

Lithographic Apparatus and Device Manufacturing Method.

The present invention relates to a lithographic projection apparatus comprising:

- a radiation system for supplying a projection beam of radiation;
- a support structure for supporting patterning means, the patterning means serving to
5 pattern the projection beam according to a desired pattern;
- a substrate table for holding a substrate; and
- a projection system for projecting the patterned beam onto a target portion of the
substrate.

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The term “patterning means” as here employed should be broadly interpreted as referring to means that can be used to endow an incoming radiation beam with a patterned cross-section, corresponding to a pattern that is to be created in a target portion of the substrate; the term “light valve” can also be used in this context. Generally,
15 the said pattern will correspond to a particular functional layer in a device being created in the target portion, such as an integrated circuit or other device (see below). Examples of such patterning means include:

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- A mask. The concept of a mask is well known in lithography, and it includes mask types such as binary, alternating phase-shift, and attenuated phase-shift, as well as
20 various hybrid mask types. Placement of such a mask in the radiation beam causes selective transmission (in the case of a transmissive mask) or reflection (in the case of a reflective mask) of the radiation impinging on the mask, according to the pattern on the mask. In the case of a mask, the support structure will generally be a mask table, which ensures that the mask can be held at a desired position in the
25 incoming radiation beam, and that it can be moved relative to the beam if so desired.

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- A programmable mirror array. One example of such a device is a matrix-addressable surface having a viscoelastic control layer and a reflective surface. The basic principle behind such an apparatus is that (for example) addressed areas of the
30 reflective surface reflect incident light as diffracted light, whereas unaddressed

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areas reflect incident light as undiffracted light. Using an appropriate filter, the said undiffracted light can be filtered out of the reflected beam, leaving only the diffracted light behind; in this manner, the beam becomes patterned according to the addressing pattern of the matrix-addressable surface. An alternative
5 embodiment of a programmable mirror array employs a matrix arrangement of tiny mirrors, each of which can be individually tilted about an axis by applying a suitable localized electric field, or by employing piezoelectric actuation means.

Once again, the mirrors are matrix-addressable, such that addressed mirrors will reflect an incoming radiation beam in a different direction to unaddressed mirrors;

10 in this manner, the reflected beam is patterned according to the addressing pattern of the matrix-addressable mirrors. The required matrix addressing can be performed using suitable electronic means. In both of the situations described

hereabove, the patterning means can comprise one or more programmable mirror arrays. More information on mirror arrays as here referred to can be gleaned, for

15 example, from United States Patents US 5,296,891 and US 5,523,193, and PCT patent applications WO 98/38597 and WO 98/33096, which are incorporated herein by reference. In the case of a programmable mirror array, the said support structure may be embodied as a frame or table, for example, which may be fixed or movable as required.

20 - A programmable LCD array. An example of such a construction is given in United States Patent US 5,229,872, which is incorporated herein by reference. As above, the support structure in this case may be embodied as a frame or table, for example, which may be fixed or movable as required.

For purposes of simplicity, the rest of this text may, at certain locations, specifically direct
25 itself to examples involving a mask and mask table; however, the general principles discussed in such instances should be seen in the broader context of the patterning means as hereabove set forth.

Lithographic projection apparatus can be used, for example, in the manufacture of integrated circuits (ICs). In such a case, the patterning means may generate
30 a circuit pattern corresponding to an individual layer of the IC, and this pattern can be imaged onto a target portion (*e.g.* comprising one or more dies) on a substrate (silicon wafer) that has been coated with a layer of radiation-sensitive material (resist). In general, a single wafer will contain a whole network of adjacent target portions that are successively

irradiated via the projection system, one at a time. In current apparatus, employing patterning by a mask on a mask table, a distinction can be made between two different types of machine. In one type of lithographic projection apparatus, each target portion is irradiated by exposing the entire mask pattern onto the target portion in one go; such an apparatus is commonly referred to as a wafer stepper. In an alternative apparatus — commonly referred to as a step-and-scan apparatus — each target portion is irradiated by progressively scanning the mask pattern under the projection beam in a given reference direction (the "scanning" direction) while synchronously scanning the substrate table parallel or anti-parallel to this direction; since, in general, the projection system will have a magnification factor M (generally < 1), the speed V at which the substrate table is scanned will be a factor M times that at which the mask table is scanned. More information with regard to lithographic devices as here described can be gleaned, for example, from US 6,046,792, incorporated herein by reference.

In a manufacturing process using a lithographic projection apparatus, a pattern (e.g. in a mask) is imaged onto a substrate that is at least partially covered by a layer of radiation-sensitive material (resist). Prior to this imaging step, the substrate may undergo various procedures, such as priming, resist coating and a soft bake. After exposure, the substrate may be subjected to other procedures, such as a post-exposure bake (PEB), development, a hard bake and measurement/inspection of the imaged features. This array of procedures is used as a basis to pattern an individual layer of a device, e.g. an IC. Such a patterned layer may then undergo various processes such as etching, ion-implantation (doping), metallization, oxidation, chemo-mechanical polishing, etc., all intended to finish off an individual layer. If several layers are required, then the whole procedure, or a variant thereof, will have to be repeated for each new layer. Eventually, an array of devices will be present on the substrate (wafer). These devices are then separated from one another by a technique such as dicing or sawing, whence the individual devices can be mounted on a carrier, connected to pins, etc. Further information regarding such processes can be obtained, for example, from the book "Microchip Fabrication: A Practical Guide to Semiconductor Processing", Third Edition, by Peter van Zant, McGraw Hill Publishing Co., 1997, ISBN 0-07-067250-4, incorporated herein by reference.

For the sake of simplicity, the projection system may hereinafter be referred to as the "lens"; however, this term should be broadly interpreted as encompassing various types of projection system, including refractive optics, reflective optics, and catadioptric

systems, for example. The radiation system may also include components operating according to any of these design types for directing, shaping or controlling the projection beam of radiation, and such components may also be referred to below, collectively or singularly, as a "lens". Further, the lithographic apparatus may be of a type having two or more substrate tables (and/or two or more mask tables). In such "multiple stage" devices the additional tables may be used in parallel, or preparatory steps may be carried out on one or more tables while one or more other tables are being used for exposures. Dual stage lithographic apparatus are described, for example, in US 5,969,441 and WO 98/40791, incorporated herein by reference.

Alignment is the process of positioning the image of a specific point on the mask to a specific point on the wafer that is to be exposed. For this to be achieved, the position and orientation of the wafer needs to be established, and for this purpose typically one or more alignment markers, such as a small pattern, are provided on the substrate (wafer). A device may consist of many layers that are built up by successive exposures with intermediate processing steps. Before each exposure, alignment is performed to minimize any positional error between the new exposure and the previous ones, such error being termed overlay error. However, some of the intermediate processing steps may deposit material on top of the alignment markers, and they will at least be buried under a layer of energy-sensitive material (resist), which can cause the alignment markers to be obscured which can result in overlay errors. These and other processing steps may also lead to undesired shifts of the measured aligned position.

Some lithographic projection apparatus use electron beam radiation for performing the exposures, and the projection electron beam is used for alignment purposes.

However this suffers from the problem that the energy of the projection electron beam is not tailored to the alignment marker and the particular layers disposed above the marker because the beam energy is typically around 100 keV. This can result in problems of damage to the features and/or unwanted exposure of the resist during the alignment procedure, and poor contrast in observing the alignment marker.

It is an object of the present invention to alleviate, at least partially, the above problems.

This and other objects are achieved according to the invention in a lithographic apparatus as specified in the opening paragraph, characterized in that the apparatus further comprises an alignment sensor comprising: an electron beam source for providing an electron beam for impinging on an alignment marker on a substrate on the
5 substrate table; and a back-scattered electron detector for detecting electrons back-scattered from the alignment marker, wherein the alignment sensor is independent of the radiation system of the lithographic projection apparatus but is provided within the lithographic projection apparatus to enable alignment to be performed in situ within the lithographic projection apparatus.

10 The invention has the advantage that alignment can be performed using the alignment sensor even when the alignment marker is obscured or laterally shifted by a layer of resist and/or further process layers deposited on the substrate. It also has the advantage that the energy of the electron beam employed in the alignment sensor can be tailored to the particular wafer, process layers and alignment marker independently of the projection
15 radiation and of the radiation system and projection system.

Preferably the projection beam of radiation is EUV radiation. This has the advantage that the electron beam of the alignment sensor and the projection radiation are independent of each other. Moreover, this has the advantage that both the projection and the alignment system can operate in vacuum.

20 Preferably the electron beam and the substrate table are capable of being scanned relative to each other. This provides a detected signal as a function of scan position indicative of the position of the alignment marker. The electron beam may be scanned relative to the substrate table, or the substrate table may be scanned relative to the electron beam.

25 The electron beam may be controllable to impinge on the substrate as a single spot. Alternatively, the electron beam may be controllable to impinge on the substrate as a predetermined intensity distribution of having a pattern which corresponds, for example, with at least a portion of the pattern of the alignment marker on the substrate. Where this is done, a mask may be provided to pattern the electron beam, the mask
30 preferably being provided with a pattern which is substantially a negative of the pattern of the alignment marker on the substrate.

Preferably the electron beam source is for providing electrons with an energy in the range of from 10 to 100 keV, and more preferably in the range of from 20 to

50 keV. This is advantageous because it is sufficiently energetic to penetrate through any layers on top of the alignment marker before being back-scattered, but also provides good contrast in back-scattering coefficient between the substrate (e.g. silicon) and the higher atomic number material of the marker (e.g. tungsten). If the electron beam energy is too high, the contrast in back-scattering is reduced. In addition, for higher electron beam energies, the alignment unit optical column must be longer, and is thus more difficult to incorporate into the lithographic apparatus.

According to a further aspect of the invention there is provided a device manufacturing method comprising the steps of:

- 10 - providing a substrate that is at least partially covered by a layer of radiation-sensitive material;
- providing a projection beam of radiation using a radiation system;
- using patterning means to endow the projection beam with a pattern in its cross-section;
- 15 - projecting the patterned beam of radiation onto a target portion of the layer of radiation-sensitive material,

characterized by determining the position of the substrate prior said projecting step, for the purpose of aligning the substrate with respect to the patterned beam of radiation, by the steps of: providing an electron beam independent of said projection beam; impinging the electron beam on an alignment marker on the substrate; and detecting electrons back-scattered from the alignment marker.

The further aspect of the invention may incorporate one or more of the preferred features referred to above.

Although specific reference may be made in this text to the use of the apparatus according to the invention in the manufacture of ICs, it should be explicitly understood that such an apparatus has many other possible applications. For example, it may be employed in the manufacture of integrated optical systems, guidance and detection patterns for magnetic domain memories, liquid-crystal display panels, thin-film magnetic heads, etc. The skilled artisan will appreciate that, in the context of such alternative applications, any use of the terms "reticle", "wafer" or "die" in this text should be considered as being replaced by the more general terms "mask", "substrate" and "target portion", respectively.

In the present document, the terms “radiation” and “beam” are used to encompass all types of electromagnetic radiation, including ultraviolet radiation (*e.g.* with a wavelength of 365, 248, 193, 157 or 126 nm) and EUV (extreme ultra-violet radiation, *e.g.* having a wavelength in the range 5-20 nm), as well as particle beams, such as ion beams or
5 electron beams.

Embodiments of the invention will now be described, by way of example
10 only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 depicts a lithographic projection apparatus according to an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 2 is a schematic illustration of an alignment sensor, which uses an electron beam, for use in the embodiment of Figure 1;

15 Figure 3 is a schematic cross-section of a wafer with an alignment marker on which an electron beam is incident according to one embodiment of the invention;

Figure 4 depicts the back-scattered electron detection signal as the electron beam in the embodiment of Figure 3 is scanned across the alignment marker;

Figure 5 is a schematic cross-section of a wafer with an alignment marker
20 on which a patterned electron beam is incident according to another embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 6 depicts the back-scattered electron detection signal as the electron beam in the embodiment of Figure 5 is scanned across the alignment marker.

In the Figures, corresponding reference symbols indicate corresponding
25 parts.

Figure 1 schematically depicts a lithographic projection apparatus 1 according to the invention. The apparatus comprises:

- a radiation system LA, IL for supplying a projection beam PB of radiation (*e.g.* UV or
30 EUV radiation, electrons or ions);
- a first object table (mask table) MT provided with a first object (mask) holder for holding a mask MA (*e.g.* a reticle), and connected to first positioning means PM for accurately positioning the mask with respect to item PL;

- a second object table (substrate table) W2T provided with a second object (substrate) holder for holding a substrate W2 (e.g. a resist-coated silicon wafer), and connected to second positioning means P2W for accurately positioning the substrate with respect to item PL;
- 5 • a third object table (substrate table) W3T provided with a third object (substrate) holder for holding a substrate W3 (e.g. a resist-coated silicon wafer), and connected to third positioning means P3W for accurately positioning the substrate, an alignment system generally indicated as AL being provided over the third object table; and
- a projection system ("lens") PL (e.g. a refractive or catadioptric system, a mirror group
10 or an array of field deflectors) for imaging an irradiated portion of the mask MA onto a target portion C of the substrate W.

The radiation system comprises a source LA which produces a beam of radiation (e.g. an undulator or wiggler provided around the path of an electron beam in a storage ring or
15 synchrotron, a plasma source, an electron or ion beam source, a mercury lamp or a laser). The beam of radiation is preferably an EUV beam, but may be any other suitable beam. The beam is caused to traverse various optical components included in illumination system IL so that the resultant beam PB has a desired shape and intensity distribution in its cross-section.

20 The beam PB subsequently impinges upon the mask MA which is held in a mask holder on a mask table MT. Having been selectively reflected (or transmitted) by the mask MA, the beam PB passes through the "lens" PL, which focuses the beam PB onto a target portion C of the substrate W2, W3. With the aid of the positioning means P2W, P3W and interferometric displacement measuring means IF, the substrate table W2T, W3T can be
25 moved accurately, e.g. so as to position different target portions C in the path of the beam PB. Similarly, the positioning means PM and interferometric displacement measuring means IF can be used to accurately position the mask MA with respect to the path of the beam PB, e.g. after mechanical retrieval of the mask MA from a mask library or during a scanning motion. In the prior art, movement of the object tables MT, W2T is generally
30 realised with the aid of a long-stroke module (coarse positioning) and a short-stroke module (fine positioning), which are not explicitly depicted in Figure 1.

The depicted apparatus can be used in two different modes:

- In step mode, the mask table MT is kept essentially stationary, and an entire mask image is projected in one go (i.e. a single "flash") onto a target portion C. The substrate table W2T, is then shifted in the X and/or Y directions so that a different target portion C can be irradiated by the beam PB;
- 5 • In scan mode, essentially the same scenario applies, except that a given target portion C is not exposed in a single "flash". Instead, the mask table MT is movable in a given direction (the so-called "scan direction", e.g. the Y direction) with a speed v , so that the projection beam PB is caused to scan over a mask image; concurrently, the substrate table W2T, is simultaneously moved in the same or opposite direction at a speed $V =$
10 Mv , in which M is the magnification of the lens PL (e.g., $M = 1/4$ or $1/5$). In this manner, a relatively large target portion C can be exposed, without having to compromise on resolution.

Figure 2 shows the principles of an alignment system embodying the present invention. It comprises an electron beam source 10 which provides an electron beam 12
15 directed towards a wafer W supported on a wafer table WT. When the electron beam 12 impinges on a suitable alignment marker 14 on the wafer W, back-scattered electrons are generated which are detected by detector 16. Details of suitable electron beam sources 10 and back-scattered electron detectors 16 are known, for example, from the field of electron microscopy.

20 The back-scattering efficiency of the alignment marker 14 depends on the atomic number of the element or elements used to form the marker. It is preferred to use relatively high atomic number materials, for example, tungsten, tantalum, cobalt or titanium, although other materials may also be employed for the marker, such as copper (the silicides or nitrides of these metals may also be used). The marker may consist of multi-layered
25 structures. The back-scattering efficiency, and its dependence on the electron beam position, also depend on the lateral and cross-sectional geometry of the marker. Specifically the depth, thickness, width and spatial separation of lines forming the marker, and made of high atomic number material, are important.

The precise position of the back-scattered electron detector 16 is not critical because
30 the back-scattering process is not particularly directional.

The electron beam 12 is scanned relative to the wafer W. The scanning can be performed by moving the wafer table WT underneath a stationary electron beam 12, or by

deflecting the electron beam 12 using electric and/or magnetic fields, or by a combination of both.

5 The alignment system enables the position and orientation of the marker 14 on the wafer W, and hence the wafer W itself, to be accurately determined with respect to the wafer table WT. Referring to Figure 1, the alignment system is used to determine the position and orientation of the wafer W3 on the wafer table W3T. The wafer table W3T is then transferred, via translation of positioning means P3W to a location below the projection lens PL. This is the location occupied by P2W in Figure 1 (P2W is translated substantially simultaneously to the location occupied by P3W in Figure 1). The positioning
10 means P3W is aligned with respect to the projection beam. Since the position of the marker (and wafer W3) is known relative to the positioning means P3W, this allows correct alignment of the wafer with respect to the projection beam to allow an exposure to be performed.

In an alternative embodiment of the invention (not shown) the alignment system may
15 be located adjacent the projection lens PL, so that alignment is achieved without the need to move the wafer and positioning means to an alternative, displaced, location.

In some instances it may be preferred to provide two alignment systems, a first located as shown in Figure 1, and a second (not shown) located adjacent the projection lens PL.

20 Determination of the marker position/orientation will be discussed in the context of further embodiments below.

The above described electron beam alignment sensor according to this embodiment of the invention is a so-called off-axis alignment sensor because the electron beam radiation does not pass through the optical centre of the projection lens. Indeed, in this
25 embodiment of the invention, the projection beam is EUV radiation and so has optics entirely independent of the electron beam alignment radiation. The electrons in the electron beam 12 generated by the electron beam source 10 have an energy set in the range of from 10 to 100 keV, and usually between 20 and 50 keV, typically around 30 keV.

The embodiment of the invention shown in Figure 2 may be implemented as shown
30 in Figure 3. Referring to Figure 3, an electron beam 12 is controlled to impinge on the wafer W as a single spot. In this example, the wafer W comprises a substrate 20 on which there is an alignment marker 14. The marker 14 is in the form of a periodic grating made of stripes of tungsten. Only three of the stripes 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3 are illustrated end-on in

cross-section in Figure 3. On top of the substrate 20 and the marker 14 is a layer 22 representing the resist and any process layers that have already been laid down on the wafer W. The electron beam 12 is scanned relative to the wafer W as indicated by the arrow 24 (though as mentioned above, the wafer W may alternatively be scanned in the opposite direction, or indeed both the wafer and the electron beam 12 can be moved).

The resulting signal, related to the intensity of back-scattered electrons detected by the detector 16 as a function of scan position, is shown in Figure 4. As can be seen, there is a correspondence between the pattern of the marker 14 and the signal in Figure 4.

Although the marker 14 in Figure 3 consists of a rectangular profile metal stripes 14.1,

14.2, 14.3, the actual signal detected by the detector 16 is the convolution of the marker pattern and the electron beam profile, so there is some smoothing in the detected signal of Figure 4. The degree of smoothing depends on, for example, the width and profile of the electron beam 12. A further broadening of the signal, i.e. the detected back-scattered electron intensity as a function of electron beam position, occurs due to electron scattering processes in the stack. From the detected signal, the position and orientation of the marker 14 can be determined. As with optical alignment markers, several gratings may be provided, for example with different periods and for example at different orientations, in order to uniquely determine the position and orientation of the marker and hence of the wafer.

In an alternative implementation, shown in Figure 5, the wafer structure of Figure 3 is used, but the electron beam 12 is composed of a plurality of beamlets 12.1, 12.2, 12.3 and so on, such that the electron beam 12 is patterned in a similar way to at least a portion of the marker 14. The electron beam 12 and wafer W are scanned relative to one another as described above and the resulting detected signal from detector 16 is shown in Figure 6. At scan positions at which there is correspondence between the pattern of the electron beam 12 and the marker 14 there is a peak in the detected signal. Again the actual detected signal is the convolution of the pattern of the marker 14 with the intensity distribution of the electron beam 12. The same comments as the embodiment above apply regarding using several gratings in the marker 14 to uniquely determine the position and orientation of the wafer W.

One way to obtain the patterned electron beam 12 according to this embodiment is to pass an initial electron beam through a mask (not shown) which is essentially a negative of the desired portion of the marker 14. The features of the mask can be defined, for example,

using tungsten or other suitable material to block the electrons in particular portions of the pattern corresponding to the gaps between the features of the marker 14.

5 An advantage of using the electron beam to provide alignment, as compared to optical beam alignment, is that the electron beam provides alignment with respect to alignment markers that cannot be seen via an optical beam. Referring to Figure 3, if layer 22 were to be optically opaque then it would not be possible to see the alignment markers using an optical beam. The electron beam passes directly through the optically opaque layer 22, thereby allowing alignment to be achieved.

10 A further advantage of using the electron beam is that scattering of the beam by the alignment markers is a function of the volume of the alignment markers not just the upper surface of the alignment markers (as is the case with optical alignment). This makes the alignment less sensitive to asymmetry of the alignment markers, as compared with optical alignment.

15 The invention is particularly suited to use in a lithographic apparatus which utilises EUV, since it operates well under vacuum conditions (vacuum is required for EUV to avoid absorption of the EUV by gas molecules).

Whilst specific embodiments of the invention have been described above, it will be appreciated that the invention may be practiced otherwise than as described. The description is not intended to limit the invention.

CLAIMS:

1. A lithographic projection apparatus comprising:
 - a radiation system for providing a projection beam of radiation;
 - a support structure for supporting patterning means, the patterning means serving to pattern the projection beam according to a desired pattern;
 - 5 - a substrate table for holding a substrate;
 - a projection system for projecting the patterned beam onto a target portion of the substrate,
- characterized in that the apparatus further comprises an alignment sensor comprising: an electron beam source for providing an electron beam for impinging on an alignment marker
- 10 on a substrate on the substrate table; and a back-scattered electron detector for detecting electrons back-scattered from the alignment marker, wherein the alignment sensor is independent of the radiation system of the lithographic projection apparatus but is provided within the lithographic projection apparatus to enable alignment to be performed in situ within the lithographic projection apparatus.
- 15 2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said projection beam of radiation is EUV radiation.
3. An apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the electron beam and the substrate table are capable of being scanned relative to each other.
4. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the substrate table is fixed, and
- 20 the electron beam is capable of being scanned relative to the substrate table.
5. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the electron beam is fixed, and the substrate table is capable of being scanned relative to the electron beam.
6. An apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the electron beam is controllable to impinge on the substrate as a single spot.
- 25 7. An apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the electron beam is patternable to impinge on the substrate as a predetermined intensity distribution.
8. An apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the intensity distribution is predetermined to correspond with at least a portion of the pattern of the alignment marker on the substrate.

9. An apparatus according to claim 7 or 8, further comprising a mask for patterning the electron beam.

10. An apparatus according to claim 9 as dependent upon claim 8, wherein the mask is provided with a pattern which is substantially a negative of the pattern of the alignment marker on the substrate.

11. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the electron beam source is for providing electrons with an energy in the range of from 10 to 100 keV, more preferably in the range of from 20 to 50 keV.

12. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the support structure comprises a mask table for holding a mask.

13. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the radiation system comprises a radiation source.

14. A device manufacturing method comprising the steps of:

- providing a substrate that is at least partially covered by a layer of radiation-sensitive material;
- providing a projection beam of radiation using a radiation system;
- using patterning means to endow the projection beam with a pattern in its cross-section;
- projecting the patterned beam of radiation onto a target portion of the layer of radiation-sensitive material,

characterized by determining the position of the substrate prior said projecting step, for the purpose of aligning the substrate with respect to the patterned beam of radiation, by the steps of: providing an electron beam independent of said projection beam; impinging the electron beam on an alignment marker on the substrate; and detecting electrons back-scattered from the alignment marker.

15. A method according to claim 14, wherein said projection beam of radiation is EUV radiation.

16. A method according to claim 14 or 15, wherein the electron beam and the substrate table are scanned relative to each other.

17. A method according to claim 16, wherein the substrate table is fixed, and the electron beam is scanned relative to the substrate table.

18. A method according to claim 16, wherein the electron beam is fixed, and the substrate table is capable of being scanned relative to the electron beam.

19. A method according to any of claims 14 to 18, wherein the electron beam is controlled to impinge on the substrate as a single spot.
20. A method according to any of claims 14 to 18, wherein the electron beam is patterned to impinge on the substrate as a predetermined intensity distribution.
- 5 21. A method according to claim 20, wherein the intensity distribution is predetermined to correspond with at least a portion of the pattern of the alignment marker on the substrate.
22. A method according to claim 20 or 21, wherein a mask is used to pattern the electron beam.
- 10 23. A method according to claim 22 as dependent upon claim 21, wherein the mask is provided with a pattern which is substantially a negative of the pattern of the alignment marker on the substrate.
24. A method according to any of claims 14 to 23, wherein electrons of the electron beam have an energy in the range of from 10 to 100 keV, more preferably in the
- 15 range of from 20 to 50 keV.