

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization

International Bureau



(10) International Publication Number

WO 2014/186705 A2

(43) International Publication Date

20 November 2014 (20.11.2014)

WIPO | PCT

(51) International Patent Classification: Not classified

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/US2014/038386

(22) International Filing Date:

16 May 2014 (16.05.2014)

(25) Filing Language:

English

(26) Publication Language:

English

(30) Priority Data:

61/824,654 17 May 2013 (17.05.2013) US
61/907,169 21 November 2013 (21.11.2013) US

(72) Inventor; and

(71) Applicant : STUART, Martin, A. [US/US]; 3612 W. Victory Blvd., Burbank, CA 91505 (US).

(74) Agents: BODI, Robert, F. et al.; Pearne & Gordon LLP, 1801 East 9th Street, Suite 1200, Cleveland, OH 44114 (US).

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BN, BR, BW, BY,

BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IR, IS, JP, KE, KG, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SA, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, RW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, KM, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report (Rule 48.2(g))

(54) Title: DIELECTRIC WALL ACCELERATOR UTILIZING DIAMOND OR DIAMOND LIKE CARBON

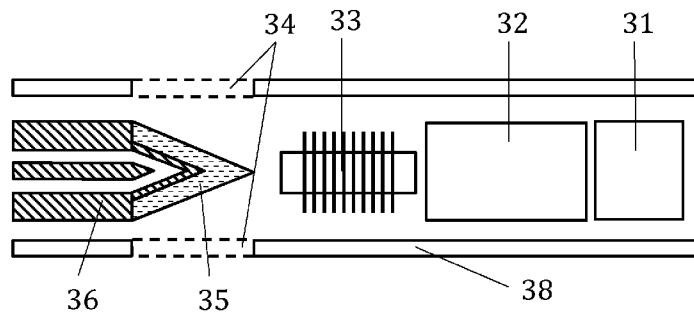


FIG. 6

(57) Abstract: Provided are a plurality of embodiments, including, but not limited to, a device for generating efficient low and high average power output Gamma Rays via relativistic particle bombardment of element targets using an efficient particle injector and accelerator at low and high average power levels suitable for element transmutation and power generation with an option for efficient remediation of radioisotope release into any environment. The devices utilize diamond or diamond-like carbon materials and active cooling for improved performance.

WO 2014/186705 A2

DIELECTRIC WALL ACCELERATOR UTILIZING DIAMOND OR DIAMOND LIKE CARBON

CROSS-REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional patent application serial number 61/824,654 filed on May 17, 2013 and incorporated herein by reference, and U.S. Provisional patent application serial number 61/907,169 filed on November 21, 2013, also incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Dielectric wall accelerators are discussed in US Pat # 5,811,944, incorporated herein by reference, where the technology concept provided a substantial performance improvement over other existing technologies prevalent at that time. In concept, the energy concentration, or rather the high voltage gradients proposed in the concept, were at odds with the materials and techniques of that day. The concept may work, but the material combinations for components were being operated at their limits and breakdowns with lifetime limits were a challenge for utilizing the devices produced.

[0003] Hence the performance of the device is strongly influenced by the materials used to construct it. Indeed, the available materials and fabrication techniques were the primary limiting factor.

SUMMARY

[0004] Provided are a plurality of example embodiments, including, but not limited to, efficient low and high average power output Gamma Ray generation via relativistic electron bombardment of element targets with 90 or higher nucleons; efficient electron injector and accelerator for compact free electron lasers; and efficient and compact proton acceleration with neutron spallation generation at low and high average power levels suitable for element transmutation and power generation with an option for efficient remediation of radioisotope release into any environment.

[0005] Also provided is an emitter device comprising: a source of charged particles; a capacitor element for accelerating the charged particles, the capacitor element including a cathode electrode and also including an anode electrode; and a conduit formed through the capacitor element for transmitting the charged particles, wherein at least one of the capacitor electrodes is at least partially coated with diamond or diamond-like carbon.

[0006] Further provided is an emitter device comprising: a source of charged particles; a conduit; a plurality of capacitor elements stacked to form a capacitor array configured to accelerate the charged particles through the conduit which is formed through the capacitor array, each one of the capacitor elements comprising: a cathode electrode having a layer including diamond or diamond-like carbon, an anode electrode having a layer including diamond or diamond-like carbon, and a plurality of photo switches arranged around the capacitor element for activation during a discharge of the capacitor element; and a cooling system for circulating a coolant in the device for cooling the device.

[0007] Also provided is an emitter device comprising: a source of charged particles; a conduit; a plurality of capacitor elements stacked to form a capacitor array configured to accelerate the charged particles through the conduit which is formed through the capacitor array, each one of the capacitor elements comprising: a cathode electrode having a layer including diamond or diamond-like carbon, an anode electrode having a layer including diamond or diamond-like carbon, and a plurality of photo switches each including a diamond crystal and being arranged around the capacitor element for activation during a discharge of the capacitor element; and a cooling system for circulating a coolant in the device for cooling the device, wherein the device is adapted to emit gamma rays as a result of accelerating the charged particles.

[0008] Further provided is method of generating gamma rays using a particle accelerator device, comprising the steps of: generating a stream of particles; supplying the stream of particles to a capacitor array comprising a plurality of discharging stacked capacitors each utilizing a diamond or diamond-like carbon coating on electrodes comprised therein; and accelerating the stream of particles using the capacitor array by discharging the capacitors of the capacitor array using one or more photo switches associated with the discharging capacitor.

[0009] Also provided is a method of manufacturing a particle accelerator comprising the steps of: manufacturing a plurality of capacitor electrodes; coating each one of the capacitor electrodes with diamond or diamond-like carbon; providing a plurality of photo switches; manufacturing a plurality of capacitor elements, each of the capacitor elements comprising a pair of the electrodes and a plurality of the photo switches; and stacking the plurality of capacitor elements on a core forming a conduit through which accelerated particles are transmitted.

[0010] Further provided is method of manufacturing a gamma ray emitter device, comprising the steps of: manufacturing a particle accelerator including the steps of: manufacturing a plurality of capacitor electrodes, coating each one of the capacitor electrodes with diamond or diamond-like carbon, providing a plurality of photo switches each including a diamond crystal, manufacturing a plurality of capacitor elements, each of the capacitor elements comprising a pair of the electrodes and a plurality of the photo switches, the capacitor elements each including a space for forming at least one channel; and stacking the plurality of capacitor elements on a core forming the at least one channel and a conduit through which accelerated particles are transmitted, wherein the at least one channel is adapted for receiving a coolant for cooling the particle accelerator; manufacturing a source of particles comprising an inner electrode operated at a first polarity surrounded by a plurality of outer electrodes operated at a second polarity and including a coolant system for cooling the source of particles; and arranging the source of particles with the particle accelerator in a housing to form the gamma ray emitter device.

[0011] Also provided are additional example embodiments, some, but not all of which, are described hereinbelow in more detail.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] The features and advantages of the example embodiments described herein will become apparent to those skilled in the art to which this disclosure relates upon reading the following description, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0013] Figure 1 is a partial schematic of an axial view of an example water cooled particle injector (DPF) for use with an example Diamond Dielectric Wall Accelerator (DDWA);

[0014] Figure 2 is a schematic of an example capacitor element of the dielectric wall accelerator region of an example DDWA;

[0015] Figure 3 is a schematic of a cooling water jacket used with the example DDWA;

[0016] Figure 4 a schematic of an end view of the end capacitor element of the dielectric wall accelerator region of the example DDWA with the cooling water jacket;

[0017] Figure 5A is a schematic of a cross section view of the end element of the example DDWA of FIG. 4;

[0018] Figure 5B is a schematic phantom view showing part of the example DDWA device; and

[0019] Figure 6 is a schematic of an application of the example DDWA used as a source for a gamma ray emitter.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THE EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS

[0020] Presented are examples of Diamond Dielectric Wall Accelerator (DDWA) architectures with designs for use of materials and fabrication techniques, with which to fabricate higher performance levels for such devices, at arguably lower costs than previous designs. The proposed architecture incorporates practical means of constructing, mounting and insulating the very high operating voltages, while cooling the device for high average power use as well. The DDWA can use any of a number of existing particle generator devices to provide source particles, although a dense plasma flux proton injector (DPF) representing an improvement on existing devices, described below with respect to FIG. 1, can also be utilized.

[0021] **Figure 1** shows a schematic drawing of an example particle injector that is a water cooled dense plasma focus (DPF) proton injector with the image shown as if looking from the bore of the DDWA acceleration tube, like a compression rail gun like device. The housing and peripheral components of this device is not shown. The DPF can be used with an example DDWA having a stacked capacitor array constructed of robust parallel electrodes (forming individual capacitors). The DPF of FIG. 1 includes central water cooled particle injector electrodes **1** and smaller water cooled outer electrodes **2** that are themselves large enough in

diameter to support uniform internal cooling fluid circulation using water flow channels **3**, one of which can be an inlet, with the other used as an outlet, and a water divider **4** provided between the incoming and outgoing water channels to divide the flows.

[0022] Each electrode **1, 2** can be made of all metal, semiconductor, or conductive ceramic composite materials, such as boron (which is electrically conductive when hot) or silicon carbide, or some other suitable conductive material. Also provided is a central bore **5** mounted directly in front of, and inline with, the electrodes in a robust vacuum tight, insulated window that is of a thin plate of so called low Z number materials (nuclei with under 20 Protons and neutrons) which can be actively cooled (e.g., water cooled), for separating the DDWA from the injector assembly, which would permit mounting the indicated electrode array into a vacuum manifold suitable for generating and conducting particles or nuclei of atoms into an aperture of a particle accelerator, which for the DDWA would be on the outer side of the window. As shown, several electrodes are arranged in an array making a coaxial cylindrical pattern. Further, the electrodes are arranged in a pattern with the one central cathode electrode **1** that is larger in diameter and that is designed with a central hollow tube with the inner annular water cooling channel designed and built into the wall of this tube. The device is also provided with any number of secondary anode electrodes **2** surrounding the central electrode jacket in a concentric pattern, with the smaller peripheral electrodes **2** arranged in a cylindrical array around the central larger electrode **1**.

[0023] Each secondary peripheral anode electrode **2** is connected to a high voltage high energy capacitor bank (not shown) and comprises a discrete pulse forming network, with the central cathode electrode **1** being used to facilitate high average and peak power discharges with very high voltages in very short time domains. At a given time, all anode electrodes **2** are fired simultaneously and an arc of very high currents is generated in a low pressure gas, such as a gas comprising hydrogen boride provided at close proximity to each electrode surface. Arcs propagate from a virtual ground plane, which is at the base or support structure of the electrodes, to the tip of the hollow or annular central cathode electrode **1**. This is a very fast event with the final result that the arcs propagate to and over the connecting electrode material that comprises the inner and outer surfaces of the central cathode electrode **1** at

which point the arcs reach beyond the contact surface and join in the central portion of the bore. At this point, a beam of electrons or protons is ejected from this region where a plasma has been generated. The annular active cooling region of each electrode permits high repetition rates which increases beam currents.

[0024] In the example case, the innermost tube has an inner jacket that is sealed to the outer jacket at the farthermost end from the mounting plate, thereby permitting water to flow between the two annular jackets (channels 3) of the inner electrode tube. This is for the purpose of cooling the electrodes in the region where the plasma is generated and where all electrons are stripped from the vaporized material that is intended to be accelerated. This bore is also the introduction point for a gas (Hydrogen, Deuterium or Nitrogen is used in most cases) or ions of any material that becomes more highly ionized in this environment, and in the case of Hydrogen provides the Protons themselves that are accelerated and injected into the DDWA bore, through the window. This window is provided by the desire for a hard vacuum in the bore of the accelerator tube of the DDWA and the partial pressure 12 torr \pm 10 torr of (by way of example) hydrogen gas in the plasma focus device injector (DPF).

[0025] If the DPF particle injector is to be used for fusion reactions between hydrogen and boron, the inner tube would be provided as one monolithic tube without active fluid cooling, however it would be conductively cooled, and it could be made out of Boron. An alternate approach is to use the all metal DPF with Boron Hydride gas at low pressures consistent with prior art patents.

[0026] A DDWA architecture using the DPF or other particle injector can be used to accelerate protons or electrons. Such a design allows production of relativistic speeds and, in the case of electrons, directs the electrons at dense high Z nuclear targets (above 90 nucleons), high energy gamma rays are produced with a useful efficiency, such as 30%, being not uncommon. In this configuration, the DPF is operated somewhat differently. The particle discharge from the plasma region where the separate arcs join axially expels protons in one direction away from the ground plane of the DPF, and expels electrons 180 degrees in the polar opposite direction. Therefore if it is operated in this configuration with respect to the DDWA input aperture, a device can be provided to use beams of electrons rather than of protons.

[0027] This is one reason the disclosed design can be provided with an annular double walled (allowing internal coolant flow) central tube with an aperture that goes all the way through the central tube. The aperture of the central tube thus permits utilizing the particles (e.g., electrons) if so desired by mounting the DDWA such that the DPF injects the particles (protons, electrons, beta particles, etc.) into the DDWA. This accelerator configuration permits the particles, such as electrons, to be accelerated to relativistic speeds, if desired, in extraordinarily short devices, such as would be useful in producing gamma rays from atomic species with 90 or more nuclear particles in the nucleus in the emitter target.

[0028] The Diamond Dielectric Wall Accelerator (DDWA) of the example embodiments described below can be provided to, for example, operate at 125 kV. per capacitor accelerator element or more. At the 125 kV level, an accelerator head needed to achieve 45 MeV electrons that would be expected to produce 16 MeV Gamma Rays would be on the order of 36 cm long. This would be compared to 2 MeV per meter in a quadra pole Radio Frequency accelerator of conventional design.

[0029] In this example application, each discharge of the DPF creates high electric currents (in a monolithic solid tube electrode) that are mirrored on the inner surface. These currents ionize and accelerate hydrogen gas into the end of the central electrode; at this location each discharge path creates tornado-like plasma discharge at the very end of the tube where ionized and accelerated protons are able to be trapped within a single vortex apex region, within the central bore of the boron tube. It is at this exact point that the combined plasma discharges are concentrated and some of the boron operating at high temperatures can encounter hydrogen ions that are also stripped of their electrons (i.e., protons) and be acted upon by the combined plasma vortexes at the very center of the end of the central electrode that is, in this case, made from Boron. In this location the magnetic forces from the individual vortexes also concentrate the plasma and create the conditions for fusion reactions to occur. The resulting helium and unreacted protons are able to be the injection material for subsequent acceleration within the DDWA. The advantage to this scheme is that the particles will be accelerated from the plasma injector at several hundred keV of energy or speed. This shortens the needed acceleration tube length within the DDWA to achieve a certain purpose.

[0030] Any atomic plasma ions or gas ions can be so accelerated. The electrode material would not necessarily be boron for non-fusion based reactions. In this case, the plasma focus device is only a compact ion accelerator/injector.

[0031] The architecture of the Dielectric Wall Accelerator (DWA) segment receiving the DPF particles is comprised of a hollow cylinder that forms the vacuum containment section of the particle accelerator. The chosen design length for this example tube segment is about a meter long or more. It is constructed to be an insulated, large (4 cm in this case) bore tube constructed of adjacent parallel rings of metal film imbedded and mounted and insulated from each other, within the sufficiently thick wall of the tube. These metal film rings form a capacitor network that has an effect of averaging the voltage gradient of the sequentially fired capacitors that are stacked on the outside wall of the accelerator tube. The effect is due to a mirrored charge, induced and thus impressed upon each ring which represents an individual capacitor element within the wall of the bore tube.

[0032] The current propagating along the electrode skin of each of the discharging capacitor elements forming a pulse forming network (PFN) are in fact supplying the accelerating electromotive force, acting upon any charged particle within the bore of the accelerator tube, by the act of being sequentially fired in a very controlled timed sequenced event (described below), an accelerating force of very high specific energy density is applied to the particles within the tube.

[0033] Although gallium arsenide or silicon carbide photo-switches, such as those used in prior applications, could be used as the active component to facilitate controlled very short time duration conduction at high voltages, permitting switching at high voltages and high currents upon the illumination of a several nanosecond laser pulse delivered via a discrete optical fiber, such devices typically operate at high currents at lower voltages or hi voltages at lower currents. These are discussed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,993,033, incorporated herein by reference, and in "Wide Bandgap Extrinsic Photoconductive Switches by J.S. Sullivan, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Jan 20, 2012, also incorporated herein by reference (hereinafter "Reference A"). Single diamond crystal or DLC photo-switches (i.e., replacing the gallium arsenide or silicon carbide with the diamond material) overcome these mentioned limitations.

The salient point is that the prior art materials have a breakdown voltage of 3-3.5 million volts per meter, whereas single crystal diamond and 70% tetrahedral DLC diamond has a breakdown voltage of 10 Billion volts per meter. This permits a practical single crystal diamond photoswitch to have a breakdown voltage for a 1 mm device at 10 million volts. Clearly, the breakdown voltage of a cooling medium such a device resided or operated in could be the dominant operational factor. The Breakdown voltage for highly deionized water is 400 kV/cm. This suggests using a photoswitch placement architecture that maximizes the material characteristics of the DDWA

[0034] The architecture of the placement of the capacitor elements or layers is such that there is a space between each capacitor disc, which is a layer of discretely spaced ribs on one face of the disc, which permits the forced flow of the deionized water coolant along the axis of the tube and capacitor array but which exits transverse to the axis of the tube through the spaces created between the capacitor disc elements of the PFN due to the presence of the described ribs. The water is pumped into the apex spaces of the polygonal (e.g., hexagonal) hole, constituting the inner aperture and cumulative water manifold, of the individual capacitor segment. A series of discrete capacitors are stacked next to each other forming a capacitor array, the axial sum of capacitors supplying the energy storage and providing a fast discharge circuit of the sequentially fired PFN. A single capacitor element can be comprised of two parallel plate transmission lines (electrodes) stacked upon one another with one or more photo switches mounted between the two conductors.

[0035] Figure 2 shows a schematic of a dielectric wall accelerator region of an example capacitor element **50** for the example DDWA. The DDWA is formed by stacking a plurality of such regions **50** (i.e., stacking a plurality of capacitor elements). The DDWA includes a central particle vacuum tube conduit **7** that passes through all of the stacked elements **50**. The element **50** includes a first diamond coated capacitor plate **8** (one provided for each capacitor acceleration element forming a resulting high voltage pulse forming a network (PFN)). A second diamond coated capacitor plate **9** (one per capacitor element) provides a ground reference for the element **50** of pulse forming network (PFN). A hexagon aperture **10** is provided in the capacitor elements, with the aperture **10** constituting central coolant flow

channels. Three single crystal diamond plate photo switches **12** are provided in axial sequence in the polygon PFN accelerator capacitor elements. Single crystal Diamond photo switches **13** are provided for the next-in-sequence polygon PFN accelerator capacitor elements. The diamond coatings on the capacitor plates (electrodes) can be comprised of diamond crystal, or diamond-like carbon (DLC), that can be deposited using a deposition process, for example. Furthermore, a Teflon coating or other coating can be provided over the diamond or DLC layer to waterproof the layer. Note: While in some embodiments, capacitor elements could share electrodes with an adjacent capacitor thereby reducing the number of such elements, such as disclosed in Reference A, this is not the preferred construction architecture.

[0036] The example DDWA device is provided as a hexagonal polygon as the configuration of the outside shape of the design (in this case a hexagon); in fact, the polygon can be provided to have many edges suitable to mount photo switches onto them. However, each capacitor will only have 3 or more photo switches **12** on each layer, so as to provide for uniform simultaneous current discharge across the face of the diamond coated insulated capacitor element **50**, and the adjacent layers will have their own photo switches **13** mounted such that the adjacent layers' photo switches will fit between the apexes of the adjacent layers. This will permit their operation without interference-specifically from arc over through breakdown of the deionized water used as an insulator and coolant. By this method each capacitor element will evenly discharge around the periphery allowing a nearly uniform current discharge of each discrete layer. The thickness and placement of the photo switch(s) **12, 13** and capacitor layers **8** will be accommodated to permit their designed operation. Taking the breakdown voltage of deionized water into account, the minimum spacing of 125 kV potential (as exemplified in this device) the photo switch electrodes need to be not less than 4 mm apart with the safe design parameter being 1 cm for a 3 time safety factor at a design voltage of 125 kV.

[0037] Each individual photo switch can be accessed and activated by an individual fiber optic coupler mounted to the outside edge. This facilitates a transmitted q switched laser pulse of sufficient intensity (e.g., 10-15 millJ each) and under controlled timing such as to allow the single crystal synthetic diamond to become a fast, high current conductor, thus short circuiting

the capacitor and producing a high current discharge constituting a firing event for particle acceleration.

[0038] Figure 3 shows an example cooling water jacket **20** which covers the end of the vacuum cylinder. This jacket **20** includes a water input/output port **21**, a water seal to central vacuum tube conduit **22**, and a water seal to accelerator polygon capacitor element **23**.

[0039] Figure 4 shows a schematic of an end view of the end capacitor **100** of the example DDWA, showing the central particle vacuum tube conduit **7**, the water cooling jacket **20**, the in/out cooling port **21**, a ground reference PFN capacitor plate contact **25** for an adjacent capacitor layer, and a high voltage PFN capacitor contact element **26** for the capacitor layer **8**. Figure 5A is a cross section view of the cooling water jacket over the end capacitor of central dielectric wall vacuum tube showing many of the same components. Figure 5B is a schematic diagram showing a DDWA device in phantom with the end capacitor **100** of FIGs. 5, 5A shown within a water cooled containment vessel **110** to form the DDWA device. Only a single capacitor element (the end element) is shown in this figure 5B, but in an actual device a plurality of the capacitor elements **50** (as shown in FIG. 2) would also be stacked on the tube conduit (core) **7** to form a stack of the capacitor elements. The particle source generator may or may not also be included within the containment vessel **110**.

[0040] Some of the features that are new in this DDWA technology, each of which constitute optional features of the disclosed example design, include, but are not limited to:

[0041] 1) The use of Diamond-Like Carbon (DLC) (or diamond) provided on all the surfaces of the capacitor electrode elements except the charging strip electrode tab or conductor shown as a strip reaching out from the larger portion of the disc that is representative as a design of the capacitor element. There is also a specific exception to this DLC film where the actual photo switch contacts are provided to be mounted onto the electrode conductor. The DLC film can be deposited using a Pulsed Laser Deposition (PLD) using a laser, for example (such as the slab laser disclosed in U.S. Pat. App. Serial No. 13/566,144 filed on August 3, 2012, and incorporated herein by reference).

[0042] 2) A secondary PLD created film, such as of hexagonal barium titanate (h-BaTiO₃) ceramic dielectric, can also be used in the region between the electrodes. The DLC is a suitable dielectric to support operation of the DDWA, but the inclusion of high saturation voltage dielectrics such as barium titanate or titanium dioxide is a designer option.

[0043] 3) The rib structures (potentially PLD created) on the face or faces of each disc capacitor element, whose purpose is to create a cooling plenum for in this case deionized water.

[0044] 4) The synthetic single crystal doped such as optionally with nitrogen or undoped-Diamond wafer/s that comprise the high voltage high current Photo switch element, placed and spaced around the individual capacitor elements to create or facilitate a uniform current flow during a discharge, but also sealed within an encapsulating DLC layer. However the described DLC layer in some cases need not cover the Face or optical pulse entrance facet, but rather only the exposed conductive metalized layer that permits the mechanical bonding and electrical pathway of the electrodes.

[0045] 5) The polygon shaped-(hexagonal in the examples shown in the figures) central aperture or hole in the individual capacitor elements which facilitates water, sulfur hexafluoride, or oil insulator flow in alternate apexes that can be forced to be in opposition or opposite directions. This feature permits cooling from opposite directions which doubles the effective length of the cooled section of the accelerator bore tube. This feature can be significant, because as the proposed coolant is forced down the length of the outer wall of the tube, it will heat up. Unless mitigated, there will be a point at which water will begin to boil and oil would begin to carbonize in high average power operation. This simple feature increases the power that can be loaded into the length of the device at any given coolant flow level and also by virtue of this design, allow unpressurized operation of the coolant enclosure structure. In some applications this significantly increases the beam current of the overall device.

[0046] 6) Deionized water or coolant pumped throughout the device along the outside wall along the axis of the vacuum tube then out through the spaces between the capacitor elements. Highly deionized water has a breakdown voltage of 400 kV per cm, if deionized to 18

MOhms per centimeter, which permits cooling and compact architecture of the device. The cooling level permits kilohertz repetition rates, thus facilitating high average power beam currents. The use of water also permits the well-established and mature technology of water Deionization resistance measurement devices to be used as a feedback system control element by the controlling computer.

[0047] 7) Diamond-Like Carbon (DLC) or diamond is used as a dielectric insulator on the capacitors' plates and electrodes, and the matrix making up the Dielectric Wall Accelerator tube itself. The breakdown voltage of pinhole free DLC is about 10 kV per micron. The proposed design employs a 0.001 inch thick multilayer DLC/graphite architecture to facilitate stress free fabrication and permit small mechanical vibration waves, generated from the discharge pulse, to be accommodated.

[0048] 8) Single crystal synthetic diamond is used as the photo switch slab mounted in several places around the periphery of each capacitor element. This single crystal synthetic diamond slab is further created with a total internal reflector on all edges except the input window. This feature facilitates uniform light illumination within the photo switch slab and lowers the required input energy to activate the switch.

[0049] 9) The DLC is principally applied by high speed Pulsed Laser Deposition (PLD), such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. App. Serial No. 13/566,144 filed on August 3, 2012, and incorporated herein by reference; however, other methods to create single crystal diamond or amorphous polycrystalline diamond-like carbon also exist that, while slower, is a technology that could also be used to create described films.

[0050] 10) Each discrete capacitor element is constructed such that optional dielectrics can be applied such as hexagonal barium titanate is deposited in a controlled thickness via PLD to adjust the energy storage of each capacitor element. This layer is created on the outside of the DLC layer and is itself sealed with a DLC layer that is sealing the DLC to expansion matched graphene, iron-nickel or molybdenum alloy constituting the electrode of the capacitor.

[0051] 11) The architecture of the design of each capacitor element is such that the thickness of each photo switch can be placed on the apex mounting pad on the capacitor disc

that is a polygon, such that the adjacent capacitor disc and the placement of its own photo switch elements will not interfere with the operation of the next adjacent capacitor element.

[0052] 12) The indicated capacitor layer is polygonal as opposed to the Blumlein strip configuration (see U.S. Patent 2,465,840 and Reference A, incorporated herein by reference) of previous designs, this is facilitated by the even placement of the photo switches around the periphery of the capacitor element.

[0053] 13) The timing control circuit that fires the charged PFN array, can be controlled by a single synchronized q switched laser pulse utilizing the IFM US patent 8,220,965 (incorporated by reference) being amplified to sufficient intensity and energy content, via a master oscillator pulse amplifier (MOPA). This then permits injecting said light pulse into a sequential optical pick off fiber launch manifold (comprising partial reflectors redirecting part of the light pulse into said fiber optic lines) would then permit the length of each individual fiber optic line to exactly control the timing and sequence of the arriving light pulse into each individual photo switch.

[0054] 14) Subsequent timing adjustment can be further facilitated by having a variable distance path length or variable thickness high refractive index material delay line such as SF-11 glass, on each fiber launch line, which would be adjustable via computer commands to a linear actuator holding the individual fiber launch focus head. This feature facilitates the same DDWA device being able to accelerate different atomic species as the timing of higher Z particles, or rather heavier atoms, can be adjusted by the computer controlled spaces between the fiber optic collimators under their control. By this method one could change the timing thus creating a controlled delay sufficient to accommodate the slower to be accelerated particle or species. By this means the timing delays required to accommodate different isotopic species in the same architecture, to be accelerated would be facilitated.

[0055] Example System Designs: The examples fall into several design architectures. The average beam current from the DDWA is related to the choice the designer wishes to achieve, based on the size of the contact surface area of the single crystal synthetic diamond photo switch, and hence the cooling surface area in conjunction with the designer chosen dielectric on disc size of each element.

[0056] The example base DDWA design can use 1 cm x 1.5 cm switch elements run at 3 locations around the DDWA accelerator capacitor element. This choice permits a several hundred to several thousand pulses per second firing rate. The heat generated in the photo switches and the coolant's ability to remove that heat are the limiting factors to power input. The capacitor diameter and thus surface area in conjunction with the dielectric material choice, will determine the per accelerator element energy storage. This set of choices will result in an average beam current of 12 mA with the acceleration voltage in increments of 125 kV per mm of accelerator length device - stacked capacitor elements. These elements are stacked adjacent to each other on the Dielectric Wall Beam tube-device length. The described architecture with about 45 MeV at 0.012 amps will produce a beam power of about ½ MW. When this electron beam is directed onto a Thorium Oxide or Depleted Uranium Oxide ceramic target, about 30% of the electron beam will be converted into Gamma Rays of 10-17 MeV.

[0057] A Gamma Ray Emitter Design

[0058] Figure 6 shows a schematic of a DDWA as described herein used as a source for a gamma ray emitter. This setup includes: a particle injector **31** (such as an improved dense plasma fusion (DPF) device as described regarding FIG. 1, for example); a diamond dielectric wall accelerator assembly (DDWA) **32**; a reflectron **33**; a gamma ray window **34** (e.g., an alumina ceramic—sapphire--edge defined grown tube window or sintered ceramic tube); a gamma ray emitter cone **35** (e.g., a high temperature high atomic weight material, such as reference thorium oxide); a heat exchanger submount **36** (e.g., a reactively created silicon carbide cooling plenum); and a vacuum containment cylinder **38** providing utility structure support.

[0059] At the proposed power inputs, in order to handle the generated emitter waste heat, the backside of the (example) thorium oxide cone is hollowed to permit a target to be cooled by SCO_2 or deionized water. This gamma ray radiation flux will fission adjacent radioisotopes in a reactor chamber, from thorium and/or uranium, down to the above mentioned species and produce about 20-25 times as much recovered electrical energy from a complete reactor system.

[0060] The electron beam, and/or if chosen the proton beam, should travel in a vacuum or near vacuum. Due to the applied heat energy in the form of particles onto the emission target, there will be a tendency in a practical device for the emission material to evaporate and coat everything in the chamber. While thorium oxide is arguably the least likely material to do this, the sputtering effect will occur at different rates for every material processed.

[0061] A new component to prevent this from happening to the DDWA and internal beam tube surfaces will be the reflectron 33 and/or a high voltage ring electrode that will apply a repulsive negative voltage to any reflected ions in the chamber from the emission target.

[0062] The Reflectron is an electrostatic particle mirror typically used in time-of-flight mass spectrometers. In the case of a relativistic particle they are a one way check valve. It is constructed out of a stack of thin conductive polygon metal plates, often made from brass, that have mounting holes drilled near each corner or apex of the polygon. In the central portion of each plate is a larger aperture that is a significant portion (approximately 70%) of the diameter of the described plate. These plates are subsequently mounted a small distance from each other typically 5-6 mm with insulating screw-bushings, after which a resistor is attached to each layer to its neighbor of nearly the same resistance. This will produce a uniform voltage gradient along its length when a high negative (for electrons and positive for protons and alpha particles) voltage is applied to one end with the other attached to ground. For some example embodiments:

[0063] The reflectron is mounted between the DDWA output aperture and the reactor chamber entrance aperture as part of the DPF-DDWA-Reflectron particle emitter design. Therefor it is next to the reactor chamber. This is enclosed within the aperture tube or vacuum chamber but mounted in an arm for architecture reasons.

[0064] The base architecture is one DPF-DDWA-Reflectron arm- attached to a vacuum reactor chamber such that the accelerated electron beam will be directed at the Gamma Ray emitter target.

[0065] The Emitter target can have a plurality of beam arms aimed and arrayed around the target on the wall(s) of the reactor chamber. The assumption is that the designer wishes to

convert radioactive material into lesser or ultimately non-radioactive material by generation and irradiation of sufficiently energetic gamma rays of materials within the reactor chamber;

[0066] The particle beam will produce gamma rays of sufficient strength IE MeV to photo fission any particular nuclear species by virtue of the parameter chosen operating voltage. This in turn is expected to result in over unity heat with which to produce thermal to electric power conversion at elevated temperatures. Therefore the heat management system IE the input heat exchangers upon which the emitter target and transmutation candidate materials will determine the power rate at which the core and surrounding radioactive material shall be operated and converted at. The exception to this assumption will be the final stage if a troublesome target atomic species that the designer or customer wishes to transmute into non-radioactive stable isotopes as a final daughter product.

[0067] Therefore, the example system as described has been architected to permit specific tailored particle beam energy levels with which to create specific tailored chosen gamma Rays MeV levels and beam currents, which can be used to transmute by photo fission any element and its isotopes. This is a description of an architecture that permits multiple variations of choices based on a designer's choice menu. In practice, this architecture can support power generation at almost any level.

[0068] Many other example embodiments can be provided through various combinations of the above described features. Although the embodiments described hereinabove use specific examples and alternatives, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various additional alternatives may be used and equivalents may be substituted for elements and/or steps described herein, without necessarily deviating from the intended scope of the application. Modifications may be necessary to adapt the embodiments to a particular situation or to particular needs without departing from the intended scope of the application. It is intended that the application not be limited to the particular example implementations and example embodiments described herein, but that the claims be given their broadest reasonable interpretation to cover all novel and non-obvious embodiments, literal or equivalent, disclosed or not, covered thereby.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An emitter device comprising:
a source of charged particles;
a capacitor element for accelerating the charged particles, the capacitor element including a pair of electrodes; and
a conduit formed through the capacitor element for transmitting the charged particles, wherein
at least one of the capacitor electrodes is at least partially coated with diamond or diamond-like carbon.
2. The emitter device of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of photo switches arranged around the capacitor element for providing a uniform current flow during a discharge.
3. The emitter device of claim 2, wherein each one of said photo switches is comprised of a diamond crystal.
4. The emitter device of claim 3, wherein said photo switches are activated in a controlled manner to facilitate a uniform current flow during discharge of the capacitor element.
5. The emitter device of any of the above claims, further comprising at least one channel for circulating a coolant in the accelerator.
6. The emitter device of any of the above claims, further comprising a plurality of said capacitor elements stacked to form a capacitor array.
7. The emitter device of claim 6, wherein said capacitor array is provided within a polygon-shaped containment vessel.

8. The emitter device of any of the above claims, wherein the conduit includes diamond or diamond-like carbon.

9. The emitter device of any of the above claims, wherein the source of charged particles is a dense plasma flux proton injector device.

10. An emitter device comprising:

a source of charged particles;

a conduit;

a plurality of capacitor elements stacked to form a capacitor array configured to accelerate the charged particles through the conduit which is formed through the capacitor array, each one of said capacitor elements comprising: at least one electrode including diamond or diamond-like carbon, and at least one photo switch configured for activation during a discharge of the capacitor element; and

a cooling system for circulating a coolant in the device for cooling the device.

11. The emitter device of claim 10, wherein each one of said photo switches is comprised of a diamond crystal.

12. The emitter device of claim 11, wherein said photo switches are activated in a controlled manner to facilitate a uniform current flow during discharge of the capacitor element.

13. The emitter device of any of claims 10-12, wherein said capacitor array is provided within a polygon-shaped containment vessel.

14. The emitter device of any claims 10-13, wherein the conduit includes diamond or diamond-like carbon.

15. The emitter device of any of the above claims, wherein the coolant is deionized water.

16. The emitter device of any of the above claims, wherein said device is adapted to emit gamma rays as a result of accelerating the charged particles.

17. An emitter device comprising:

a source of charged particles;

a conduit;

a plurality of capacitor elements stacked to form a capacitor array configured to accelerate the charged particles through the conduit which is formed through the capacitor array, each one of said capacitor elements utilizing a pair of electrodes having a layer including diamond or diamond-like carbon, and a plurality of photo switches each including a diamond crystal and being uniformly arranged around the capacitor element for activation during a discharge of the capacitor element; and

a cooling system for circulating a coolant in the device for cooling the device,
wherein

said device is adapted to emit gamma rays as a result of accelerating the charged particles.

18. The emitter device of any of the above, wherein the source of charged particles is a dense plasma flux proton injector device comprising an inner electrode operated at a first polarity surrounded by a plurality of outer electrodes operated at a second polarity.

19. The emitter device of claim 18, wherein the dense plasma flux proton injector device further comprises a cooling system for circulating a coolant.

20. A method of generating gamma rays using a particle accelerator device, comprising the steps of:

generating a stream of particles;

supplying the stream of particles to a capacitor array comprising a plurality of discharging stacked capacitors each utilizing a diamond or diamond-like carbon coating on electrodes comprised therein; and

accelerating the stream of particles using the capacitor array by discharging the capacitors of the capacitor array using one or more photo switches associated with the discharging capacitor.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of cooling the capacitor array using a coolant.

22. The method of claims 20 or 21, wherein each one of said photo switches is comprised of a diamond crystal.

23. A method of manufacturing a particle accelerator comprising the steps of; manufacturing a plurality of capacitor electrodes; coating each one of said capacitor electrodes with diamond or diamond-like carbon; providing a plurality of photo switches; manufacturing a plurality of capacitor elements, each of said capacitor elements comprising one or more of said electrodes and a plurality of said photo switches arranged in a uniform manner; and stacking the plurality of capacitor elements on a core forming a conduit through which accelerated particles are transmitted.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein each one of said photo switches is comprised of a diamond crystal.

25. A method of manufacturing a gamma ray emitter device, comprising the steps of:
manufacturing a particle accelerator including the steps of:
manufacturing a plurality of capacitor electrodes,
coating each one of said capacitor electrodes with diamond or diamond-like carbon,
providing a plurality of photo switches each including a diamond crystal,

manufacturing a plurality of capacitor elements, each of said capacitor elements comprising at least one of said electrodes and at least one of said photo switches, said capacitor elements each including at least one channel space for forming at least one channel and a central space for receiving a core; and

stacking the plurality of capacitor elements on the core with the channel space of each capacitor element forming in common the at least one channel, with the core forming a conduit through which accelerated particles are transmitted through the accelerator, wherein said at least one channel is adapted for receiving a coolant flow for cooling the particle accelerator;

manufacturing a source of particles comprising an inner electrode operated at a first polarity surrounded by a plurality of outer electrodes operated at a second polarity and including a coolant system for cooling the source of particles; and

arranging the source of particles with the particle accelerator in a housing to form the gamma ray emitter device.

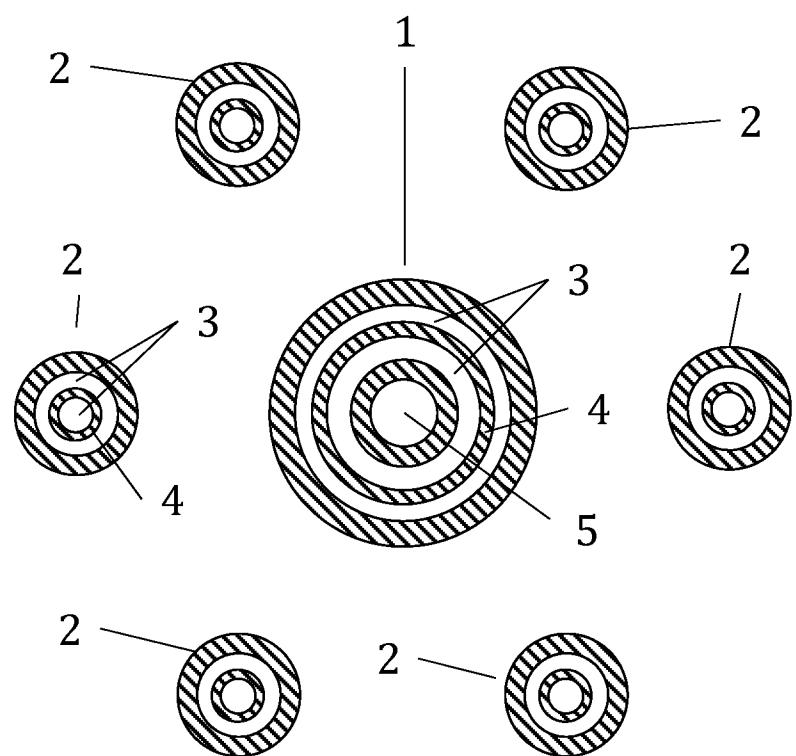


FIG. 1

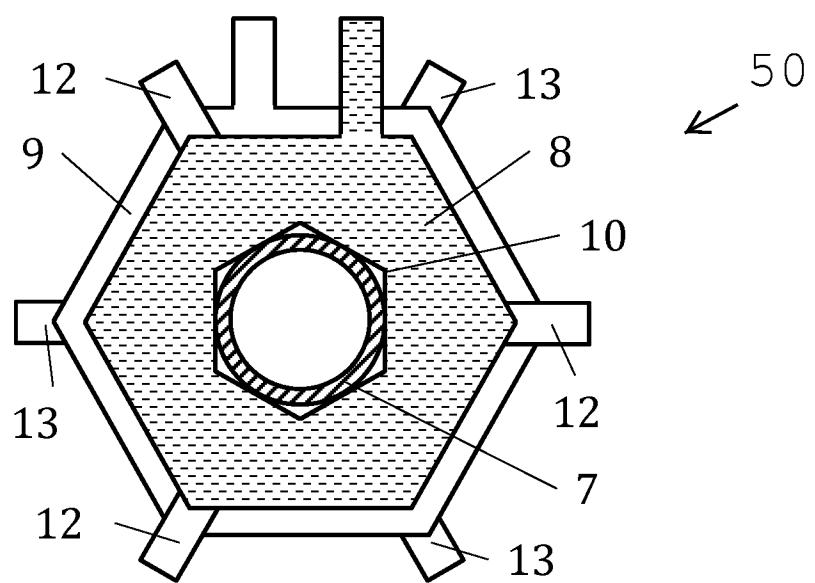


FIG. 2

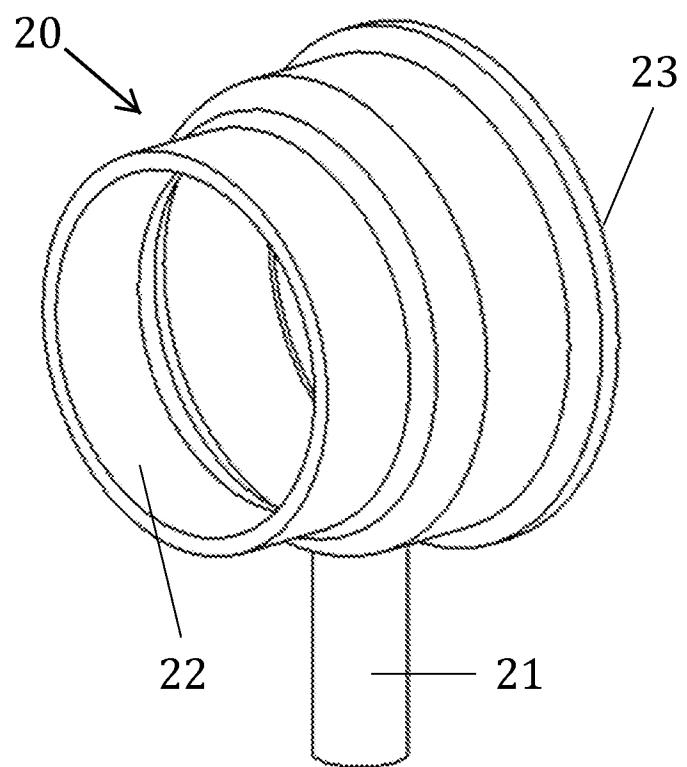


FIG. 3

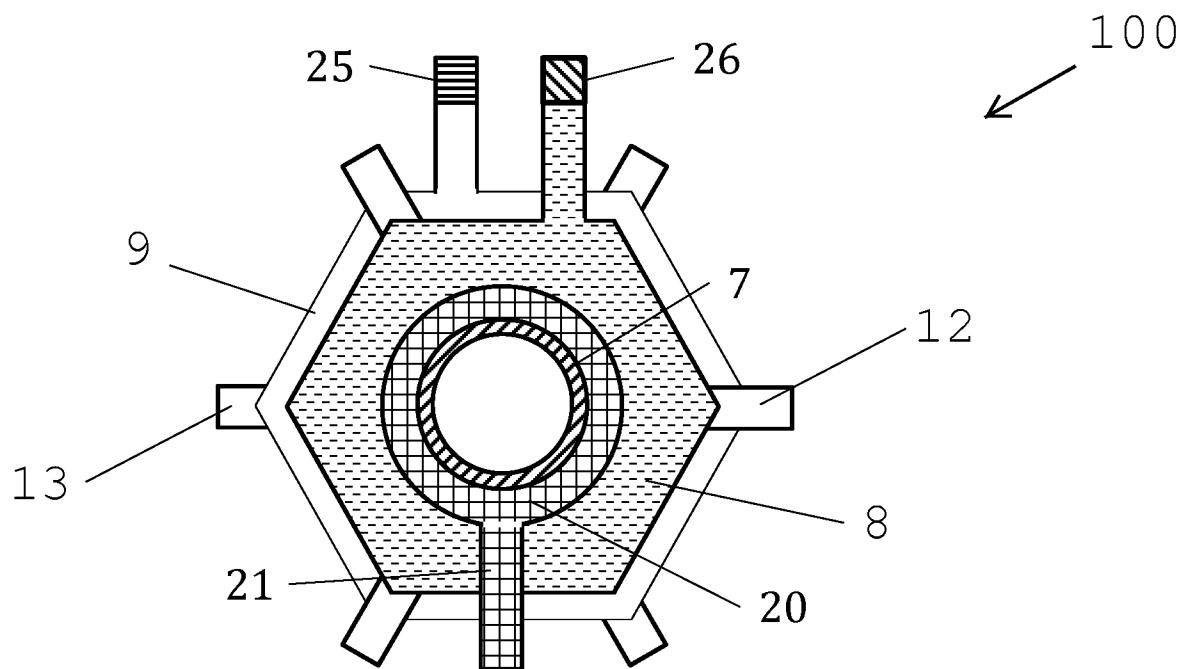


FIG. 4

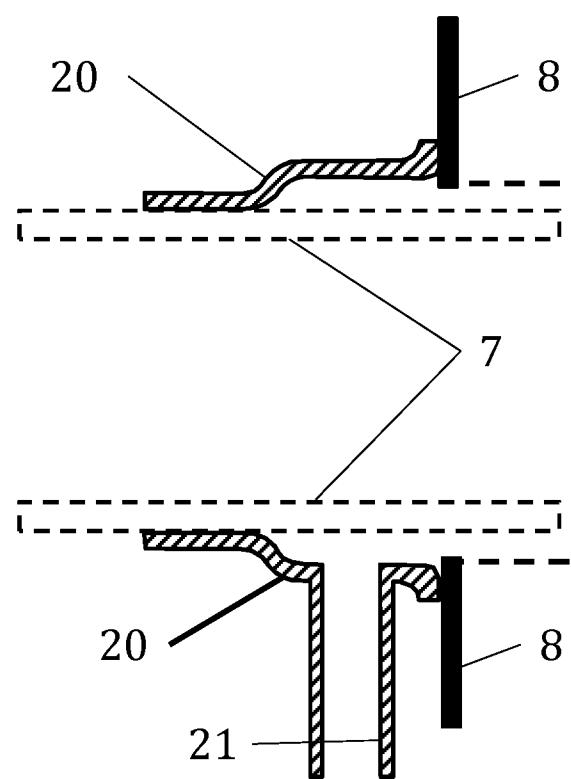
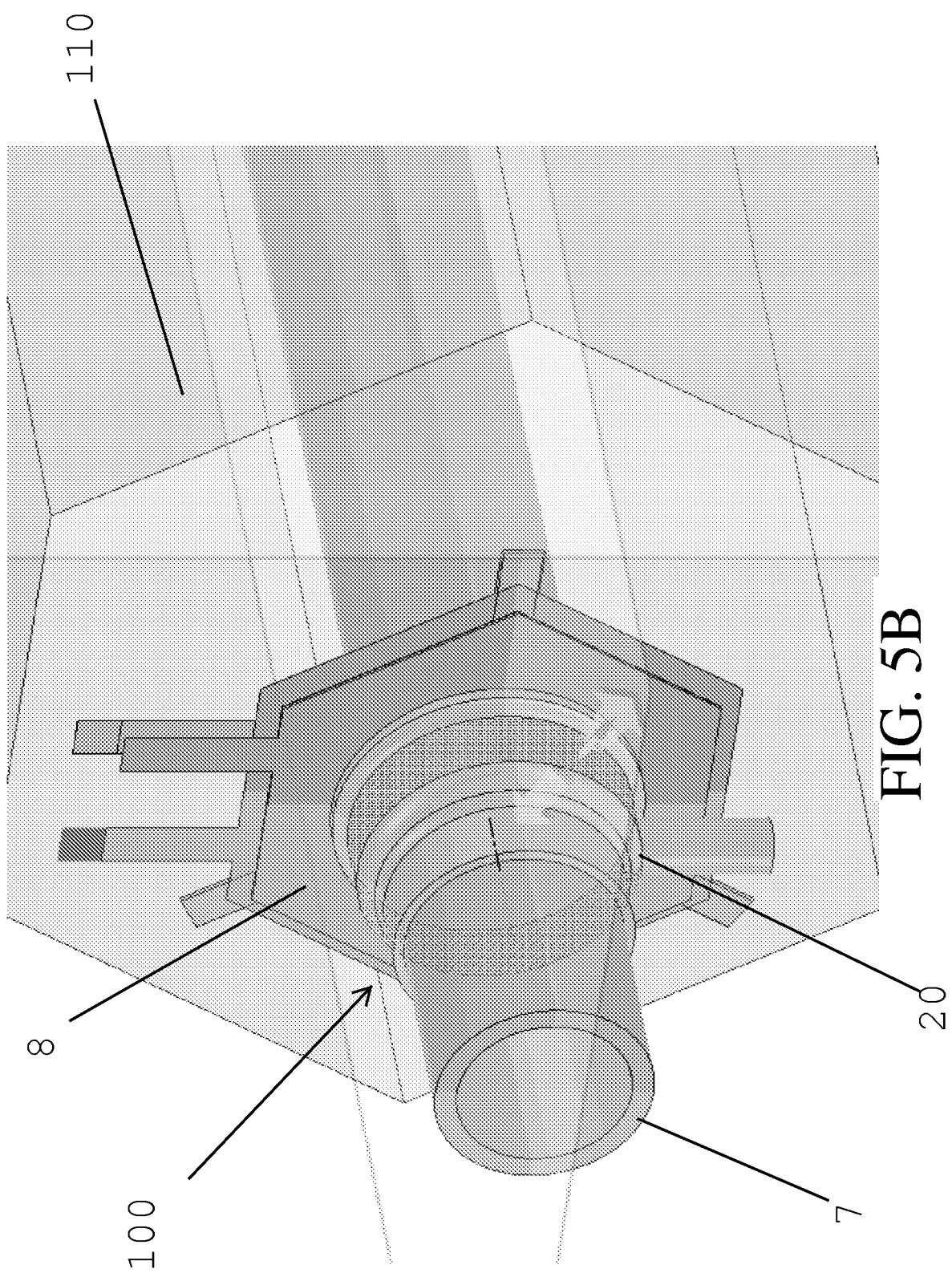


FIG. 5A



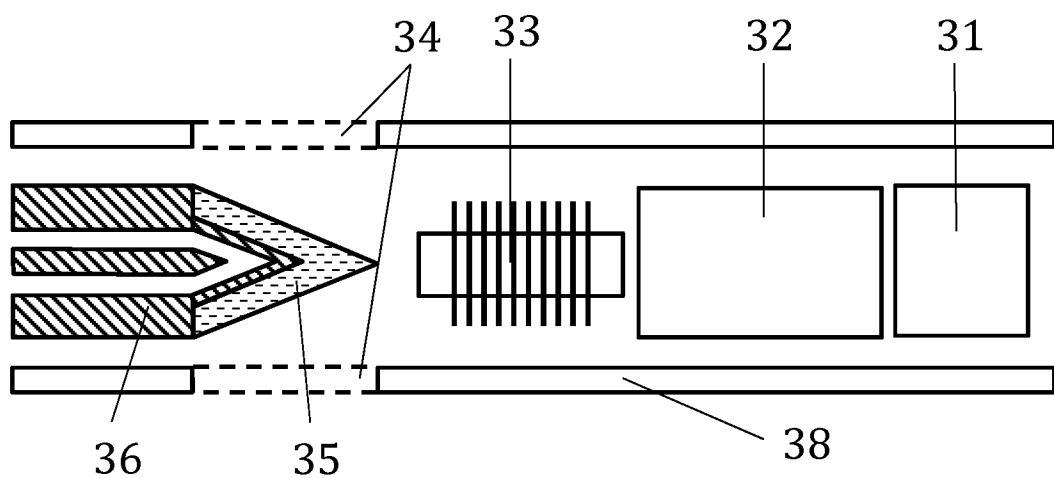


FIG. 6