Sputtering of Clean and K-Covered Ni Surfaces by Low Energy (\langle 500 eV) Noble Gas Ions

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Abstract

Clean and K-covered Ni surfaces are bombarded with low energy (10-500 eV) noble gas ions, and the sputtered ions are measured using a quadrupole mass spectrometer. The sputtering yields for Ni $^+$ and K $^+$ ions initially increase with energy, and slow down at higher energies. The apparent threshold for Ni $^+$ sputtering is observed at the primary energies of \sim 200 eV (He $^+$), \sim 50 eV (Ne $^+$), and \sim 80 eV (Kr $^+$). The threshold for K $^+$ sputtering is lower: \sim 40 eV (He $^+$), \sim 10 eV (Ne), and \sim 30 eV (Ar $^{2+}$ and Kr $^+$). Energy dependency of the sputtering yields is discussed in relation to the projectile-surface momentum transfer, ionization of the sputtered particles, and the differential sputtering probability. Preliminary results of molecular dynamics calculations on the present system are also presented.