# AlGaN/GaN/3C-SiC on diamond HEMTs with thick nitride layers prepared by bonding-first process

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# AlGaN/GaN/3C-SiC on diamond HEMTs with thick nitride layers prepared by bonding-first process

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Highlights	・ダイヤモンドに接合された窒化ガリウム(GaN)を熱加工し、トランジスタ作製に				
	成功。				
	・作製したトランジスタの放熱性の向上、接合による GaN 層の品質担保を実証。				
	・高品質な炭化ケイ素(3C-SiC)バッファ層を採用。				
	・ダイヤモンド上窒化ガリウムの大面積化が可能になり、社会実装を加速。				
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研究グループは、ダイヤモンドに接合された窒化ガリウムを熱加工し、トランジスタの作製に成功するとともに放熱性の向上を実証しました。

窒化ガリウムを利用したトランジスタは、シリコンに代わる次世代半導体として、携帯電話の基地局などで幅広く使用されているものの、動作時の発熱により性能が大きく制限されており、大型の放熱部材も必要とされていました。

研究グループは、2021 年 9 月に世界で初めて GaN とダイヤモンドの直接接合に成功し、1,000  $\mathbb{C}$ の熱処理にも耐えることを実証しました。今回の研究では、ダイヤモンドとの直接接合に成功した窒化ガリウムに約  $800^{\mathbb{C}}$ の熱処理を行うことで、放熱性に優れたトランジスタの作製に成功しました。地球上で最も熱伝導率が高く、最も効率的に熱を逃すことができるダイヤモンドを使用しているため、シリコン上でのトランジスタと比べて放熱性が向上していること(図 1)、また、窒化ガリウム層の品質が劣化しないことも明らかとなりました。

本研究成果により、接合後にトランジスタを作製することでダイヤモンド上窒化ガリウムの大面積化が進展し、レーダーやインバータなどの大電力用途にも使用範囲が拡大することが期待されます。

### 概要

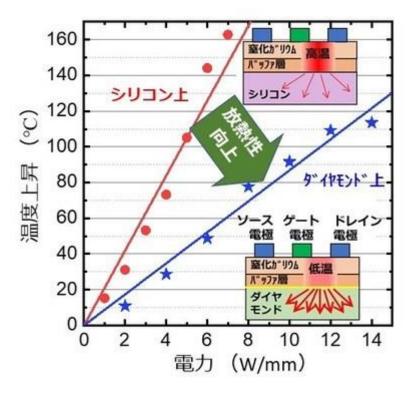


図 1: ダイヤモンド上に作製することによる放熱性の向上効果 (Si 上と比べて放熱性が良いため、同じ電力でも温度上昇は小さい)。

'ダイヤモンドに接合された窒化ガリウムを熱加工し、トランジスタを作製することに成功'. 大阪市立大学. https://www.osaka-cu.ac.jp/ja/news/2021/220318. (参照 2022-03-18)

### 1 AIGaN/GaN/3C-SiC on diamond HEMTs with thick nitride layers

### 2 prepared by bonding-first process

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We fabricate AlGaN/GaN high electron mobility transistors (HEMTs) on diamond substrates

- 19 by transferring 8-μm heterostructures grown on 3C-SiC/Si templates and subsequently
- applying the conventional device process steps. No exfoliation of 3C-SiC/diamond bonding
- 21  $\,$  interfaces is observed during 800 °C annealing, the essential step for forming ohmic contacts
- $\,$  on nitrides.  $\,$  The thermal resistance of HEMTs on diamond is 35% of that of HEMTs on Si,
- 23 which is assumed to be the origin of smaller negative drain conductance in on-diamond
- 24 HEMTs. The results imply that the bonding-first process is applicable for fabricating low-
- 25 thermal-resistance HEMTs with thick nitride layers.

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1 Group-III-nitride based electron devices such as GaN HEMTs have been widely applied 2 for high-power and high-frequency/high-speed systems because of their excellent power 3 capability and electron transport properties. RF power amplifiers made of HEMTs with 1-2-µm-thick nitride layers have become popular in wireless networks <sup>1-2)</sup>. Recently, HEMTs 4 made of thicker (>4 µm) nitride layers have been intensively investigated for power circuit 5 applications <sup>3-5)</sup>. However, a rise in the temperature of highly biased devices <sup>6-7)</sup>, which is 6 7 marked in HEMTs on sapphire substrates because of their low thermal conductivity, causes 8 degradation of device characteristics, such as negative drain conductance (NDC) 8), and 9 brings about negative impacts on their reliability 9). These self-heating effects have been reduced by using 4H-SiC substrates for nitride growth<sup>6)</sup>. 10 11 To proceed with the improvement of device characteristics, the possibility of using 12 diamond, with thermal conductivity of up to 2,200 W/mK (in the case of single crystalline 13 (SC) diamond), as a heat spreader has been intensively investigated. Nitride heterostructures have been grown on SC diamond (111) substrates <sup>10)</sup>. Alternatively, after host substrates for 14 epitaxial growth had been removed, and thin SiN dielectrics and polycrystalline (PC) 15 diamond have been successively deposited on the exposed bottom surfaces <sup>11-12)</sup>. Although 16 17 this technology is applicable to large-size heterostructures, the low thermal conductivities of SiN dielectrics 13) and the PC diamond near bonding interfaces 14) affect the thermal 18 19 resistance ( $R_{TH}$ ) of such HEMTs. 20 To further improve the thermal properties, heterostructures have been transferred onto 21 diamond substrates using wafer bonding technologies such as surface-activated bonding (SAB) <sup>15)</sup>. Reported transfer processes include those based on a "device first" concept <sup>16-18)</sup>, 22 23 in which heterostructures were bonded to diamonds after HEMTs had been fabricated, and 24 those based on a "bonding first" concept 19), in which HEMTs were fabricated after 25 heterostructures had been transferred. In the device-first process, possible unevenness and/or ununiform strain introduced during device fabrication 20) are assumed to bring about 26 difficulties in bonding large-size samples. Samples have been annealed at 700 °C during 27 28 bonding in the bonding-first process, which limited the thickness of heterostructures to be bonded (typically  $< 2 \mu m$ ) <sup>21)</sup>. We have previously fabricated diamond/GaN junctions <sup>22)</sup> 29 30 using SAB without heating and confirmed their tolerance against 1000 °C annealing. In this work, we transferred AlGaN/GaN heterostructures grown on 3C-SiC/Si (111) 31 templates 23) onto diamond substrates using SAB 24) and subsequently fabricated GaN 32 HEMTs, i.e., the bonding-first process was applied. The total thickness of the nitride layers 33 34 of the heterostructures is 8 µm. The electrical properties of HEMTs as well as their surface

1 temperature during operation were investigated and compared with those of HEMTs 2 fabricated on as grown heterostructures. 3 We grew an AlGaN/GaN heterostructure consisting of a 23-nm-thick Al<sub>0.26</sub>Ga<sub>0.74</sub>N barrier 4 layer, a 6-µm-thick GaN layer, and a 2-µm-thick III-N buffer layer on a (111)-oriented 3C-5 SiC/Si template by metal organic chemical vapor deposition (CVD). The thickness of the 6 3C-SiC layer was 1 µm. We temporarily bonded the top surface of the heterostructure to a 7 handle Si substrate and removed the host Si substrate with fluonitric acid. Then, we 8 polished the exposed backside of 3C-SiC layer by chemical mechanical polishing. We 9 deposited a ≈10-nm Si layer on a bonding surface of a 10-mm-square, 500-μm-thick single-10 crystalline CVD-diamond substrate by RF sputtering and fabricated the handle 11 substrate/nitride/3C-SiC/diamond structure using SAB. After the handle Si substrate had 12 been removed with fluonitric acid, we applied the conventional process steps to fabricate the 13 on-diamond HEMTs (Fig. 1): mesa isolation using Ar<sup>+</sup>-ion milling, formation of source and 14 drain contacts by evaporating Ti/Al/Ti/Au layers and annealing at 800 °C for 60 s in N<sub>2</sub> 15 ambient, and formation of gate contacts by evaporating Ni/Au layers. Top views of the as-16 bonded handle substrate/nitride/3C-SiC/diamond junction, the junction after removal of the 17 handle substrate, and HEMTs fabricated on diamond are shown in Figs. 2(a)-(c), 18 respectively. A cross-sectional SEM image of HEMTs fabricated on diamond is shown in 19 Fig. 2(d). These images show that a heterostructure with a total thickness of  $\approx 9 \, \mu m$  was 20 successfully bonded to diamond and that all process steps, including the 800 °C annealing, 21 were completed without the occurrence of exfoliation at the bonding interfaces. We also 22 applied the same process steps to a heterostructure as grown on the 3C-SiC/Si template (on-23 Si HEMTs). We investigated the sheet resistance  $(R_{\rm sh})$ , contact resistance  $(R_{\rm c})$ , concentration  $(N_{\rm s})$ , and 24 25 mobility ( $\mu$ ) of two-dimensional electron gas at the AlGaN/GaN interfaces of HEMTs using the transfer length method (TLM) and capacitance-voltage measurement 25) at room 26 27 temperature. We estimated  $R_{\rm sh}$ ,  $R_{\rm c}$ ,  $N_{\rm s}$ , and  $\mu$  of the heterostructures on diamond to be 406  $\Omega/\text{sq}$ , 1.6  $\Omega\cdot\text{mm}$ , 0.86×10<sup>13</sup> cm<sup>-2</sup>, and 1780 cm<sup>2</sup>/Vs, respectively. Those of the as-grown 28 heterostructures were found to be 398  $\Omega/\text{sq}$ , 2.3  $\Omega\cdot\text{mm}$ , 0.89×10<sup>13</sup> cm<sup>-2</sup>, and 1760 cm<sup>2</sup>/Vs, 29

The drain current  $(I_{\rm D})$ -drain bias voltage  $(V_{\rm DS})$  characteristics as well as the transfer characteristics of HEMTs with gate length  $(L_{\rm G})$  of 5  $\mu$ m, source-to-gate and gate-to-drain separations  $(L_{\rm SG}, L_{\rm GD})$  of 5  $\mu$ m, and gate width  $(W_{\rm G})$  of 150  $\mu$ m were measured for  $V_{\rm DS}$ 

respectively. The results are summarized in Table I. It is notable that no marked difference

in each parameter was observed between the two heterostructures.

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1 between 0 and 20 V and gate bias voltage ( $V_{GS}$ ) varied between -4 and 3 V with a 1-V step. 2 The characteristics of HEMTs on diamond and on Si are shown in Figs. 3(a) and (b), 3 respectively. Excellent pinch-off properties were observed for both devices. In the  $I_D$ - $V_{DS}$ 4 curve for  $V_{\rm GS}=3$  V in the HEMT on Si, we observed a peak in  $I_{\rm D}$  (460 mA/mm) at  $V_{\rm DS}=$ 8.9 V and NDC of -7.5 mS/mm for a higher  $V_{\rm DS}$  region. The  $I_{\rm D}$ - $V_{\rm DS}$  curve for the same  $V_{\rm GS}$ 5 in the HEMT on diamond revealed a peak of 570 mA/mm at  $V_{\rm DS} = 10.5$  V and NDC of -5.6 6 7 mS/mm for a higher  $V_{DS}$ , i.e., the magnitude of NDC of the on-diamond HEMT was 75% of 8 that of the NDC of the on-Si HEMT, while the peak  $I_D$  of the on-diamond HEMT was 1.2 9 times as large as that of the on-Si HEMT. We also confirmed that threshold voltages of on-10 diamond and on-Si HEMTs were the same (-3.2 V) and their intrinsic transconductance for 11  $V_{\rm GS}$  lower than -2.5 V agreed with that estimated based on the long-channel model although 12 the epi layer of on-diamond HEMTs experienced the transferring process (not shown). 13 The temperature of biased TLM devices and HEMTs were measured by using micro-14 photoluminescence (μ-PL) and micro-Raman (μ-Raman) spectroscopies. During 15 measurements, the dies were mounted on a Cu block. The temperature of its bottom was 16 fixed at 300 K using a water-cooling system. In the μ-PL measurement, a 325-nm He-Cd 17 laser was focused on the surface of the HEMTs. The relationship between the peak energies 18 of PL spectra and ambient temperatures measured for unbiased devices, which was fit to a Varshini equation  $^{26-27)}$ , was used as a calibration curve. In the  $\mu$ -Raman spectroscopy, the 19 20 Stokes/anti-Stokes ratio measured for the GaN E2(high) band measured using a 488-nm laser 21 was used for estimating temperatures. Results of measurements were compared with those 22 of analysis by the finite element method (FEM), in which we adjusted the thermal 23 conductivity (k) of the III-N buffer layer to reproduce the measurement results. we referred to k of other materials in the literature <sup>28)</sup>. 24 25 Relationships between the power dissipation ( $P_{diss}$ ) in 8-µm-long and 220-µm-wide biased 26 TLM devices on diamond and on Si and temperatures at the center of their channels are 27 shown in Fig. 4. The temperature based on the μ-PL measurement was higher than that based 28 on the  $\mu$ -Raman measurement for the same power dissipation. In this figure, we also show 29 their calculated surface temperature and that averaged along the vertical direction in the GaN 30 channels, which were obtained by setting  $\kappa$  of the III-N buffer layer to 30 W/mK. We found 31 that for each TLM device the calculated surface temperature and the average temperature 32 agreed with the results of the  $\mu$ -PL and the  $\mu$ -Raman measurements, respectively. This means that the penetration depths of lights with wavelengths of 325 and 488 nm into GaN, which 33 are  $\approx 70$  nm and 50  $\mu$ m <sup>29-30)</sup>, respectively, cause the higher temperatures observed in the  $\mu$ -34

1 PL measurements. The results of the analysis imply that the  $\mu$ -PL measurement is preferable

2 for estimating the temperature of active parts of biased HEMTs and hence their  $R_{TH}$ . More

importantly, the temperature rise of on-diamond devices was approximately half of that of

4 on-Si devices.

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We estimated temperatures in the gap between the source and gate and in the gap between the gate and drain of biased HEMTs with  $L_G = 20 \mu m$ ,  $L_{SG} = L_{GD} = 10 \mu m$ , and  $W_G = 200 \mu m$ using  $\mu$ -PL measurements.  $V_{DS}$  was varied for a fixed  $V_{GS}$  (2 V) in measurements. The spatial variations of temperatures for on-diamond and on-Si HEMTs for  $P_{\rm diss}$  of 2, 4, and 6 W/mm are compared in Fig. 5(a). The highest temperature was observed at the gate edge in the gap between the gate and drain for each bias condition. The relationship between the temperature at this region and  $P_{\text{diss}}$  is shown in Fig. 5(b). As with the results for TLM devices, lower temperatures were observed for the on-diamond HEMTs in comparison with those for the on-Si HEMTs.  $R_{\text{TH}}$  of the on-diamond HEMTs [8 K/(W/mm)], was  $\approx 35\%$  of that of the on-Si HEMT [26 K/(W/mm)]. In addition, as is shown in Fig. 5(c), relationships between drain current for each  $P_{\text{diss}}$  normalized by current at 2 W/mm ( $I_D(P_{\text{diss}})/I_D(2 \text{ W/mm})$ ) and the temperature of gate edge for the two types of HEMTs were close to each other, which implies that the observed lower  $R_{TH}$  of the on-diamond HEMTs is assumed to be the origin of their lower NDC. Also notable is that the electrical properties of the on-diamond heterostructures agree with those of the on-Si heterostructures. These features show that the process for transferring heterostructures onto diamond does not have negative impacts on the characteristics of nitride devices fabricated after they have been transferred.

In summary, we transferred 8- $\mu$ m-thick AlGaN/GaN heterostructures onto CVD-diamond and successfully fabricated HEMTs by applying the conventional device process steps after the transfer. No exfoliation of the heterostructure occurred, although the bonding interface experienced 800 °C annealing to form ohmic contacts. We also observed a smaller  $R_{TH}$  in the on-diamond devices (×0.35 of that in on-Si devices), which was assumed to be the origin of 0.75-times smaller NDC of on-diamond HEMTs although its peak  $I_D$  was 1.2 times larger than that of on-Si HEMTs. These results imply that the bonding-first approach is applicable for fabricating low- $R_{TH}$  nitride devices and integrated circuits made of thick heterostructures.

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## Figure Captions

- Fig. 1. Process steps for fabricating on-diamond HEMTs.
- **Fig. 2.** Top views of (a) as-bonded handle substrate/nitride/3C-SiC/diamond junction, (b) junction after removal of handle substrate, and (c) fabricated on-diamond HEMTs. (d) Cross sectional SEM image of on-diamond HEMTs.
- **Fig. 3.**  $I_D$ - $V_{DS}$  characteristics of (a) on-diamond and (b) on-Si HEMTs with  $L_G = 5 \mu m$ ,  $L_{SG} = L_{GD} = 5 \mu m$ , and  $W_G = 150 \mu m$  for  $V_{GS}$  varied between -4 and 3 V in 1-V steps.
- **Fig. 4.** Relationships between temperature rise and dissipated power density in on-diamond and on-Si TLM devices. Results of measurements based on  $\mu$ -PL and  $\mu$ -Raman spectroscopies are compared with those of FEM analysis.
- **Fig. 5.** (a) Spatial variations of temperature on surfaces of on-diamond and on-Si HEMTs for  $P_{\rm diss}$  of 2, 4, and 6 W/mm. (b) Relationships between temperature rise at the gate edge in the gate-to-drain separation and  $P_{\rm diss}$  for the respective HEMTs. The two lines are eye guides. (c) Relationships between drain current normalized by  $I_{\rm D}$  at  $P_{\rm diss}$  of 2 W/mm and the temperature at the gate edge in the gate-to-drain separation for the respective HEMTs.

Table I. Material parameters.

Material	HEMT on Si		HEMT on diamond	
parameters	Average	SD	Average	SD
$R_{\rm sh} \ (\Omega/{\rm sq})$	397	7	406	3
$R_c$ ( $\Omega$ mm)	2.7	0.1	1.6	0.1
$N_s (10^{13}/cm^2)$	0.89	0.06	0.86	0.02
$\mu$ (cm <sup>2</sup> /Vs)	1760	20	1780	30

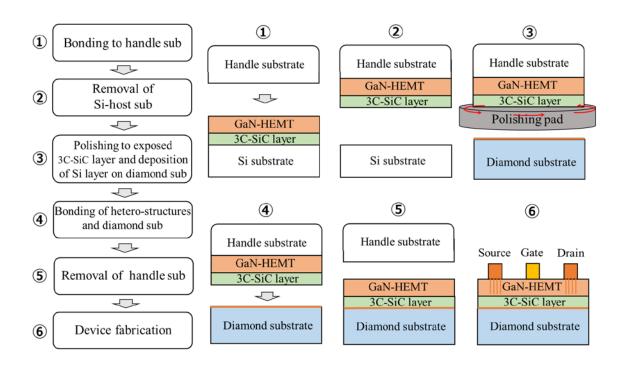
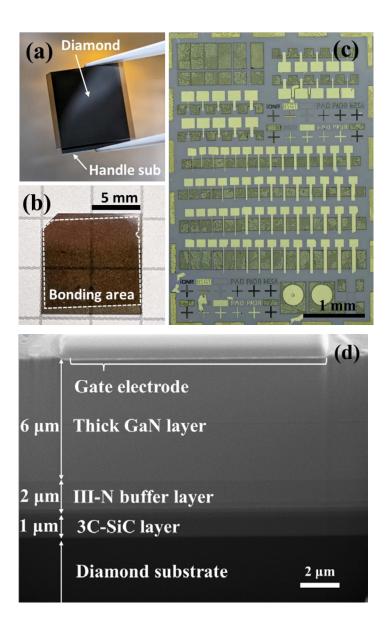
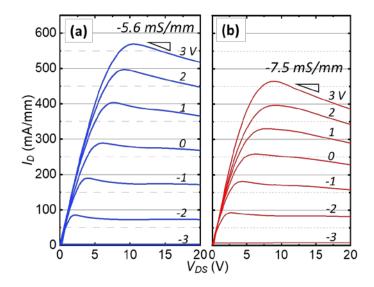


Fig. 1. Process steps for fabricating on-diamond HEMTs.



**Fig. 2.** Top views of (a) as-bonded handle substrate/nitride/3C-SiC/diamond junction, (b) junction after removal of handle substrate, and (c) fabricated on-diamond HEMTs. (d) Cross sectional SEM image of on-diamond HEMTs.



**Fig. 3.**  $I_D$ - $V_{DS}$  characteristics of (a) on-diamond and (b) on-Si HEMTs with  $L_G = 5 \mu m$ ,  $L_{SG} = L_{GD} = 5 \mu m$ , and  $W_G = 150 \mu m$  for  $V_{GS}$  varied between -4 and 3 V in 1-V steps.

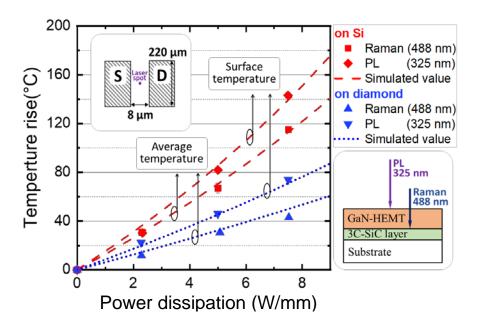


Fig. 4. Relationships between temperature rise and  $P_{diss}$  in on-diamond and on-Si TLM devices. Results of measurements based on  $\mu$ -PL and  $\mu$ -Raman spectroscopies are compared with those of FEM analysis.

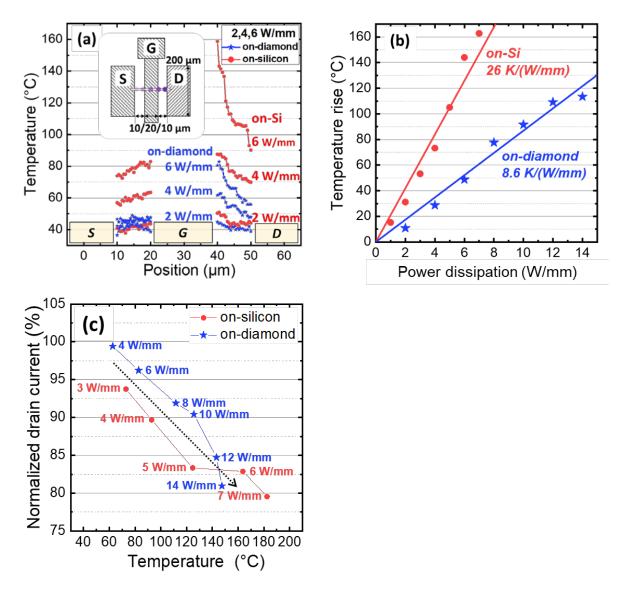


Fig. 5. (a) Spatial variations of temperature on surfaces of on-diamond and on-Si HEMTs for  $P_{\rm diss}$  of 2, 4, and 6 W/mm. (b) Relationships between temperature rise at the gate edge in the gate-to-drain separation and  $P_{\rm diss}$  for the respective HEMTs. The two lines are eye guides. (c) Relationships between drain current normalized by  $I_{\rm D}$  at  $P_{\rm diss}$  of 2 W/mm and the temperature at the gate edge in the gate-to-drain separation for the respective HEMTs.