

# YBCO STEP EDGE JUNCTIONS FOR MAGNETICALLY TUNABLE RESONATORS

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*Abstract* - Step edge junctions on NdGaO<sub>3</sub> substrates with a product  $I_0 R_N \approx 50 \mu V$  and a promising rather uniform current density distribution along the junction width at 77 K have been fabricated. 196 magnetometer SQUIDs are integrated in a coplanar line resonator to tune its resonance frequency magnetically. The resonator quality factor and frequency shift near 10 GHz and 50 K are investigated experimentally.

## Introduction

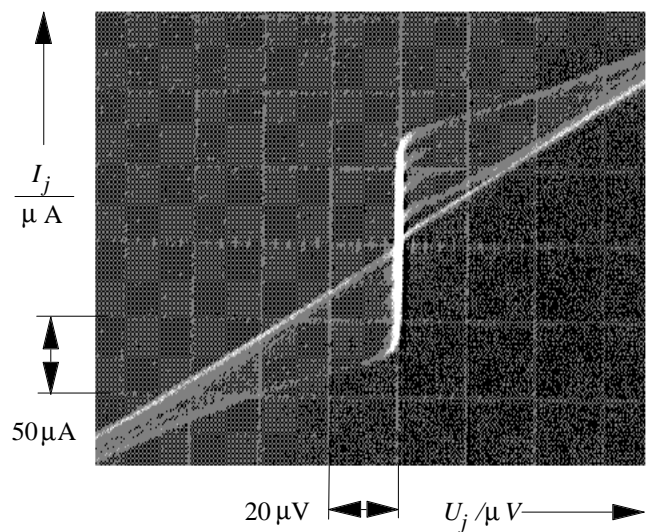
Microwave applications like radar and antenna systems will need phase shifters. Commercial products based on GaAs MMIC [1,2] could improve performance in bandwidth and insertion loss by using HTSC circuits [3..5]. To start the development of a phase shifter a coplanar line resonator with tunable inductance has been designed and simulated [6,7]. Step edge junctions on different substrates are used. They can be integrated easily in rf circuits and allow acceptable properties at 77 K [8,9]. The phase shifter allows for rather large tolerances of the maximum Josephson current and can therefore be implemented with the present state of technology.

## Fabrication

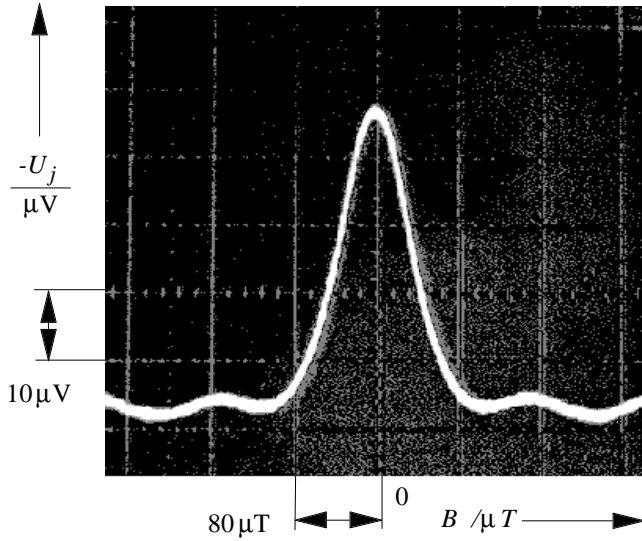
YBCO films have been deposited by *off-axis sputtering* from a single stoichiometric target on (001) NdGaO<sub>3</sub> substrates in order to get almost untwinned *c-axis* films [10]. Current densities of  $2 \times 10^7 A/cm^2$  and surface resistances of  $25 \mu\Omega$  at 10 GHz and 4.2 K have been achieved. The anisotropy ratio of the dc resistivities  $\rho_b/\rho_a$  and of the surface resistances  $R_{sb}/R_{sa}$  at 10 GHz in the *a-b*-direction of the YBCO films is about 2. The steps have been etched with Ar ion beam and a Nb mask.

## Measurements of junctions

Junctions have been fabricated on (110) NdGaO<sub>3</sub> substrates with a step height  $h = 380$  nm and a film thickness  $t = 340$  nm. Sometimes two Josephson currents are observed in the  $I_G-U_j$ -characteristic probably emanating from the upper and lower grain boundary at the substrate step. However, in contrast to step edge junctions on SrTiO<sub>3</sub> [11] the corresponding Josephson current ratio on NdGaO<sub>3</sub> substrates seems to be considerably larger. The  $I_G-U_j$ -characteristic of a step edge junction with  $6 \mu m$  line width at 77 K in a swept external magnetic field is shown in Fig. 1. The maximum Josephson current is  $I_0 = 75 \mu A$  and the product  $I_0 R_N$  reaches  $50 \mu V$ . The Josephson current can be suppressed by a magnetic field.



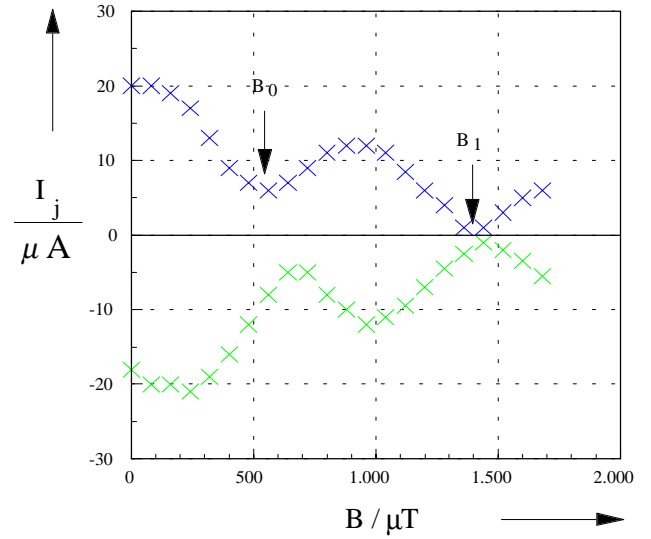
**Fig. 1:** The measured current-voltage characteristic of a  $6 \mu m$  wide step edge junction in a swept external magnetic field at 77 K.



**Fig 2:** Voltage versus magnetic induction at 77 K of a 6  $\mu\text{m}$  wide step edge junction according to Fig. 1 at constant current  $I_G$ .

The negative junction voltage  $U_j$  as a function of the external magnetic field or flux with a constant current  $I_G$  is presented in Fig. 2. The second minimum appears at about twice the magnetic field value of the first one.

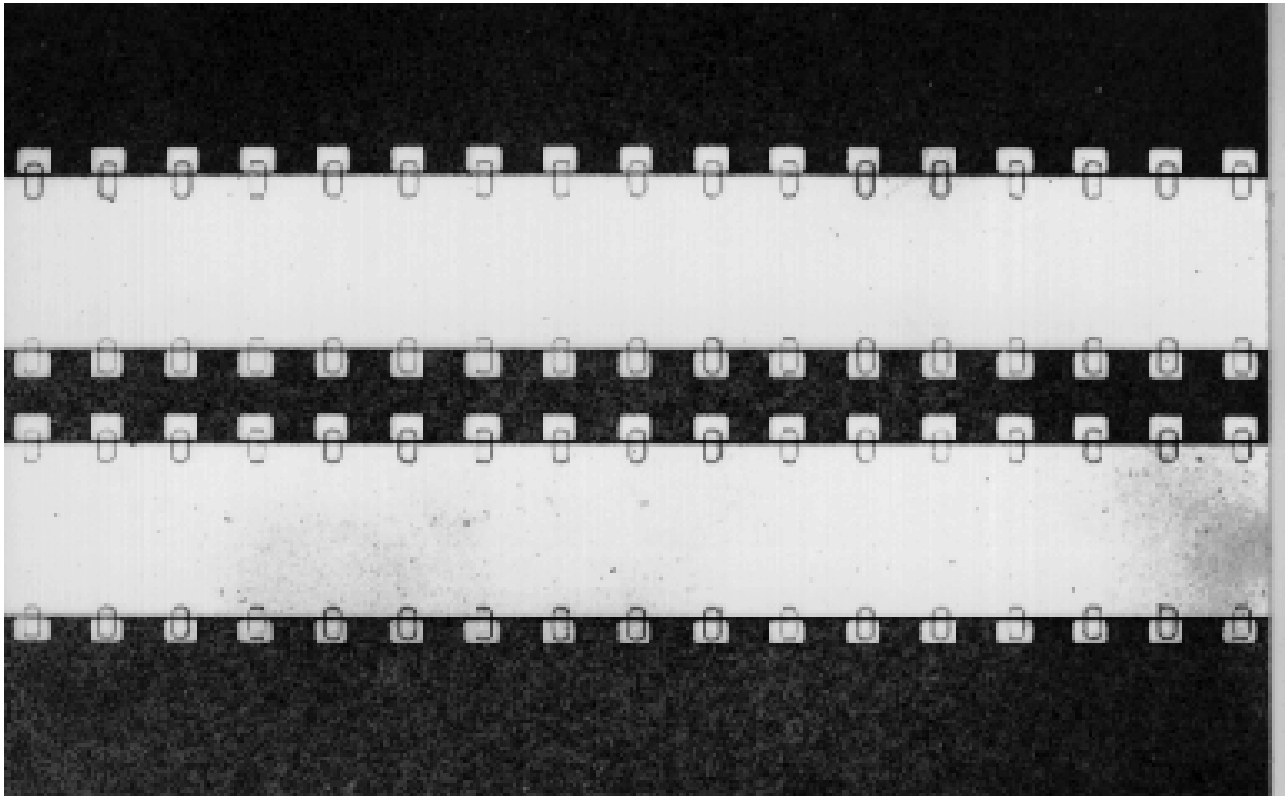
The  $I_j$  -  $B$  characteristic at 77 K of a junction with smaller width  $w = 2.5 \mu\text{m}$  than in Fig. 1 and 2 is shown in Fig. 3. Since the  $I_G$  -  $U_j$  characteristic exhibits noise rounding the current  $I_G$  has been measured at constant voltage of 10  $\mu\text{V}$ . The Josephson current  $I_j$  is calculated in subtracting the resistive component:  $I_j = I_G - 10 \mu\text{V} / R_N$  with  $R_N \approx 1 \Omega$ . The Josephson penetration depth of these step edge junctions may roughly be approximated:



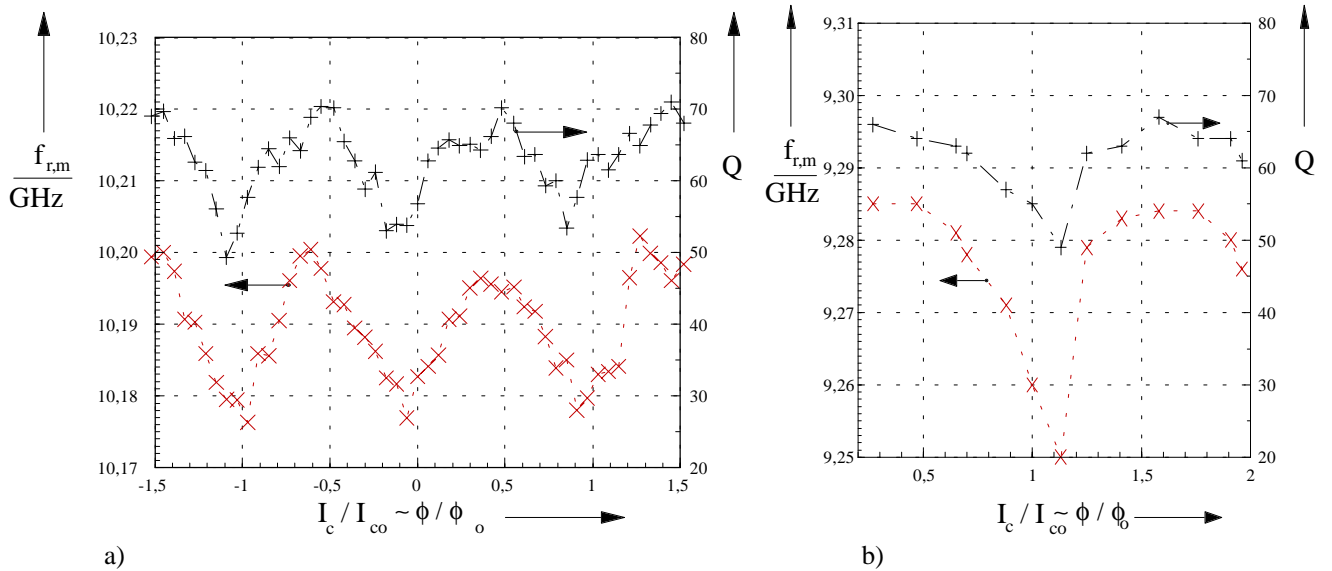
**Fig. 3:** The Josephson current  $I_j$  of a step edge junction at 77 K versus magnetic induction  $B$ .

$$\lambda_J(T = 77 \text{ K}) = \sqrt{\frac{\phi_0}{2\pi\mu_0 d j_{\max}(T)}} \approx 2.3 \mu\text{m}$$

where  $j_{\max}(T = 77 \text{ K}) \approx 4.7 \text{ kA/cm}^2$  and  $d \approx 2\lambda$ . The magnetic penetration depth is estimated for  $\lambda(77 \text{ K}) \approx 520 \text{ nm}$ . Hence, the junction width in Fig. 3 is in the same order than the Josephson penetration depth; self fields can be neglected. For both polarities in Fig. 3 there are pronounced minima. The second minimum is approximately zero. The ratios of the inductions at the minima of  $|I_j|$  are  $B_1/B_0 = 2.5$  and 2.1, i.e. close to 2. The magnetic pene-



**Fig. 4:** Micrograph of a coplanar resonator section with magnetometers on a  $\text{NdGaO}_3$  - substrate. The resonator has a length of 4 mm and a inner conductor width of 50  $\mu\text{m}$ .



**Fig. 5:** a) Measurement results: Resonance frequency  $f_{r,m}$  and quality factor  $Q$  versus the normalized control current. The center frequency  $f_{r,m} = (f_1 + f_2)/2$  is calculated from the measured 3 dB - frequencies  $f_1, f_2$ . b) Simulated results with  $I_o R_n = 135\mu\text{V}$  [7].

tration depth is larger than the film thickness so that the magnetic inductions  $\mathbf{B}_0$  at the first minimum of  $I_j$  can be estimated [12]

$$\mathbf{B}_0 \approx \frac{2\phi_0}{w^2}.$$

For  $w = 6\ \mu\text{m}$  and  $w = 2.5\ \mu\text{m}$  the inductions are  $\mathbf{B}_0 = 110\ \mu\text{T}$  and  $660\ \mu\text{T}$  in reasonable agreement with measurements according to Fig. 1 and 2, respectively. The observed magnetic field dependence may be explained rather by an uniform Josephson current density of a single short junction than by an interferometer with a few point junctions in contrast to that of step edge junctions usually found on  $\text{SrTiO}_3$ -substrates [11].

### Measurement of the resonator

About 196 magnetometer SQUIDs with junctions of the discussed type on  $\text{NdGaO}_3$  have been integrated in a coplanar line resonator according to Fig.4, however with a film thickness  $t = 165\ \text{nm}$  and a step height  $h = 220\ \text{nm}$ . Test - SQUIDs with hole area  $46 \times 46\ \mu\text{m}^2$  on the same chip have been characterised at  $T = 50\ \text{K}$  by  $I_o R_N = 590\ \mu\text{V}$ , a maximum slope  $dU/d\phi_c = 65\ \mu\text{V}/\phi_0$  and a critical junction temperature, where the Josephson current vanishes,  $T_{cj} = 79.5\ \text{K}$ .

The resonator has been mounted in a closed gold plated brass housing and tested with a vector network analyser HP8720. A THRU calibration and time domain filters have been applied to eliminate the influences of small reflections. From  $S_{21}$  transmission parameter measurements the resonance frequencies and quality factors have been deduced. The coplanar resonator is capacitively coupled to  $50\ \Omega$ -transmission lines. The SQUIDs are integrated in both the inner and outer strips of the coplanar line at small distances of  $92\ \mu\text{m}$  to increase the influence on the line inductance. The resonance frequency and the quality factor

near 10 GHz in Fig.5a changes periodically as a function of the applied control current  $I_c$  or magnetic flux  $\phi$ . The period  $\Delta I_{c0} = 430\ \mu\text{A}$  should correspond to one flux quantum. Hence, within one flux quantum the maximum frequency shift is 24 MHz. This periodic frequency and quality factor dependence can be simulated with a simple model assuming  $I_o R_n = 135\mu\text{V}$  as shown in Fig. 5b [7].

### Conclusion

The magnetic field dependence of step edge junctions on  $\text{NdGaO}_3$  can be approximated with a rather uniform current density inside the the junction. An integration of a large number of SQUIDs in a coplanar line resonator is feasible. The resonance frequency has been changed periodically with a magnetic field.

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