

光学学报

面向光学/精密结构的碳化硅制备和应用进展

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摘要 碳化硅陶瓷具有力学和热学综合性能优势, 已广泛应用于光学/精密结构构件的制造。综述了应用于天/地基先进光电系统领域的碳化硅陶瓷制备技术国内外现状, 对比分析了常压烧结、反应烧结、气相转化/沉积三种已获得工程化应用的致密化技术, 以及预制体成型技术和材料性能调控方法; 介绍了碳化硅陶瓷的增材制造技术, 及其应用于光学/精密结构构件制备的进展; 总结了超大口径、超高复杂度碳化硅陶瓷的连接技术。阐述了不同应用场景对碳化硅陶瓷的性能需求及其面临的挑战, 展望了碳化硅陶瓷制备技术的发展趋势。

关键词 光学材料; 碳化硅陶瓷; 光学/精密结构构件; 致密化技术; 增材制造; 连接技术

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1 引言

碳化硅(SiC)具有高比刚度、高热稳定性、耐辐照耐磨损、抗腐蚀性强等优异的综合性能, 其原料来源广泛且对环境友好, 在20世纪90年代至今的航空航天光电系统中获得广泛应用^[1-4], 可实现大幅度的轻量化和热管理机构简化, 并赋予光机结构长期的结构稳定性。随着天、地基光电探测和遥感系统对分辨率和集光能力等性能的需求越来越迫切、要求的主反射镜口径越来越大、惯量控制要求也越来越高^[5-9], SiC优异的结构和热控效率所带来的优势愈加突显。此外, SiC陶瓷其他优异的物理和化学性能赋予其在高温、高压等极端恶劣环境服役的潜力。

近30年, 欧洲航天局(ESA)、美国航空航天局(NASA)、日本宇宙航空研究开发机构(JAXA), 以及中国航天科技集团有限公司和中国科学院等国内外机构和团队, 在用于大口径高精密光机部件制造的SiC材料制备的研究方面取得了长足的进步, 发展出众多各具特色的成型和致密化烧结技术路线。我国相关研究起步稍晚于美国、日本等技术发达的国家, 但经过20多年的努力, 我国的技术水平达到国际先进水平, 部分达到国际领先^[3,6]。光机结构制造对SiC陶瓷的要求苛刻, 充分的致密性、高度的均匀性和各向同性是材料具备高精度光学可加工性和可应用性的保障, 更优的力学/热学综合性能和复杂结构的可制造性是

SiC发挥性能优势的前提。

2 面向天/地基光电系统制造的SiC陶瓷材料制备技术研究进展

SiC中高比例的Si-C共价键和紧密的面心立方密堆积(FCC)和六方密堆积(HCP)原子排列方式赋予其优异的力学和热学综合性能, 但是也导致SiC陶瓷烧结时原子扩散迁移难度大、致密化困难, 这不利于SiC的充分致密化。此外, 致密SiC极高的硬度和偏脆的特性, 不利于复杂轻量化结构的高效制造。因此, 针对各类光学和高精度支撑部件, 必须综合考虑SiC陶瓷构件的成型方法和烧结方法, 同时保证材料性能和结构可制造性。

常见SiC陶瓷成型与致密化烧结方法, 及由此构成的材料制备技术路线见图1^[10-12]。随着先进光电系统向着大口径、轻量化发展, 并结合前述光学元件对SiC材料特性的要求, 应用于光学制造的SiC陶瓷制备技术研究工作逐渐聚焦, 以致密化技术为中心, 优选并优化成型工艺。其中, 满足光学精密结构制造要求的致密化方法有常压烧结、化学气相转化/合成、反应烧结, 其中前两者制备单相SiC, 通过后者获得SiC/Si复相陶瓷。其他致密化方法或因最终材料致密性差, 或因材料具有显著各向异性, 未在光学制造领域获得应用。匹配的成型方式包括干压成型、冷等静压(CIP)成型、注浆成型和凝胶注模成型等。

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国内外机构或团队针对成型至致密化烧结技术路线进行了广泛探索,独立形成了各异的技术路线,所制备光学精密结构的SiC材料和构件各具特点。因此,本节为充分体现各个技术路线的特色,将以典型机

构或团队的技术进展和成果为中心,从常压烧结SiC、反应烧结SiC、化学气相转化/合成SiC,以及新兴的SiC增材制造技术4个方面进行技术发展的对比分析。

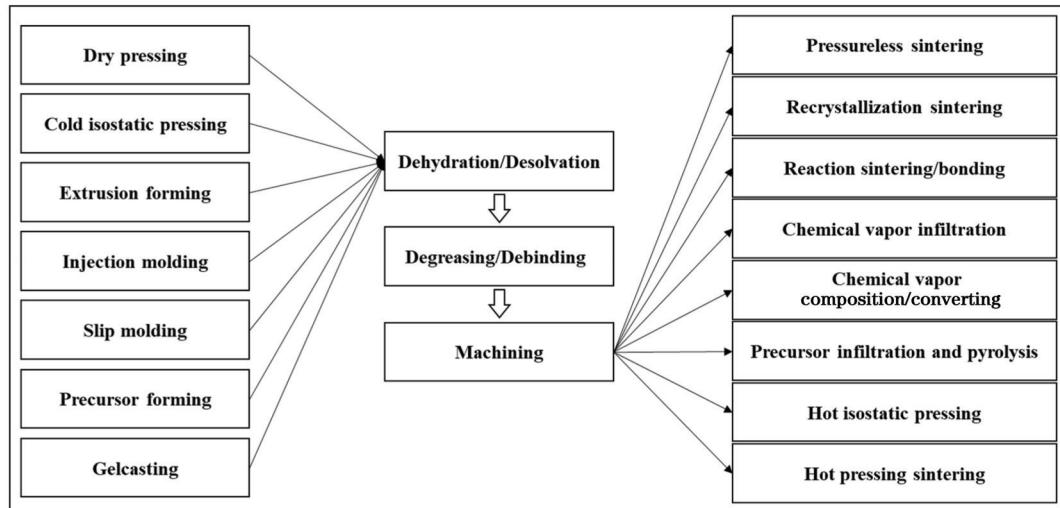


图1 SiC光学与精密结构材料制备技术路线
Fig. 1 Technical route of preparation for SiC optics and fine structures

2.1 常压烧结SiC(S-SiC)光学精密结构材料

Bougoin^[9]在亚微米级SiC粉体中掺杂质量分数≤1%的B、C元素作为烧结助剂,经过充分混合均匀和造粒后,在200 MPa冷等静压下制备最大1.7 m×1.2 m的厚板状素坯,经过机械加工可获得具有烧结收缩尺寸补偿、高度轻量化结构的预制体,见图2。经过2000~2500 °C常压惰性气氛条件下的烧结,获得相对密度达到98.5%的SiC反射镜基体材料。光学加工收敛特性与Zerodur和ULE相当,材料热膨胀特性在各方向的偏差小于 10^{-8} K⁻¹^[13],光学表面镀制化学气相沉积SiC(CVD SiC)改性层,能够满足红外至紫外各波

段的成像要求。在此基础上,BOOSTEC公司通过SiC陶瓷钎焊连接技术,为Herschel空间望远镜^[14-15]构建了Φ3.5 m主反射镜、次反射镜和支架等核心元部件,主/次镜光机结构的质量仅为Hubble Φ2.4 m主反射镜的40%,同时该技术显著降低了光机系统的热膨胀失配,见图3。该公司还为已服役的GAIA、Aeolus-Aladin和Euclid空间光电设施,构建了全SiC结构(All-SiC),实现光机结构极高的长时稳定性^[16-17],见图4。美国CoorsTek公司基于同样的技术路线实现单α-SiC物相S-SiC,并将其应用于反射镜、焦平面板、光学支撑机构等精密部件制造^[18-19]。

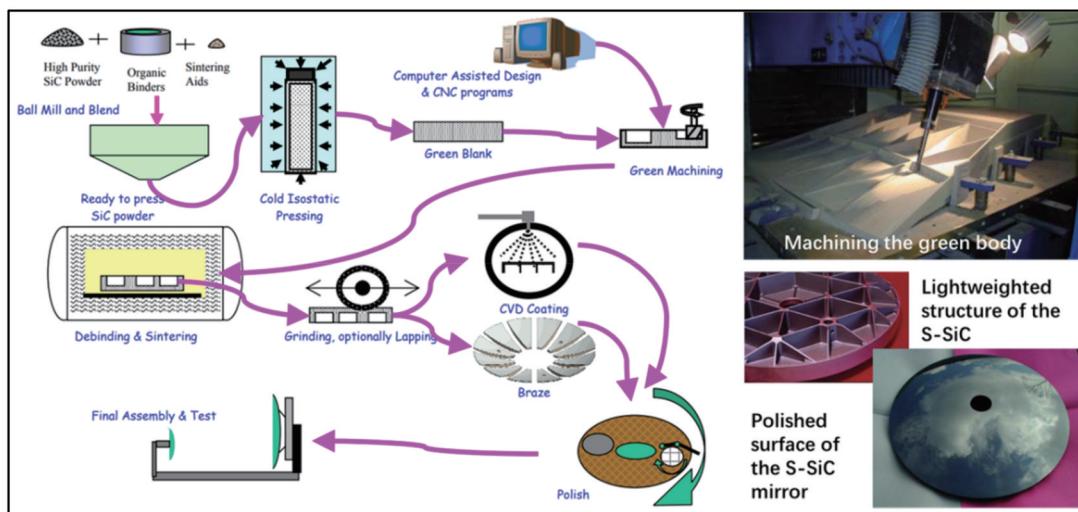


图2 SiC冷等静压成型结合常压烧结致密化流程及空间光机构件^[9]
Fig. 2 SiC cold isostatic pressing and pressureless sintering for space opto-mechanical structural components^[9]

图3 Herschel望远镜Φ3.5 m SiC主反射镜分块与钎焊后整镜^[14-15]Fig. 3 SiC parts and brazed mirror blank for Φ3.5 m primary mirror of Herschel telescope^[14-15]图4 ESA GAIA all-SiC结构及其典型分立部件^[16-17]Fig. 4 SiC components and all-SiC structure of ESA GAIA telescope^[16-17]

中国科学院上海硅酸盐研究所团队采用SiC粉末压力成型,从单/双向压力成型技术发展到冷等静压成型,结合常压烧结^[20-21],实现最大尺寸为1.5 m量级的SiC空间光学反射镜材料制备。致密化烧结时,以少量或微量B、C元素为固相烧结助剂^[22],采用常压液相烧结致密化则以Al₂O₃与Y₂O₃为烧结助剂^[23]。为克服收缩大、形变控制困难的问题,该团队探索了常压烧结收缩均匀化方法,文献[20]报道其所制备的SiC陶瓷烧结三维线收缩率偏差优于±0.3%。该团队还探索了由凝胶注模成型SiC结合常压烧结的制备方法^[22-23]。由于该方法需要兼顾烧结活性,浆体中SiC颗粒粒度细小且分布较窄,固相含量(质量分数)最高仅为54%,根据烧结均匀收缩及100%致密化进行估算,线收缩率将超过18%。Li等^[24]和Cao等^[25]报道了类似的研究结果。该团队亦开展了基于常压烧结SiC钎焊技术的研究^[26],见图5。所拼接的1 m量级反射镜经光学加工,面形达到0.038λ(λ=632.8 nm),经过15~25 °C真空温度循环以及振动模拟试验,面形分别变化

为0.037λ和0.036λ。经过空间环境辐照模拟试验,拼接镜面反射率保持在98%的水平。

根据成型预制体的相对密度计算,常压烧结SiC完全致密化线收缩率为10%~20%。较大的收缩率导致形变控制难度巨大,尤其是大尺寸、具有复杂轻量化结构的SiC反射镜镜体。非均匀收缩所产生的内应力影响材料尺寸的稳定性,甚至导致材料开裂失效。目前,全球范围内常压烧结SiC的最大尺寸仅为1.5 m量级。

2.2 反应烧结SiC(RB-SiC)光学/精密结构

基于反应烧结(反应熔渗或反应键合)的SiC光学材料,烧结线收缩率可控制在1%以下^[12-13,27],同时烧结温度相对较低,这大幅降低了对形变控制和烧结设备的要求。因此,该技术具有容易实现构件大尺寸化的优点,在光学和精密结构制造领域获得了广泛的应用。

Northrop Grumman Xinetics公司^[28]采用CERAFORM®工艺,通过低温注浆成型结合冷冻固化和冷冻干燥技术,获得最大米级反应烧结SiC镜体及其支撑结构材料的制备能力,见图6^[29]。采用

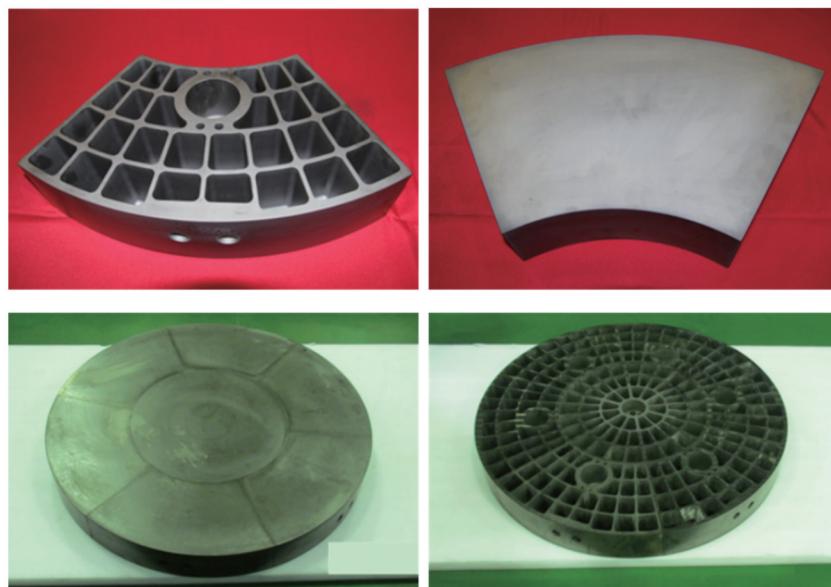


图 5 常压烧结 SiC 反射镜分块钎焊拼接:SiC 分块与钎焊后反射镜体^[26]
Fig. 5 Brazing joint of pressureless sintered SiC: SiC parts and brazed mirror blank^[26]

CERAFORM® 工艺制备 SiC 材料的全流程收缩率仅为 0.3%，热膨胀均匀性偏差小于 $3 \times 10^{-11} \text{ K}^{-1}$ ，优于光学级 Al 合金与 Be 的 10^{-10} K^{-1} ，与单晶 Si 和 ULE 玻璃接近，并具有与 Be 相当且远高于前者的比刚度。通过可溃散或可溶出模具型芯，可成型半封闭甚至全封

闭的传统机械加工无法制造的轻量化型腔结构，在同等质量条件下将镜体结构刚度提升 30%。该公司认为后续通过光学面可变形的主动光学技术，理论上可将口径为 2 m 的 SiC 反射镜的面密度降至 2 kg/m^2 这一极具挑战性的轻量化水平^[30]。



图 6 Xinetics CERAFORM® RBSiC 空间反射镜体材料^[29]
Fig. 6 Xinetics CERAFORM® RBSiC space mirror materials^[29]

美国 L-3 Communications SSG 公司采用传统的注浆成型技术，结合 Si 反应烧结（熔渗）技术^[31]，具备米级 SiC 反射镜体材料制备能力，并在 21 世纪初就规划以反应烧结 SiC 为基底，表面以非晶硅为改性层，研制极紫外短波段成像光学面^[32]，以为 SHARPI (Solar High Angular Resolution Photometric Imager) 任务的离轴系统提供 122 mm 次镜。光学检测结果表明，SiC 基底结合非晶 Si 光学面可实现的低频误差为 3.1 nm RMS，高频误差达到 0.3 nm RMS（取决于空间采样周期），达到超光滑水平；由于 SiC 优异的热学性能，该次镜满足太阳热载荷下 EUV 波段光度测量成像要求。后续美国 Navy Observatory 的 JMAPS 项目^[33] L-3 SSG 提供了包含全 SiC 光学反射镜、测量系统架构的方案，形成无热化光机结构，实现 3 a 全寿命周期，光机系统

经过多次 180~320 K 温变后，保持低于 5×10^{-3} " 的残余像差和本底畸变。

日本 NEC Toshiba Space Systems, Ltd. 以液相硅的反应烧结为致密化方式，通过将平均粒径为亚微米级 SiC 和 0.3 μm C 微粉高能混合，采用压力注浆^[27] 或干压成型^[34] 制备富碳预制体，经由液相 Si 反应熔渗，将无定形碳完全转化为 SiC，剩余毛细孔为过量 Si 完全填充，可实现材料的大尺寸化，见图 7(a)。NT SiC 中仅包含 SiC 和 Si 两相，尺寸约为 1~2 μm，且分散均匀，无残余碳质和显气孔，见图 7(b)，其抗弯强度达 1091 MPa^[35]，达到传统工艺 SiC 陶瓷的 2 倍以上，大幅提高了构件可靠性。除了优异的力学性能，该方法的密度和热膨胀与常压烧结或反应烧结 SiC 陶瓷一致；虽然细晶化引起 NT SiC 材料的导热性能下降，导热

率仍达到 $130 \text{ W}/(\text{m}\cdot\text{K})$ 的较高水平。该团队还开发了反应连接工艺,实现 NT SiC 连接,图 7(c)显示连接界面成分和组织形貌与母材保持一致。由于 Si 和 SiC 软硬两相细化,抛光时,软质 Si 下陷小对粗糙度的影响较小。Geyl 等^[36]在为 HISUI (Hyperspectral Imager SUItE) 的 MSS(Multi Spectral Sensor) 和 HSS(Hyper Spectral Sensor) 载荷制造反射镜时,证明 NT SiC 无需

CVD SiC 或 PVD Si 表面改性层即可满足光学表面高精度抛光要求,MSS 的 M1 和 M3 制造结果证实其基底粗糙度可加工至 $1.5 \text{ nm}(\text{RMS})$,NT SiC 显著降低工艺复杂性、不确定性,以及制造成本。光学面粗糙度在磁流变抛光后可达 $0.4 \text{ nm}(\text{RMS})$ 超光滑水平^[34]。NT SiC 在短波段光学成像和强激光领域的可应用性当前处于研究和验证阶段。

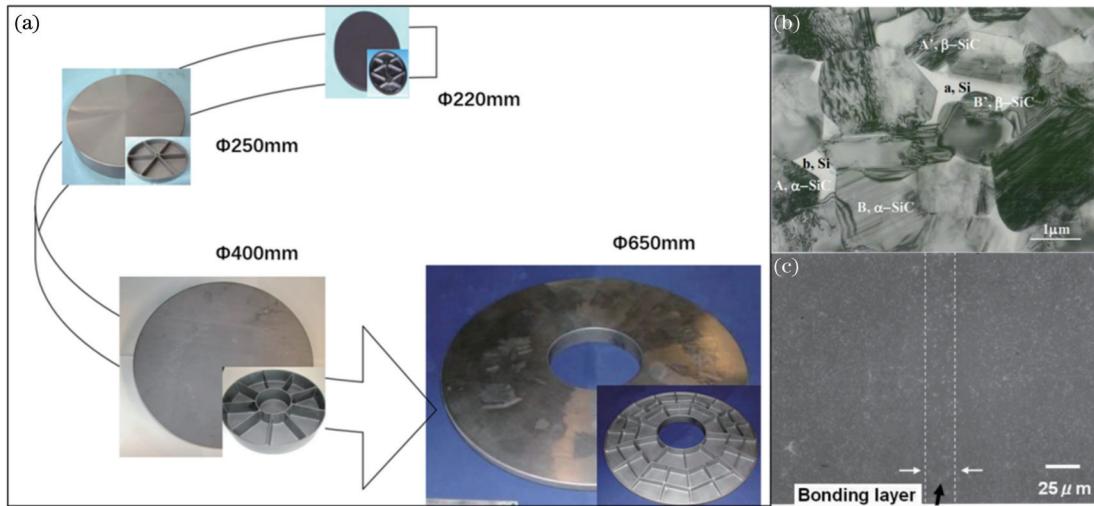


图 7 反应烧结 NT SiC 反射镜体^[34]。(a) 各口径系列反射镜体材料;(b) NT SiC 组织结构;(c) NT SiC 反应连接区域组织结构
Fig. 7 Reaction sintering NT SiC mirror blanks^[34]. (a) NT SiC mirror with various diameters; (b) microstructure of NT SiC;
(c) microstructure of joining area between NT SiC parts

德国 ECM (Engineered Ceramic Materials GmbH)^[37]在 C 预制体中引入短切碳纤维 C_f,脱脂后 C 素预制体具有良好的机械加工性,局部粘接后,通过液相 Si 反应熔渗致密化,形成 Cesic® 和 HB-Cesic® SiC 复合材料。图 8(a)中材料显微组织形貌显示,碳纤维存在部分硅化,静态断裂韧性 K_{IC} 为 $3.7 \text{ MPa}\cdot\text{m}^{1/2}$, 抗弯强度为 320 MPa ,与反应烧结 SiC 复相陶瓷相当;材料性质具有 X-Y 和 Z 方向性差异;作为反射镜,光学面需要 CVD SiC 改性层以实现抛光。ECM 通过组分设计,利用各类 C_f 热物性相互补偿,但 X-Y 平面和 Z 向热膨胀差仅能控制在 4% 左右^[38],仅满足红外波段成像要求;该材料还具有内外螺纹等结构接口的可加工性[图 8(b)]。另一方面,该材料制备方法亦可通过酚醛树脂等 C 前驱体进行粘接,之后通过反应转化为 SiC 并形成分块的一体化连接,实现更复杂构型的高效低成本制备,目前 ECM 公司具备了 $\Phi 2.4 \text{ m}$ 反应烧结 SiC 复合材料的研制能力。基于上述优势,Cesic 材料 2017 年被用于制造当时最大气象观测系统 LSST 探测器阵列基座[图 8(c)],2018 年用于国际空间站 DESIS 可见-红外光谱仪中的 HB-Cesic 反射镜制备[图 8(d)],用于 SPIRALE 红外预警系统的验证卫星中的全 Cesic® 光机结构制备,满足了成本和周期缩减以及长期服役稳定性的要求,还用于日本 JAXA 研制的全 HB Cesic® 红外相机原理样机制备^[39],主镜口径为

800 mm,光机结构总质量仅为 25 kg,见图 8(e)。

Grinchuk 等^[40]针对成型的多孔 SiC 预制体进行多次 C 前驱体浸渍裂解(PIP),通过调节预制体中 C 的质量分数控制最终材料中反应转化的 SiC 含量,研究物相含量对材料性能的调制规律。结果显示,材料的导热系数和弹性模量与 SiC 含量呈正相关,但是其弯曲强度和热膨胀性能则对 SiC 含量不敏感。研究结果还表明,通过多次 C 前驱体 PIP,能够获得 SiC 体积分数高达 93% 的 SiC/Si 复相陶瓷,杨氏模量达到 427 GPa。另一方面,若以光学制造为应用目标,则浸渍掺 C 量越大,未完全反应遗留的疏松 C 夹杂越多,这增加了后续表面改性的难度和复杂度,见图 9。

国内武汉理工大学^[41-43]和中国建筑材料科学研究院^[44-46]较早开展 SiC 凝胶注模、注浆、冷等静压等成型技术,以及反应烧结致密化技术的研究,主要聚焦于富碳多孔预制体的制备,通过反应烧结(熔渗)致密化获得高 SiC 含量的 SiC/Si 复相陶瓷材料。在材料性能调控方面,国内研究结果与国外一致,例如前者通过不同碳源及其含量调节反应,生成 β -SiC 和过剩 Si,从而获得弯曲强度达到 739 MPa 的 SiC/Si 复相陶瓷。基于该技术路线,后者制备了米级口径、具有轻量化结构的反应烧结 SiC 反射镜材料。目前两机构制备 SiC 反射镜的光学加工性和环境适应性等尚未见报道。

中国科学院长春光学精密机械与物理研究所团队

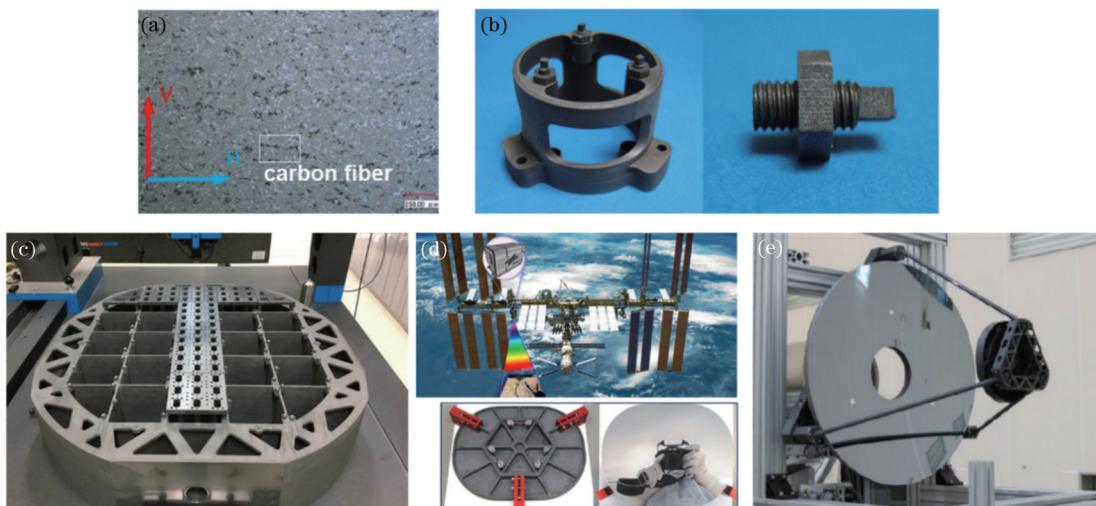


图8 ECM制备Cesic[®]和HB-Cesic^{®[37-39]}。(a)Cesic[®]金相显微组织结构；(b)Cesic[®]螺纹连接试件；(c)LSST望远镜探测器阵列基座；(d)国际空间站DESI多光谱相机HB-Cesic[®]反射镜；(e)SPICA Φ800 mm全HB-Cesic[®]光机结构原理样机,总质量为25 kg

Fig. 8 ECM's Cesic[®] and HB-Cesic^{®[37-39]}.(a) Metallographic structure of Cesic[®]; (b) Cesic screwds; (c) Cesic[®] supporting structure for LSST sensor array; (d) HB-Cesic[®] mirror for DESI multispectral imager of International Space Station; (e) all HB-Cesic[®] demo of SPICA telescope with Φ800 mm primary mirror and total mass of 25 kg

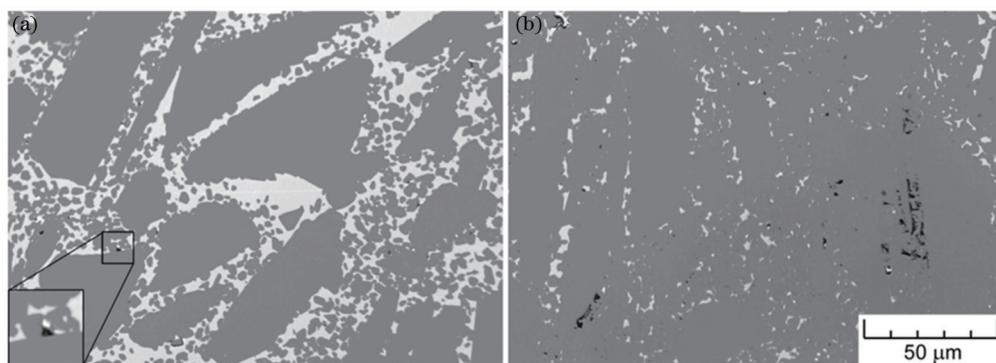


图9 反应烧结SiC中SiC含量与内部残余C^[40]。(a)SiC体积分数为78%；(b)SiC体积分数为93%

Fig. 9 SiC content and residual C in reaction sintered SiC^[40]. (a) Volume fraction of SiC is 78%; (b) volume fraction of SiC is 93%

发展了由Omatete发明的陶瓷凝胶注模成型技术^[47-49],针对SiC悬浮体的长时均匀性、稳定性、流变学特性及其充型行为调控,非可拔模结构消失模设计与制作,大尺寸复杂结构SiC凝胶固化体干燥^[50],脱脂和致密化烧结过程^[51]的反应转化与毛细孔渗流,应力应变控制和缺陷抑制,同质化反应连接^[52]和无损检测等系列关键技术问题,完成了最大口径为3.5 m的单体高性能SiC反射镜材料制备,通过同质化连接,该团队完成了目前国际上口径最大的Φ4.03 m SiC反射镜材料制备,同时可制备内含主动热控型腔或流道等复杂度更高的功能-结构一体化光学元件或精密构件,满足我国大型光电设备制造的迫切需求,见图10^[6]。该团队为多个天/地基光电系统提供了多块口径为2~4 m的高性能轻量化SiC反射镜材料。基于材料近净尺寸制备的优势,突破背部半封闭、立体镂空等高性能复杂轻量化结构的成型限制,完成了面向

空间载荷的Φ2 m超轻量化SiC反射镜材料制备,面密度优于35 kg/m²,与JWST主镜面密度相当,但镜体结构刚性和尺寸稳定性满足1/50λ(RMS)面型加工要求,优于JWST主镜子镜的1/30λ(RMS)。同时,该团队研发了真空辅助注模工艺^[53],制备了口径为500 mm、面密度优于12 kg/m²的超轻量化反射镜材料,达到美国NGST计划中光学元件轻量化关键指标水平。

尽管反应烧结SiC由Si、SiC软硬两相构成,在光学加工时物相去除速率不同容易产生浮雕效应,但是该制备技术几乎与全部先进成型技术适配,对大尺寸复杂结构具有优良的成型能力,致密化烧结温度低,所获得的SiC材料致密性高,残余应力低,材料综合性能与常压烧结SiC相当,结合PVD Si和CVD SiC改性^[54],满足高质量空间光学成像应用要求,因此在SiC反射镜制造技术的发展中具有明显的优势。

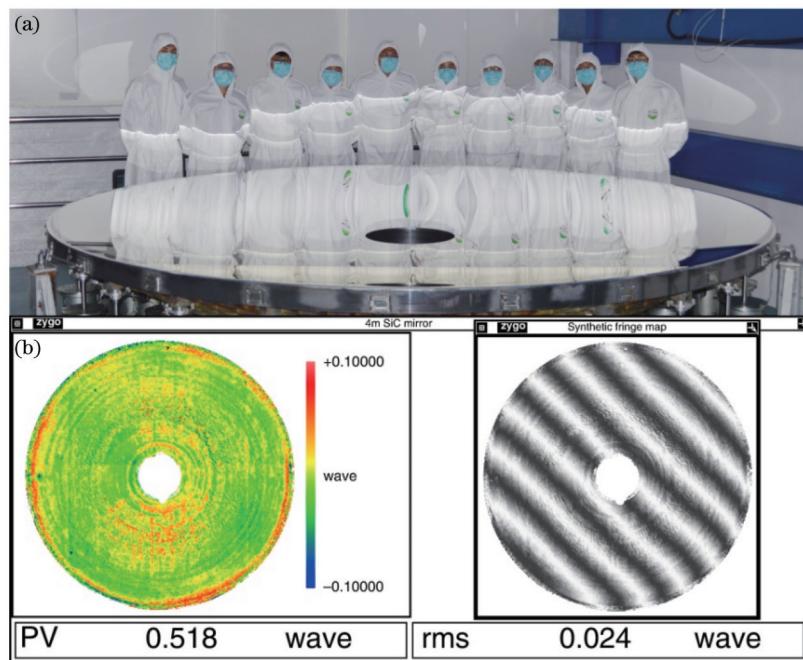


图 10 中国科学院长春光学精密机械与物理研究所大尺寸 SiC 光学元件^[6]。(a)Φ4.03 m SiC 非球面反射镜;(b)Φ4.03 m SiC 非球面检测结果

Fig. 10 Large-size monolithic SiC optics of Changchun Institute of Optics, Fine Mechanics and Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences^[6]. (a) SiC aspheric mirror with diameter of 4.03 m; (b) test results of SiC aspheric mirror with diameter of 4.03 m

2.3 化学气相合成/转化

化学气相沉积(CVD)通过前驱体转化,将其以气相沉积到材料表面后使其固态化,可获得高纯度、高致密度的单晶、多晶或非晶态膜层,是光学表面改性的理想方法之一。然而 CVD SiC 沉积速率通常为 $\mu\text{m}/\text{h}$ 级^[55],并且由于厚度的增加,气-固转变时膜层空穴、显微孔洞等缺陷产生的概率随之大幅提高,气-固相变应力水平急剧提升,因此直接通过 CVD 生长大尺寸 SiC 反射镜体非常困难。

为突破上述气相沉积速率、厚膜层生长的制约,美国 Trex Enterprises 公司^[56-57]和 POCO 公司^[58-60]开发了化学气相合成/转化(CVC)技术。前者采用 SiC 前驱体三氯甲基硅烷(MTS)和载气 H_2 混合气体,与 SiC 微粉或短切纤维,共喷射沉积到石墨模具上,随后在厚度方向生长,最终获得完全致密的高纯度多晶 SiC 反射镜材料^[61-62],见图 11,其生长速率达到 mm/h 量级,是 CVD

速率的 10 倍以上,其原因是 SiC 微粉或短切纤维等非均匀形核核心的加入,促使转化的 SiC 随机形核和生长,避免了 CVD 过程柱状晶单向生长缓慢的劣势,并达到宏观尺度的各向同性;另一方面,多形核中心缩短转化 SiC 生长尺寸,消除了新生相与固体界面应力。基于 NASA SBIR 项目,Trex 公司形成 Φ1.5 m 反射镜材料制备能力^[63],材料密度与弹性模量接近纯 SiC,优于反应烧结 SiC。在光学制造方面,该方法的优势在于 CVC SiC 无需进行表面镀膜改性,表面即可加工至粗糙度优于 0.4 nm(RMS)的超光滑水平,可应用于可见光或紫外等短波段成像,以及强激光反射镜制造。POCO 公司则以特制多孔石墨为预制体,通过气相 SiO 或 Si 等渗透并与石墨反应转化为 β -SiC。但是,该方法制备的 SiC 材料残余气孔体积分数达到 5% 以上,需要表面镀制 CVD SiC 改性层以满足光学面加工的要求,且块体材料弯曲强度、弹性模量分别为 147 MPa 和

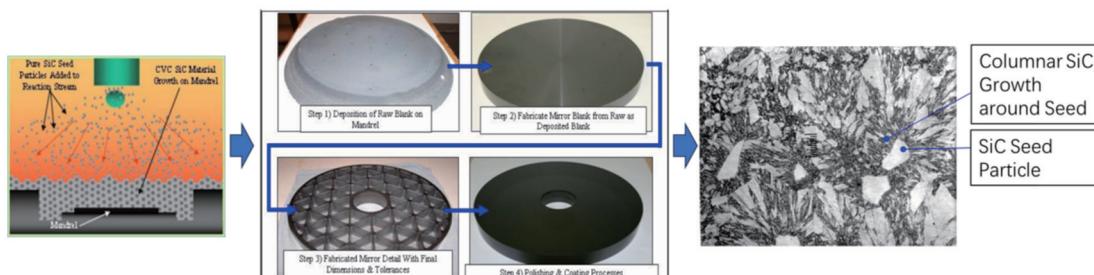


图 11 Trex CVC SiC 反射镜材料制备方法及显微组织^[61-62]

Fig. 11 CVC preparation of Trex SiC mirror materials and material microstructure^[61-62]

218 GPa, 低于反应烧结和常压烧结 SiC。该公司亦开发了反应转化连接技术, 通过石墨预制体拼接和反应

转化, 制备大尺寸 SiC 反射镜材料^[64]。表 1 为各团队面向光学精密结构制造的 SiC 材料。

表 1 各团队面向光学精密结构制造的 SiC 材料

Table 1 Comparison of various SiC materials for optics and fine structures

Organization and Institute	Preparation methods	Max sizes	Specific stiffness	Thermal stability	Optical manufacturability	Cost/time consumption	Property
BOOSTEC ^[9,13-17] (MERSON)	CIP, pressureless sintering	1.5 m (monolithic); 3.5 m (brazed)	High	High	Moderate high, CVD SiC cladding is needed	Moderate high/high	Single phase SiC, residual micro pores included
Shanghai Institute of Ceramics, CAS ^[20-21]	CIP, pressureless sintering	1.5 m (monolithic)	High	High	Moderate high, CVD SiC cladding is needed	Moderate high/high	Single phase SiC, residual micro pores included
Northrop Grumman Xinetics ^[2,28-30]	CERAFORM®, reaction sintering	1.5 m (monolithic)	Moderate high	High	Moderate high, PVD Si cladding is needed	Moderate/ moderate low	Low shrinkage
L-3 Communications SSG ^[31-32]	Slip casting, reaction sintering	1.5 m (monolithic)	Moderate	High	Moderate high, PVD Si cladding is needed	Moderate/—	—
NEC-Toshiba Space System Ltd. ^[27,34-36]	Die forming, reaction sintering	1 m (monolithic)	High	High	High, the substrate is directly polishable for visible light imaging	—/ Moderate low	Extremely high strength; difficult to enlarge the diameter
ECM ^[37-39]	Die forming, reaction sintering	2.4 m (monolithic)	Moderate high	Moderate high	Low, CVD SiC cladding is needed	Moderate low/low	Applicable for complex structure fabrication; heterogeneous and anisotropic
Changchun Institute of Optics, Fine Mechanics and Physics, CAS ^[3,6,10,47,51,53]	Gel-casting, reaction sintering	3.5 m (monolithic); 4.03 m (reaction bonded)	High	High	Moderate high, CVD SiC or PVD Si cladding is needed	Moderate/ moderate low	Applicable for complex structure fabrication, low shrinkage and residual stress
China Building Materials Academy Co., Ltd ^[44-45]	Slip casting, reaction sintering	1 m (monolithic)	High	High	Moderate high, CVD SiC or PVD Si cladding is needed	Moderate low/low	—
Trex Enterprises ^[56-57,63]	CVC	1.5 m (monolithic)	High	High	High, the substrate is directly polishable for visible light imaging	—/High	High purity, high homogeneity, single phase SiC
POCO ^[58,60-64]	CVC	<1 m (monolithic)	Moderate	Moderate	Low, CVD SiC cladding is needed	Moderate low/low	High residual porosity

2.4 SiC 光学精密结构材料新型制备方法——增材 制造技术

构件性能与功能性取决于材料本征属性与结构形式。新型先进光电系统、精密仪器和半导体装备, 对精密构件的刚性、轻量化率、热控效率、功能-结构集成度

等提出挑战。在应用 SiC 高性能材料的基础上, 获得更优的构形是精密构件功能实现和性能提升的关键, 如拓扑优化的复杂形状、半封闭内含腔道等多层次非拔模构形等^[65-68], 见图 12。传统制造方法对上述 SiC 高性能构型制造存在制造效率低下甚至无法实现的瓶

颈。增材制造技术或 3D 打印技术,通过立体构件的二维层叠生成,理论上赋予高性能结构设计无限的自由度。Goodman^[69]指出,在满足应用要求的条件下,基于增材制造可获得更优结构,1~2.5 m 量级 SiC FIR 反射镜的面密度可低至 7.75 kg/m^2 ,约为 JWST 主镜的 39%,仅为 NASA SBIRs 项目目标的一半,镜体轻量化率提升一倍,其他优势还包括约 40% 的成本降低,以及实现多材料的集成打印等,因此,SiC 增材技术有望克服高性能、高复杂度结构可设计却不可制造的限制,为光机结构性能带来新一轮提升。

SiC 陶瓷属于强共价键含量较高的陶瓷材料,颗粒的熔融(SiC 常压下无熔点,高温分解)和烧结很难

实现;另一方面,即使采用大功率激光器熔融陶瓷,但是陶瓷叠层凝固产生的巨大应力难以控制,造成陶瓷材料强度低,或产生显微裂纹甚至开裂。因此,除少数氧化物陶瓷^[70]的直接激光熔融沉积(SLM)及 Exner 等^[71]针对小尺寸 SiC 等陶瓷开发的 LMS(laser micro sintering)技术外,鲜有一步打印致密化且达到应用要求的陶瓷构件。因此,当前陶瓷材料增材制造理论研究和实践更多关注多步法,即打印成型和致密化烧结两大步骤。在打印原材料体系方面,陶瓷材料增材制造技术又分为基于高分子陶瓷前驱体打印技术和混合陶瓷颗粒、短切纤维等填料的固相悬浮体打印技术。

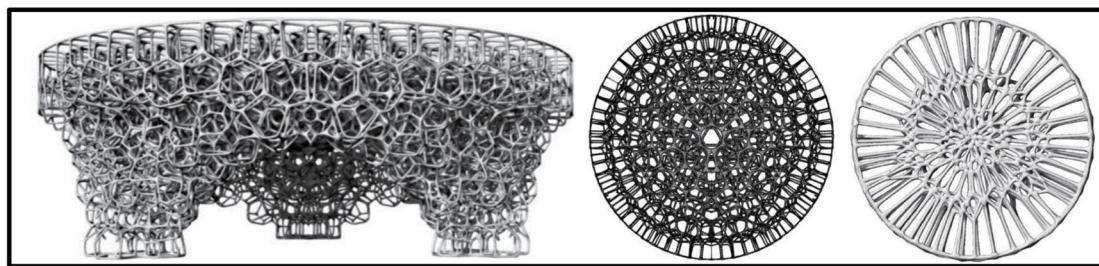


图 12 基于 Voronoi 结构的反射镜背部结构拓扑优化^[65]

Fig. 12 Voronoi-based design for topological optimization of mirror light-weight structures^[65]

美国 HRL 实验室^[72]将前驱体立体光固化(SLA)-裂解转化为 SiOC 耐热陶瓷,后续基于前驱体接枝等技术,形成了一系列 SiC 光固化打印前驱体。国内 Chen 等^[73]开展了基于喷墨直写(DIW)的 SiC 前驱体 PCS 打印技术研究,其优势是原材料具有优异流变特性和光学特性,劣势是前驱体脱脂并转化为瓷时体积收缩过大,导致过大的形变甚至出现裂纹。

对于 SiC 而言,液相 Si 反应熔渗方法既可以满足光学加工的充分致密化,也可以避免明显的线收缩引

起复杂结构的不可控形变,是理想的 SiC 反射镜材料后处理方法。围绕反应熔渗致密化技术,全球众多企业与研究机构开发了各种增材制造(或 3D 打印)技术:美国 MIT 开发了黏结剂喷射成型(BJP)技术^[74],基于此项技术,以色列金属研究所和美国 II-VI 公司成功制备出 250 mm 量级 SiC 反射镜材料^[75],见图 13。从材料显微组织上观察(文献[75]中图 11),该打印方法可实现打印层内和层间的组分分布均匀性,对材料各向同性极为有利;美国 Goodman 公司^[76-78]基于直写打印

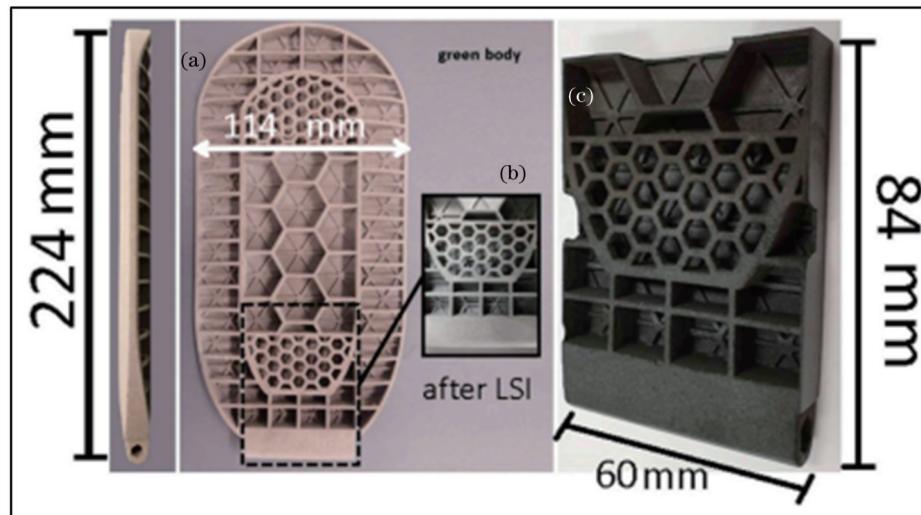


图 13 BJP 打印超轻量化 SiC 结构^[75]。(a)BJP 打印坯体;(b)局部结构样件;(c)Si 反应熔渗致密化 SiC 材料

Fig. 13 BJP printed super light-weight SiC structures^[75]. (a) Preforms via BJP; (b) sample of local structure; (c) densified SiC material via Si liquid reaction infiltration

和反应连接技术(Z-process),结合前驱体PIP制备单体尺寸为25 cm的拼接式米级SiC陶瓷或纳米陶瓷基反射镜,达到了NASA SBIRs计划阶段1和阶段2的

目标——轻量化、高度稳定、大尺寸光学结构,为OST、LUVOIR任务中应用于长波红外至紫外波段的载荷提供光学和精密结构件,见图14。

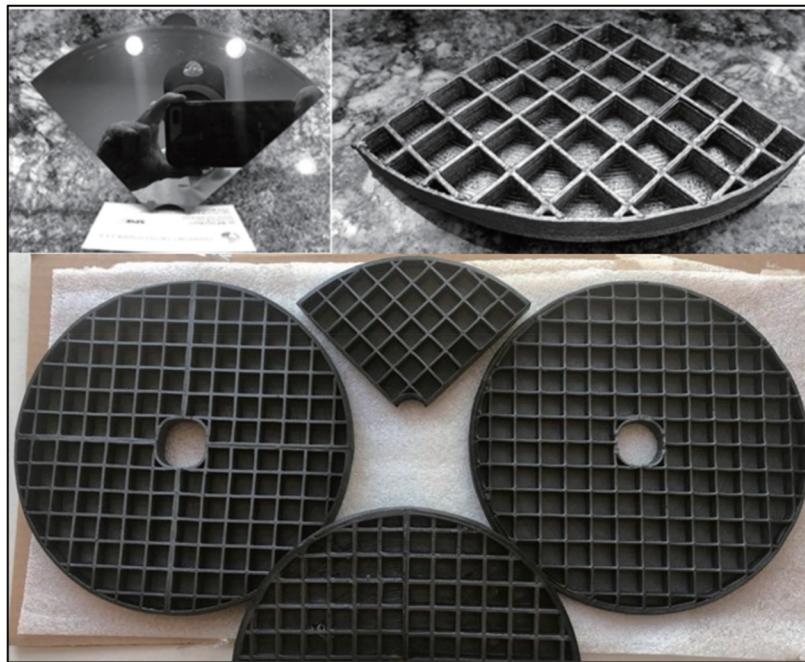


图14 Z-Process 3D打印RoboSiCTM反应连接Φ250 mm样件^[78]

Fig. 14 Φ250 mm sample of RoboSiCTM via Z-Process 3D printing combined with reaction bonding^[78]

国内团队对SiC增材制造技术也进行了积极广泛的探索,在光学系统制造领域,SiC增材制造技术水平总体与发达国家持平,在技术路线选择上与国外团队一致,以3D打印成型后致密化烧结的两步法为主,而致密化烧结方法包括液相硅反应烧结/反应熔渗(LSI)和前驱体PIP。

中国建筑材料科学研究院有限公司和北京理工大学团队较早开展面向光学制造和应用的SiC材料立体光固化(SLA)制备技术研究^[79-82],探索了材料性能提升方法。前者研究结果显示,由于SiC对紫外光的高折射和强吸收,为保障光引发聚合效果,光敏浆料中SiC的体积分数仅为46%,增材制造SiC陶瓷的弯曲强度、弹性模量等力学性能明显低于传统成型工艺制备的RB-SiC。后者在预制体光固化与脱脂后,采用多次PCS和DVB前驱体浸渍和裂解,获得纯SiC材料的致密度仅为93.5%,弯曲强度仅为165.2 MPa。

中国科学院上海硅酸盐研究所团队对光学级SiC材料SLA/DLP与FDM制备技术开展了研究^[83-84]。该团队以短切碳纤维C_f增强增韧基于SLA制备的SiC陶瓷基复合材料,通过在C_f表面进行C前驱体水热法包覆、裂解及Si气相反应,在C_f表面形成SiC保护界面层^[85],而后与SiC颗粒配置光敏浆料并打印成型,最终由LSI完全致密化。结果显示SiC界面层的引入避免了C_f被液相Si侵蚀,可以发挥其在陶瓷基复合材料中

的增强作用。后续光学表面制造和应用适应性仍有待验证。另一方面,该团队探索了熔融沉积打印(FDM)技术结合LSI的SiC反射镜材料增材制造技术^[86],通过在打印原料中直接引入碳颗粒并通过调整固体质量分数和有机添加剂配比,调控原料打印时高温下流变特性,成型固体质量分数超过60%的SiC/C预制体。经过1600 °C液相Si的反应和熔渗,获得SiC反射镜材料。材料弹性模量达到(346.3±22.8) GPa,抗弯强度达到(310.41±39.32) MPa,这与传统工艺制备反应烧结SiC材料的性能水平相当。文献[86]的实验结果显示,FDM线性打印路径上存在新增材料与已固化部分的连接和融合不充分问题,反应烧结后缝隙留下带状Si相,降低了材料宏观均匀性。此外,预制体中碳黑含量过高,遗留未充分反应的碳夹杂物,这两方面镜体材料缺陷对光学元件可靠性和适用范围的影响有待进一步检验。

华中科技大学和宁波伏尔肯科技股份有限公司相关团队^[87-90]基于激光选区烧结(SLS)结合反应熔渗制备SiC光学与精密结构元件,具备1.6 m口径SiC反射镜预制体成型能力。前者也研究了BJP打印技术^[91],但是固相含量提升困难,需要通过PRIP(即PIP)引入碳源,降低预制体孔隙率,通过LSI转化获得更高的SiC含量并降低残余Si含量。当碳引入量过大,毛细孔由于Si/C反应固相体积膨胀,造成物质运输路径的堵塞,导致反应不完全,不利于光表面的加工,该研究

结果与中国科学院上海硅酸盐研究所^[86]的研究结果一致。

长沙理工大学、深圳升华三维科技有限公司基于

粉末挤出(PE)技术,引进并发展了SiC FDM打印技术和相关装备^[92-93],反射镜材料成型能力达到Φ500 mm,见图15,后续光学制造和检测尚未见报道。

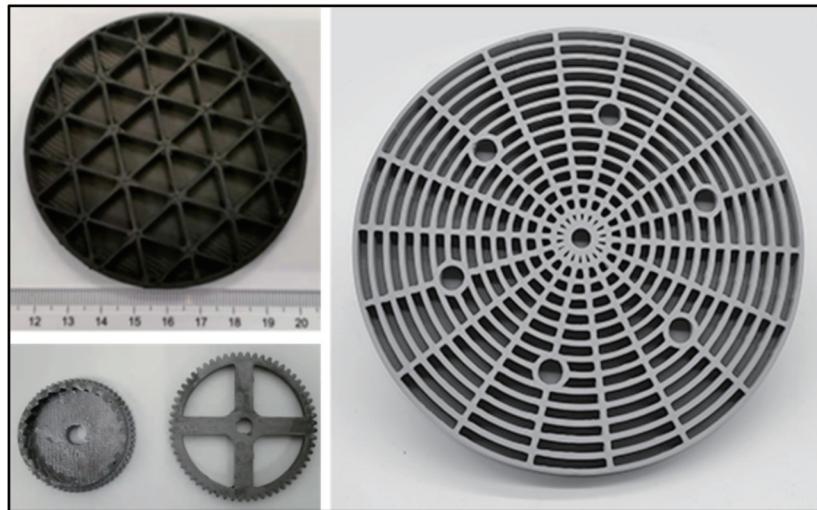


图 15 FDM 打印 SiC 反射镜体^[92]
Fig. 15 FDM printed SiC mirror blank^[92]

中国科学院长春光学精密机械与物理研究所与中国科学院空间应用工程与技术中心联合研究了基于光固化原理的DLP(digital light processing)结合LSI致密化的光学级SiC制备技术^[94]。通过开发大幅宽高精度的曝光装备,优化光敏体系、颗粒级配等打印工艺参数,并对预制体进行碳前驱体PIP掺杂,采用LSI促使

Si和C反应以提升高性能物相 β -SiC含量,液相Si充分填充毛细孔,进而获得致密度大于99%的复相陶瓷,材料弹性模量和弯曲强度分别提升至402 GPa和244.17 MPa,完成了满足光学制造和应用要求的Φ620 mm SiC反射镜体制备,见图16。

综上所述,增材制造技术相对于常规陶瓷制备技

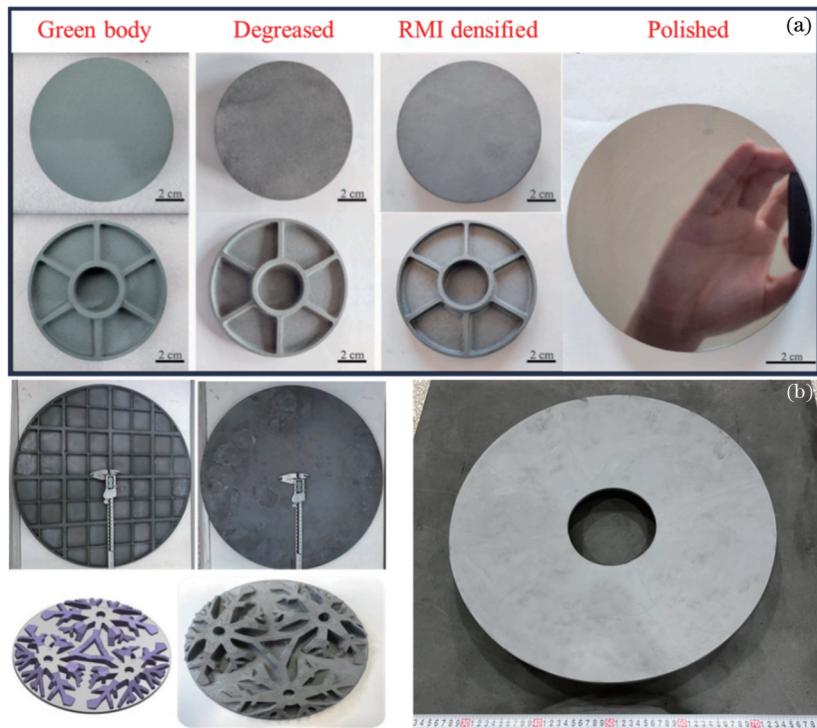


图 16 增材制造 SiC 反射镜材料^[94]。(a) 基于 DLP 的 Φ100 mm SiC 镜体过程状态;(b) 基于 DLP 与 LSI 的 Φ100~620 mm SiC 反射镜体
Fig. 16 SiC mirror material for additive manufacturing^[94]。(a) Status of Φ100 mm SiC during DLP; (b) Φ100~620 mm SiC mirror blanks via DLP and LSI process

术,能够满足高自由度设计的复杂SiC构件的可制造性要求,国内外对SiC增材制造技术研究的聚焦,使得各种3D打印方法均得到关注和研究,其在实现SiC光学精密结构方面的优缺点见表2。另一方面,与传统工艺相比,面向光学精密结构的增材制造仍存在若干问题^[74, 95-96]。

1)增材叠层方向(Z向)和打印平面(X-Y)内物相分布非均匀化问题,引起固化、脱脂或烧结的收缩不一致,尤其对于大尺寸高精度构件的增材制造,形变控制难度较大。

表2 面向光学精密结构的各种SiC增材制造技术^[95-96]Table 2 Comparison of SiC additive manufacturing methods for optics and fine structures^[95-96]

Additive manufacturing technologies	Advantages	Limitations and challenges	Organizations and institutions
Direct ink writing/ DIW	High utilization rate of the raw materials; suitable for multi-material printing	Low forming accuracy and resolution; low efficiency of printing; auxiliary support is needed for cantilever structure printing	Goodman Technologies, LLC; Central South University
Fused deposition modeling/FDM	Higher initial volume fraction of SiC in raw material up to 60% ^[86] ; high utilization rate of the raw materials; suitable for multi-material printing	Control of the properties of the raw material is demanding; low forming accuracy and resolution; step effect on the surface; low efficiency of printing	Goodman Technologies, LLC; Shanghai Institute of Ceramics, Chinese Academy of Sciences; Changsha University of Technology
Binder jet printing/BJ/BJP/ BJ3DP	Better homogeneity; high efficiency of the raw material preparation; wide applicability for various powder materials	Low printing resolution and surface quality; relative densities and the strength of the printed bodies are low	Israel Institute of Metals; Goodman Technologies, LLC; II-VI Technologies Co., Ltd
Selective laser sintering/SLS	Wide applicability for various powder materials; high efficiency of the raw material preparation; easy to achieve large size printed body up to 1.6 m ^[88]	Low relative densities of the printed bodies due to the low packing efficiency; rigorous control of the thermal field during the printed process	Huazhong University of Science and Technology; Ningbo Flk Technology Co., Ltd
Stereolithography/ SL/SLA/DLP	High efficiency of printing; high forming accuracy and surface quality; high volume fraction of ceramic loading up to 60% ^[97]	High requirement of the properties of the slurry; SiC powder's strong absorption and scattering of UV limit the cured thickness and the further increasement of the solid loading; large deformation of the printed bodies during the post processing	HRL Laboratories; Technology and Engineering Center for Space Utilization, Chinese Academy of Sciences; Beijing Institute of Technology; Shanghai Institute of Ceramics, Chinese Academy of Sciences

3 SiC连接技术进展

凝胶注模、冷等静压、3D打印技术理论上可制备更大尺寸、更高复杂度的单体SiC材料,从而减少结构配合和过渡部件,简化系统集成和装调工艺;结构一体化还可以避免结构连接的热失配或预紧,实现整体结构的无应力化,保障光机结构的长时稳定性。然而,精

2)Z向与X-Y平面材料物相分布差异所导致的最终复合材料的各向异性,增大了反射镜体的结构设计难度。

3)增材制造技术制备的陶瓷构件的一致性和可靠性明显低于传统工艺所制备的部件,这一问题严重制约其应用推广。

4)当前增材制造技术仍无法同时满足光学面制造的致密性、组织结构各向同性与均匀性要求,例如:表面仍需要CVD SiC厚改性层;满足致密性要求的同时力学性能低于传统工艺所制备的材料。

密光机结构制造过程往往面临大尺寸SiC陶瓷材料和部件的整体制备、加工、运输等风险与成本较高,复杂结构致密化烧结形变控制难度大等问题;此外,内部其他热、电、磁等功能模块的集成安装,也需要在最终整体SiC光机结构完成制造前进行。因此,先进行SiC构件的单件制造,而后以各种方式连接,仍然是先进光学系统构建的必要技术手段。

BOOSTEC 公司^[17]研究的 SiC 连接方法包括螺栓连接、胶接、陶瓷相结合和钎焊连接。ESA 和法国空客防务^[98]联合研制的 Euclid 望远镜的“full-SiC”结构是综合运用了上述连接方法的典型,实现了光机系统的高稳定性,以及可控的时间成本和经济成本。

螺栓连接刚性高,通常螺栓材料选用在某个温度范围热膨胀系数接近 SiC 的 M93 Invar®、Helicoil® 等合金^[99]。Euclid 望远镜搭载的 VIS 可见光成像焦平面及其三镜等后端部件的 SiC 支撑框架,即通过螺栓与 2.50 m × 2.15 m 的 SiC 主基准板紧固连接,见图 17。螺栓配合紧固方式,还可采用前述 ECM 公司研制的短切 C 纤维增强 SiC 的 Cesic® 复合材料,见图 8(b),其与 SiC 热膨胀系数非常接近,材料具有一定的抗震动和抗冲击性能,可实现 SiC 部件间近无热化紧固连接。文

献[100]针对高超音速飞行器鼻锥的耐高温连接问题,通过 C 纤维预编织、模具成型、真空压力浸渍裂解的方法,制备连续 C 纤维增强 SiC 螺纹连接件,较优的螺栓轴向拉伸强度达到 262 MPa,剪切强度达到 111 MPa 的较高水平。文中指出纤维编织角度和排布方式、改性溶液种类、热处理温度,是保障螺牙、螺钉承载能力的关键因素。文献[101]指出提高 C 纤维增强 C 基、SiC 基复合材料螺纹连接件力学性能的关键是提高材料基体断裂和纤维脱黏抗力、避免纤维桥架等缺陷。综上,螺纹连接较高的刚性和形位精度,以及装卸快捷性受到光机结构制造领域的广泛关注,但其连接定位精度最优达到 μm 级,对于精密光机结构而言,预紧力的引入也为长时连接可靠性带来不确定性,更关键的是,连接面的配合提高了整个系统的装配/装调自由度控制难度。

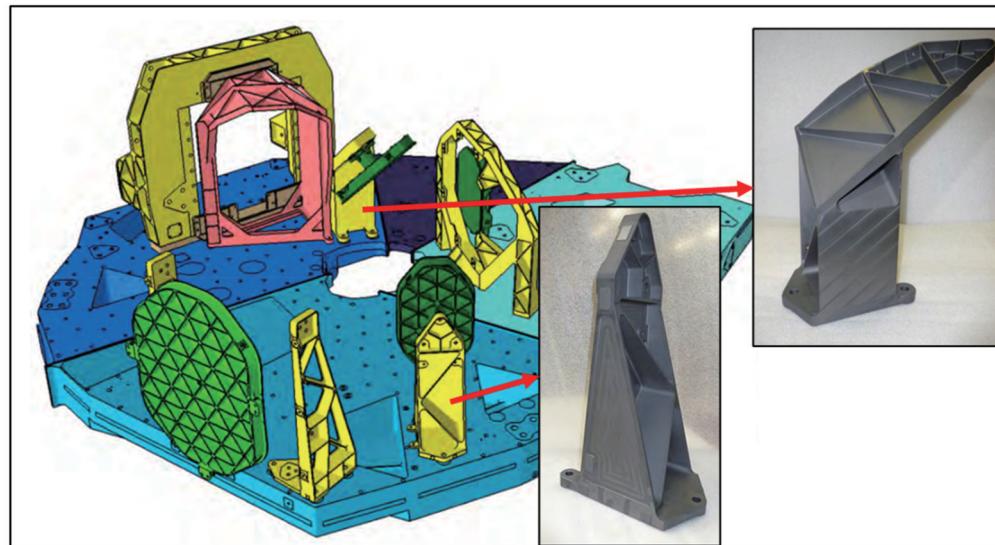


图 17 Euclid SiC 中心基准板背面螺栓连接 SiC 支撑构件^[98]

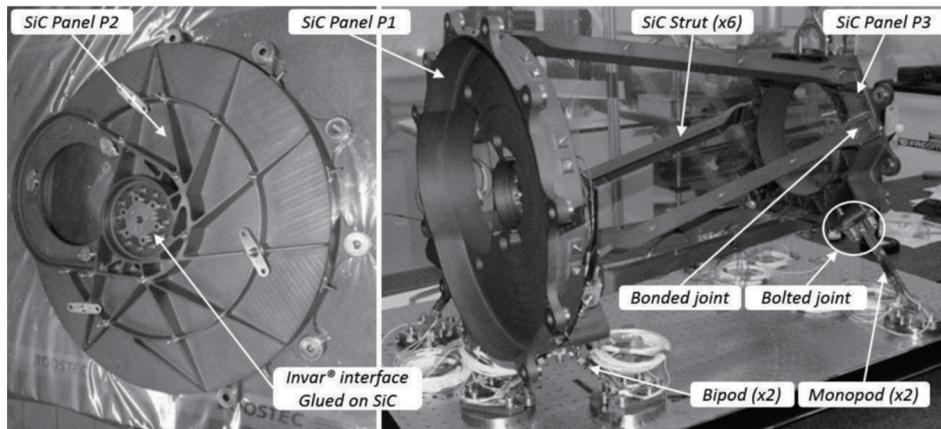
Fig. 17 Joining of Euclid telescope's SiC base plate with SiC supporting components through bolts^[98]

胶接是利用环氧树脂等热固性有机黏接剂,结合 SiC 与 SiC 或 SiC 与其他材质的接合面,连接结构的形位尺寸公差可由辅助定位工装保障。Euclid SiC 主基准面与次镜蛛形框架之间的 SiC 支撑杆,红外光谱仪 NISP 焦平面板与亚系统之间的连接杆,采用环氧树脂类胶黏剂进行结构连接^[99]。其中在 Euclid NISP 系统(图 18)^[102]中,通过严格控制黏合面形位精度,胶接后系统尺寸偏差可控制在几十微米量级。尽管胶接的尺寸精度较低,但其适用性广泛,工艺操作性强,并且抗冲击性能优异。通过将 Invar、Ti 合金等金属构件作为螺纹接口的预埋件与 SiC 母材胶接,可降低其与 SiC 母材之间高配合度接合面的加工难度,再根据装配需要高精度定位螺纹孔或锥孔,使得胶接和螺纹连接的优势得以结合。

陶瓷相结合^[17, 103]是将 SiC 预制体或母材精加工的两个连接面与第二相陶瓷材料充分接触并施予高温,SiC 母材烧结致密的同时,通过两相界面的互扩散或

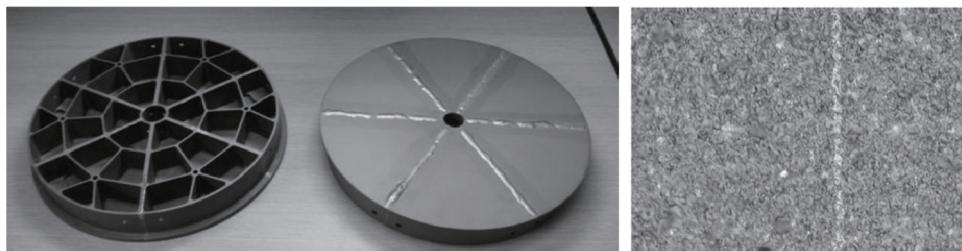
反应键合,形成高刚性的永久性连接。母材与连接材料均为陶瓷,可赋予组件系统长期保持一致的热/力特性。然而,该方法需要大尺寸高温烧结设备,且对烧结过程中高精度支撑 SiC 配合组件的结构材料和工装要求极高,因此相关应用案例的报道不多。

钎焊连接采用熔点低于 SiC 的焊接材料,通过表面润湿和黏附,凝固后形成刚性连接。BOOSTEC 公司^[17]针对热膨胀匹配问题,研发了特殊 SiC 基合金,其与 SiC 母材在深空服役工况下的热膨胀系数差小于 10^{-7} K^{-1} ,在 Herschel 主反射镜(图 3)、GAIA 主支撑框架(图 4)、Euclid 中心基准板(图 17)等多个载荷的 all-SiC 光机结构研制中得到应用。但是,早期研究工作^[104]指出,作为光学表面,焊缝材料的硬度明显低于 SiC 母材或 CVD SiC 改性层,因此在加工后存在线性凹陷的现象,见图 19。文献[105]以低膨胀硅硼酸盐玻璃为连接材料,通过大电流产生的高温,使之与 SiC 表面氧化层键合形成连接,该方法可避免使用大尺寸

图 18 Euclid NISP SiC 光机结构的多种连接方式^[103]Fig. 18 Various joint techniques applied in SiC opto-mechanical structure of Euclid NISP^[103]

真空高温钎焊设备，并且减少工件的热历史。文献[106]以 $\text{SiO}_2\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Y}_2\text{O}_3$ 为连接材料，文献[107]以 Mo 箔为连接材料，通过扩散键合，分别获得了 319 MPa 和 263 MPa 的结合强度。文献[108]采用 SiC 前驱体为连接材料，实现与母材的同质化，但其焊接层内存在残余气孔。钎焊适用于多种材料与 SiC 的连接，可获得致

密、可靠性高的连接。总体而言，钎焊连接应用于 SiC 光学精密结构制造时，虽然可通过材料组分设计，选用热膨胀接近于 SiC 的连接材料，但连接材料冷凝或转化时的收缩，使得界面产生较大的残余应力，后续工艺难以去除，并且连接缝合母材还存在硬度差，这对后续光学加工、光机装调带来很大的挑战。

图 19 表面 CVD SiC 改性后常压烧结 SiC 分块的钎焊，及其焊缝显微形貌^[18,104]Fig. 19 Braze of pressureless sintered SiC parts with surface CVD SiC layer and morphology of braze seam^[18,104]

RB-SiC 部件同样适用于螺栓连接、胶接、钎焊等常规连接方式，更具优势的是，得益于其液相硅反应熔渗的致密化机制，以及 Si 、 $\alpha\text{-SiC}$ 、 $\beta\text{-SiC}$ 物相之间极为接近的热膨胀特性，可实现部件预制体的直接反应连接，通过连接材料成分和工艺的精细化设计，甚至达到连接材料与母材完全同质化的效果。这一优势在高精度光学制造领域尤为明显。ECM^[37]采用碳素的前驱体（如酚醛树脂等）粘接短切 C_t/SiC 预制体，通过液相 Si 反应连接制备高复杂度的光机构件（图 8）。中国科学院上海硅酸盐研究所^[109]提出反应连接常压烧结 SiC 的方法，连接层组成物相为 SiC 与 Si，解决了材料热失配的问题。但是冷凝产生的残余应力和硬度差等问题及其影响仍待进一步研究。中国科学院长春光学精密机械与物理研究所^[3]对凝胶注模成型的 SiC 预制体进行连接，通过优化粘接材料的组分、物相形貌和连接工艺，反应烧结与连接同步完成，由于连接缝处的材料经转化后与母材的材料成分与组织结构、性质基本一致（图 20），并且冷凝和冷却过程同步进行，有效规避了



图 20 RB-SiC 同质化反应连接

Fig. 20 Homogeneous reaction bonding of RB-SiC

相变体积变化产生的残余应力、服役热失配应力，以及最终材料硬度差等问题，形成长时稳定的刚性连接。口径为 4.03 m 的 SiC 光学反射镜由 12 个扇形子块通过反应连接形成单体反射镜，光学加工后，面形优于 16 nm RMS^[6]，相较于 Herschel 主镜，该镜可满足面形

精度要求更高的可见光波段成像。

各种SiC光学精密构件连接方法的优缺点对比见表3。在解决烧结、加工与检测设备的前提下,反

应连接是保障大型复杂光机结构长时稳定性的理想途径,是全SiC结构、无热化连接等制造技术发展的趋势。

表3 SiC光机构件连接方法的主要优缺点

Table 3 Advantages/disadvantages of the joint methods for the SiC optomechanical parts

Methods	Advantages	Disadvantages
Bolting ^[99-101]	Relatively high rigidity; high precision, up to μm level; high technical maturity	Uncertainty of the tightening stress; thermal property differences between the SiC parts and the bolt
Gluing ^[99]	Low process requirement; high strength and reliability; wide applicability for various paring materials	Relatively low precision, 10 μm level or lower; thermal property differences between the bonding materials and the parent materials
Ceramic bonding ^[17,103]	High rigidity with long-term effectiveness; excellent thermoelastic properties	Requirement of high temperature firing equipment with large size; requirement of precision supporting at high temperature; thermal property differences between the bonding materials and the parent materials
Brazing ^[17,104]	High rigidity with long-term effectiveness; high strength and reliability	Residual stress due to the phase transformation of the bonding materials; thermal property differences between the bonding materials and the parent materials
Reaction bonding	High homogeneity and high rigidity; low residual stress; long-term stability	Requirement of sintering equipment with large size

4 SiC光学精密结构部件的应用现状与趋势

随着世界对深空探测、国防建设、超精密制造的需求高速增长,光电精密仪器和装备制造产业迎来飞速发展,天/地基超大口径天文望远镜、半导体光刻、UV、软X-ray等短波光学、强激光等领域,对更高性能的光学元件、精密结构等构件材料的需求愈加迫切。理论上,SiC陶瓷的高比刚度、高热导率和较小的热膨胀系数相比于上述领域常用的微晶玻璃Zerodur、ULE、铝合金等传统材料具有突出优势。

4.1 天/地基超大口径光电系统

人类对大口径光学系统的最初需求是天文观测,而后国防安全中遥感、预警、感知等领域,对光电系统分辨率、灵敏度和响应速率等性能的要求愈加提高。光电系统的主镜孔径决定其极限分辨率和集光能力(例如对暗弱目标的探测灵敏度),质量惯量和热控效率则是影响系统响应速度的关键。

欧洲地区和美日等发达国家在建造超大地基望远镜方面具有深厚的技术和经验积累,在建的超大型地基天文台主镜口径已经达到40 m,面临的问题包括:光学元件单体材料的最大尺寸限制;重力场中镜体不同姿态的形变;大气扰动引起的折射率变化;风、热等载荷引起的巨大光学面型的变化;光学元件制造和运维的成本。针对上述问题,在微晶玻璃Zerodur、硅硼酸盐玻璃、ULE等材料制备和加工技术较为成熟的条件下,欧洲地区和美日等国家的相关项目团队提出了分块共相主镜(图21:口径为30 m的TMT^[110-112],主

镜由492片1.4 m子镜拼接而成;口径为39 m的ELT^[113],主镜由798片1.4 m Zerodur子镜拼接而成)、反射镜主动支撑、主动光学等极具创新性的解决方案。中国科学院长春光学精密机械与物理研究所的4 m口径光学级SiC材料的研制成功:一方面证明了SiC反射镜材料大尺寸化的可行性,同时,SiC反射镜材料具有玻璃基材料4倍的比刚度,超过100倍的热导率,较硅硼酸盐玻璃小的热膨胀系数,在大口径镜体减重、抗外载荷变形、通过快速降低热梯度提高热控效率方面优势凸显;另一方面,高刚性材料有利于大口径子镜的应用,减少共相子镜数量,从而显著降低主镜光机结构制造和控制的复杂度,SiC反射镜体与主动支撑、主动光学和自适应光学等技术均能很好地兼容^[114-115],并且基于上述优异的力、热综合性能,子镜光学面位向和面形的主动调节幅度小,有利于系统获得更高的响应速率。对于后续的光学制造方面,近净尺寸成型能将镜体加工去除量减少90%以上,同时可实现交付周期的缩短和成本的极大降低。因此,SiC是新一代地基超大口径光电系统主镜的理想材料。

天基遥感与探测光电系统对重量的敏感性远高于地基系统,而且由于维修的难度和成本极高,需要光机系统具有长期稳定性。即使类似JWST的主镜分块共相拼接和主动光学等技术的应用,高刚性、高热学性能的SiC相对于玻璃、金属等柔性大、热稳定性低的材料,仍具有重力场下复杂精密结构的高精度加工性能优异、减重潜力大、热控效率高、主动光学/自适应光学控制系统简化、精密光机系统长时稳定性高、信息获取响应速率高等优势^[16]。结合光机一体化设计,结构拓

扑优化和增材制造等新型设计方法和制备技术,可望

进一步实现性能更优异的SiC光机结构。

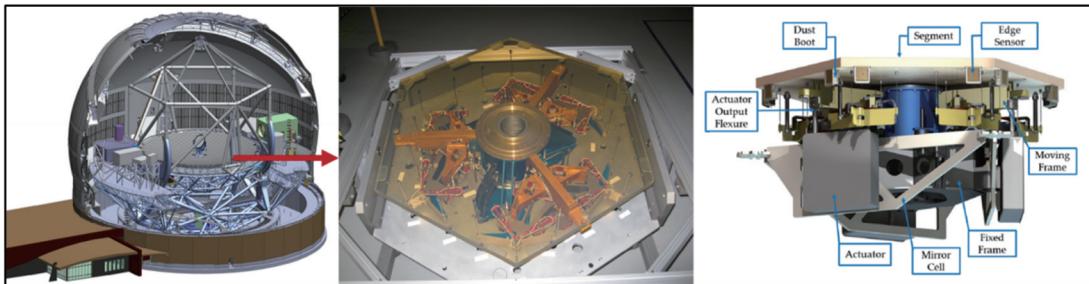


图 21 TMT 主镜、子镜及其支撑结构^[112]

Fig. 21 Primary mirror, its segments and supporting structures of TMT telescope^[112]

4.2 UV、软 X-ray 短波光学及强激光应用领域

天文观测、半导体制造等涉及的UV、X-ray短波光学,以及先进制造或武器装备所涉及的强激光应用领域,对光学元件共同的要求是表面超光滑和零缺陷,以提高光学表面反射率,从而保证高能量利用率、低杂散和低能量吸收。此外,两者还要求高热控效率,尽可能地降低光学表面温度梯度和快速耗散表面热量,保护增反膜层。本征的高热导特性赋予SiC在该应用领域巨大的优势。

通常认为SiC材料或存在残余气孔(常压烧结SiC),或具有明显的两相结构(反应烧结SiC)^[116],对抛光极为不利。但研究工作^[117]表明,在SiC基底表面镀制CVD SiC或PVD Si改性层,可以满足超光滑表面的制造。对于表面深度和孔径等特征尺寸大于10 μm的孔或夹杂等缺陷,改性层完全覆盖难度较大,可能影响抛光,并且当光学面承受较大的热载荷时,缺陷处容

易产生较大热量和应力集中,严重降低膜层的损伤阈值。因此,要在短波光学和强激光光学元件制造和应用领域发挥SiC材料的热性能优势,需要在原材料处理、预制体成型到致密化烧结整个材料制备链路,通过阐明多尺度下物相与结构的演化规律,缺陷产生的机理及其抑制的机制,形成全链路精细化、确定化的调控方法,实现SiC镜体材料的零缺陷化。另一方面,光学面所收集能量的密度日益提高,集成式主动热控是进一步实现光学面均温性、降低热变形、高效实现热耗散的方案^[118-119]。这一解决方案增加了SiC镜体结构的复杂度,传统材料制备技术上,SiC钎焊、反应连接等技术可用于内含流体腔道等复杂结构的制备,见图22^[120]。其中,反应连接因焊料-母材近同质化、化学稳定性高、可与反应烧结同时完成等特点,更具优势。增材制造技术的兴起,为此类SiC高性能、高集成化的非拔模结构制造提供更广阔的应用空间。

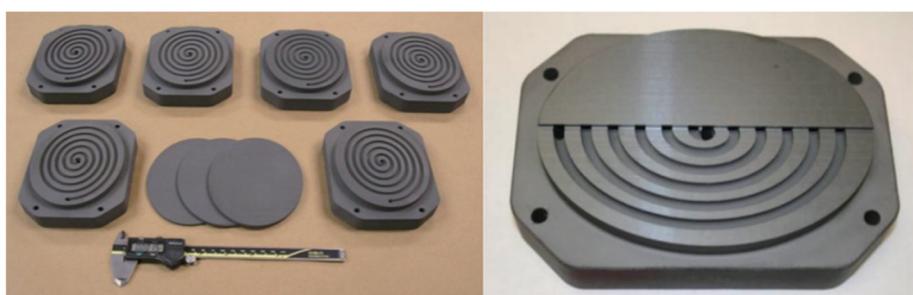


图 22 集成散热水冷通道的反应连接 RB-SiC 反射镜体^[120]

Fig. 22 Reaction joint of RB-SiC mirror with integrated water cooling channel^[120]

4.3 其他精密结构制造

如前述,SiC已在一系列光学精密仪器制造中应用于光学元件、焦平面探测器等高精度支撑结构,这充分体现了该材料的高刚性、高热稳定性优势。随着我国先进制造业的发展,其中所涉及的尖端半导体装备关键部件,如先进光刻工艺中高精度低惯量晶圆光刻工件台、压差式晶圆吸盘、精密滑动导轨、气浮导轨和转台、光学检测装备的光具座等,都迫切需要大尺寸高性能高复杂度(光/电/力/热集成化)SiC以及SiC基复合材料和部件。作为结构部件,SiC材料或部件的

力学性能需要优化,如需要充足的韧性、更大的韦伯模数等。同时,SiC材料或部件的需求量大,直面激烈的市场竞争,因此在保证性能、质量的前提下,采用新方法、优化的工艺和管理模式提高生产效率和有效管控成本,是提高我国在相关行业核心竞争力的最有效途径。

5 结束语

材料及其部件的应用优势以其“形”、“性”为基础。SiC因其键合方式和晶体结构,具有优异的力、热、化

学等综合性能优势。而SiC陶瓷组分与微观组织结构、宏观几何形状等多尺度结构的优化，则需要材料制备技术水平的进一步提升和制备方法的进一步革新。

在材料制备方面，常压烧结可获得接近单相的SiC材料组分，可充分发挥其本征性能的优势，但针对大尺寸光学元件制造，抑制烧结体非均匀化收缩和降低应力水平，仍是技术突破和工艺迭代的难点；反应烧结SiC收缩极小，可适配多种成型工艺，在成型体高度均匀的前提下，致密化烧结后材料各向同性和均匀性高，并且可通过增强相掺杂、组织结构优化实现材料的强韧化；CVC SiC材料的纯度极高、致密且性能优异，但复杂结构近净尺寸成型能力差，材料制备效率低、成本高。当前制备技术研究进展表明，先进成型工艺结合反应烧结是米级以上大尺寸SiC光学/精密结构构件制备的较优方案。

增材制造技术理论上可实现任意构形的制造，反应烧结是增材制造SiC充分致密化的最佳途径，因此增材制造结合反应烧结技术是复杂SiC陶瓷光学/精密构件理想的制备方法。但当前，SiC陶瓷增材制造技术仍需解决材料各向异性、固化/烧结收缩不一致、性能难以达到传统工艺制备的材料水平等问题。

在材料连接技术方面，反应连接具有焊缝-母材完全同质化、残余应力小等优势，相比螺栓连接、胶接、陶瓷相连接和钎焊，应用于尺寸精度高、长时稳定性的光机构件更具优势，是未来更大尺寸、更高复杂度SiC光学/精密结构制造的理想方案。

在航空航天遥感、半导体制造、短波光学等领域，特别是大口径光电系统、高端光刻设备、X射线、强激光装备等，对SiC材料及部件需求迫切，要求在大尺寸化、零缺陷化、性能强韧化、材料制备和部件制造成本控制等方面实现进一步的技术突破。因此，如何实现更优构型的可制造性，如何通过调控材料组分和显微组织结构提升服役性，从“形”、“性”两方面协同优化SiC陶瓷构件的性能，挖掘其在相关领域的应用潜力，是实现技术赶超和引领的关键。

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Research and Development of SiC Ceramic Fabrication Technologies for Optics and Fine Structures

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Abstract

Significance Due to the outstanding thermal-mechanical properties and the high resistance to radiation, abrasion, and corrosion, SiC ceramics can be ranked as the optimal materials for the manufacture of the optics and the precision structures for space/ground-based advanced opto-mechanical systems. They fulfill the increasing demands of aperture enlargement, weight budget reduction, thermomechanical management simplification, and long-term stability. During the

past three decades, ESA, NASA, JAXA, CASC, China Academy of Sciences, and so forth have been making great efforts to develop SiC components for remote sensors and telescopes for civilian and military applications at the cutting edge of the new generation optomechanical system development. The material preparation technologies and the relevant fabrication technologies, which determine the performance of the SiC components, the modules, and even the whole system, are the focus of the investigation and study.

Progress The major concerns of the great efforts paid to the SiC preparation technologies are the accomplishment of optical surface density, the homogeneity, and the isotropy of the SiC blanks, which are essential for the optomechanical application, as well as the improvement of the thermomechanical properties such as specific modulus and thermal stability, and the manufacturability of the large-scale structural complexities.

Among various SiC preparing technologies presented in Fig. 1, the densification methods of pressureless sintering, the reaction sintering/bonding and the chemical vapor composition/converting (CVC), combining the suited forming techniques for preforms, are proven to be effective for the SiC optics and precision structures. The pressureless sintered SiC possesses relatively better mechanical performance and homogeneity. It has presented isotropy, thermostability, and machinability during the development and in-orbit services of Herschel Space Observatory's (2009) $\Phi 3.5$ m primary mirror, GAIA (2014) and Euclid's (2023) all-SiC optomechanical structures. The maximum sizes of monolithic pressureless sintered SiC (S-SiC) optics reported reach $1.7\text{ m} \times 1.2\text{ m}$ (BOOSTEC) and $\Phi 1.5\text{ m}$ (Shanghai Institute of Ceramics, China Academy of Sciences). However, further enlargement encounters the difficulties of the large-size high-temperature sintering equipment construction, the high sintering shrinkage, and the resulting ununiform deformation and stress that might cause cracking. CVD or PVD cladding on the S-SiC surface is necessary for optical polishing due to the residual micropores. Typical reaction sintered/bonded SiC (RB-SiC) comprises SiC, free Si, and residual C that is detrimental to the materials. The results show that reaction sintering/bonding densification methods are suitable for various ceramic forming techniques and the shrinkages of the whole process can be kept lower than 1%. The sintering temperatures are as low as the melting point of Si and the homogeneous bonding of parts is practicable, which are the essential processes to realize the reported largest $\Phi 4.03$ m SiC mirror (Changchun Institute of Optics, Fine Mechanics and Physics, China Academy of Sciences, 2016), except for lower Young's modulus than that of single-phase SiC ceramics. The results of the previous study also demonstrated the effectiveness of the microstructure refining and the phase composition regulation on the improvement of the RB-SiC performance and optical manufacturability. SiC via chemical vapor composition/converting (CVC SiC) is a single-phase ceramic with high purity. Trex Enterprise developed the co-deposition of micro SiC powder and precursor derived SiC onto the mold along with the densification process. POCO company adapted the pure porous graphite as preforms, and the vapor SiO and Si as infiltration matters, which would react with the graphite to convert into beta SiC meanwhile promoting densification. The introduction of the heterogeneous nucleation cores of the micro SiC powders or the graphite surface increases the rate of the crystal growth via the vapor phase by 10 times more than that of the CVD process and helps to overcome the heterogeneity of the materials due to the columnar crystal growth and to reduce the stress between the interface of the sequential solidified phases, which enables the fabrication of 1.5 m class CVC SiC mirror blank. The properties of Trex's CVC SiC are as excellent as pure full-dense SiC ceramic and facilitate the direction polishing without additional surface modification for optical surface finishing. However, the deposit efficiency and the capability of the complex component fabrication are yet the bottleneck of the promotion of the CVC techniques.

As another determining factor for the performance of the SiC components, the improved structural configurations, such as topology-optimized structures (Fig. 12) and structures with the integrated cooling medium channels, exceed the capability of conventional technologies. Additive manufacturing (AM) or 3D printing techniques enable the free-form components manufacture. According to Goodman's investigation, based on the AM or 3D printing techniques, the weight reduction of the SiC optics comes up to 39% for 1–2.5 m class SiC mirrors for FIR application compared to JWST, and up to 40% of cost reduction. Investigation results show that additive manufacturing shaping combined with reaction sintering densifying is optimal for the preparation of the SiC materials for optics and precision structures. Binder jet printing, stereolithography/digital light processing, fused deposition modeling, and selective laser sintering are promising candidate methods for SiC or SiC-C preform forming. However, the problems of the lower performance compared to the materials via conventional methods, the heterogeneities of the materials, and the difficulties in non-uniform deformation control during the debonding and the reaction sintering are yet to be resolved.

The joint of SiC parts favors the large-scale optomechanical system construction less costly and risky. As a typical case of all-SiC structure, the Euclid payload demonstrated the bolt joint, epoxy bonding, ceramic bonding, and brazing of the pressureless sintered SiC parts (Figs. 17–18). The rigidity of the brazing joined components or the structural frames is more promising than that of the first two, though the bolt joint and the epoxy bonding might be realized at room temperature in a normal atmosphere and applicable for SiC and other materials. However, brazing will inevitably introduce residual stress due to the thermal mismatching of the base materials and the fillers, and due to the volume changing of the

fillers during solidification. The residual stress cannot be eliminated through the post process, hence increasing the uncertainty for the dimensional stability of the precision structures. Reaction bonding techniques facilitate the homogeneous joint through Si-C reaction, which can be carried out simultaneously with the reaction sintering process and avoid the residual stress. The microstructure of the joining area can be tailored to be identical to the parent RB-SiC parts.

The advantages of the SiC materials are expected to extend to the manufacture and applications of space/ground-based large aperture photoelectric imaging systems, short wave optics for ultraviolet to soft X-ray, high power laser optics, and other precision structures such as key components in semiconductor equipment. The merits brought about include the system rigidity and the weight lessening, and the improvement of the system sensitivity and reliability, thanks to the high specific stiffness, excellent thermal stability, high resistance to abrasion, and corrosion of the SiC ceramics.

Conclusions and Prospects The pressureless sintered SiC, reaction sintered SiC, and CVC SiC ceramics exhibit advantages in the optomechanical system manufacture due to their thermal mechanical comprehensive properties. To further promote the application of silicon carbide in precision engineering, it is necessary to develop new fabrication methods such as additive manufacture of SiC ceramics, and advanced SiC joint technologies for the innovative structural forms within an acceptable cost space. The improvements of the material microstructures and the properties from micro to macro scale via technical breakthrough are needed in advanced material forming, densification sintering, connection technologies, and applied technologies.

Key words optical materials; silicon carbide ceramic; optics and fine structure; densification technique; additive manufacturing; joining technology