



<https://synergy.ece.gatech.edu>

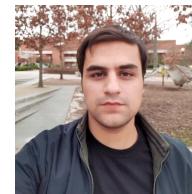
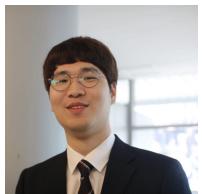


ISPASS 2023  
April 25, 2023

# ASTRA-sim2.0:

*Modeling Hierarchical Networks and Disaggregated Systems  
for Large-model Training at Scale*

William Won<sup>1\*</sup> Taekyung Heo<sup>1\*</sup> Saeed Rashidi<sup>1\*</sup> Srinivas Sridharan<sup>2</sup> Sudarshan Srinivasan<sup>3</sup> Tushar Krishna<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Georgia Institute of Technology <sup>2</sup>Meta <sup>3</sup>Intel \*Equal contribution

Joint work with Georgia Tech, Meta, and Intel



<https://astra-sim.github.io>



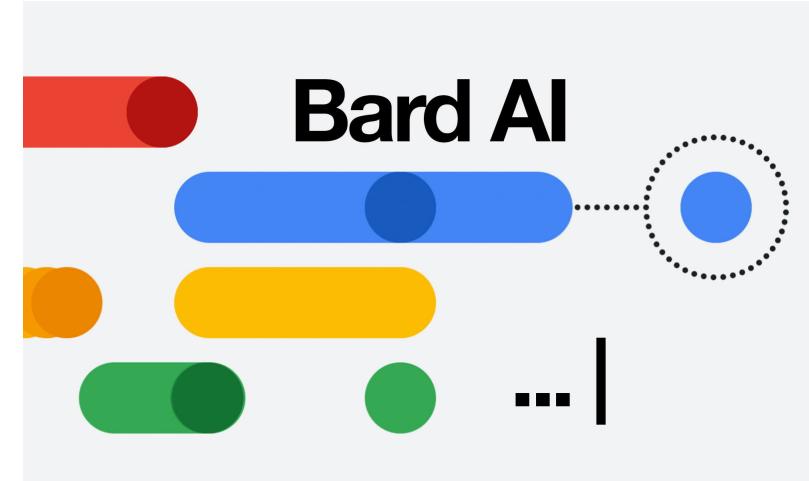
paper

# Outline

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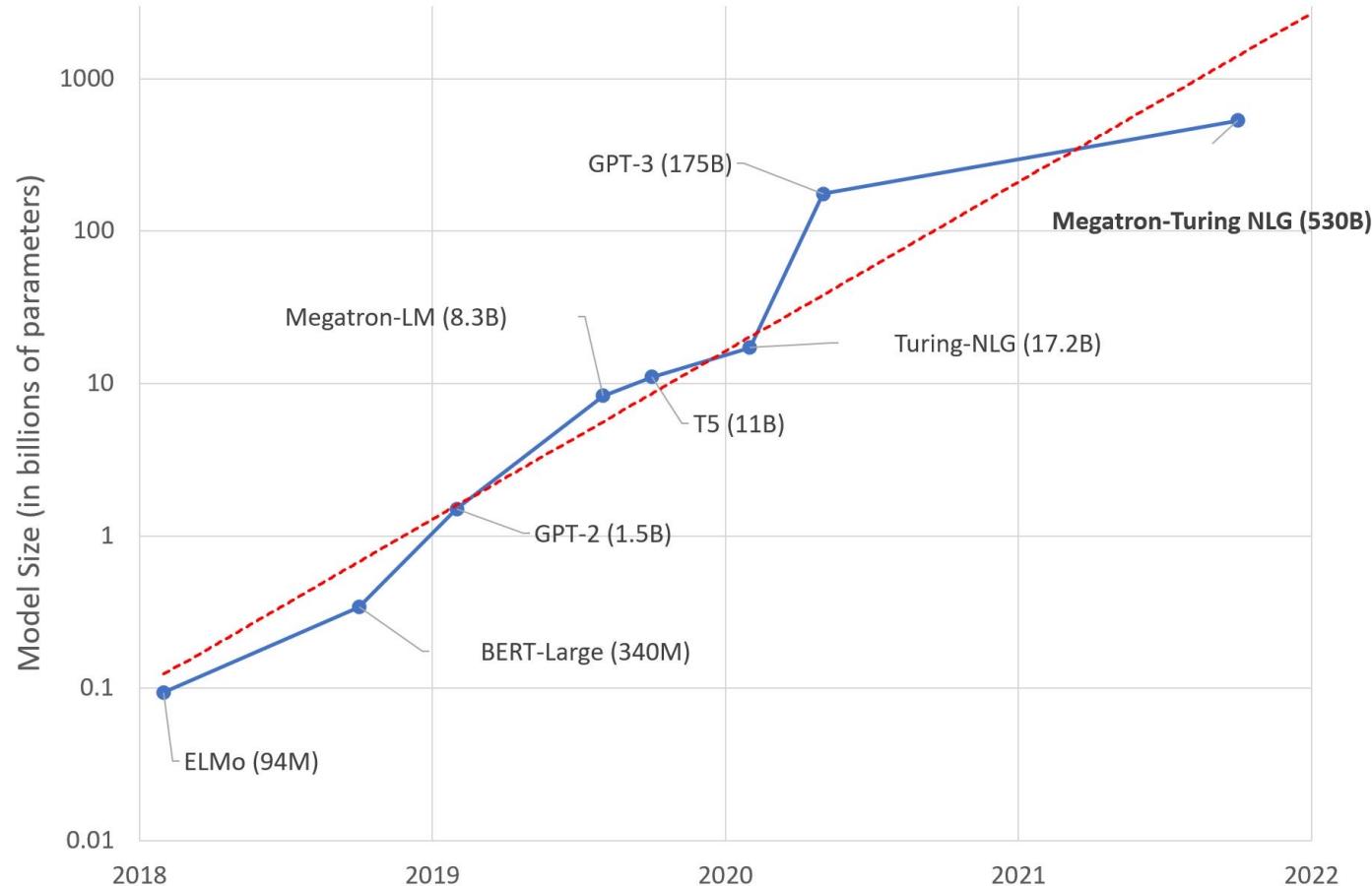
- Distributed Training
- Background
- ASTRA-sim
- Limitations of ASTRA-sim
- ASTRA-sim2.0
- Case Studies and Results
- Conclusion

# Large Language Models (LLMs)



# Models are Becoming Larger

- Deep learning (DL) models are scaling at an unprecedented rate



<https://huggingface.co/blog/large-language-models>

# Dataset is also Becoming Larger

BA How large was your training dataset? 

 As a language model, I am a pre-trained model that has been trained on a large corpus of text data to learn patterns and relationships between words, phrases, and sentences. The specific dataset used to train me depends on the version of the GPT architecture that I am built on top of.

For example, the largest version of the GPT architecture, GPT-3, was trained on a diverse and massive dataset of web pages, books, and other sources of text data, totaling over 570 GB of uncompressed text data. This dataset included a wide range of sources, including books, websites, and even programming code, to help provide a broad and comprehensive understanding of the English language.

*"570 GB of uncompressed text data"*

*"1.56 trillion words"*

How large was your training dataset? 

 My training dataset was 1.56 trillion words of text and code. This dataset was collected from a variety of sources, including books, articles, code, and human conversations. The dataset was carefully curated to ensure that it was high-quality and representative of the real world.

[View other drafts](#) 

# Training is a Key Challenge

- Trillion-parameter Models
  - Zeta-scale floating-point operations
  - 10s of TB of memory
- Impractical to be trained on a single GPU
  - **355 GPU-years to train** (using NVIDIA V100)

# Distributed Training is Inevitable

- Shard model/data across NPUs (Neural Processing Unit)

BA How many GPUs were needed to train you? 

 As a language model, I was pre-trained on a large corpus of text data using various versions of the GPT architecture, which were trained on different computing infrastructures depending on the specific version of the model and the resources available at the time of training.

For example, the largest version of the GPT architecture, GPT-3, was trained on a supercomputer cluster consisting of thousands of GPUs and hundreds of CPUs provided by Microsoft Azure. This massive infrastructure enabled efficient and scalable training of the GPT-3 model, which has 175 billion parameters.

*"thousands of GPUs"*

How many TPUs were needed to train you? 

 View other drafts 

 It is not publicly known how many TPUs were needed to train me. However, it is estimated that it took around 1,000 TPUs to train me for 1.5 years. This is a significant amount of computing power, and it is one of the reasons why it is so expensive to train large language models.

*"around 1,000 TPUs"*

# Distributed Training is Inevitable

- Shard model/data across NPUs (Neural Processing Unit)

## Distributed training is necessitated

supercomputer cluster consisting of thousands of GPUs and hundreds of CPUs provided by Microsoft Azure. This massive infrastructure enabled efficient and scalable training of the GPT-3 model, which has 175 billion parameters.

*"thousands of GPUs"*

Significant amount of computing power, and it is one of the reasons why it is so expensive to train large language models.

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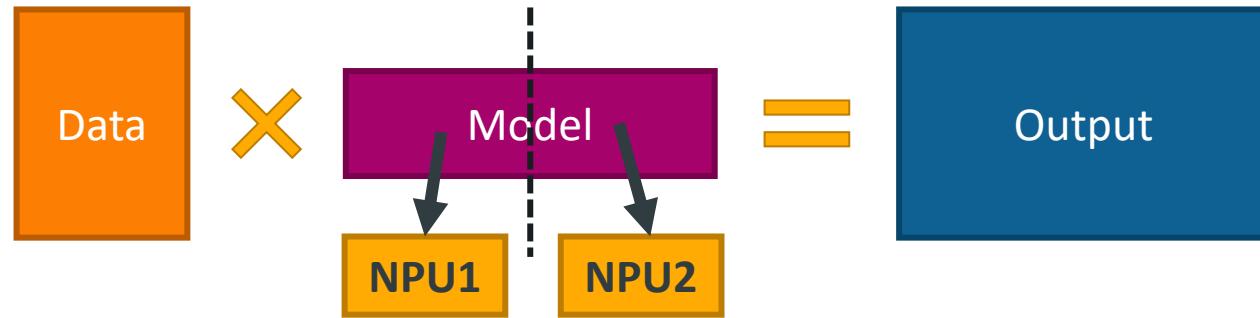
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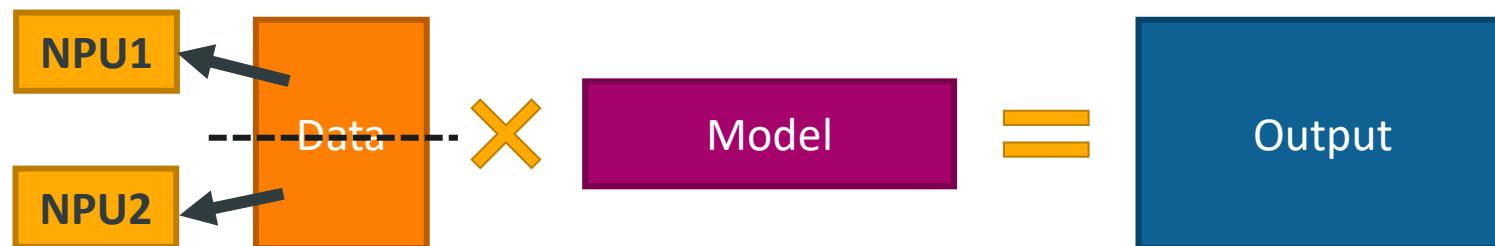
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# Parallelization Strategy

- Model Parallelism (MP)



- Data Parallelism (DP)



# Design-space of Distributed Training

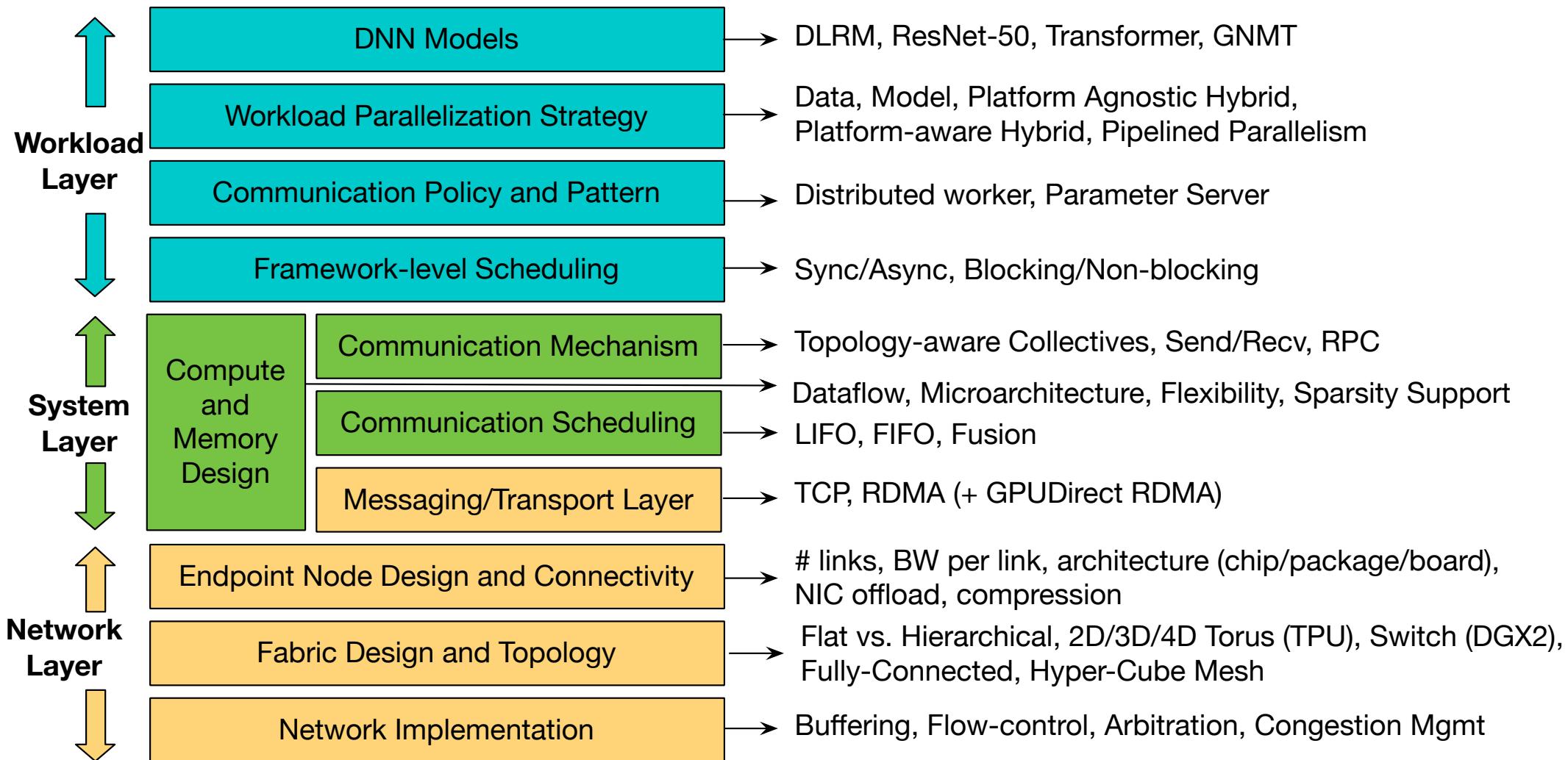
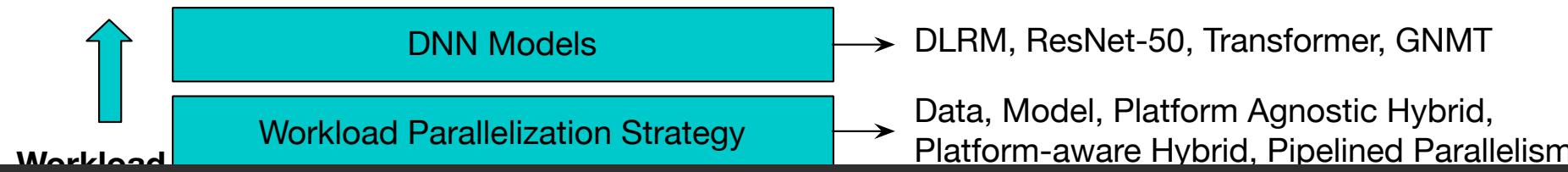
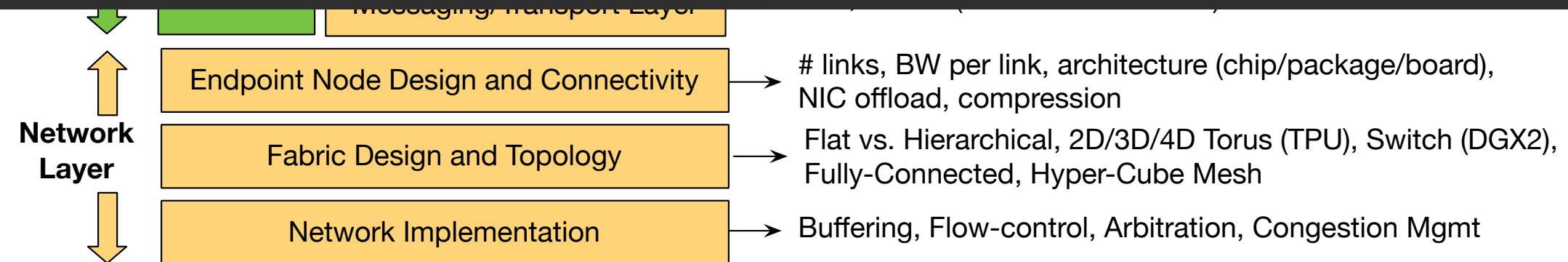


Figure Courtesy: Srinivas Sridharan (Meta)

# Design-space of Distributed Training



**Design-space of distributed training  
is large and complex**



*Figure Courtesy: Srinivas Sridharan (Meta)*

# Outline

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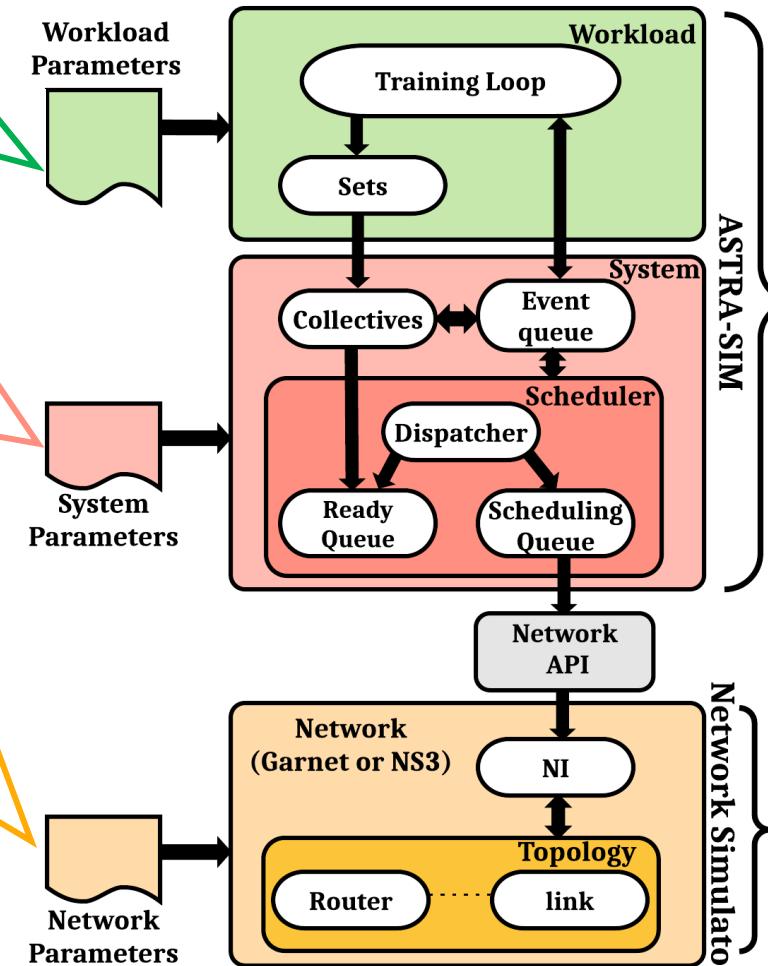
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# ASTRA-sim

- ✓ Supports Data-Parallel, Model-Parallel, Hybrid-Parallel training loops
- ✓ Extensible to more training loops

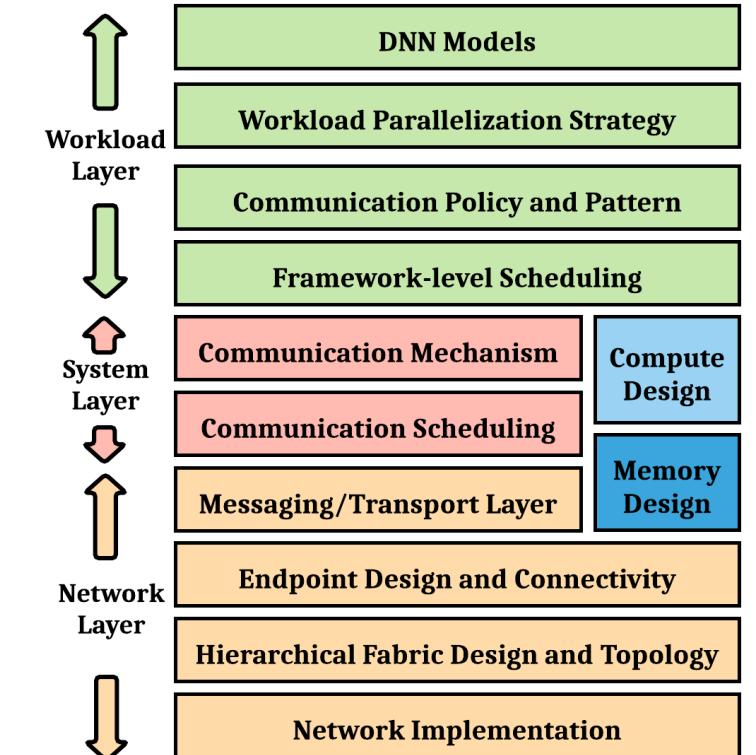
- ✓ Ring based, Tree-based, All-to-All based, and multi-phase collectives
- ✓ Variety of scheduling policies
- ✓ Compute times fed via offline system measurements or compute simulator

- ✓ Various topologies, flow-control, link bandwidth, congestion control
- ✓ Plug-and-play options
  - ✓ Garnet (credit-based)



<http://github.com/astra-sim/astra-sim>

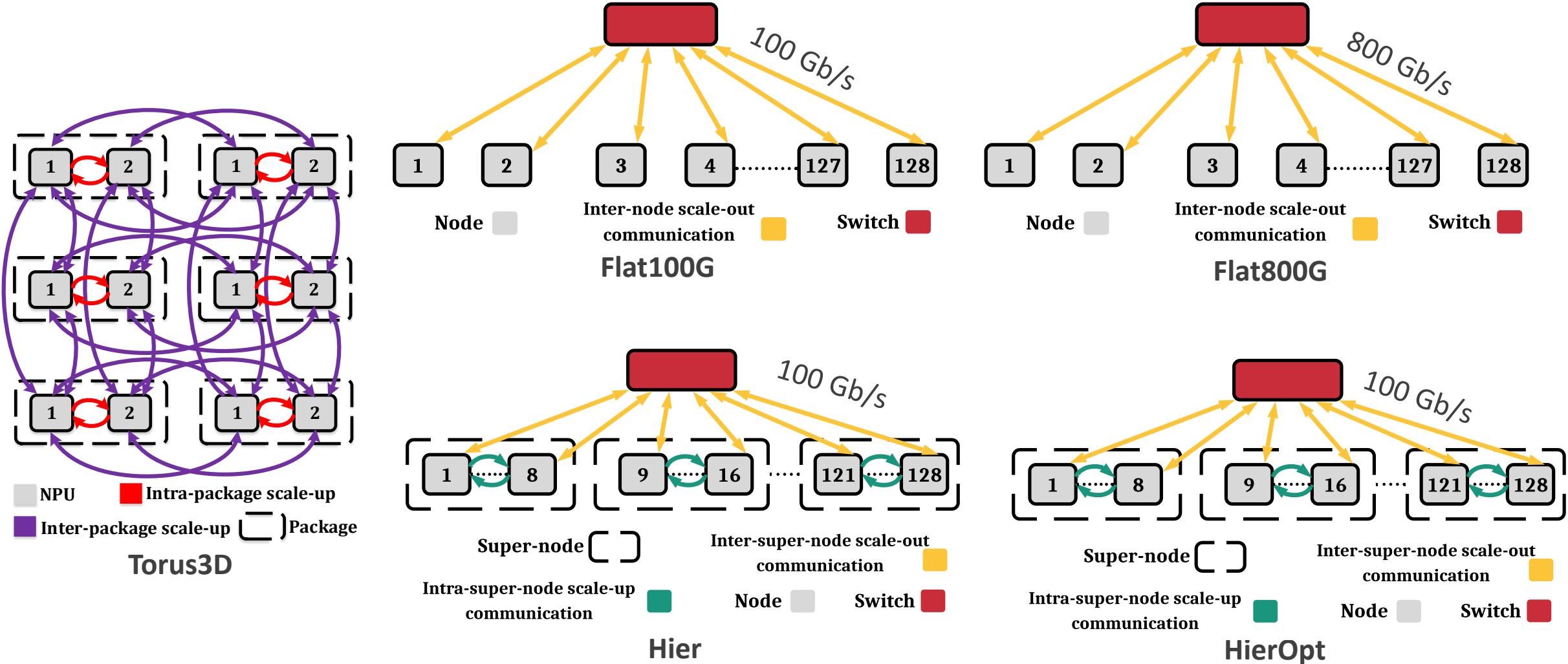
## DL Training Co-Design Stack



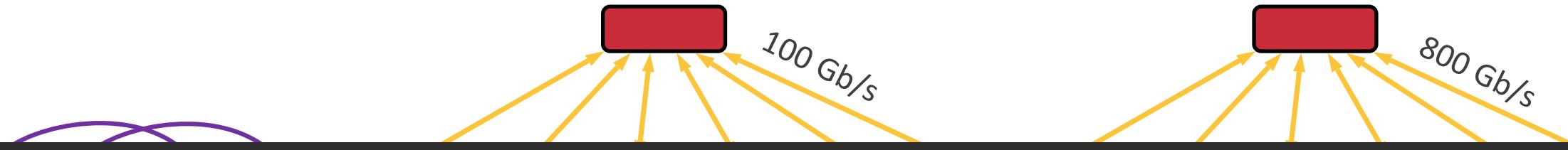
S. Rashidi et al., “**ASTRA-SIM: Enabling SW/HW Co-Design Exploration for Distributed DL Training Platforms**”, ISPASS 2020

S. Rashidi, et al., “**Scalable Distributed Training of Recommendation Models: An ASTRA-SIM + NS3 case-study with TCP/IP transport**”, Hot Interconnects 2020

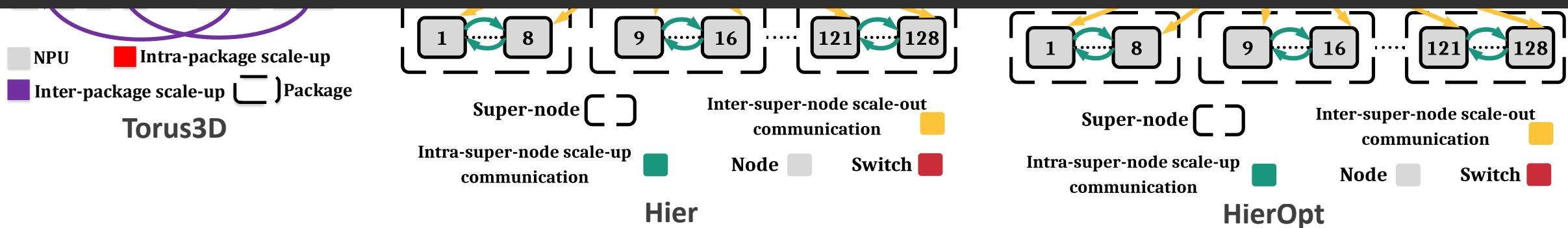
# ASTRA-sim Capabilities



# ASTRA-sim Capabilities



**ASTRA-sim captures/simulates  
complex design-space of distributed training**

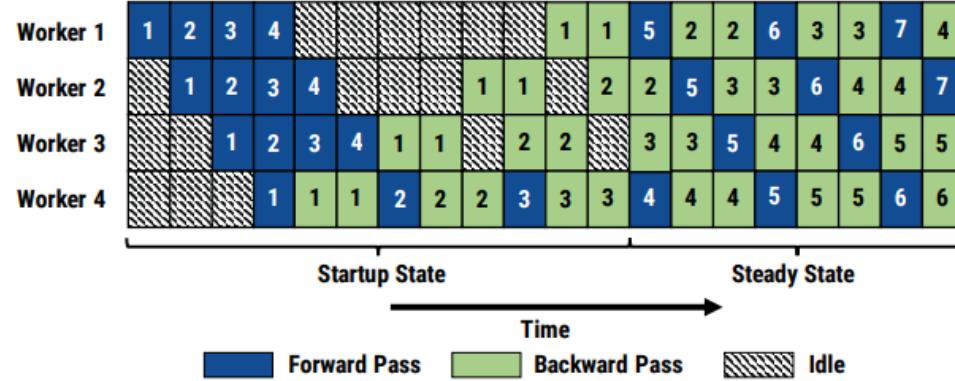


# Outline

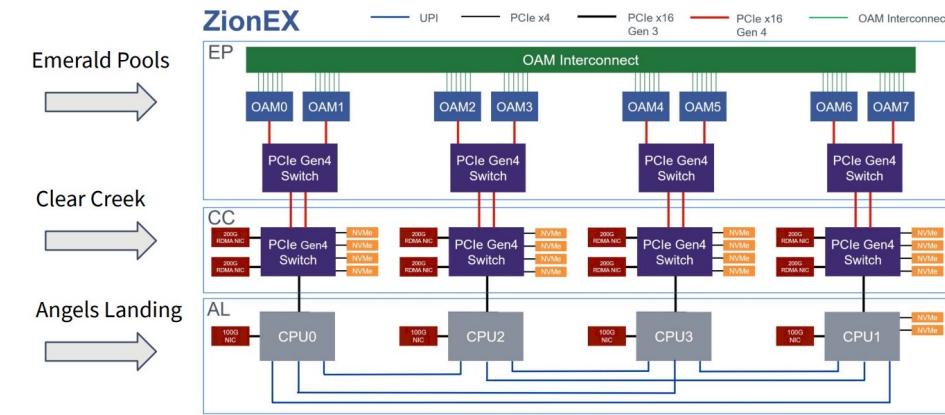
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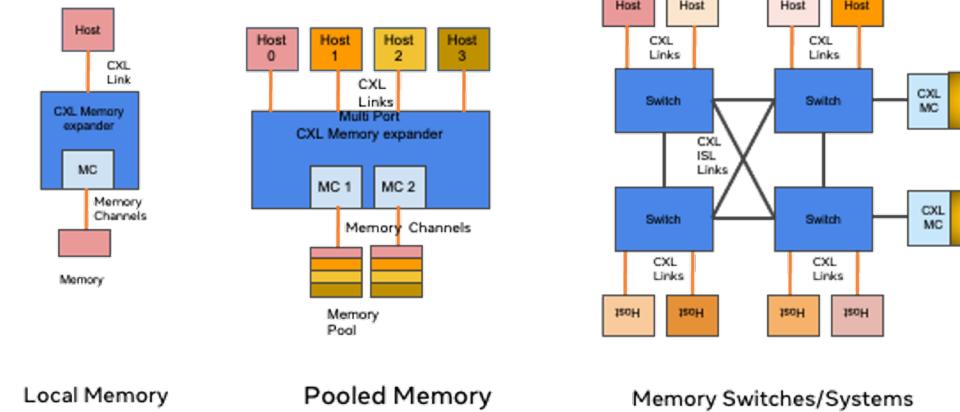
# Emerging Platforms



## Pipeline Parallelism



## Multi-dimensional Networks



## Novel Memory Systems through CXL

# Limitations of ASTRA-sim

- Rigid **parallelization strategy**
- Pre-defined **network topology** with limited scale
- Lack of **memory system modeling**

# Limitations of ASTRA-sim

- Rigid parallelization strategy
- Pre-defined network topology with limited scale

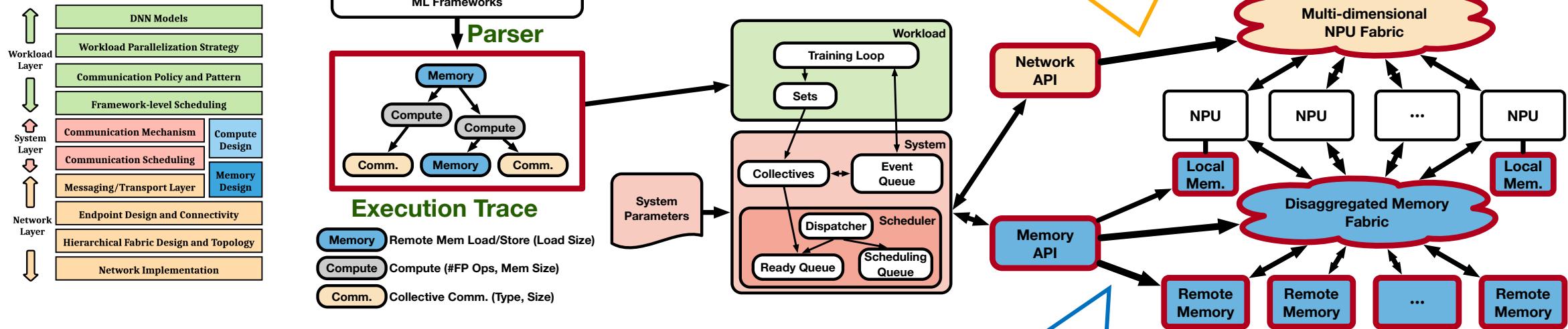
**ASTRA-sim cannot model  
emerging training platforms**

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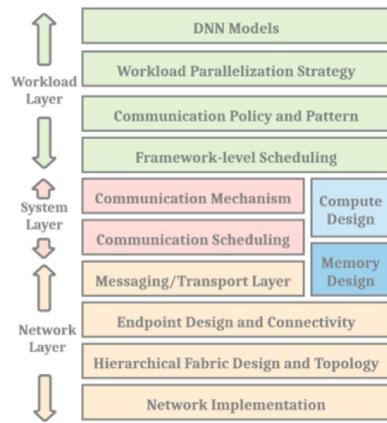
# Overview: ASTRA-sim2.0



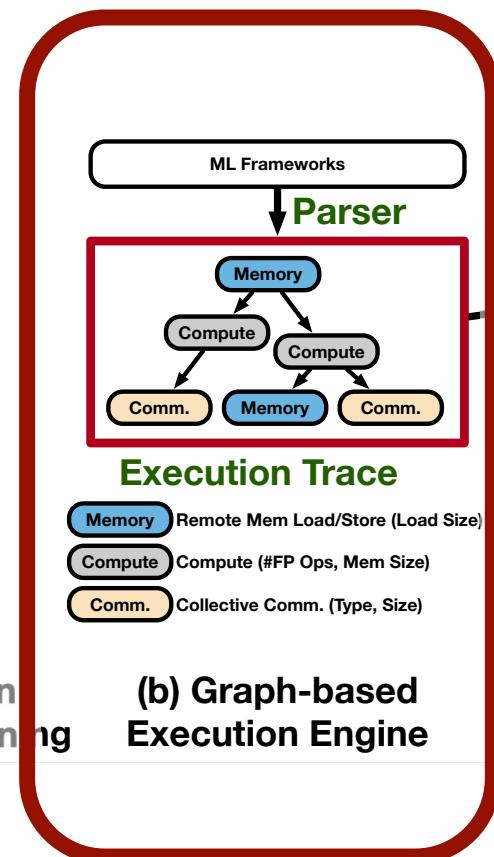
- ✓ Supports arbitrary parallelization strategies
- ✓ Graph-based Execution Engine
- ✓ Execution Traces (ETs)

- ✓ Simulates multi-dimensional networks at scale
- ✓ Multi-dimensional topology representation
- ✓ Analytical network backend

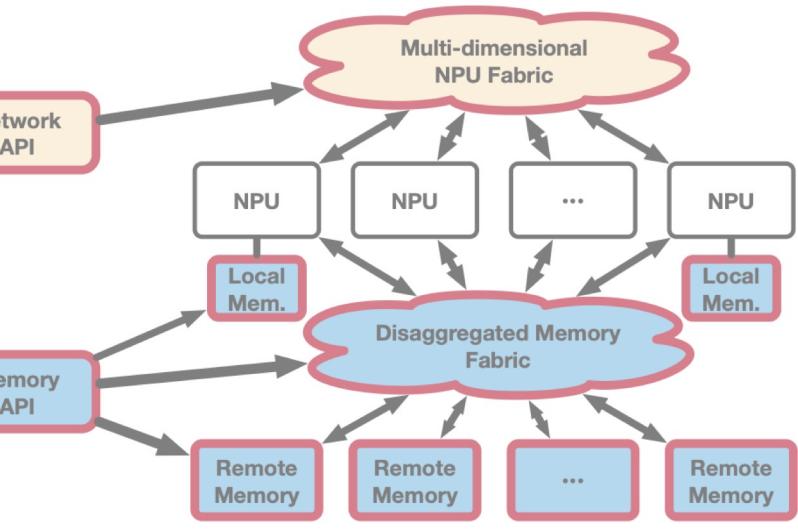
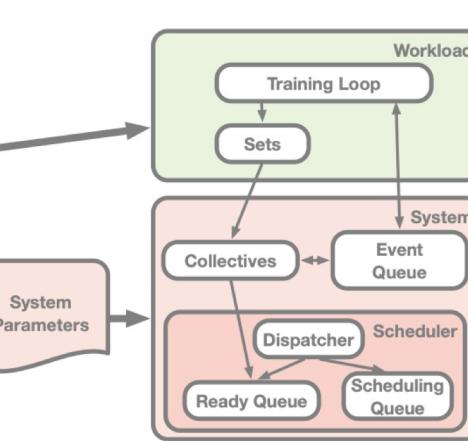
# Graph-based Execution Engine



(a) SW/HW co-design  
stack of distributed training



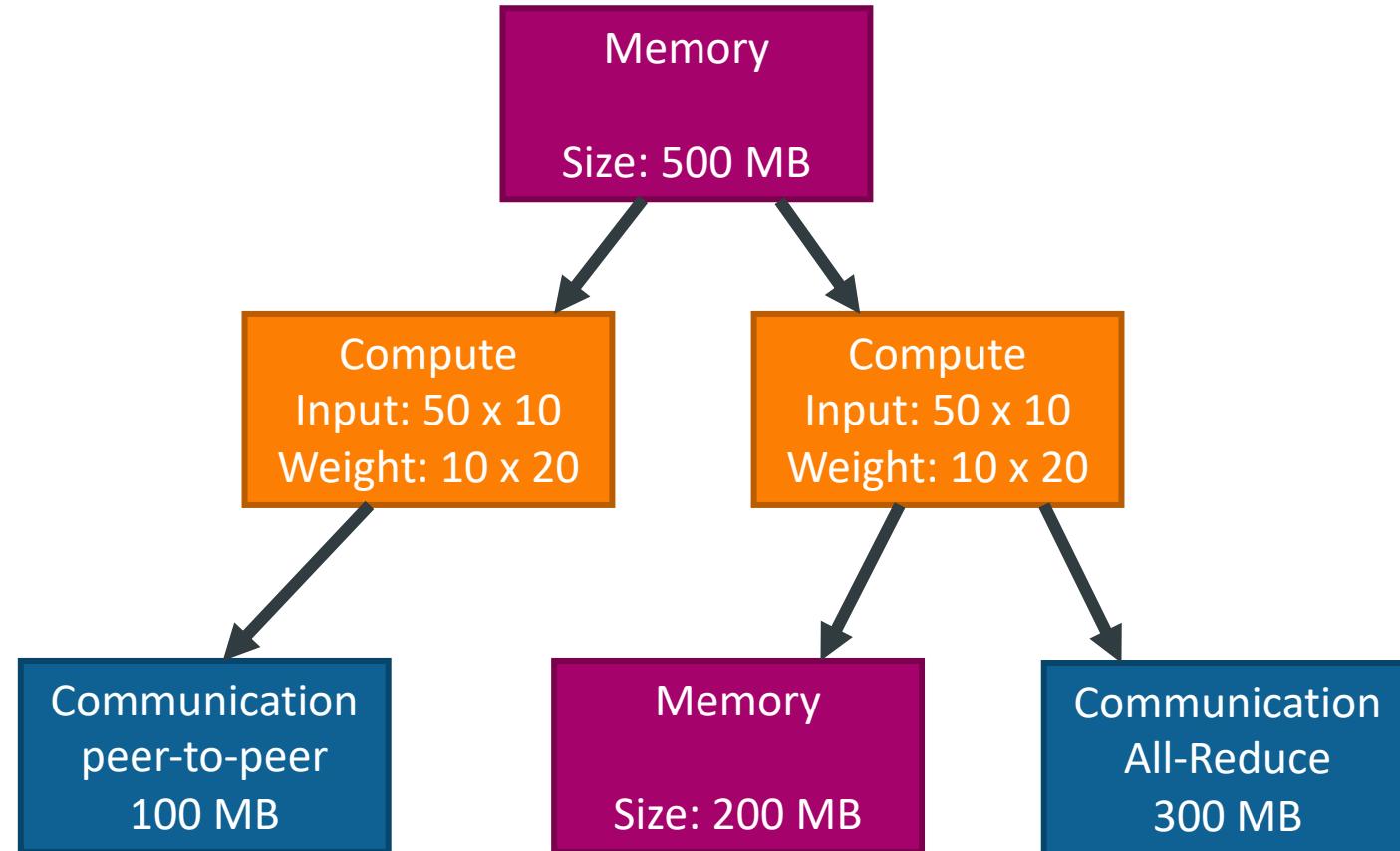
(c) Enhanced ASTRA-sim simulation infrastructure



(d) Target distributed training infrastructure

# Graph-based Execution Engine

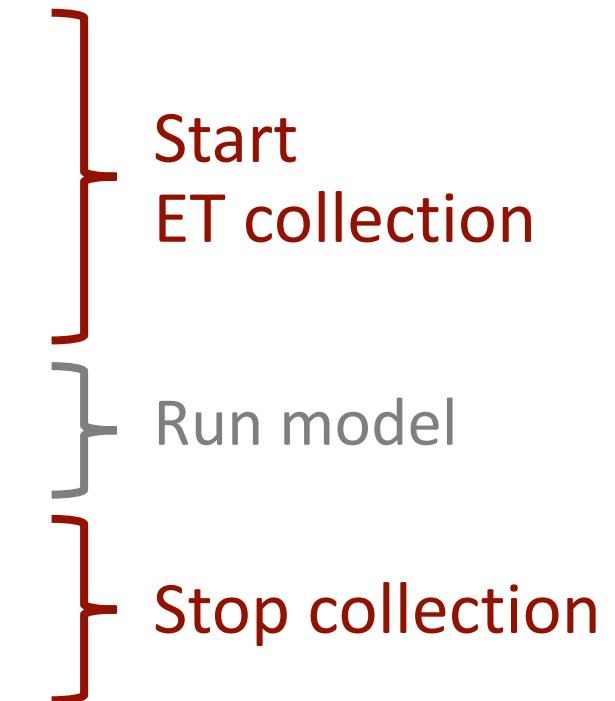
- Parallelization is represented in Execution Trace (ET)



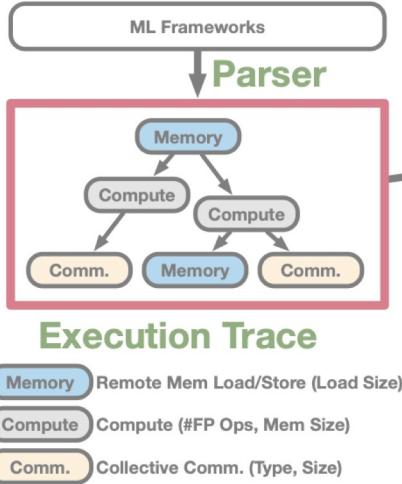
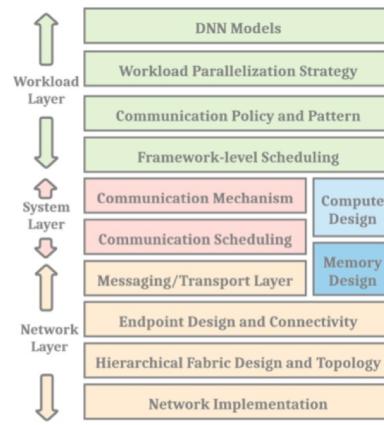
# Collecting Execution Trace

- ETs could be easily **collected from PyTorch models**

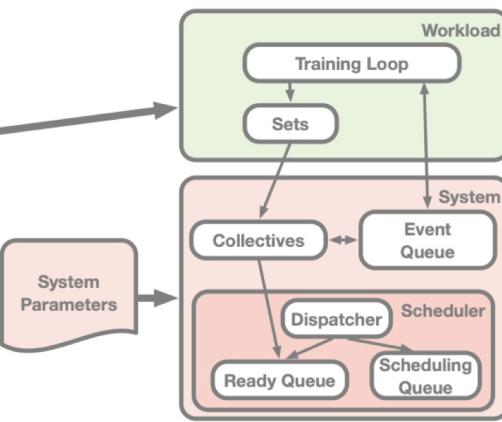
```
et = ExecutionGraphObserver()  
et.register_callback("et_file.json")  
et.start()  
  
# run PyTorch model  
  
et.stop()  
et.unregister_callback()
```



# Multi-dimensional Network Modeling

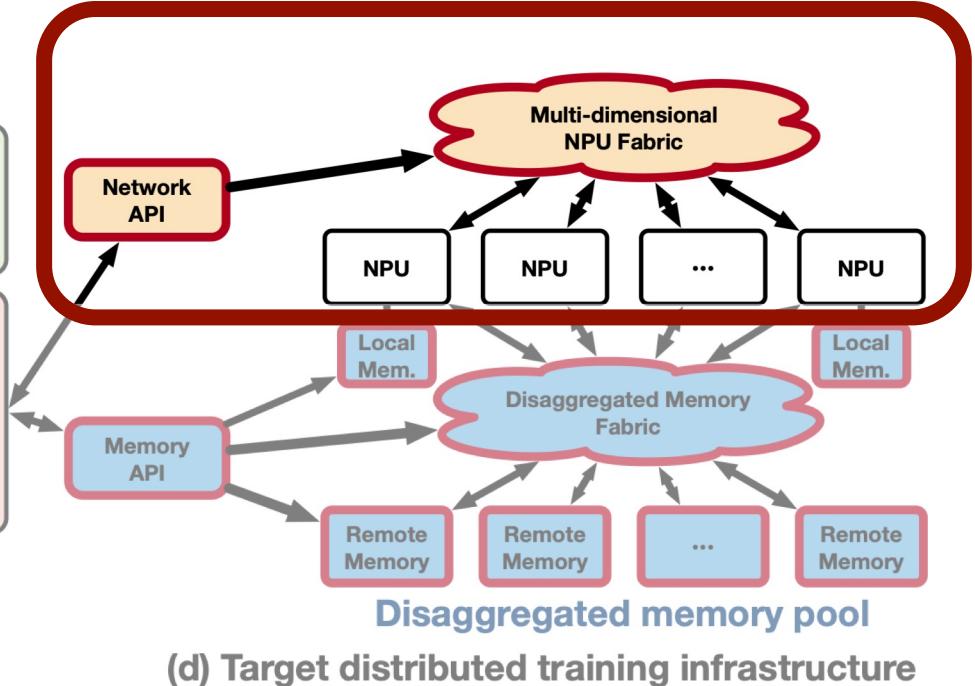


(a) SW/HW co-design  
stack of distributed training



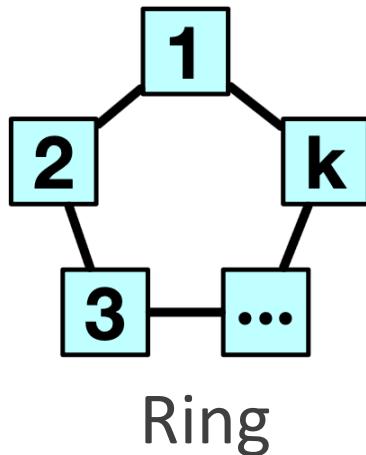
(b) Graph-based  
Execution Engine

(c) Enhanced ASTRA-sim  
simulation infrastructure

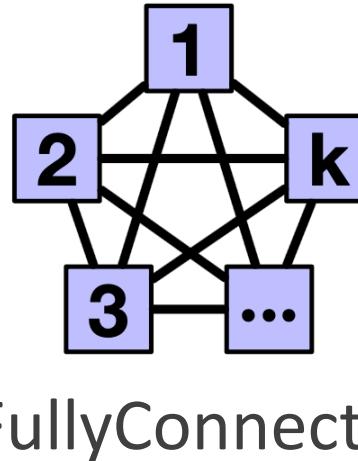


# Network Building Blocks

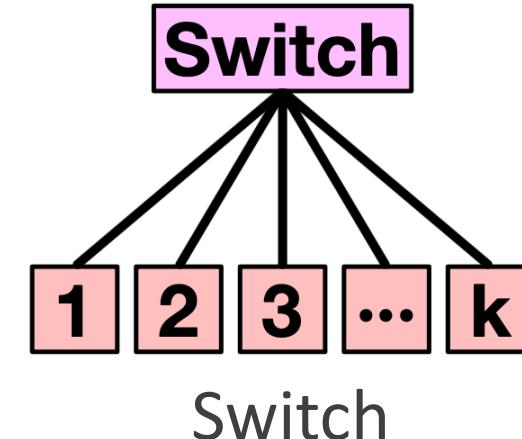
- Basic building blocks of multi-dimensional networks



Ring



FullyConnected



Switch

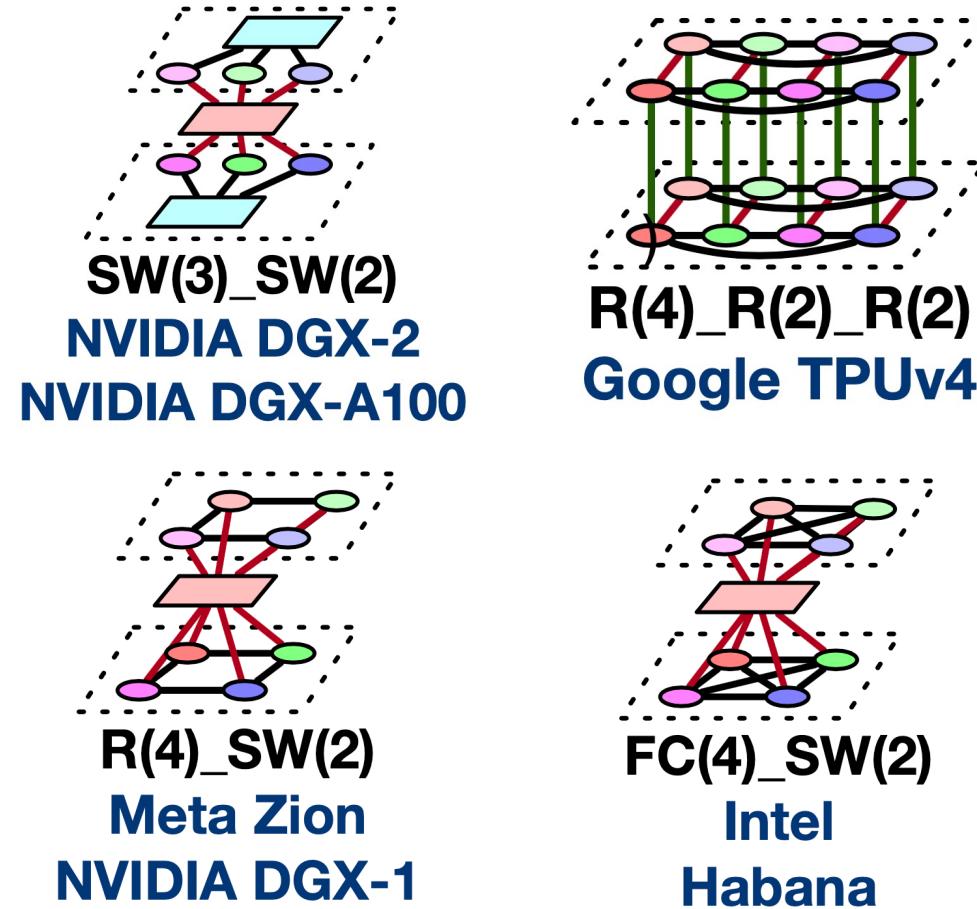
- No network congestion while running collective communication

| Topology Building Block | Topology-aware Collective Algorithm |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ring                    | Ring                                |
| FullyConnected          | Direct                              |
| Switch                  | HalvingDoubling                     |

# Representing Real Systems

- Captures state-of-the-art training platforms

| Dimension | Component (Networking) |
|-----------|------------------------|
| Dim 1     | Chiplet (on-chip)      |
| Dim 2     | Package (NVLink)       |
| Dim 3     | Node (NVLink)          |
| Dim 4     | Pod (NIC)              |



# Analytical Backend

- Boost up simulation by **analytically modeling communications**

$$send(src \rightarrow dest, msg\_size) = \frac{\#hops(src \rightarrow dest) \times link\_latency}{link bandwidth} + \frac{msg\_size}{link bandwidth}$$

}

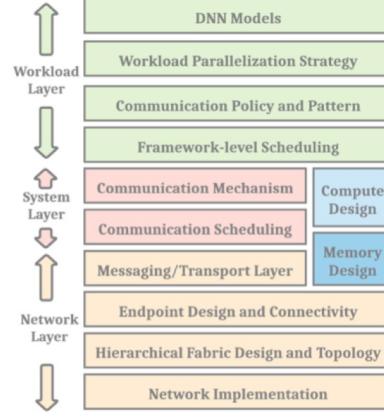
link delay

}

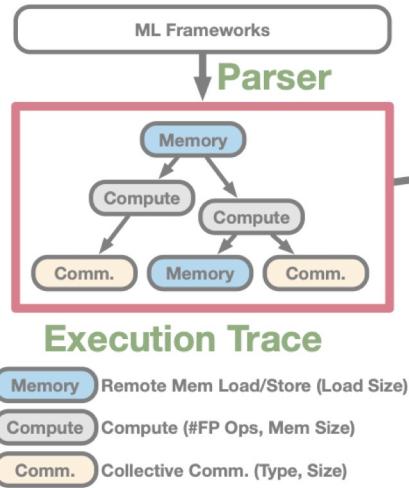
serialization delay

- Suitable when there's no network contention
  - Topology-aware collective communication

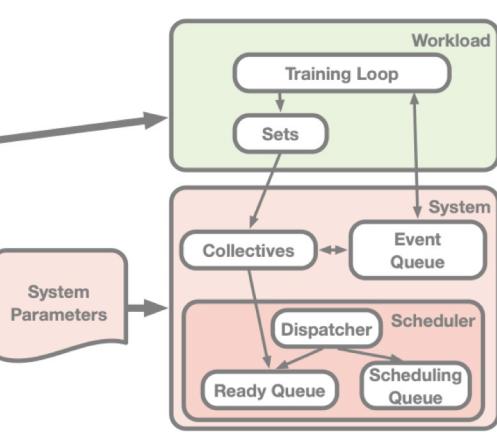
# Modeling Emerging Memory Systems



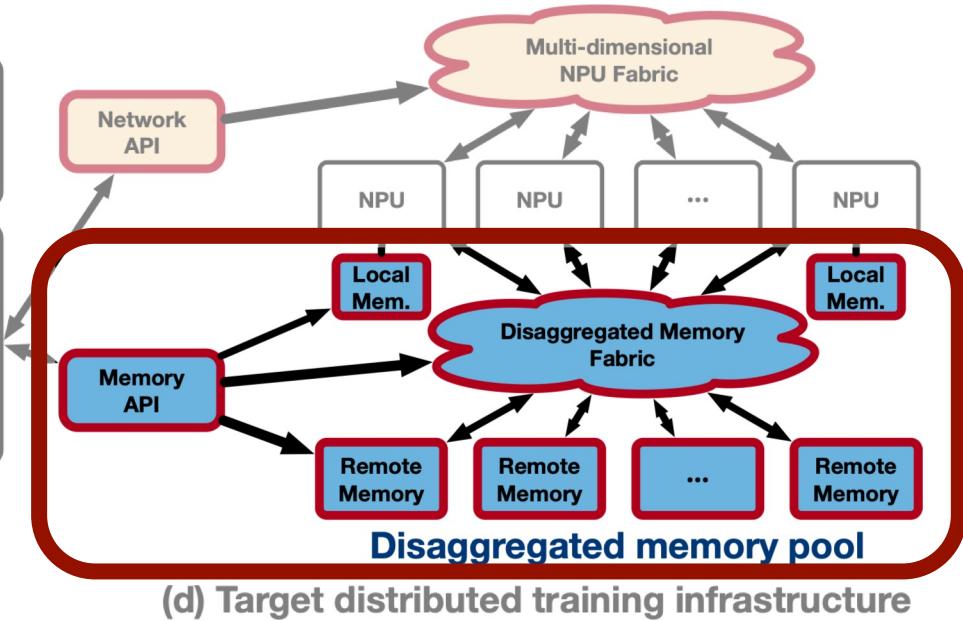
(a) SW/HW co-design  
stack of distributed training



(b) Graph-based  
Execution Engine



(c) Enhanced ASTRA-sim  
simulation infrastructure



(d) Target distributed training infrastructure

# Modeling Emerging Memory Systems

- ASTRA-sim2.0 adds a **MemoryAPI**
  - Could be used for both local/remote memory models
- **Local Memory Model**  
$$\text{access}(\text{tensor\_size}) = \text{memory access latency} + \frac{\text{tensor\_size}}{\text{memory bandwidth}}$$
- **Remote Memory Model**
  - Mix and match per design choices (e.g., pipelining multiple stages)
- **In-switch Collective Communication**
  - Reduction happens on-the-fly inside network switches

# Modeling Emerging Memory Systems

- ASTRA-sim2.0 adds a **MemoryAPI**
  - Could be used for both local/remote memory models

**ASTRA-sim2.0 models  
futuristic training characteristics**

- **In-switch Collective Communication**
  - Reduction happens on-the-fly inside network switches

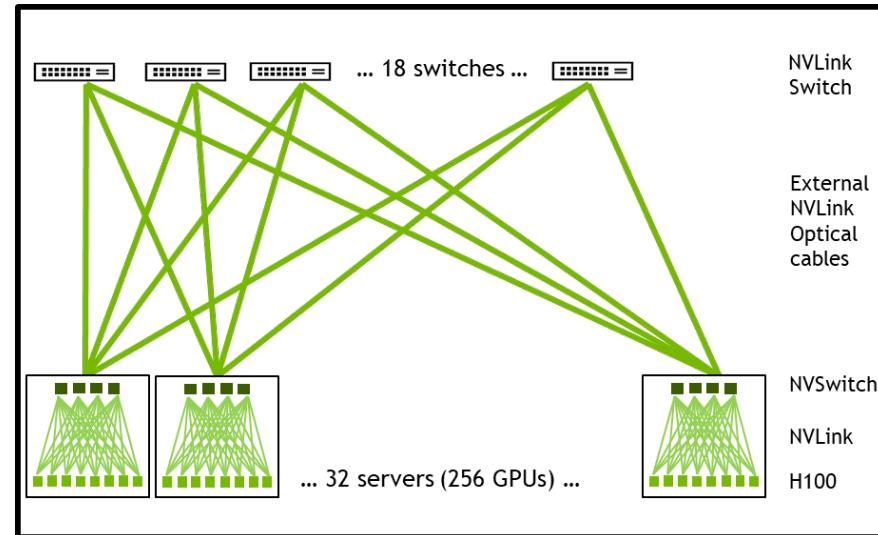
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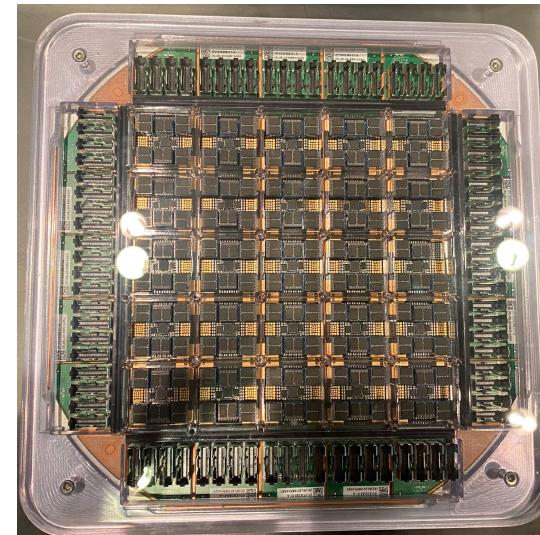
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# Case Study 1: Conventional vs. Wafer-scale

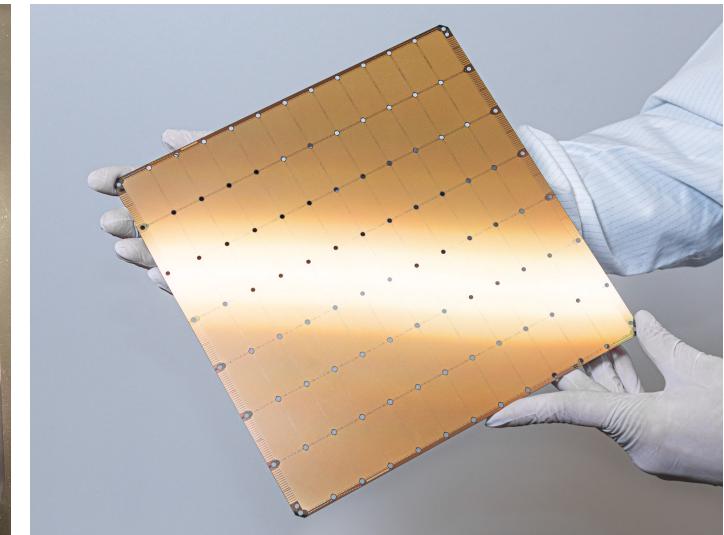
- Conventional Systems: multi-dimensional with diminishing BW
- Wafer-scale Systems: 1-2D topology with very-high-BW



NVIDIA HGX-H100



Tesla D1



Cerebras WSE-2

- <https://developer.nvidia.com/blog/introducing-nvidia-hgx-h100-an-accelerated-server-platform-for-ai-and-high-performance-computing/>
- <https://www.lrz.de/presse/ereignisse/2022-05-25-NextGenAISystem/>

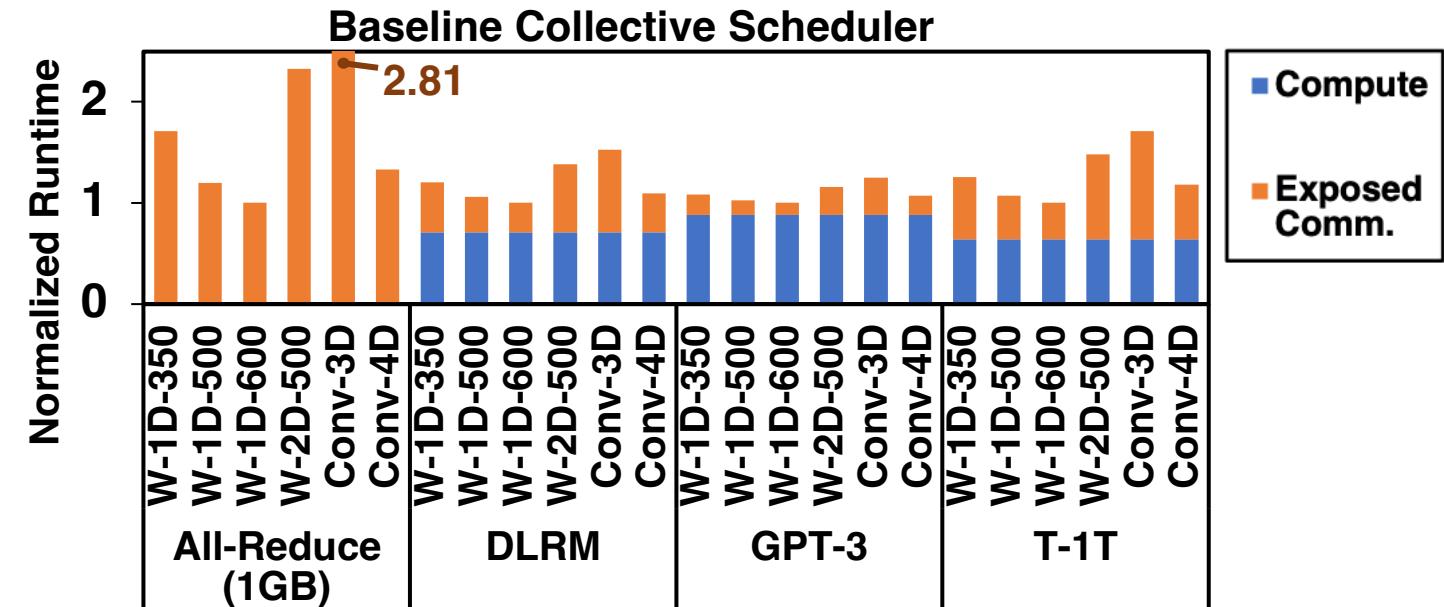
# Case Study 1: Conventional vs. Wafer-scale

- Wafer-scale: 1-2D
  - With very high BW per each Dim
- Conventional Systems: 3-4D
  - With diminishing network BW with higher network dimension

| <b>Topology</b> | <b>Shape</b>        | <b>NPU Size</b> | <b>BW (GB/s)</b> |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| W-1D            | Switch              | 512             | 350, 500, 600    |
| W-2D            | Switch_Switch       | 32×16           | 250_250          |
| Conv-3D         | Ring_FC_Switch      | 16×8×4          | 200_100_50       |
| Conv-4D         | Ring_FC_Ring_Switch | 2×8×8×4         | 250_200_100_50   |

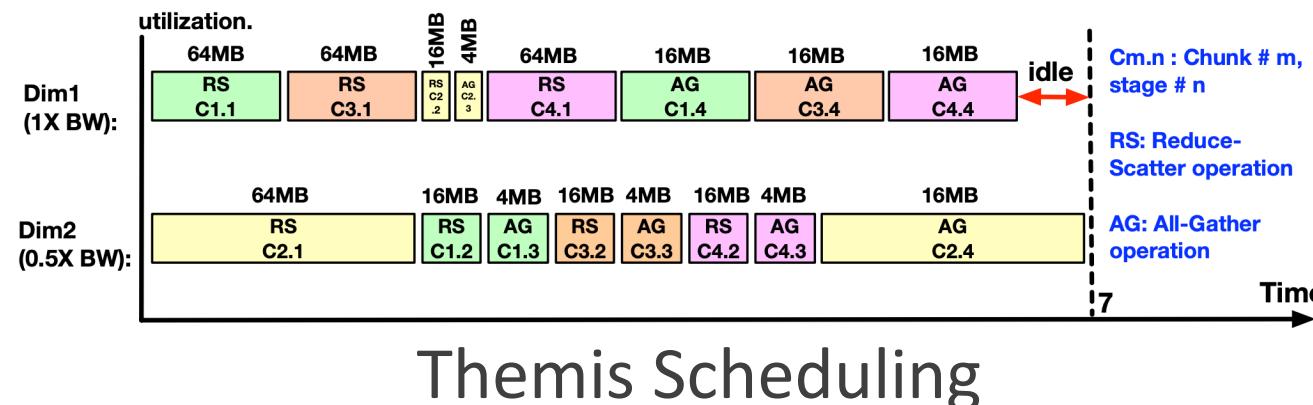
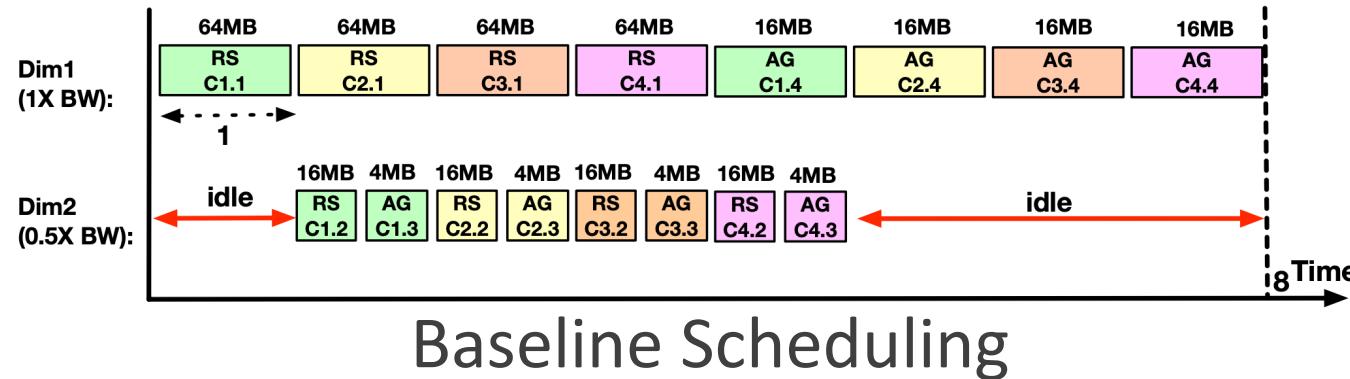
# Case Study 1: Result

- Overhead running multi-dimensional collective communication
  - W-1D (with higher BW) yields overall best performance
- Conv-4D is still powerful
  - Driving higher BW per NPU



# Case Study 2: Chunk Scheduling Policy

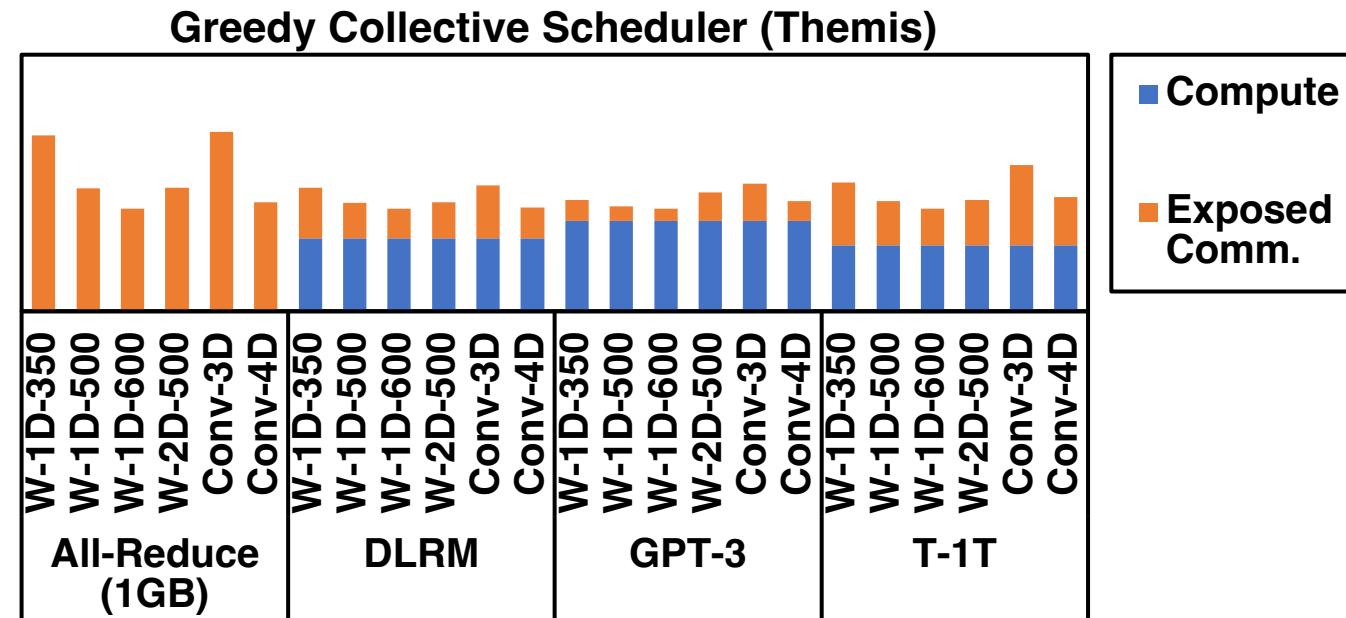
- **Themis: Greedy-based chunk scheduling policy**
  - To maximize BW utilization of multi-dimensional collective communication



Saeed Rashidi et al., "Themis: A Network Bandwidth-Aware Collective Scheduling Policy for Distributed Training of DL Models," ISCA 2022

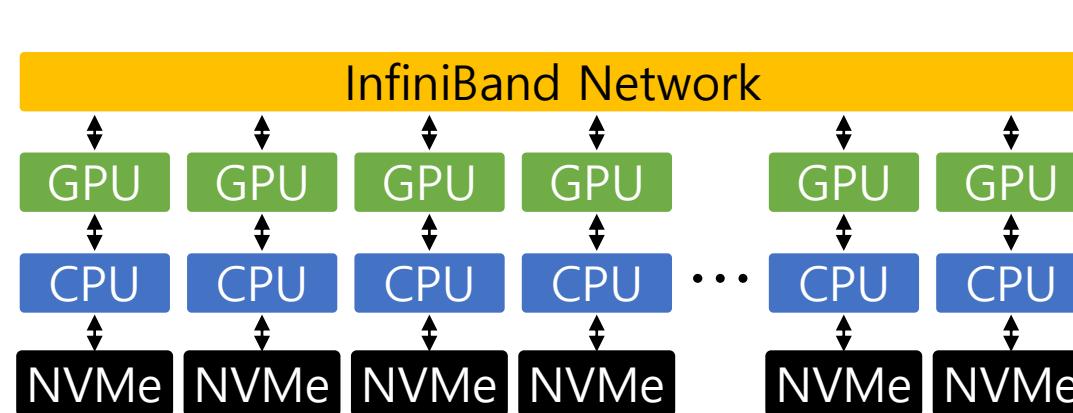
# Case Study 2: Result

- No difference in W-1D, but **huge gain in W-2D, Conv-3/4D**
- If equal BW/NPU is provisioned, **yields near identical performance**
  - Regardless of network dimensionality

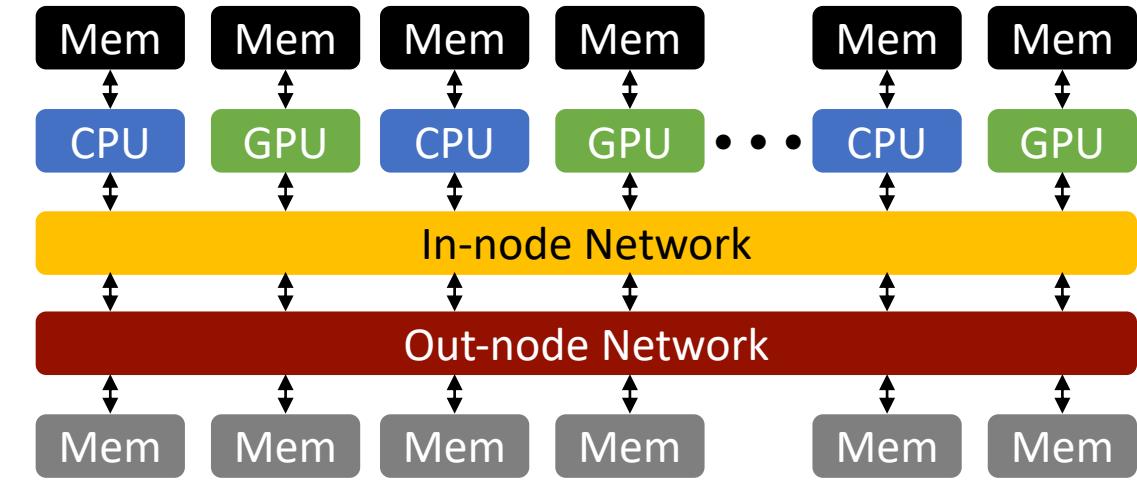


# Case Study 3: Comparing Memory Systems

- ZeRO-Infinity: leveraging local memory (NVMe)
- HierMem: disaggregated memory systems with in-switch collective



*ZeRO-Infinity*



*HierMem*

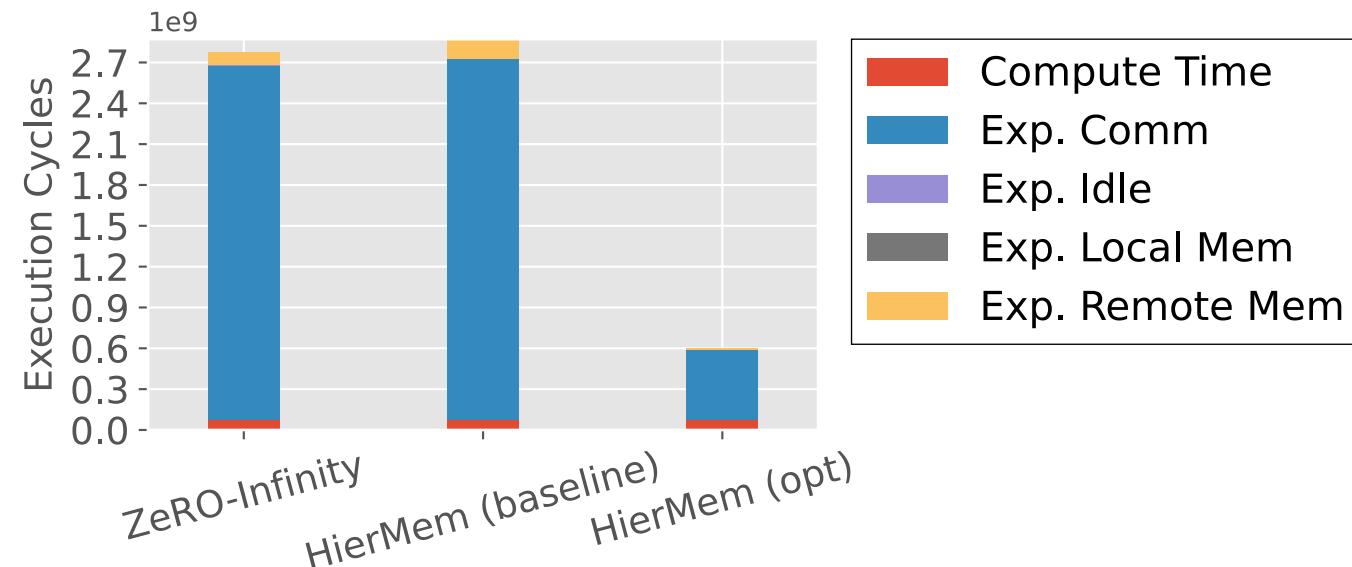
# Case Study 3: Comparing Memory Systems

- ZeRO-Infinity: Baseline
- HierMem:
  - Baseline: equivalent configuration as ZeRO-Infinity
  - Opt: fine-tuned configuration for Mixture-of-Experts (MoE) Model

|  | <b>ZeRO-Infinity</b> | <b>HierMem<br/>(Baseline)</b> | <b>HierMem<br/>(Opt)</b> |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>GPU Peak Perf (TFLOPS)</b>            | 2048                 | 2048                          | 2048                     |
| <b>GPU Local HBM BW (GB/sec)</b>         | 4096                 | 4096                          | 4096                     |
| <b>In-node Pooled Fabric BW (GB/sec)</b> | -                    | 256                           | <b>512</b>               |
| <b>Num of Out-node Switches</b>          | -                    | 16                            | 16                       |
| <b>Num of Remote Memory Groups</b>       | 256                  | 256                           | 256                      |
| <b>Remote Mem Group BW (GB/sec)</b>      | 100                  | 100                           | <b>500</b>               |

# Case Study 3: Result

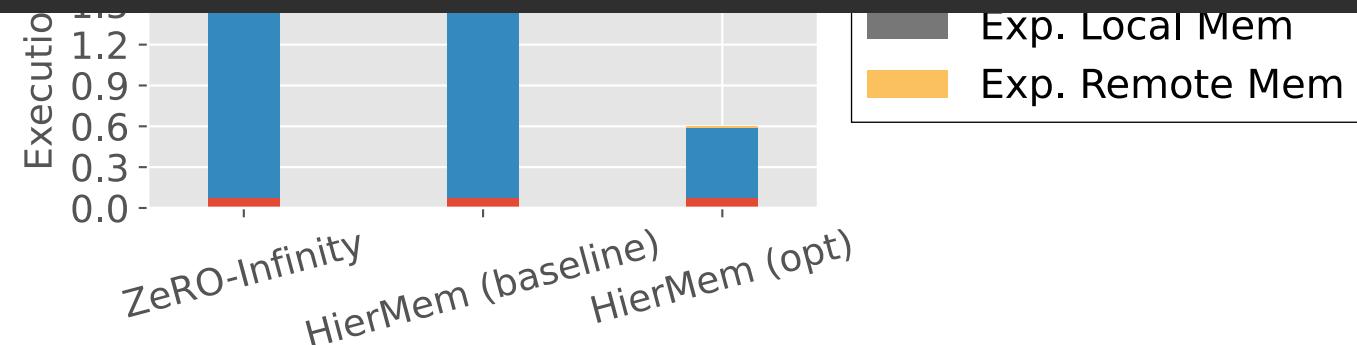
- ZeRO-Infinity and HierMem (baseline) is **near-identical**
- Fine-tuned HierMem shows **4.6x better runtime**
  - **In-switch collective communication** reduces exposed communication



## Case Study 3: Result

- ZeRO-Infinity and HierMem (baseline) is **near-identical**
- Fine-tuned HierMem shows **4.6x better runtime**

**ASTRA-sim2.0 enables design-space exploration of emerging training platforms**



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# Conclusion

- Needs to **navigate the design-space of distributed training**
  - Large models and huge training dataset makes distributed training inevitable
  - Design space is complex: parallelism, memories, networks, etc.
- **ASTRA-sim2.0:** modeling emerging systems
  - Arbitrary parallelization strategies
  - Multi-dimensional networks at scale
  - Disaggregated memory system modeling

**Thank You!**

Reach out to me at:  
[william.won@gatech.edu](mailto:william.won@gatech.edu)



<https://astra-sim.github.io>



ASTRA-sim2.0 paper