

Design Automation for Cyber–Physical Systems

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I. INTRODUCTION

Cyber–physical systems (CPSs) are characterized by the seamless integration and close interaction of cyber components (e.g., sensors, computation nodes, communication networks) and physical processes (e.g., mechanical devices, physical environment, humans). The cyber components monitor, analyze, and control the physical processes, and react to their changes through feedback loops. A classic example of CPSs is autonomous vehicles. These vehicles collect information of the surrounding physical environment via heterogeneous sensors such as cameras, radar, and LIDAR; process and analyze the multi-modal information at real time with advanced computing devices such as GPUs, application-specific SoCs and multicore CPUs; automatically make planning and control decisions; and continuously actuate the corresponding mechanical components. The cyber components of autonomous vehicles are much more intelligent and complex than those of traditional vehicles, and interact more directly and closely with the physical environment.

The advancement of CPSs, such as autonomous vehicles, industrial robots, wearable devices, smart buildings, and smart infrastructures, has shown great promises. However, the design and operation of CPSs face serious challenges stemming from system scale and functional complexity that is constantly growing; the adoption of distributed and networked architectural platforms; the close interaction with dynamic physical environment and human activities;

The papers in this special issue discuss challenges and present promising solutions in the modeling, simulation, synthesis, validation, and verification of cyber–physical systems.

and the stringent and diverse requirements on performance, safety, security, fault tolerance, extensibility, energy consumption, etc. For example, the development of new features in vehicles has led to a drastic growth of functional complexity, with software code increasing from around 1 million lines in 2000 to 100 million post-2010 [1]. The number of electronic control units (ECUs) has increased from under 50 to more than 100 [2], and cutting-edge GPUs have been developed for autonomous driving functions [3]. Automotive engineers now have to explore a much larger design space, address more functional and nonfunctional requirements, and validate the designs under more dynamic and uncertain scenarios for enabling autonomy.

Unfortunately, many key processes in current CPS design practices are *ad hoc* and manual, and are incapable of coping with the above challenges. We believe that now is a critical time for the CPS community, both academic researchers and industrial developers, to aggressively pursue design automation to develop a

new set of methodologies, algorithms, and tools for improving CPS design quality, scalability, reliability, and productivity, and most importantly, to facilitate a bold move from *ad hoc* CPS design toward systematic and formal techniques. This special issue provides a comprehensive coverage of the broad area of design automation for CPSs.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE SPECIAL ISSUE

In this issue, leading research groups discuss challenges and present promising solutions in modeling, simulation, synthesis, validation, and verification of CPSs. They demonstrate the importance of these design automation techniques in a variety of application domains, including automotive and transportation systems, buildings, biochips, and mobile applications.

The first group of papers present methodologies and frameworks for addressing common design challenges across various CPS domains.

In particular, one major challenge to CPS design and analysis is the intrinsic heterogeneity of those systems. Today CPSs are often designed by leveraging existing solutions and by adding cyber components to an existing physical system, thus decomposing the design into two separate phases. In the paper “Codesign methodologies and tools for cyber–physical systems,” Zhu and Sangiovanni-Vincentelli propose to codesign cyber and physical components of the system, i.e., to model, simulate, synthesize, and validate the sensing, control, computation, and communication algorithms; the software and hardware implementation platform; the mechanical components and processes; and the surrounding physical environment and human activities in a *holistic* environment. They present a number of codesign approaches, such as the Metronomy cosimulation framework [4] that integrates functional modeling in Ptolemy [5] and architectural modeling in Metro II [6], several cross-layer cosynthesis methods that

are based on the exploration of timing contracts, and a collaborative functional verification and platform synthesis framework. The authors also discuss open challenges in CPS codesign and possible future directions for addressing them.

In the paper “Model and tool integration platforms for cyber–physical system design,” Sztipanovits *et al.* address the heterogeneity in CPS model libraries and design tools with two *integration platforms*. The Model Integration Platform leverages the General Modeling Environment (GME) [7], the model integration language CyPhyML [8], and the formal specification language FORMULA 2.0 [9] to represent components, design spaces and designs, cross-domain interactions, composition constraints, data model interfaces, models of engineering process, and model transformation. It enables precise representation of semantic interfaces among modeling domains. The Tool Integration Platform features the DESERT tool [10] for automated design space exploration, and integrates methods for formal verification, reliability analysis, and uncertainty quantification.

The paper “A component architecture for the Internet of Things” addresses heterogeneity for those CPSs that leverage internet technology for interactions between the cyber world and the physical world. It presents a design pattern called *accessors* to serve as a proxy for any “Thing” or service that may be local or remote (analogous to the role of a web browser proxy in representing a remote service). The accessors enable the integration of heterogeneous and distributed components for Internet-of-Things (IoT) applications. They are defined with an adapted *actor* model in Ptolemy, and interact with each other based on a timed discrete-event model of computation. Brooks *et al.* also present CapeCode, a design environment in Ptolemy that can be used to compose accessors and facilitate the modeling, debugging, and design space exploration of various IoT applications.

Another major challenge in CPS design is to manage the continuous change and evolution of the systems and their operation environment. In the paper “Platform-centric self-awareness as a key enabler for controlling changes in CPS,” Möstl *et al.* define *self-awareness* as a system’s ability to recognize its own state, possible actions, and the result of these actions on itself and its environment. They present two frameworks, controlling concurrent change (CCC) and information processing factory (IPF), for building self-aware CPSs that have the capabilities of self-modeling, self-configuration, and monitoring. In particular, CCC addresses in-field changes (both at-runtime and at-down-time) in automotive systems, with a focus on ensuring system safety and availability, while IPF focuses more on runtime feedback control for MPSoC-based CPSs.

The second group of papers present techniques for formalizing the modeling, synthesis, and verification of CPSs.

In the paper “Building a hybrid systems modeler on synchronous languages principles,” Benveniste *et al.* present a modeling language for hybrid systems that is built on the synchronous language principles and compilation techniques. The proposed language combines traditional synchronous language constructs with ordinary differential equations (ODEs) and zero-crossing events, to support the modeling of both discrete time and continuous time in hybrid systems. It also provides a runtime that delegates the model execution in continuous-time phases to an off-the-shelf numerical solver. The approach has been implemented and evaluated in the academic tool Zelus and its industrial sister SCADE Hybrid.

The paper “Real-time decision policies with predictable performance” introduces the usage of declarative streaming languages, in particular StreamQRE, for modeling and analyzing real-time streaming applications that process sequences of data items under constraints on memory, processing time, and energy con-

sumption. The approach is based on the formalism of quantitative regular expressions (QREs), and its evaluation algorithm can guarantee constant cost (memory, runtime, energy) per data item and calculate the upper bounds on the per-item cost. The paper uses cardiac arrhythmia monitoring as the driven application to demonstrate the ideas of StreamQRE.

The paper “Layering assume-guarantee contracts for hierarchical system design” presents a method to algorithmically decompose system-level temporal logic specifications for CPSs into lower level specifications for individual subsystems (components), in the form of assume-guarantee contracts. The automated process ensures that the generated component specifications are implementable and simpler for further development, based on a formalized definition of realizability and a parametric analysis approach for finding what variables can be hidden while preserving realizability and ensuring correct composition. The method also includes an algorithm to convert the generated specifications from binary decision diagrams to more readable formulas over integer variables.

In the paper “SMC: Satisfiability modulo convex programming,” Shoukry *et al.* present a satisfiability modulo convex programming (SMC) framework that enables efficient reasoning of Boolean and convex constraints at the same time. Such capability is particularly important for CPS design and verification, where the system heterogeneity often brings both types of constraints. The proposed framework leverages a lazy combination of satisfiability (SAT) solving and convex programming, to provide a satisfying assignment or determine that the problem is unsatisfiable. Through case studies in spacecraft docking mission control, robotic motion planning, and secure state estimation, the authors demonstrate that the framework outperforms state-of-the-art satisfiability modulo theory (SMT) and mixed integer convex programming (MICP) solvers on problems with both

complex Boolean structures and large number of real variables.

The third group of papers focus on specific application domains and present corresponding methodologies and tools.

In the paper “Design automation for smart building systems,” Jia *et al.* present a platform-based design flow for smart buildings. The proposed flow maps high-level specifications of desired building applications to their physical implementations based on the platform-based design (PBD) paradigm. Three intermediate design platforms are defined for smart buildings, namely the virtual device platform (including high-level functions such as a virtual occupancy sensor), the module platform (including basic functions such as a sensing module and a data analytics module that distills the occupancy information from the sensor), and the implementation platform (including concrete software and hardware implementations such as building operation systems APIs and program code). Design space exploration is carried out when a design at higher level platform is mapped onto (refined into) a design at lower level platform.

The paper “Tools and methodologies for autonomous driving systems” introduces a standard reference architecture for connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs), and presents a set of methodologies and tools for the modeling, design, development, and testing of CAV systems. The reference architecture includes sensors, V2X (e.g., vehicle-to-infrastructure, vehicle-to-vehicle, vehicle-to-pedestrian) communication interfaces, perception, planning and behavior modules, vehicle by-wire controls, embedded computing platform, etc. The tools include SysWeaver for model-based design, integration, and analysis of software architecture; SysAnalyzer for schedulability analysis; TROCS and AutoSim for hybrid emulation and simulation at system level and at application level, respectively; and a runtime diagnostics service for on-road tests.

In the paper “Cyber-physical digital-microfluidic biochips: Bridging the gap between microfluidics and microbiology,” Ibrahim and Chakrabarty introduce a new synthesis methodology for digital-microfluidic biochips. The approach leverages on-chip integration of sensing systems, and uses realistic models of biomolecular protocols to address real-world microbiology applications through cyber-physical adaptation. More specifically, the paper presents a design and optimization framework to control multiple sample pathways in quantitative-analysis protocols such as the gene-expression analysis, a synthesis method for large-scale protocols with temporal constraints such as the real-time epigenetic analysis, and a synthesis method for protocols with indexed samples such as the type-driven single-cell analysis.

The paper “Oasis: A mobile cyber-physical system for accessible location exploration” considers mobile devices connected through wireless communication as a mobile CPS. It brings up the emerging concept of improving mobile user experience by appropriately modeling human mentality, wireless signal coverage, and their interplay. Based upon a real-world case study, Cheng *et al.* carefully analyze “null zones” and “hot zones,” where data rate is not sufficiently high to facilitate delay-sensitive applications, and then develop a mobile CPS platform called Oasis, for guiding users to leave those zones and move to nearby locations with better mobile experience. The modeling of user satisfaction and user willingness to take a route is particularly interesting and important for CPS applications with strong human interaction.

III. SYSTEM DESIGN AUTOMATION FOR FUTURE CPS

Historically, electronic design automation (EDA) techniques have propelled the advancement of integrated circuits, tackling the ever-increasing circuit complexity with a wealth of automation, optimization,

and validation tools. We believe that for enabling future advancements and innovations of CPSs, developing *system design automation* techniques will be similarly essential. The intrinsic heterogeneity of CPSs, from the differences between various

cyber and physical components to the unique characteristics across different CPS domains, will likely make such development more challenging, but there are promising directions, as presented in this special issue.

We trust that the papers in this issue provide a broad and in-depth coverage of the needs, challenges, and solutions in design automation for CPSs; and we hope that they can stimulate future research and development to address the open challenges ahead.

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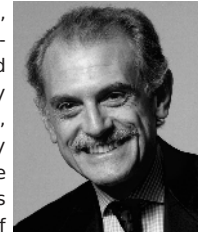
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