



Superconducting computing: present status and perspectives

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**Extended Abstracts of
1987 INTERNATIONAL SUPERCONDUCTIVITY
ELECTRONICS CONFERENCE (ISEC '87)**

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5-26-20 Shiba, Minato-ku
TOKYO, JAPAN

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SESSION-IX: Digital and Analog Circuits-II

- S9-1 Technologies for Josephson Picosecond Signal Processor (Invited)
S.M. Faris
HYPRES Inc., U.S.A.
- S9-2 Analog Signal Processing with Josephson Junctions: Analog to Digital Conversion (Invited)
J.W. Spargo and R.R. Phyllips
Hughes Aircraft Company, U.S.A.
- S9-3 High-Speed A/D Converters and Shift Registers
E. Fang, V. Nandakumar, D.A. Peterson, and T. Van Duzer
University of California, U.S.A.
- S9-4 A New Comparator for use in Ultra-High Speed Josephson A/D Converter
T. Nakanishi and H. Yoshikiyo
NTT, JAPAN

Institute of Advanced Sciences, YNU

Members in the research unit on “Extremely Energy-Efficient Processors”



Nobuyuki Yoshikawa, PI, IAS Professor
Yuki Yamanashi, IAS Associate Professor
Naoki Takeuchi, IAS Associate Professor
Christopher Ayala, IAS Associate Professor
Hideo Suzuki, IAS Researcher
Olivia Chan, IAS Assistant Professor
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Outlines of This Talk

- Background and motivation
- Past and present status of superconducting digital electronics
- Operation principles of AQFP circuits
- AQFP as a logic circuit
- Recent research activities on AQFP circuits
- Future directions
 - Josephson/CMOS hybrid memories
 - Reversible logic circuits
- Summary

Background

Estimated power consumption to realize an exa-scale computer



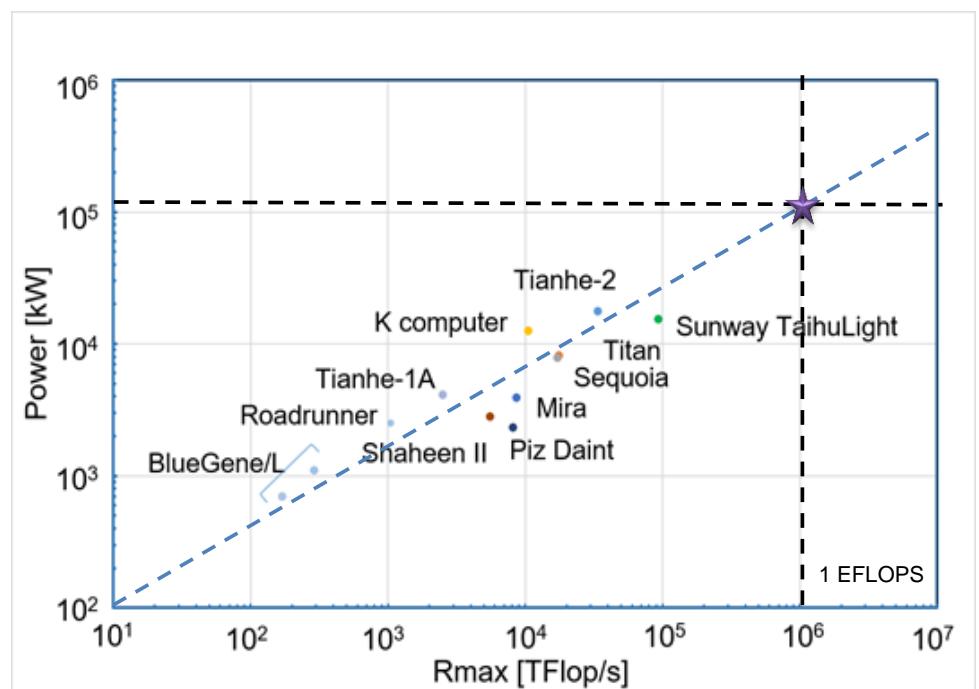
> 100 MW
~ \$million/100 MW per year

K computer (Japan)

Peak performance: 10.5 PFLOPS
Power consumption: 12.6 MW



1st-ranked computers in recent TOP500



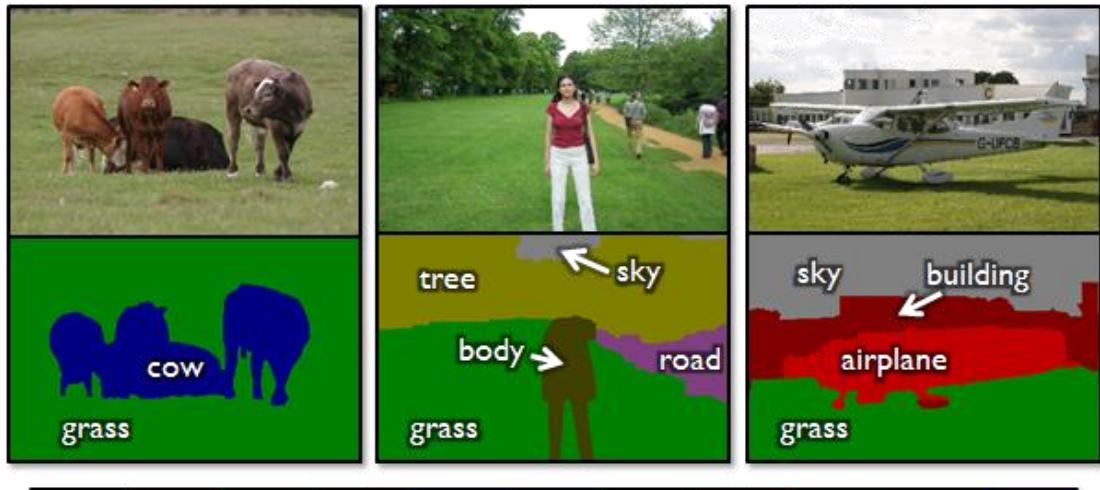
<http://www.top500.org/>

Low-Power Logic Devices is highly demanded.

AI is Power Hungry



Example of Semantic Segmentation



object classes	building	grass	tree	cow	sheep	sky	airplane	water	face	car	
bicycle	bicycle	flower	sign	bird	book	chair	road	cat	dog	body	boat

<http://jamie.shotton.org/work/research.html>

input size: 513 x 513
Flops: 346 GFLOPS

<https://www.nvidia.com/en-us/titan/titan-xp/>

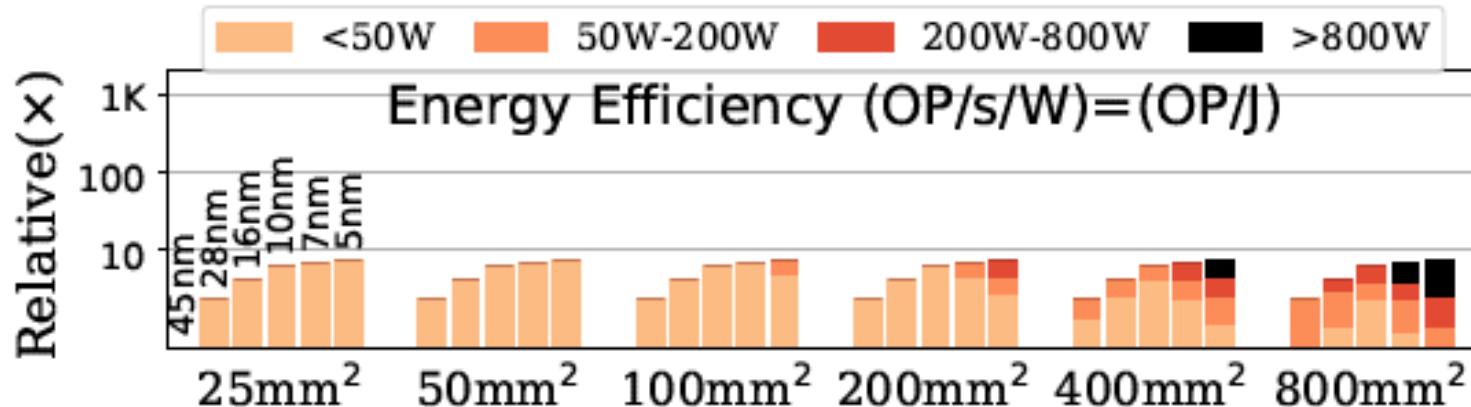
<https://github.com/albanie/convnet-burden>

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Energy Efficiency of CMOS Chips

Energy efficiency of CMOS chips for different CMOS nodes and die sizes

$$f_{\text{chip}} = 1 \text{ GHz}$$



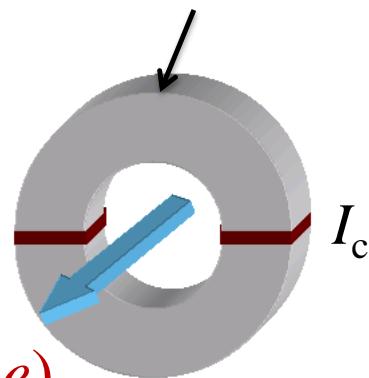
Normalized to 25 mm² chip fabricated with 45 nm CMOS

A. Fuchs and D. Wentzlaff, “The Accelerator Wall: Limits of Chip-Specialization,” *the 25th IEEE International Symposium on High-Performance Computer Architecture (HPCA ’19)*, 2019.

Single-Flux-Quantum (SFQ) Circuits

SFQ circuits

Superconducting loop
with Josephson junctions

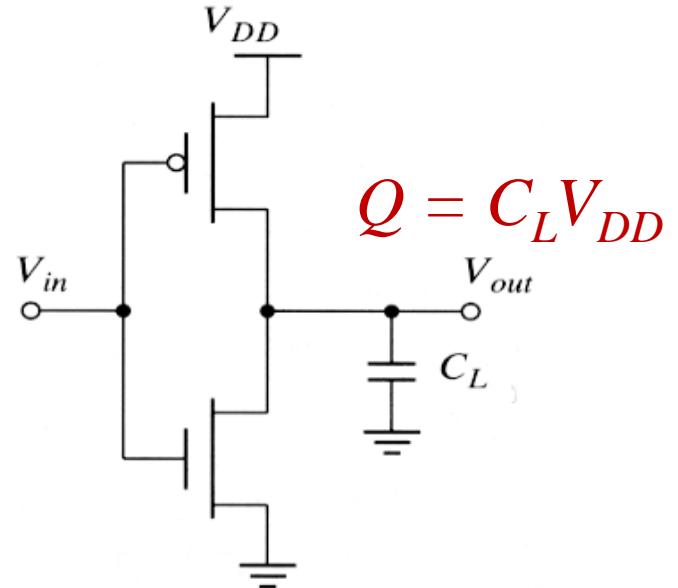


$$\Phi_0 = h/(2e)$$

Switching energy

$$E = \Phi_0 I_c \sim 10^{-19} \text{ J}$$

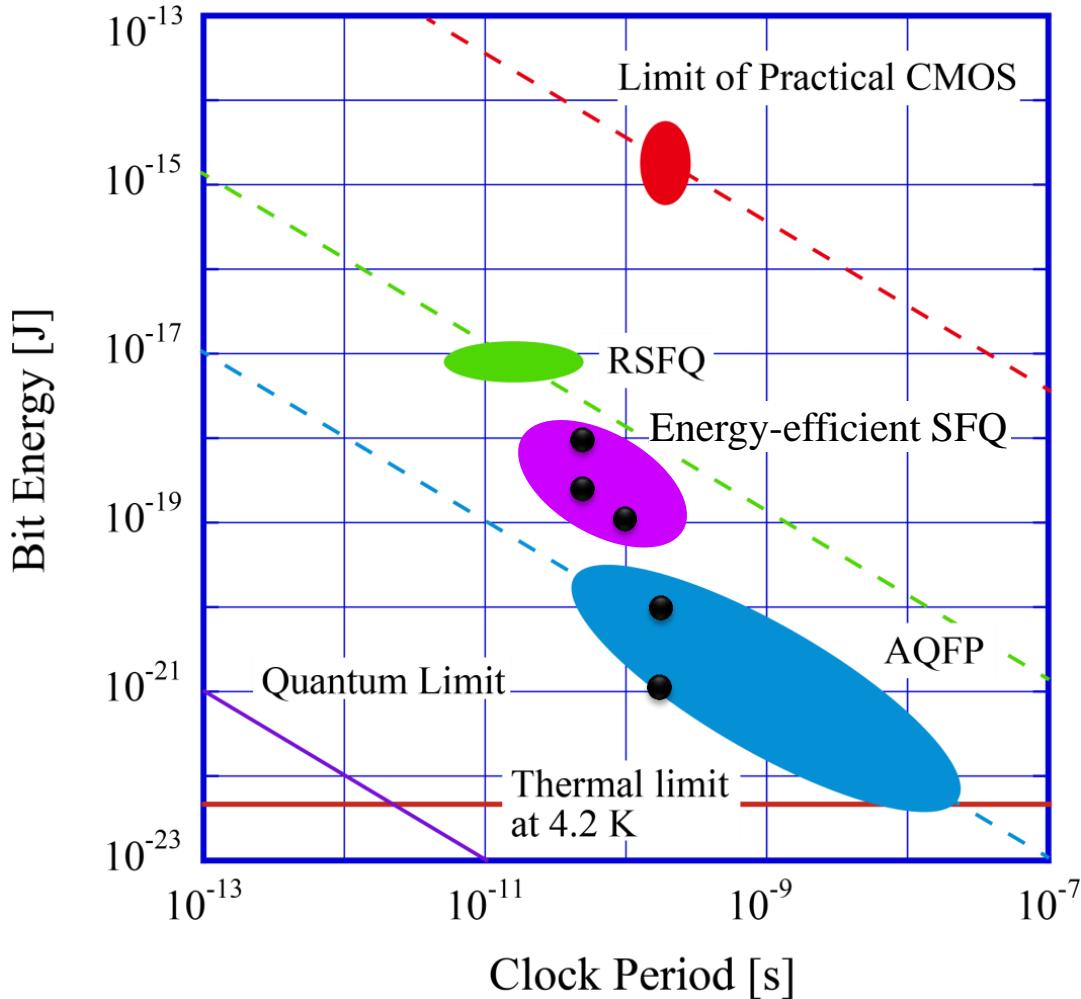
CMOS circuits



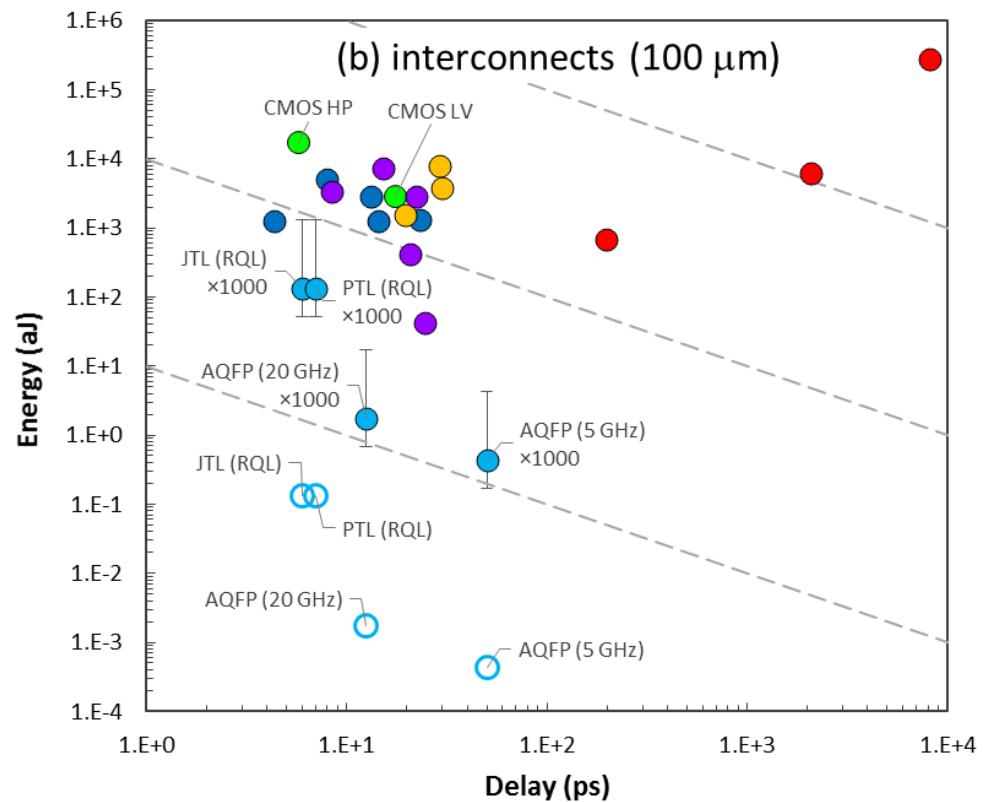
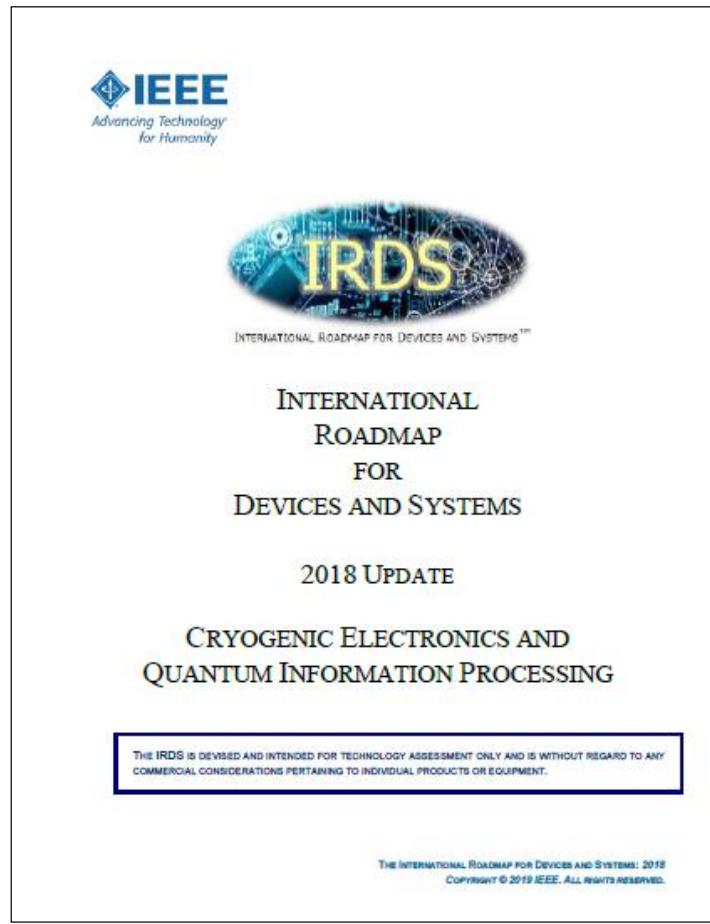
Switching energy

$$E = QV_{DD} \sim 10^{-16} \text{ J}$$

Comparison of Energy-Delay Product



IRDS (International Roadmap for Device and Systems)

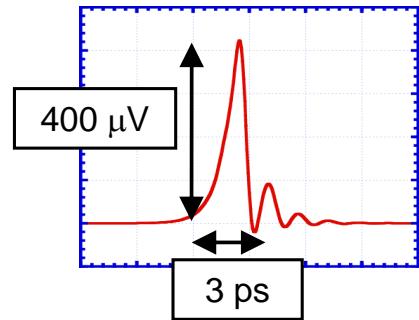
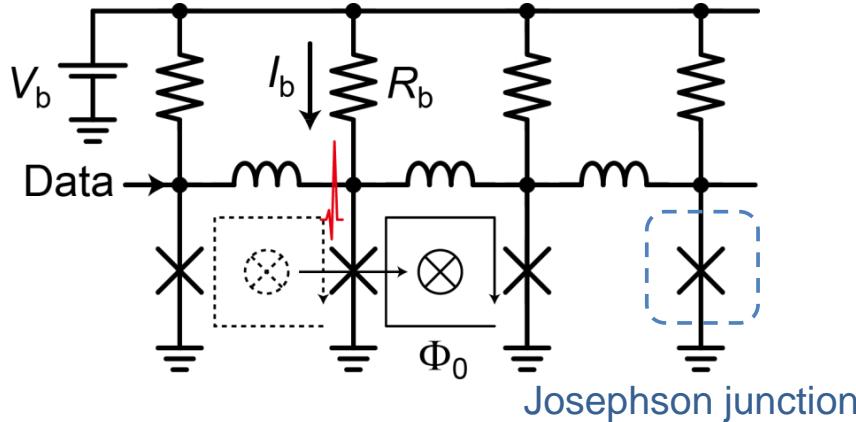


Energy and delay of gates with 100 μm interconnection length

Available at <https://irds.ieee.org/editions/2018>

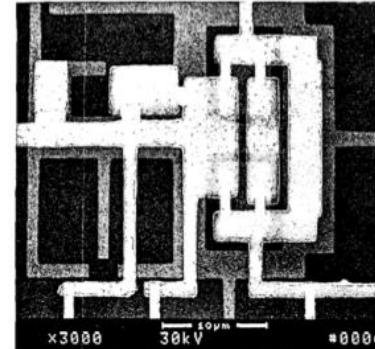
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Rapid Single-Flux-Quantum (RSFQ) Circuits



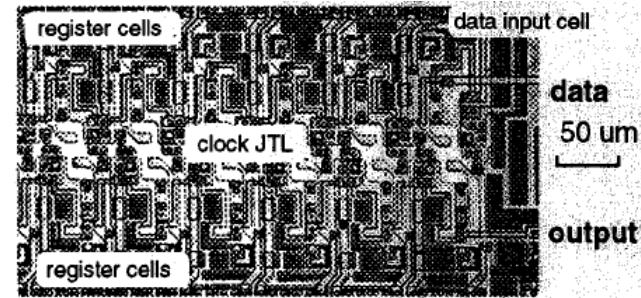
- Pulse height $\sim 400 \mu\text{V}$
- Pulse width $\sim 3 \text{ ps}$
- Power $\sim \text{nW/gate}$

K. K. Likharev, V. K. Semenov, *IEEE Trans. Appl. Supercond.* 1, 3–28 (1991).



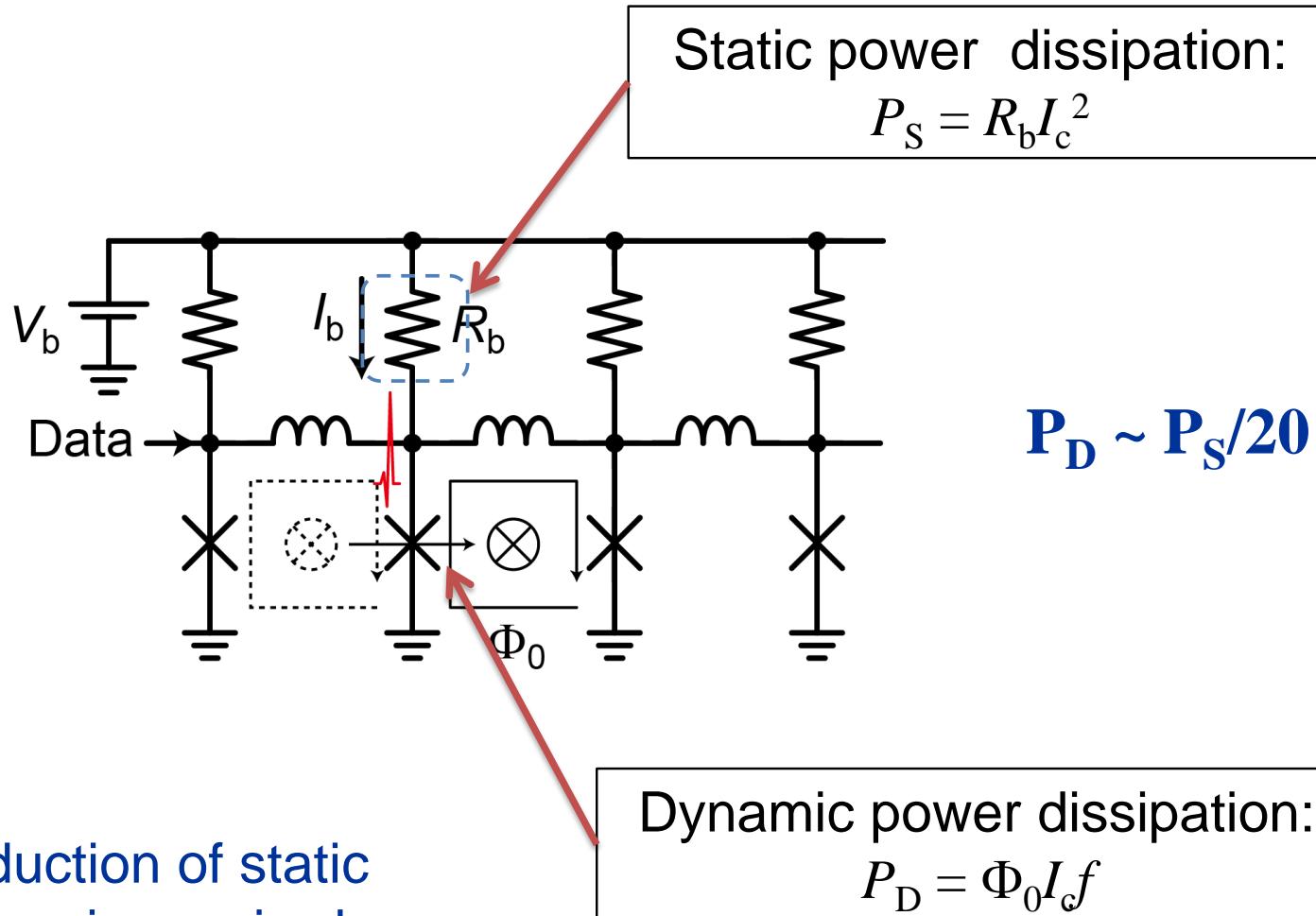
T Flip-flop operating at up to 770 GHz.

W. Chen *et al.*, *IEEE Trans. Appl. Supercond.* 9, 3212–3215 (1999).



256-b shift register operating at 12 GHz
 O. Mukhanov *et al.*, *IEEE Trans. Appl. Supercond.* 3, 2578–2581 (1993).

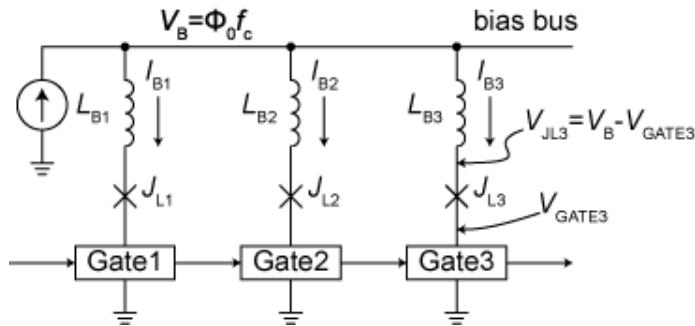
Power Consumption in RSFQ Logic



Energy-Efficient SFQ Circuits

DC Powered

ERSFQ (Hypres)

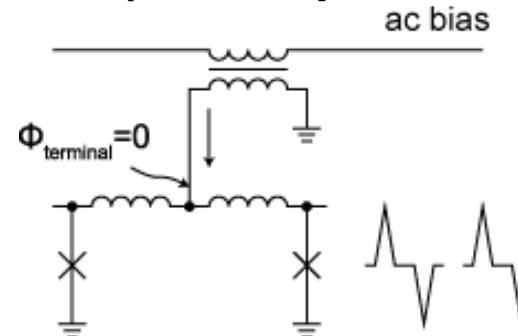


$$P_S \sim P_D \sim I_c \Phi_0 f$$

O. A. Mukhanov, *IEEE Trans. Appl. Supercond.* **21**, 760 (2011).

AC Powered

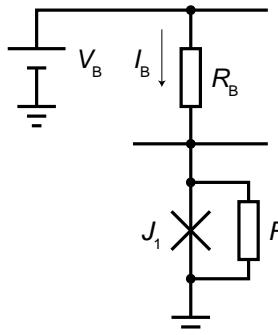
RQL (Northrop Grumman)



$$P_S \sim 0, P_D \sim I_c \Phi_0 f$$

Q. P. Herr *et al.*, *J. Appl. Phys.* **109**, 103903 (2011).

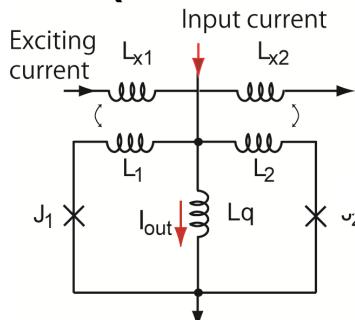
LV-SFQ (Nagoya Univ.)



$$P_S \sim 5P_D, P_D \sim I_c \Phi_0 f$$

M. Tanaka *et al.* *JJAP* **5**, 1053102 (2012)

AQFP (Yokohama National Univ.)

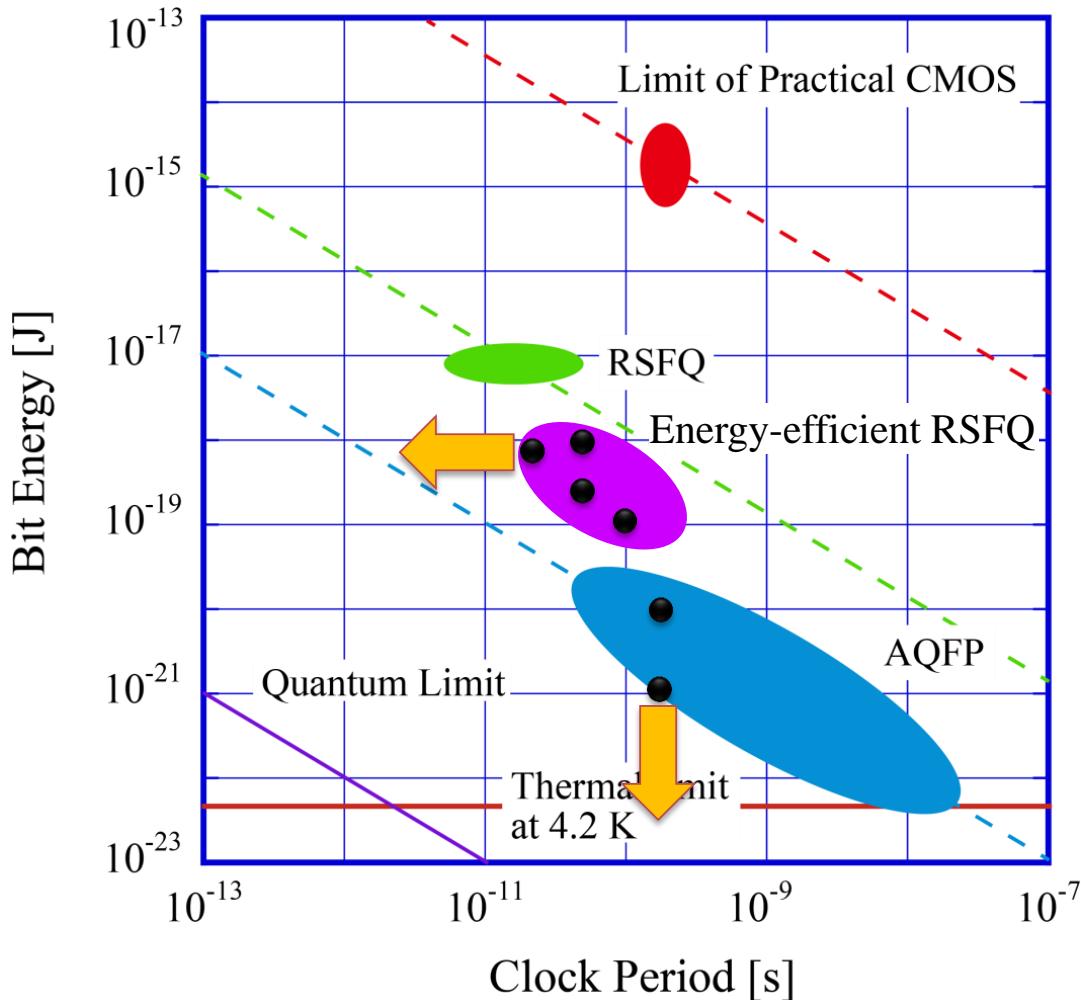


$$P_S \sim 0, P_D \sim I_c \Phi_0 f$$

N. Takeuchi, *et. al.*, *SUST*, 26, 035010 (2013).

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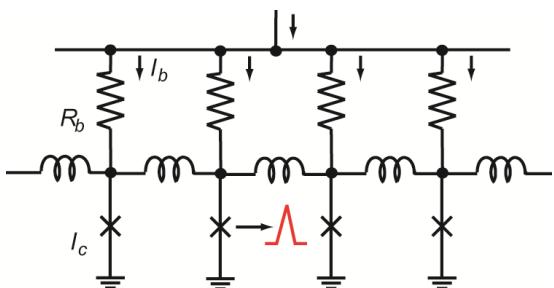
Comparison of Energy-Delay Product



Two Options in SC Digital Electronics

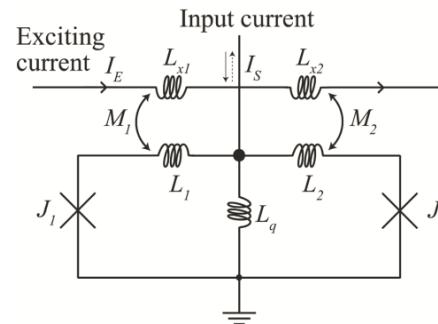
SFQ Logic

- Extremely high throughput
 - 50 GHz ~ 100 GHz frequency
 - RSFQ, ERSFQ, LVSFQ, RQL



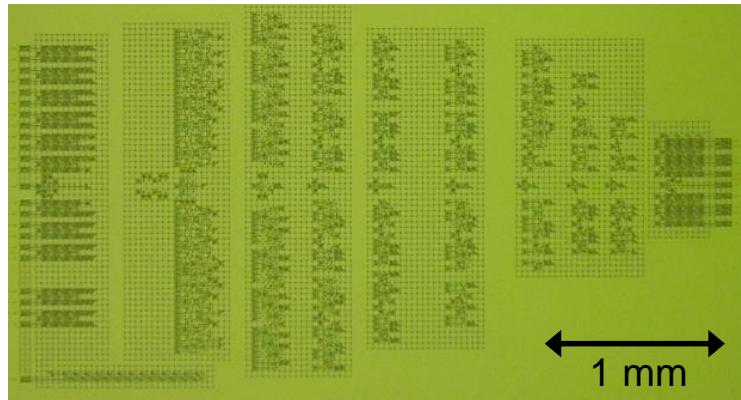
Adiabatic QFP Logic

- Extremely high energy efficiency
 - 1~10 zJ/operation

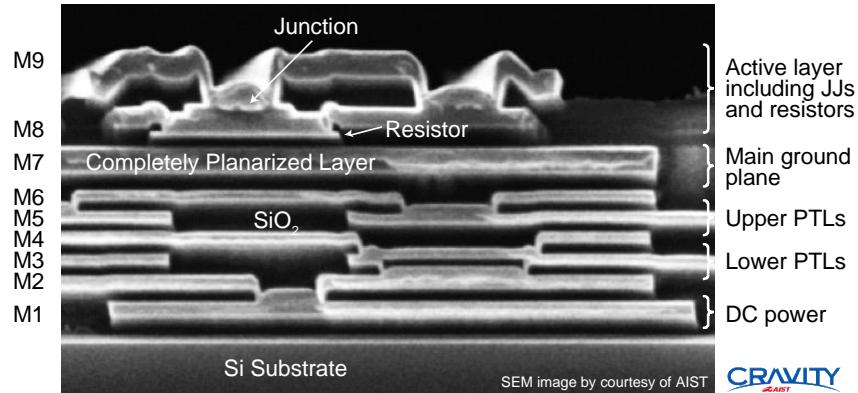
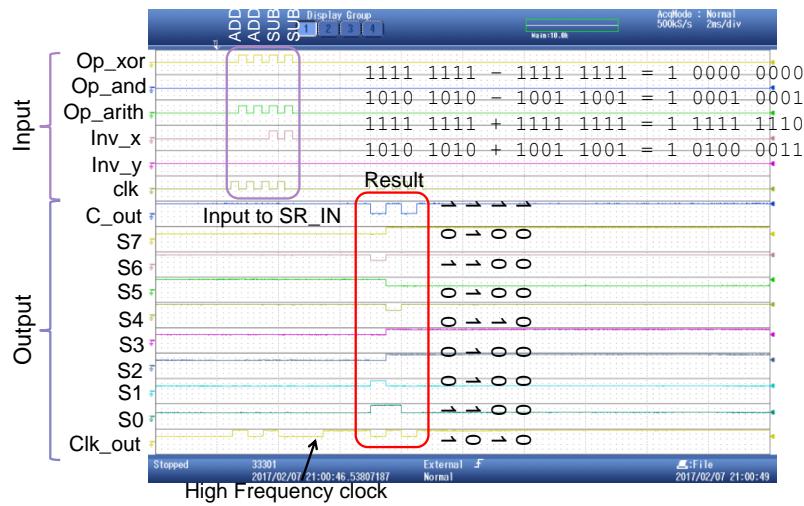


Combination of these two logic circuits brings about high-performance digital systems.

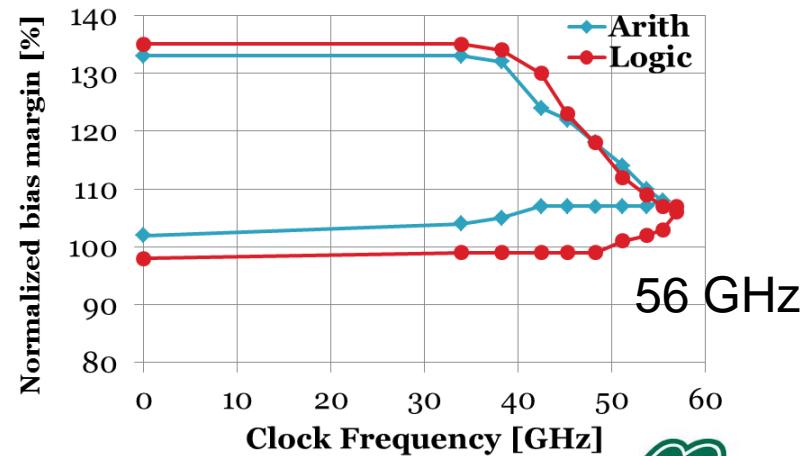
56-GHz Demonstration of Gate-Level-Pipelined, Bit-Parallel ALU



7348 junctions, $3.93 \times 2.07 \text{ mm}^2$



S. Nagasawa et al. IEICE Trans. Electron. E97-C (2014) 132–140.

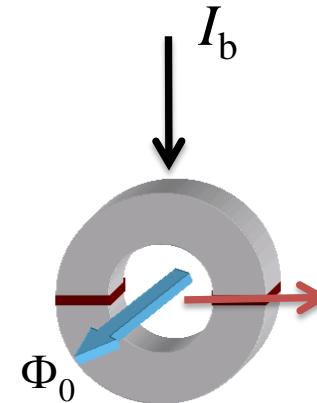
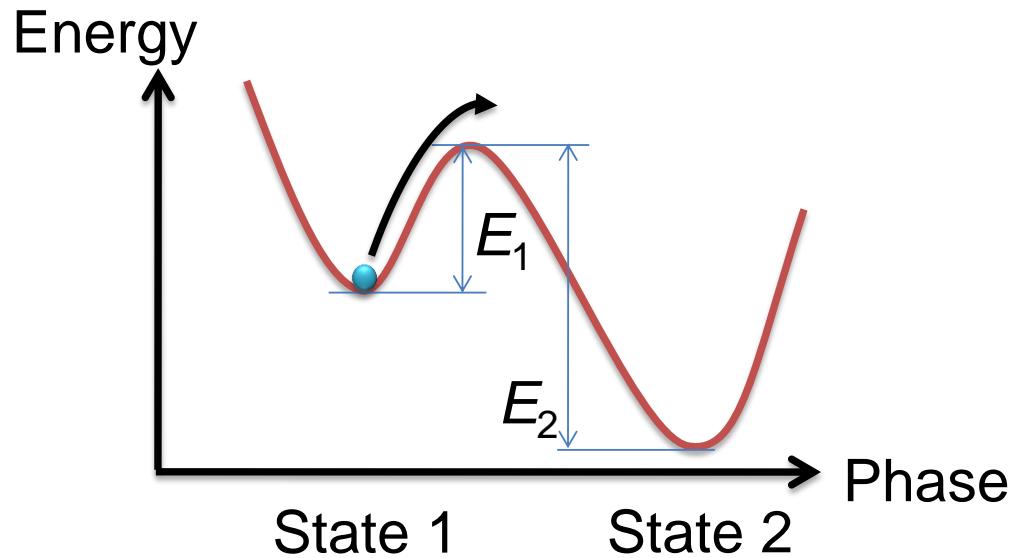


M. Tanaka et al. ISLPED 2017 Design Contest Honorable Mention Award, Taipei

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Energy Potential of RSFQ Circuits



Input energy: E_1

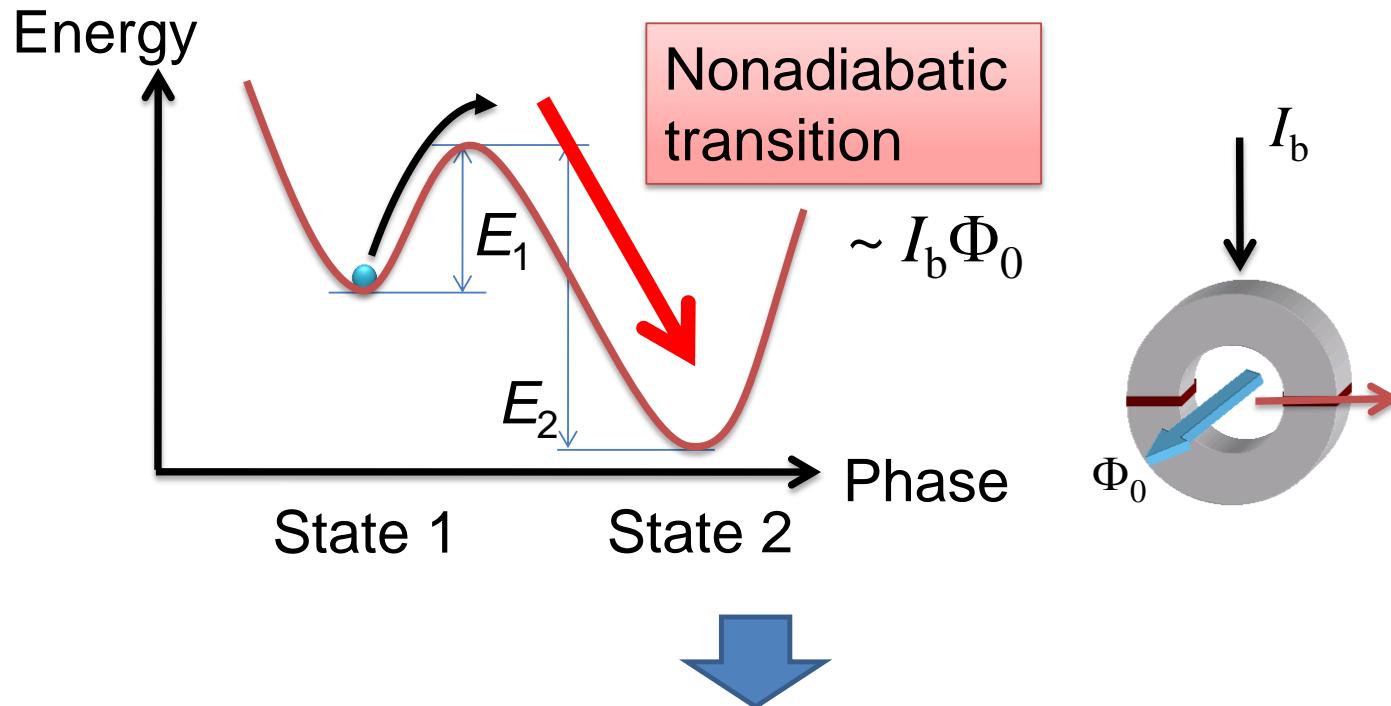
Output energy: E_2

Energy dissipation: E_2

Requirement for the reduction of
switching errors

$$E_1 > 100 k_B T$$

Energy Potential of RSFQ Circuits



Adiabatic operation of the system is required for energy-efficient computing.

Quantum Flux Parametron (QFP)

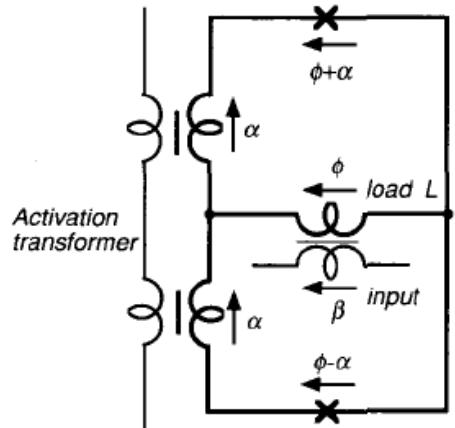


Fig. 1. The basic model of a simple QFP. It consists of two *rf*-SQUID's which share the same inductive load L .

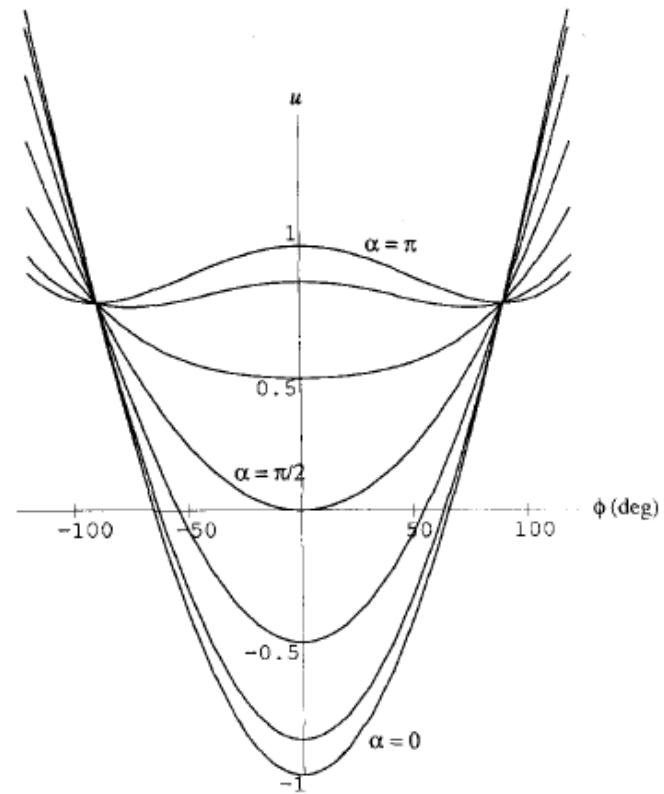
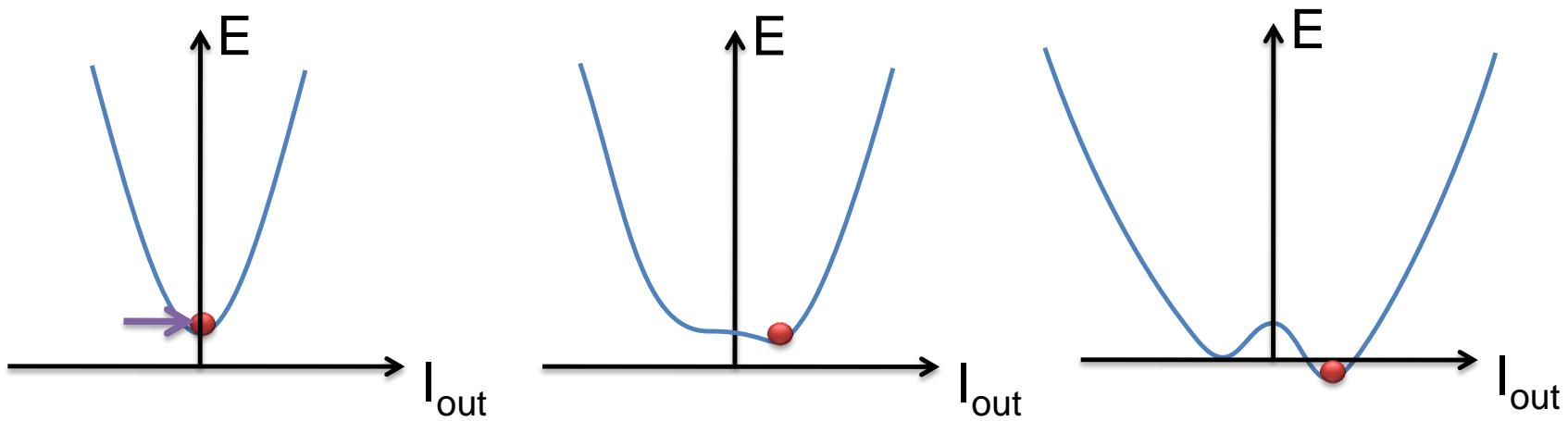
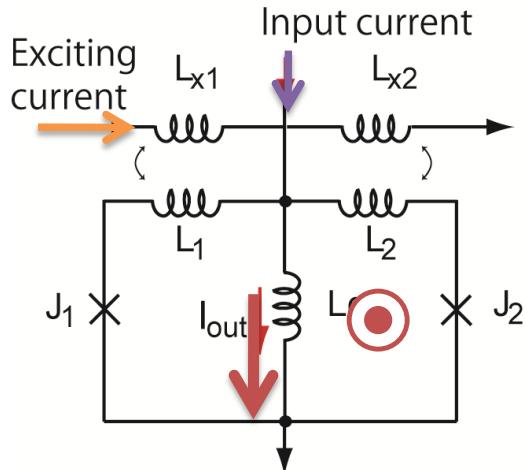
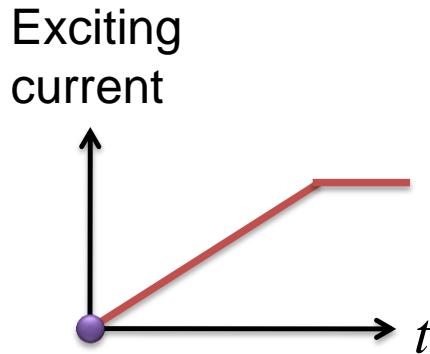


Fig. 2. The normalized Hamiltonian of the basic model shown in Fig. 1. With increasing the activation, bistable states appear. It is possible to choose either stable state by applying a small input.

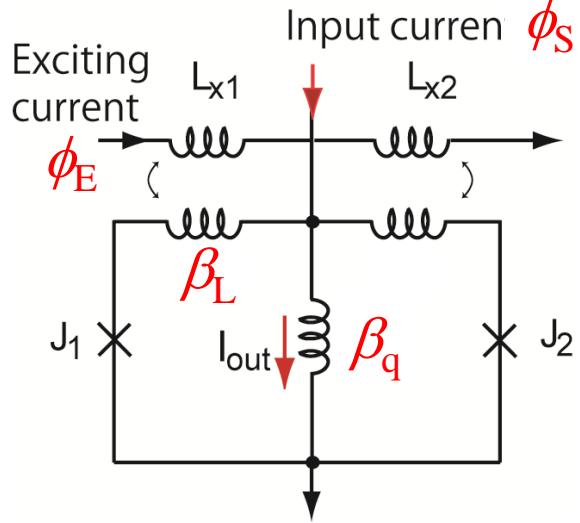
E. Goto, Proc. 1st RIKEN Symp. Josephson Electronics, pp. 48-51 (1984).

M. Hosoya et al., *IEEE Trans. Appl. Supercond.* 1, 77-89 (1991).

Operation Principle of Quantum Flux Parametron (QFP)



Potential Energy of QFP



$$U_{qfp} = E_j \left[\frac{(\phi_E - \phi_-)^2}{\beta_L} + \frac{(\phi_S - \phi_+)^2}{\beta_L + 2\beta_q} - 2 \cos \phi_- \cos \phi_+ \right]$$

Normalized exciting current $\phi_E = 2\pi \frac{M_1 I_E}{\Phi_0}$,

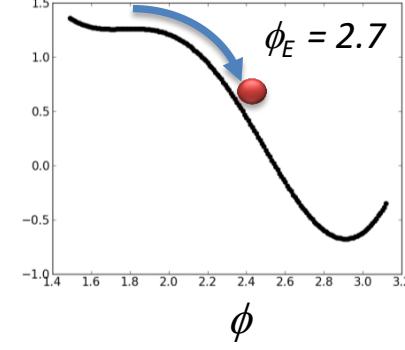
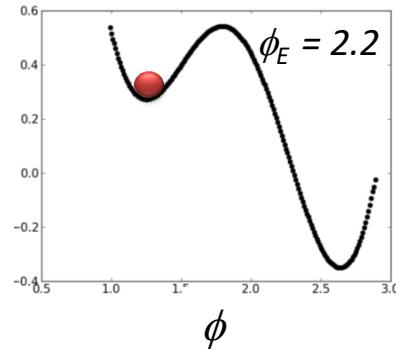
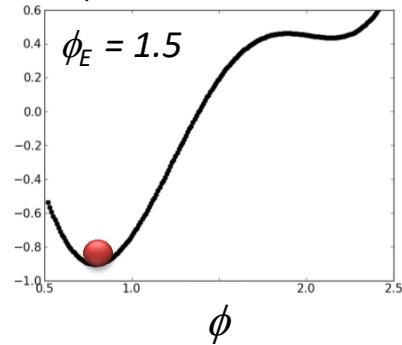
Normalized loop inductance $\beta_L = 2\pi \frac{L_1 I_0}{\Phi_0}$,

Normalized input current $\phi_S = 2\pi \frac{L_q I_S}{\Phi_0}$

Normalized output inductance $\beta_q = 2\pi \frac{L_q I_0}{\Phi_0}$

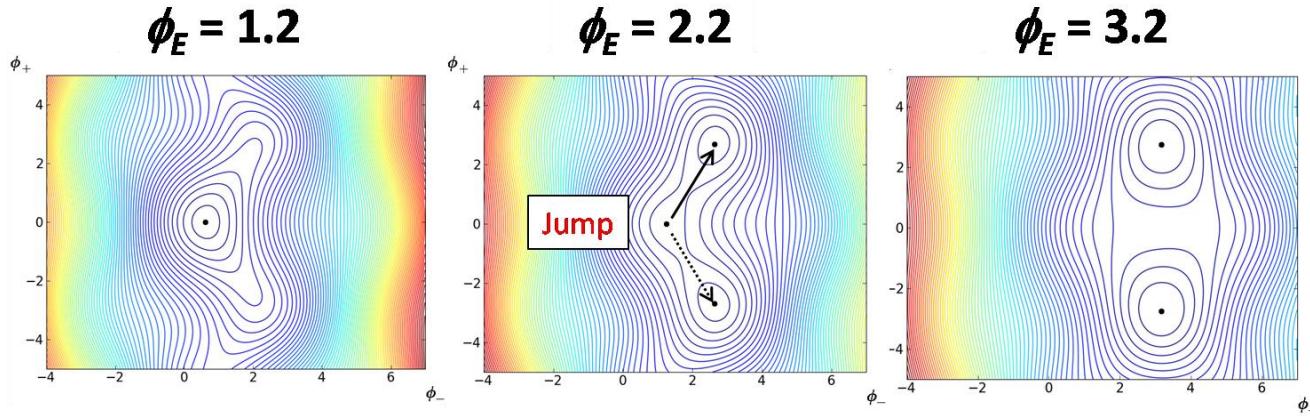
$$E_j = \frac{E_J}{2\pi} = \frac{I_0 \Phi_0}{2\pi}, \quad \phi_+ = \frac{\phi_1 + \phi_2}{2}, \quad \phi_- = \frac{\phi_1 - \phi_2}{2}$$

◆ $(\beta_L, \beta_q) = (1.0, 3.0)$

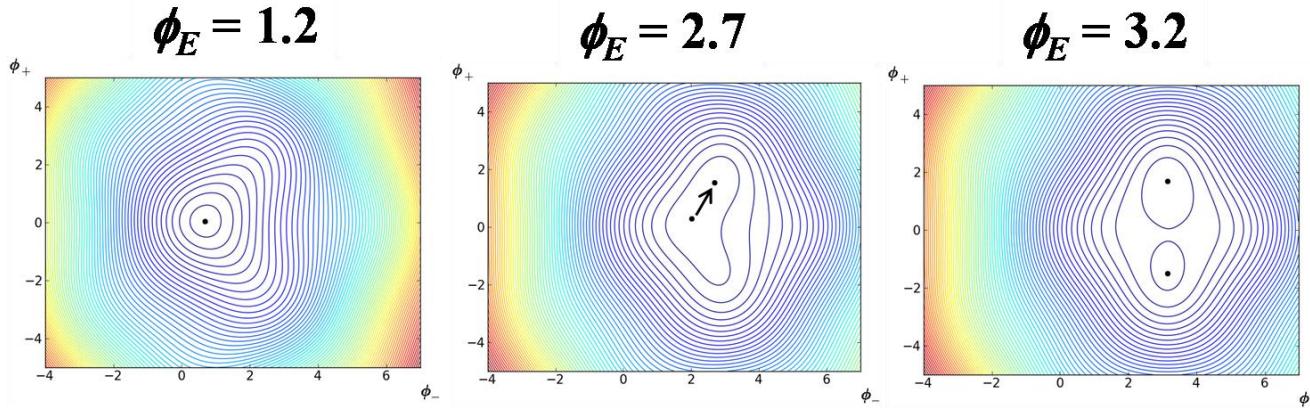


QFP in Nonadiabatic and Adiabatic Modes

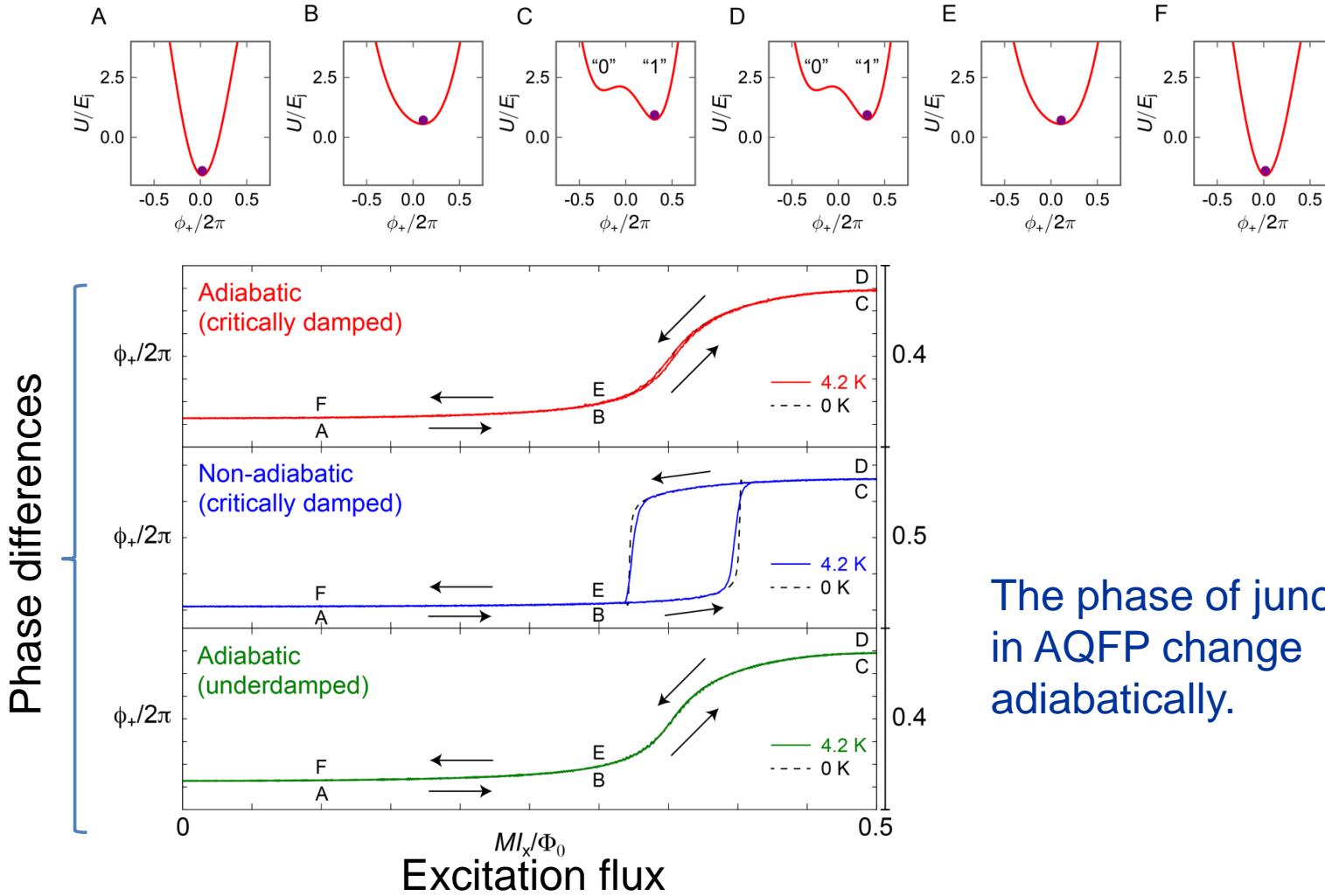
Non-adiabatic-mode QFP $\blacklozenge (\beta_L, \beta_q) = (1.0, 3.0)$



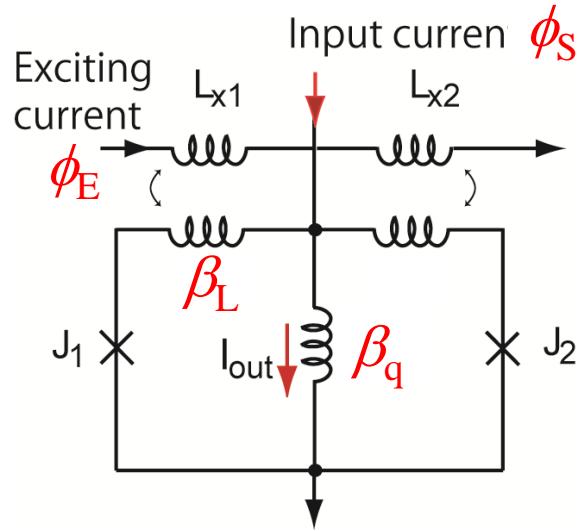
Adiabatic-mode QFP $\blacklozenge (\beta_L, \beta_q) = (0.8, 0.4)$



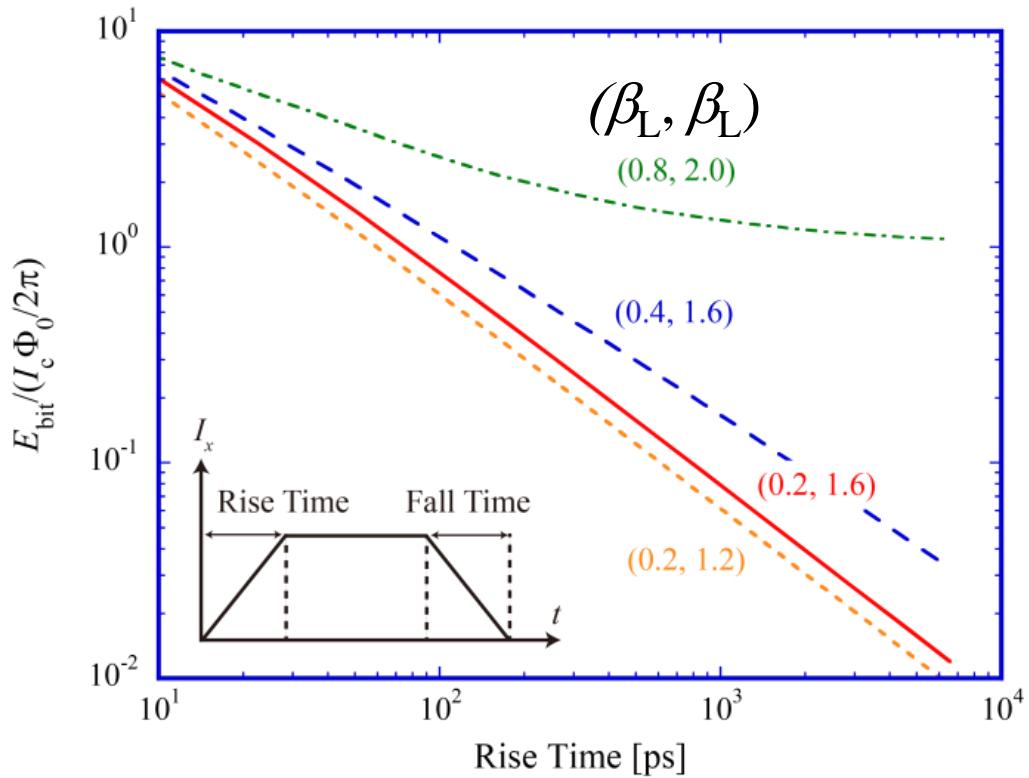
Evolution of Junction Phase



Bit Energy vs. Clock Period of AQFP



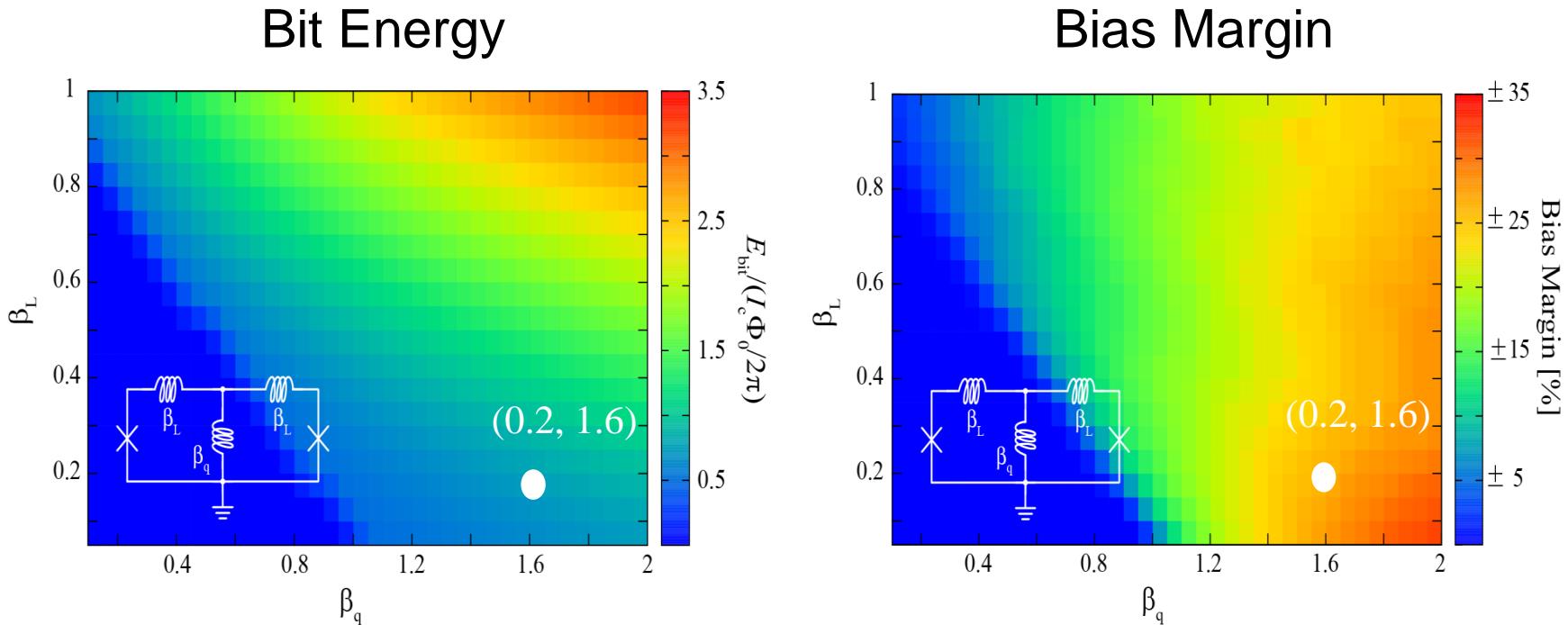
Energy dissipation $\propto f$



When rise time is 1000 ps, $E_{\text{bit}} = 0.023 I_c \Phi_0$ ($\sim 20k_B T$).

→ 1/1000 of RSFQ

Robust AQFP Design



$L_{in,n} = L_{q,n}$, $k_q = 0.3$, $I_{in1} = 0.1I_c$ and
 the rise time is 100 ps.

$L_{in,n} = L_{q,n}$, $k_q = 0.3$, $I_{in1} = 0.1I_c$ and
 the rise time is 100 ps.

Energy Consumption of AQFP

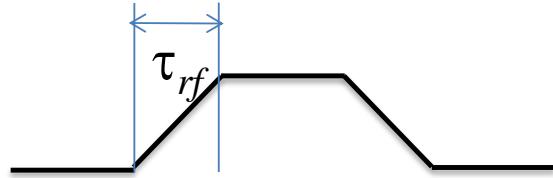
Bit Energy

$$E_{bit} = 2I_c\Phi_0 \frac{\tau_{sw}}{\tau_{rf}}$$

Intrinsic switching time

$$\tau_{sw} \approx \frac{\Phi_0}{I_c R} = \sqrt{\frac{2\pi\Phi_0 C}{\beta_c I_c}}$$

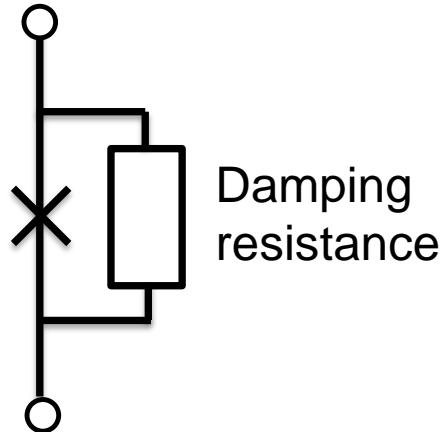
- τ_{rf} : Rising/falling time of clock



- β_c : McCumber parameter

$\beta_c \sim 1$: critical damping

$\beta_c > 1$: under damping



Energy Consumption of AQFP

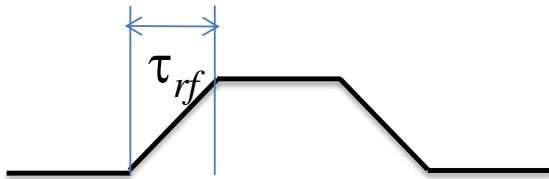
Bit Energy

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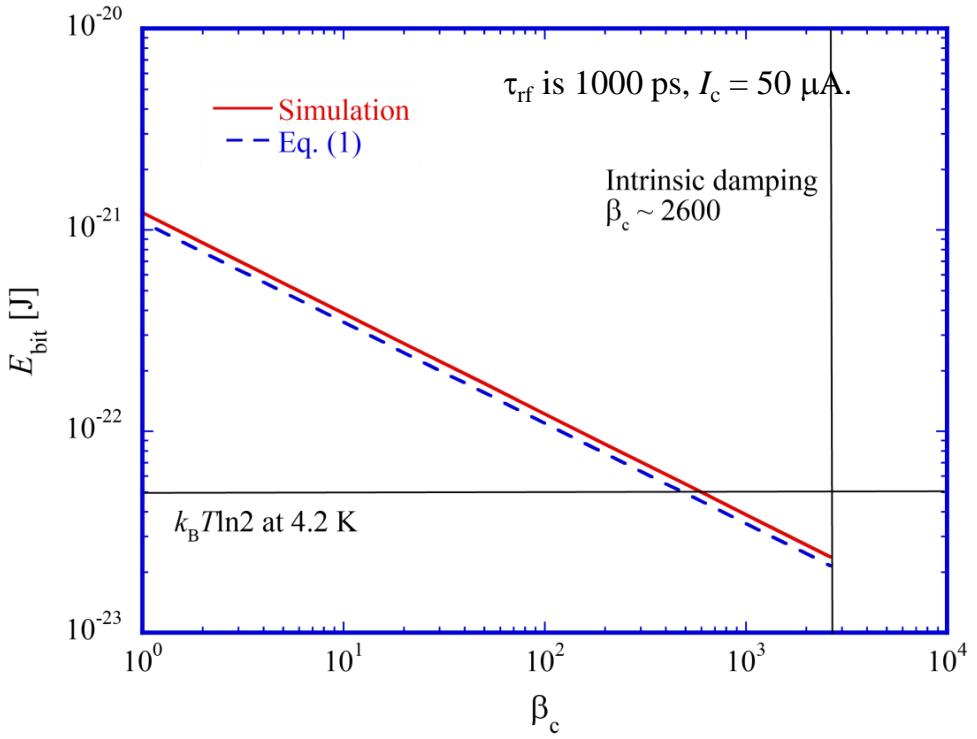
Intrinsic switching time

$$\tau_{sw} \approx \frac{\Phi_0}{I_c R} = \sqrt{\frac{2\pi\Phi_0 C}{\beta_c I_c}}$$

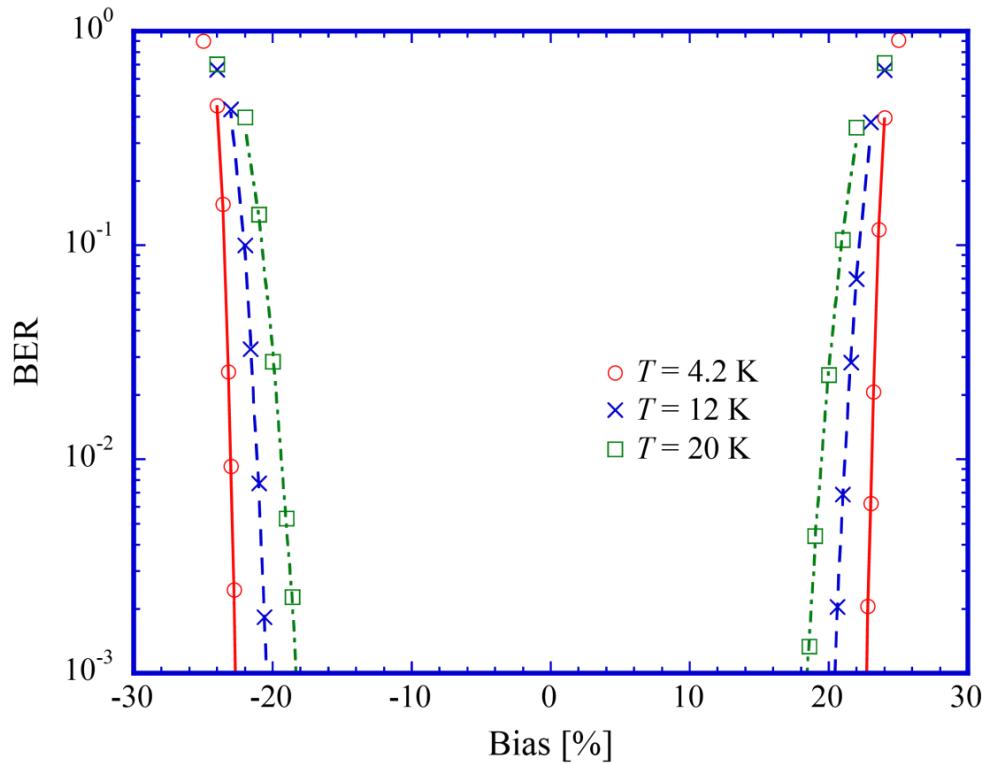
- τ_{rf} : Rising/falling time of clock



β_c Dependence of Bit-Energy of AQFP



Bit-Error-Rate (BER) of the AQFP at Finite Temperatures



- Iteration number is 10^4 .

$(\beta_L, \beta_q) = (0.2, 1.6)$, $I_c = 50 \mu\text{A}$,
 $L_{\text{in},n} = L_{q,n}$, $k_q = 0.3$, $I_{\text{in}1} = 0.1I_c$
and rise time is 200 ps.

$T \text{ [K]}$	$I_c \Phi_0 / K_B T$	Bias Margin for $\text{BER} < 10^{-23}$
4.2	110	$\pm 19.4 \%$
12	38.6	$\pm 13.8 \%$
20	23.2	$\pm 8.8 \%$

Outlines of This Talk

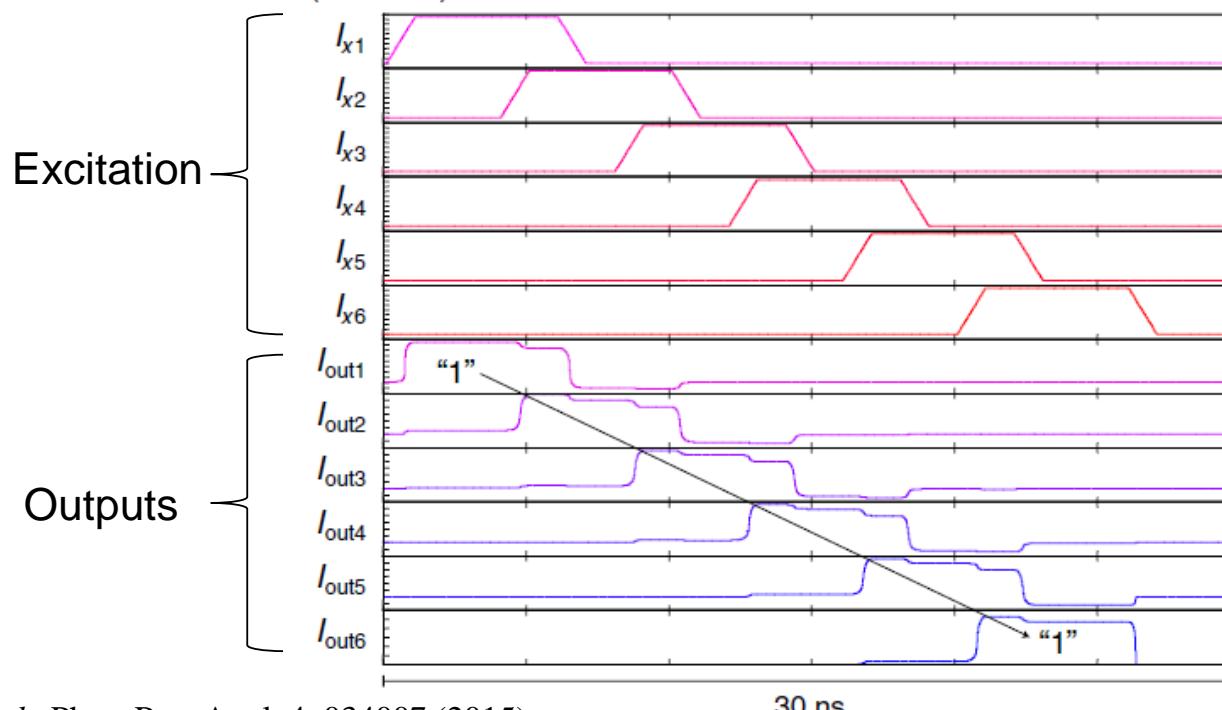
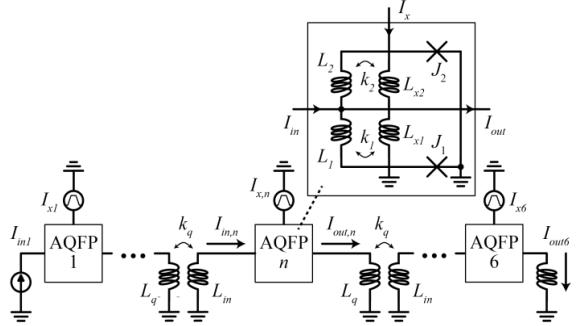
- Background and motivation
- Past and present status of superconducting digital electronics
- Operation principles of AQFP circuits
- AQFP as a logic circuit
- Recent research activities on AQFP circuits
- Future directions
 - Josephson/CMOS hybrid memories
 - Reversible logic circuits
- Summary

Important Metrics as a Logic Circuit

- Gain/signal reproducibility
- Functionality
- Speed
- Energy consumption
- Driving ability
- Connectability
- Robustness
- Density

Signal Propagation in AQFP Array

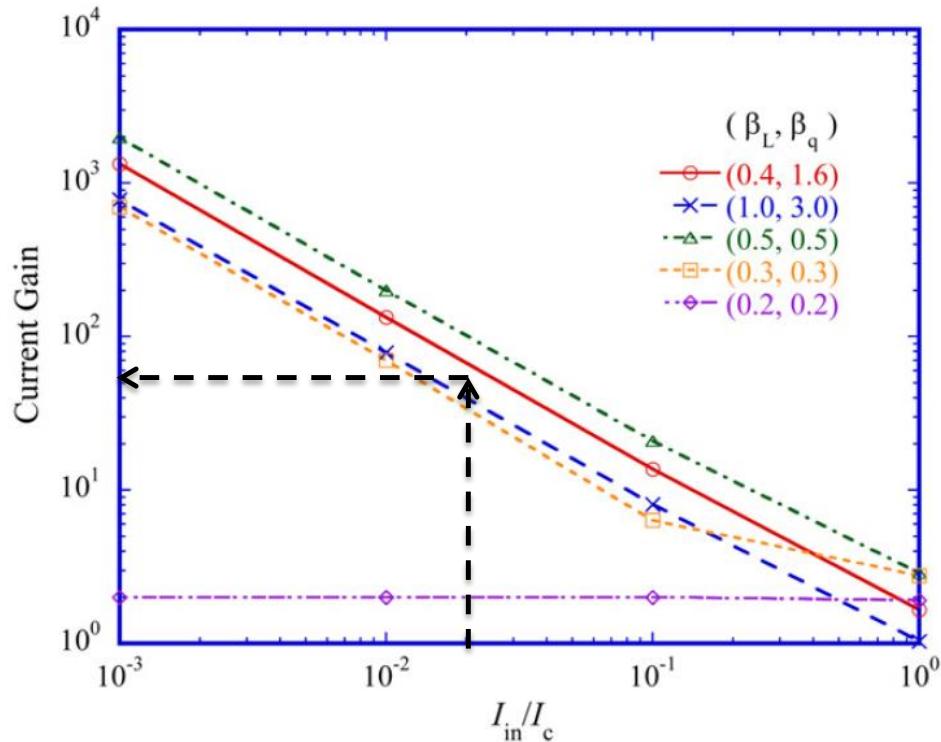
$\phi_x/2\pi = 0.5$,
 $(\beta_L, \beta_q) = (0.2, 1.6)$,
 $I_c = 50 \mu\text{A}$,
 $I_{in1} = 5 \mu\text{A}$,
 $L_{in} = L_q, k_q = 0.3$.



Gain

- Current gain of AQFP is considerably large.

Current gain vs. input current at T = 0K



If we assume

$\delta I_{in} \sim 1 \mu\text{A}$, and $I_c = 50 \mu\text{A}$,
the current gain is given by

$$I_c / \delta I_{in} \sim 50.$$

δI_{in} : input thermal noise

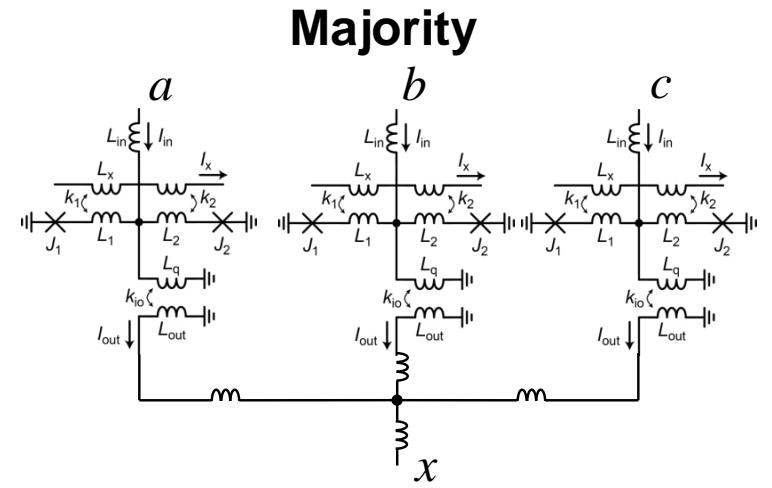
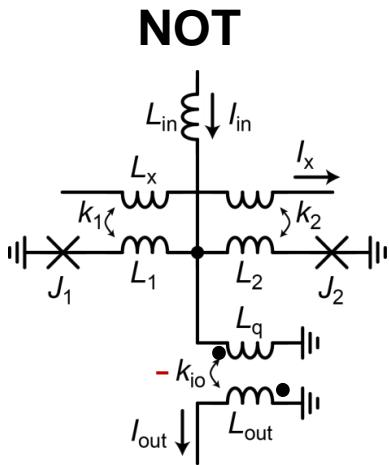
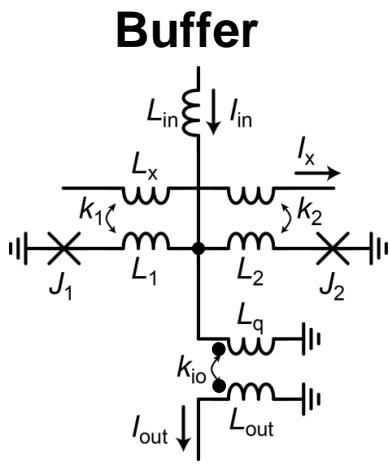
cf. In RSFQ circuits with
 $I_{in} \sim 20 \mu\text{A}$, $I_c = 100 \mu\text{A}$,
the current gain is ~ 5 .

Functionality

- NOT gate is cost free.
- Majority gate is a basic logic gate.

NOT gate is made by using a transformer with negative coupling.

Majority gate is made by connecting three buffer in parallel.

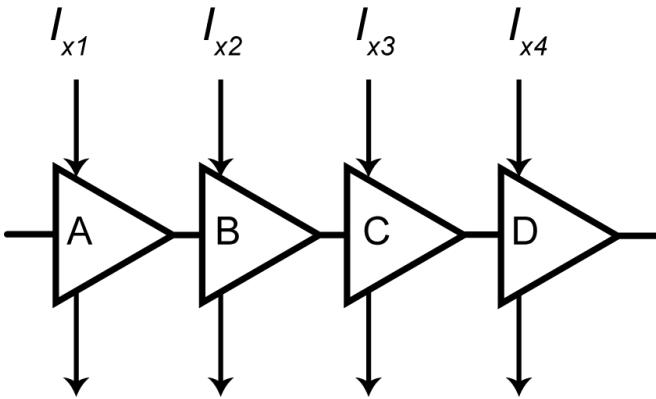


$$x = \text{MAJ}(a, b, c) = ab + bc + ac$$

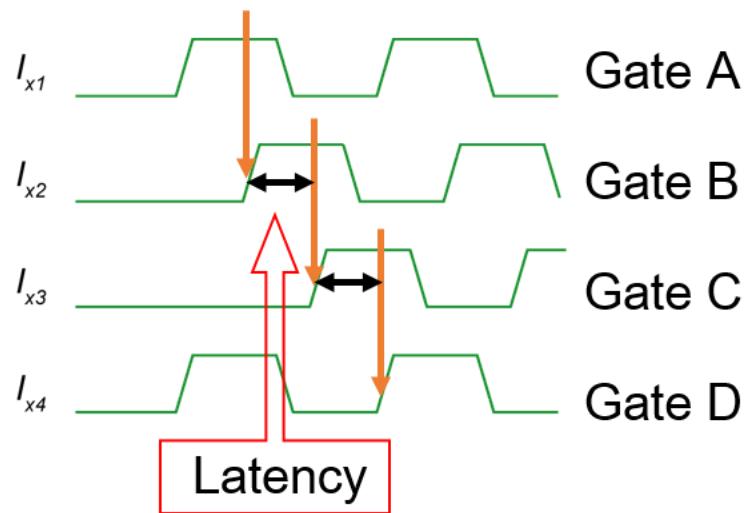
Speed

- AQFP is driven by multi-phase clocks. (4-phase is typically used.)
- Target clock frequency is 5 GHz.
- Double excitation method can increases the clock frequency [1].
- Latency is improved by increasing the number of phase.

Clocking of AQFP gates



$$\text{Latency} = \frac{\text{clock period}}{\text{number of phase}}$$

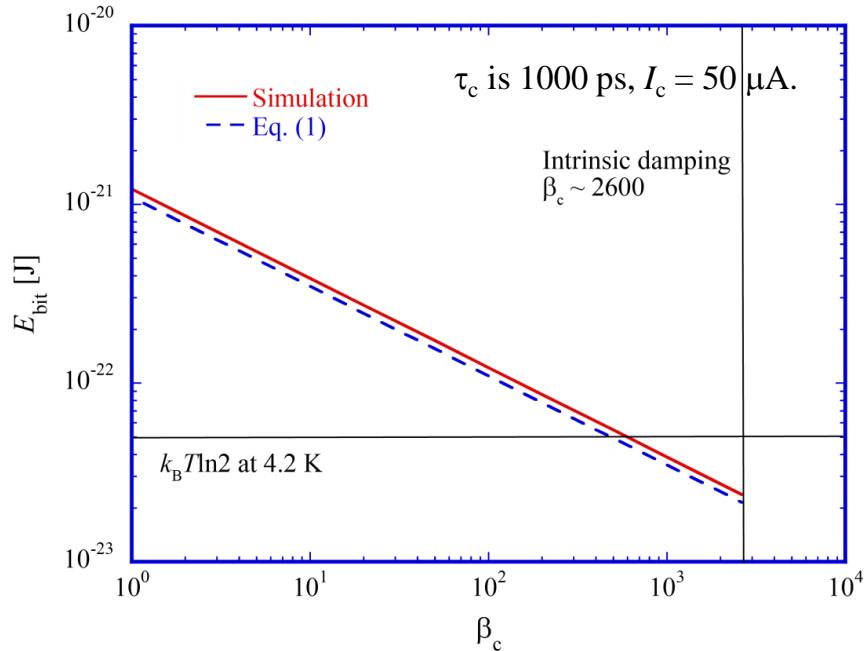


[1] K. Fang *et al.*, J. Appl. Phys., **121**, 143901 (2017).

Energy Consumption

- The static energy consumption is zero, the dynamic energy consumption is proportional to the clock frequency.
- The energy consumption is reduced by using high- J_c and high- β_c junctions.

β_c Dependence of Bit-Energy of AQFP



N. Takeuchi, et. al., APL., 103, 052602 (2013).

Bit energy:

$$E_{bit} = 2I_c\Phi_0 \frac{\tau_{sw}}{\tau_{rf}}$$

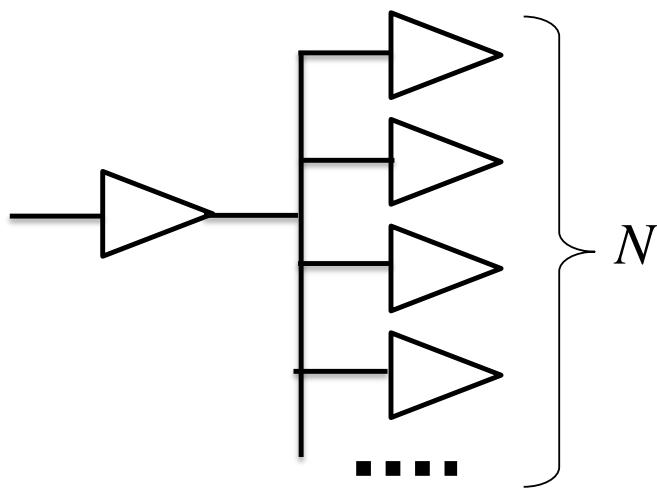
Intrinsic switching time:

$$\tau_{sw} \approx \frac{\Phi_0}{I_c R} = \sqrt{\frac{2\pi\Phi_0 c}{\beta_c j_c}}$$

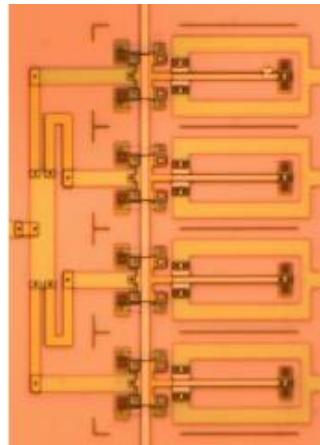
Driving Ability

- Fan-out of AQFP gate is relatively large (~ 4).

Fan-out



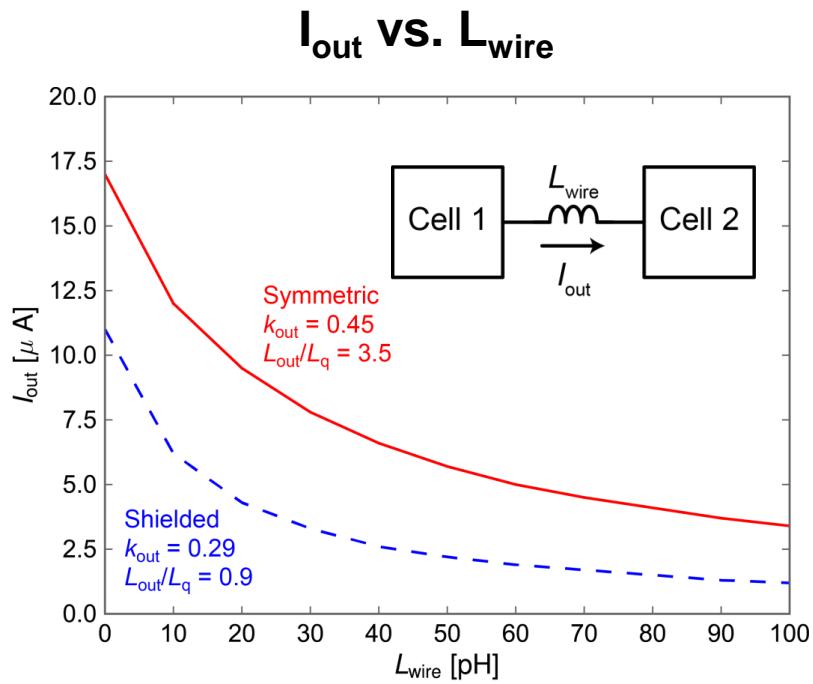
1:4 splitter



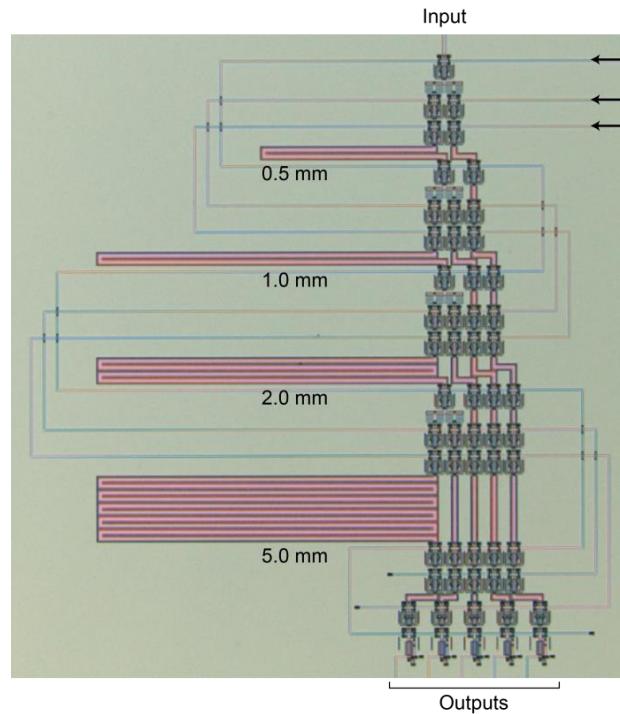
cf. optimal fan-out of CMOS is $3 \sim 4$.

Connectability

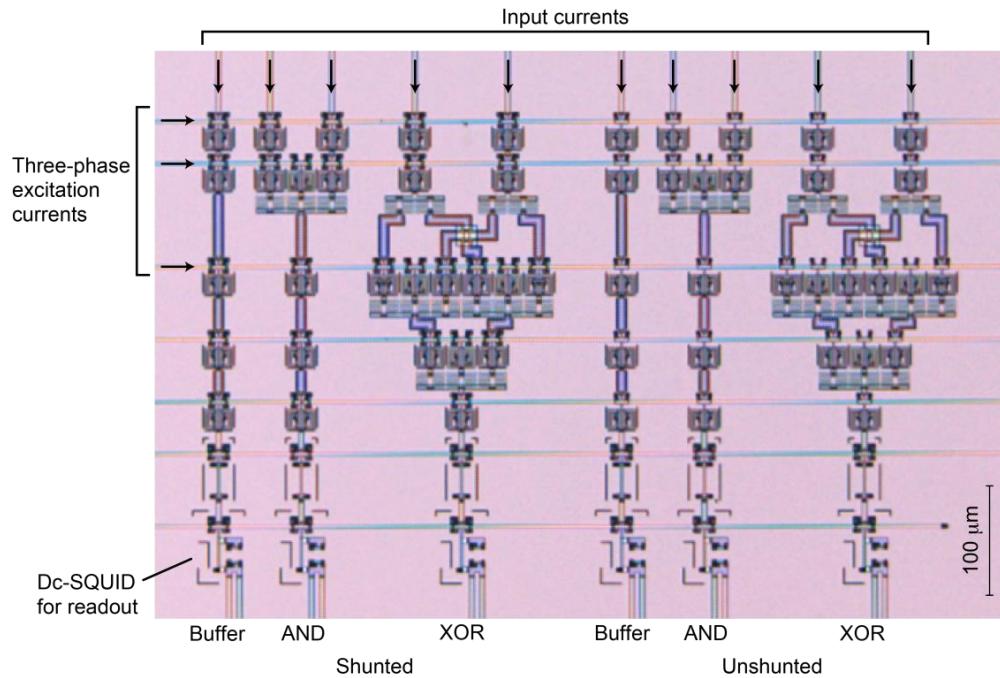
- The output current of AQFP gate decreases with increase of interconnect inductance, which limits the wire length.
- $L_{\max} \sim 1 \text{ mm}$.



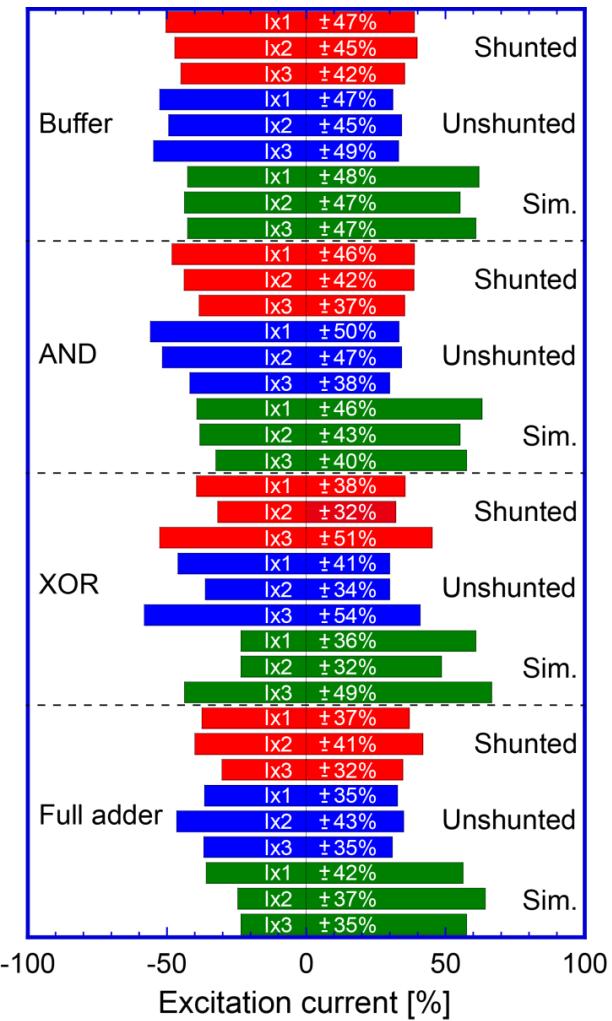
Testing of maximum wiring length



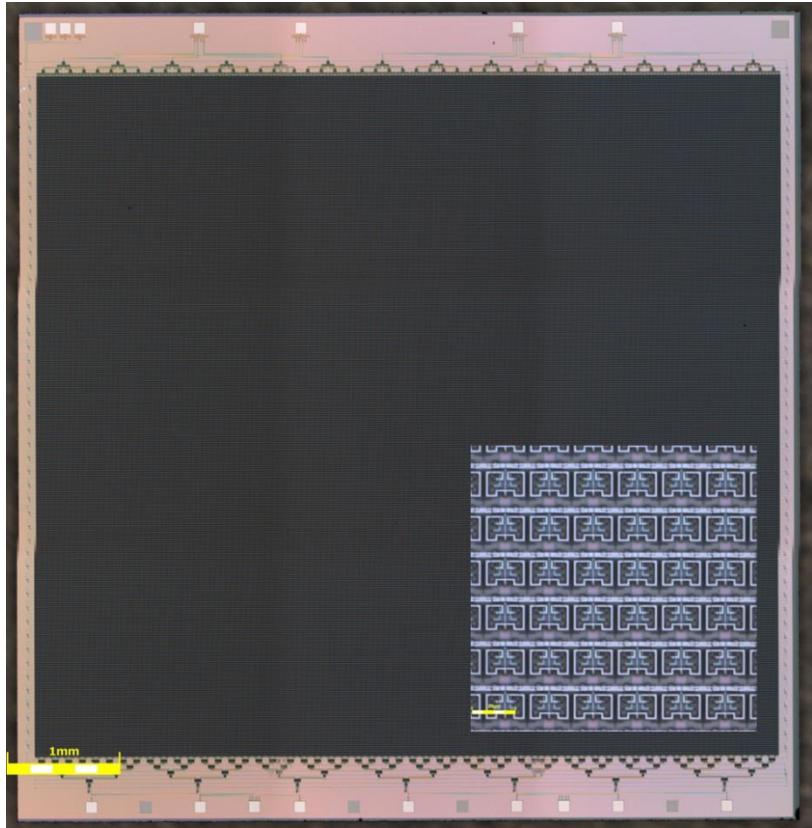
Robustness



Wide operation margins were observed in experiments.



Demonstrated 84k-Junction AQFP buffer array



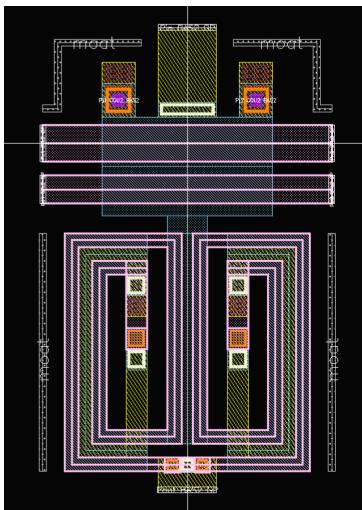
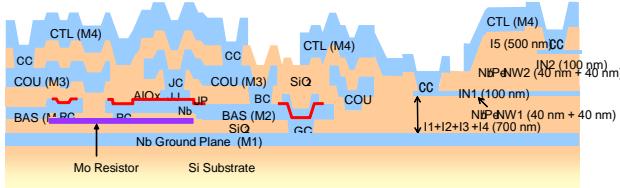
- AQFP is robust because
 - The operation is based on differential pairs of junctions and inductances.
 - The critical current of all junctions is the same.

Area	$6.68 \times 6.23 \text{ mm}^2$
Bias Current	3.60 mA
JJ number	83736

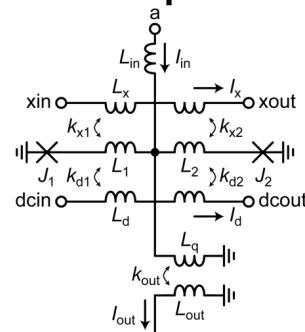
Density

- Multi-layer processes improve the circuit density.

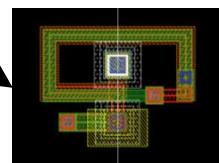
4-metal layer process
 (Junction size $\sim 1 \mu\text{m}$)



$25 \times 40 \mu\text{m}^2$

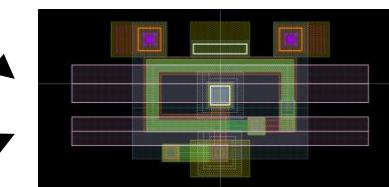
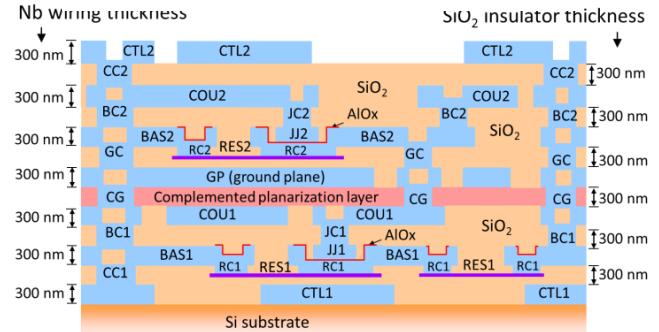


Excitation line
 (upper layers)



Transformer
 (lower layers)

7-metal layer process
 (Junction size $\sim 1 \mu\text{m}$)

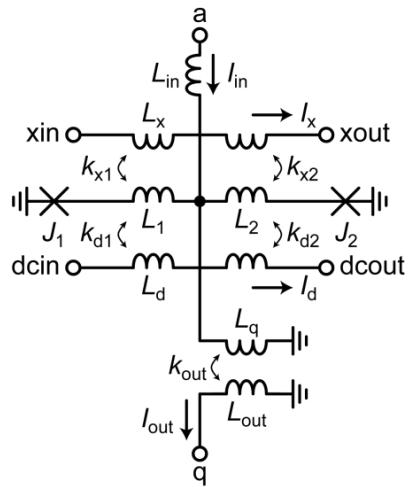


$13 \times 25 \mu\text{m}^2$
 (-67.5% area reduction)

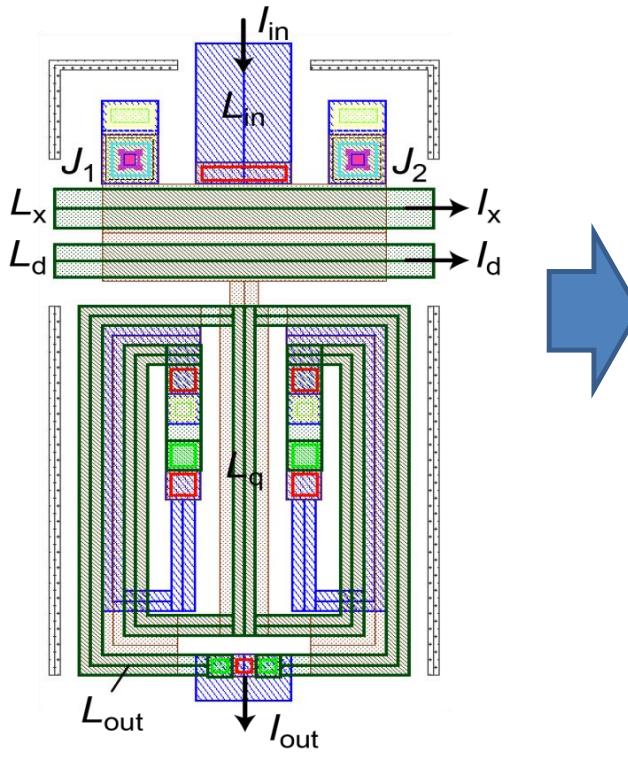
$\sim 0.3\text{M gate/cm}^2$

AQFP Cell Library for the MIT LL 8-Metal Layer Process

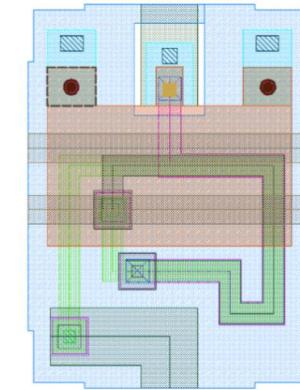
Schematic of an AQFP buffer



Layouts of an AQFP buffer



AIST HSTP process

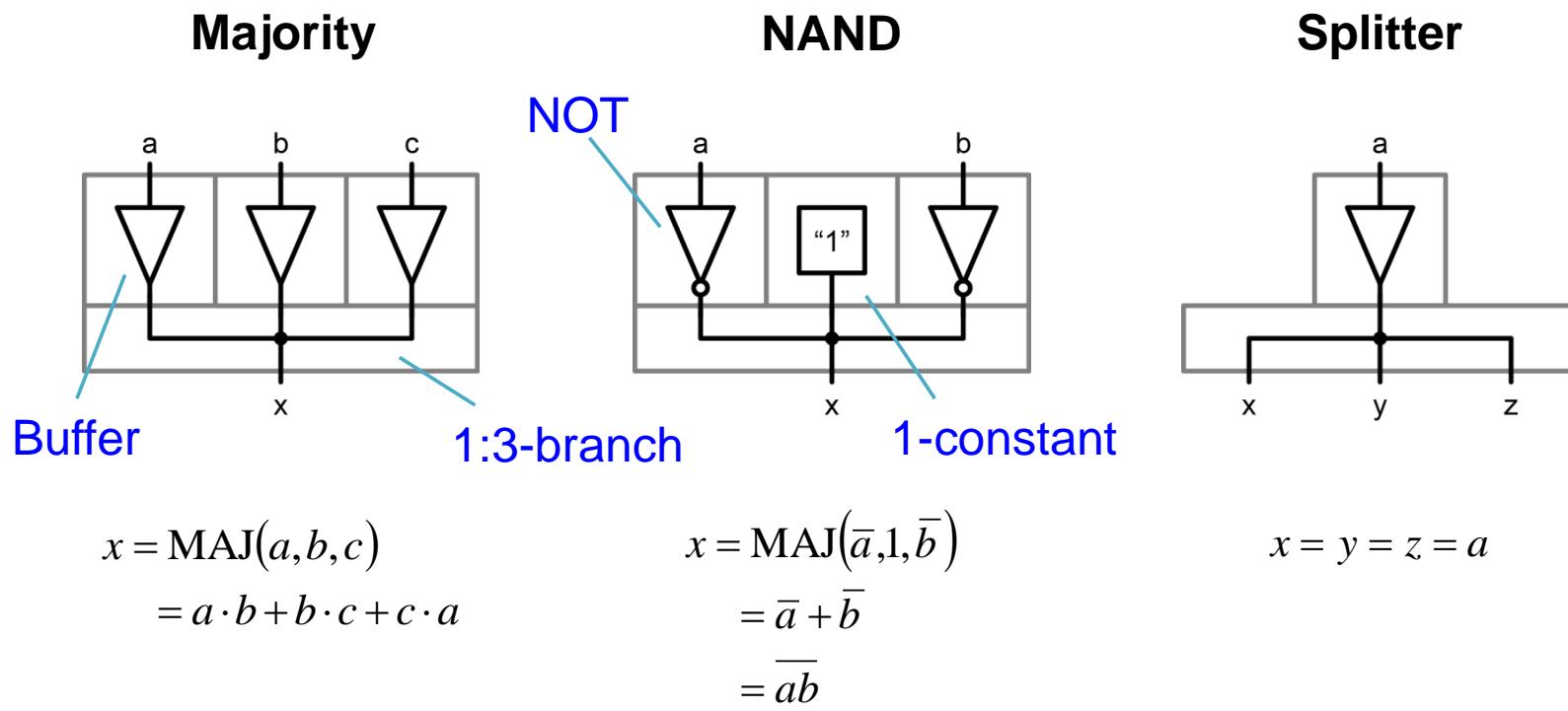


15 $\mu\text{m} \times 20 \mu\text{m}$
MIT LL process
 (SFQ5ee)

- AQFP and an output transformer can be overlapped by using the MIT LL multilayer process.

Design Methodology

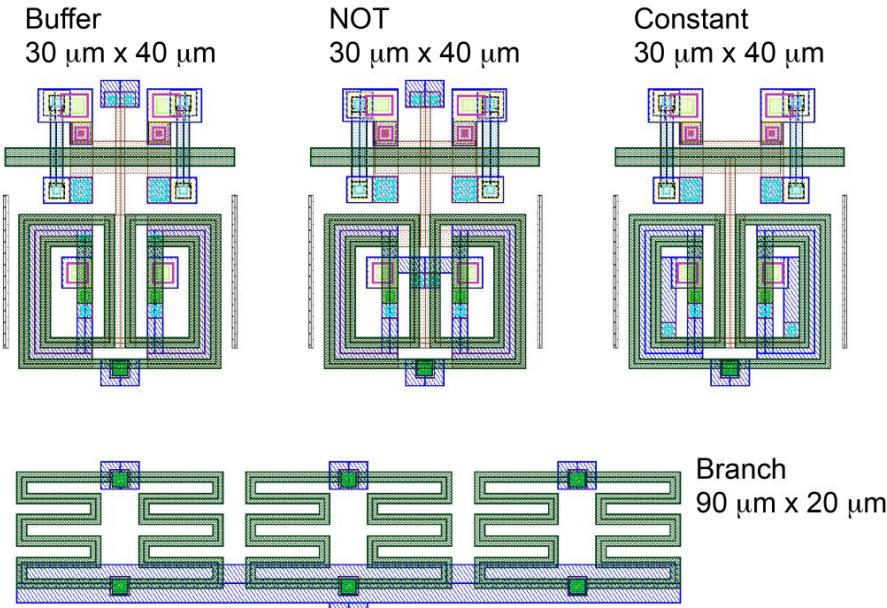
- Logic cells can be designed by placing four building blocks:
Buffer, NOT, Constant, Branch



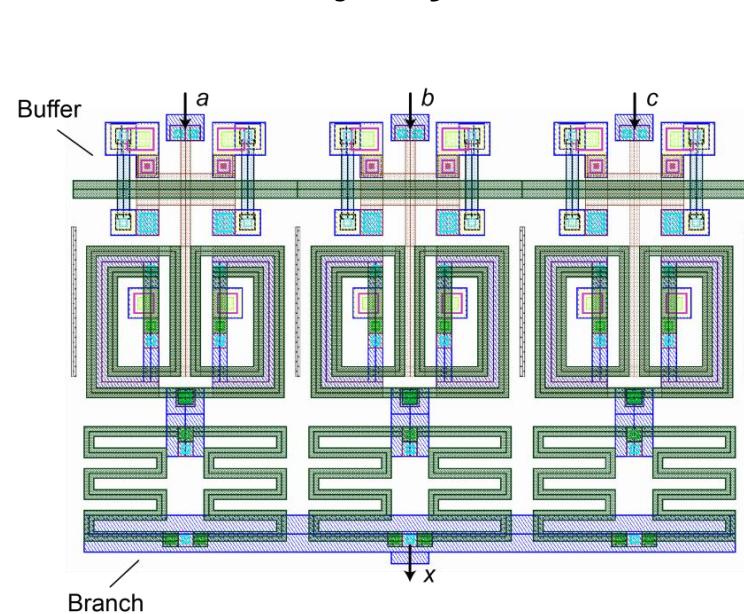
Layout of Basic Cells

- Symmetric design prevents the parasitic coupling between the excitation and output inductance

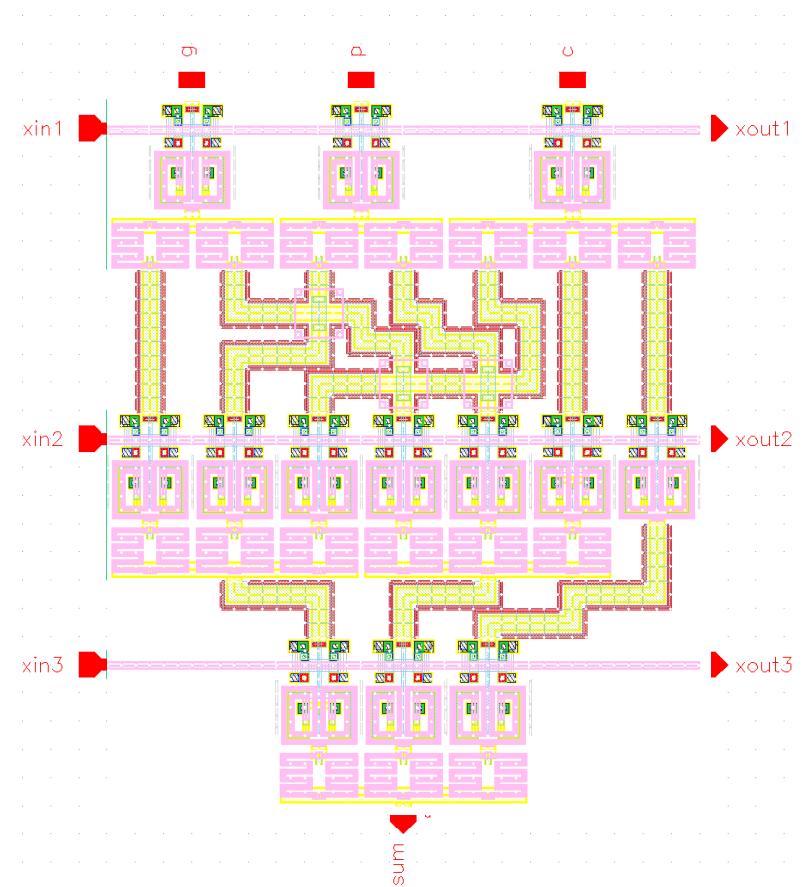
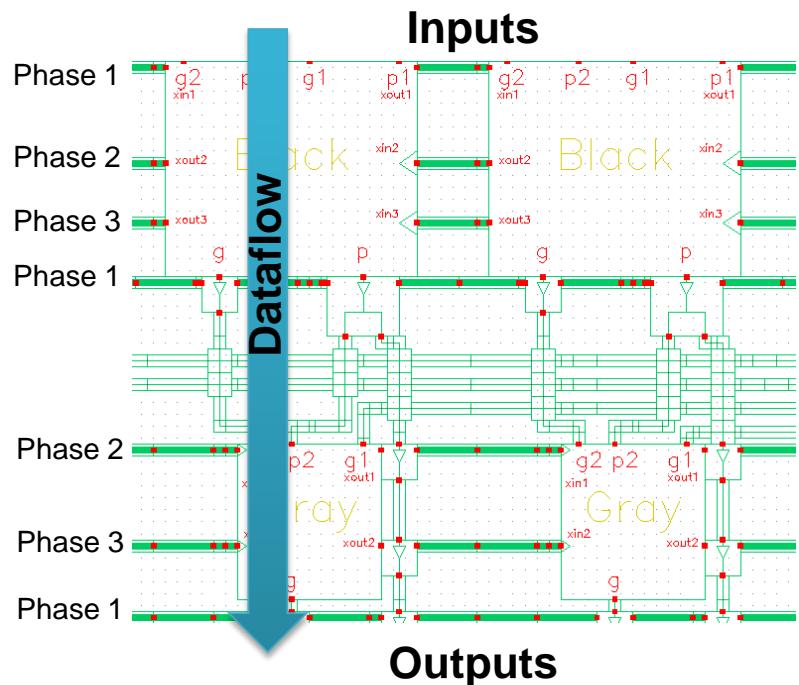
Building block cells



Majority cell



AQFP Logic Design

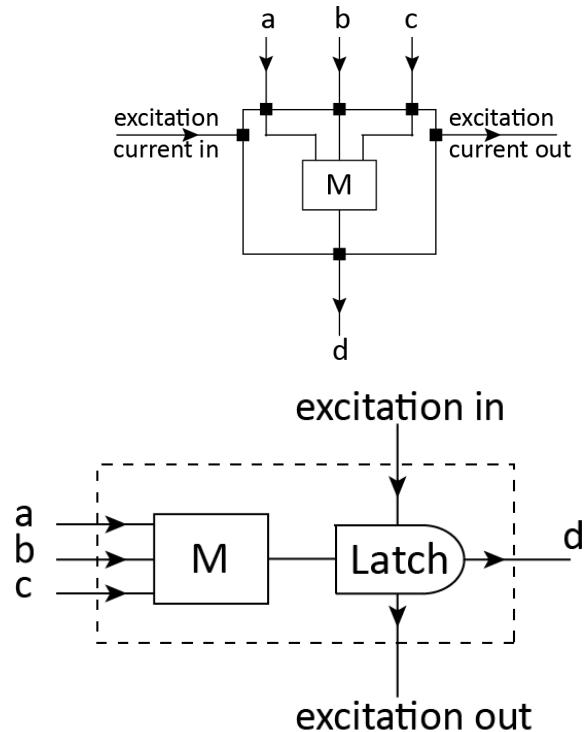


- Logic cells are placed together like Lego blocks
- Logic gates grouped by phase & data flow

AQFP design flow

HDL-Modeling of AQFP Logic

HDL-modeling of AQFP Majority gate

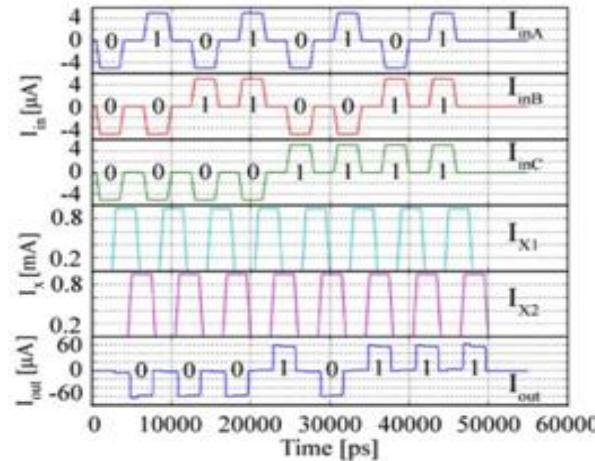


An AQFP majority gate is modeled by a combinational logic with a latch.

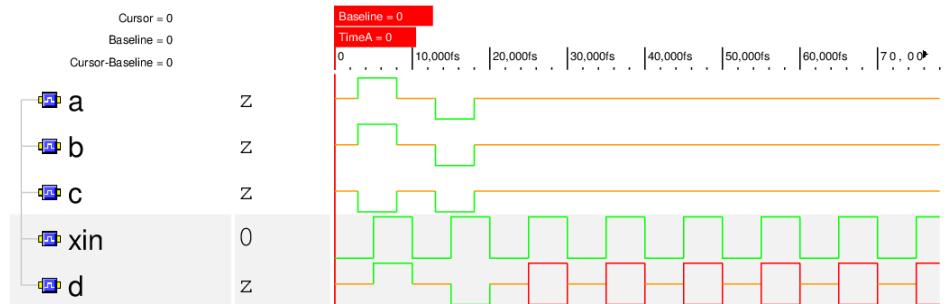
Q. Xu et al., IEEE TAS, 26, 1–5 (2016).
 Q. Xu, et al., IEEE TAS., 27, 1301905 (2017).

Waveform of AQFP majority gate

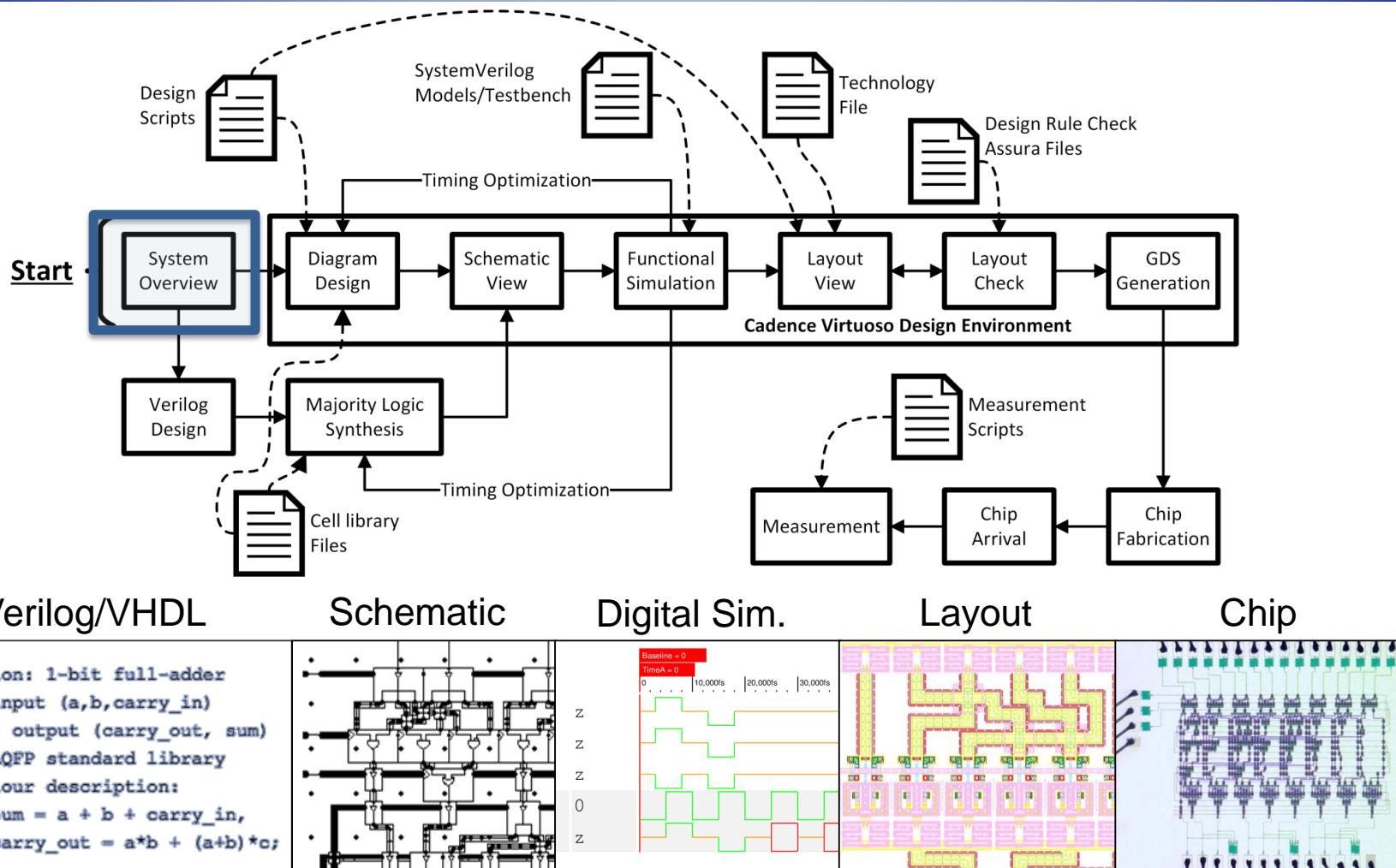
Analog simulation results



Digital simulation results

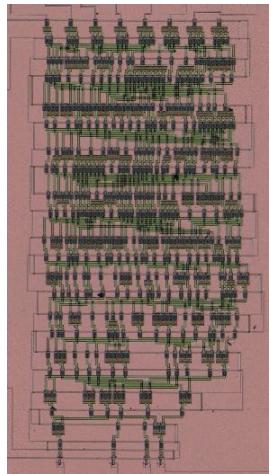


EDA Tools for Top-Down Design



AQFP Circuits Fabricated by Top-Down Design Flow

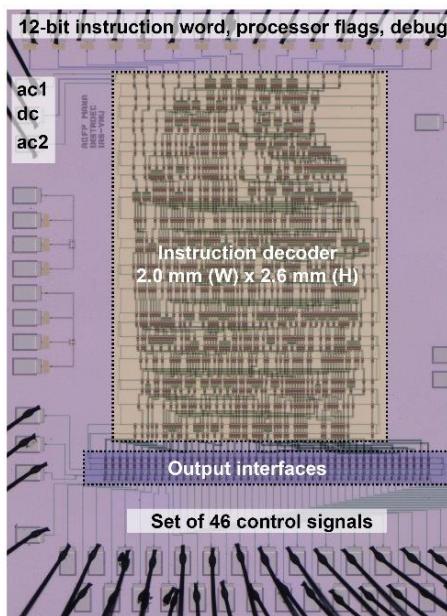
4-bit shifter



1090 JJ

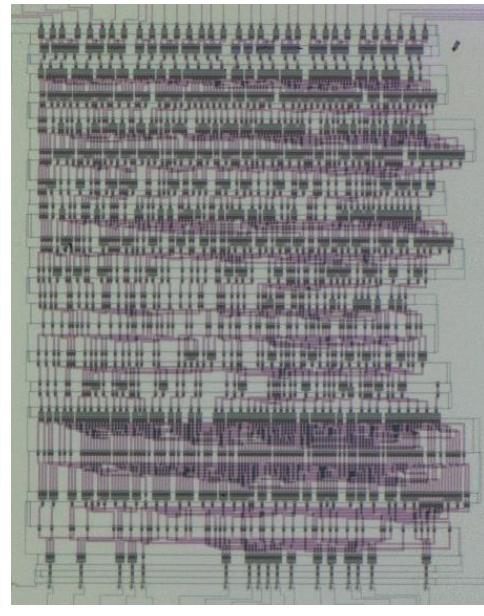
Correct
operation
confirmed

12-bit instruction
decoder



Partial operation confirmed

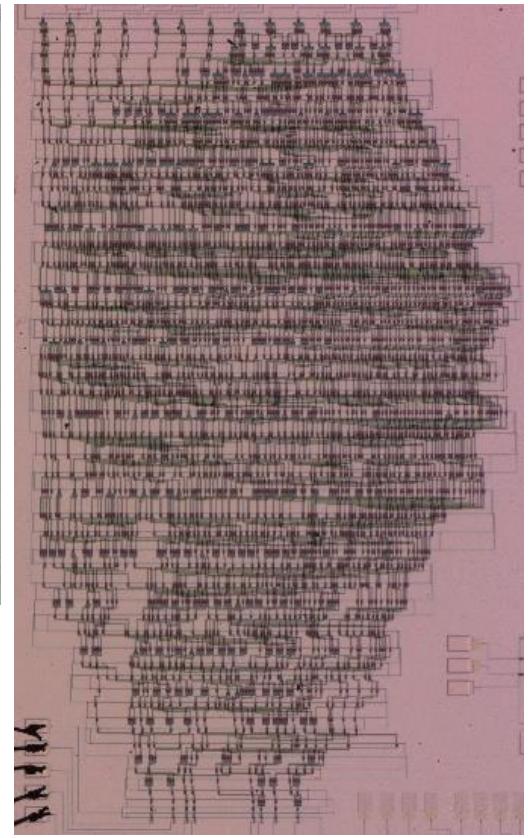
16-bit carry look-
ahead adder



4976 JJ

Partial operation confirmed

8-bit shifter



7100 JJ

Fabricated by AIST HSTP

CRAVITY
AIST

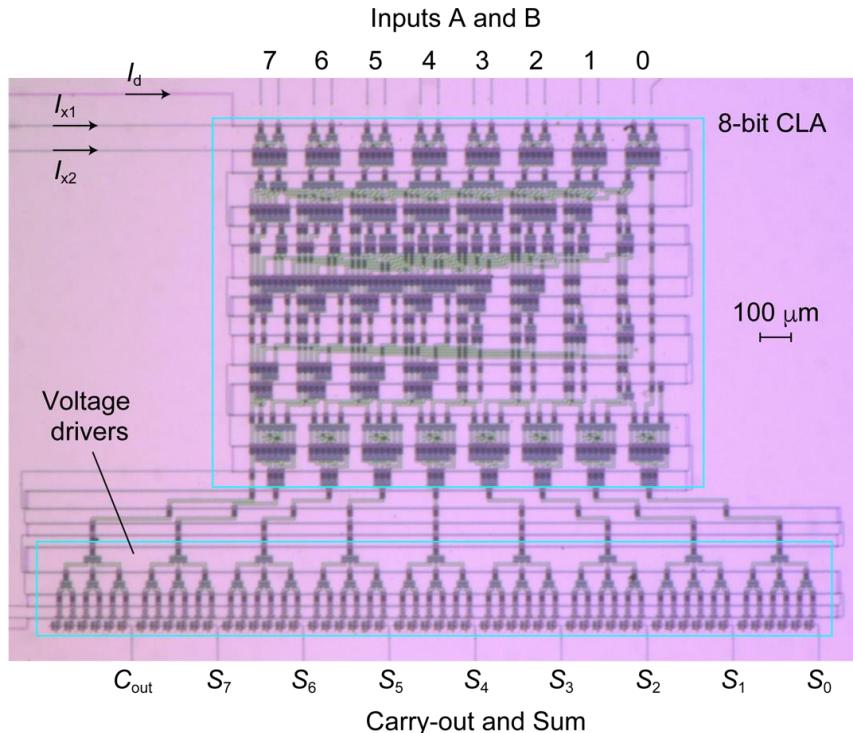
Y. Murai *et al.*, IEEE TAS. 27, 1–9 (2017).

T. Tanaka *et al.*, IEEE TAS 29,1-6 (2019).

YNU YOKOHAMA National University

Measurement of Energy Consumption of AQFP Circuits at 5 GHz

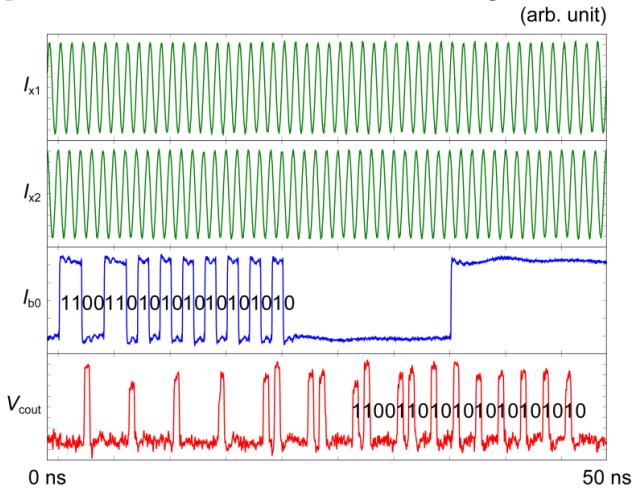
8-bit AQFP Cary Look-ahead Adder



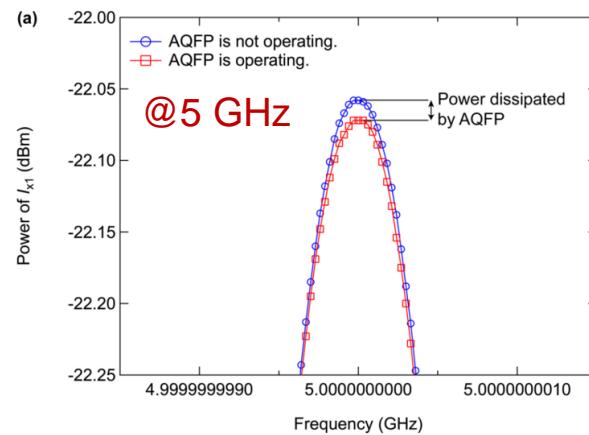
The total junction count: 1,638

Energy consumption: 1.5 aJ/operation
 $\sim 24 k_B T/\text{junction}$

Output waveform of carry @1 GHz

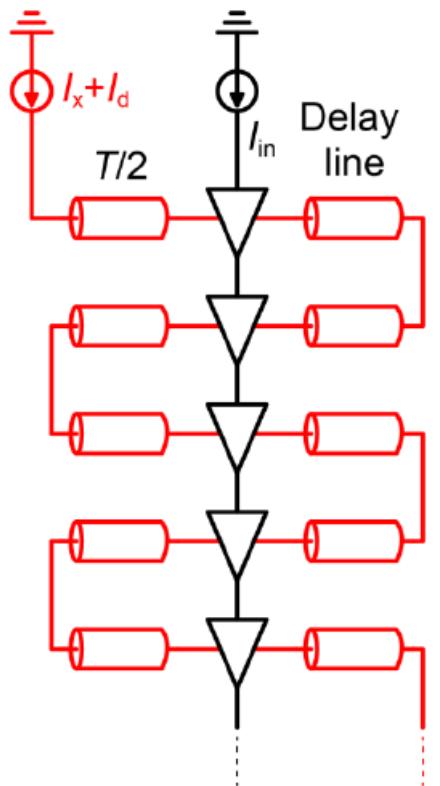


Power consumption measurements



Delay-line Clocking for Short Latency

Phase-to-phase clock delay
shorten by delay line



5-GHz 4-phase
clock latency
 ~ 50 ps

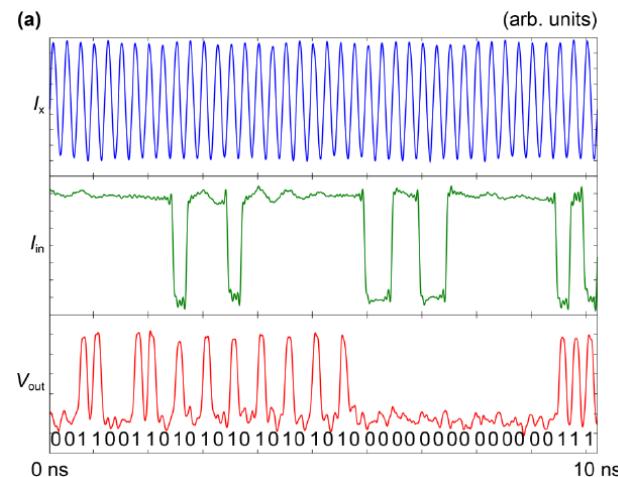
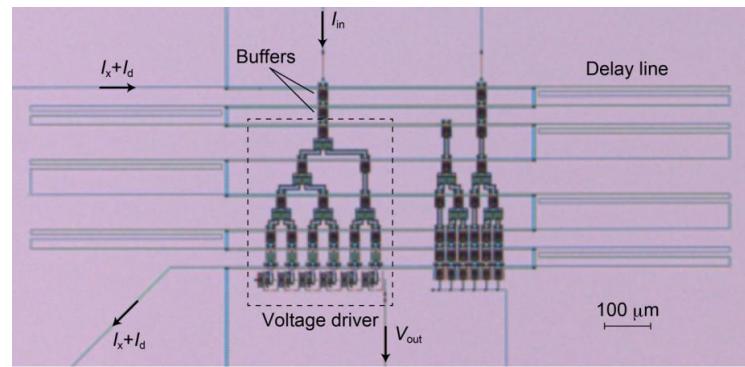
Delay-line
clock latency
 ~ 5 ps

Fabricated by AIST HSTP



Takeuchi *et al.*, APL to be published.

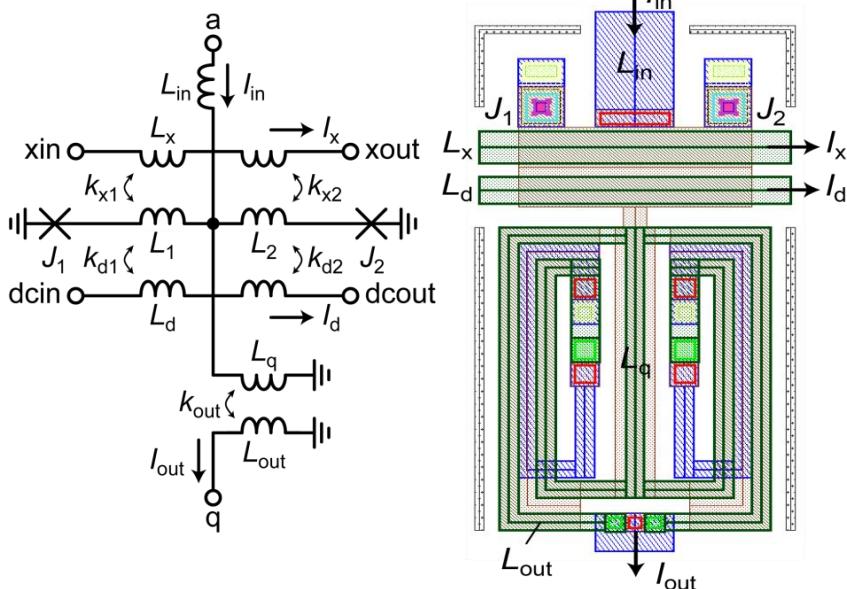
4-GHz test result of AQFP buffer
array with latency of 10 ps



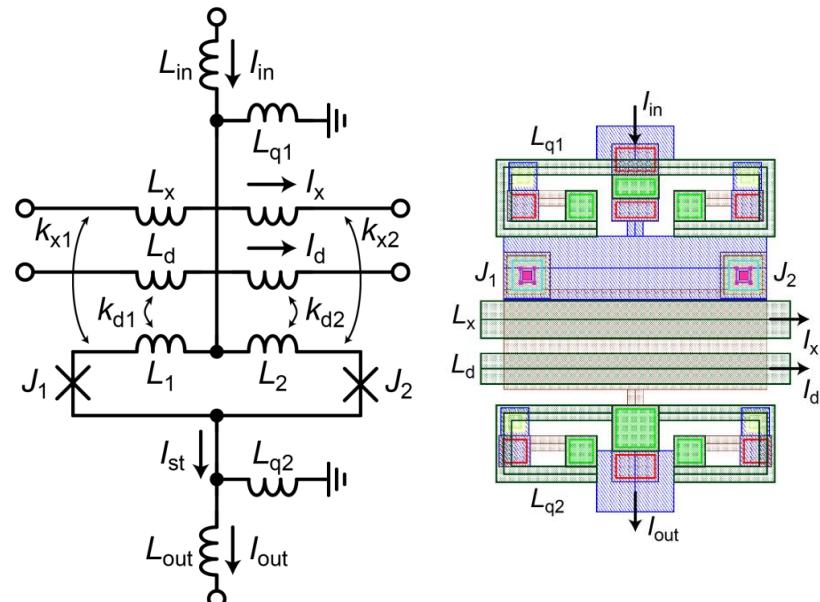
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Directly Coupled AQFP Logic

Conventional AQFP inverter



Directly coupled AQFP inverter



- Transformer was removed to decrease the cell size.
- Good for scaling down the device size in the future

Fabricated by AIST HSTP

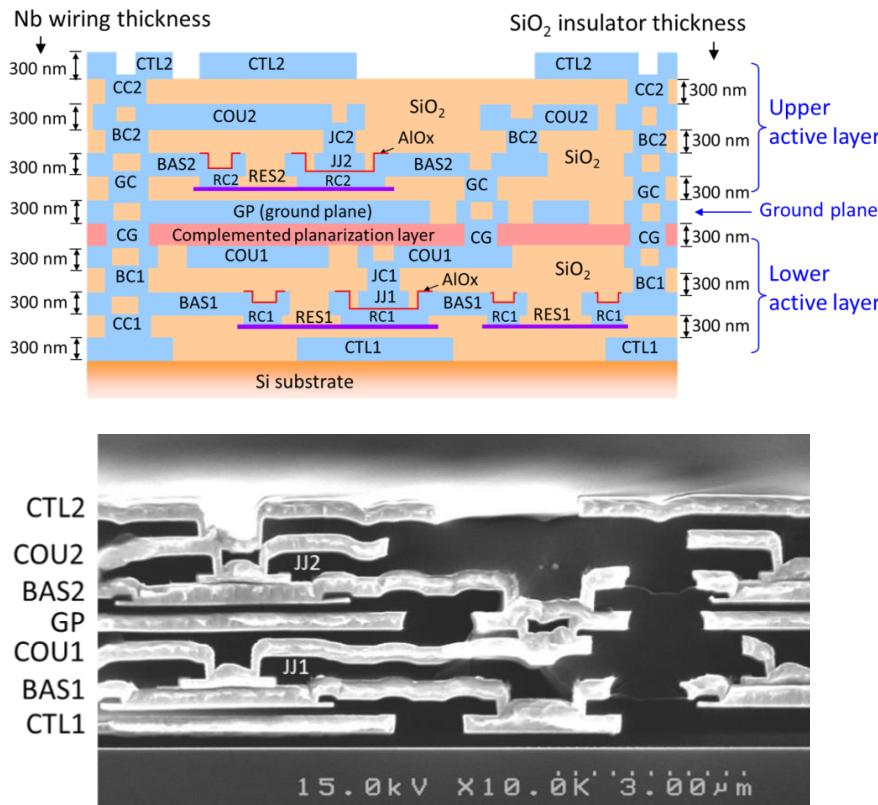
CRAVITY
AIST

Takeuchi *et al.*, submitted to Phys. Rev. Appl.,

YNU YOKOHAMA National University

Development of 3D AQFP ICs

Double Gate Process (DGP)



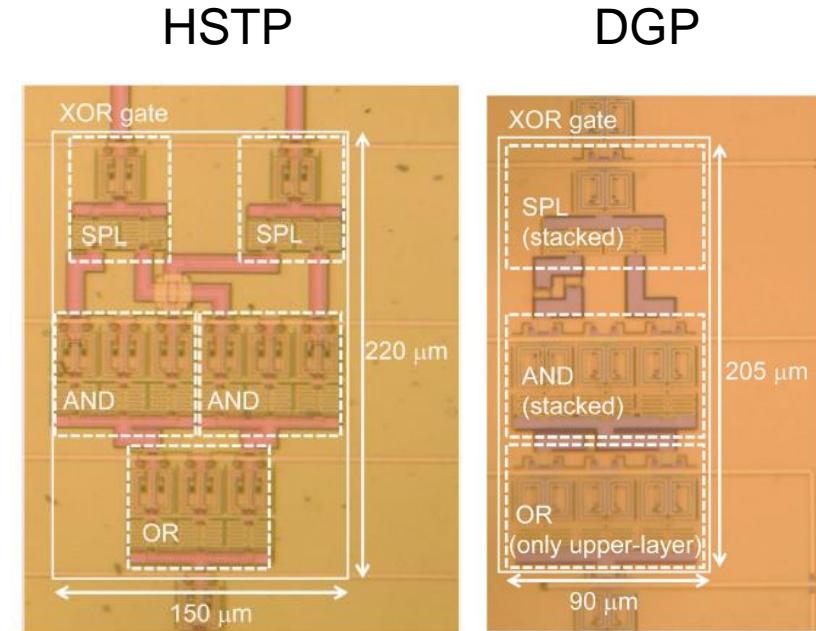
Fabricated by AIST DGP



T. Ando *et al.*, SUST 30 (2017) 075003.

YNU YOKOHAMA National University

Comparison of XOR Gate



The circuit area was reduced by 44%.

Outlines of This Talk

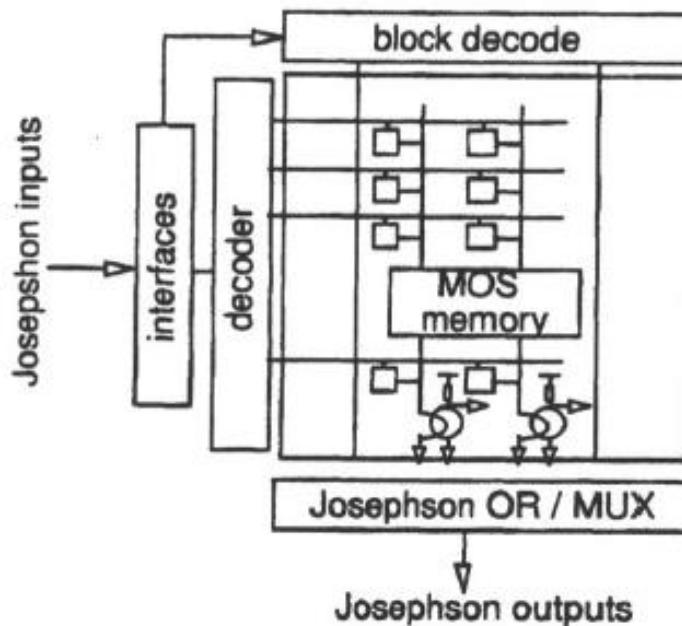
- Background and motivation
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- Recent research activities on AQFP circuits
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 - Reversible logic circuits
- Summary

Future Directions

- Memories
 - Josephson-CMOS hybrid memories
 - Magnetic memories
- More energy efficient logic
 - Reversible QFP (RQFP) circuits.
- Other applications
 - Control and readout circuits for Quantum computers
 - Read out circuits for superconducting sensor arrays

Josephson/CMOS Hybrid Memory

Concept of hybrid Josephson-CMOS RAM



[1] Ghoshal *et al.*, IEEE TAS, 3, 2316, 1993.

64-kb Cryo-CMOS RAM

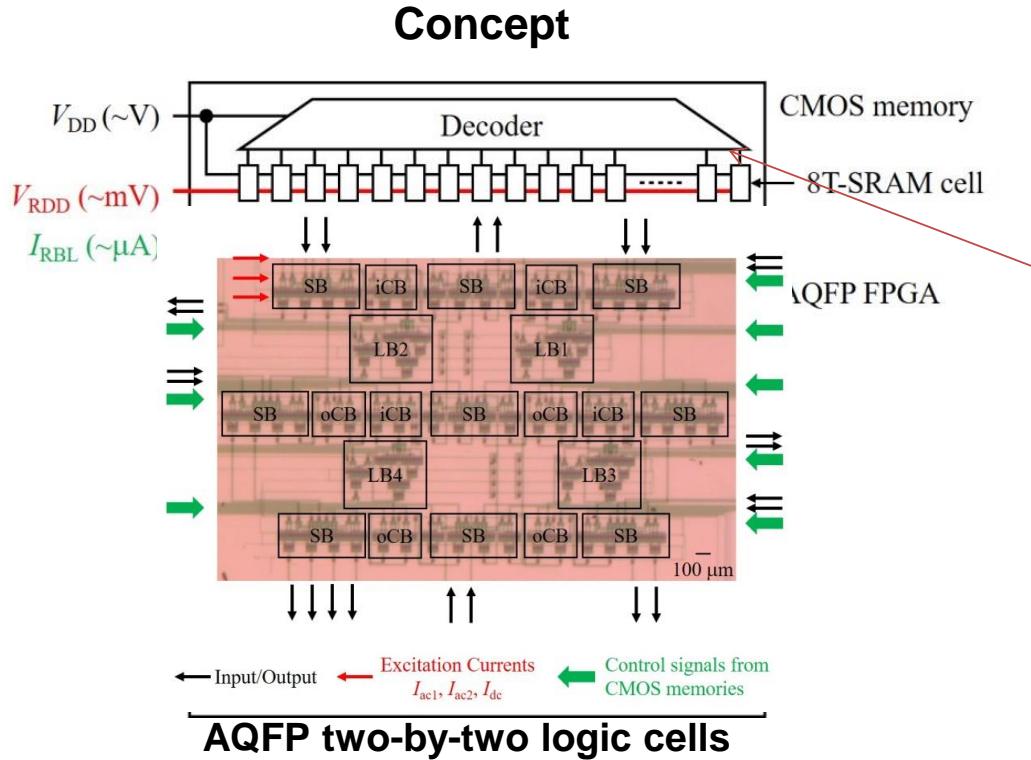


180 nm CMOS and 2.5 kA/cm² JJ processes

[2] G. Konno *et al.*, IEEE TAS, 27, 1300607, 2017.

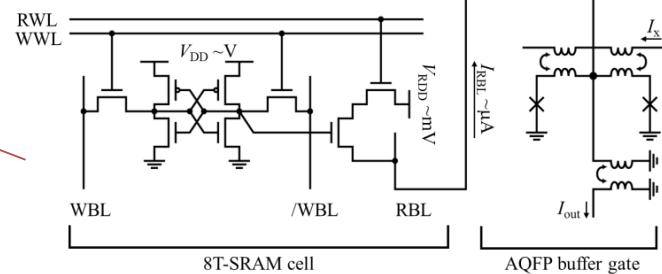
Successful demonstration of SFQ processor with a cryo-CMOS memory:
Y. Hironaka *et al.*, ISEC 2019, Riverside.

AQFP-CMOS Hybrid FPGA

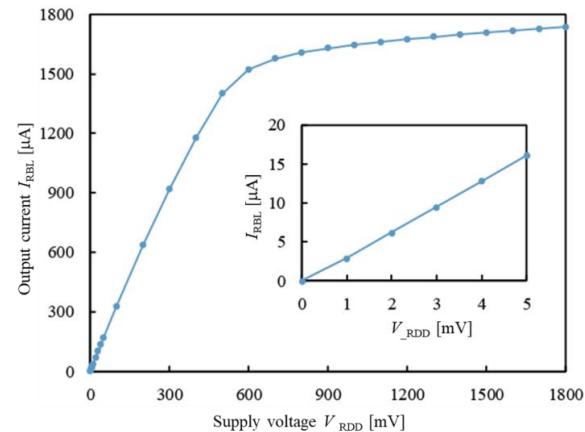


- CMOS memory is used as a rewritable ROM.
- Power consumption of CMOS is reduced by decreasing VDD.

8T CMOS memory cell with AQFP read-out



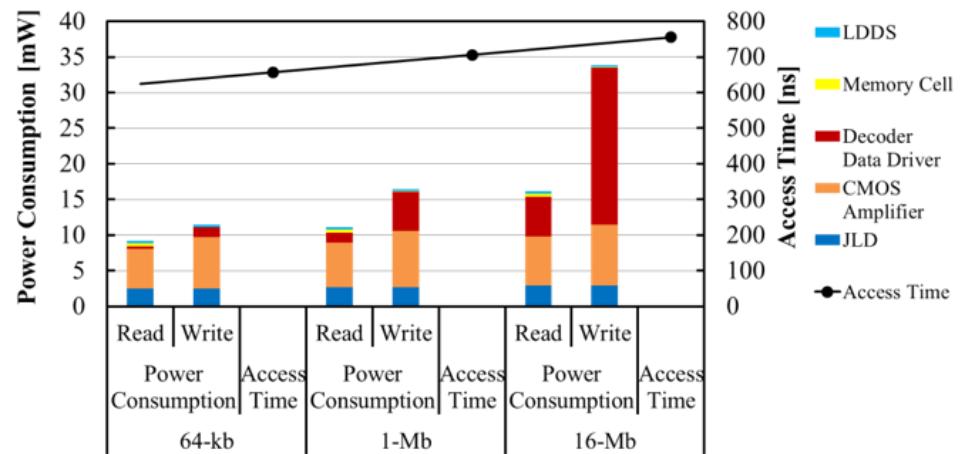
Reduction of output current of a memory cell with reduced VDD



Issues in Josephson/CMOS Hybrid systems

- CMOS devices consume a lot of power.

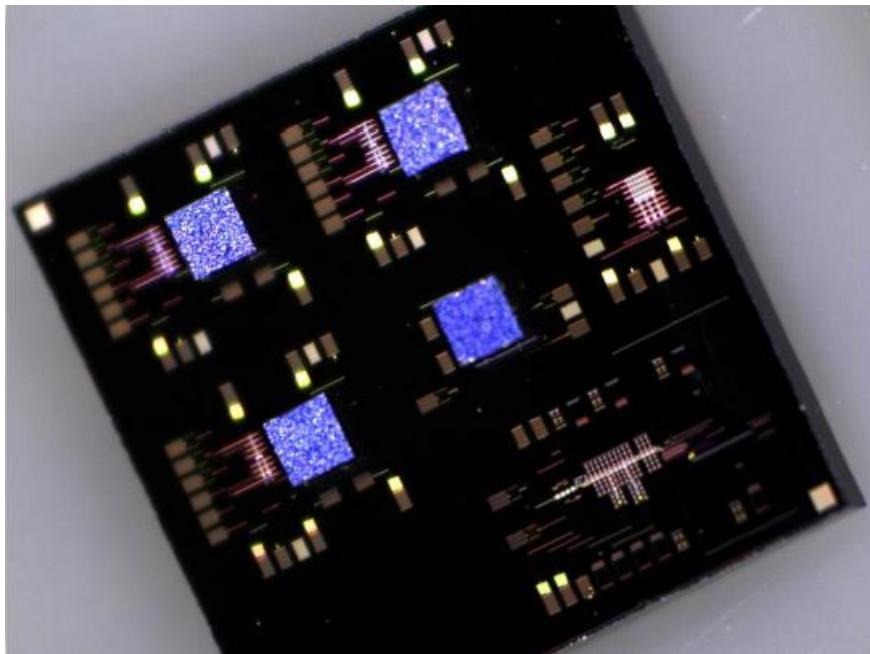
- 10⁵ times larger than AQFP
- Use of low V_{TH} process
- Use of adiabatic decoder
- Use of new amplifier (nTron)



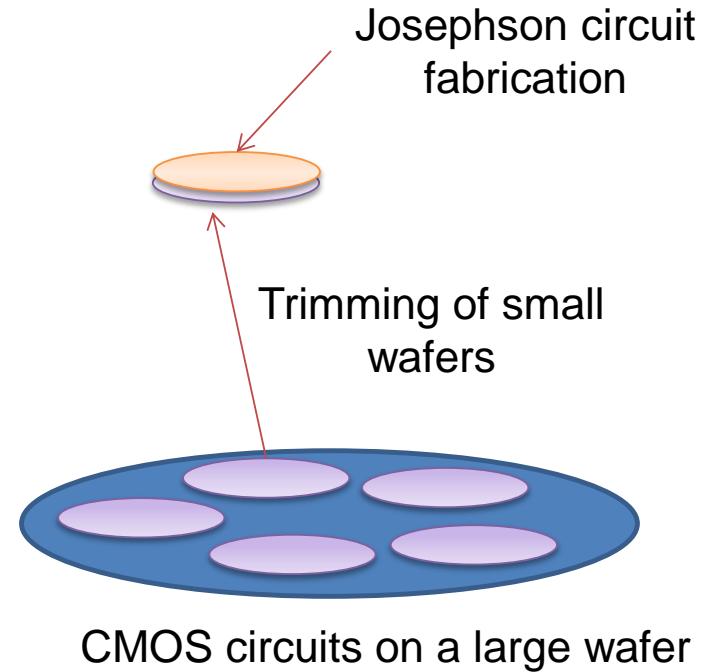
- Connection between Josephson and CMOS devices.
 - Use of flip chip bonding : ~100 pads/1 mm²
 - Use of monolithic Josephson/CMOS fabrication process

Flip-chip Bonding/ Monolithic Process

Hybrid integration of AQFP and nTron chips



Monolithic integration of AQFP and CMOS circuits

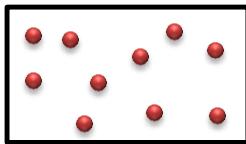


Courtesy of Prof. Ortlepp and Prof. Berggren.

T. Ortlepp *et al.*, ISEC2019, Riverside.

Landauer's Principle

Thermodynamic entropy = Information entropy



101100010100110

- Equivalence between thermodynamic entropy and information entropy
- For computation reducing the information entropy, the minimum bit energy, $E_{bit} = k_B T \ln 2$, is consumed.
- For computation conserving the information entropy, there is no minimum limit of bit energy in computation.

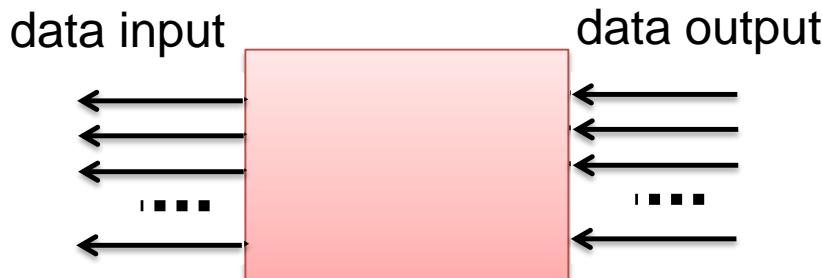
R. Landauer, *IBM Journal of Research and Development* 5, 183 (1961).

C. H. Bennett, *IBM Journal of Research and Development* 17, 525 (1973).

Reversible Computing

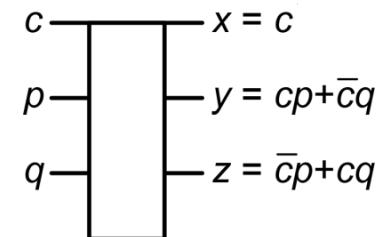
- The entropy is conserved during computation.
- Logical reversibility is required.

Physical reversibility, bi-directionality is also required.



E. Fredkin and T. Toffoli, *Int. J. Theor. Phys.* **21**, 219-253 (1982).

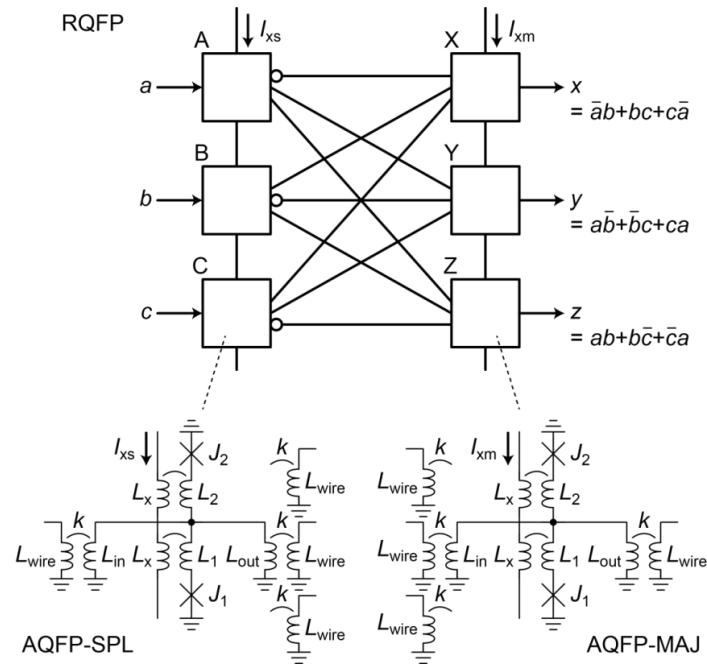
Fredkin gate



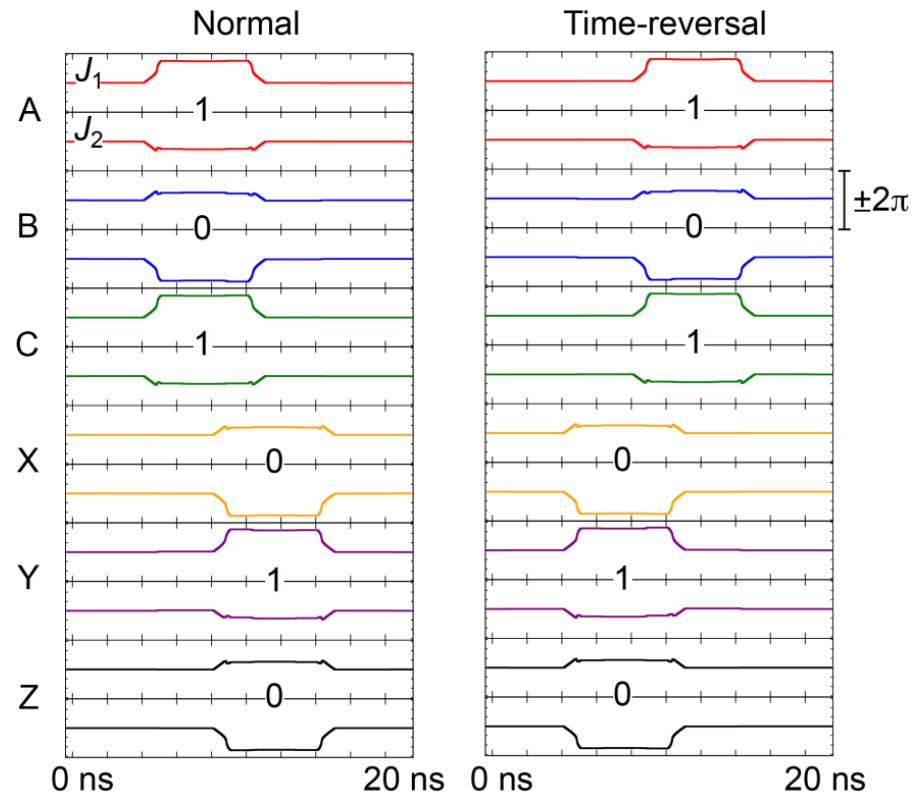
Input			Output		
c	p	q	x	y	z
0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	1	0	1	0
0	1	0	0	0	1
0	1	1	0	1	1
1	0	0	1	0	0
1	0	1	1	0	1
1	1	0	1	1	0
1	1	1	1	1	1

Reversible AQFP (RQFP)

Reversible majority QFP gate



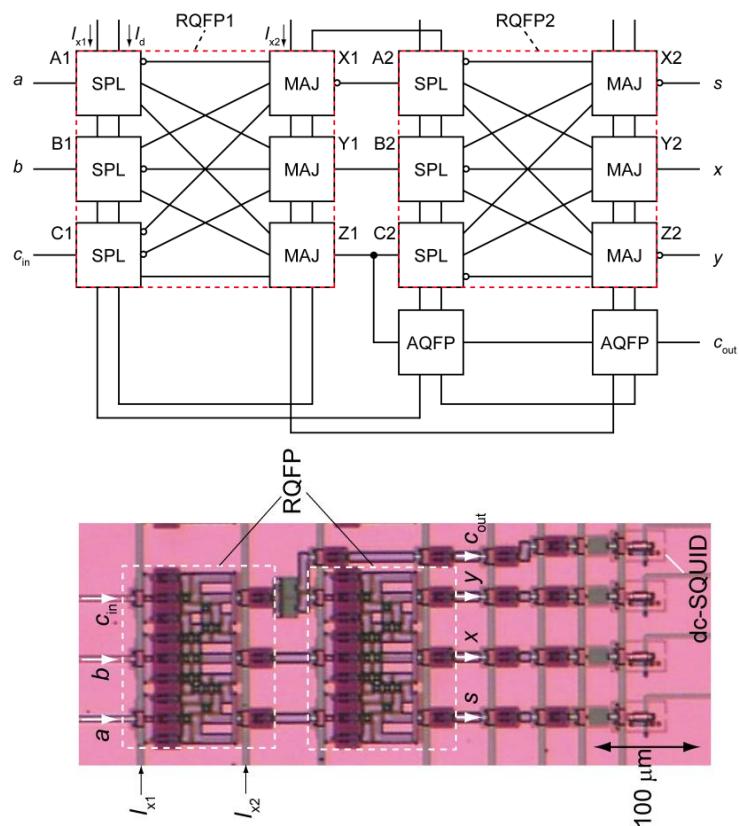
Reversible majority QFP gate



A logically and physically reversible gate can be achieved by using AQFP gates.

Reversible AQFP Adder

Schematic of 1b full adder

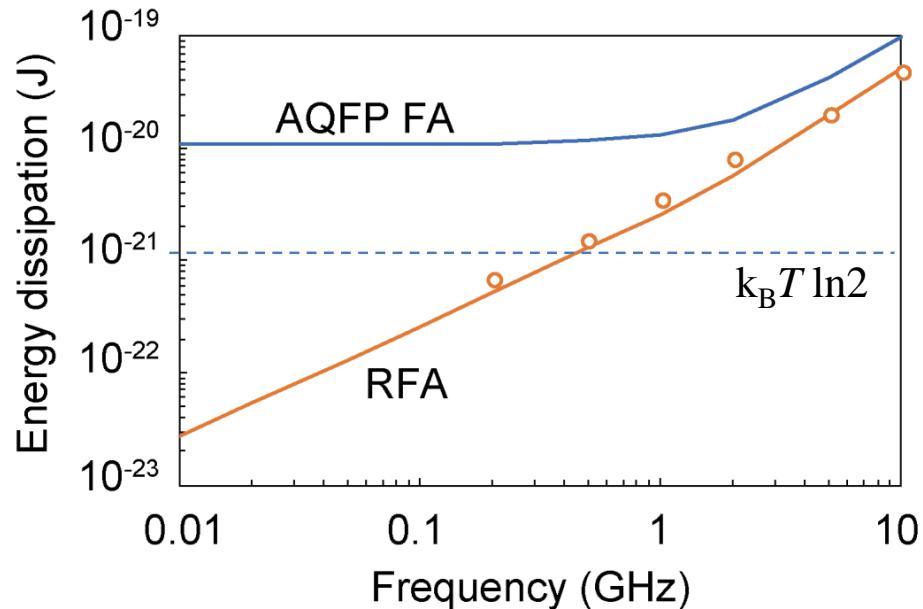


Fabricated by AIST HSTP



T. Yamae *et al.*, SUST, 32, 035005 (2019).

Energy dissipation of 1b full adder



Bit energy smaller than $k_B T \ln 2$ is possible in RQFP circuits.

RQFP register file, see Yamae et al. ISEC 2019, Riverside.

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Summary

- Two outstanding features of superconducting logic circuits:
 - High-speed SFQ logic circuits
 - Energy-efficient AQFP logic circuits
- Memories are key devices for digital applications.
 - Hybrid Josephson-MOS memory has its potential.
- More energy-efficient logic circuit is possible by using RQFP.