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Development of Beta Gallium Oxide on Large Area Substrates

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14. ABSTRACT
In this program, we have explored high-quality homoepitaxy growth with β -Ga₂O₃ using conventional PAMBE and MOCATAXY on different crystal orientations, and MOCVD (with Agnitron Collaboration) for high-mobility epitaxial films. We have also developed device design and processing with β -Ga₂O₃ for high-power applications.

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Development of Beta Gallium Oxide on Large Area Substrates

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Materials and Devices with β -Ga₂O₃

In this program, we explored high-quality homoepitaxy growth with β -Ga₂O₃ using conventional PAMBE and MOCATAXY on different crystal orientations, and MOCVD (with Agnition Collaboration) for high-mobility epitaxial films. We have also developed device design and processing with β -Ga₂O₃ for high-power applications.

1. Material Development

(i) MBE Growth and Metal Oxide Catalyzed Epitaxy (MOCATAXY)

We have studied the MBE growth of β -Ga₂O₃ and β -(Al_xGa_{1-x})₂O₃ via conventional MBE growth, and via metal oxide catalyzed epitaxy (MOCATAXY), which shows the ability to markedly improve growth rates and material quality in MBE growth. We showed that MOCATAXY growth, which uses an additional indium flux as a catalyst during MBE growth, can expand the range of growth temperatures that (010) β -(Al_xGa_{1-x})₂O₃ can grow up to 900 °C, without sacrificing material quality. Additionally, minimal indium incorporation was measured in the film by APT, and clear thickness fringes were observed in XRD as shown in Fig. 1a. [1]

MOCATAXY growth was also expanded to other orientations, showing the ability to improve growth rates and allow for growth at much higher temperatures in (010) and (001) β -Ga₂O₃. (001) β -Ga₂O₃ in particular had been limited by lower growth rates due to increased suboxide desorption during conventional PAMBE growth in this orientation. MOCATAXY helps limit this suboxide desorption and allows for approximately 5 times the growth rate of conventional PAMBE for (001) β -Ga₂O₃. A summary of growth rates for various orientations is shown in Fig. 1b. [2]

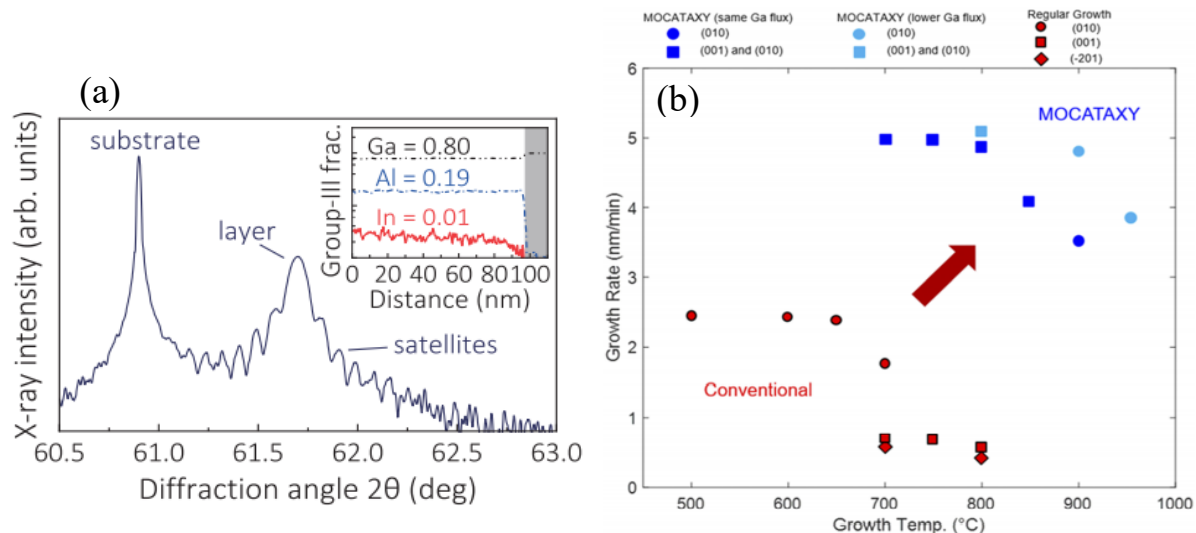


Fig. 1. (a) β -(Al_xGa_{1-x})₂O₃ XRD scan showing thickness fringes and a high intensity (020) β -(Al_xGa_{1-x})₂O₃ peak indicative of thickness and compositional uniformity. APT shows relatively low indium incorporation in the film. (b) Comparison of maximum growth rates achieved for various growth temperatures and crystallographic orientations for conventional PAMBE and MOCATAXY.

Room temperature Hall mobilities for (001) β -Ga₂O₃ films were also significantly higher for MOCATAXY grown films, further showing promise for this catalytic growth to allow for future (001) β -Ga₂O₃ devices. [2]

(ii) Doping

Sn doping via conventional PAMBE and MOCATAXY growth has been studied in detail. For conventional PAMBE of (010) β -Ga₂O₃, higher Sn doping concentrations were achievable, however the lower Sn cell temperatures needed to achieve the lower doping range, resulted in inconsistent Sn doping profiles. Both significant doping delay at the start of a doping profile, as well as surface segregation after the Sn shutter was closed were observed in SIMS profiles. MOCATAXY growth, on the other hand, allowed for sharp controllable profiles over a wide range of concentrations (10^{16} cm⁻³ to 10^{19} cm⁻³). A relatively high room temperature mobility of 132 cm²/Vs was achieved for a carrier concentration of 4×10^{16} cm⁻³ in a MOCATAXY grown (010) β -Ga₂O₃ film. [3]

Temperature dependent Hall measurement on a Sn doped (010) β -Ga₂O₃ film revealed a Sn donor level at 77 meV below the conduction band. At lower temperatures, maximum Hall mobility was limited, likely due to ionized impurity scattering due to a high background impurity concentration in the film. Temperature dependent Hall mobility and carrier concentration are shown in Fig. 2a. [3]

In addition to studying intentional n-type doping in MBE, unintentional Fe incorporation into films from Fe doped substrates was investigated. The observed Fe tail into epitaxially grown films was determined to be a result of a temperature dependent surface segregation effect, rather than diffusion. This effect led to an Fe tail observed in SIMS, with the length of this tail increasing for higher growth temperatures. Fig. 1b shows SIMS profiles demonstrating this effect as Fe incorporates more readily at lower growth temperatures, allowing for faster trapping of this total surface riding Fe, thereby limiting the length of this Fe tail into the film. Growing a low

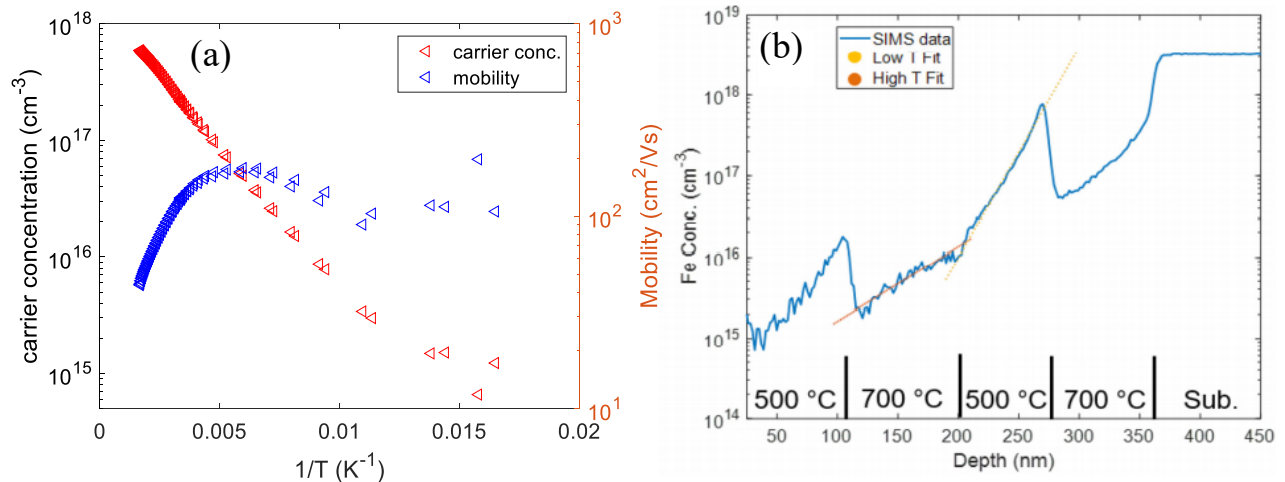


Fig. 2. (a) Temperature dependent Hall carrier concentration and mobility of Sn doped (010) β -Ga₂O₃ film. (b) Fe incorporation into the MBE grown film measured by SIMS for a film structure with varying growth temperatures.

temperature, Fe trapping buffer layer prior to active regions of devices structures was determined to be a solution to the problem of unintentional compensation in devices due to this Fe incorporation. [4]

(iii) (110) Growth Orientation

We explored the epitaxial growth of β -Ga₂O₃ on Sn-doped (110) substrates via PAMBE. The AFM scan of the as-received (110) substrates shows a very low RMS roughness of 0.08 nm for its smooth surface. Additionally, the result of miscut measurement shows that the miscut angle along the [001] direction and [201] direction is 0.1°. For the substrate polishing procedure, RHEED measurement reveals the existence of crystallographically equivalent (110) and (-110) facets on (010) substrate after Ga polishing by confirming chevron patterns, while there were only streaky patterns on (110) substrate indicative of smooth surface morphology as shown in Fig. 3a.[5]

Growth characteristics of β -Ga₂O₃ grown on (110) substrates at different Ga fluxes and substrate temperatures were studied in detail. From XRD rocking curve scan, the FWHM of the (110) peak is ~41 arc sec, which is comparable to the values reported for epitaxial films grown on (010) substrates. The trend of growth rate is nearly the same between β -Ga₂O₃ epitaxial films grown on (110) and (010) substrates. However, the growth rate on (110) substrates in the plateau region is 10% lower than that of (010) substrate as shown in Fig. 3b. This could be attributed to the geometry of the inclined (110) facets in (010) growth, the exposed (110) surface area is ~10% more than that of (110) growth. Furthermore, the surface morphology of β -Ga₂O₃ epitaxial films is smooth on both (110) and (010) substrates with RMS roughness around 1.0 nm. Additionally, elongated features oriented along the [001] direction are exhibited in the plateau regime on both (110) and (010) substrates, while this feature is not expected on the films grown on the (110) substrates due to the absence of clear faceting. Despite the appearance of (110) facets in the growth of (010) β -Ga₂O₃, the (110) plane does not have a tendency to show a well-defined step-terrace structure.

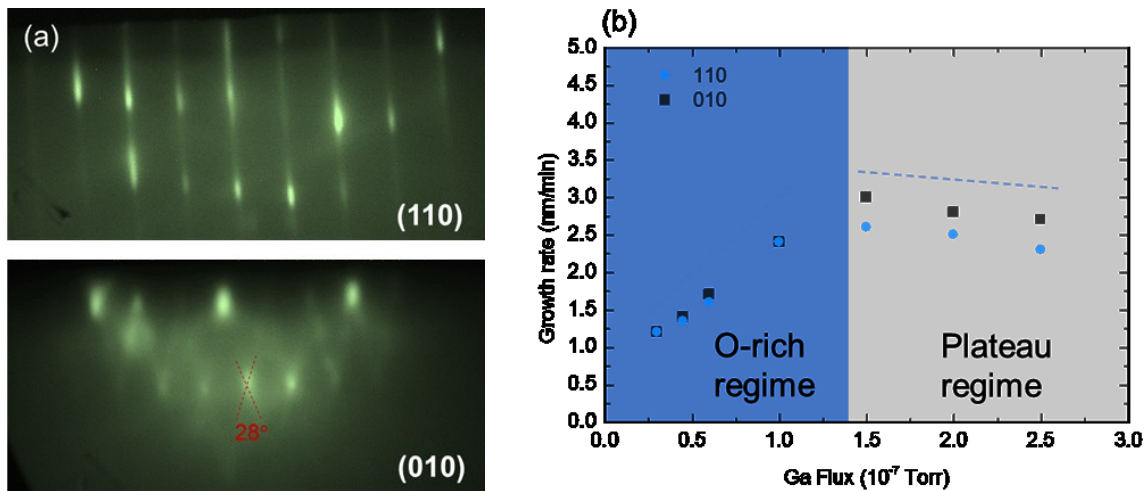


Fig. 3. (a) RHEED patterns of (110) substrates and (010) substrates after 10 min Ga polishing. (b) Growth rates of β -Ga₂O₃ epitaxial films grown on (110) and (010) substrates at 700 °C.

(iv) MOCVD grown β -Ga₂O₃

In collaboration with Agnitron Technology we have also worked on characterization of MOCVD grown β -Ga₂O₃. Temperature dependent Hall measurements were performed on lightly doped n-type MOCVD grown films to achieve a room temperature mobility of 176 cm²/Vs, a demonstration that first showed the ability of MOCVD films to provide device quality mobility necessary for vertical structures for high field applications. Highly Sn doped n⁺ contacts were grown via MBE to allow for ohmic contact at the low temperatures of the Hall measurement. [6] Since then, demonstration of extremely high low temperature mobility exceeding 10⁴ cm²/Vs [7] and room temperature carrier concentrations of low 10¹⁴ cm⁻³ [8] have been achieved, showing the high purity and low carrier concentrations necessary for efficient vertical high field devices. Work on this material will be discussed later in this review.

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2. High-power Device Development

(i) Anisotropic Wet Etch of β -Ga₂O₃

We have developed anisotropic wet-etch processing of β -Ga₂O₃ with hot H₃PO₄ (120-160 °C) that can enable dry-etch damage removal and development of submicron channels for FinFETs. A systematic study was performed on a fabricated wagon wheel pattern on β -Ga₂O₃ (010) substrate that showed a directional dependence of β -Ga₂O₃ etch by hot H₃PO₄, [1] with the [001] direction revealing faster etch rate and near vertical profile as shown in Fig. 4a.

A further evaluation of this wet-etch process was performed on sidewall Schottky diodes fabricated on MOCVD (010) β -Ga₂O₃ films on Fe-doped substrates. [2] The wet-etched Schottky diodes showed superior characteristics with near unity ideality factor and reduced hysteresis compared to the ones without wet-etch as shown in Figs. 4b and 4c. This wet-etch method appears to be a useful technique for low-damage and ultra-scaled device that was used in our subsequent FINFET development.

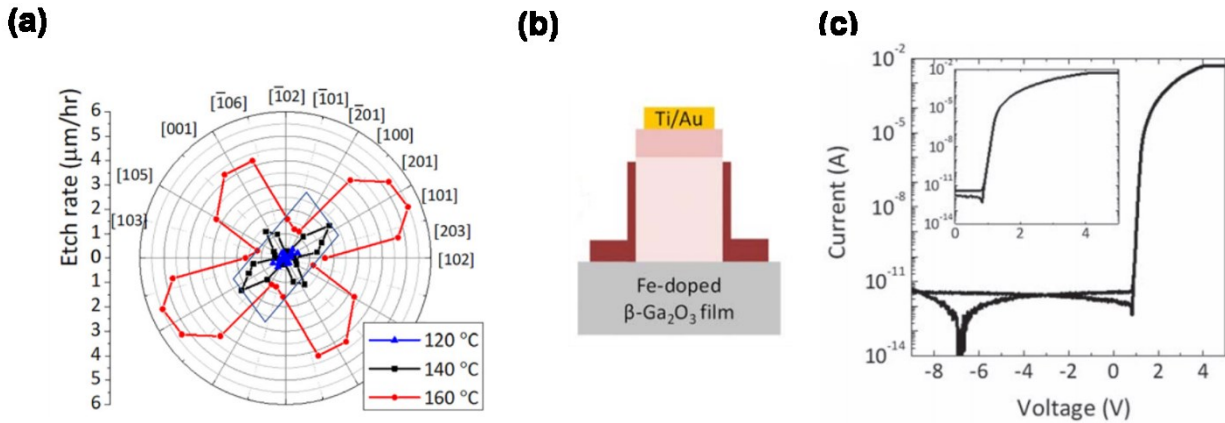


Fig. 4. (a) $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ sidewall etch rate at different H_3PO_4 temperatures. [1] Higher etch rates are obtained near the $[001]$ and $[201]$ directions, and sidewall Schottky diode with wet-etch (b) fabricated device structure, and (c) current-voltage characteristics with unity ideality factor and no hysteresis. [2]

(ii) Lateral FINFETs

We developed lateral Fin transistors with both MISFETs and MESFET structures on MOCVD (010) $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ on Fe-doped substrates using the wet-etch technique with hot H_3PO_4 . [3] The devices had fin length of 3 μm , gate length of 1 μm , gate-source spacing of 5 μm , and gate-drain spacing of 9 μm . The FINFET devices comprised of uniformly distributed 72 fins with a total width of 200 μm . The breakdown voltage of the MESFET was obtained as 1263 V whereas the MISFET demonstrated a breakdown voltage of 787 V as shown in Fig. 5.

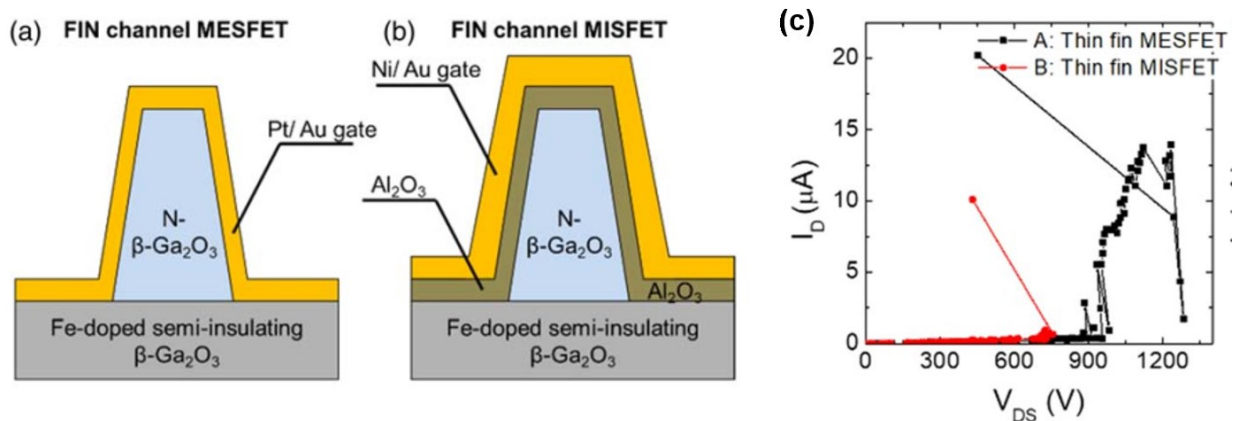


Fig. 5. MOCVD (010) $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ (a) MESFET, (b) MISFET, and (c) breakdown characteristics [3].

(iii) Vertical Field-plate Schottky Diodes

We also developed vertical field-plate Schottky barrier diodes using MOCVD (010) $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ since vertical devices offer superior power handling capability and scaling feasibility compared to the lateral ones. The Schottky diodes consisted of nominal $\sim 1.1 \mu\text{m}$ lightly Si-doped n- $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$

drift layer (\sim low 10^{16} cm^{-3} doping) grown on a $0.2 \mu\text{m}$ n^+ buffer layer ($[\text{Si}] \sim 5 \times 10^{18} \text{cm}^{-3}$) on top of a Sn-doped substrate. [4] The field-plate Schottky diodes exhibited a low differential specific on-resistance of $0.67 \text{ m}\Omega\text{-cm}^2$, a punch-through breakdown voltage of 165 V, and a higher Baliga's figure of-merit (BFOM) compared to the devices from other growth methods of similar drift layer thickness (Fig. 6). The low $R_{\text{on,sp}}$ can be potentially contributed from the high-mobility MOCVD $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ drift layer. Our results suggest the MOCVD $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$, with higher mobility and background impurity, can be promising for high-power vertical devices.

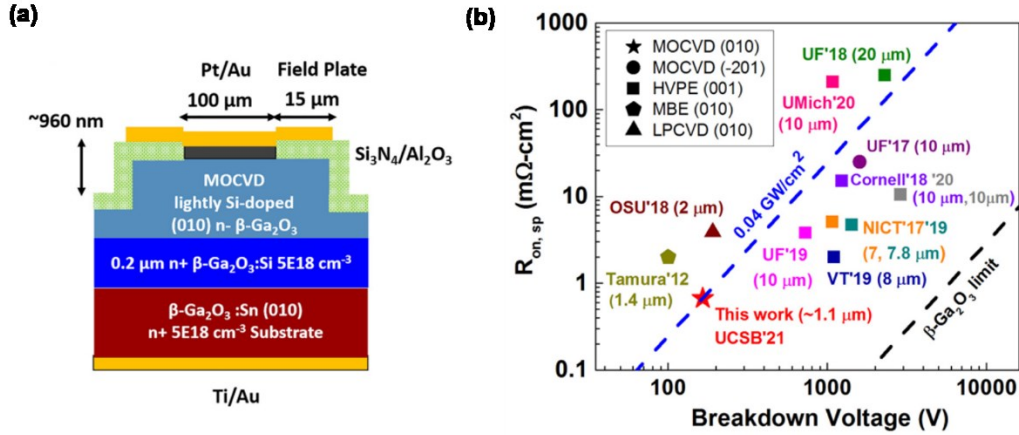


Fig. 6. (a) MOCVD $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ vertical field-plate Schottky diodes, (b) $R_{\text{ON,sp}}$ versus breakdown voltage of vertical $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ Schottky diodes from our work and from prior reports (drift layer thickness shown in parenthesis). [4] Our devices provided better BFOM compared to similar thickness devices by other growth methods, such as LPCVD (OSU'18) and MBE (Tamura'12).

(iv) Power Device Figure-of-Merit

We have evaluated the potential of $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ for high-power application revisiting the power device figure-of-merit. The conventional BFOM considers complete dopant ionization in the evaluation of on-resistance. However, in UWBG semiconductors, this is often not the case as the shallow dopants transform to deep levels providing only partial ionization, and are often compensated by impurities. The $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ offers an additional advantage here with a wide range of shallow dopants available (Si, Ge, Sn), their high ionization efficiency, and high-material purity compared to other UWBG semiconductors (e.g. AlN and diamond). With the actual material expectations included in terms of dopant ionization and impurity compensation effects, $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ showed a superior “Modified BFOM” compared to other UWBG semiconductors as shown in Fig 7. [5]

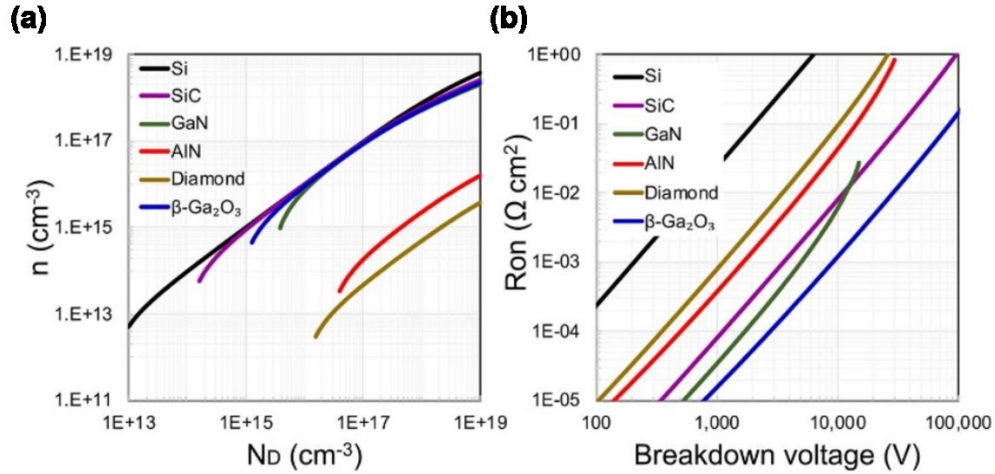


Fig 7. (a) Ionized doping in different semiconductors with respect to the background doping considering compensation effects by acceptor-like impurities. (b) Modified BFOM contour showing $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ can provide higher BFOM compared to other UWBG semiconductors when material purity and dopant ionization efficiency are considered to estimate BFOM. [5]

3. Application of $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ Devices in Harsh Environment

To investigate $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ device performance in harsh radiation application, we explored neutron radiation effects in UCSB-grown PAMBE Ge-doped $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ epitaxy and EFG-grown UID substrates from Tamura using Ni/ $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ Schottky diodes. [6, 7] The samples were irradiated together at the Ohio State University Research Reactor (OSURR) for a fair comparison. Each sample was diced into two pieces in order to separately irradiate them with two different fluences of fast neutrons (>0.5 eV) with exposure time of 30 and 60 minutes at 450 kW in OSURR that provided a 1 MeV neutron equivalent fluence as $8.5 \times 10^{14} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ and $1.7 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-2}$, respectively.

After the radiation, the irradiated PAMBE $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ diodes revealed a carrier removal rate of $\sim 19 \pm 0.3 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ which was ~ 2.7 times lower compared to the ones on EFG-grown substrate with a carrier removal rate of $\sim 51 \pm 3.5 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ (Fig. 8a). Moreover, a prior work on SiC Schottky diodes irradiated in the same OSURR reactor revealed a carrier removal rate of $\sim 48.5 \pm 6.3 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ (Fig. 8b). Our work revealed PAMBE $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ to be ~ 2.5 times more radiation hard compared to SiC which will be promising for MBE $\beta\text{-Ga}_2\text{O}_3$ devices for extreme environment applications. [7]

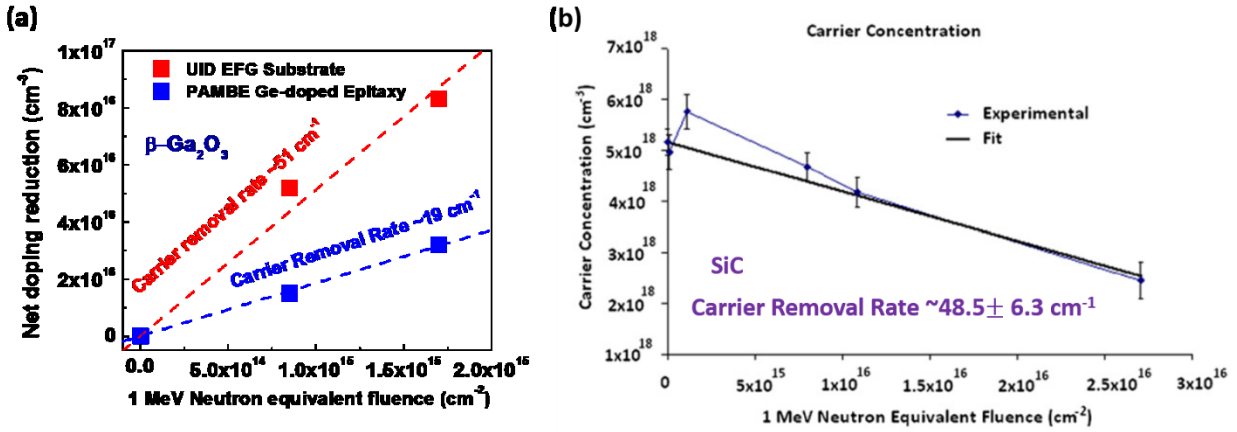


Fig. 8- Carrier removal rate in neutron-irradiated samples (a) β -Ga₂O₃ EFG substrate and PAMBE epitaxy [6, 7], (b) SiC [8] showing PAMBE β -Ga₂O₃ has ~2.5 times less carrier removal rate compared to SiC.

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3. Density Functional Theory

In collaboration with the Chris Van de Walle group at UCSB, we have explored the properties of Ga₂O₃ alloys and acceptor dopant diffusion via hybrid density functional theory. For the Al₂O₃-Ga₂O₃ alloy system, it was determined that the monoclinic crystal structure was preferred for Al contents up to 71%. The conduction band and valence band offsets were calculated between Al₂O₃ and Ga₂O₃ for the monoclinic and corundum structures. Additionally, valence and conduction band offsets were calculated for the β -(Al_xGa_{1-x})₂O₃/Ga₂O₃ heterostructure as a function of Al content x as shown in Fig. 9. [1] Achieving high Al content to obtain high conduction band offsets is necessary to produce high 2DEG densities for efficient modulation doped field effect transistors in the future.

Investigation into diffusion of the deep acceptors Mg and N was performed as well. Here it was found that Mg can incorporate on the Ga site as a deep acceptor or on the O site as a deep donor. N can incorporate on the O site as a deep acceptor, but can also incorporate on the Ga site. Mg was shown to diffuse rapidly as an interstitial in a process that is assisted by Ga interstitials. N diffusion on the other hand is assisted by O vacancies. Mg diffusion occurs at significantly lower activation energies than N, suggesting it will diffuse at lower temperatures than N. [2]

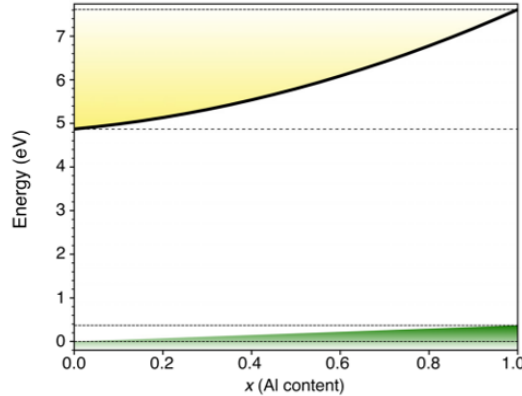


Fig. 9- Prediction of conduction and valence band offsets as a function of Al composition in β -($\text{Al}_x\text{Ga}_{1-x}$) $_2\text{O}_3$, with β - Ga_2O_3 shown as the dotted lines.

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