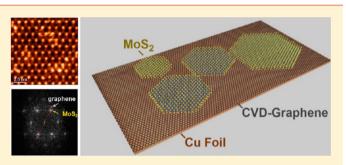


# van der Waals Epitaxy of MoS<sub>2</sub> Layers Using Graphene As Growth **Templates**

Yumeng Shi, $^{\dagger, \ddagger, \#}$  Wu Zhou, $^{\parallel, \bot, \#}$  Ang-Yu Lu, $^{\$}$  Wenjing Fang, $^{\dagger}$  Yi-Hsien Lee, $^{\$, \dagger}$  Allen Long Hsu, $^{\dagger}$  Soo Min Kim, $^{\dagger}$  Ki Kang Kim, $^{\dagger}$  Hui Ying Yang, $^{\ddagger}$  Lain-Jong Li, $^{\$}$  Juan-Carlos Idrobo, $^{\bot}$  and Jing Kong $^{*, \dagger}$ 

Supporting Information

**ABSTRACT:** We present a method for synthesizing MoS<sub>2</sub>/ Graphene hybrid heterostructures with a growth template of graphene-covered Cu foil. Compared to other recent reports, 1,2 a much lower growth temperature of 400 °C is required for this procedure. The chemical vapor deposition of MoS<sub>2</sub> on the graphene surface gives rise to single crystalline hexagonal flakes with a typical lateral size ranging from several hundred nanometers to several micrometers. The precursor (ammonium thiomolybdate) together with solvent was transported to graphene surface by a carrier gas at room temperature, which was then followed by post annealing. At an



elevated temperature, the precursor self-assembles to form MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes epitaxially on the graphene surface via thermal decomposition. With higher amount of precursor delivered onto the graphene surface, a continuous MoS2 film on graphene can be obtained. This simple chemical vapor deposition method provides a unique approach for the synthesis of graphene heterostructures and surface functionalization of graphene. The synthesized two-dimensional MoS<sub>2</sub>/Graphene hybrids possess great potential toward the development of new optical and electronic devices as well as a wide variety of newly synthesizable compounds for catalysts.

KEYWORDS: Chemical vapor deposition, van der Waals epitaxy, molybdenum disulfide, graphene, STEM imaging

A tomically thin two-dimensional (2D) materials with a layered structure such as graphene<sup>3-5</sup> and hexagonal boron nitride (h-BN)<sup>6,7</sup> have been attracting a large amount of attention due to their unique properties.<sup>4,8-10</sup> Recently, it has been demonstrated that molybdenum disulfide (MoS2), another inorganic graphene analogue, exhibits excellent electrical<sup>11</sup> and optical performance<sup>12,13</sup> when it is thinned down to a monolayer. MoS2 belongs to the layered transitionmetal dichalcogenides (LTMDs) materials, which are traditionally used as solid-state lubricants and as catalysts for hydrodesulfurization and hydrogen evolution. Similar to graphene and h-BN, MoS<sub>2</sub> has a hexagonal crystal structure. 14 Each Mo atom is six-fold coordinated, hexagonally packed between two three-fold coordinated sulfur atoms. Each S-Mo-S quintuple-layer is weakly boned to other S-Mo-S layers by van der Waals forces.

Because of the relatively weak interaction between the S-Mo-S layers, physical 11,15 or chemical exfoliation 16,17 methods can be used to cleave the MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes down to ultrathin crystals typically with thicknesses of ~0.65 nm. It has been reported that the electrical and optical properties of MoS<sub>2</sub> change dramatically from bulk MoS<sub>2</sub> to monolayer (i.e., a S-Mo-S quintuple layer) due to the interlayer interaction. 15 Bulk MoS<sub>2</sub> is a semiconducting material with an indirect band gap of ~1.2 eV, while monolayer MoS<sub>2</sub> is a direct band gap material with a band gap of ~1.8 eV.<sup>17</sup> Recently, monolayer MoS<sub>2</sub> field effect transistors (FETs) have been fabricated. 11 By using halfnium oxide (HfO<sub>2</sub>) as the gate dielectric, electron mobility up to 200 cm<sup>2</sup> V<sup>-1</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> with an on/off current ratio of more than 10<sup>8</sup> has been achieved. 11 However, unlike graphene that does not have a band gap, MoS<sub>2</sub> presents a band gap, and that makes it a more attractive material for optoelectronics<sup>18</sup> and low power digital electronics.

Besides the top down exfoliation method, MoS<sub>2</sub> can be synthesized using different bottom up approaches, such as transition metal sulfurization, 1,19-22 thermal decomposition of

Received: December 28, 2011 Revised: May 19, 2012 Published: May 29, 2012

Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, United States

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>‡</sup>Singapore University of Technology and Design, 20 Dover Drive Singapore 138682, Singapore

<sup>§</sup>Institute of Atomic and Molecular Sciences, Academia Sinica, Taipei, 11529, Taiwan

Department of Physics and Astronomy, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee 37235, United States

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Materials Science and Technology Division, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge Tennessee 37831-6064, United States

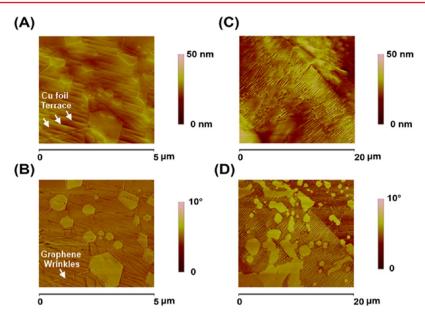


Figure 1. MoS<sub>2</sub> nanoflakes on CVD graphene/Cu foil substrates. (A,C) Typical AFM height images of MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes grown on graphene/Cu foil substrates. (B,D) AFM phase images of the corresponding regions as shown in A and C. For these samples, the precursor adsorption time was 10 min with Ar flow rate of 10 sccm as the precursor carrying gas.

thiosalts, <sup>2,23–25</sup> vapor transportation, <sup>26,27</sup> and solvothermalization. <sup>28–30</sup> Recently, chemical vapor deposition (CVD) has been successfully used to synthesize large area high quality 2D materials such as graphene <sup>31–33</sup> and boron nitride <sup>34–36</sup> on transition metals. Compared to other synthesis methods, CVD potentially can give better control over the number of layers if the growth occurs via surface mediated synthesis. Especially for a material like MoS<sub>2</sub>, where the band gap varies from the bulk down to monolayer, it is desirable to achieve atomic layer control over the number of MoS<sub>2</sub> layers synthesized. Most recently, large-area MoS<sub>2</sub> atomic thin layers have been obtained by either sulfurization of thin molybdenum layers <sup>1</sup> or thermal decomposition of ammonium thiomolybdate in a sulfur rich environment. <sup>2</sup> Both of these methods include high-temperature annealing process over 800 °C.

Apart from the effort of achieving mono- or few-layer MoS<sub>2</sub>, progress has also been made in the growth of hybrid graphene/ MoS<sub>2</sub> structures. It has been demonstrated that reduced graphene oxide (RGO) can be a good template for MoS2 nanoflakes formation<sup>37</sup> by simply dissolving ammonium thiomolybdate ((NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>MoS<sub>4</sub>) together with RGO in an organic solvent at an elevated temperature. The heterostructures of graphene/MoS2 hybrids show great potential in the hydrogen evolution reaction (HER).<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, these graphene/MoS2 hybrids are not just limited to catalysis applications, they are also model systems to study the physics of interfaces between two-dimensional layers, or even p-n junctions at these interfaces, and this also opens a new way for graphene functionalization. However, due to the defective nature of RGO the solvothermal method only produces small crystallites of MoS<sub>2</sub> (lateral size ~2 nm).<sup>37</sup>

Previously, it has been demonstrated that graphite can be a good template for bilayer Bernal-stacked graphene<sup>38</sup> and the growth of topological insulators<sup>39</sup> via van der Waals epitaxy. An essence of the van der Waals epitaxy is to obtain a substrate surface that is free of dangling bonds.<sup>40,41</sup> The graphene surface, formed by sp<sup>2</sup> bonded carbon atoms, is atomically flat and free of dangling bonds, which makes it an ideal starting

template for other 2D materials. In this work, we introduce a method for synthesizing high quality MoS<sub>2</sub> single crystal flakes (with lateral sizes up to several micrometers) on a CVD grown graphene (CVD-G) surface. Compared to the most recently reported methods, <sup>1,2</sup> we demonstrate MoS<sub>2</sub> nanoflakes can be epitaxially synthesized on the surface of graphene at relatively low temperature of 400 °C. The relatively large lattice mismatch between MoS<sub>2</sub> and graphene (~28%)<sup>42</sup> is expected to be relaxed through the week van der Waals force. Compared to the conventional van der Waals epitaxy, we use organic solvent to carry and deposit the precursor onto the surface of CVD-G. After postannealing, the MoS<sub>2</sub> layers form on the surface of graphene with their c-axis perpendicular to the graphene surface. It is believed that the interface properties of CVD-G, that is, free of dangling bonds and intrinsic weak van der Waals forces play an important role in the MoS<sub>2</sub> growth. Yet, a precise control on the number of layers for the growth of MoS<sub>2</sub> on graphene surface is still not achieved. For instance, at a low dose of (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>MoS<sub>4</sub> precursor, isolated MoS<sub>2</sub> thin flakes form on the surface of graphene and an increment of the precursor dose produces thicker MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes, which eventually results in a continuous MoS<sub>2</sub> film on the graphene surface. Nevertheless, the obtained MoS<sub>2</sub> nanoflakes in this study possess high crystallinity and have abundant edges, which can be very useful in applications such as catalysis,  $^{37,43,44}$  sensing,  $^{45}$  or energy storage,  $^{46-48}$  where the thickness control of MoS<sub>2</sub> is less critical. The MoS<sub>2</sub>/graphene heterostructure was evaluated by atomic force microscopy (AFM), transmission electron microscopy (TEM), X-ray energy dispersive spectrometer (EDS) spectrum, aberration-corrected scanning transmission electron microscopy (STEM), electron energy loss spectroscopy (EELS), Raman spectroscopy, and X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS).

**Results and Discussion.** The  $MoS_2/CVD$ -G hybrid was obtained in a low-pressure chemical vapor deposition (LPCVD) system. The precursor for  $MoS_2$  growth is  $(NH_4)_2MoS_4$ , which is a solid at room temperature. In order to deposit the precursor in a controllable manner,  $(NH_4)_2MoS_4$ 

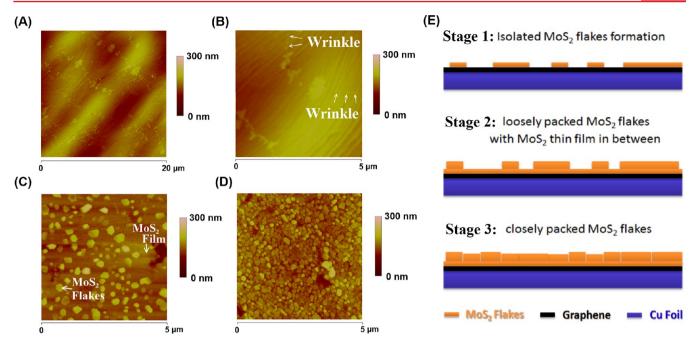


Figure 2. AFM images showing the formation of nanoflakes under different growth conditions. (A,B) AFM images of the sample surface after growth with very low amount of precursor supply, showing formation of small flakes along the graphene wrinkles at the initial stage of precursor adsorption. (C,D) AFM images of the sample surface after growth with high amount of precursor supply (precursor adsorption time was 30 min and 1 h for panels C and D, respectively). Hexagonal-shaped nanoflakes were found fully covering the surface after 1 h of growth. (E) Schematic diagram showing the formation of  $MoS_2$  flakes and thin films under different growth conditions. On stage 1, the amount of precursor is limited, which gives isolated  $MoS_2$  flakes. With increasing amount of precursor, the surface coverage of  $MoS_2$  flakes increases with thin  $MoS_2$  films forming in between the flakes. On stage 3, the amount of precursor further increases which results in closely packed  $MoS_2$  nanoflakes on the  $MoS_2$  film.

is dissolved in  $N_1N_2$ -dimethylformamide (DMF), and by bubbling the organic solution with argon (Ar) gas the DMF/ (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>MoS<sub>4</sub> vapor can be carried into the growth chamber and subsequently adsorbed onto the surface of the CVD-G. The amount of precursor deposition can be adjusted by varying the flow rate of the carrying gas, the concentration of the DMF/(NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>MoS<sub>4</sub>, and the deposition time. After exposing the CVD-G to the precursor, the growth chamber was heated up to 400 °C at a heating rate of 5 °C/min. At the growth temperature, the precursor fully decomposes into MoS<sub>2</sub> and generates S, H<sub>2</sub>S, and NH<sub>3</sub> gas. More details of the growth condition are described in the Supporting Information.

The as-grown MoS<sub>2</sub>/graphene heterostructures were identified by AFM. Figure 1A,B shows the height and phase images (taken in tapping mode AFM) of the MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes grown on a single layer CVD-G substrate. The precursor adsorption time was 10 min with Ar flow rate of 10 standard cubic centimeters per minute (sccm) as the precursor carrying gas. The location of the MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes can be more easily identified by the phase image (as shown in Figure 1B,D). The MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes tend to have a hexagonal or quasi-hexagonal shape (with a lateral size ranging from several hundred nanometers to several micrometers and a typical thickness from ~2 to ~5 nm) with a higher phase color contrast compared to graphene on Cu foil. It was also found that when graphene oxide or bare Cu foil is used as growth template there is no hexagonal shape MoS2 flakes that can be obtained, which suggests the growth of MoS<sub>2</sub> can be affected considerably by the crystal quality of graphene underneath. Figure 1C,D shows the AFM phase image of the  $MoS_2$  grown on graphene over 20  $\mu m \times 20 \mu m$  region. As indicated in Figure 1A, for the as-grown samples terrace structure from Cu foil surface can be frequently observed and the synthesized MoS2 flakes are found to cross these Cu foil

terraces. However, there appears to be no correlation between the location of the  $MoS_2$  flakes and the Cu terraces. These observations suggest the CVD-G interlayer plays an important role on the  $MoS_2$  growth.

Meanwhile, as seen in Figure 1A, graphene wrinkles normally can be found around the MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes. From our previous report, the graphene wrinkles are more reactive than the surface plan region,<sup>49</sup> which could attract the precursor at the initial stage and act as the first nucleation center for MoS<sub>2</sub> growth. To verify this, the nucleation of the MoS<sub>2</sub> on the graphene surface was investigated by limiting the amount of precursor during the adsorption step. For this purpose, the adsorption time was fixed at 10 min with Ar flow rate of 10 sccm as the precursor carrying gas, but this Ar-carried DMF/(NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>MoS<sub>4</sub> vapor was diluted by another 100 sccm Ar gas before reaching the deposition zone. Figure 2A shows the AFM images of the MoS<sub>2</sub> growth with an extremely small amount of precursor adsorption. For the CVD grown graphene on metal, normally wrinkles form due to the negative thermal expansion coefficient of graphene. It was found that after the growth, the wrinkled regions tend to have more MoS<sub>2</sub> flakelike features (as indicated in Figure 2B) and those features follow the wrinkles very well. This phenomenon suggests the graphene wrinkles can effectively serve as the first nucleation centers. With an increased amount of precursor, the MoS<sub>2</sub> can grow on the surface of graphene through weak van der Waals interaction. The nucleation of MoS<sub>2</sub> on the graphene wrinkles is probably due to the curved  ${\rm sp}^2~\pi$  bonds in the graphene wrinkles, which have been shown to be more reactive than the planar graphene regions.<sup>49</sup> A recent report shows that the dangling bonds at the graphene boundaries are likely to attract adsorbates.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, the grain boundaries of CVD-G could also act as nucleation sites, but further studies are required to elucidate their role as MoS<sub>2</sub>

nucleation centers. For comparison, the precursor adsorption time was also adjusted up to 30 min and 1 h while keeping the carrying gas flow rate at 10 sccm. With the increase of the precursor dose, thicker MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes with a typical thicknesses ranging from ~10 to ~50 nm can be found on the surface of graphene. It was noticed that with a 30 min deposition time produces MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes that are not closely packed (as shown in Figure 2C), but the morphology of the seemingly "empty regions" between the MoS2 flakes differs dramatically from just CVD-G on Cu foil (no terrace features can be found here). This indicates that the graphene surface is fully covered by a film of MoS<sub>2</sub> and the isolated MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes seen here are on top of the underlying MoS<sub>2</sub> background. For the sample grown with 1 h adsorption, the size of these MoS<sub>2</sub> nanoflakes becomes smaller and the nanoflakes are closely packed (as shown in Figure 2D). A possible evolution path of MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes to continuous MoS2 film is schematically illustrated in Figure 2E.

The  $MoS_2/graphene$  heterostructures were characterized using Raman spectroscopy. The  $MoS_2/graphene$  hybrid was first transferred onto  $SiO_2/Si$  substrates after etching away the copper foil. The samples display Raman features at 384 cm<sup>-1</sup>and 409 cm<sup>-1</sup>  $^{51}$  as shown in the inset of Figure 3, which

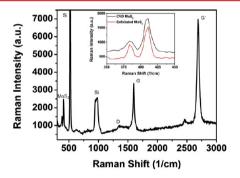


Figure 3. Raman spectra taken from the  $MoS_2$ /graphene heterostructure after it is transferred to 300 nm  $SiO_2$ /Si substrates. Inset shows the typical Raman signature of CVD synthesized  $MoS_2$  on graphene (spectrum in black) and the one obtained from mechanically exfoliated bulk  $MoS_2$  on  $SiO_2$ /Si substrate (spectrum in red).

are characteristic signature of the  $MoS_2$  structure and originate from the  $E^1_{2g}$  and  $A_{1g}$  Raman modes of  $MoS_2$ .<sup>51</sup> The peaks at 520 and  $\sim 900~cm^{-1}$  originates from the Si substrate. The inset spectra in black and red compare the Raman signature of CVD synthesized and bulk  $MoS_2$  crystals (SPI, natural molybdenite mechanically exfoliated onto  $SiO_2/Si$  substrates). Consistently

with a recent report,  $^1$  the CVD MoS $_2$  showing a lower relative intensity ratio for  $E^1_{2g}$  and  $A_{1g}$  compared to the natural MoS $_2$  crystal. The intensity ratios for  $E^1_{2g}$  and  $A_{1g}$  are  $\sim$ 0.31 and  $\sim$ 0.45 for the CVD MoS $_2$  and natural MoS $_2$ , respectively. The difference originates from the fact that the planar vibration mode  $E^1_{2g}$  can be affected by the grain distribution and the domain size of the CVD MoS $_2^{1,51}$  In contrast, the peak spacing between  $E^1_{2g}$  and  $A_{1g}$  for CVD and exfoliated MoS $_2$  is 25.3 and 25.4 cm $^{-1}$ , respectively. Furthermore, Raman is a useful technique to analyze the quality of graphene. The most direct feature in Raman spectroscopy showing the quality of graphene is the D band at  $\sim$ 1350 cm $^{-1}$ , which is closely related to the defect density in the graphene lattice. The small graphene D band ( $\sim$ 1350 cm $^{-1}$ ) suggests that under the growth condition used for MoS $_2$  synthesis, the structure of the graphene was not adversely affected.

To further study the structure and chemical composition of the epitaxial heterostructures we used TEM, EDS, STEM, and XPS characterization techniques. XPS and EELS were applied to characterize the elemental composition of the as-synthesized samples. The atomic ratio of Mo and S obtained from XPS is 1:2.14, which is in a good agreement with the value obtained from EELS . The detailed XPS and EELS measurement are given in the Supporting Information (Figures S1 and S2).

TEM images of the epitaxial MoS<sub>2</sub>/graphene heterostructures are shown in Figure 4. The MoS<sub>2</sub>/graphene hybrid was transferred to a TEM grid using the method described in the Supporting Information. The MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes show darker contrast compared to the graphene membrane. Figure 4A,B shows typical TEM bright-field images of the MoS<sub>2</sub>/graphene hybrid structure with varying densities of MoS<sub>2</sub>. Figure 4A presents an isolated hexagonal flake and the inset is the selected area electron diffraction (SAED) pattern taken from this MoS<sub>2</sub> flake. The SAED pattern indicates the single crystalline nature of the hexagonal flake. Figure 4C shows a typical high-resolution TEM (HRTEM) image taken from the edge of a MoS<sub>2</sub> flake. The lattice spacing matches the (100) spacing of MoS<sub>2</sub>. The inset shows the EDS spectrum taken from the same region, which confirms the presence of both sulfur and molybdenum in the flake. The full EDS spectrum is given in the Supporting Information (Figure S3).

As mentioned before, with increasing amount of precursor, continuous  $MoS_2$  films form, with loosely packed  $MoS_2$  nanoflakes on top of the film, (see Figure 2C). In order to investigate the crystallinity of the  $MoS_2$  thin film, aberration-corrected STEM high-angle annular dark-field (HAADF)

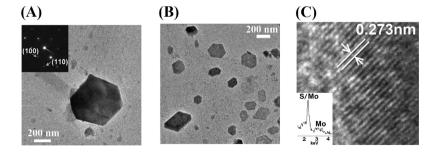


Figure 4. TEM images of the heterostructure of  $MoS_2$  nanoflakes on graphene surface. (A) TEM image of an isolated flake with hexagonal shape. Inset shows the selected area electron diffraction (SAED) pattern from the flake. (B) Low-magnification TEM image of  $MoS_2$  flakes with higher densities (This sample shows a uniform and transparent  $MoS_2$  background (more details are given by the STEM analysis in Figure 6). (C) A typical HRTEM image taken from the edge of a  $MoS_2$  flake. The lattice spacing matches the (100) spacing of  $MoS_2$ . Inset shows the EDS spectrum of the  $MoS_2$  flakes.

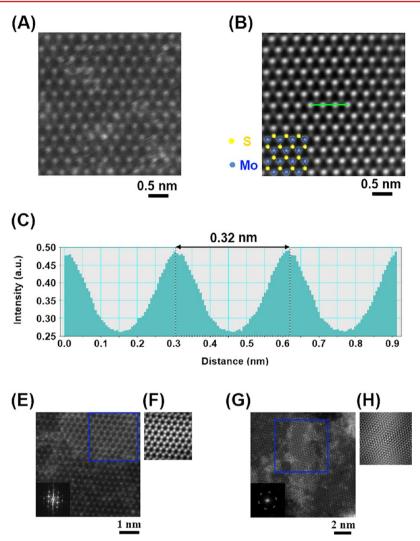


Figure 5. High-resolution STEM-HAADF imaging of the monolayer and few-layer  $MoS_2$  film supported on the graphene membrane. (A) Raw data and (B) FFT-filtered image. The inset shows the overlay of an atomic structure model of monolayer  $MoS_2$  (projection down the *c*-axis). (C) The measured in-plane lattice distance (indicated by the green line in (B)) is  $0.32 \pm 0.01$  nm. (E,G) The high-resolution STEM-HAADF images of a AB stacked and misoriented bilayer  $MoS_2$  (with  $8.5^\circ$  rotation angle) nanodomains respectively; (F,H) the FFT-filtered images of the regions highlighted in E and G, respectively. Insets of panels E and G show the FFT patterns of the highlighted regions.

imaging, also known as Z-contrast imaging, was performed. Besides the MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes observed under TEM, single layer and few-layer MoS2 films can also be clearly observed from the STEM-HAADF images. The result indicates that the MoS<sub>2</sub> synthesis on graphene surface is not a self-limited reaction. Since STEM-HAADF image intensity is atomic number (Z)dependent, the Mo and S atomic positions in the monolayer MoS<sub>2</sub> film can be easily identified from the image contrast as shown in Figure 5A. The Mo atoms show much higher contrast than the S atom pairs. The lattice structure of the monolayer MoS<sub>2</sub> is more clearly shown in the Fourier-filtered image in Figure 5B, where direct measurement of the lattice constant is possible. Figure 5C shows an intensity line profile across the filtered image (as marked in Figure 5B), which gives an in-plane lattice constant of 0.32 nm. The STEM results suggest the c-axis of the MoS<sub>2</sub> flake is perpendicular to the graphene substrates. Moreover, the HAADF image intensity is also proportional to the number of MoS2 layers, which provides a feasible way to quantify the number of layers for few-layer MoS<sub>2</sub> films. For the MoS<sub>2</sub> domains with a layer number  $\geq 2$ , both AB stacking and mis-orientated stacking were observed as shown in Figure 5E,F.

For the monolayer  $MoS_2$  in Figure 5A,B, the HAADF images show distinct interatomic image contrast between Mo and S pairs. The AB stacking bilayer region in Figure 5E shows equal intensity for the hexagonal lattice due to the overlapping of the Mo and S pairs in the top and bottom layers. The misorientated bilayer  $MoS_2$  can be distinguished by the Moiré pattern, as shown in Figure 5G,H, and the rotation angle between the two atomic layers can be measured directly from the image's fast Fourier transform (FFT).

The orientation relationship between the monolayer MoS<sub>2</sub> and graphene support was studied by analyzing the FFT images. Here the STEM-HAADF images and bright-field (BF) images were collected simultaneously. While HAADF images provide clear Z contrast information for the MoS<sub>2</sub> layer, the BF-STEM images deliver phase contrast from both MoS<sub>2</sub> layer and monolayer graphene film. As shown in Figure 6, the FFT images from the STEM-BF images show diffraction spots from the graphene, even though it is difficult to resolve the graphene lattice directly from the STEM-HAADF or STEM-BF images because of the intrinsic low contrast arising from a single atomic layer. The sharp diffraction spots shown in Figure 6C

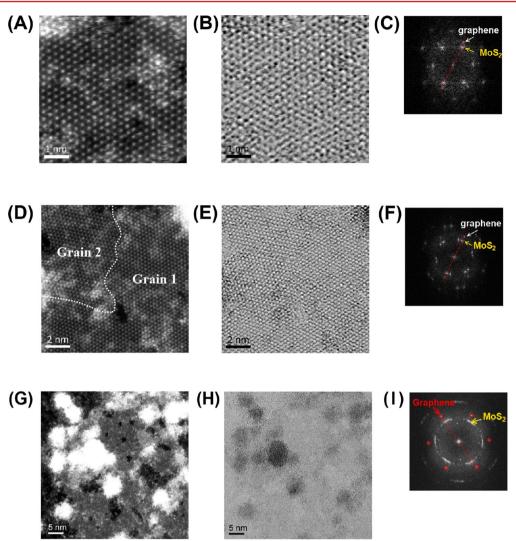


Figure 6. STEM-HAADF images (A,D,G) and STEM-BF images (B,E,H) of the monolayer  $MoS_2$  film supported on the graphene membrane. The white line in panel D roughly shows the grain boundary of  $MoS_2$ . Panels C, F, and I are the corresponding FFT patterns from the STEM-BF images in panels B, E, and H, respectively. The arrows indicate the diffraction spots originating from the graphene and the  $MoS_2$  layers. Red dash lines are added to compare both lattices orientation. The brightest particles in panel G are  $FeO_x$  residuals induced during transfer process, and one of them generates the sharp spots inside the  $MoS_2$  ring in the FFT pattern.

indicate the single crystal nature of the imaged graphene and  $MoS_2$  domains. More importantly, the  $MoS_2$  domain displays the same orientation as the underneath graphene film, as illustrated by the red dash line in Figure 6C. The result suggests that the  $MoS_2$  grain is epitaxially grown on graphene. However, we notice that the monolayer  $MoS_2$  films are polycrystalline. An example of a grain boundary in the monolayer  $MoS_2$  film is shown in Figure 6D,E. The grain boundary is highlighted by the white line in Figure 6D, and the presence of the two grains can be clearly seen from the images and the corresponding FFT image (Figure 6F). The FFT image further shows that one of the  $MoS_2$  grain (labeled as "Grain 1") is epitaxially grown on the graphene film, while the other  $MoS_2$  grain (labeled as "Grain 2") presents a  $12^\circ$  rotation with respect to the graphene lattice

To further understand the tendency of epitaxial growth of MoS<sub>2</sub> monolayer on graphene, we look at STEM images from relatively large areas covering multiple MoS<sub>2</sub> grains. A representative example is shown in Figures 6G,H. The corresponding FFT image (Figure 6I) from the BF image shows sharp spots from graphene, indicating that the graphene

layer in the imaging area belongs to the same grain. The imaged  $MoS_2$  film generates partial diffracted ring patterns, suggesting the presence of multiple grains with different orientations. However, the partial diffracted rings for  $MoS_2$  shows strong tendency to align with the graphene's diffraction pattern; the diffraction intensity is stronger along the same orientation as the graphene film. Moreover, almost all the diffraction intensity coming from  $MoS_2$  is distributed within a narrow range (from -11 to  $18^\circ$  with respect to the graphene film). This means that a large fraction of the  $MoS_2$  grains is epitaxially grown on the graphene film, and all the  $MoS_2$  grains tend to orient as close as possible to the graphene film.

We observed experimentally that the monolayer  $MoS_2$  film is polycrystalline, and a large fraction of the  $MoS_2$  grains adopt the same orientation as the graphene film. Notice that the lattice spacing for  $MoS_2$  is ~28% larger than that for graphene, therefore it is likely that the crystal orientation can be incommensurate due to the large strains between layers. However, all the remaining strain is expected to get accommodated in the van der Waals gap. The formation of defects in  $MoS_2$  is probably due to a large number of

heterogeneous sites (impurities) derived from precursors or grain boundaries (defects) of graphene, where further study would be required.

Our STEM results suggest that the monolayer  $MoS_2$  grains tend to epitaxially grow on graphene, and a misorientation of the  $MoS_2$  monolayer grains with respect to graphene develops gradually. The formation of a continuous partial ring pattern within a narrow angular range, instead of multiple sets of sharp spot patterns, is a strong evidence for the gradual development of mis-orientation from the epitaxial  $MoS_2$  grains. Moreover, the fact that almost no  $MoS_2$  grain shows mis-orientation larger than  $18^\circ$  with respect to the graphene film further confirms that the  $MoS_2$  does not grow randomly on graphene.

In conclusion, we have presented the growth of MoS<sub>2</sub> layered structures on CVD-G through the adsorption and decomposition of a single precursor. Even though there is a large lattice mismatch between the MoS2 and graphene structure, it was found that graphene can serve as an epitaxial substrate for MoS<sub>2</sub>. The remarkable electrical and mechanical properties of graphene make it very suitable both as an electrode and a support substrate/scaffold, whereas the MoS<sub>2</sub> flakes on its surface can serve as catalysis or electron redox centers. Furthermore, our results here also suggest that other hexagonal structured substrates, such as hexagonal boron nitride, can be used as a growth substrate for the MoS<sub>2</sub> layers. h-BN has been shown to be a superior substrate for graphene transistor devices due to the absence of dangling bonds. Potentially the growth of MoS<sub>2</sub> on h-BN may lead to high-performance MoS<sub>2</sub> transistor or optoelectronic devices in the future.

## ASSOCIATED CONTENT

## S Supporting Information

Detailed descriptions of the graphene and  $MoS_2$  synthesis method, transfer method of the as-grown  $MoS_2$ /graphene hybrids to arbitrary substrates, and the EELS, XPS, and EDS characterization results of the  $MoS_2$ /graphene hybrids. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

# AUTHOR INFORMATION

#### Corresponding Author

\*E-mail: jingkong@mit.edu.

# **Author Contributions**

<sup>#</sup>These authors contribute equally.

### Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was supported by the National Science Foundation under Award Number DMR 0845358. W.J.F. acknowledges the support from Interconnect Focus Center (IFC), and K.K.K. acknowledges the support from the Materials, Structure, and Devices (MSD); both are among the five programs in the focus center research program (FCRP), a Semiconductor Research Corporation program. S.M.K. acknowledges the support from National Research Foundation of Korea Grant funded by the Korean Government (NRF-2011-357- C00028). W.Z. acknowledges the support from the National Science Foundation under award No. DMR-0938330; J.C.I. acknowledges support from Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Shared Research Equipment (ShaRE) User Facility, which is sponsored by the Office of Basic Energy Sciences, U.S. Department of Energy. L.J.L.

acknowledges the support from Academia Sinica and National Science Council in Taiwan (NSC-99-2112-M-001-021-MY3).

#### REFERENCES

- (1) Zhan, Y.; Liu, Z.; Najmaei, S.; Ajayan, P. M.; Lou, J. Small **2012**, 8 (7), 966–971.
- (2) Liu, K.-K.; Zhang, W.; Lee, Y.-H.; Lin, Y.-C.; Chang, M.-T.; Su, C.-Y.; Chang, C.-S.; Li, H.; Shi, Y.; Zhang, H.; Lai, C.-S.; Li, L.-J. *Nano Lett.* **2012**, *12* (3), 1538–1544.
- (3) Geim, A. K.; Novoselov, K. S. Nat. Mater. 2007, 6 (3), 183-191.
- (4) Novoselov, K. S.; Geim, A. K.; Morozov, S. V.; Jiang, D.; Katsnelson, M. I.; Grigorieva, I. V.; Dubonos, S. V.; Firsov, A. A. *Nature* **2005**, 438 (7065), 197–200.
- (5) Novoselov, K. S.; Geim, A. K.; Morozov, S. V.; Jiang, D.; Zhang, Y.; Dubonos, S. V.; Grigorieva, I. V.; Firsov, A. A. *Science* **2004**, *306* (5696), 666–669.
- (6) Kubota, Y.; Watanabe, K.; Tsuda, O.; Taniguchi, T. Science 2007, 317 (5840), 932-934.
- (7) Dean, C. R.; Young, A. F.; Meric, I; Lee, C; Wang, L; Sorgenfrei, S; Watanabe, K; Taniguchi, T; Kim, P; Shepard, K. L.; Hone, J. *Nat. Nanotechnol.* **2010**, 5 (10), 722–726.
- (8) Zhang, Y.; Tan, Y.-W.; Stormer, H. L.; Kim, P. Nature 2005, 438 (7065), 201-204.
- (9) Decker, R. g.; Wang, Y.; Brar, V. W.; Regan, W.; Tsai, H.-Z.; Wu, Q.; Gannett, W.; Zettl, A.; Crommie, M. F. *Nano Lett.* **2011**, *11* (6), 2291–2295.
- (10) Zeng, H.; Zhi, C.; Zhang, Z.; Wei, X.; Wang, X.; Guo, W.; Bando, Y.; Golberg, D. *Nano Lett.* **2010**, *10* (12), 5049–5055.
- (11) Radisavljević, B; Radenovic, A; Brivio, J; Giacometti, V; Kis, A. Nat. Nanotechnol. 2011, 6 (3), 147–150.
- (12) Eda, G.; Yamaguchi, H.; Voiry, D.; Fujita, T.; Chen, M.; Chhowalla, M. Nano Lett. 2011, 11 (12), 5111–5116.
- (13) Splendiani, A.; Sun, L.; Zhang, Y.; Li, T.; Kim, J.; Chim, C.-Y.; Galli, G.; Wang, F. *Nano Lett.* **2010**, *10* (4), 1271–1275.
- (14) Brivio, J.; Alexander, D. T. L.; Kis, A. Nano Lett. **2011**, 11 (12), 5148–5153
- (15) Mak, K. F.; Lee, C.; Hone, J.; Shan, J.; Heinz, T. F. Phys. Rev. Lett. 2010, 105 (13), 136805.
- (16) Coleman, J. N.; Lotya, M.; O'Neill, A.; Bergin, S. D.; King, P. J.; Khan, U.; Young, K.; Gaucher, A.; De, S.; Smith, R. J.; Shvets, I. V.; Arora, S. K.; Stanton, G.; Kim, H.-Y.; Lee, K.; Kim, G. T.; Duesberg, G. S.; Hallam, T.; Boland, J. J.; Wang, J. J.; Donegan, J. F.; Grunlan, J. C.; Moriarty, G.; Shmeliov, A.; Nicholls, R. J.; Perkins, J. M.; Grieveson, E. M.; Theuwissen, K.; McComb, D. W.; Nellist, P. D.; Nicolosi, V. Science 2011, 331 (6017), 568–571.
- (17) Gordon, R. A.; Yang, D.; Crozier, E. D.; Jiang, D. T.; Frindt, R. F. *Phys. Rev. B* **2002**, *65* (12), 125407.
- (18) Yin, Z.; Li, H.; Li, H.; Jiang, L.; Shi, Y.; Sun, Y.; Lu, G.; Zhang, Q.; Chen, X.; Zhang, H. ACS Nano **2012**, 6 (1), 74–80.
- (19) Cai, G. M.; Jian, J. K.; Chen, X. L.; Lei, M.; Wang, W. Y. Appl. Phys. A 2007, 89 (3), 783–788.
- (20) Viršek, M.; Krause, M.; Kolitsch, A.; Mrzel, A.; Iskra, I.; Škapin, S. o. D.; Remškar, M. *J. Phys. Chem. C* **2010**, *114* (14), 6458–6463.
- (21) Kim, D.; Sun, D.; Lu, W.; Cheng, Z.; Zhu, Y.; Le, D.; Rahman, T. S.; Bartels, L. Langmuir 2011, 27 (18), 11650-11653.
- (22) Lee, Y.-H.; Zhang, X.-Q.; Zhang, W.; Chang, M.-T.; Lin, C.-T.; Chang, K.-D.; Yu, Y.-C.; Wang, J. T.-W.; Chang, C.-S.; Li, L.-J.; Lin, T.-W. Adv. Mater. **2012**, 24 (17), 2320–2325.
- (23) Diemann, E.; Müller, A.; Aymonino, P. J. Z. Anorg. Allg. Chem. **1981**, 479 (8), 191–198.
- (24) Prasad, T. P.; Diemann, E.; Müller, A. J. Inorg. Nucl. Chem. 1973, 35 (6), 1895–1904.
- (25) Song, X. C.; Zhao, Y.; Zheng, Y. F.; Yang, E. Adv. Eng. Mater. **2007**, 9 (1–2), 96–98.
- (26) Piña, C.; Bosch, P.; Acosta, D.; Barreto, J.; Vazquez, A.; Camarillo, E. *J. Cryst. Growth* **1989**, *96* (3), 685–690.
- (27) Remskar, M.; Mrzel, A.; Skraba, Z.; Jesih, A.; Ceh, M.; Demsar, J.; Stadelmann, P.; Levy, F.; Mihailovic, D. *Science* **2001**, 292 (5516), 479–481.

(28) Ma, L.; Chen, W.-X.; Li, H.; Zheng, Y.-F.; Xu, Z.-D. *Mater. Lett.* **2008**, 62 (6–7), 797–799.

- (29) Peng, Y. Y.; Meng, Z. Y.; Zhong, C.; Lu, J.; Yu, W. C.; Jia, Y. B.; Qian, Y. T. Chem. Lett. **2001**, No. 8, 772–773.
- (30) Zou, T. Z.; Tu, J. P.; Huang, H. D.; Lai, D. M.; Zhang, L. L.; He, D. N. Adv. Eng. Mater. **2006**, 8 (4), 289–293.
- (31) Kim, K. S.; Zhao, Y.; Jang, H.; Lee, S. Y.; Kim, J. M.; Kim, K. S.; Ahn, J.-H.; Kim, P.; Choi, J.-Y.; Hong, B. H. *Nature* **2009**, *487* (7230), 706–710.
- (32) Reina, A.; Jia, X.; Ho, J.; Nezich, D.; Son, H.; Bulovic, V.; Dresselhaus, M. S.; Kong, J. *Nano Lett.* **2008**, *9* (1), 30–35.
- (33) Li, X.; Cai, W.; An, J.; Kim, S.; Nah, J.; Yang, D.; Piner, R.; Velamakanni, A.; Jung, I.; Tutuc, E.; Banerjee, S. K.; Colombo, L.; Ruoff, R. S. Science **2009**, 324 (5932), 1312–1314.
- (34) Shi, Y.; Hamsen, C.; Jia, X.; Kim, K. K.; Reina, A.; Hofmann, M.; Hsu, A. L.; Zhang, K.; Li, H.; Juang, Z.-Y.; Dresselhaus, M. S.; Li, L.-J.; Kong, J. *Nano Lett.* **2010**, *10* (10), 4134–4139.
- (35) Liu, Z.; Song, L.; Zhao, S.; Huang, J.; Ma, L.; Zhang, J.; Lou, J.; Ajayan, P. M. *Nano Lett.* **2011**, *11* (5), 2032–2037.
- (36) Kim, K. K.; Hsu, A.; Jia, X.; Kim, S. M.; Shi, Y.; Hofmann, M.; Nezich, D.; Rodriguez-Nieva, J. F.; Dresselhaus, M. S.; Palacios, T.; Kong, J. *Nano Lett.* **2012**, *1* (12), 161–166.
- (37) Li, Y.; Wang, H.; Xie, L.; Liang, Y.; Hong, G.; Dai, H. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2011**, 133 (19), 7296–7299.
- (38) Yan, K.; Peng, H.; Zhou, Y.; Li, H.; Liu, Z. Nano Lett. 2011, 11 (3), 1106–1110.
- (39) Dang, W.; Peng, H.; Li, H.; Wang, P.; Liu, Z. Nano Lett. 2010, 10 (8), 2870–2876.
- (40) Koma, A.; Sunouchi, K.; Miyajima, T. J. Vac. Sci. Technol., B 1985, 3 (2), 724-724.
- (41) Koma, A. Thin Solid Films 1992, 216 (1), 72-76.
- (42) Ma, Y.; Dai, Y.; Guo, M.; Niu, C.; Huang, B. Nanoscale 2011, 3 (9), 3883–3887.
- (43) Zong, X.; Wu, G.; Yan, H.; Ma, G.; Shi, J.; Wen, F.; Wang, L.; Li, C. J. Phys. Chem. C 2010, 114 (4), 1963–1968.
- (44) Zong, X.; Yan, H.; Wu, G.; Ma, G.; Wen, F.; Wang, L.; Li, C. J. Am. Chem. Soc. **2008**, 130 (23), 7176–7177.
- (45) Li, H.; Yin, Z.; He, Q.; Li, H.; Huang, X.; Lu, G.; Fam, D. W. H.; Tok, A. I. Y.; Zhang, Q.; Zhang, H. Small **2012**, 8 (1), 63–67.
- (46) Chang, K.; Chen, W. ACS Nano 2011, 5 (6), 4720-4728.
- (47) Xiao, J.; Choi, D.; Cosimbescu, L.; Koech, P.; Liu, J.; Lemmon, J. P. Chem. Mater. **2010**, 22 (16), 4522–4524.
- (48) Hwang, H.; Kim, H.; Cho, J. Nano Lett. 2011, 11 (11), 4826–4830.
- (49) Ki Kang, K.; Alfonso, R.; Yumeng, S.; Hyesung, P.; Lain-Jong, L.; Young Hee, L.; Jing, K. Nanotechnology 2010, 21 (28), 285205.
- (50) An, J.; Voelkl, E.; Suk, J. W.; Li, X.; Magnuson, C. W.; Fu, L.; Tiemeijer, P.; Bischoff, M.; Freitag, B.; Popova, E.; Ruoff, R. S. ACS Nano 2011, 5 (4), 2433–2439.
- (51) Lee, C.; Yan, H.; Brus, L. E.; Heinz, T. F.; Hone, J.; Ryu, S. ACS Nano 2010, 4 (5), 2695–2700.
- (52) Dresselhaus, M. S.; Jorio, A.; Hofmann, M.; Dresselhaus, G.; Saito, R. *Nano Lett.* **2010**, *10* (3), 751–758.