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## BOOK of ABSTRACTS



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# Precise nanoporous silicon formation process for an integrated LED source

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**Abstract.** We propose to use nanoporous silicon (npSi)/Al Schottki structure to fabricate integrated into a Si chip light emitting source. High current densities and high concentrations of hydrofluoric acid are generally needed during the electrochemical etching process to fabricate high porosity nanostructured silicon films. However, short process time of ultrathin films formation, toxic and aggressive reagents are serious concerns associated with it. Therefore, it is highly demanded to seek alternatives to fabricate ultrathin nanoporous Si films using lower current densities at low F- ion concentrations. We have developed an ultrathin nanoporous silicon fabrication process by electrochemical etching in ammonia fluoride solution. It was shown that highly uniform and ultrathin high porosity nanoporous silicon films can be fabricated under very low current densities and fluorine ion concentration in a reproducible manner.

## 1. Introduction

At first porous self-organized structure on silicon was created in 1956 at Bell Laboratory. In 1990 the quantum effects and room temperature visible luminescence was demonstrated in porous silicon [1]. Our works were concentrated on avalanche type reverse biased Schottky diodes and its microdisplays and optoelectronics applications [2,3]. Standard technological parameters for formation a high porosity nanostructured Si are high current densities and high concentrations of hydrofluoric acid. These regimes are not convenient because of very short process times (some seconds for thin layers) and toxic (high HF vapor pressure), aggressive reagents (etching Al layers and interconnections) are used. However, changing to lower current densities and concentrations leads to instability and low uniformity of the process.

## 2. Porous silicon formation

There are three well known regimes areas in the current density- hydrofluoric acid concentration plot, which are illustrated in Fig. 1 [4]. At high densities-concentration electro-polishing takes place, at low densities-concentrations we have porous silicon formation and in the middle is a transient regime. Rectangular in the plot shows standard good reproducible, well known regimes [5], while ellipse corresponds to low uniformity processes. The area at bottom left corner isn't methodically investigated. One of the reasons of this is low buffer capacity of a very diluted hydrofluoric acid and chemical changes during the anodizing process. To avoid from "diluted" problem using of salts of hydrofluoric acid in combination with an acid with high buffer capacity is proposed.

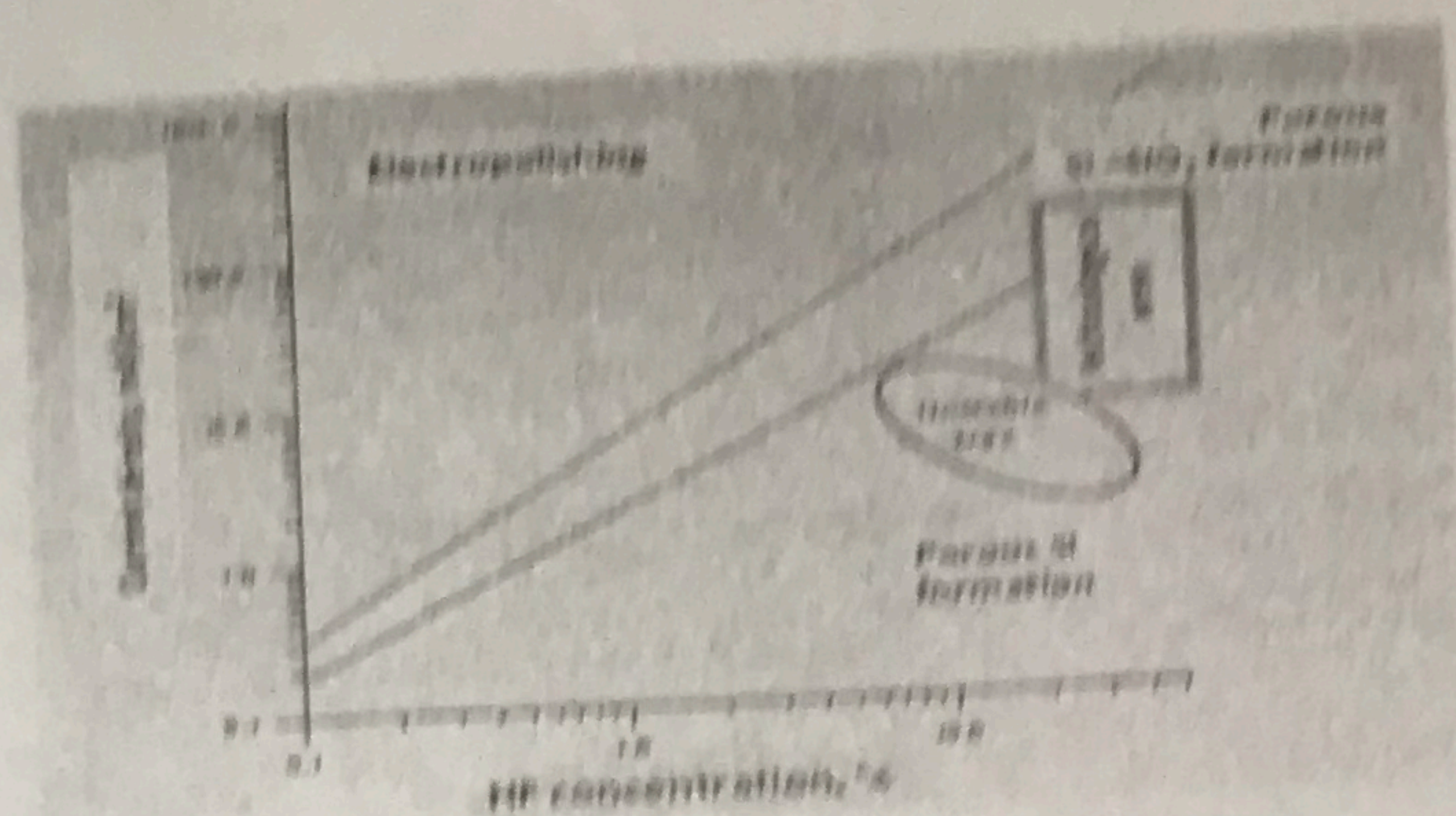


Figure 1. Different types of porous silicon formation.

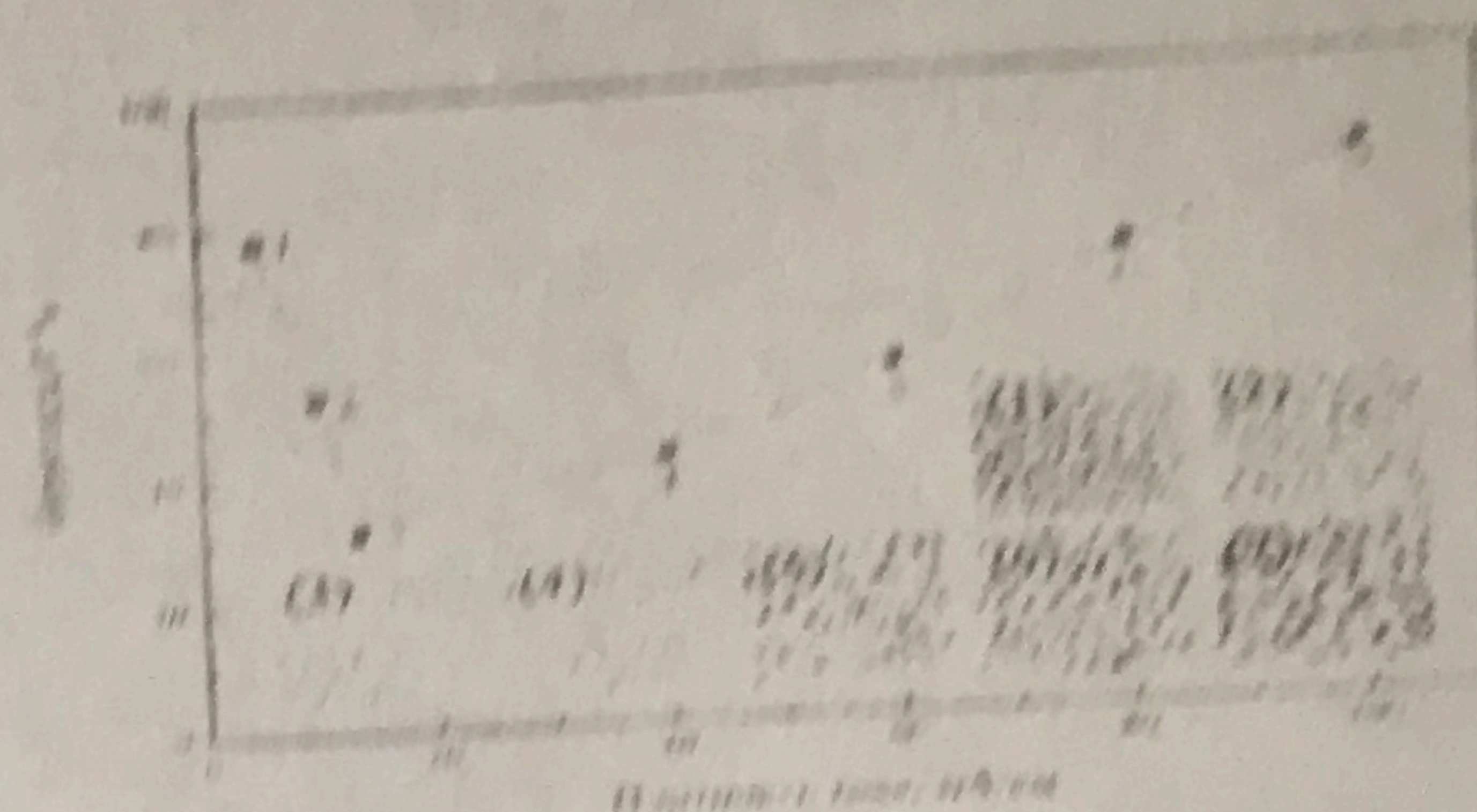


Figure 2. Porous structure versus current density.

In fig. 2 change of porosity versus anodizing current density for heavy antimony doped silicon (0.01 Ohm cm  $\langle 100 \rangle$  orientation) in 1:2:1 HF:C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH:H<sub>2</sub>O is presented. Porosity anomaly versus current density is absolutely evidence. At 10 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> the plot turns and morphology of porous silicon changes from regular vertical holes (at higher current densities) to sponge structure (at lower current densities).

### 3. Results and discussion

N-type  $\langle 100 \rangle$  oriented phosphorous doped silicon substrates (0.1 Ohm cm and 0.01 Ohm cm) were used. The samples were anodized in NH<sub>4</sub>F:H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>:C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH solution containing from 5 to 25 % H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> at current densities of 0.01 – 1 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> and ambient conditions with halogen lamp illumination. Figure 3 and 4 shows structure of PS. Pores size is 10 - 20 nm and porosity is 55 % at current density of 0.25 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> and 75 % at current density of 0.025 mA/cm<sup>2</sup>.

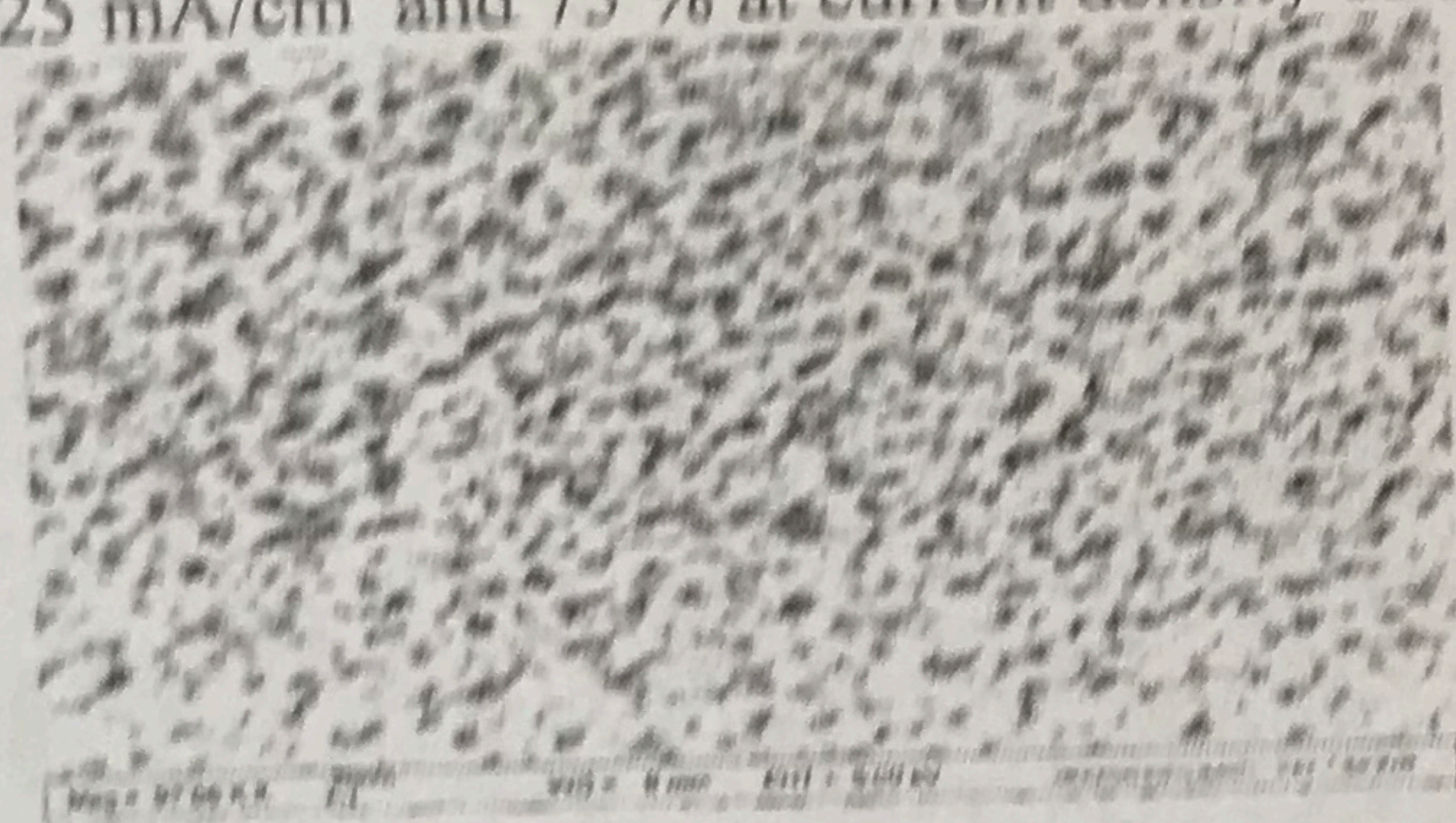


Figure 3. Structure of PS anodized at 0.25 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> and 5 % NH<sub>4</sub>F: 5 % H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>:C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH

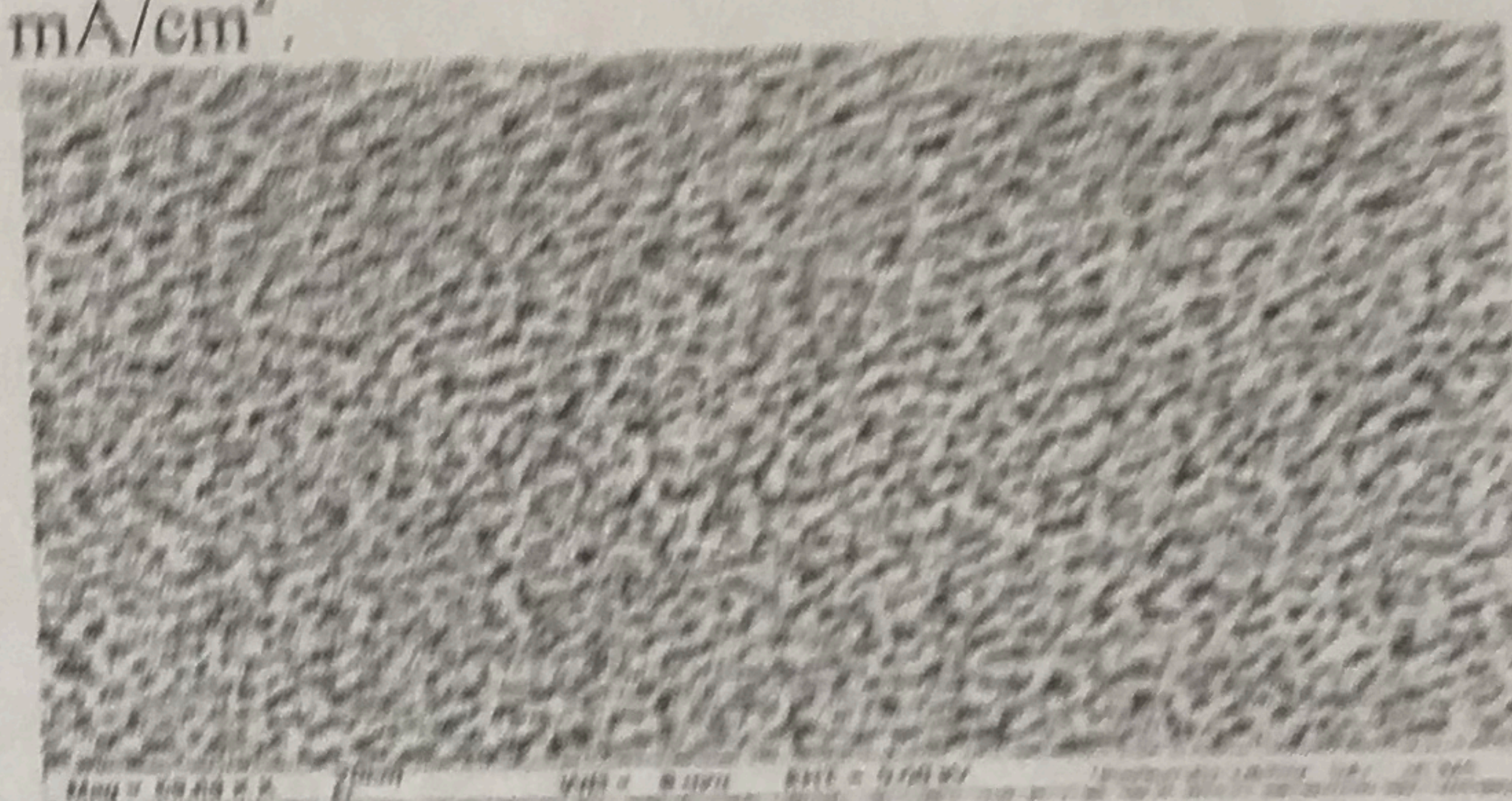


Figure 4. Structure of PS anodized at 0.025 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> and 5 % NH<sub>4</sub>F: 5 % H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>:C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH.

### 4. Conclusions

In this work we report the stable and reproducible regime of porous silicon layers production at ultra small current density and fluorine ion concentration. Porous silicon structures are high porosity sponge like, have ultra small thicknesses and can be used to fabricate integrated to a Si chip light emitters.

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