by crossing through the active media Nd:YAG 13 times. Next, from the ray-tracing method, we analyse the absorption efficiency and pump uniformity of the pump light using the non-sequential mode of ZEMAX simulation software. The electro-optical Q-switched system is used to study the output of the Q-switching experiment. Furthermore, the variation between free output and Q-switched output energy versus input current is studied. The optical-to-optical conversion efficiency of Q-switched output at different input currents and the dynamic-to-static ratio at the highest output efficiency are calculated. Finally, the pulse width, beam quality, and far-field spot of the laser are measured.

**Results and Discussions** The free-running and Q-switched pulse outputs of the laser are measured when the pump pulse width is 230  $\mu$ s and the repetition rate is 5 Hz. When the pump current is 180 A, the laser operates freely and obtains the maximum output single pulse energy of 124 mJ. With the increase in pump current, the output optical-to-optical conversion efficiency of the Q-switched pulse laser increases and then decreases. At the pump current of 170 A, we obtain the highest optical-to-optical efficiency which is 30.1%. Furthermore, the dynamic-to-static ratio is as high as 94.64% (Fig. 4). We detect the Q-switched pulse waveform using a photodetector at an output energy of 106 mJ and the detected pulse width is 15 ns [Fig. 5 (a)]. Additionally, we use a wedge prism to sample the output laser beam with repetition rate of 5 Hz and a single pulse energy of 106 mJ, and the output beam is focused by a lens with a focal length of 150 mm. Also, a charge-coupled device beam analyzer is used to measure the beam quality factor. After the measurement, the beam quality factors of  $M_x^2=4.43$  and  $M_y^2=4.79$  are obtained [Fig. 5 (b)].

**Conclusions** In this paper, we investigate and experimentally design an LD corner-side-pumped Nd:YAG electro-optical Q-switched laser, and we realize a high-efficiency 1064 nm pulse laser output. The use of a novel corner-side hybrid pump structure gives high absorption efficiency of pump light. Furthermore, four pieces of Sm:YAG crystals are bounded around

the active medium Nd:YAG to suppress parasitic oscillation and effectively reduce ASE. Finally, we obtain a single pulse energy of 106 mJ and pulse width of 15 ns in the *Q*-switching mode under conditions of a pulse repetition rate of 5 Hz and a pump width of 230  $\mu$ s. Also, the optical-to-optical conversion efficiency is 30.1% and the dynamic-to-static ratio is 94.64%. The experimental results show that the composite slab laser crystal structure realizes high-efficiency absorption of pump light and effectively suppresses ASE and parasitic oscillation. Thus, our proposed method provides an effective method for high-efficiency 1064 nm *Q*-switched pulse laser output.

**Key words** lasers; Nd:YAG; electro-optical *Q*-switching; amplified spontaneous radiation