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(54) **HYDRAULIC SYSTEM FOR A HYDRODYNAMIC MACHINE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A hydrodynamic machine comprising: a toroidal working chamber including a first bladed wheel and a second bladed wheel arranged concentrically with the first bladed wheel; and an electrohydraulic system including an open loop unit and a closed loop control unit, a working medium accumulator, a pump operable to pump a working medium from the working medium accumulator into the toroidal working chamber, a heat exchanger, a valve operable to switch between a first position, the first position being a non-braking position, and a second position, the second position being a braking position, and a line system operable to allow the pump to pump the working medium in both the first position and the second position into the working chamber.

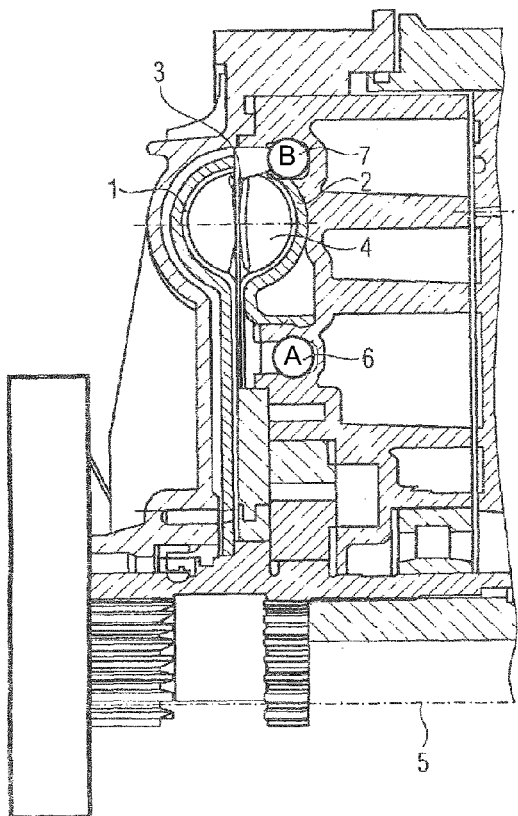
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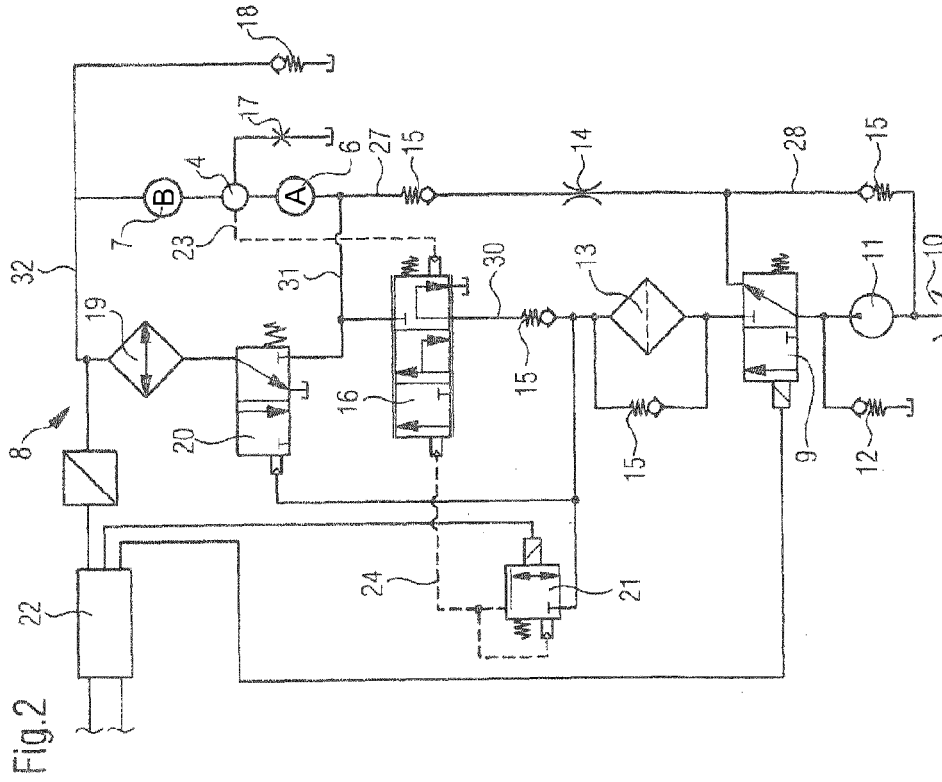


Fig. 1

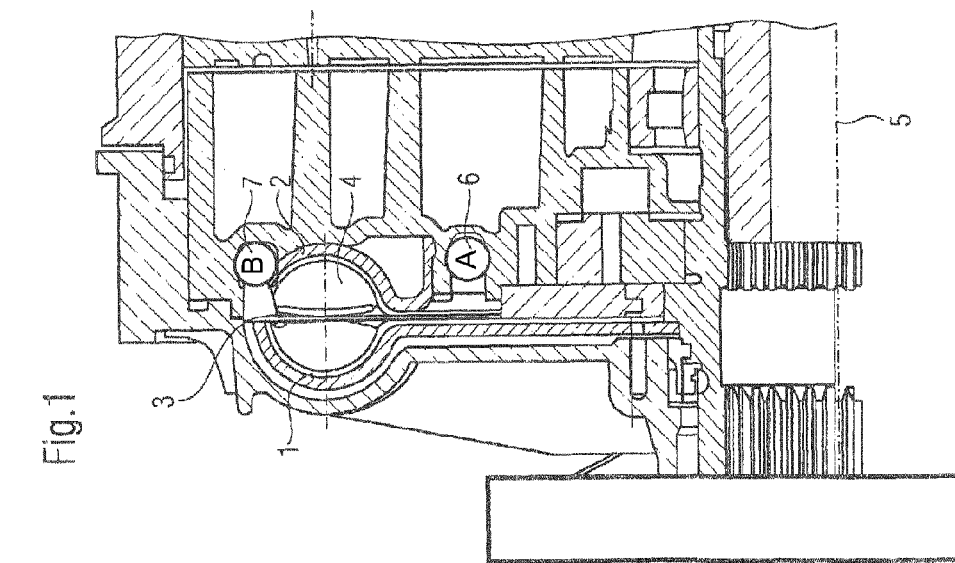


Fig. 2

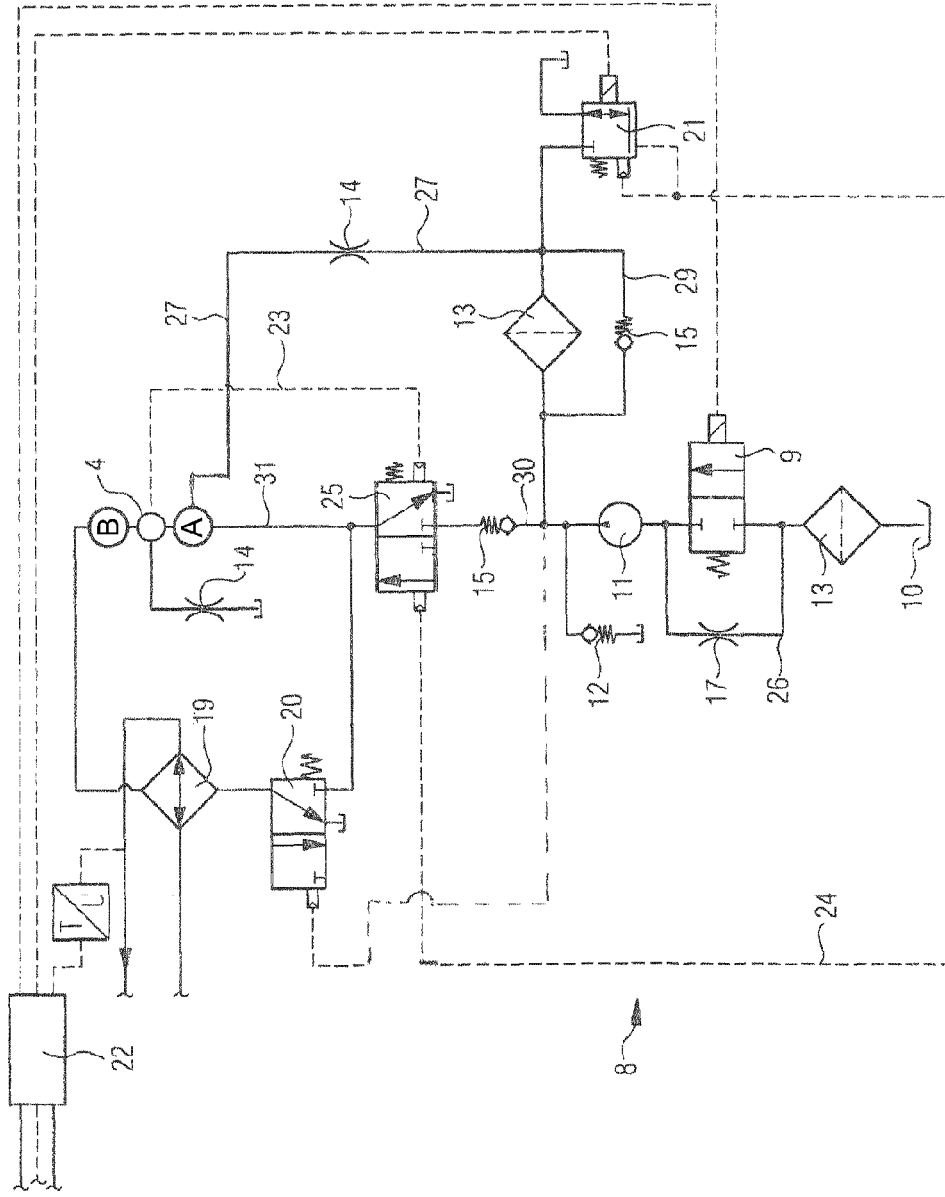


Fig.3

HYDRAULIC SYSTEM FOR A HYDRODYNAMIC MACHINE

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This is a continuation of PCT application No. PCT/EP2014/070587, entitled "HYDRAULIC SYSTEM FOR A HYDRODYNAMIC MACHINE", filed Sep. 26, 2014, which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The invention relates to a hydrodynamic machine, in particular a hydrodynamic retarder to produce a braking torque by way of a fluid.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Hydrodynamic machines or hydrodynamic retarders generally include a housing in which a first bladed wheel, in particular a rotor and a second bladed wheel, in particular a stator arranged concentrically thereto which together form a toroidal chamber, and that are grouped about a common axis of rotation are arranged.

[0006] Retarders or hydrodynamic brakes can be arranged in a drive train on the motor side or respectively gear box side. The fill level of the retarder with a working fluid, for example oil or water with or without additives, determines the "rotor braking torque". When operating the retarder, oil for example is pumped into the working chamber. During braking operation, the driven rotor accelerates this oil and transfers it on the outside diameter of the working chamber to the stator. There, the oil is slowed and returned via the inside diameter of the working chamber back into the rotor. Due to the generally known interaction between rotor and stator the braking torque develops.

[0007] A hydraulic system ensures that in the non-braking operation and/or in the braking operation the working chamber is supplied or respectively filled with the appropriate working medium. It is thereby of special consideration that the heat that is generated in both operational modes is removed from the working chamber by way of the working medium and is returned for cooling to a cooling circuit in a cooler. It is particularly necessary in the non-braking operation that a minimum volume is routed through the working chamber in order to cool the retarder also in the non-braking operation.

[0008] The working chamber is connected to a working fluid circuit via the fluid supply and the fluid discharge, wherein said circuit consists essentially of a working fluid accumulator, a cooler, a pump and several valves. An open loop and closed loop control unit is connected with the components of a hydraulic system in such a manner that the braking torque and/or working medium flow can be controlled or respectively regulated.

[0009] A hydraulic system of this type is known for example from DE 10 2006 030 791 A1. In this hydraulic system the objective is essentially to direct the working medium in all operational modes through a cooler in order to achieve optimum temperature control. The working medium is an oil that at the same time is used for gear lubrication. For adaptation of the volume flow it is provided to control the pump of the hydraulic system.

[0010] It is the objective of the current invention to suggest an improved hydraulic system for a hydrodynamic machine.

In particular, with the objective to improve the electro-hydraulic system in regard to the number and complexity of components, as well as to reduce the disturbances.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] The invention includes a hydrodynamic machine or a retarder, in particular a hydrodynamic retarder, comprising a first bladed wheel, in particular a rotor and a second bladed wheel arranged concentrically thereto, in particular a stator that together form a toroidal working chamber. The hydrodynamic machine moreover includes an electrohydraulic system including an open loop and closed loop control unit, a pump, a heat exchanger, a working medium accumulator, a valve and a line system, wherein working medium can be pumped by way of the pump from the working medium accumulator into the working chamber. The valve can in particular be switched between a first position, the non-braking position; and a second position, the braking position; wherein the line system is designed in such a way that working medium can be pumped by way of the pump in both position into the working chamber.

[0012] By using a valve in combination with a pump in order to secure supply of the working chamber with working medium in all operational situations, the complexity of the line system or respectively the hydraulic system can be reduced. This results in reduced hydraulic resistance, as well as advantages in regard to system safety, maintenance and economic efficiency.

[0013] Regarding the layout of the hydraulic system or the line system, various arrangements of the individual components of the hydraulic system or line system are suggested below.

[0014] In a first embodiment, the valve can be arranged on the pressure side of the pump. With this arrangement working medium flows through the valve in the non-braking position as well as in the braking position as soon as the retarder is driven and the pump builds up a pumping effect. The downstream hydraulic- or line system ensures that no, or only a very low working medium pressure is built up in the non-braking operation position, and a high working medium pressure in the braking operation.

[0015] In a second embodiment, the valve can be arranged on the suction side of the pump. In this arrangement the working medium flows through the valve only in the braking operation.

[0016] When using a Gerotor pump the drive losses of the pump are advantageously adapted in both arrangements to the required working medium volume or respectively the required pump pressure.

[0017] In both the embodiments described above, the line system can moreover be arranged in such a manner that it includes an operating line system having a pressure regulating system through which working medium is routed in the braking operation, and a bypass line system through which working medium is routed in the non-braking operation.

[0018] In particular, in the first embodiment, the bypass line system can moreover include a bypass line to bypass the pressure regulating system, and a bypass line to return the superfluous working medium into the working medium accumulator.

[0019] In particular, in the second embodiment, the bypass line system can alternatively include a bypass line to bypass the pressure regulating system and a bypass line to bypass the valve. The valve can be designed as a 2/2 valve.

[0020] A throttle and/or a check valve can be provided in all bypass lines.

[0021] In order to regulate the braking operation, the pressure regulating system can include a proportional valve. This can be hydraulically connected with a bypass line on the pressure side of the pump, so that it is advantageously ensured that the proportional valve is supplied in both operational conditions with the necessary operating medium or respectively system pressure.

[0022] For the protection of the proportional valve, a working medium filter can be provided before the proportional valve. If the proportional valve is arranged in the bypass line, only a small amount of working medium needs to be filtered, thus considerably reducing the costs for the “filter” function.

[0023] The pressure regulating system can moreover include a 3/3 or 3/2 directional valve for pressure control.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0024] The above-mentioned and other features and advantages of this invention, and the manner of attaining them, will become more apparent and the invention will be better understood by reference to the following description of embodiments of the invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0025] FIG. 1 illustrates a sectional view of a retarder according to the invention;

[0026] FIG. 2 illustrates a first embodiment for the design of a hydraulic system; and

[0027] FIG. 3 illustrates a second embodiment for the design of a hydraulic system.

[0028] Corresponding reference characters indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views. The exemplifications set out herein illustrates embodiments of the invention, and such exemplifications are not to be construed as limiting the scope of the invention in any manner.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0029] With additional reference to FIG. 2, FIG. 1 is a sectional view of an exemplary retarder that is used in particular in buses and commercial vehicles. The retarder includes a housing consisting of several housing parts, a rotor 1 and a stator 2 that together form a toroidal annulus or working chamber 4.

[0030] The retarder is driven by a working medium, in particular an oil that is pumped by way of pump 11 via a line system into intake channel 6 or respectively spiral channel. From intake channel 6 the oil arrives through separating gap 3 into working chamber 4. During the braking operation, a circulatory flow forms in working chamber 4. Driven rotor 1 accelerates the oil and transfers it at the outside diameter into stator 2. There, the oil impacts on the stationary stator blades and is slowed down. On the inside diameter the oil flows again to rotor 2. The resulting braking energy is converted predominantly into heat, so that it is necessary to cool part of the oil permanently by way of a heat exchanger 19. This part of the oil is drained from the circulatory flow through the fluid outlet or outlet channel 7. The drained oil is then pumped through a heat exchanger 19 and subsequently—depending on the operational condition—back into working chamber 4, so that a circulatory flow is created. In non-braking operation the oil is pumped back into working medium accumulator 10.

[0031] FIG. 2, with continued reference to FIG. 1, illustrates a first embodiment for the design of the hydraulic

system. A substantial characteristic of this design is the positioning of pump 11 before valve 9. The valve is herein illustrated in the non-braking operational position. As soon as the pump is driven, oil is pumped from the working medium accumulator 10 via the valve 9 into bypass lines 27, 28. A throttle 14 is installed in bypass line 27 that can be adjusted in such a manner that a small part of the working medium is pumped into working chamber 4. The volume flow is to be selected large enough that sufficient heat removal out of the working chamber is ensured. Moreover, it may not be so large as to create an increased no-load resistance. From working chamber 4, the oil is pumped through heat exchanger 19 back into working medium accumulator 10. Thus, a small amount of oil is continuously being cooled in the non-braking operation by way of heat exchanger 19.

[0032] Second bypass line 28 feeds the remaining, substantially larger volume flow directly back into working medium accumulator 10. Pump 11 thus runs virtually in a no-load mode as a result of which the losses in the non-braking operation can be minimized without having to adjust the pump 11. A Gerotor pump can hereby be used that is driven directly by the rotor shaft.

[0033] For the braking operation—position not indicated—valves 9, 16 and 20 are switched. As soon as switching valve 9 that is located on the pressure side of pump 11 switches, the working medium gets into working chamber 4 via working medium lines 30, 31 and valve 16.

[0034] Valve 16 is a pressure compensator that is switched into the appropriate switching position via the pressure measured in working chamber 4 and the pressure predefined by proportional valve 21. A pressure compensator is a differential pressure valve or a pressure control valve that can regulate a differential pressure between an externally fed measuring location and an actual pressure at the valve. Valve 16 can be designed as a 3/3 directional valve as illustrated herein, or also as a 2/3 directional valve. The system pressure in working chamber 4 can be regulated proportionally to the desired braking torque at the rotor shaft by way of the pressure compensator. A torque sensor can be provided for this purpose, for example on the rotor shaft. In this switching, proportional valve 21 is supplied with system pressure only when switching into the braking position. A filter 13 is provided for the protection of proportional valve 21 that filters the entire working medium necessary for the braking operation.

[0035] As a result of switching valve 20, a closed loop between working chamber 4 and cooler 19 is formed, wherein the system pressure is adjusted through control of the pressure compensator.

[0036] FIG. 3, with continued reference to FIG. 1, illustrates a second embodiment of the structure of the hydraulic system. This differs substantially from the first embodiment, wherein also in this embodiment in the non-braking operation, a certain volume of working medium is pumped into working chamber 4 by way of pump 11. In this design, valve 9 is located on the suction side of pump 11.

[0037] In the non-braking operation working medium is continuously sucked by pump 11 via bypass line 26 that is throttled by way of a suction throttle 17 from working medium accumulator 10, and is pumped via bypass 27 into working chamber 4. Bypass line 27 thereby ends in inlet channel 6 in such a way that the working medium is essentially pumped through working chamber 4 into outlet channel 7.

[0038] An additional throttle 14 is installed in bypass 27, and before the same, a proportional valve 21 is connected with valve 25 to bypass line 27 for control of the pressure compensator. In this way it is ensured that there is always sufficient system pressure available at proportional valve 21, and that therefore always a quick delay-free adjustment of the braking effect is facilitated. Moreover, a filter 13, in particular a fine filter, is installed in bypass line 27 before proportional valve 21. As a result, only the relatively small volume that is necessary for the non-braking operation and for control of proportional valve 21 is filtered.

[0039] For the braking operation—position not illustrated—valves 9, 20 and 25 are switched. The oil gets into working chamber 4 via working lines 30, 31 and valve 25. Valve 25 is a pressure compensator that is switched into the appropriate switching position according to the pressure that is measured in working chamber 4 and the pressure that is predefined by proportional valve 21. Valve 25 can be designed as a 2/3 directional valve as indicated in this example, or alternatively as a 3/3 directional valve. By way of the pressure compensator, the system pressure in working chamber 4 can be adjusted proportionally to the desired braking torque at the rotor shaft. For this purpose, a torque sensor may for example be provided on the rotor shaft.

[0040] A Gerotor pump 11 is provided as the pump and is connected non-rotatably with the rotor shaft. Both embodiments ensure that the pump resistance in the non-braking operation is very low and supports the braking action in the braking operation.

[0041] Generally, the filters and return lines into the working medium accumulator 10 illustrated in the drawings, and the throttles or check valves that are installed in the lines, are indeed necessary for the overall function but are routinely used by the expert.

[0042] While this invention has been described with respect to at least one embodiment, the present invention can be further modified within the spirit and scope of this disclosure. This application is therefore intended to cover any variations, uses, or adaptations of the invention using its general principles. Further, this application is intended to cover such departures from the present disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which this invention pertains and which fall within the limits of the appended claims.

COMPONENT IDENTIFICATION LIST

[0043]	1 rotor
[0044]	2 stator
[0045]	3 separation gap
[0046]	4 working chamber
[0047]	5 axis of rotation
[0048]	6 inlet channel
[0049]	7 outlet channel
[0050]	8 electrohydraulic system
[0051]	9 valve
[0052]	10 working medium accumulator
[0053]	11 pump
[0054]	12 pressure relief valve
[0055]	13 oil strainer/filter
[0056]	14 throttle
[0057]	15 check valve
[0058]	16 pressure differential valve 3/3 directional valve
[0059]	17 suction throttle
[0060]	18 pressure relief valve
[0061]	19 heat exchanger

[0062]	20 switching valve
[0063]	21 proportional valve
[0064]	22 open loop and closed loop control unit
[0065]	23 control line
[0066]	24 control line
[0067]	25 pressure differential valve
[0068]	26-29 bypass line
[0069]	30-31 working line
[0070]	32 line to cooler

What is claimed is:

1. A hydrodynamic machine, comprising:
 - a toroidal working chamber including:
 - a first bladed wheel; and
 - a second bladed wheel arranged concentrically with the first bladed wheel; and
 - an electrohydraulic system including:
 - an open loop control unit and a closed loop control unit;
 - a working medium accumulator;
 - a pump operable to pump a working medium from the working medium accumulator into the toroidal working chamber;
 - a heat exchanger;
 - a valve operable to switch between a first position, the first position being a non-braking position, and a second position, the second position being a braking position; and
 - a line system operable to allow the pump to pump the working medium in both the first position and the second position into the working chamber.
2. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 1, wherein the hydrodynamic machine is a hydrodynamic retarder.
3. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 1, wherein the first bladed wheel is a rotor and the second bladed wheel is a stator.
4. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 1, wherein the valve is located on a pressure side of the pump.
5. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 1, wherein the valve is located on a suction side of the pump.
6. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 1, wherein the line system includes an operating line system having a pressure regulating system through which the working medium is routed in the braking position, and a bypass line system through which the working medium is routed in the non-braking position.
7. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 6, wherein the bypass line system includes a first bypass line to bypass the pressure regulating system, and a second bypass line to return superfluous working medium into the working medium accumulator.
8. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 7, wherein a volume throttle element is provided in the first bypass line.
9. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 6, wherein the bypass line system includes a first bypass line to bypass the pressure regulating system, and a second bypass line to bypass the valve.
10. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 9, wherein the pressure regulating system includes a proportional valve that is hydraulically connected with the first bypass line.
11. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 10, wherein a working medium filter is provided before the proportional valve in the first bypass line.

12. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 9, wherein a volume throttle element is provided in at least one of the first bypass line and the second bypass line.

13. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 6, wherein the pressure regulating system includes a 3/3 or a 3/2 directional valve for pressure control.

14. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 1, wherein the toroidal working chamber is connected with a cooler via an outlet channel.

15. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 3, wherein the pump is connected non-rotatably with the rotor.

16. The hydrodynamic machine according to claim 1, wherein the pump is a Gerotor/annular gear pump.

* * * * *