

Advanced Engineering Course on

Low-Power Analog IC Design

EPFL Premises, Lausanne, Switzerland August 29 – September 2, 2022

Friday, September 2, 2022 Kofi Makinwa, TU Delft, Netherlands

Micropower ADCs



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Micropower ADCs

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1 of 95

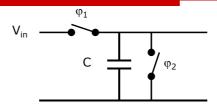
What is a Micropower ADC?

- ☐ One that draws less than 1mW
 - → a few hundred µAs from a 1V supply
- □ So not very fast: $f_s < 100 MHz$ charging 1pF with $100 \mu A \rightarrow 10 ns$ for a 1V swing
- □ Typical applications:
 - sensor interfaces
 - battery monitoring circuits
 - medical devices
 - short-range radios

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Fundamental Limits (Power)



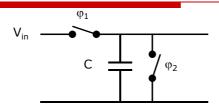
- □ Cap is charged and discharged \rightarrow $P_{min} = CV_{ES}^2 \cdot f_S$
- □ So micropower design
 - → reduce caps, reduce swing and reduce frequency
- ☐ Main limitations are kT/C noise and mismatch
- Note: Continuous-time circuits avoid kT/C noise limitations but are usually much less accurate

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3 of 95

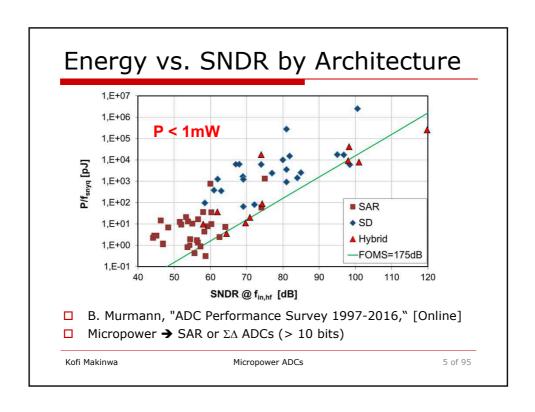
Fundamental Limits (Efficiency)

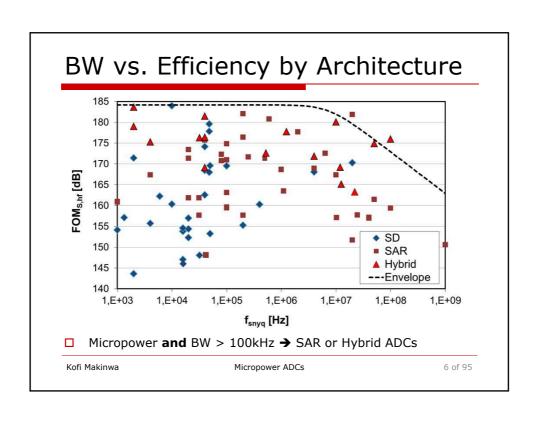


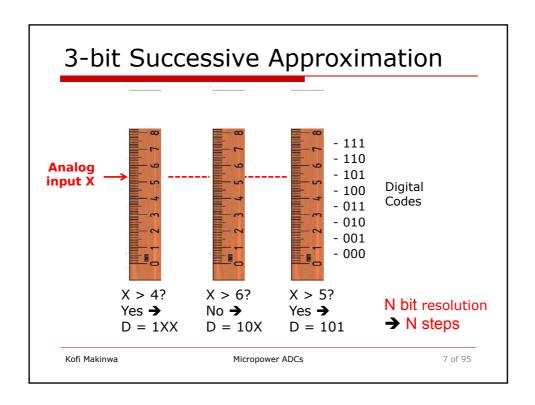
- ☐ Inband noise: $V_n^2 = (kT/C) \cdot (f_{NYO}/f_S)$
- □ Signal energy: $V_{in}^2 = (V_{FS}/2)^2/2$
- □ So SNR = $V_{in}^2 / V_n^2 = (CV_{FS}^2/8kT) \cdot (f_S/f_{NYQ})$
- □ But $E_{min} = P_{min}/f_{NYQ} = CV_{FS}^2 \bullet (f_S/f_{NYQ}) = 8kT*SNR$
- ☐ Linear trade-off between Energy and SNR
- □ Schreier figure of merit $(FOM_S) = (SNDR)_{dB} + 10log(BW/P)$

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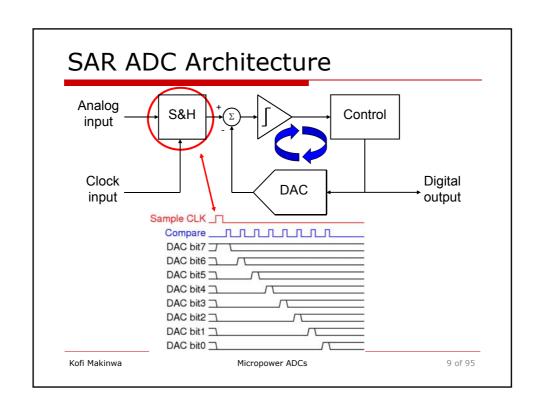
SAR ADCs

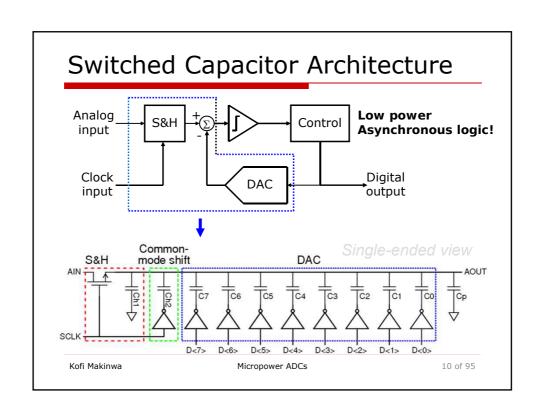
SAR ADC = Cap DAC and Comparator

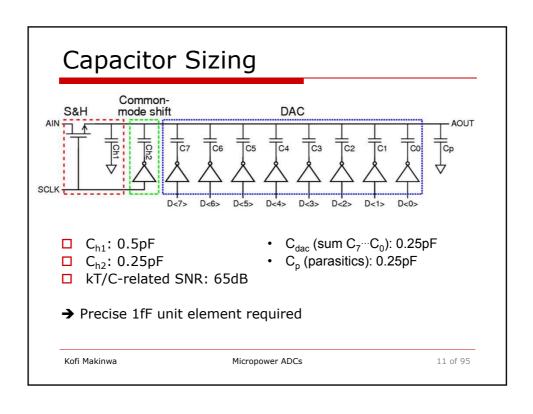
- □ Only one active component
- Scaling & calibration allows tiny unit caps (< 0.5fF)
 → CV² power is dramatically reduced
- □ But matching limits resolution (and accuracy) to
 < 12b unless calibration is used → nm-CMOS
- Case Study
 - P. Harpe et al., "A 30fJ/Conversion-Step 8b 0-to-10MS/s Asynchronous SAR ADC in 90nm CMOS," ISSCC 2010

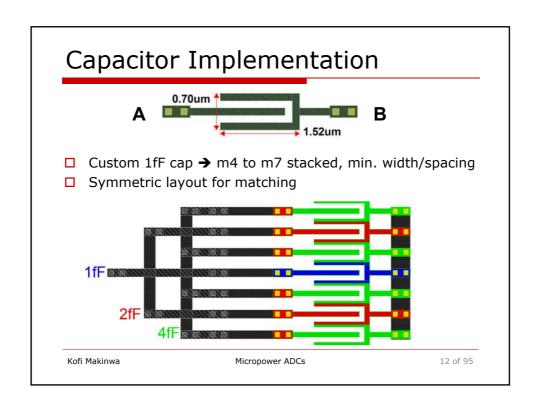
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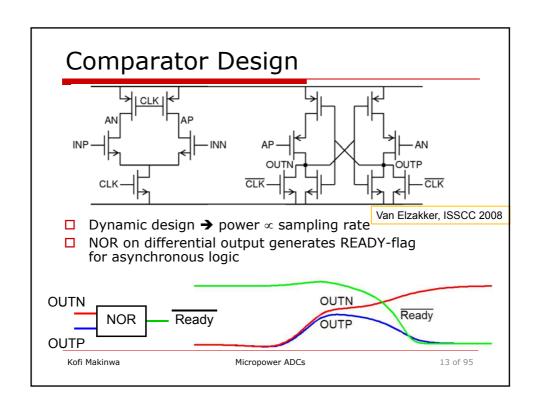
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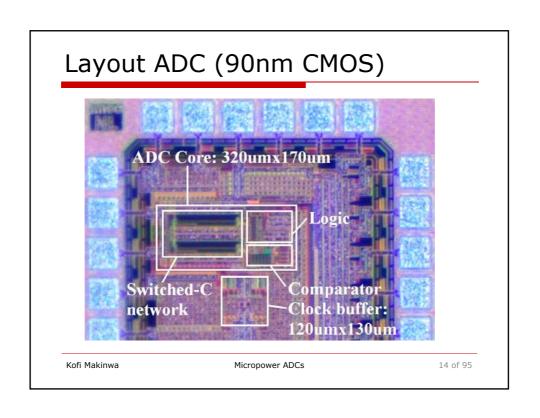


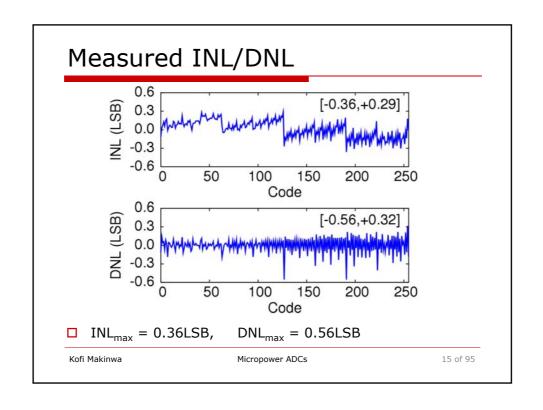


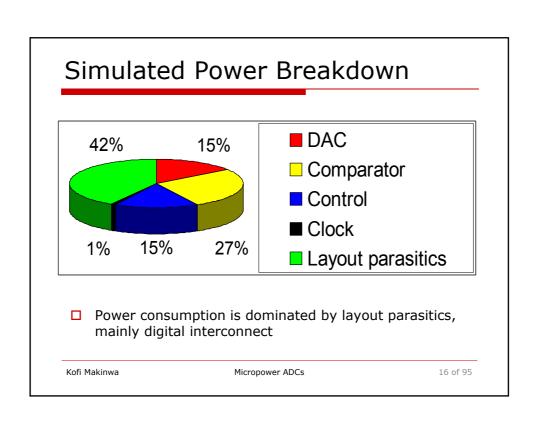


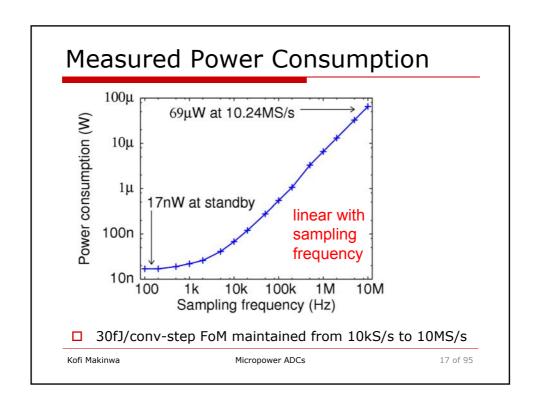


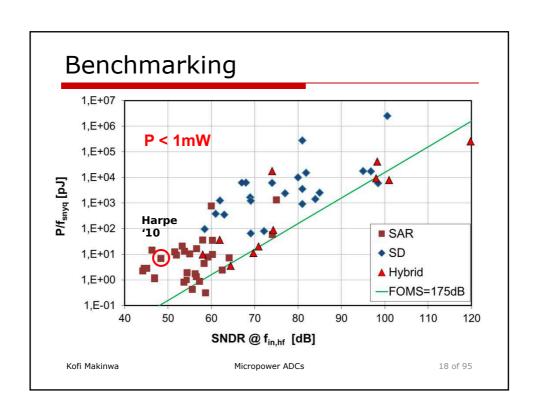










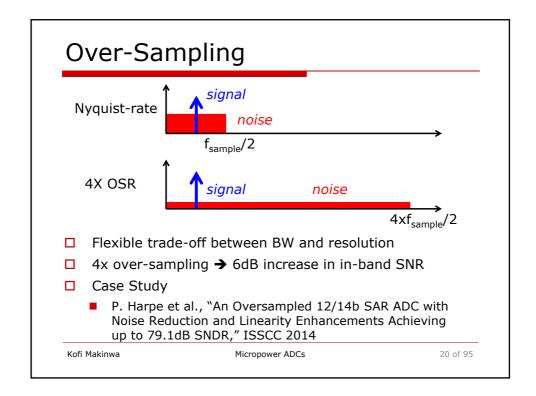


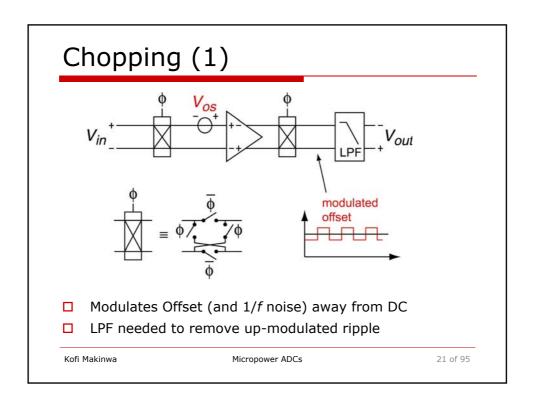
Further Developments

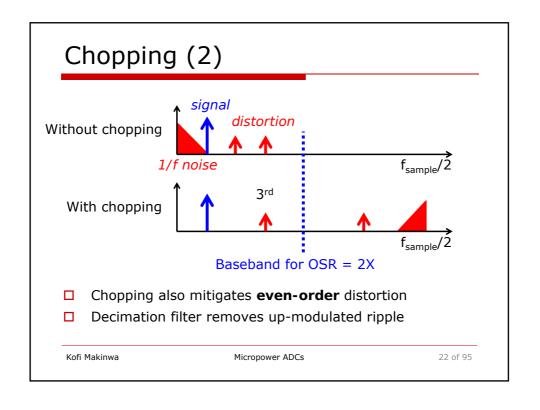
- □ Lower power → smaller DAC caps (< 0.5fF)</p>
- □ Lower power → Variable comparator power
 - coarse conversions → low power
 - fine (critical) conversions → higher power OR multiple conversions plus averaging / majority voting)
- □ Lower power → Optimized DAC switching schemes
 - Minimize energy needed to charge/discharge DAC caps
- ☐ Higher resolution
 - Scaling → better lithography
 - Calibration → up to 20b resolution
 - Oversampling & noise-shaping

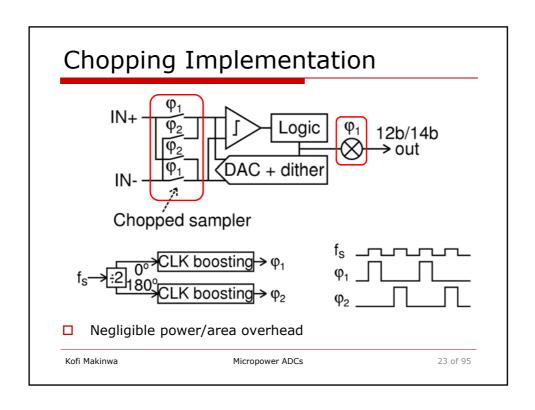
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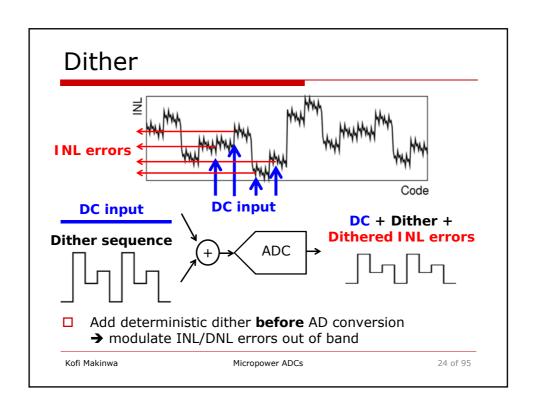
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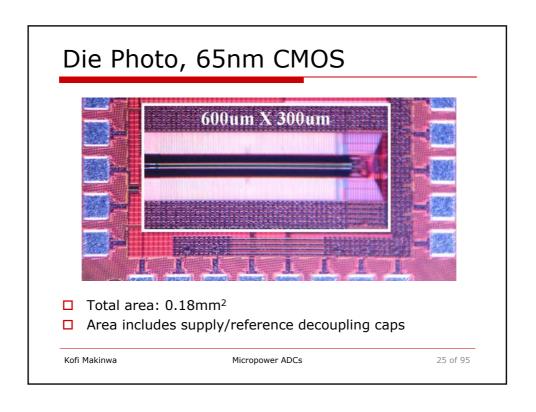


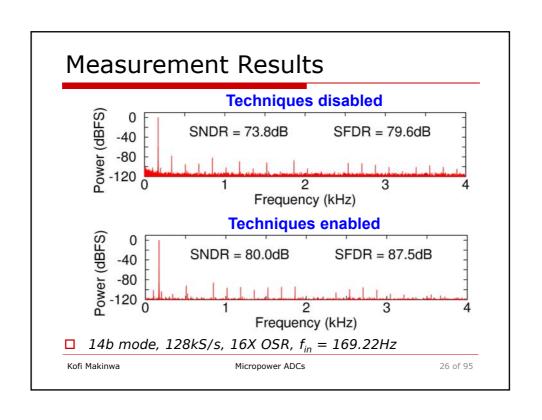


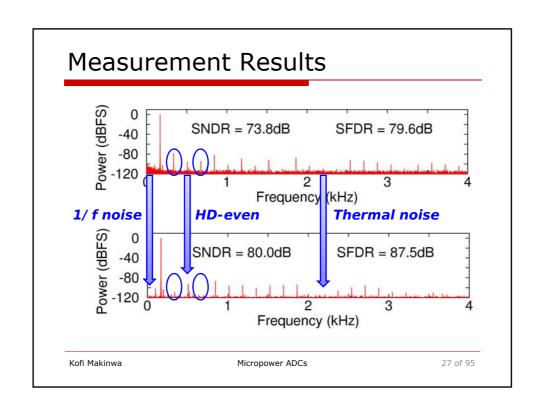


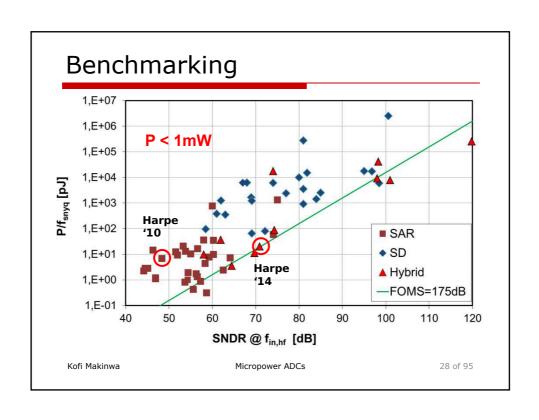




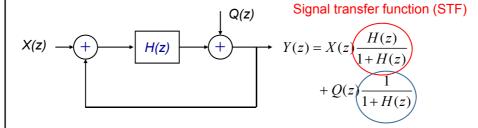








ΣΔ Modulator: Linear Model

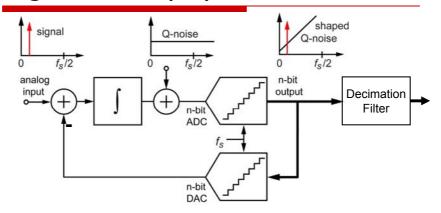


Noise transfer function (NTF)

- \square Quantization errors Q(z) are assumed to be white \Rightarrow un-correlated with X(z) (approximately true!)
- ☐ STF ~ 1 **if** |H| >>1
- □ NTF ~ HPF **if** H = LPF \Rightarrow noise shaping!

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Sigma-Delta ($\Sigma\Delta$) ADC Basics



- ☐ Integrator's gain suppresses Q-noise near DC
- □ Over-sampling further reduces the in-band Q-noise
- ☐ A simple (linear) 1-bit ADC and DAC are often sufficient

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Sigma-Delta ($\Sigma\Delta$) ADCs

 $\Sigma\Delta$ ADC = one <u>critical</u> amplifier + relaxed comparator

- One more active component
- Over-sampling (OSR = f_s/f_{NYQ}) \Rightarrow more energy (CV^{2*} f_s), but less noise (kT/C/OSR)
- □ Resolution is <u>not</u> matching limited
- ☐ Another advantage ...

"The beauty of a delta-sigma converter is that you don't have to understand all of it to make it work."

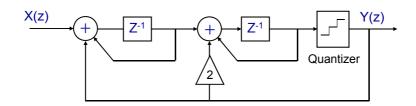
- Willy Sansen

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31 of 95

Feedback Topology

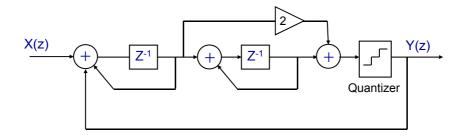


- □ Classic architecture
- But feedback to the output of the 1st integrator \Rightarrow 1st integrator's output \sim X(z) \Rightarrow large swing
- \square STF is Low Pass \Rightarrow suppresses out-of-band signals

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Feed-Forward Topology



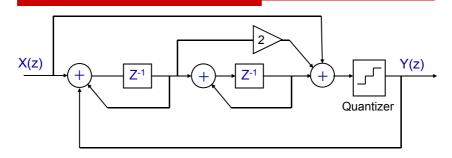
- Output of 1^{st} integrator contains high-pass filtered input signal and quantization noise \Rightarrow lower swing
- □ But the STF exhibits HF peaking (3x at $f_s/2$) ⇒ Out-of-band signals may overload the quantizer

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33 of 95

Low-Distortion Topology



- Feeding the input signal directly to the quantizer ⇒ loop filter only processes Q-noise ⇒ low swing
- \square STF is now all-pass (=1), but timing is tricky
- □ J. Silva et al., "Wideband low-distortion delta-sigma ADC topology," Electronics Letters, June 2001.

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Micropower $\Sigma\Delta$ ADC Design

Design strategies

- Reduce amplifier swing ⇒ "The Swing is the Thing"
- ☐ Use power-efficient amplifiers (especially the 1st)
- Size caps for thermal noise and use dynamic techniques (inherent averaging!) to reduce offset

Case study

- Y. Chae and G. Han, "Low Voltage, Low Power Inverterbased Switched-Capacitor Delta-Sigma Modulator," JSSC, Feb. 2009.
- ☐ Uses the Low-distortion topology + auto-zeroing ⇒ <u>inverters</u> can be used as simple and power efficient amplifiers

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35 of 95

Dynamic Techniques

- □ Static errors such as offset, 1/f noise and gain error can be modulated out of the signal BW
- ☐ The resulting AC ripple can elegantly be removed by (notches in) the modulator's decimation filter

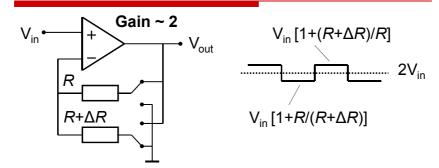


- Auto-zeroing and auto-calibration can also be used to suppress offset and mismatch errors
- ☐ **Energy-efficient** manner of improving performance

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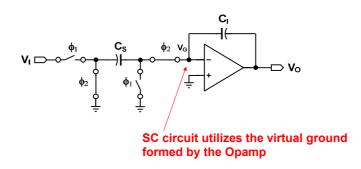
Dynamic Element Matching (DEM)



- □ Gain error = $(\Delta R/R)/2 \Rightarrow 0.05\%$ with precision layout!
- □ Resistor swapping \Rightarrow Gain error $\sim (\Delta R/R)^2/2 = 0.5$ ppm!
- ☐ Up-modulated gain error can be removed by a LPF
- ☐ For multiple elements, e.g. in DACs, up-modulated error can even be shaped! ⇒ Data weighted averaging (DWA)

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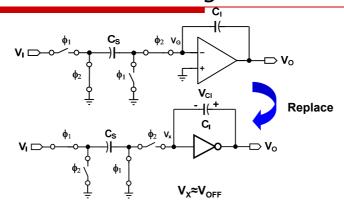
Switched-Capacitor Integrator



- ☐ The Opamp is the major power consuming block
- □ Voltage scaling ⇒ Op Amp design is challenging

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Inverter-Based Integrators?



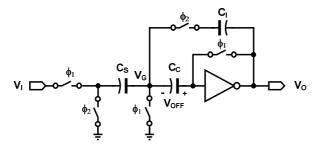
- Cow voltage operation
- ® Unpredictable offset voltage
- ⊗ No virtual ground

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39 of 95

An Inverter-Based Integrator

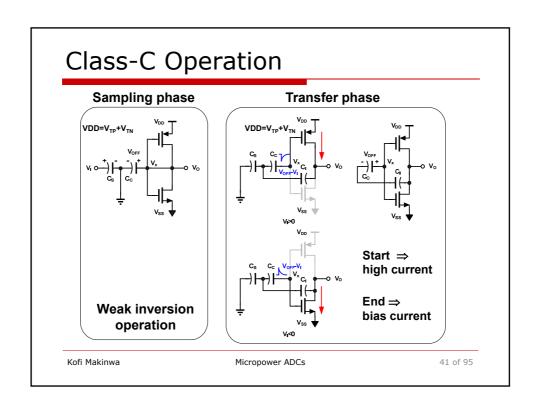


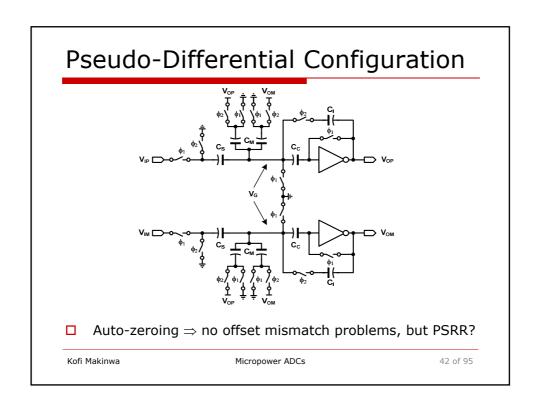
Auto-zeroing

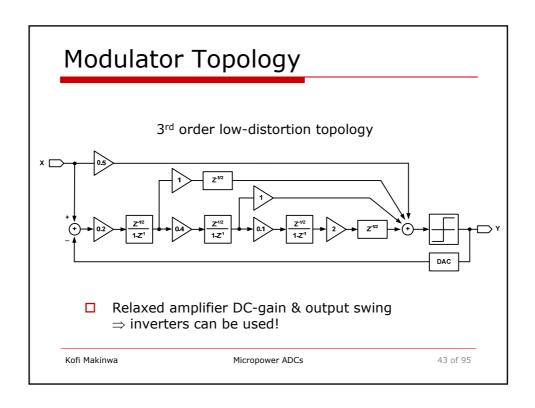
- Phase 1: Amplified offset (and 1/f noise) stored on C_C while input signal V_I is sampled on C_S
- $lue{}$ Phase 2: Charge on C_C is transferred to C_I
- \square Inverter offset is stored on $C_C => V_G = virtual$ ground

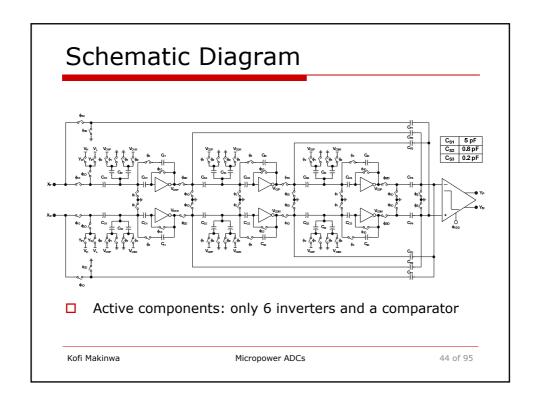
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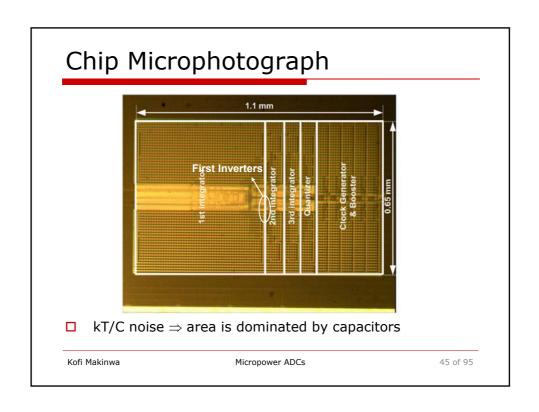
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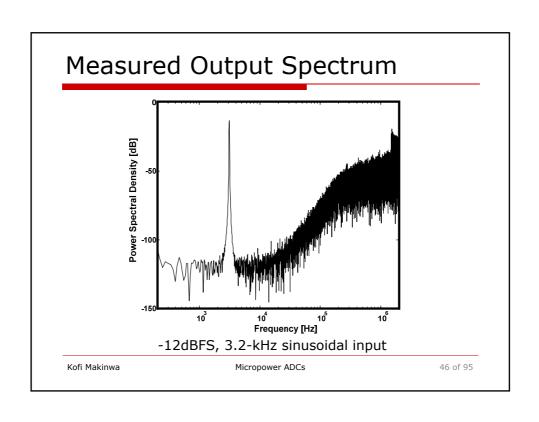


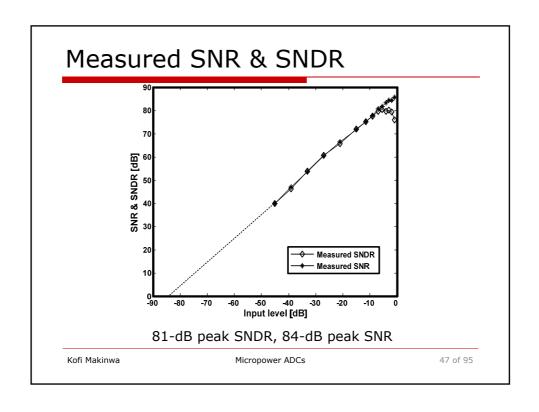


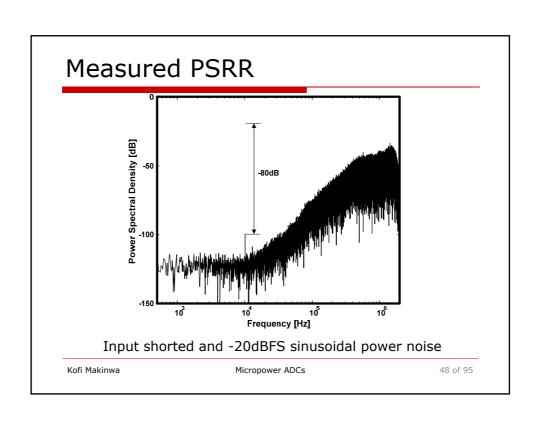


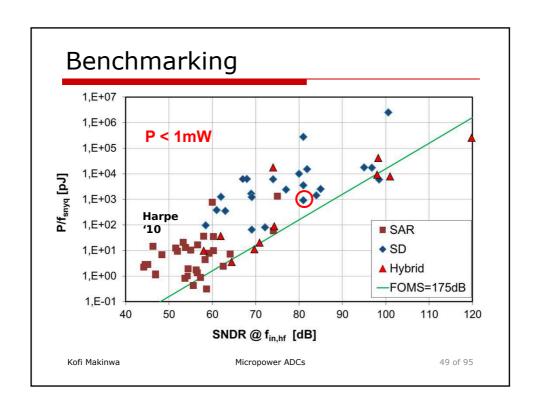












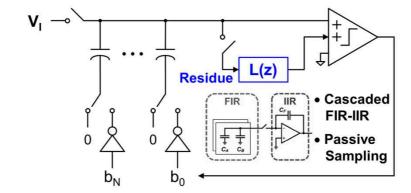
Noise-Shaping in SAR ADCs

- Noise-shaping increases the benefits of over-sampling
- With Nth order noise-shaping,
 2x over-sampling → 6N+3 dB improvement in SNR
- But how to do this in a simple (scalable) manner?
- Case Studies
 - J. Fredenburg et al., "A 90MS/s 11MHz Bandwidth 62dB SNDR Noise-Shaping SAR ADC", ISSCC 2014

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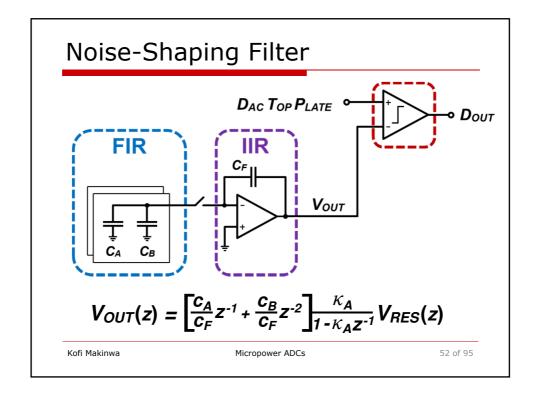
Noise-Shaping Concept

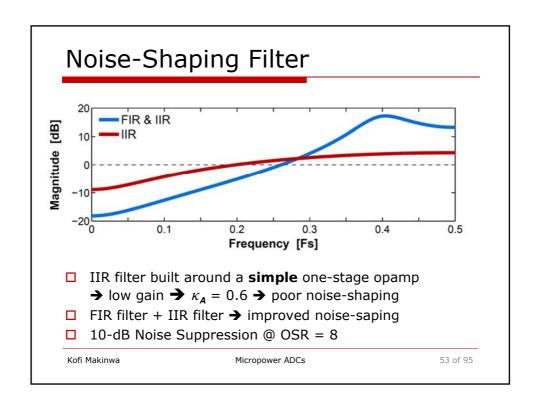


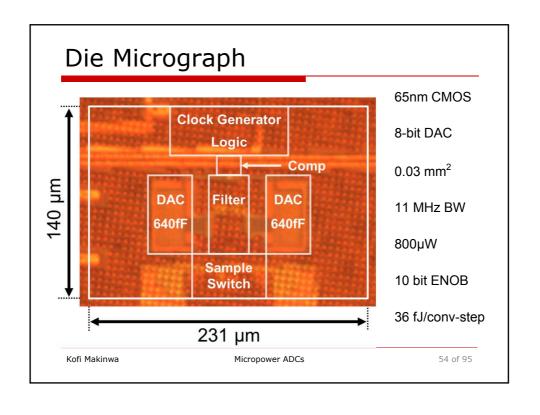
- □ Extra step at the end of a SAR conversion → analog residue is present at the comparator input!
- □ Extra comparator input → summing node

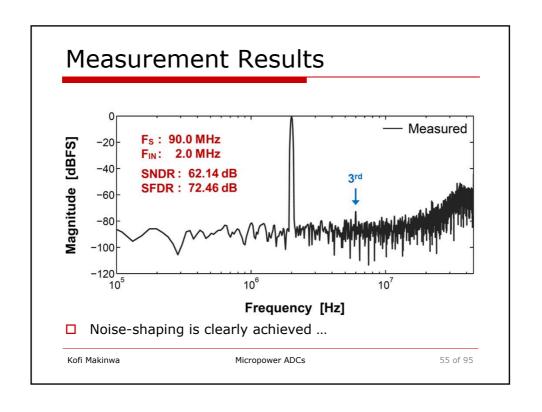
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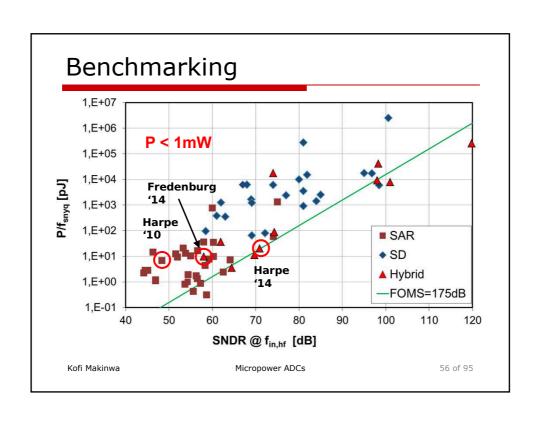
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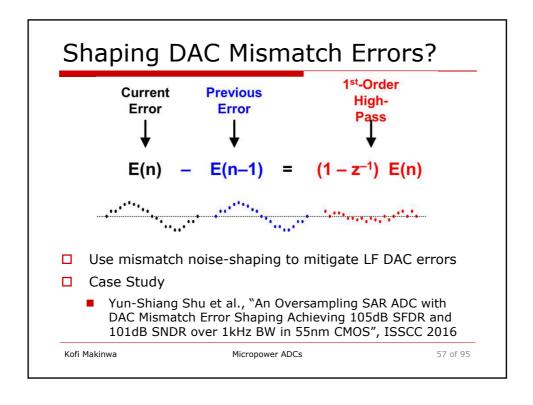


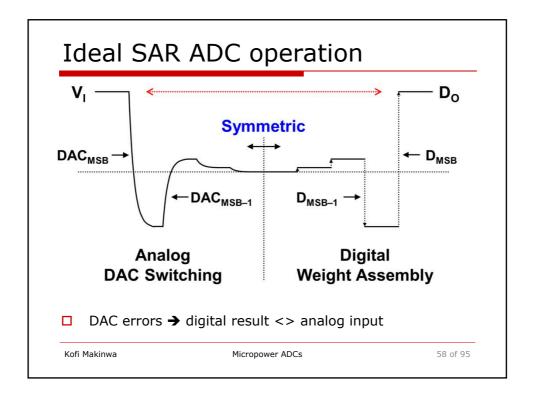


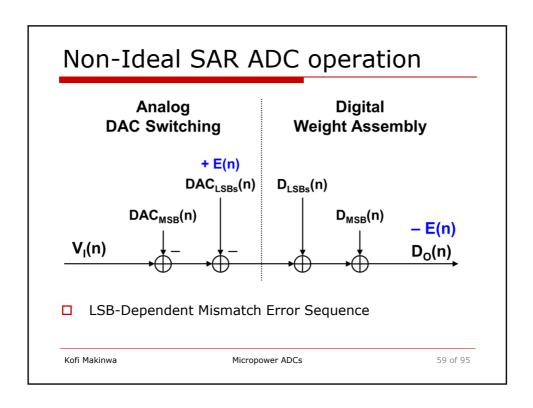


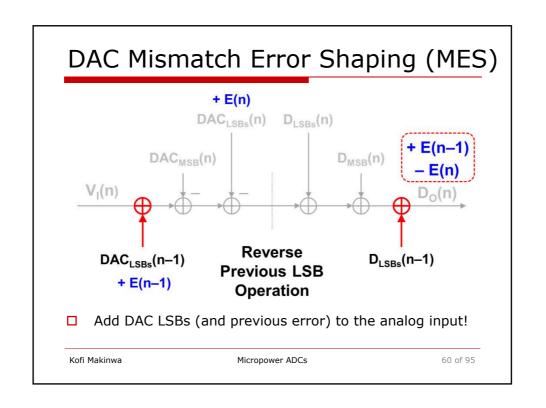


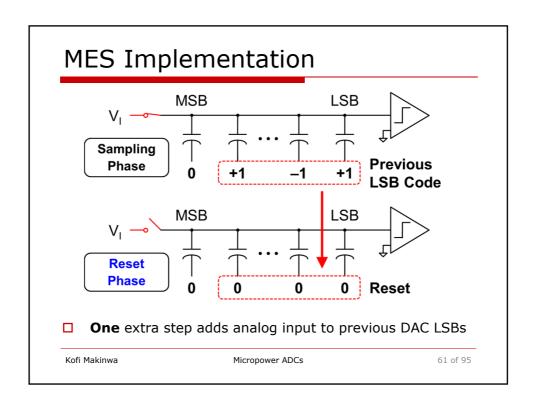


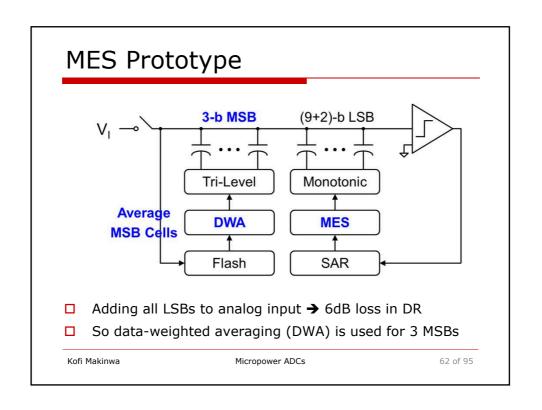


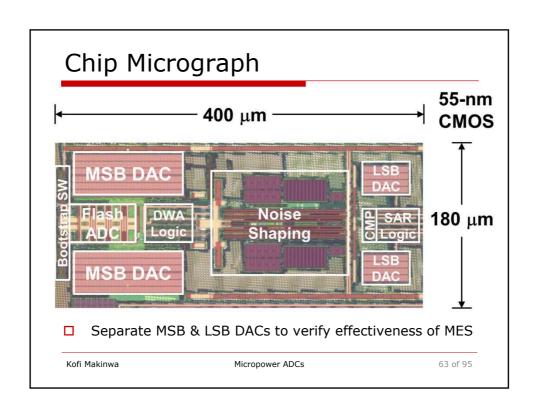


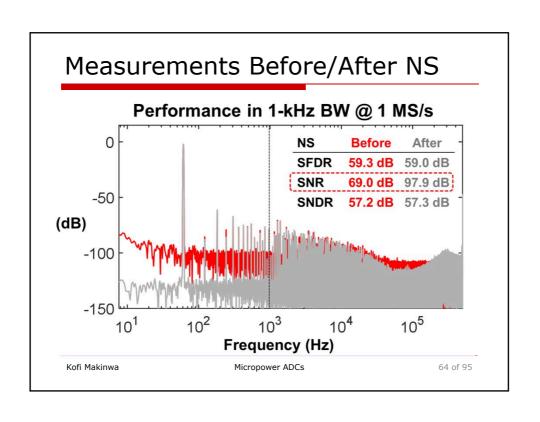


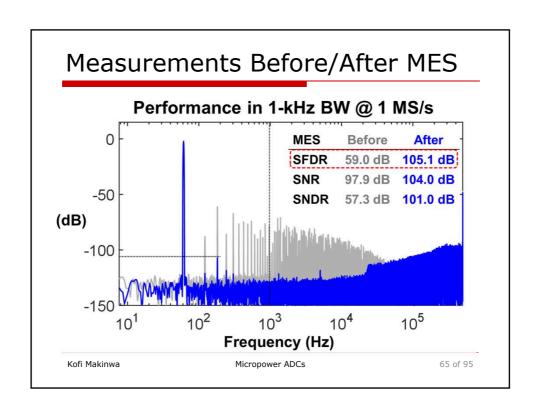


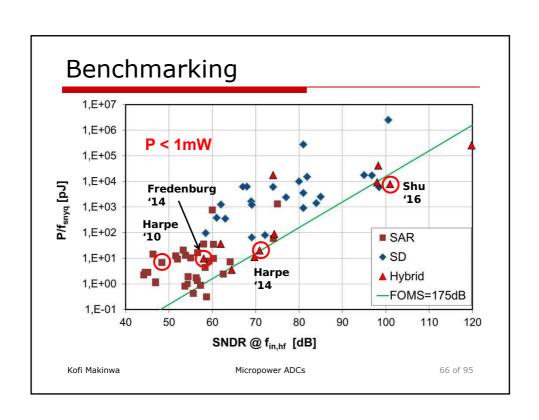


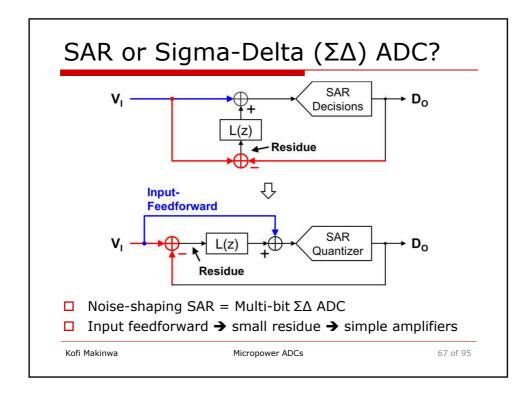












NS-SAR vs ΣΔ ADCs

Noise-shaping SAR ADCs

- ☐ High-resolution (8-12b) DAC
- □ Cap DAC → kT/C noise, **strong** input/reference buffers
- Need anti-alias filtering

ΣΔ ADCs

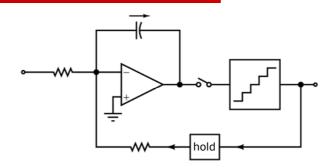
- □ Low-resolution (1-4b) DAC
- ☐ High-order noise-shaping (up to 5th)

 → lower OSR, wider BW
- Discrete-Time (DT) $\Sigma\Delta$ ADCs \rightarrow kT/C noise, **strong** input/reference buffers
- □ Continuous-Time (CT) $\Sigma\Delta$ ADCs ??

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Continuous-Time ΣΔ ADCs



- □ Sampling **after** loop filter ⇒ built-in anti-alias filtering
- ☐ First integrator typically has resistive inputs ⇒ simple input/reference buffers
- □ But width of DAC pulse is important ⇒ jitter sensitivity
 ⇒ multi-bit DAC (+ DWA to maintain linearity)

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69 of 95

Incremental ADCs

- \square Are $\Sigma\Delta$ ADCs whose integrators are **reset** at the start of every conversion
- Result is a **high-resolution** Nyquist-like ADC that produces the same result for the same DC input
- Used for quasi-static signals e.g. in sensor readout and instrumentation applications
- □ Unlike conventional Σ∆ ADCs can be easily multiplexed between multiple input channels
 - J. Markus, J. Silva, and G. C. Temes, "Theory and Applications of Incremental Delta Sigma converters," IEEE TCAS I, vol. 51, no. 4, pp. 678–690, Apr. 2004.

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Micropower Incremental ADCs

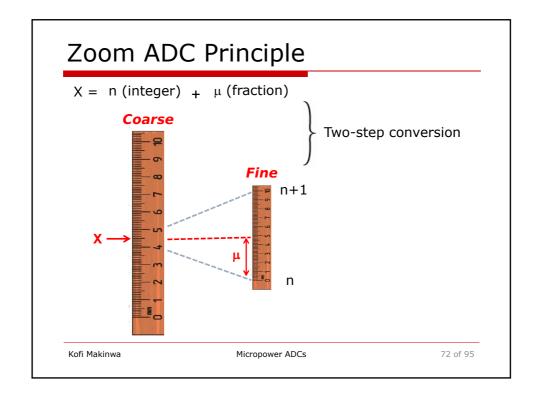
 $\Sigma\Delta$ ADC = one <u>critical</u> amplifier + relaxed comparator

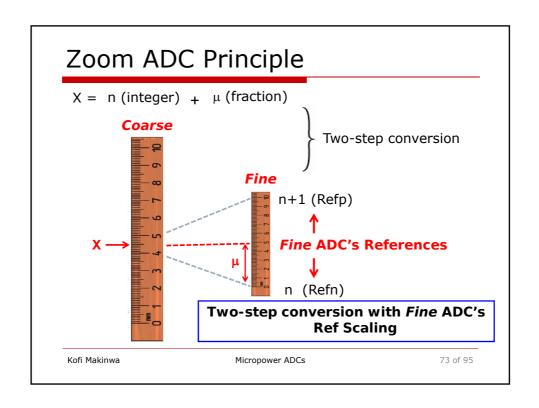
Design strategy

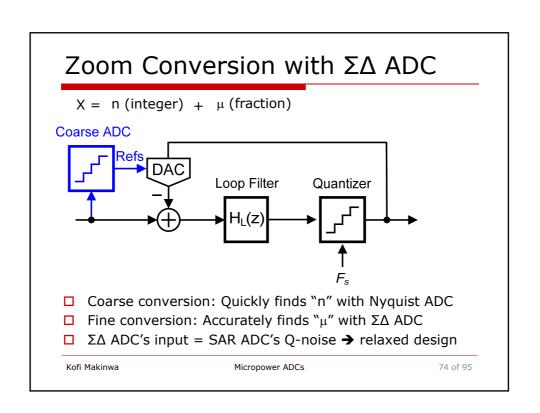
- □ Reduce loop filter swing → power-efficient amplifiers (especially the 1st) → "The Swing is the Thing"
- □ Use dynamic techniques (inherent averaging!) to mitigate offset, 1/f noise and **DAC mismatch**
- Case Study
 - Y. Chae et al., "A 6.3µW 20bit Incremental Zoom-ADC with 6ppm INL and 1µV Offset," ISSCC 2013.

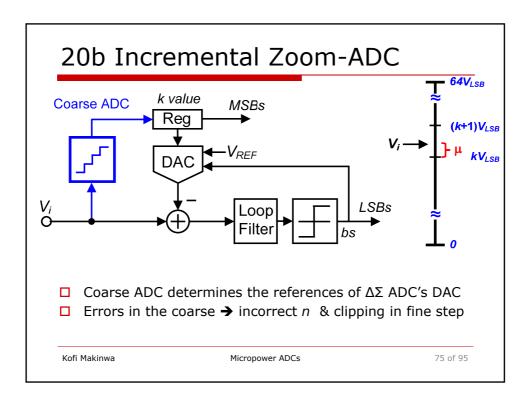
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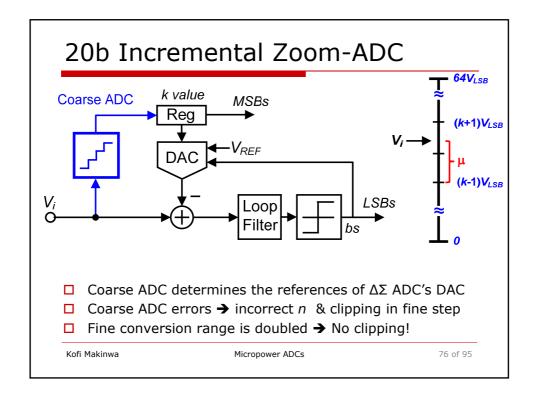
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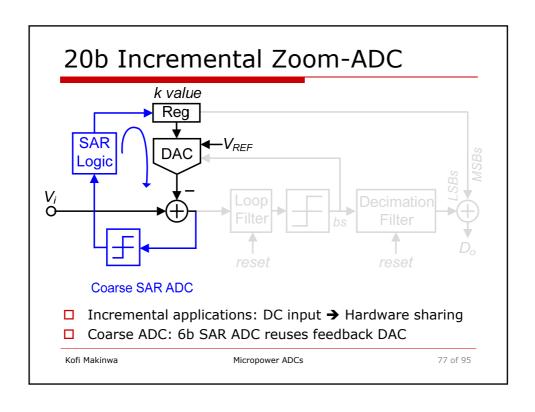


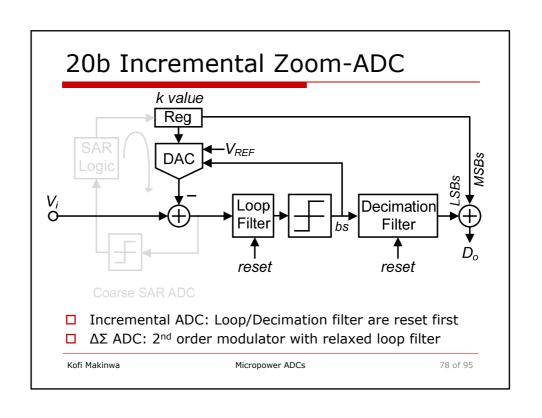


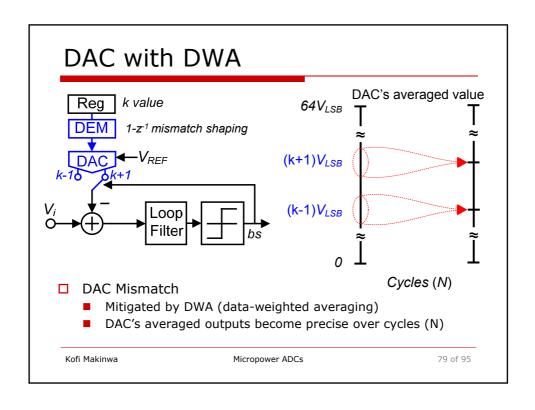


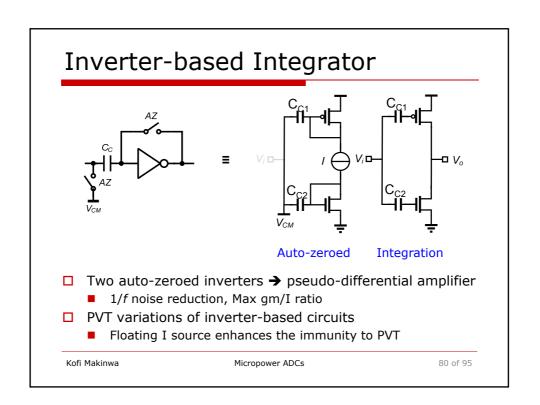


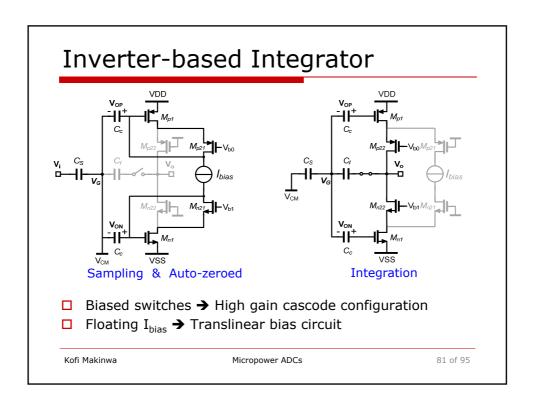


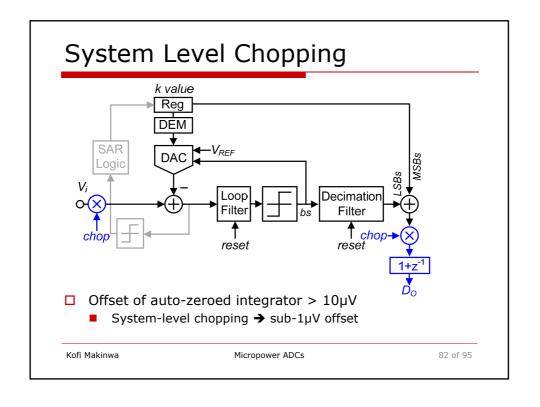


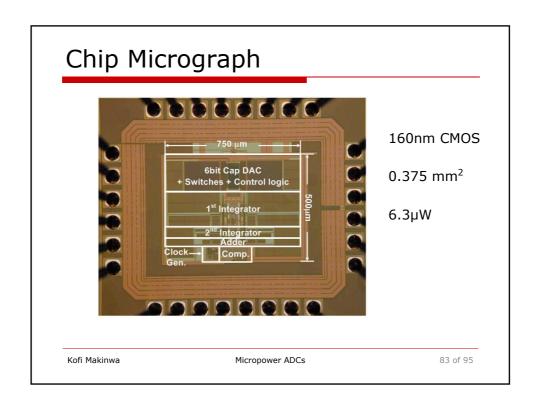


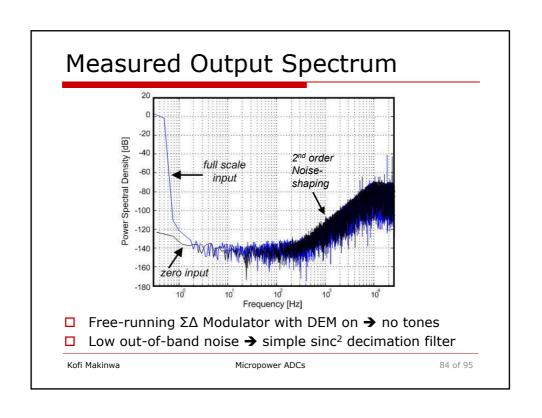


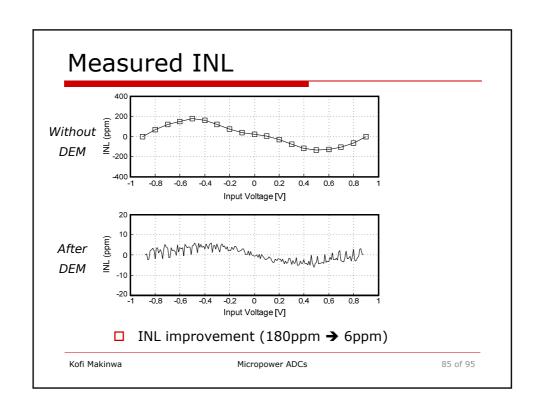


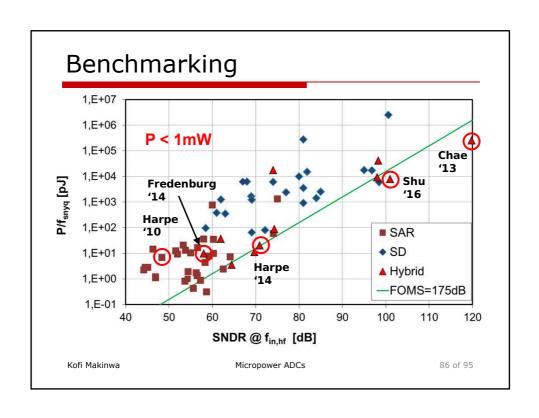


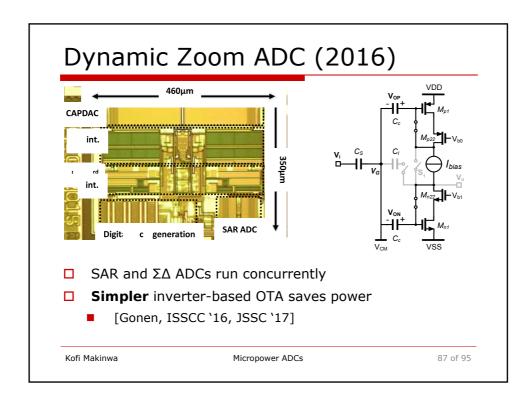










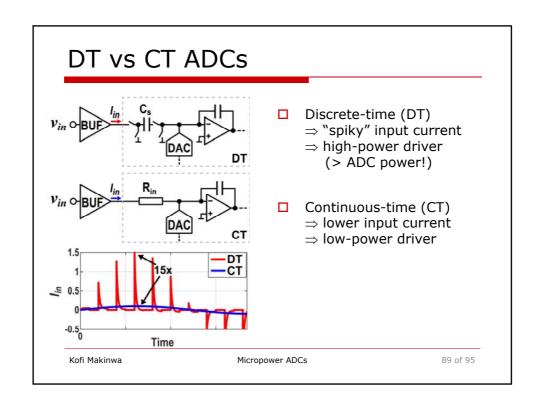


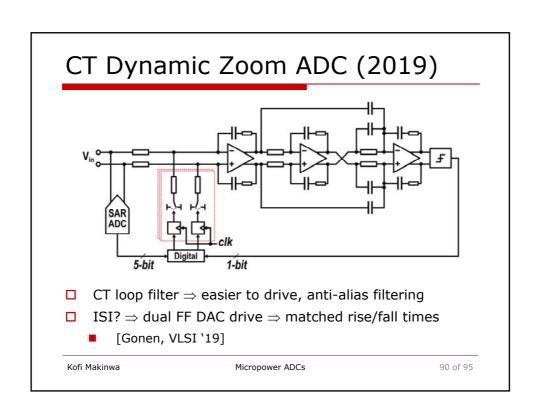
Dynamic Zoom ADC (2018) Asynchronous SAR \Rightarrow lower power, faster updating of $\Sigma\Delta$ ADCs references \Rightarrow even less swing So current-reuse OTA with static biasing \Rightarrow less power [Karmakar, ISSCC '18]

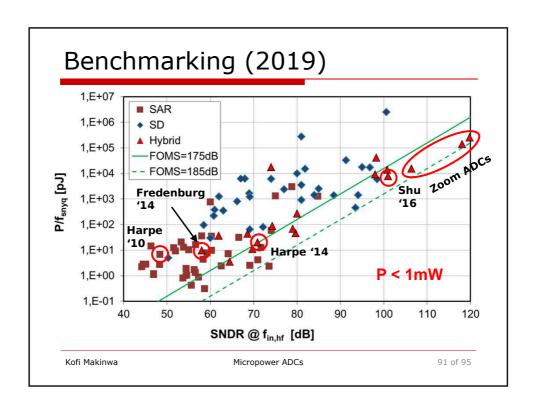
Micropower ADCs

88 of 95

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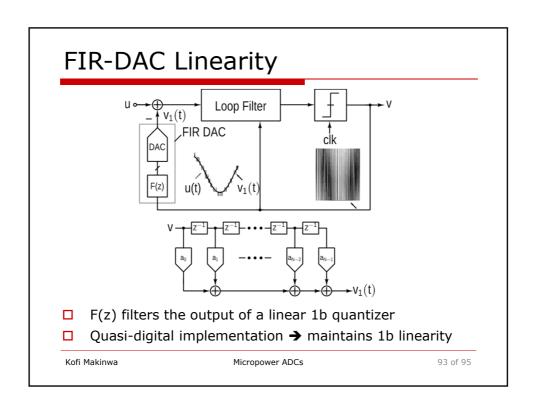


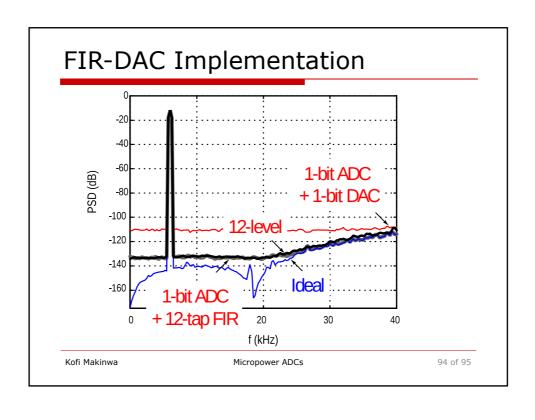
FIR-DAC

- □ Continuous-Time (CT) ΣΔ ADCs → built-in anti-alias filtering, simpler buffers, more efficient amplifiers (relaxed settling), but jitter sensitive
- Multi-bit DAC → smaller DAC steps → mitigates jitter sensitivity at the expense of linearity
- ☐ FIR-DAC → filter the output of a 1b ADC/DAC
- Case Study
 - S. Billa et al., "A 280µW 24kHz-BW 98.5 dB-SNDR chopped single-bit CT ΣΔM achieving < 10Hz 1/f noise corner without chopping artifacts," ISSCC 2016</p>

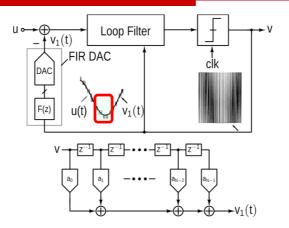
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FIR-DAC Implementation



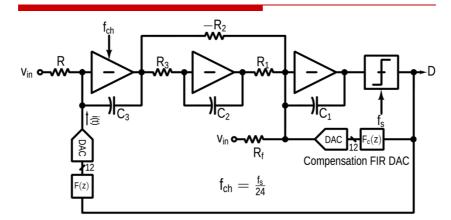
Reduced loop-filter swing $(u-v_1) \rightarrow j$ itter insensitivity, better linearity, power-efficient amplifiers

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95 of 95

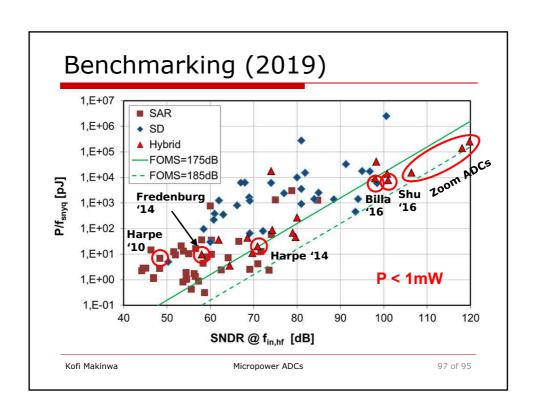
3rd Order CTDSM Architecture



- □ Second DAC compensates for FIR-DAC delay
- ☐ Active RC integrators (the 1st is chopped)

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Summary

- □ Micropower ADCs \rightarrow SAR or ΣΔ ADCs
- □ SAR ADCs are lower power, but their resolution is limited to 10-12b without calibration
- More resolution can be achieved by the use of oversampling and noise-shaping
- □ Chopping and/or mismatch shaping → higher resolution
- ☐ Use of low-swing topologies facilitates the use of power efficient amplifiers e.g. inverters and dynamic amplifiers
- □ Hybrid architectures that combine SAR and $\Sigma\Delta$ ADCs → low power **and** high resolution!

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Acknowledgements

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For generously sharing their slides

- □ Thank-You for Your Attention!
- Any questions?



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Micropower ADCs

Recent Literature (1)

Sensor Interfaces with Micropower ADCs

- K. Souri et al., "A CMOS Temperature Sensor With a Voltage-Calibrated Inaccuracy of ±0.15 °C (3σ) from -55 to 125 °C," JSCC 2013
- H. Ha et al., "A 160 nW 63.9 fJ/conversion-step Capacitance-to-Digital Converter for Ultra-Low-Power Wireless Sensor Nodes," ISSCC 2014
- S. Oh et al., "15.4b Incremental Sigma-Delta Capacitance-to-Digital Converter with Zoom-in 9b Asynchronous SAR," VLSI 2014
- S.H. Shalmany et al., "A ±5 A Integrated Current-Sensing System With ±0.3 % Gain Error and 16 μA Offset, JSSC 2016
- □ C.-C. Tu et al., "A 0.06mm2 ± 50mV Range -82dB THD Chopper VCO-Based Sensor Readout Circuit in 40nm CMOS," VLSI 2017

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Recent Literature (2)

Micropower SAR ADCs

- M. van Elzakker et al., "A 10-bit Charge-Redistribution ADC Consuming 1.9 μW at 1 MS/s," JSSC 2010
- A. Shikata et al., "A 0.5 V 1.1 MS/sec 6.3 fJ/Conversion-Step SAR-ADC With Tri-Level Comparator in 40 nm CMOS," JSSC 2012
- P. Harpe et al., "A 10b/12b 40 kS/s SAR ADC With Data-Driven Noise Reduction Achieving up to 10.1b ENOB at 2.2 fJ/Conversion-Step," JSSC 2013.
- H-Y. Tai et al., "A 0.85 fJ/conversion-step 10b 200kS/s Subranging SAR ADC in 40nm CMOS," ISSCC 2014
- Y.-S. Hu et al., "A 510nW 12-bit 200kS/s SAR-Assisted SAR ADC Using a Re-Switching Technique," VLSI 2017
- A. AlMarashli et al., "A 107 dB SFDR, 80 kS/s Nyquist-Rate SAR ADC Using a Hybrid Capacitive and Incremental ΣΔ DAC," VLSI 2017

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Recent Literature (3)

Noise-shaping SAR ADCs

- K. Obata et al., "A 97.99 dB SNDR, 2 kHz BW, 37.1 μW Noise-Shaping SAR ADC with Dynamic Element Matching and Modulation Dither Effect," VLSI 2016
- Z. Chen et al., "A 9.35-ENOB, 14.8 fJ/Conv.-Step Fully-Passive Noise-Shaping SAR ADC," VLSI 2016
- W. Guo et al., "A 12b-ENOB 61µW noise-shaping SAR ADC with a passive integrator," ESSCIRC 2016
- S-E. Sieh et al., "A 0.44fJ/conversion-step 11b 600KS/s SAR ADC with Semi-Resting DAC," VLSI 2016
- Z. Chen et al., "A 2nd Order Fully-Passive Noise-Shaping SAR ADC with Embedded Passive Gain," A-SSCC 2016
- M. Miyahara et al., "An 84 dB Dynamic Range 62.5-625 kHz Bandwidth Clock-Scalable Noise-Shaping SAR ADC with Open-Loop Integrator using Dynamic Amplifier," CICC 2017
- W. Guo et al., "A 13b-ENOB 173dB-FoM 2nd -Order NS SAR ADC with Passive Integrators," VLSI 2017

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Recent Literature (4)

Micropower ΣΔ ADCs

- J. de Melo et al., "0.7 V 256 μW ΔΣ Modulator With Passive RC Integrators Achieving 76 dB DR in 2 MHz BW," VLSI 2015
- \square I. Khan et. al, "A Low-Power Gm-C based CT ΔΣ Audio-Band ADC in 1.1V 65nm CMOS," VLSI 2015
- B. Gonen et al., "A 1.65mW 0.16mm2 Dynamic Zoom-ADC with 107.5dB DR in 20kHz BW," ISSCC 2016
- A. Sanyal et al., "A 18.5-fJ/step VCO-Based 0-1 MASH DS ADC with Digital Background Calibration," VLSI 2016
- C. de Berti et al., "A 106 dB A-Weighted DR Low-Power Continuous-Time Sigma Delta Modulator for MEMS Microphones," JSSC 2016
- S. Lee et al., "A 300-µW Audio ΔΣ Modulator With 100.5-dB DR Using Dynamic Bias Inverter," TCAS-I 2016
- M. Jang et al., "A 55µW 93.1dB-DR 20kHz-BW Single-Bit CT ΔΣ Modulator with Negative R-Assisted Integrator Achieving 178.7dB FoM in 65nm CMOS," VLSI 2017

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Recent Literature (5)

- Y. Zhang et al., "A Two-Capacitor SAR-Assisted Multi-Step Incremental ADC with a Single Amplifier Achieving 96.6 dB SNDR over 1.2 kHz BW," CICC 2017
- S. Li and N. Sun, "A 0.028mm2 19.8fJ/step 2nd-Order VCO-Based CT ΔΣ Modulator Using an Inherent Passive Integrator and Capacitive Feedback in 40nm CMOS," VLSI 2017
- S. Karmakar et al., "A 280µW dynamic-zoom ADC with 120dB DR and 118dB SNDR in 1kHz BW," ISSCC 2018
- H. Chandrakumar, D. Marković, "A 15.2-ENOB Continuous-Time ΔΣ ADC for a 7.3µW 200mVpp-Linear-Input-Range Neural Recording Front-End," ISSCC 2018
- □ C. Lee et al., "A 1.2V 68µW 98.2dB-DR Audio Continuous-Time Delta-Sigma Modulator," VLSI 2018
- B. Gonen et al., "A Low Power Continuous-Time Zoom ADC for Audio Applications," VLSI 2019

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