



·强激光物理与技术·综述·

脉冲压缩光栅的激光损伤机理及 阈值提升技术研究进展^{*}

白清顺, 孙 浩, 李玉海, 张 鹏, 杜云龙

(哈尔滨工业大学 机电工程学院, 哈尔滨 150001)

摘要: 总结了激光辐射条件下脉冲压缩光栅的激光诱导损伤机理, 探究了表面形貌、加工方式、结构缺陷以及表面污染等因素对光栅损伤造成的影响, 从微观损伤机理的角度阐释了产生损伤的内在原因。在脉冲压缩光栅的激光预处理、加工工艺及表面污染物的去除等方面, 分析了实现光栅损伤阈值提升的内在因素, 给出了提升光栅损伤阈值的技术措施。根据影响光栅损伤阈值的因素, 提出在光栅运行过程中采用多种措施组合的方式来提升光栅的激光诱导损伤阈值。脉冲压缩光栅激光损伤机理和阈值的研究对脉冲压缩光栅系统的稳定运行具有实践意义, 为激光装置高能量密度的输出奠定基础。最后, 提出了光栅激光诱导损伤研究的科学与技术问题, 为脉冲压缩光栅激光诱导损伤阈值的提升提供新的思路, 服务于重大科学装置和重要技术领域的发展。

关键词: 脉冲压缩光栅; 激光诱导损伤阈值; 损伤机理; 阈值提升; 污染物

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Research progress on laser-induced damage mechanism and threshold improvement of pulse compression gratings

Bai Qingshun, Sun Hao, Li Yuhai, Zhang Peng, Du Yunlong

(School of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin 150001, China)

Abstract: The damage of pulse compression gratings is the key factor affecting the stable operation and power improvement of chirped pulse amplification system. In this paper, the laser-induced damage mechanism of pulse compression grating under laser radiation is summarized, the effects of surface morphology, processing mode, structural defects and surface pollution on grating damage are explored, and the internal causes of damage are explained from the perspective of micro damage mechanism. In the aspects of laser pretreatment, processing technology and surface pollutant removal of pulse compression grating, the internal factors to improve the grating damage threshold are analyzed, and the technical measures to improve the grating damage threshold are given. A combination of various measures is proposed to improve the laser-induced damage threshold of the grating. The research on laser damage mechanism and threshold of pulse compression grating has practical significance for the stable operation of pulse compression grating system and lays a foundation for the output of high energy density of laser device. Finally, this paper puts forward the scientific and technical problems of grating's laser-induced damage research, which provides new ideas for improving the laser-induced damage threshold of pulse compression grating, and help the development of major scientific devices and important technical fields.

Key words: pulse compression gratings, laser-induced damage threshold, damage mechanism, threshold improvement, pollution

高能量激光装置在激光-物质相互作用和紧凑型激光加速器、实验室天体物理学、惯性约束聚变(ICF)等^[1-3]方面有着重要应用。啁啾脉冲放大(CPA)技术^[4-6]是获得短脉冲高能量激光关键技术, CPA系统利用展宽器将短脉

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通信作者:白清顺, Qshbai@hit.edu.cn。

冲激光在时间上展宽几个量级,脉冲宽度达到几百皮秒甚至纳秒;展宽后的低功率脉冲经过激光增益介质放大,提高脉冲激光的峰值功率;最后经过压缩器将脉冲宽度压缩,得到峰值功率达到拍瓦级的飞秒脉冲激光^[7-8]。脉冲压缩光栅是 CPA 系统中实现高能量激光的核心光学元器件^[9-10],光栅工作时的损伤直接影响着压缩效率和峰值功率。因此,脉冲压缩光栅损伤研究对 CPA 系统稳定运行尤为重要。脉冲压缩光栅在拍瓦级高能量环境下稳定运行的指标是:在 1054 nm 的波长、且入射角为 61° 时,在 10 ps 脉冲激光作用下的激光诱导损伤阈值(LIDT)大于 2.7 J/cm²,且光栅的最小衍射效率(DE)为 97%^[11-12]。LIDT 是光学元器件在损伤概率为零时所能够承受的最大能量密度,限制高能量激光装置的最大工作光通量^[13-14]。

为了满足高能量激光输出及光栅尺寸不断增大的要求,脉冲压缩管光栅(PCG)需要复杂的加工工艺。同时,由于 CPA 系统中最后一块脉冲压缩光栅的功率密度最高,最容易损伤,导致高能量激光的输出能量无法进一步提升。为提升高能量激光装置的输出能量,应研究在飞秒激光辐射条件下 PCG 的损伤机理。在 PCG 的外在损伤机制方面,Hopper 和 Danileiko 提出:材料内部杂质吸收激光辐射能量,导致温度升高^[15-16]。同时,吸收的热量会传递到周围介质中,导致光栅损伤阈值下降,前提是假设材料的光学、热学和弹性性质与温度无关。但是,现实条件下,光学材料的性能与温度密切相关,这种温度无关性的假设不合理。Danileiko 与 Koldunov 提出了热爆炸模型,即高能量激光辐射条件下,杂质引起材料的热不稳定性,导致杂质周围材料发生光电离^[17-18]。这种机理可以准确地解释损伤阈值的脉宽依赖性,且考虑了材料性能与温度的相关性,但是这种理论被限制在材料内部存在杂质情况下。后续,也提出了光栅材料的损伤机制:光电离^[19-20]和电子碰撞电离^[21-22]。这两种损伤机制可以较好地解释在短脉冲激光辐射下,光栅材料损伤的原因。Stuart 等^[23]发现 1960 lines/mm 的多层介质膜光栅损伤开始于电场强度最大位置。优化 PCG 的电场强度,提高损伤阈值成为研究的重点^[24-25]。

在飞秒激光辐射下,多因素耦合致使光栅损伤成为限制能量输出的瓶颈。光栅损伤涉及到电场强度、光电离以及自由电子碰撞等方面。本文研究了 PCG 微观损伤机理,获得提高 LIDT 的方法,并总结出阈值提升的方案。开展脉冲压缩光栅损伤机理的研究,对提升 PCG 的 LIDT 具有重要理论意义和应用价值。

1 脉冲压缩光栅损伤机理

脉冲压缩光栅损伤机制受到脉冲宽度的影响显著。在不同脉冲宽度的激光辐射下,脉冲压缩光栅的材料损伤机理表现不同。在大于 10⁻¹³ s 的长脉冲激光辐射条件下,热量吸收是光栅材料损伤的主要原因,主要包括 3 个过程^[14]:一是辐射吸收,基底吸收激光能量;二是能量转移,将吸收的能量从吸收部位传递到其他位置;三是热机械响应,缺陷部位的能量吸收导致材料内部应力增加。激光辐射能量在材料中积累,会出现热吸收,造成光学材料的损伤^[21]。小于 10⁻¹³ s 的短脉冲激光的损伤机制不同于长脉冲激光的损伤机制^[26-27]。首先,光栅材料吸收激光辐射能量,激发出自由电子,并发生多光子电离,致使电子能量跃迁到更高能量级;再者,在激光辐射下,光栅柱附近的电场强度升高,并且在光栅脊处电场强度最大,利用归一化电场强度(NEFI)表征激光辐射下电场强度变化。电场强度升高会加速激光辐射下自由电子的运动,加剧自由电子的碰撞,导致光栅材料雪崩电离^[21, 28]。短脉冲激光辐射下,光栅材料的损伤发生在光栅柱峰值电场强度处^[29-30],且膜层材料的损伤过程主要包含 3 部分:(1)热过程,光栅材料吸收激光辐射能量并产生热量,激发出大量的自由电子;(2)介电过程,电场强度升高并从晶格中剥离电子,致使自由电子密度增加;(3)多光子电离,随着能量升高到足够高时,剥离的电子瞬间被提升到更高的能级,自由电子运动速度继续升高^[31-33]。在电场强度作用下,自由电子碰撞加剧,导致光栅材料雪崩电离破坏。

2 脉冲压缩光栅损伤的影响因素

2.1 脉冲压缩光栅的结节缺陷及其影响

结节缺陷是多层介质膜中一种典型的 μm 级缺陷^[34],是光栅膜层损坏的原因之一。通常情况下,符合 PCG 设计标准的光栅比存在结节缺陷光栅的 LIDT 高 1~2 倍^[35]。在光栅制造过程中,污染、划痕、凹坑以及在沉积层中的杂质等都会在光栅膜层中引入结节缺陷。在激光辐射条件下,结节缺陷逐渐形成倒锥形形貌,其顶部突出在膜层表面^[36-39]。结节缺陷在激光辐射下的成核模型如图 1(a)所示,最终会出现大块膜层脱落现象,形成尺寸较大的损伤凹坑,损伤后形貌如图 1(c)所示。

根据结节缺陷的位置,可以分为两种情况:(1)结节缺陷位于光栅柱下,如图 2(a)所示;(2)结节缺陷位于光栅槽下,如图 2(b)所示。当结节缺陷位于光栅柱下以及结节缺陷直径小于光栅柱宽度时,只有结节缺陷上的光栅柱损坏,光栅柱附近电场分布几乎没有变化;当结节缺陷直径大于光栅柱宽度时,结节缺陷上方光栅柱消失,且中心

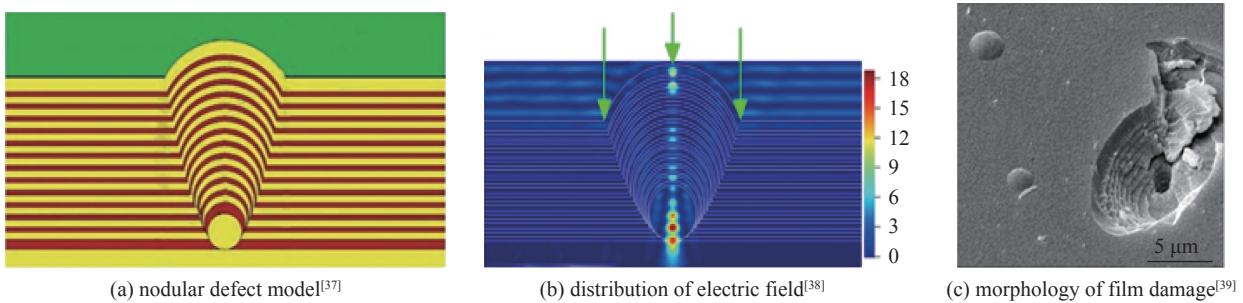


Fig. 1 Nodular defect morphology under laser irradiation

图 1 在激光辐射下结节缺陷形貌

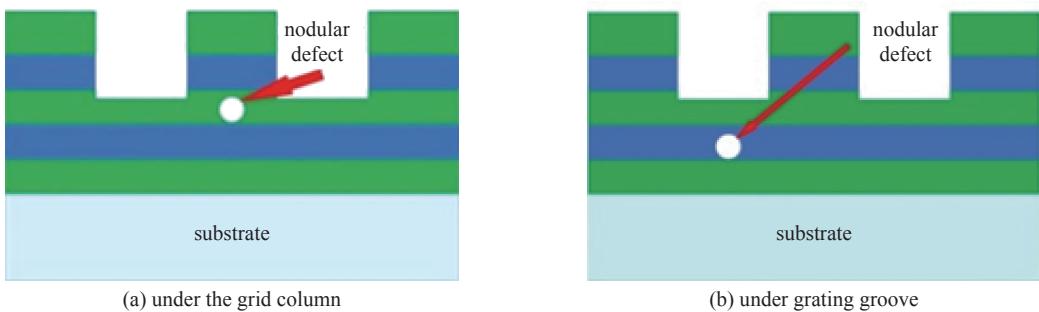
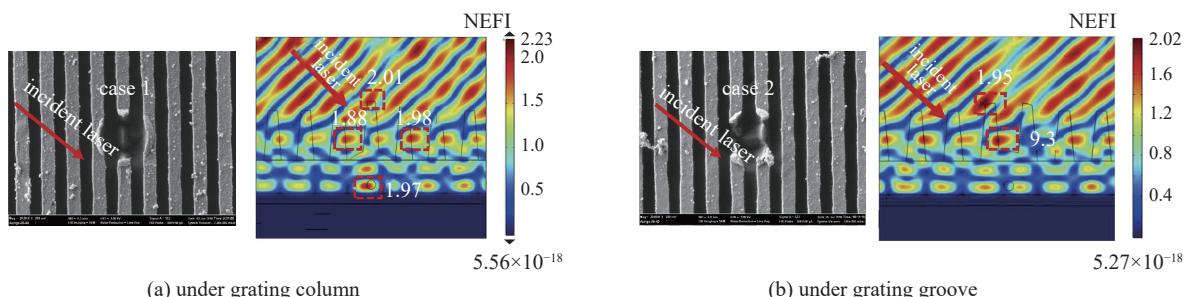


Fig. 2 Distribution of nodular defects in gratings

图 2 光栅中结节缺陷的分布情况

光栅柱的相邻两个光栅柱也会受到损伤, 损伤情况如图 3(a)所示, 结节缺陷处电场强度远远大于无结节处电场强度。当结节缺陷位于光栅槽下方时, 在结节直径大于槽底宽度时, 上方的光栅槽损坏, 并且相邻的两个光栅柱也受到了损伤, 光栅表面的损伤如图 3(b)所示。同时, 结节缺陷处电场强度增加。结节缺陷附近电场强度增强, 导致多光子电离增强以及自由电子碰撞加剧^[40]。并且, 结节缺陷引起的局部电场增强致使该部位的电子密度迅速达到临界值, 造成材料雪崩电离, 光栅膜层开始损伤, 最终会导致光栅表面形貌损坏以及激光诱导损伤阈值的下降^[40]。

Fig. 3 Grating damage morphology and electric field distribution caused by nodular defects at different positions of s-polarized Ti:Sapphire laser with an incident angle of 65° and a pulse duration of 32 fs^[41]图 3 s 偏振 Ti 蓝宝石激光器在 65°入射角, 脉冲持续时间 32 fs 时, 不同位置结节缺陷引起的光栅损伤形貌及电场分布^[41]

2.2 激光注入能量和脉冲数的影响

激光注入能量与脉冲数也会影响 PCG 的 LIDT。通常情况下, 多脉冲激光辐射下的 PCG 的 LIDT 比单脉冲低得多, 且随着激光注入能量的增加而下降。激光注入能量和脉冲数与 PCG 的 LIDT 的影响关系如图 4 所示。图 4 展示了飞秒激光辐射条件下, PCG 的损伤演变情况。横坐标表示随着脉冲数对表面形貌的影响, 纵坐标是激光注入能量对表面形貌的影响。随着激光注入能量及脉冲数的增加, PCG 膜层会依次出现如图 4(a)与图 4(d)所示的纳米凸点、图 4(b)、图 4(e)所示的凸点增多以及图 4(c)所示的纳米裂纹出现, 最终出现图 4(f)所示的膜层脱落。少量脉冲辐射时, 激光光斑中心形成了纳米裂纹; 在膜层出现纳米裂纹以后, 随着激光脉冲数量增加, 纳米裂纹将从激光光斑中心向边缘扩散。脉冲数增加, 纳米裂纹的密度和横向尺寸随之增加; 脉冲数继续增加, 光斑中心到边缘损伤密度呈现不均匀分布状态。

在单脉冲激光注入能量为 1.42 J/cm^2 时, 光栅膜层中缺陷的影响会导致凸点的产生。凸点附近的电场强度增

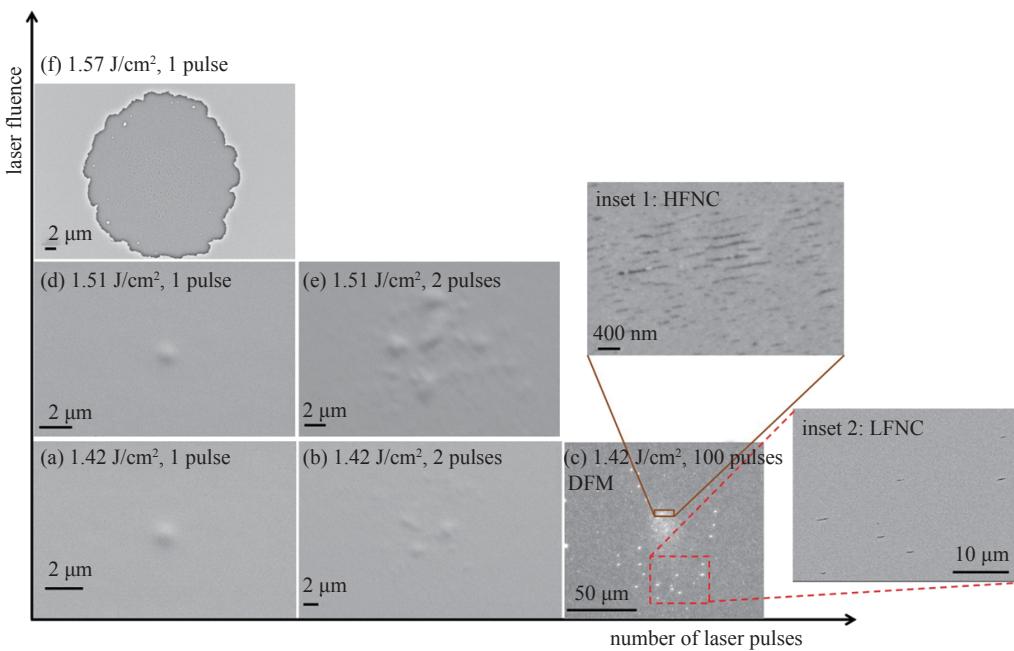


Fig. 4 Damage evolution of grating film under irradiation of 120 fs, 796 nm, 10 Hz laser^[40]. (a)(d) nano bumps; (b)(e) surface roughness; (c) nano cracks; (f) film falling off
图 4 在 120 fs, 796 nm, 10 Hz 激光作用下, 光栅膜层的损伤演变^[40]

强, 光电离效应与自由电子碰撞几率增加, 加剧光栅膜层纳米裂纹的形成。并且随着纳米裂纹的形成, 光栅表面电场强度进一步增强^[40-42]。自由电子的碰撞加剧产生的缺陷, 促进纳米裂纹生长^[43], 最终会导致光栅膜层脱落, 引起PCG的LIDT下降。

2.3 脉冲压缩光栅膜层沉积工艺的影响

根据PCG膜层种类可以划分为三类:金属光栅(ACG)、多层介质膜光栅(MDG)及金属多层介质膜光栅(MMDG), 膜层分布如图5所示。最初使用的是金属光栅, 该光栅具有较高的衍射效率及较宽的带宽, 被认为是理想的PCG^[44]。但是这种光栅的损伤阈值一般不超过0.6 J/cm²。多层介质膜光栅可以实现更高的LIDT, MDG在基体上交替沉积SiO₂/HfO₂膜层, 实现较高的LIDT, 且DE也接近100%^[45-47]。但是多层介质膜间存在应力, 容易产生裂纹^[48], 降低光栅的物理性能。为了减少多层介质膜间内应力, Bonod^[24]研究了金属多层介质膜光栅, 先在基体上镀上一层金膜, 再交替沉积SiO₂与HfO₂膜层, 在缓解内应力的同时提高了带宽。这3种光栅都需要在基体上沉积膜层, 因此PCG膜层的沉积工艺对光栅的损伤阈值有着重要的影响。

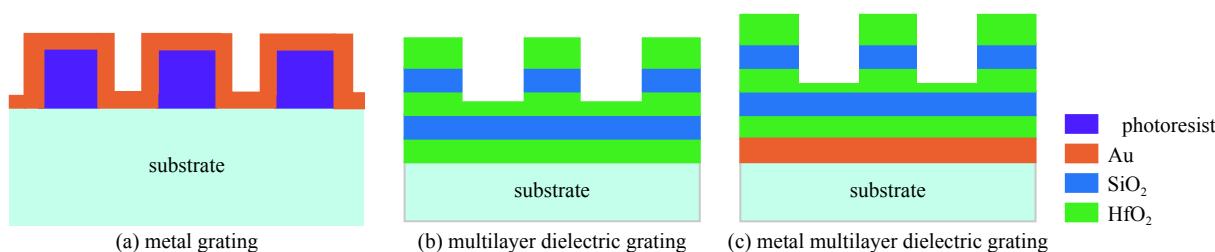


Fig. 5 Distribution of grating films

图 5 光栅膜层的分布方式

电子束蒸发和磁控溅射是基底上沉积膜层的两种方法。其中电子束蒸发制备的光栅具有一定的抗激光损伤性能并且膜层内应力低, 但是膜层与基体及膜层间的结合力并不强。采用电子束蒸发制备的金属光栅, 典型损伤形态是膜层脱落, 且随着辐射强度的增加而损伤加重。电子束蒸发制备膜层的损伤程度与辐射强度间的关系如图6所示^[49]。当激光注入能量达到0.55 J/cm²时, 金属膜开裂; 当激光注入能量达到0.65 J/cm²时, 部分金属膜脱落并出现扩张趋势。电子束蒸发制备的膜层损伤过程为气泡形成、膜层开裂以及膜层脱落。气泡形成的原因是膜层的应力松弛和软化膜的强制膨胀^[50]。对气泡区观察, 光栅柱底部出现随机的针孔特征, 如图7所示, 这些针孔是诱发薄膜脱落的因素。膜层从光栅基底上剥落后, 大部分光刻胶刻蚀的光栅槽型完好, 并且出现熔融的金属颗粒,

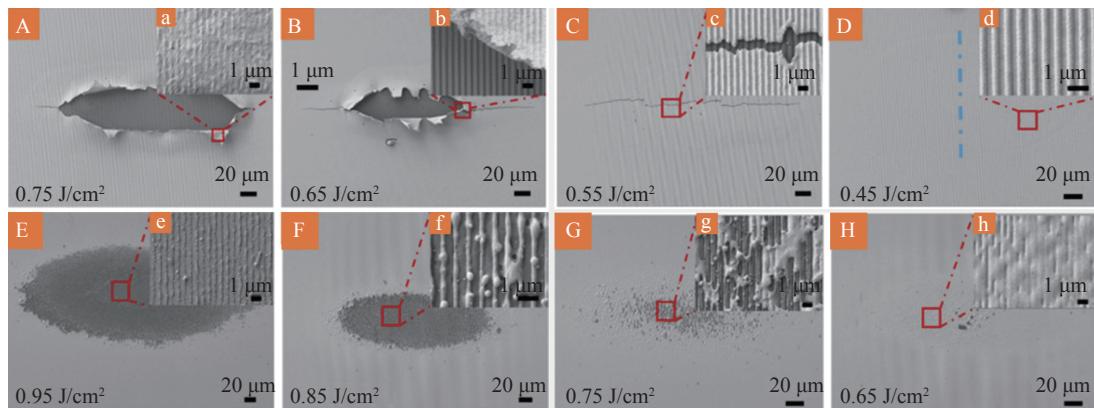
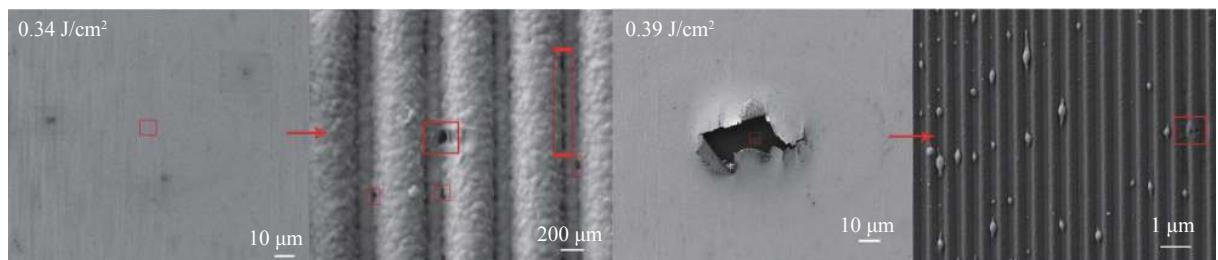


Fig. 6 Grating damage morphologies of Ti: Sapphire laser with different laser injection energy and film deposition methods at a frequency of 1 kHz and a pulse duration of 60 fs^[50]

图 6 Ti 蓝宝石激光在频率 1 kHz, 脉冲持续时间 60 fs 时, 不同激光注入能量及膜层沉积方式的光栅损伤形貌^[50]



(a) injection energy is 0.34 J/cm^2 , (b) local amplification of fig (a) the film bulges and pinholes occur at the bulges
(c) when the injection energy is 0.39 J/cm^2 , the film breaks
(d) metal particles appear when the film breaks

Fig. 7 Damage morphology of ACG prepared by electron beam evaporation with Ti: Sapphire laser at frequency 1 kHz and pulse duration 60 fs^[51]

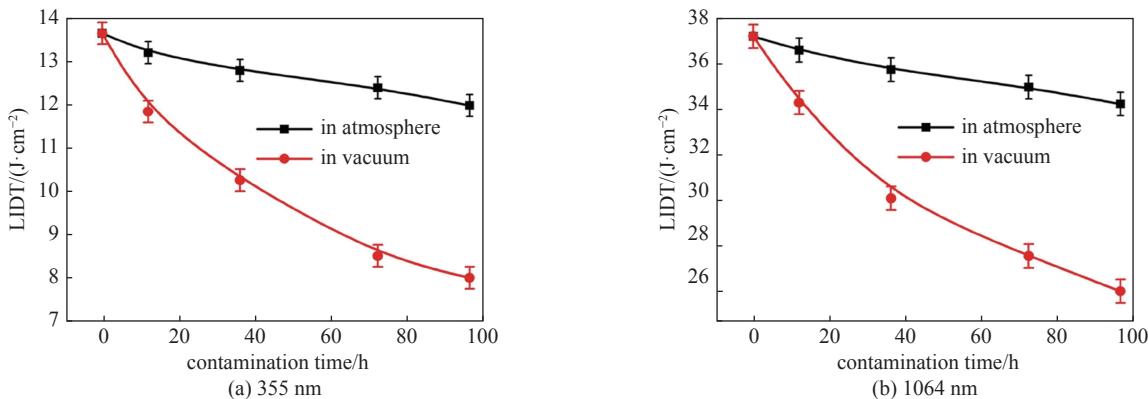
图 7 Ti 蓝宝石激光在频率 1 kHz, 脉冲持续时间 60 fs 时, 电子束蒸发制备的金属光栅损伤形貌^[51]

对应图 7(d)中的白色颗粒^[51]。光栅柱底部随机出现的针孔被认为是局部薄弱点, 当激光照射到金属光栅表面时, 激光可能通过针孔照射到下面的光刻胶上。光刻胶吸收能量后, 发生光电离, 产生大量自由电子, 并在电场作用下自由电子的碰撞加剧。由于金属膜与光刻胶的界面结合强度很弱, 损伤会发生在膜层烧蚀之前, 自由电子的碰撞作用促使膜层与基体上光刻胶分离, 并形成气泡^[52]。在激光辐射条件下, 光栅表面出现凸点, 并且凸点附近电场强度增强, 导致光栅膜层损伤直至膜层脱落。

磁控溅射加工制备的光栅可以获得较强的结合力以及较好抗激光损伤性能^[42], 对应的损伤机制为热烧蚀。在不同激光注入能量下, 磁控溅射制备金属光栅的典型损伤形貌是金属膜层熔化, 如图 6(E)-(G)所示。随着激光注入量的增加, 膜层吸收能量增加, 当激光注入能量为 0.95 J/cm^2 时, 金属膜层吸收激光辐射能量, 引起光栅膜层熔化, 导致 ACG 表面微结构几乎消失。金属膜层吸收激光能量后, 电离出大量自由电子。随着激光辐射时间增加, 自由电子数量增多, 自由电子碰撞加剧。磁控溅射的膜层与基体间结合力强, 不易出现膜层脱落。

2.4 脉冲压缩光栅表面污染的影响

在封闭或真空环境中, 高能量激光辐射下的污染物会导致膜层损伤, 造成光栅损伤阈值下降^[53-54]。光栅表面污染物的来源一般分为直接和间接来源。直接来源是在加工、生产、运输以及运行环境中, 吸附在光栅表面的污染物。采用超洁净制造技术可以减少加工过程的污染物残留^[55]; 在使用之前的清洗, 可以去除大部分的污染物, 但是仍有少量污染物残留; 而间接来源的污染物则是光栅运行过程中, 由于光栅损伤而产生的污染物以及其它元器件产生的污染物吸附到光栅表面。由于范德华力和静电力作用, 间接吸附的污染物难以清除, 造成 PCG 的 LIDT 下降^[56-57]。光栅表面膜层受到污染的影响巨大, 尤其是有机物, 如烷烃、不饱和烃、芳香烃等^[58-60]。图 8 表明, 脉冲压缩光栅表面二氧化硅溶胶凝胶膜的损伤阈值随着污染时间的增加而下降。在相同污染时间下, 真空条件下的 LIDT 远低于大气环境下的损伤阈值。这是因为污染物分子不断吸收激光辐照的能量, 会导致污染物分子碳化, 并积聚热量产生高温, 激发出大量自由电子, 自由电子继续吸收能量, 传给晶格, 使材料温度进一步升高^[61], 温度升高致使表面形貌损伤加剧^[62]。同时, 污染物附近电场强度增加, 加速激发出的自由电子, 加剧电子碰撞, 导致更多电子从

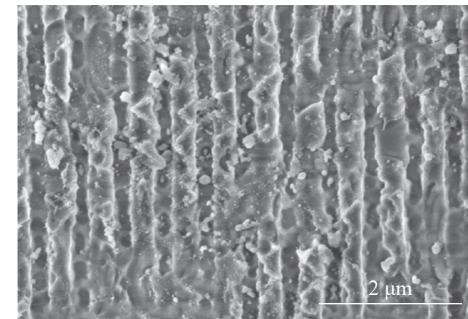
Fig. 8 Changes of LIDT of SiO_2 sol-gel film with pollution time^[63]图 8 SiO_2 溶胶凝胶膜损伤阈值随污染时间的变化情况^[63]

晶格中分离出来时,致使光栅表面材料雪崩电离,造成光栅表面膜层损伤,产生永久的膜层结构损坏。在高能激光作用下,表面的熔石英颗粒会导致 PCG 表面出现损伤,颗粒污染引起的损伤形态如图 9 所示,表面微观结构几乎都被破坏。

综上所述,PCG 的 LIDT 的影响因素主要包含结节缺陷、激光注入能量和脉冲数、膜层沉积工艺以及表面污染等。各影响因素造成损伤的表现形式及损伤机制如表 1 所示。不同因素造成光栅的损伤形貌表现形式不同,但是其机理可以归结为:光栅材料在激光的作用下发生电离,产生大量自由电子;其次,电场强度增加,自由电子碰撞加剧;最终造成光栅材料发生雪崩电离,致使光栅材料损伤,PCG 的 LIDT 下降。

表 1 激光诱导损伤阈值影响因素的对比
Table 1 Comparison of influencing factors of laser-induced damage threshold

influencing factor	damage forms	damage mechanism
nodular defect ^[37-40]	(1) under the grating column: the central grating column disappear, the adjacent two grating columns partially disappear (2) under the grating groove: two adjacent grating columns disappear	with the increase of electric field strength, the collision effect of free electrons is enhanced, which leads to avalanche ionization
laser injection energy and pulse number ^[41-42]	damage process: bump generation, more bumps, nano crack, film falling off	the bumps are formed by nodular defects, the electric field is enhanced, the free electron collision is intensified, the nano cracks are formed, and the film finally falls off
film deposition process ^[49-51]	(1) electron beam evaporation preparation: bubble formation, nano crack generation and propagation, and final film peeling off (2) magnetron sputtering: melting of films and microstructures ^[49-51]	the photoresist ionizes free electrons to cause bubbles; with the increase of electric field strength, the nano cracks and the film peeling off ionization of free electrons; as the radiation time increases, the number of free electrons increases, the collision intensifies, and the radiation energy absorption causes the gold film to melt
surface contamination ^[56-57]	organic contamination carbonization, surface microstructure damage	the contamination absorbs radiation energy and excites free electrons; with the increase of electric field strength, electron collision and avalanche ionization are intensified

Fig. 9 Damage morphologies of MMDG with $1.48 \text{ J}/\text{cm}^2$ of particulate pollutants at pulse duration of 8.6 ps ^[64]图 9 脉冲持续时间 8.6 ps 时, $1.48 \text{ J}/\text{cm}^2$ 的颗粒污染物对 MMDG 的损伤形貌^[64]

3 脉冲压缩光栅抗损伤能力提升方法

3.1 光栅制备工艺的改进方法

PCG 的制备工艺流程如图 10 所示,首先在石英基底上交替沉积 HfO_2 和 SiO_2 膜层,接着,对顶层 HfO_2 上的光刻胶进行全息曝光和显影,然后使用刻蚀技术将栅槽型转移到 HfO_2 膜上,最终得到 PCG 的槽型^[51];而 MMDG 的

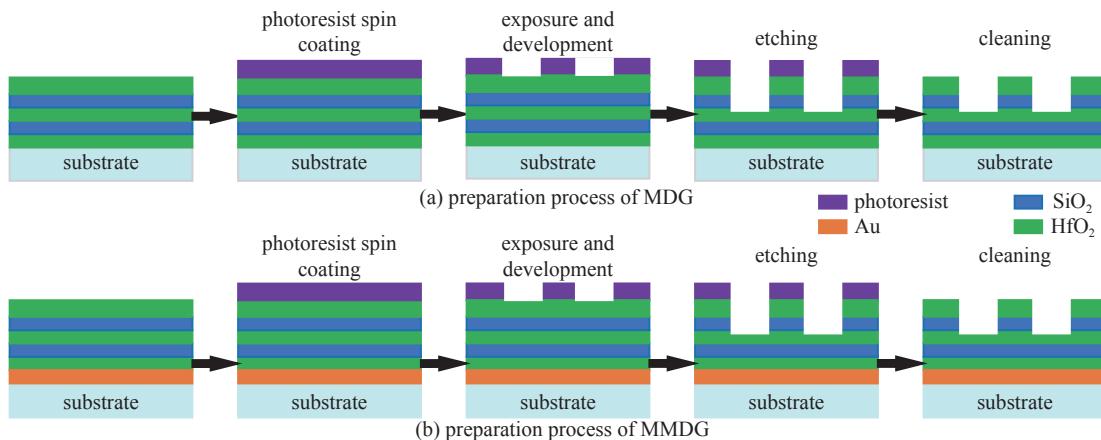


Fig. 10 Typical pulse compression grating preparation process

图 10 典型的脉冲压缩光栅制备工艺流程

制备过程与 MDG 类似,不同之处是 MMDG 需要首先在基底上镀一层金属薄膜,后续工艺流程类似于 MDG 制备工艺^[62]。膜层制备工艺及刻蚀工艺的改进可以提高脉冲压缩光栅的激光诱导损伤阈值。

3.1.1 膜层的高温退火制备

基体上交替沉积 HfO₂ 和 SiO₂ 膜层时,采用高温退火制备的 HfO₂ 薄膜具有很强的抗激光损伤能力。在不同的退火温度下,HfO₂ 薄膜的 LIDT 如图 11 所示,制备的 HfO₂ 薄膜在 353 K 下退火后,损伤阈值达到 31.6 J/cm²。退火处理后的膜层具有高的损伤阈值的原因是:膜层退火可以降低膜层表面粗糙度,从而降低光栅附近的电场强度^[41]。但是,随着退火温度的升高,膜层的 LIDT 下降,可能是由于膜层材料在退火过程中,有机物蒸发造成缺陷^[65] 及材料相变,晶体增长导致的薄膜散射以及粗糙度增加^[66]。然而,在 573 K 的温度下退火后,薄膜的损伤阈值仍可以达到 21.7 J/cm²,具有很强的抗激光损伤能力。在基底表面沉积多层介质膜时,可以采用高温退火的方式来制备多层介质光栅的 HfO₂ 薄膜,以达到较高的 LIDT。

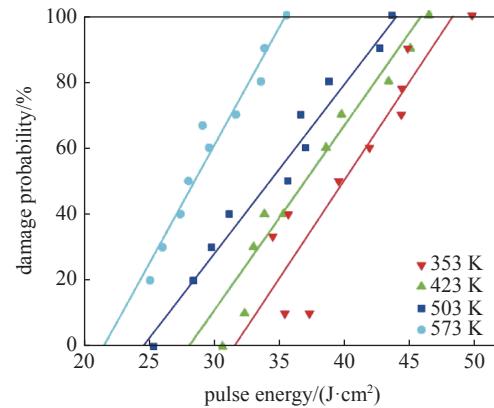
3.1.2 膜层的离子束刻蚀

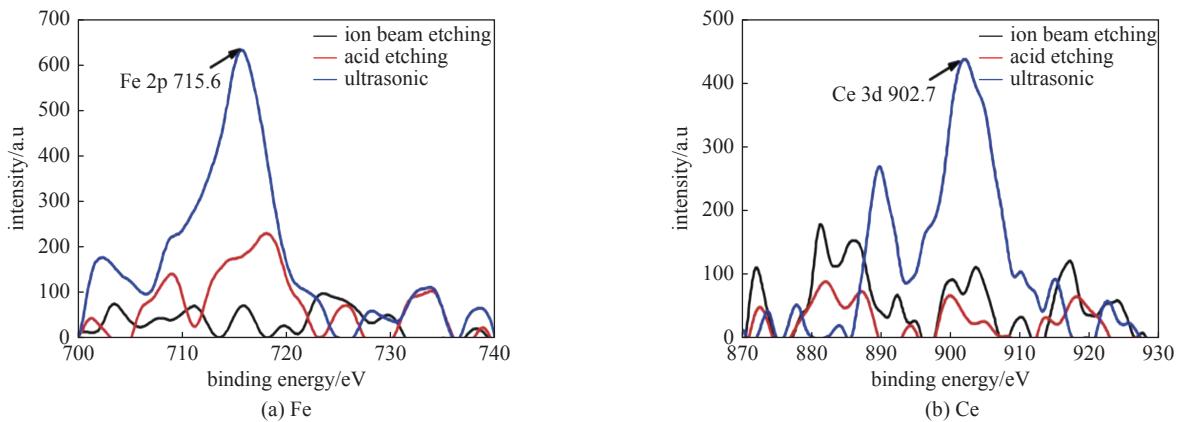
采用离子束刻蚀技术,可以促使 PCG 膜层表面和亚表面变得平滑,降低光栅表面粗糙度,降低电场强度。同时,光栅表面粗糙度的下降,降低光栅对污染物的吸附,减少污染物对激光能量的吸收而减少自由电子数量;离子束溅射可以减小光栅膜层的缺陷密度,降低光栅缺陷周围的电场强度^[67];离子束溅射技术还可以减少表面杂质元素的浓度^[68-69],减少自由电子。不同刻蚀方式后,表面元素含量对比如图 12 所示,离子束刻蚀后,表面的杂质元素的含量明显下降,具有良好的效果。

3.2 纳秒激光的辐照方法

中国科学院上海光学精密机械研究所提出:在脉冲压缩光栅使用之前,采用纳秒激光预辐照技术,对高能量激光装置中易损坏的光学元件具有潜在的保护作用,提高光栅的激光诱导损伤阈值^[70]。对光栅进行纳秒脉冲激光预处理,损伤概率为零时的能量由 0.2 J/cm² 提升到 0.22 J/cm²,LIDT 提高了 10%。飞秒激光单辐射以及纳秒预辐射处理后光栅两种损伤状态如图 13 所示,纳秒激光预处理后的光栅在飞秒激光辐射作用后,仍具有明显的槽型结构;无纳秒激光预处理的光栅,光栅柱几乎消失,致使光栅基本功能丧失。

纳秒预辐照在特定情况下会提高脉冲压缩光栅的性能。首先,纳秒预辐照对光栅表面进行清洁,去除光栅表面部分污染物,有助于降低自由电子浓度。其次,纳秒预辐射可以促进光栅表面退火,降低光栅表面的粗糙度,从而降低电场强度^[71]。纳秒预辐射的清洗作用与退火效应降低膜层表面粗糙度,这两种作用相互结合可以有效提升脉冲压缩光栅的损伤阈值。

Fig. 11 Laser-induced damage thresholds of HfO₂ films at annealing temperatures of 353 K, 423 K, 503 K and 573 K^[65]图 11 在 353 K、423 K、503 K 以及 573K 退火温度下 HfO₂ 薄膜的激光诱导损伤阈值^[65]

Fig. 12 Elements content of the surface of the substrates^[69]图 12 基底表面的元素含量^[69]

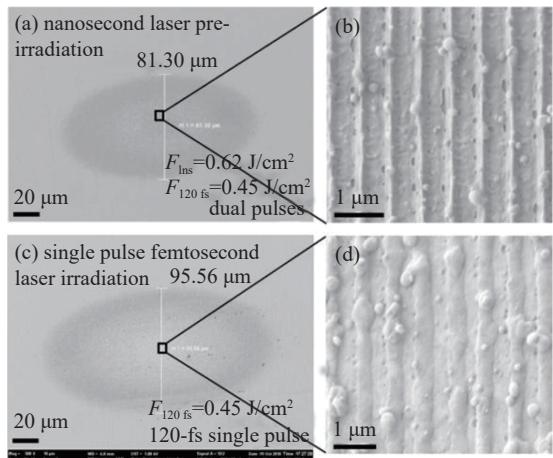
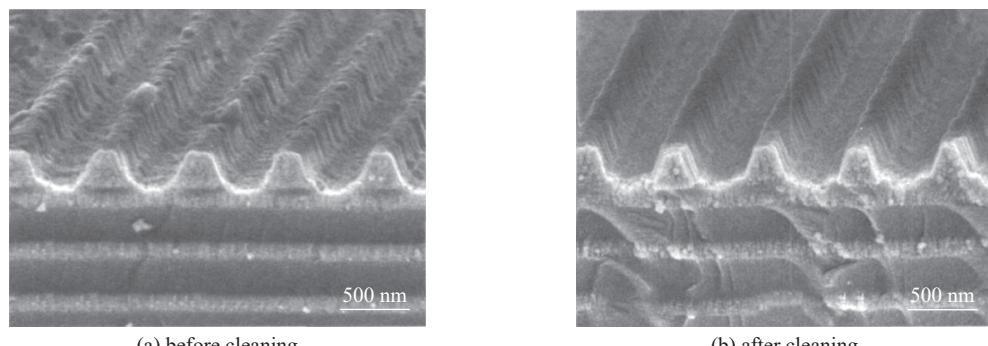
3.3 脉冲压缩光栅的清洗技术

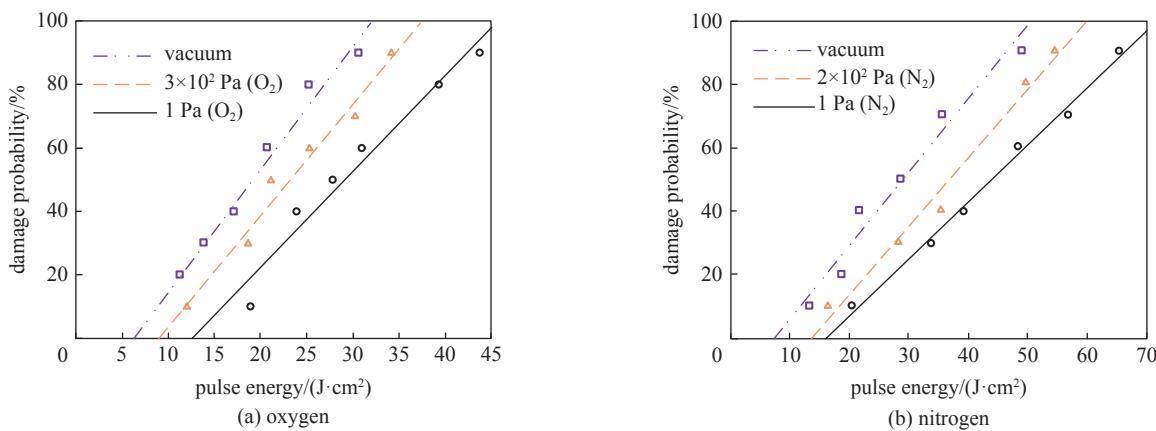
对PCG表面污染物进行清洗,可以有效提高光栅的LIDT和DE。针对光栅表面的污染物,学者提出了不同清洗方案:利用Piranha酸(98% H₂SO₄+30% H₂O₂)溶液去除光栅表面的光刻胶^[72],HPM溶液(37% HCl+30% H₂O₂+DIH₂O)清洗去除金属元素,兆声清洗光栅表面的光刻胶和溅射沉积物^[73],大气常压等离子体去除光学元器件表面有机物以及风刀去除表面颗粒污染物^[74-75],结合等离子体清洗以及干法清洗的方法也能够实现表面污染物的去除,清洗前后的效果对比如图14所示^[76]。光栅表面清洗可以减少表面污染物,降低污染物电离出的电子数量,减小电子碰撞概率,提高脉冲压缩光栅的损伤阈值。

光栅的后期清洗技术是保证激光高能量稳定输出的关键。为了降低混合酸溶液导致光栅膜层可能出现的起泡和局部分层的现象^[77],以及满足在位清洗、表面无损伤、极端工况、高质高效等要求^[78-79],可以采用干法清洗技术。等离子清洗技术作为一种干法清洗工艺,具有污染物去除效率高、清洗表面无损伤、清洗表面无损伤以及实现复杂装置中零件的在位清洗等优势,是未来非常有前景的技术方案。

3.4 损伤阈值提升的其它方法

在真空环境中引入少量氧气和氮气,可以提高光学膜层在真空环境中的抗激光损伤能力^[80]。如图15所示,在氧气和氮气含量较少的真空环境中,光学膜层的LIDT均增大。不同的气体环境以及气体压力对损伤阈值有很大的影响,在高气压下可以获得较高的激光损伤阈值。引入气体使得激光损伤阈值提高的原因可以归结为:光学膜

Fig. 13 Damage state of Ti: Sapphire laser in the state of single-pulse and double-pulse radiation at a frequency of 10 Hz and a pulse duration of 35 fs^[70]图 13 Ti 蓝宝石激光在频率 10 Hz, 脉冲持续时间 35 fs 时, 单脉冲辐射及双脉冲辐射状态下损伤状态^[70]Fig. 14 SEM images of grating before and after cleaning^[76]图 14 光栅清洗前后扫描电镜图^[76]

Fig. 15 Damage probability of introduced gas under vacuum and different pressures^[80]图 15 引入气体在真空及不同压力条件下的损伤概率^[80]

层中存在多孔结构，暴露于真空环境中膜层的水蒸气解吸导致膜层的折射率降低，从而导致膜层的热导率发生变化^[81-82]。这种工艺具有操作简便、经济性好、可在线操作等优点，但是引入杂质气体，会降低真空度，造成激光色散。

针对光栅的预处理、膜层制备工艺、微结构刻蚀、污染物清洗、光栅气氛环境等工艺方案，分析光栅微观损伤机理，获得相应工艺的损伤影响和优缺点，如表 2 所示。表 2 中涉及多种激光损伤阈值的提升技术方案，但是实践表明单种方案对光栅损伤阈值提升作用有限。在实际激光损伤阈值提升工艺操作过程中，可以根据脉冲压缩光栅的工作情况，同时使用多种组合方案，实现光栅损伤阈值的提升。

表 2 激光损伤阈值提升工艺方案的比较

Table 2 Comparison of laser damage threshold enhancement process schemes

technological process	advantages	disadvantages
high temperature annealing ^[65-66]	the film performance is improved; significant LIDT increase	annealing temperature and time have great influence on the LIDT; the operation is complicated
ion beam etching ^[67-68]	remove of pollutants; reduction of defect density	potential damage to the surface
nanosecond laser pre-irradiation ^[70]	easy operation; on-line operation; removal of pollutants	heat accumulation on grating surface caused by long time pre-radiation
cleaning of PCG ^[72-74]	significant effect of threshold promotion; easy operation; plasma cleaning can be used to realize on-line cleaning	the pollutants produced in operation cannot be removed; chemical cleaning method is difficult to realize on-line cleaning
introduction of O ₂ and N ₂ ^[80]	easy operation; good economy; on-line operation	introduction of impurity gas reduces the vacuum degree, resulting in laser dispersion

光栅加工过程的离子束刻蚀及膜层退火方案，可以降低膜层粗糙度。光栅使用前的预处理方案，可以进一步降低膜层粗糙度以及光栅表面污染物。在光栅使用过程中利用在线清洗技术，减少污染物对光栅影响。而光栅运行环境中引入 O₂、N₂，可以降低水蒸气解吸现象。本文总结的损伤阈值提升方案涉及到光栅制造和使用的不同阶段，并且这些工艺措施不易产生显著的工艺冲突。因此，可以借助不同阶段损伤阈值提升工艺方案的组合，实现激光诱导损伤阈值的稳定提升。

4 光栅损伤阈值提升需要解决的关键问题

基于脉冲压缩光栅激光诱导损伤机理的分析以及损伤阈值提升的迫切需求，本文认为脉冲压缩光栅损伤阈值提升亟须解决的关键科学问题为脉冲压缩光栅的表面状态演化规律及其失效机制问题。在解决这一科学问题后，需要开展关键技术问题的研究，即激光诱导损伤的影响因素辨析和损伤阈值的提升技术。图 16 为脉冲压缩光栅激光损伤研究的科学与技术问题及其内涵。光栅表面状态的演化规律及其失效机制是实现损伤阈值提升的理论基础。脉冲压缩光栅损伤因素辨析主要包括：掺杂诱导结节缺陷、使用条件及环境、制造工艺流程、表面污染物吸附。激光诱导损伤阈值的提升可从制造工艺流程改进、光栅使用前预处理工艺、污染物去除方式及运行环境改善等方面开展研究。光栅激光诱导损伤所涵盖的基础理论与关键技术体现了多物理场、多尺度的耦合特性。未来通过研究并提炼脉冲压缩光栅制造和应用中的共性科学与技术问题，不断地完善激光诱导损伤的基础理论，优化光栅损伤阈值提升技术，形成脉冲压缩光栅激光诱导损伤研究的知识体系，服务于国家重大科学装置的建设和

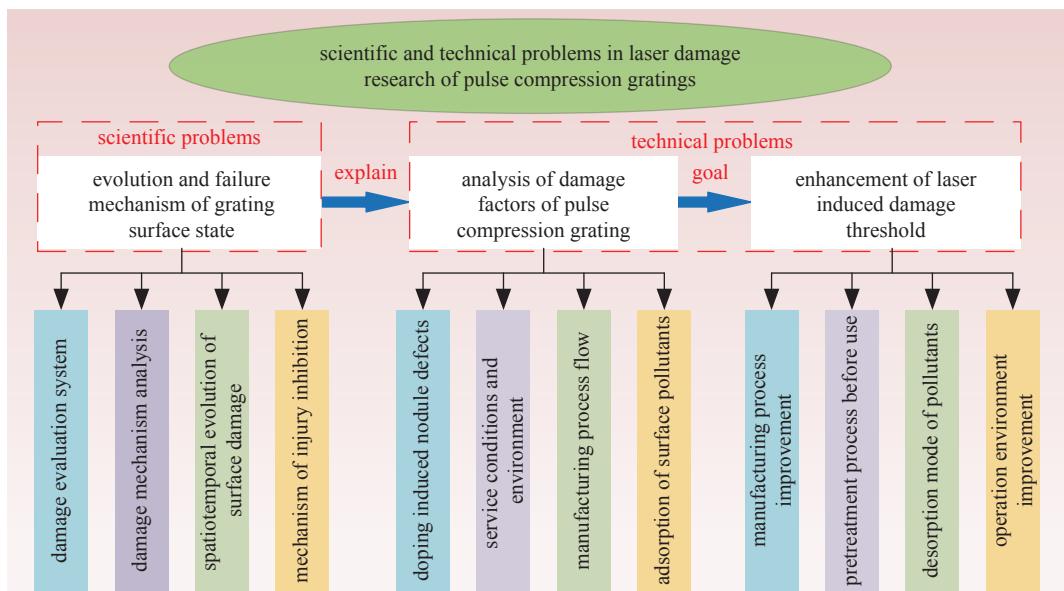


Fig. 16 Scientific and technical issues in the research on laser-induced damage of pulse-compressed gratings

图 16 脉冲压缩光栅激光诱导损伤研究的科学与技术问题

高能激光技术领域的发展。

5 结论与展望

脉冲压缩光栅是实现啁啾脉冲放大技术的关键元件,其损伤机理和损伤阈值的研究对重大科学装置的建设有着至关重要的影响。本文在分析了脉冲压缩光栅损伤类型的基础上,研究了影响光栅损伤的主要因素,从结节缺陷、激光参数、膜层沉积工艺以及光栅表面污染的角度探究了其损伤机理。损伤机理的共性表现为:脉冲压缩光栅表面电场强度的增加,加速激光场中光电离出的自由电子,加剧电子碰撞,导致材料雪崩电离。提升脉冲压缩光栅的损伤阈值,可以采用纳秒激光预处理、改进光栅制备工艺、光栅等离子体清洗工艺以及引入杂质气体等技术。多种方案组合将获得优异的激光损伤阈值提升效果。最后,提出了脉冲压缩光栅激光损伤研究需要解决的科学与技术问题。损伤机理关键科学问题的解决将为光栅损伤阈值的提升奠定坚实理论基础,并对超短脉冲激光技术的发展提供关键支撑。

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