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Inventor(s)	Otsuka; Takeshi et al.

Charged particle beam apparatus

Abstract

Light which is radiant energy is emitted from a sample which is heated, and is detected by a backscattered electron detector. A detection signal from the backscattered electron detector includes a radiant component. A radiant component removal section extracts the radiant component from the detection signal using a filter, and then removes the radiant component from the detection signal. An optical detector which detects the radiant component may be provided. A divided detector may be provided as the backscattered electron detector.

Inventors:	Otsuka; Takeshi (Tokyo, JP), Mochizuki; Sadahiko (Tokyo, JP)
Applicant:	JEOL Ltd. (Tokyo, JP)
Family ID:	1000008762626
Assignee:	JEOL Ltd. (Tokyo, JP)
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Primary Examiner: Porta; David P
Attorney, Agent or Firm: The Webb Law Firm

Background/Summary

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

(1) This application claims priority to Japanese Patent Application No. 2022-028236 filed Feb. 25, 2022, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE DISCLOSURE

Field of the Disclosure

(2) The present disclosure relates to a charged particle beam apparatus, and in particular to a

technique for observing a sample which is heated.

Description of Related Art

(3) A charged particle beam apparatus is an apparatus which observes a sample by illuminating the sample with a charged particle beam. Known types of charged particle beam apparatus include a scanning electron microscope, a scanning ion microscope, and the like. In the observation of the sample using the charged particle beam apparatus, the sample is heated as necessary. That is, the sample is observed while the sample is heated, or the sample in the heated state is observed. For example, the sample is heated when observation of a change of strain of a crystal grain is desired or observation of growth of a crystal is desired. A heating temperature is, for example, a few hundreds of ° C. or greater, or a thousand ° C. or greater.

(4) In the scanning electron microscope, electrons emitted from the sample (backscattered electrons, secondary electrons) are detected by a detector (backscattered electron detector, secondary electron detector). When the sample is heated, radiant energy (radiant heat) of an extent to be not ignorable is emitted from the sample and a sample holder; that is, a heated subject. The emission of the radiant energy is specifically emission of light (infrared light, visible light, or the like) as an electromagnetic wave. As the temperature of the sample becomes higher, the amount of radiant energy emitted from the sample is increased.

(5) Normally, the detectors which detect the electrons are also sensitive to photons. Therefore, when the sample is to be observed while the sample is heated, a detection signal which is output from the detector includes, in addition to a component of interest caused by detection of the electrons, a radiant component caused by detection of the radiant energy.

(6) The radiant component in the detection signal causes an offset in the detection signal. In particular, in the case of a sample in a high-temperature state, the radiant component causes a large offset. Further, in this case, because the amount of radiant energy emitted from the sample changes irregularly, the offset in the detection signal becomes unstable. The radiant component included in the detection signal reduces quality of a sample image, and, in some cases, becomes a significant obstructing factor in generating the sample image.

(7) WO 2020/100205 discloses a charged particle beam apparatus having a filter which blocks light from the sample. JP H9-134696 A discloses a scanning electron microscope having a light shielding plate which blocks light from the sample. WO 2020/100205 and JP H9-134696 A do not disclose a technique for removing the radiant component included in the detection signal.

(8) As described above, when the sample in the heated state is to be observed, the radiant energy is emitted from the heated subject (sample, sample holder, and the like) to the detector. The detected radiant energy causes the radiant component. If the sample image is formed based on the detection signal including the radiant component which cannot be ignored, the quality of the sample image is reduced, and, in some cases, it becomes impossible to generate the sample image. Realization of a technique for generating a clear sample image based on the sample in the heated state is desired.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE

(9) An advantage of the present disclosure lies in improvement of quality of the sample image in observation of the sample which is heated. Alternatively, an advantage of the present disclosure lies in removal of the radiant component included in the detection signal.

(10) According to one aspect of the present disclosure, there is provided a charged particle beam apparatus comprising: equipment that illuminates a sample with a charged particle beam; a detector that detects a particle of interest emitted from the sample, caused by illumination of the charged particle beam, and that outputs a detection signal including a radiant component caused by detection of radiant energy emitted from a heated subject, caused by heating of the sample; means that identifies the radiant component through a processing of the detection signal or through selective detection of the radiant energy; a remover that removes the radiant component from the detection signal; and a generator that generates an image representing the sample based on the detection signal from which the radiant component is removed.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- (1) Embodiment(s) of the present disclosure will be described based on the following figures, wherein:
- (2) FIG. 1 is a diagram showing an example structure of a scanning electron microscope according to a first embodiment of the present disclosure;
- (3) FIG. 2 is a diagram showing a scan region and a detection signal;
- (4) FIG. 3 is a diagram showing an example structure of a signal processor;
- (5) FIG. 4 is a diagram showing an example structure of a radiant component removal section;
- (6) FIG. 5 is a diagram for explaining an action of a filter;
- (7) FIG. 6 is a diagram showing an example of a detection signal acquired under a non-heated condition;
- (8) FIG. 7 is a diagram showing an example of a detection signal acquired under a heated condition;
- (9) FIG. 8 is a diagram showing an example of a radiant component extracted by a filter;
- (10) FIG. 9 is a diagram showing an example of a detection signal after removal of the radiant component;
- (11) FIG. 10 is a diagram showing an example of an image generated based on a detection signal including a radiant component;
- (12) FIG. 11 is a diagram showing an example of an image generated based on a detection signal after removal of the radiant component;
- (13) FIG. 12 is a diagram showing an example of processing on a detection signal after removal of the radiant component;
- (14) FIG. 13 is a diagram showing a first alternative configuration of the first embodiment of the present disclosure;
- (15) FIG. 14 is a diagram showing a second alternative configuration of the first embodiment of the present disclosure;
- (16) FIG. 15 is a diagram showing an example structure of a scanning electron microscope according to a second embodiment of the present disclosure;
- (17) FIG. 16 is a diagram showing a first alternative configuration of the second embodiment of the present disclosure;
- (18) FIG. 17 is a diagram showing a second alternative configuration of the second embodiment of the present disclosure; and
- (19) FIG. 18 is a diagram showing a third alternative configuration of the second embodiment of the present disclosure.

DESCRIPTION OF NON-LIMITING EMBODIMENTS

- (20) Non-limiting embodiments of the present disclosure will now be described with reference to the drawings.

(1) Overview of Embodiment

- (21) A charged particle beam apparatus according to an embodiment of the present disclosure comprises illumination equipment, a detector, means that identifies a radiant component (identifier), a removal section (remover), and a generation section (generator). The illumination equipment illuminates a sample with a charged particle beam. The detector detects a particle of interest emitted from the sample, caused by illumination of the charged particle beam. The detector outputs a detection signal including a radiant component caused by detection of radiant energy emitted from a heated subject, caused by heating of the sample. The means that identifies the radiant component identifies the radiant component through processing of the detection signal or through selective detection of the radiant energy. The removal section removes the radiant

component from the detection signal. The generation section generates an image representing the sample based on a detection signal from which the radiant component is removed.

(22) According to the structure described above, because the image can be formed based on the detection signal from which the radiant component is removed, image quality degradation due to the radiant component can be prevented or reduced. As a method of identifying the radiant component, there may be exemplified a method of extracting the radiant component through the processing of the detection signal, and a method of selectively detecting the radiant energy from the heated subject.

(23) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the charged particle beam is an electron beam. Other examples of the charged particle beam include an ion beam. In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the particle of interest is a backscattered electron or a secondary electron emitted from the sample. Other examples of the particle of interest include ions. The detection of the radiant energy is detection of light. Here, the light may include infrared light, visible light, and ultraviolet light. Alternatively, a thermoelectron may be detected as the radiant energy. When a sample holder for heating is used, the entirety of the sample and the sample holder is the heated subject. Alternatively, only the sample may be heated or only a local site in the sample may be heated. In this case, the sample or the local site is the heated subject.

(24) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the means that identifies the radiant component includes a filter which extracts the radiant component from the detection signal. In general, the radiant component changes in a short period in response to a change of a sample form, and the particle of interest changes in a long period in response to a change of the sample temperature. The radiant component can be extracted by taking advantage of such a difference in properties. An alternative configuration may be considered in which a filter is used which directly extracts the component of interest from the detection signal.

(25) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the charged particle beam is two-dimensionally scanned over an observation region which is set on the sample. The detection signal is a one-dimensional signal acquired through the two-dimensional scanning of the charged particle beam. The filter is a one-dimensional filter. The filter is one-dimensionally scanned with respect to the detection signal. The filter is a filter which realizes a smoothing action. Because the change of the temperature is a one-dimensional change caused on a time axis, the one-dimensional filter can be applied to the detection signal which is a one-dimensional signal, and is thus appropriate.

(26) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the detector has a plurality of detection regions sensitive to the particle of interest and to the radiant energy. A plurality of detection signals are output from the plurality of detection regions in parallel with each other. The charged particle beam apparatus further comprises a plurality of adjusters and a summation device. The plurality of adjusters individually apply gain adjustment and offset adjustment to the plurality of detection signals, respectively, and output a plurality of detection signals after adjustment in parallel with each other. The summation device adds the plurality of detection signals after adjustment, and outputs a detection signal after summation. The detection signal after summation is input to the filter. According to this structure, possibility of occurrence of saturation of the detection signal can be reduced.

(27) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the detector has a plurality of detection regions sensitive to the particle of interest and to the radiant energy. A plurality of detection signals are output from the plurality of detection regions in parallel with each other. The means that identifies the radiant component includes means which extracts a plurality of radiant component candidates from the plurality of detection signals, and means which identifies the radiant component based on the plurality of radiant component candidates.

(28) While the radiant energies reaching the plurality of detection regions are approximately equal to each other, the number of particles of interest reaching each detection region depends on the sample shape at the time of illumination of the charged particle beam. That is, it is possible to

assume that, in the plurality of detection signals which are output from the plurality of detection regions, a common component is the radiant component, and differing components are components of interest. The radiant component is identified from the plurality of radiant component candidates based on such a relationship. For example, a radiant component candidate having the lowest intensity among the plurality of radiant component candidates may be identified as the radiant component. Alternatively, the radiant component may be identified through other methods.

(29) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the removal section removes the radiant component from the plurality of detection signals. The generation section generates the image representing the sample based on a plurality of detection signals from which the radiant component is removed. Alternatively, a three-dimensional image of the sample may be generated based on the plurality of detection signals from which the radiant component is removed.

(30) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the detector is a primary detector. The detection signal is a primary detection signal. The means that identifies the radiant component includes a sub detector which selectively detects the radiant energy without detecting the particle of interest. The radiant component is identified based on a sub detection signal which is output from the sub detector. According to this structure, because the radiant component can be selectively detected, the radiant component can be identified with high precision.

(31) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, the sub detector has an incidence film which permits the radiant energy to transmit and which blocks the particle of interest. According to this structure, the radiant component can be easily identified.

(32) In an embodiment of the present disclosure, there are provided a plurality of primary detection regions which function as the primary detector. The removal section removes the radiant component from a plurality of primary detection signals which are output from the plurality of primary detection regions. The generation section generates the image representing the sample based on a plurality of primary detection signals from which the radiant component is removed. The concept of the image includes a three-dimensional image. Alternatively, a divided detector having a plurality of primary detection regions and a plurality of sub detection regions may be used.

(2) Details of Embodiments

(33) FIG. 1 shows an example structure of a charged particle beam apparatus according to a first embodiment of the present disclosure. The charged particle beam apparatus illustrated in FIG. 1 is a scanning electron microscope. Alternatively, the structure to be described below may be applied to a scanning transmission electron microscope, an ion beam apparatus, or the like.

(34) In FIG. 1, the scanning electron microscope has an observer **10** and an information processor **12**. The observer **10** has a sample chamber **14**. A sample stage **16** is provided in the sample chamber **14**, and a sample holder **18** is attached to the sample stage **16**. The sample holder **18** holds a sample **20**. The observer **10** includes equipment which illuminates an electron beam serving as a charged particle beam.

(35) The sample **20** is, for example, a material such as iron, or a product such as a semiconductor device. The sample holder **18** has a function to heat the sample **20**. For example, the entirety or a part of the sample **20** may be heated by applying a current to the entirety of or the part of the sample **20**.

(36) The observer **10** has a lens barrel. An electron gun **22**, a condenser lens **24**, a scanning coil **26**, an objective lens **30**, or the like is provided in the lens barrel. An electron beam **34** is generated by these elements, and the generated electron beam **34** is illuminated onto the sample **20**. The electron beam **34** is two-dimensionally scanned over an observation region which is set on the sample **20**. The two-dimensional scanning of the electron beam **34** will be described later in detail with reference to FIG. 2. The sample chamber **14** is provided below the lens barrel.

(37) Through heating of the sample **20**, a temperature of the sample **20** is increased. For example, the temperature of the sample **20** changes from room temperature to a temperature greater than or

equal to 1000° C. In the embodiment, the sample **20** in the process of temperature increase is continuously or intermittently observed by means of the observer **10**. Alternatively, the sample **20** maintained at a certain temperature may be observed. Alternatively, the temperature of the sample in a high-temperature state may be gradually reduced, and the sample **20** may be observed continuously or intermittently during the process of the temperature reduction.

(38) In FIG. **1**, the observer **10** has a backscattered electron detector **36**. The backscattered electron detector **36** is a semiconductor type detector, and is provided, in the illustrated example structure, at a position above the sample **20** and immediately below the objective lens **30**. A secondary electron detector may be provided in addition to or in place of the backscattered electron detector **36**.

(39) With the illumination of the sample **20** with the electron beam, backscattered electrons **38** are emitted from the sample. The backscattered electrons **38** are detected by the backscattered electron detector **36**. On the other hand, due to the heating of the sample **20**, radiant energy, more specifically, light **40** (infrared light, visible light, or the like) is emitted from the sample **20** (more accurately, a heated subject including the sample **20**). When the light **40** reaches the backscattered electron detector **36**, the detector also detects the light **40**.

(40) The detection signal which is output from the backscattered electron detector **36** includes a component of interest (electron component) caused by the detection of the backscattered electron **38**, and a radiant component caused by the detection of the light **40**. The radiant component varies significantly with the change of temperature of the sample **20**. The radiant component causes an offset of the detection signal. When an amount of the radiant energy is increased stepwise during the heating process, the offset level similarly increases stepwise. Normally, the change of the offset level occurs non-continuously or irregularly. The change of the offset level is significantly large in comparison to a change of the component of interest. Thus, in the first embodiment, as will be described below in detail, a structure is employed to remove the radiant component from the detection signal. While the detection signal includes a noise component in addition to the component of interest and the radiant component, the noise component can be removed or suppressed through various publicly-known methods.

(41) Next, the information processor **12** will be described. The information processor **12** is formed from, for example, an electronic circuit and a computer. Each of a signal processor **42** and a sampling section **44** to be described below is formed from an electronic circuit, and each of a radiant component removal section **46**, an image generator **48**, a controller **52**, and the like to be described below is formed from a computer.

(42) The single processor **42** applies a gain adjustment and an offset adjustment on a detection signal **41** in order to realize an appropriate contrast or a desired contrast. The offset adjustment corresponds to a shift of a baseline of the detection signal. Under control of the controller **52**, the gain adjustment and the offset adjustment are executed such that saturation is not caused in the detection signal **41**, and an amplitude of the detection signal **41** is fitted to a desired dynamic range (for example, an input dynamic range of a sampling section **148** to be described below). An example structure of the signal processor **42** will be described later with reference to FIG. **3**.

(43) The detection signal which is output from the signal processor **42** is input to the sampling section **44**. The sampling section **44** samples the detection signal; that is, an analog detection signal is converted to a digital detection signal. The sampling section **44** has an A/D (analog-to-digital) converter. A number of quantization bits of the A/D converter is determined such that the saturation is not caused and necessary resolution can be achieved. The detection signal which is output from the sampling section **44** (digital detection signal) is input to the radiant component removal section **46**.

(44) The radiant component removal section **46** has a filter which extracts a radiant component in the detection signal. As the filter, there may be employed a filter having a smoothing action such as, for example, an edge-retaining-type smoothing filter. The radiant component removal section **46** removes the extracted radiant component from the detection signal. With this process, a detection

signal from which the radiant component is removed is acquired. In this detection signal, the component of interest is dominant. An example structure of the radiant component removal section **46** will be described later in detail with reference to FIG. **4**.

(45) The image generator **48** generates an image representing the sample (a backscattered electron image serving as an SEM image) based on the detection signal after the radiant component is removed. Because the radiant component is already removed, image quality degradation due to the radiant component is prevented or reduced. An amplitude value array forming the detection signal is two-dimensionally mapped according to the two-dimensional scanning of the electron beam. With this process, the image is generated.

(46) A display **50** is formed from, for example, a liquid crystal display. The image generated by the image generator **48** is displayed on the display **50**. In the process of heating the sample **20**, the two-dimensional scanning of the electron beam **34** is repeated. With this process, an image array is generated, and displayed on the display **50**. Alternatively, each image forming the image array may be analyzed.

(47) The controller **52** is formed from a processor (for example, a CPU) which executes a program. The controller **52** controls various structures shown in FIG. **1**. The controller **52** according to the embodiment functions as an observation controller **54** and a heating controller **56**. The observation controller **54** controls operations of various structures in the lens barrel. The heating controller **56** controls the heating of the sample **20**. For example, the heating controller **56** controls the heating of the sample **20** such that the temperature change of the sample **20** is a predefined temperature change. A single processor may be employed to function as the controller **52**, the radiant component removal section **46**, and the image generator **48**, or a plurality of processors may be employed to function as the controller **52**, the radiant component removal section **46**, and the image generator **48**.

(48) Alternatively, a secondary electron detector may be provided in place of the backscattered electron detector **36**. In this case also, the radiant component included in a detection signal which is output from the secondary electron detector is extracted, and then, the radiant component is removed from the detection signal. A secondary electron image is generated based on the detection signal after the radiant component is removed. Alternatively, both the backscattered electron detector and the secondary electron detector may be provided. Alternatively, a detector other than these detectors may be provided.

(49) A scan region and the detection signal will now be described with reference to FIG. **2**. FIG. **2** shows at an upper part an upper surface of the sample **20**. An x direction is a primary scanning direction, and a y direction is a sub scanning direction. A region of interest **58** is set on the sample **20** by the user or automatically. The region of interest **58** corresponds to an imaging region. A scan region **60** is defined to contain the region of interest **58**. The electron beam is two-dimensionally scanned in the scan region **60**.

(50) Reference numeral **62** shows scanning of a first time in the x direction. The scanning in the x direction is performed at each position in the y direction. In some cases, a so-called interlaced scanning is performed. The scan region **60**, which is larger than the region of interest **58**, is determined in order to image a stable scan region; that is, in order to exclude a strain due to responsiveness (delay in switching of the magnetic field) of the scanning coil from a target of imaging.

(51) A detection signal **64** shown at a lower part of FIG. **2** is formed from a plurality of signal segments corresponding to a plurality of scans along the x direction. For example, a signal segment **66A** is acquired through execution of a scan **62A**, and a signal segment **66B** is acquired through execution of a subsequent scan, scan **62B**. The two signal segments **66A** and **66B** are timewise continuous in the detection signal **64**. While the electron beam is two-dimensionally scanned, the detection signal acquired through the two-dimensional scan is a one-dimensional signal on the time axis, similar to the one-dimensional signal showing the change of the sample temperature.

(52) FIG. 3 shows an example structure of the signal processor 42 shown in FIG. 1. The signal processor 42 is formed from a first gain adjuster (first amplifier) 68, an offset adjuster 70, and a second gain adjuster (second amplifier) 72. In consideration that the detection signal may include the radiant component, and that occurrence of saturation in the detection signal should be avoided, the detection signal is first amplified with a low amplification in the first gain adjuster 68, and then the offset adjustment is applied to the amplified detection signal. For example, when a level of the radiant component is increased, the offset of the detection signal is reduced in correspondence thereto. After the offset adjustment, the detection signal is amplified by the second gain adjuster 72. With this process, necessary contrast can be secured.

(53) Operations of the first gain adjuster 68, operations of the offset adjuster 70, and operations of the second gain adjuster 72 are controlled by the controller. In this case, the operations of the adjusters 68, 70, and 72 may be feedback-controlled while referring to the detection signal. Alternatively, the detection signal may be amplified using three or more amplifiers.

(54) The level of the radiant component is unstable, and, in particular, the degree of instability is increased as the temperature of the sample is increased. For example, in order to avoid occurrence of saturation due to the increase of the level of the radiant component, the gains of the first gain adjuster 68 and the second gain adjuster 72 may be set low. In either case, it is difficult to remove the influences of the radiant component solely through the offset adjustment, and a process to remove the radiant component from the detection signal is necessary.

(55) FIG. 4 shows an example structure of the radiant component removal section 46. The radiant component removal section 46 has a filter 74 and a subtractor 76. The filter 74 is for extracting (identifying) the radiant component included in the detection signal. The filter 74 is a one-dimensional filter having a smoothing action or a low-pass action. More specifically, as the filter 74, there may be employed a low-pass filter, a moving average filter, an edge-retaining-type smoothing filter, and the like. As the edge-retaining-type smoothing filter, there may be exemplified a bilateral filter, a non-local means filter, and the like.

(56) The radiant component extracted by the filter 74 is sent to the subtractor 76. The subtractor 76 subtracts (removes) the radiant component from the detection signal, to thereby generate a detection signal from which the radiant component is removed. A sequence of processes described above is performed for each set of data arranged on the time axis. In the moving average process, a weighted average may be calculated.

(57) When the moving average filter is used as the filter, as shown in FIG. 5, a plurality of sets of data arranged in a time sequential order are sequentially set as data of interest $S1(t)$. With the data of interest $S1(t)$ as a center, a one-dimensional window 78 is set. Data $S1(t+3) \sim S1(t-3)$ in the window 78 are referred to, and an average value $Fd(t)$ determined therefrom is set as a value of new data of interest $S1(t)$. More specifically, the following calculation shown in Equation (1) is executed. In the illustrated example configuration, w is three ($w=3$).

$$(58) [\text{Equation1}] \quad Fd(t) = \frac{S_1(t-3) + S_1(t-2) + S_1(t-1) + S_1(t) + S_1(t+1) + S_1(t+2) + S_1(t+3)}{(2w+1)} \quad (1)$$

(59) When the bilateral filter is used as the filter, for example, the following calculation shown in Equation (2) is executed.

$$(60) [\text{Equation2}] \quad Fd(t) = \frac{\text{Math}_{n=-w}^w S_1(t+n) \exp(-\frac{n^2}{2\sigma_1^2}) \exp(-\frac{(S_1(t)-S_1(t+n))^2}{2\sigma_2^2})}{\text{Math}_{n=-w}^w \exp(-\frac{n^2}{2\sigma_1^2}) \exp(-\frac{(S_1(t)-S_1(t+n))^2}{2\sigma_2^2})} \quad (2)$$

(61) Here, w is a parameter defining a size of the window, and σ_1 and σ_2 are respectively parameters for adjusting the action of the filter.

(62) With reference to FIGS. 6 to 9, a specific example of signal processing will be described. FIG. 6 shows a detection signal 82 before heating. The horizontal axis represents a time axis, and the vertical axis represents an amplitude axis. Two-dimensional scanning of the electron beam is

repeatedly executed on the sample, and a signal acquired through this process is the detection signal **82**. The detection signal **82** includes a large number of fine waveforms reflecting the sample shape. In the detection signal **82**, the influence of the radiant component is small and is ignorable. (63) FIG. **7** shows a detection signal **84** acquired during the heating process. The detection signal **84** includes a radiant component, and specifically, a significant offset is caused in the detection signal **84**. The offset includes a portion **88** which is approximately flat, but also includes a portion **86** which rapidly changes, and an unstable portion **90**. A portion which appears thick in the detection signal **84** corresponds to the component of interest reflecting the sample shape. As described above, this portion is formed from a large number of fine changes. It should be noted that the scale of the vertical axis shown in FIG. **7** differs from the scale of the vertical axis shown in FIG. **6**.

(64) It can be deduced that the portion **86** is caused when an internal structure of the sample rapidly changes due to the heating of the sample, and that the portion **90** is caused when the internal structure of the sample changes continuously or irregularly. In either case, the radiant component is a significant obstructing factor in imaging the sample.

(65) FIG. **8** shows a radiant component **92** extracted by the filter. The radiant component **92** corresponds to a basic form or a baseline of the detection signal shown in FIG. **7**. The radiant component **92** includes a pulsed portion **94**.

(66) FIG. **9** shows a detection signal **96** after removal of the radiant component. The offset due to the radiant component has mostly disappeared, and the detection signal as a whole is within a certain amplitude range. The substance of the detection signal **96** is a large number of waveforms **98** reflecting the sample shape. As is clear from comparison of the scale of the vertical axis shown in FIG. **9** and the scales of the vertical axes shown in FIGS. **7** and **8**, the contrast of the detection signal **96** is significantly increased.

(67) The detection signal **96** includes several peaks **100**. These peaks are remains of the pulsed portions shown in FIG. **8**. Each peak **100** corresponds to a noise of about one pixel, and is not significant in view of the image as a whole. However, as will be described later, a suppression process may be applied to the peaks.

(68) FIG. **10** shows an image **102** generated based on the detection signal having the radiant component. Several lateral stripes appear in the image **102**, and the image **102** as a whole is unclear.

(69) FIG. **11** shows an image **104** generated based on the detection signal after the removal of the radiant component. The image **104** has a sufficient contrast, and has superior clarity.

(70) As shown in FIG. **12**, a clipping process may be applied to a detection signal **106** after the removal of the radiant component. The clipping process is, for example, a process to cut portions above a first threshold **108A** and portions below a second threshold **108B**. As shown by reference numerals **110A** and **110B**, the first threshold **108A** and the second threshold **108B** may be varied by the user or automatically. Alternatively, other processes (including other filtering processes) may be applied to the detection signal in place of the clipping process.

(71) FIG. **13** shows a first alternative configuration of the first embodiment of the present disclosure. A detector **112** which detects the backscattered electrons is a so-called divided detector. In the illustrated example structure, the detector **112** has six regions including regions a to f. Each individual region a to f functions as an independent detection element. Six detection signals are output from the detector **112**, in parallel with each other.

(72) A signal processor **42A** has an amplifier array **114**, an offset adjuster array **116**, and a summation device **118**. The amplifier array **114** is formed from six amplifiers **114A**, and the offset adjuster array **116** is formed from six offset adjusters **116A**. Each detection signal is amplified by the amplifier **114A**. Then, for each detection signal, the offset adjustment is applied by the respective offset adjuster **116A**. Six detection signals after these adjustments are added by the summation device **118**. The detection signal after the summation is output to the sampling section

44. The structures after the sampling section **44** are identical to the structures after the sampling section **44** shown in FIG. **1**.

(73) When the structure shown in FIG. **13** is employed, an advantage can be obtained in that it becomes more difficult for saturation of the detection signal to occur. That is, because an area of each individual region a to f is small, the amount of radiant energy experienced by each individual region is also small. With this configuration, it becomes more difficult for saturation due to the radiant component to occur in a stage before the summation.

(74) FIG. **14** shows a second alternative configuration of the first embodiment of the present disclosure. In the illustrated example structure, a divided detector **120** has four regions a to d. Each region a to d functions as a detection element. Four detection signals are output from the divided detector **120**, in parallel with each other.

(75) A signal processor **42B** has an amplifier array **122**, an offset adjuster array **124**, a filter array **126**, a difference device array **128**, and a radiant component judgment device **132**. The amplifier array **122** is formed from four amplifiers **122A**, the offset adjuster array **124** is formed from four offset adjusters **124A**, the filter array **126** is formed from four filters **126A**, and the difference device array **128** is formed from four difference devices **128A**.

(76) Each filter **126A** is a filter which extracts the radiant component (a radiant component candidate in the second alternative configuration). With the actions of the four filters **126A**, four radiant component candidates are extracted from four detection signal, in parallel with each other. The radiant component judgment device **132** judges (identifies) a radiant component candidate, among the four radiant component candidates, having the minimum amplitude value as the radiant component.

(77) The radiant energy from the heated subject is emitted approximately equivalently in the periphery, and the amounts of the radiant energy received by the four regions a to d may be assumed to be approximately equal to each other. The four detection signals may be assumed to include the radiant component common to the four regions. On the other hand, depending on the sample shape at the time of illumination of the electron beam, the amounts of backscattered electrons received by the regions a to d vary. Thus, a part exceeding the common radiant component may be considered to correspond to the component of interest. Based on this idea, the radiant component candidate having the minimum level among the four radiant component candidates is judged as the radiant component. The level is compared at each individual time. Alternatively, processes such as smoothing may be applied to the radiant component candidates prior to the level comparison.

(78) In each difference device **128A**, the radiant component is subtracted from each detection signal. With this process, four detection signals from which the radiant component is removed are generated. The difference device array **128** corresponds to the radiant component removal section.

(79) A sampling section **130** is formed from four sampling circuits **130A**. Each detection signal is sampled by the respective sampling circuit **130A**. With this process, four detection signals after sampling are generated. A three-dimensional image generator **136** generates a three-dimensional image representing the sample based on these detection signals.

(80) In this case, a publicly-known Photometric Stereo (PS) method may be employed. In this method, an image three-dimensionally representing the surface of the sample is generated utilizing a difference in emission angles of the electrons among a plurality of detection regions.

Alternatively, a three-dimensional image of the sample may be constructed through other methods. In this case also, the above-described radiant component removal technique may be applied.

(81) FIG. **15** shows an example structure of a scanning electron microscope according to a second embodiment of the present disclosure. In FIG. **15**, elements similar to those shown in FIG. **1** are assigned the same reference numerals, and their descriptions will not be repeated.

(82) In the sample chamber, a photodetector **140** is provided. A light receiving surface of the photodetector **140** is covered with an electron shielding film **142**. The electron shielding film **142** is

a selective transmission film which permits light to transmit and blocks the electrons, and is formed from, for example, glass or a transparent resin. A charging prevention process (conductive process) is applied on a surface of the electron shielding film **142**.

(83) In the backscattered electron detector **36**, the backscattered electrons are detected, and the radiant energy; that is, the light, is detected. On the other hand, in the photodetector **140**, only the radiant energy; that is, the light, is detected. A first detection signal which is output from the backscattered electron detector **36** includes a component of interest and a radiant component. A second detection signal which is output from the photodetector **140** basically includes only the radiant component. The second detection signal may be assumed to be a radiant component signal.

(84) A signal processing circuit **143** is a circuit which performs gain adjustment and offset adjustment on the first detection signal. A signal processing circuit **144** is a circuit which performs gain adjustment and offset adjustment on the second detection signal. The detection signals are adjusted such that the radiant component included in the first detection signal and the radiant component included in the second detection signal are equal to each other.

(85) A subtraction circuit **146** is a circuit which subtracts the second detection signal from the first detection signal. With this process, a detection signal after removal of the radiant component is acquired. The subtraction circuit **146** functions as the radiant component removal section. The subtraction circuit **146** may alternatively be called a difference device. The detection signal after the removal of the radiant component is sent through the sampling section **148** to the image generator **48**.

(86) In the second embodiment also, the radiant component in the detection signal (first detection signal) can be effectively removed. In the second embodiment, because the light caused by the radiation is directly detected, the radiant component can be identified with high precision.

Alternatively, a mechanism which moves the photodetector **140** may be provided as necessary. The mechanism places the photodetector **140** at a predetermined position in the sample chamber during the use of the photodetector **140**, and retracts the photodetector **140** to a retracted position when the photodetector **140** is not used.

(87) FIG. **16** shows a first alternative configuration of the second embodiment of the present disclosure. A backscattered electron detector **150** is a divided detector, and has four regions a to d. A photodetector **151** is provided separately from the backscattered electron detector **150**. An electron shielding film is provided on a light receiving surface of the photodetector **151**.

(88) A signal processor **152** has an amplifier array **154**, an offset adjuster array **156**, and a difference device array **158**. The amplifier array **154** is formed from four amplifiers **154A** and an amplifier **154B**, and the offset adjuster array **156** is formed from four offset adjusters **156A** and an offset adjuster **156B**. The difference device array **158** is formed from four difference devices **158A**.

(89) Four first detection signal which are output from the backscattered electron detector **150** in parallel with each other are amplified by the four amplifiers **154A**, and offset adjustment is applied by the four offset adjusters **156A** on the four first detection signal after the amplification.

(90) On the other hand, a second detection signal which is output from the photodetector **151** is amplified by the amplifier **154B**, and offset adjustment is applied by the offset adjuster **156B** on the second detection signal after the amplification. The plurality of difference devices **158A** respectively subtract the second detection signal after the offset adjustment from the four first detection signals after the offset adjustment. With this process, four detection signals after removal of the radiant component are acquired. These signals are sent to a three-dimensional image generator **162**. The three-dimensional image generator **162** generates a three-dimensional image of the sample based on the PS method described above, or the like.

(91) Alternatively, the gain adjustment and the offset adjustment may be applied to the four detection signals after the second detection signal is subtracted from the four first detection signals.

(92) FIG. **17** shows a second alternative configuration of the second embodiment of the present disclosure. Specifically, a divided detector **164** shown in FIG. **17** may be provided in place of the

backscattered electron detector **36** and the photodetector **140** in the structure shown in FIG. **15**. The divided detector **164** has a plurality of regions a to f which are arranged in an annular manner. The regions a to f have the same area with each other. The regions a, c, and e function as detection elements for backscattered electron detection, and regions b, d, and f function as detection elements for light detection. Regions b, d, and f are covered with a selective transmission film which blocks electrons and which permits the light to transmit. Alternatively, three first detection signals which are output from the regions a, c, and e may be added after being individually processed. Similarly, three second detection signals which are output from the regions b, d, and f may be added after being individually processed. By setting the areas of the regions a to f to be equal to each other, the gains of the detection signals can be set to the same gain, facilitating the subtraction of the radiant component.

(93) FIG. **18** shows a third alternative configuration of the second embodiment of the present disclosure. Specifically, a divided detector **166** shown in FIG. **18** may be provided in place of the backscattered electron detector **150** and the photodetector **151** in the structure shown in FIG. **16**. The divided detector **166** has a plurality of first regions a to h arranged in an annular manner. The first regions a, c, e, and g have relatively large areas, and function as detection elements for backscattered electron detection. Second regions b, d, f, and h have relatively small areas, and function as detection elements for light detection. Each of the second regions b, d, f, and h is covered with an electron shielding film. Three second detection signals which are output from the regions b, d, and f may be added after being individually processed. The second detection signal after the summation is subtracted from four first detection signals which are output from the regions b, d, f, and h. A three-dimensional image is generated based on the four detection signals after the removal of the radiant component. When the third alternative configuration is employed, the plurality of first regions and the plurality of second regions are placed such that a rotational symmetry is realized.

(94) Alternatively, a secondary electron detector may be employed as a photodetector. In this case, a high negative potential may be applied to a detection window (electrode) of the secondary electron detector, so that electrons (secondary electrons, backscattered electrons) do not reach the detection window. Light transmitting through the detection window is detected as a current signal by an action of a photomultiplier tube. The current signal is a signal representing the radiant component. Alternatively, detection of thermoelectrons may be considered for identifying the radiant component. Alternatively, the structure described above may be applied to a scanning transmission electron microscope or to other observation apparatuses.

Claims

1. A charged particle beam apparatus comprising: equipment that illuminates a sample with a charged particle beam; a detector that detects a particle of interest emitted from the sample, caused by illumination of the charged particle beam, and that outputs a detection signal comprising a radiant component caused by detection of radiant energy emitted from a heated subject, caused by heating of the sample; an identifier that identifies the radiant component through a processing of the detection signal or through selective detection of the radiant energy; a remover that removes the radiant component from the detection signal; and a generator that generates an image representing the sample based on a detection signal from which the radiant component is removed.
2. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the charged particle beam is an electron beam, the particle of interest is a backscattered electron or a secondary electron emitted from the sample, and the detection of the radiant energy is detection of light.
3. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the identifier comprises a filter which extracts the radiant component from the detection signal.
4. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the charged particle beam is

- two-dimensionally scanned over an observation region which is set on the sample, the detection signal is a one-dimensional signal acquired through the two-dimensional scanning of the charged particle beam, the filter is a one-dimensional filter, and the filter is one-dimensionally scanned with respect to the detection signal.
5. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the filter is a filter which realizes a smoothing action.
6. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the detector has a plurality of detection regions sensitive to the particle of interest and to the radiant energy, a plurality of detection signals are output from the plurality of detection regions in parallel with each other, the charged particle beam apparatus further comprises: a plurality of adjusters that individually apply gain adjustment and offset adjustment on the plurality of detection signals, and that output a plurality of detection signals after adjustment in parallel with each other; and a summation device that adds the plurality of detection signals after adjustment and that outputs a detection signal after summation, and the detection signal after summation is input to the filter.
7. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the detector has a plurality of detection regions sensitive to the particle of interest and to the radiant energy, a plurality of detection signals are output from the plurality of detection regions in parallel with each other, and the identifier extracts a plurality of radiant component candidates from the plurality of detection signals, and identifies the radiant component based on the plurality of radiant component candidates.
8. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the remover removes the radiant component from the plurality of detection signals, and the generator generates the image representing the sample based on a plurality of detection signals from which the radiant component is removed.
9. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the detector is a primary detector, the detection signal is a primary detection signal, the identifier comprises a sub detector which selectively detects the radiant energy without detecting the particle of interest, and the radiant component is identified based on a sub detection signal which is output from the sub detector.
10. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the sub detector has an incidence film which permits the radiant energy to transmit and which blocks the particle of interest.
11. The charged particle beam apparatus according to claim 9, wherein a plurality of primary detection regions functioning as the primary detector are provided, the remover removes the radiant component from a plurality of primary detection signals which are output from the plurality of primary detection regions, and the generator generates the image representing the sample based on a plurality of primary detection signals from which the radiant component is removed.
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