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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A combustion turbine power generation system (10) includes a combustion turbine assembly (11) including a main compressor (12) constructed and arranged to receive ambient inlet air, a main expansion turbine (14) operatively associated with the main compressor, combustors (16) constructed and arranged to receive compressed air from the main compressor and to feed the main expansion turbine, and an electric generator (15) associated with the main expansion turbine for generating electric power. A compressed air storage (18) stores compressed air. A heat exchanger (24) is constructed and arranged to receive a source of heat and to receive compressed air from the storage so as to heat compressed air received from the storage. An air expander (28) is associated with the heat exchanger and is constructed and arranged to expand the heated compressed air to exhausted atmospheric pressure for producing additional electric power via an electric generator associated with the expander and to permit only a portion of airflow expanded by the air expander to be injected, under certain conditions, into the combustion turbine assembly.

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Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Continuation of application No. 12/076,689, filed on Mar. 21, 2008, now Pat. No. 7,406,828, which is a division of application No. 11/657,661, filed on Jan. 25, 2007.

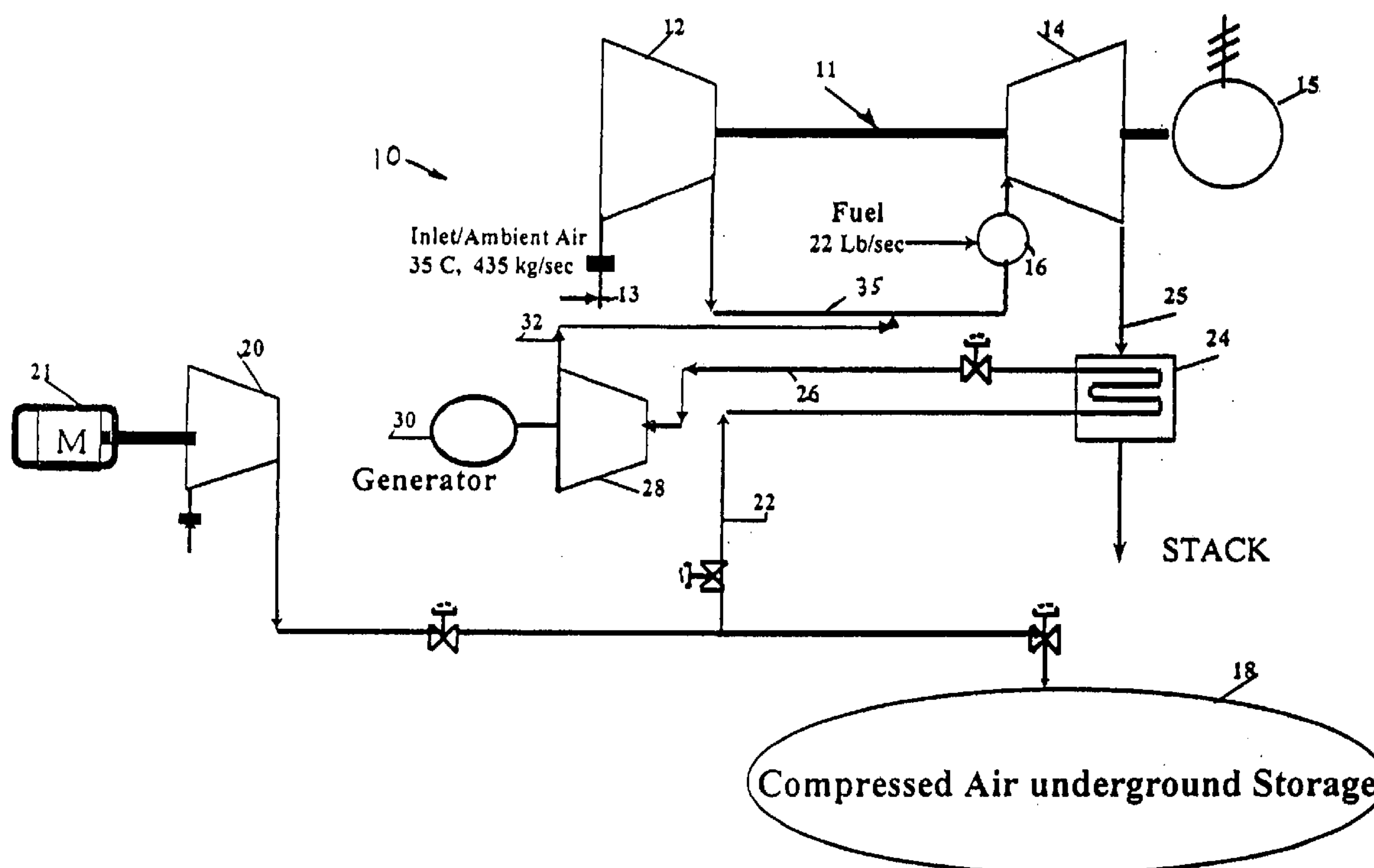
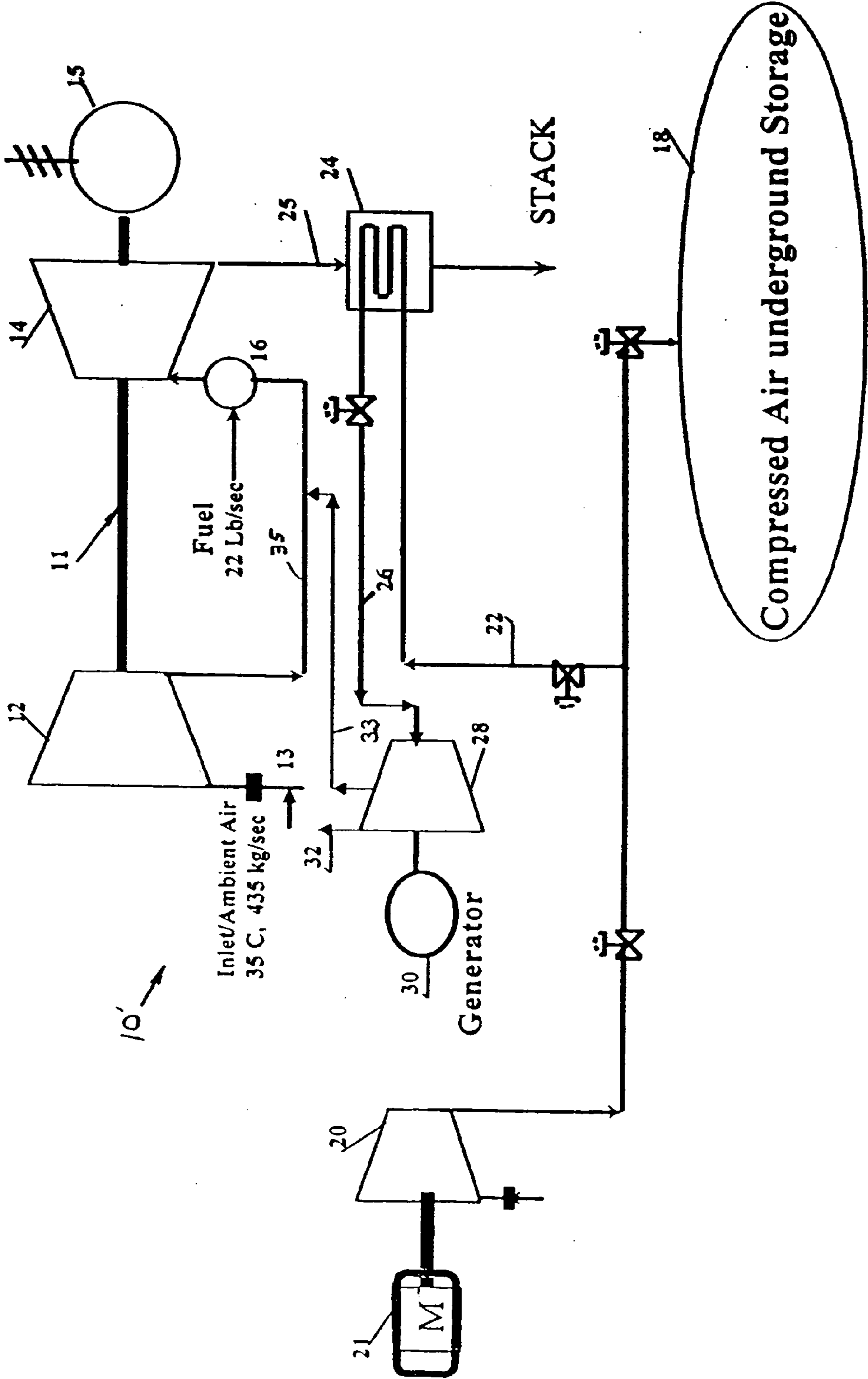


Fig. 2



**POWER AUGMENTATION OF COMBUSTION
TURBINES WITH COMPRESSED AIR
ENERGY STORAGE AND ADDITIONAL
EXPANDER**

[0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 12/076,689, which is a division of U.S. application Ser. No. 11/657,661, filed on Jan. 25, 2007.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates to power augmentation of combustion turbine power systems with compressed air energy storage and additional expander; and, more particularly, to augmenting power of the system by expanding heated, high pressure compressed air from a storage for producing additional expander power and extracting airflow from the expander and injecting the extracted airflow into the combustion turbine upstream of combustors for combustion turbine power augmentation.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] It is well known that combustion turbines have significant power degradation associated with increased ambient temperature or high elevations. This loss of power is primarily associated with the reduced mass of the combustion turbine's airflow, caused by the reduced inlet air density.

[0004] There are a number of power augmentation technologies targeting the recovery of the power lost by combustion turbines due to high ambient temperatures/high elevation:

[0005] The Air Injection power augmentation technology that is based on the injection upstream of combustors of additional airflow (humid or dry) that is delivered by external auxiliary compressor(s);

[0006] Inlet chillers that cool the ambient air and provide a corresponding power augmentation;

[0007] Evaporative coolers, inlet fogging and "wet compression" technologies that provide power augmentation by a combination of the inlet air cooling and the increased mass flow through the combustion turbine;

[0008] Air Injection power augmentation technology disclosed in my earlier U.S. Pat. No. 5,934,063, the contents of which is incorporated by reference herein, that is based upon air injection upstream of combustors using a compressed air energy storage. However, the compressed air in the storage typically has a much higher pressure than is needed for the air injection for the power augmentation.

[0009] Thus, there is a need to utilize the compressed air storage high pressure to further improve the incremental power and to improve the overall heat rate of the system.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] An object of the invention is to fulfill the need referred to above. In accordance with the principles of the present invention, this objective is achieved by providing a combustion turbine power generation system including a combustion turbine assembly including a main compressor constructed and arranged to receive ambient inlet air, a main expansion turbine operatively associated with the main compressor, combustors constructed and arranged to receive compressed air from the main compressor and to feed the main

expansion turbine, and an electric generator associated with the main expansion turbine for generating electric power. A compressed air storage stores compressed air. A heat exchanger is constructed and arranged to receive a source of heat and to receive compressed air from the storage so as to heat compressed air received from the storage. An air expander is associated with the heat exchanger and is constructed and arranged to expand the heated compressed air to exhausted atmospheric pressure for producing additional electric power via an electric generator associated with the expander and to permit only a portion of airflow expanded by the air expander to be injected, under certain conditions, into the combustion turbine assembly.

[0011] In accordance with another aspect of the invention, a method is provided to augment power of a combustion turbine assembly. The combustion turbine assembly includes a main compressor constructed and arranged to receive ambient inlet air, a main expansion turbine operatively associated with the main compressor, combustors constructed and arranged to receive compressed air from the main compressor and to feed the main expansion turbine, and an electric generator associated with the main expansion turbine for generating electric power. The method provides stored compressed air from a compressed air storage. The compressed air originating from the storage is heated. The heated, compressed air is expanded in an air expander to exhausted atmospheric pressure for producing additional power. The air expander is constructed and arranged to permit only a portion of airflow expanded by the air expander to be injected, under certain conditions, into the combustion turbine assembly. Additional electric power is generated, via an electric generator, using air expanded by the air expander.

[0012] Other objects, features and characteristics of the present invention, as well as the methods of operation and the functions of the related elements of the structure, the combination of parts and economics of manufacture will become more apparent upon consideration of the following detailed description and appended claims with reference to the accompanying drawings, all of which form a part of this specification.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] The invention will be better understood from the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments thereof, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals refer to like parts, in which:

[0014] FIG. 1 is a schematic illustration of a combustion turbine power generation system with power augmentation using a compressed air storage supplying compressed air, preheated in a heat exchanger, to an expander that expands the air for providing additional power with expander exhaust airflow being injected upstream of the combustors, provided in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0015] FIG. 2 is a schematic illustration of a combustion turbine power generation system with power augmentation using a compressed air storage supplying compressed air, preheated in a heat exchanger, to an expander that expands the air for providing additional power with airflow extracted from a stage of the expander being injected upstream of the com-

bustors, provided in accordance with the principles of another embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS

[0016] With reference to FIG. 1, a combustion turbine power generation system with power augmentation, generally indicated as **10**, is shown in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. The system **10** includes a conventional combustion turbine assembly, generally indicated at **11**, having a main compressor **12** receiving, at inlet **13**, a source of inlet air at ambient temperature and feeding combustors **16** with the compressed air; a main expansion turbine **14** operatively associated with the main compressor **12**, with the combustors **16** feeding the main expansion turbine **14**, and an electric generator **15** for generating electric power.

[0017] A compressed air storage **18** is provided that is preferably an underground storage structure that stores air that is compressed by at least one auxiliary compressor **20**. In the embodiment, the auxiliary compressor **20** is driven by a motor **21**, but can be driven by an expander or any other source. The auxiliary compressor **20** charges the storage **18** with compressed air during off-peak hours. An outlet **22** of the storage **18** is preferably connected with a heat exchanger **24**. The heat exchanger **24** also receives exhaust air **25** from the main expansion turbine **14**. Instead, or in addition to the exhaust air **25** from the main turbine **14**, the heat exchanger **24** can receive any externally available source of heat.

[0018] An outlet **26** of the heat exchanger **24** is connected to an expander **28** that is connected to an electric generator **30**. In accordance with the embodiment, during peak hours, compressed air is withdrawn from the storage **18**, preheated in the heat exchanger **24** and sent to the expander **28**. The heated air is expanded through the expander **28** that is connected to the electric generator **30** and produces additional power. The exhaust from the expander **28**, with injection flow parameters determined by combustion turbine limitations and optimization, is injected into the combustion turbine assembly **11** upstream of combustors **16**. Thus, as shown in FIG. 1, structure **32** communicates with structure **35** to facilitate the injection of air. In the embodiment, the structures **32** and **35** are preferably piping structures.

[0019] Typical gross power augmentation of a combustion turbine associated with an air injection technology is 20-25%. The additional power of the additional expander **28**, operating with the injection airflow of approximately 12-14% (of the combustion turbine assembly inlet flow) and utilizing a stored compressed air with the inlet pressure of approximately 60-80 bars (a typical stored compressed air pressure) preheated in the heat exchanger **24** to the inlet temperature of approximately 480-500 C, is approximately 5-10% of the combustion turbine assembly **11** power. As an example, the GE 7241 combustion turbine assembly operating at 35 C could have gross power augmentation of approximately 38-40 MW with the air injection flow of approximately 12% of the combustion turbine assembly inlet flow; the expander **28** additional power is approximately 10 MW with the total power augmentation of approximately 48-50 MW. The power generation system **10** heat rate is reduced because the additional expander **28** power is delivered without any additional fuel flow, i.e. with the zero heat rate.

[0020] This system **10** has the following additional (to original embodiment with a combustion turbine assembly **11**; compressed air storage **18** and charging compressor **20**) components:

[0021] The additional air expander **28**

[0022] The heat exchanger **24** recovering the combustion turbine **14** exhaust heat and feeding the expander **28**

[0023] BOP piping and specialties

[0024] The overall parameters of the system **10** are optimized based on the overall plant economics including:

[0025] Additional components capital and operational costs

[0026] The combustion turbine power augmentation

[0027] The expander **28** additional peaking power produced

[0028] FIG. 2 shows another embodiment of the system **10'** that is similar to that of FIG. 1, except that the additional expander **28** expands the preheated compressed stored air from the stored air pressure to atmospheric pressure resulting in much higher power. In addition, the expander flow rate is not restricted to the injection rate allowable by a specific combustion turbine assembly. Furthermore, the air required for the injection in a combustion turbine assembly for power augmentation with specific parameters is extracted from the expander **28** with specific parameters.

[0029] With reference to FIG. 2, the compressed air from the storage **18** is directed to the heat exchanger **24** that receives heat from the source of a heat (e.g. exhaust of turbine **14**). The heated air is expanded through the expander **28** that is connected to the electric generator **30** and produces additional power. The airflow of expander **28** is a subject for optimization and could be as high as a combustion turbine inlet flow. The expander **28** has a provision for an extracted airflow flow with parameters consistent with the requirements of the air injection technology determined by combustion turbine assembly limitations and can be a subject of optimization. In other words, the injection flow parameters of the injected airflow are consistent with flow parameters of the main compressor **12** at an injection point. Thus, injection can be limited or restricted under certain conditions. For example, based on combustion turbine manufacturer published data, injection at low ambient temperatures may not be permitted or possible, or injection may not be permitted or possible due to accessibility to injection points, or injection may not occur due to operational judgments. The extracted airflow is injected via structure **33** into the combustion turbine assembly **11** (via structure **35**) upstream of the combustors **16** with a combustion turbine power augmentation of approximately up to 20-25%. The remaining airflow in the expander **28** is expanded through low pressure stages to atmospheric pressure. Thus, when injection is possible or desired, not all airflow from the expander is exhausted to atmospheric pressure.

[0030] As an example, the GE 7241 combustion turbine operating at 35 C could have gross power augmentation of approximately 38-40 MW with the extracted (from the additional expander **28**) and injected airflow of approximately 12% of the combustion turbine inlet flow; the expander additional power could be as high as the combustion turbine power and is a subject for optimization.

[0031] The use of the expander **28** can be employed in a Combustion Turbine/Combined Cycle Power Plant. This system preferably includes the following additional (to the com-

bustion turbine assembly **11**; compressed air storage **18** and charging compressor **20**) components:

[0032] The air expander **28**,

[0033] Heat exchanger **24** recovering the combustion turbine

[0034] **14** Exhaust heat and feeding the expander **28**,

[0035] BOP piping and specialties

[0036] The foregoing preferred embodiments have been shown and described for the purposes of illustrating the structural and functional principles of the present invention, as well as illustrating the methods of employing the preferred embodiments and are subject to change without departing from such principles. Therefore, this invention includes all modifications encompassed within the spirit of the following claims.

1. A combustion turbine power generation system comprising:

a combustion turbine assembly including a main compressor constructed and arranged to receive ambient inlet air, a main expansion turbine operatively associated with the main compressor, combustors constructed and arranged to receive compressed air from the main compressor and to feed the main expansion turbine, and an electric generator associated with the main expansion turbine for generating electric power,

a compressed air storage storing compressed air;

a heat exchanger constructed and arranged to receive a source of heat and to receive compressed air from the storage so as to heat compressed air received from the storage,

an air expander associated with the heat exchanger and constructed and arranged to expand the heated compressed air to exhausted atmospheric pressure for producing additional power, and to permit only a portion of airflow expanded by the air expander to be injected, under certain conditions, into the combustion turbine assembly, and

an electric generator, associated with the expander, for producing additional electrical power.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the heat exchanger is constructed and arranged to receive exhaust from the main expansion turbine thereby defining the source of heat.

5. The system of claim 1, further comprising at least one auxiliary compressor for charging the compressed air storage.

6. (canceled)

7. A combustion turbine power generation system comprising:

a combustion turbine assembly including a main compressor constructed and arranged to receive ambient inlet air, a main expansion turbine operatively associated with the main compressor, combustors constructed and arranged to receive compressed air from the main compressor and to feed the main expansion turbine, and an electric generator associated with the main expansion turbine for generating electric power,

means for storing compressed air;

means, receiving a source of heat and receiving compressed air from the means for storing, for heating compressed air received from the means for storing,

means, associated with the means for heating, for expanding the heated compressed air to exhausted atmospheric pressure for producing additional power, the means for expanding being constructed and arranged to permit only a portion of airflow expanded by the means for expanding to be injected, under certain conditions, into the combustion turbine assembly, and

means, associated with the means for expanding, for generating additional electric power.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the means for expanding is an air expander.

9. (canceled)

10. (canceled)

11. The system of claim 7, wherein the means for heating is a heat exchanger constructed and arranged to receive exhaust from the main expansion turbine thereby defining the source of heat.

12. The system of claim 7, wherein the means for storing is an air storage.

13. The system of claim 12, further comprising at least one auxiliary compressor for charging the air storage.

14. (canceled)

15. A method augmenting power of a combustion turbine assembly, the combustion turbine assembly including a main compressor constructed and arranged to receive ambient inlet air, a main expansion turbine operatively associated with the main compressor, combustors constructed and arranged to receive compressed air from the main compressor and to feed the main expansion turbine, and an electric generator associated with the main expansion turbine for generating electric power, the method including:

providing stored compressed air from a compressed air storage,

heating compressed air originating from the storage, expanding the heated, compressed air in an air expander to exhausted atmospheric pressure for producing additional power, the air expander being constructed and arranged to permit only a portion of airflow expanded by the air expander to be injected, under certain conditions, into the combustion turbine assembly, and

generating, via an electric generator, additional electric power using the air expanded by the air expander.

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the heating step includes using exhaust heat from the main expansion turbine.

19. (canceled)

20. The system of claim 1, wherein the air expander is constructed and arranged to permit the airflow injected to be injected upstream of the combustors.

21. The system of claim 7, wherein the means for expanding is constructed and arranged to permit the airflow injected to be injected upstream of the combustors.

22. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

injecting the airflow injected upstream of the combustors.

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