#### **ETH** zürich



Control of Power Converters in Low-Inertia Power Systems

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### Acknowledgements



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Further: Gab-Su Seo, Brian Johnson, Mohit Sinha, & Sairaj Dhople

### What do we see here?



### Frequency of West Berlin re-connecting to Europe



*before* re-connection: islanded operation based on batteries & single boiler *afterwards* connected to European grid based on synchronous generation

### The foundation of today's power system







Synchronous machines with rotational inertia

$$M rac{d}{dt} \omega pprox P_{
m generation} - P_{
m demand}$$

Today's grid operation heavily relies on

- 1. kinetic energy  $\frac{1}{2}M\omega^2$  as *safeguard* against disturbances
- 2. self-synchronization of machines through the grid
- 3. robust stabilization of frequency and voltage by generator controls

We are *replacing* this solid *foundation* with ...

### Tomorrow's clean and sustainable power system







#### synchronous machines

- + large rotational inertia
- + kinetic energy  $\frac{1}{2}M\omega^2$  as buffer
- + self-synchronize through grid
- + robust control of voltage & freq.
- slow primary control

#### renewables & power electronics

- no rotational inertia
- almost no energy storage
- no inherent self-synchronization
- fragile control of voltage & freq.
- + fast actuation & control

what could possibly go wrong?

### The concerns are not hypothetical

issues broadly recognized by TSOs, device manufacturers, academia, agencies, etc.



amprior

### Critically re-visit system modeling/analysis/control



#### a key unresolved challenge: control of power converters in low-inertia grids

→ industry is willing to explore green-field approach (see MIGRATE project)

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### Cartoon summary of today's approach

Conceptually, inverters are oscillators that have to synchronize



Hypothetically, they could sync by communication (not feasible)



### Cartoon summary of today's approach

Colorful idea: inverters sync through physics & clever local control





*theory:* sync of coupled oscillators & nonlinear decentralized control

power systems/electronics experiments @NREL show superior performance

#### Outline

Introduction: Low-Inertia Power Systems

Problem Setup: Modeling and Specifications

State of the Art: Comparison & Critical Evaluation

Dispatchable Virtual Oscillator Control

Experimental Validation

Conclusions

#### Modeling: signal space in 3-phase AC circuits



**assumption**: balanced  $\Rightarrow$  2d-coordinates  $x(t) = [x_{\alpha}(t) x_{\beta}(t)]$  or  $x(t) = A(t)e^{i\delta(t)}$ 

from currents/voltages to powers: active  $p = v^{\top}i$  and reactive  $q = v^{T} R(\frac{\pi}{2}) i$ 

### Modeling: the network



interconnecting lines via II-models & ODEs



quasi-steady state algebraic model ~ diffusive (synchronizing) coupling



salient feature: *local* measurement reveal *global* information



### Modeling: the power converter



DC port modulation control (3-phase) LC output filter AC port to power grid

- ▶ passive **DC** port port  $(i_{dc}, v_{dc})$  for energy balance control
- ightarrow details neglected today: assume  $v_{dc}$  to be stiffly regulated
- ► modulation = lossless signal transformer (averaged)
- $\rightarrow$  controlled switching voltage  $\frac{1}{2}v_{dc}u$  with  $u \in [-1, 1]$
- ► *LC filter* to smoothen harmonics with *R*, *G* modeling filter/switching losses

well actuated, modular, & fast control system  $\approx$  *controllable voltage source* 

#### Control objectives in the stationary frame

1. synchronous frequency:

$$\frac{d}{dt} v_k = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & -\omega_0 \\ \omega_0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} v_k \quad \forall k \in \mathcal{V} \coloneqq \{1, \dots, N\}$$

 $\sim \,$  stabilization at harmonic oscillation with synchronous frequency  $\omega_0$ 

#### 2. voltage amplitude:

 $||v_k|| = v^* \quad \forall k \in \mathcal{V}$  (for ease of presentation)

 $\sim$  stabilization of voltage **amplitude**  $||v_k||$ 

#### 3. prescribed power flow:

$$v_k^{\top} i_{o,k} = p_k^{\star} , \quad v_k^{\top} \underbrace{R(\frac{\pi}{2})}_{90^{\circ} \text{rotation}} i_{o,k} = q_k^{\star} \quad \forall \, k \in \mathcal{V}$$

~ steady-state active & reactive power injections  $\{p_k^{\star}, q_k^{\star}\}$ 

#### Main control challenges



- *f* nonlinear objectives  $(v_k^*, p_k^*, q_k^*)$  & stabilization of a *limit cycle*
- *f* decentralized control: only local measurements  $(v_k, i_{o,k})$  available
- *time-scale separation* between slow sources & fast network may not hold
- + fully controllable voltage sources & stable linear network dynamics

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### Baseline: virtual synchronous machine emulation



► **PD control** on  $\omega(t)$ :  $M \frac{d}{dt} \omega(t) + D(\omega(t) - \omega_0) = P_{\text{generation}}(t) - P_{\text{demand}}(t)$ 

there are smarter implementations at the cost of algorithmic complexity

# Standard power electronics control approach to virtual machine emulation would continue by



- 1. acquiring & processing of *AC measurements*
- synthesis of references (voltage/current/power)
   "how would a synchronous generator respond now ?"
- 3. *track* error signals at converter terminals
- 4. *actuation* via modulation and DC-side supply

#### Droop as simplest reference model

 frequency control by mimicking p – ω droop property of synchronous machine:

$$D(\omega - \omega_0) = p - p^{\star}$$

• *voltage control* via q - ||v|| droop heuristic:

$$\frac{d}{dt}||v|| = -c_1(||v|| - v^*) - c_2(q - q^*)$$



- → direct control of  $(p, \omega)$  and (q, v)assuming they are independent (true only near steady state)
- → requires tricks in implementation : low-pass filters for dissipation, virtual impedances for saturation, limiters,...



### Challenges in power converter implementations





- 1. *delays* in measurement acquisition, signal processing, & actuation
- 2. constraints on currents & voltages
- 3. performance improvement via "tricks"
- 4. certificates on stability & robustness



ightarrow proper implementation (internal model + matching + PBC) alleviates some issues

[Jouini, Arghir, & Dörfler, Automatica '17]

### Comparison of droop/emulation/matching @AIT



- all controllers perform fine near steady-state and under nominal conditions
- all show poor transient performance unless augmented with various "tricks"
- ightarrow none appears suitable for post-fault stabilization in a low-inertia power system

### Virtual Oscillator Control (VOC)

nonlinear & open limit cycle oscillator as reference model for terminal voltage (1-phase):

 $\ddot{v} + \omega_0^2 v + g(v) = i_o$ 





- history: [Torres, Hespanha, Moehlis, '11], [Johnson, Dhople, Krein, '13], [Dhople, Johnson, Dörfler, Hamadeh, '14], [Kim, Persis, '17]
- · simplified model amenable to theoretic analysis
- → almost global synchronization & local droop
- in practice proven to be *robust mechanism* with performance superior to droop & others
- → problem: cannot be controlled(?) to meet specifications on amplitude & power injections



### Comparison of grid-forming control strategies



droop control

good performance near steady state
relies on decoupling & small attraction basin



synchronous machine emulation

- + backward compatible in "nominal" case
- poor performance & needs hacks to work





virtual oscillator control (VOC)

robust & almost globally stable sync
cannot meet amplitude/power specifications



#### today: foundational control approach

[Colombino, Groß, Brouillon, & Dörfler, '17, '18] [Seo, Subotic, Johnson, Colombino, Groß, & Dörfler, '18]<sub>20</sub>

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### Recall problem setup

#### 1. simplifying assumptions (will be removed later)



• converter  $\approx$  controllable voltage source

• grid 
$$\approx$$
 quasi-static:  $\ell \frac{d}{dt}i + ri \approx (j \ell \omega_0 + r)i$ 

• lines 
$$\approx$$
 homogeneous  $\kappa = \tan(\ell_{kj}/r_{kj}) \ \forall k, j$ 

#### 2. fully decentralized control of converter terminal voltage & current

- $\checkmark$  set-points for relative angles  $\{\theta_{jk}^{\star}\}$
- f nonlocal measurements  $v_j$
- f grid & load parameters

#### 3. control objective

stabilize desired quasi steady state

(synchronous, 3-phase-balanced, and meet set-points in nominal case)

- ✓ local measurements  $(v_k, i_{o,k})$
- $\checkmark$  local set-points  $(v_k^\star, p_k^\star, q_k^\star)$



#### Colorful idea for closed-loop target dynamics

objectives: frequency, phase, and voltage stability

$$\frac{d}{dt}v_{k} = \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 0 & -\omega_{0} \\ \omega_{0} & 0 \end{bmatrix} v_{k}}_{\text{rotation at }\omega_{0}} + \underbrace{c_{1} \cdot e_{\theta,k}(v)}_{\text{synchronization}} + \underbrace{c_{2} \cdot e_{\|v\|,k}(v_{k})}_{\text{magnitude regulation}}$$



#### synchronization:

$$e_{\theta,k}(v) = \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{jk} \left( v_j - R(\theta_{jk}^{\star}) v_k \right)$$

#### amplitude regulation:

$$e_{\|v\|,k}(v_k) = \left(v^{\star 2} - \|v_k\|^2
ight)v_k$$

#### Decentralized implementation of target dynamics

$$e_{\theta,k}(v) = \underbrace{\sum_{j} w_{jk}(v_j - R(\theta_{jk}^*)v_k)}_{\text{need to know } w_{jk}, v_j, v_k \text{ and } \theta_{jk}^*} = \underbrace{\sum_{j} w_{jk}(v_j - v_k)}_{\text{``Laplacian'' feedback}} + \underbrace{\sum_{j} w_{jk}(I - R(\theta_{jk}^*))v_k}_{\text{local feedback: } \mathcal{K}_k(\theta^*)v_k}$$

insight I: non-local measurements from communication through physics



insight II: angle set-points & line-parameters from power flow equations

$$p_k^{\star} = v^{\star 2} \sum_j \frac{r_{jk}(1 - \cos(\theta_{jk}^{\star})) - \omega_0 \ell_{jk} \sin(\theta_{jk}^{\star})}{r_{jk}^2 + \omega_0^2 \ell_{jk}^2}}{q_k^{\star} = -v^{\star 2} \sum_j \frac{\omega_0 \ell_{jk}(1 - \cos(\theta_{jk}^{\star})) + r_{jk} \sin(\theta_{jk}^{\star})}{r_{jk}^2 + \omega_0^2 \ell_{jk}^2}} \right\} \Rightarrow \underbrace{\mathcal{K}_k(\theta^{\star})}_{\text{global parameters}} = \underbrace{\frac{1}{v^{\star 2}} R(\kappa) \begin{bmatrix} q_k^{\star} & p_k^{\star} \\ -p_k^{\star} & q_k^{\star} \end{bmatrix}}_{\text{local parameters}}$$

### Main results

1. desired target dynamics can be realized via *fully decentralized control*:



#### 2. almost global stability result :

If the  $\ldots$  condition holds, the system is **almost globally asymptotically stable** with respect to a **limit cycle** corresponding to a **pre-specified** solution of the **AC power-flow** equations at a **synchronous** frequency  $\omega_0$ .

#### Main results cont'd

- 3. certifiable, sharp, and intuitive stability conditions :
  - consistent  $v^*$ ,  $p_k^*$ , and  $q_k^*$  satisfy **AC power flow equations**
  - magnitude control slower than synchronization control
  - ► power transfer "small enough" compared to network connectivity

e.g., for resistive grid: 
$$\frac{1}{2}\lambda_2(L) > \max_k \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{v^{\star 2}} |p_{j,k}| + c_2 v^{\star}$$

4. connection to *droop control* revealed in polar coordinates (for inductive grid) :

$$\frac{d}{dt}\theta_{k} = \omega_{0} + c_{1} \left(\frac{p_{k}^{\star}}{v^{\star 2}} - \frac{p_{k}}{\|v_{k}\|^{2}}\right) \underset{\|v_{k}\|\approx 1}{\approx} \omega_{0} + c_{1} \left(p_{k}^{\star} - p_{k}\right) \quad (p - \omega \text{ droop})$$

$$\frac{d}{dt}\|v_{k}\| \underset{\|v_{k}\|\approx 1}{\approx} c_{1} \left(q_{k}^{\star} - q_{k}\right) + c_{2} \left(v^{\star} - \|v_{k}\|\right) \qquad (q - \|v\| \text{ droop})$$

#### Proof sketch for algebraic grid: Lyapunov & center manifold

*Lyapunov function:*  $V(v) = \frac{1}{2} \text{dist}(v, S)^2 + \frac{c_2}{v^{\star 2}} \sum_k \left( v^{\star 2} - \|v_k\|^2 \right)^2$ 



 $\mathcal{T} \cup \mathbb{O}_{2N} \text{ is globally attractive} \\ \lim_{t \to \infty} \|v(t)\|_{\mathcal{T} \cup \mathbb{O}_{2N}} = 0$ 

 $\mathcal{T}$  is stable  $\|v(t)\|_{\mathcal{T}} \le \chi_2(\|v_0\|_{\mathcal{T}})$ 

 $\begin{aligned} \mathcal{T} \text{ is almost globally attractive} \\ \mathbb{O}_{2N} \text{ exponentially unstable} \\ \implies \mathcal{Z}_{\{\mathbb{O}_{2N}\}} \text{ has measure zero} \\ \forall v_0 \notin \mathcal{Z}_{\{\mathbb{O}_{2N}\}} : \lim_{t \to \infty} \|v(t)\|_{\mathcal{T}} = 0 \end{aligned}$ 

stability & almost global attractivity  $\implies$  *almost global asymptotic stability* 

### Case study: IEEE 9 Bus system



#### t = 0 s: black start of three inverters

- initial state:  $||v_k(0)|| \approx 10^{-3}$
- convergence to set-point

#### t = 5 s: load step-up

- 20% load increase at bus 5
- consistent power sharing

#### t = 10 s: loss of inverter 1

- the remaining inverters synchronize
- they supply the load sharing power

### Simulation of IEEE 9 Bus system



### Dropping assumptions: dynamic lines



**re-do the math** leading to updated condition: **magnitude control** slower than **sync control** slower than line dynamics

#### observations

- inverter control interferes with the line dynamics
- controller needs to be artificially slowed down
- recognized problem
   [Vorobev, Huang, Hosaini, & Turitsyn,'17]

#### "networked control" reason

- communication through currents to infer voltages
- very inductive lines delay the information transfer
- the controller must be slow in very inductive networks

#### Proof sketch for dynamic grid: perturbation-inspired Lyapunov



#### Individual Lyapunov functions

- ▶ slow system: V(v) for  $\frac{d}{dt}v = f_v(v, h(v))$
- ► fast system: W(y) for  $\frac{d}{dt}y = f_i(v, y + h(v))$ where  $\frac{d}{dt}v = 0$  & coordinate y = i - h(v)

#### Lyapunov function for the full system

- ►  $\nu(x) = dW(i h(v)) + (1 d)V(v)$ where  $d \in [0, 1]$  is free convex coefficient
- $\frac{d}{dt}\nu(x)$  is decaying under stability condition

#### Almost global asymptotic stability

- $\mathcal{T}' \cup \{\mathbb{O}_n\}$  globally attractive &  $\mathcal{T}'$  stable
- $\mathcal{Z}_{\{0_n\}}$  has measure zero

### Evaluation of stability conditions



amplitude gain [p.u.]



 $\|v_k\|$  [p.u.]

increase of control gains by factor 10  $\Rightarrow$  oscillations, overshoots, & instability

⇒ conditions are highly accurate

### Dropping assumptions: detailed converter model





detailed converter model with LC filter:

- *idea:* invert LC filter so that  $v \approx \frac{1}{2} v_{dc} u$
- → control: perform robust inversion of LC filter via cascaded PI
- ► analysis: repeat proof via singular perturbation Lyapunov functions
- → *almost global stability* for sufficient time scale separation (quantifiable)

VOC model < line dynamics < voltage PI < current PI

- . . . similar steps for control of  $v_{dc}$  in a more detailed model

<sup>[</sup>Subotic, ETH Zürich Master thesis '18]

### Experimental setup @ NREL







### Experimental results



black start of inverter #1 under 500 W load (making use of almost global stability)



250 W to 750 W load transient with two inverters active



connecting inverter #2 while inverter #1 is regulating the grid under 500 W load



change of setpoint:  $p^*$  of inverter #2 updated from 250 W to 500 W

### Conclusions

#### Summary

- · challenges of low-inertia systems
- dispatchable virtual oscillator control
- theoretic analysis & experiments

#### Ongoing & future work

- theoretical questions: robustness & regulation
- practical issue: compatibility with legacy system
- experimental validations @ ETH, NREL, AIT



#### Marcello Colombino



Dominic Groß

#### Main references

D. Groß, M Colombino, J.S. Brouillon, & F. Dörfler. *The effect of transmission-line dynamics on grid-forming dispatchable virtual oscillator control.* 

M. Colombino, D. Groß, J.S. Brouillon, & F. Dörfler. *Global phase and magnitude synchronization of coupled oscillators with application to the control of grid-forming power inverters*.

## POWER IS NOTHING WITHOUT CONTROL

