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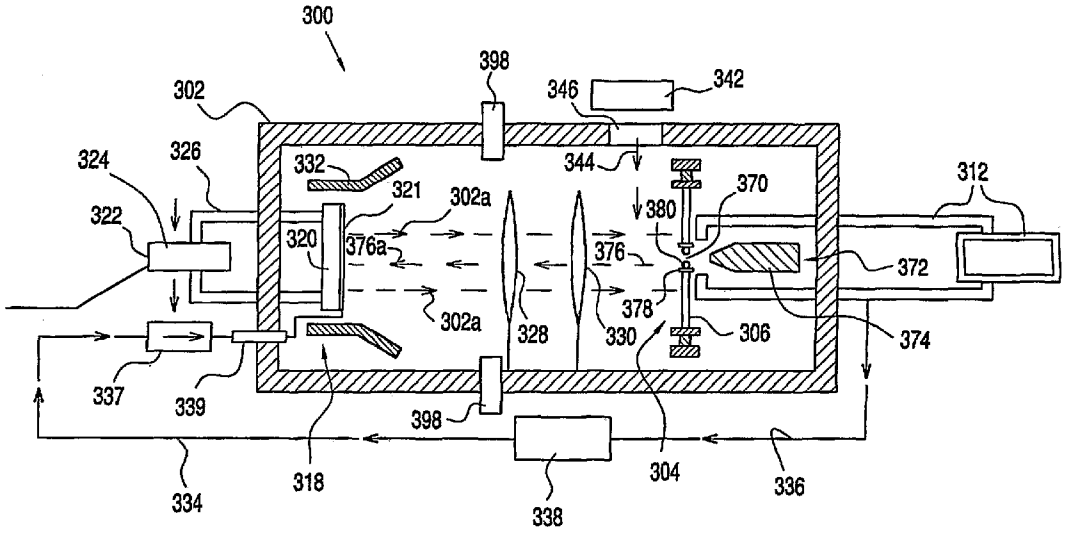
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(54) Title: THERMIONIC ELECTRIC CONVERTER



(57) Abstract: A thermionic electric converter includes a cathode output enhancing laser (374) operable to direct a laser beam (376) to strike an emissive surface of a cathode emitter (321), to increase the electron output of the cathode emitter (321). The cathode output enhancing lase (374) is positioned to direct a laser beam (375) through an opening (370) in the anode (306) or target structure, in the direction of the cathode emitter (321). An electron repulsion ring (380) is provided at an edge of the opening (370) in the anode (306), to reduce the number of electrons missing the anode (306) and passing through the opening (370) in the anode (306).

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