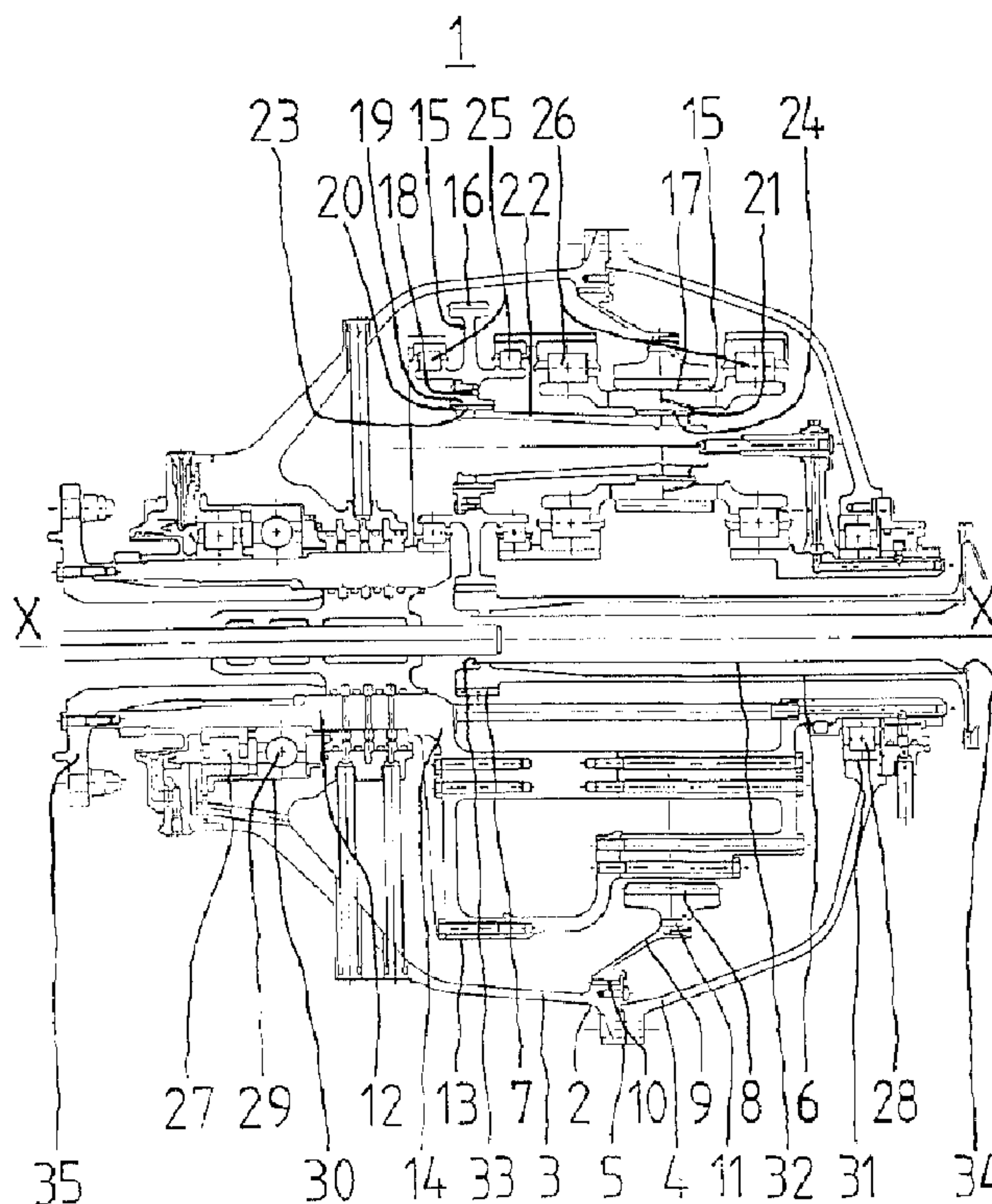




(86) Date de dépôt PCT/PCT Filing Date: 1999/09/29
 (87) Date publication PCT/PCT Publication Date: 2000/04/06
 (45) Date de délivrance/Issue Date: 2004/11/23
 (85) Entrée phase nationale/National Entry: 2000/05/29
 (86) N° demande PCT/PCT Application No.: DE 1999/003121
 (87) N° publication PCT/PCT Publication No.: 2000/019124
 (30) Priorité/Priority: 1998/09/30 (198 44 843.0) DE

(51) Cl.Int.⁷/Int.Cl.⁷ F16H 1/28, F02C 7/36
 (72) Inventeur/Inventor:
 STEGHERR, RUDOLF, DE
 (73) Propriétaire/Owner:
 MTU AERO ENGINES GMBH, DE
 (74) Agent: MARKS & CLERK

(54) Titre : BOITE PLANETAIRE
 (54) Title: PLANETARY GEAR



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

A planetary gear comprising a gear housing, a first shaft and a second shaft located coaxially opposite said first shaft, an internal geared wheel, a sun wheel connected to the first shaft so as to be rotationally rigid, a planet carrier forming a constructional unit, rotatably held, with the second shaft, and several step planets rotatably held in the planet carrier, each unit comprising two connected planet wheels with different effective diameters, with the larger planet wheels intermeshing with the sun wheel, and the smaller planet wheels intermeshing with the internal geared wheel. Each planet wheel is arranged as a separate unit and on both sides is rotatably held in the planet carrier via at least one roller bearing, with high stability under load. The two planet wheels of each step planet are coupled so as to be torsion resistant, via an additional shaft, with the shaft engaging each planet wheel in a positive-lock in circumferential direction.

ABSTRACT

A planetary gear comprising a gear housing, a first shaft and a second shaft located coaxially opposite said first shaft, an internal geared wheel, a sun wheel connected to the first shaft so as to be rotationally rigid, a planet carrier forming a constructional unit, rotatably held, with the second shaft, and several step planets rotatably held in the planet carrier, each unit comprising two connected planet wheels with different effective diameters, with the larger planet wheels intermeshing with the sun wheel, and the smaller planet wheels intermeshing with the internal geared wheel.

Each planet wheel is arranged as a separate unit and on both sides is rotatably held in the planet carrier via at least one roller bearing, with high stability under load.

The two planet wheels of each step planet are coupled so as to be torsion resistant, via an additional shaft, with the shaft engaging each planet wheel in a positive-lock in circumferential direction.

MTU 1626 PCT

Planetary gear

The invention relates to a planetary gear made of gearwheels, comprising a sun wheel on a first shaft, a planet carrier on a second shaft, an internal geared wheel on the gear housing or on a third shaft, and step planets, each with two planet wheels of different sizes, interconnected so as to be torsion resistant, of which wheels the smaller planet wheels intermesh with the internal geared wheel and the larger planet wheels with the sun wheel, according to the precharacterising portion of claim 1.

Planetary gears with step planets are well known, they are for example used as propeller gearing in the Rolls-Royce aircraft engine "Tyne". Compared to a single stage planetary gear with simple planets, i.e. wheels with an effective diameter intermeshing with the sun wheel and the internal geared wheel, with a modest increase in the volume of the gearing and somewhat increased design expenditure, the step planet design allows a significant increase in the transmission ratio, with the shaft torque largely increasing in the same ratio. In the known designs, the two wheels of the step planet are axially directly adjacent to each other as well as connected to form an integral unit, i.e. they are usually made in one part.

Rotary bearing of such integral step planets is usually via one or several plain bearings (slide bearings) in the interior of each of these components as well as via a rigid planet carrier axis leading through the step planet. In the case of roller bearings, one bearing each is provided axially in front of and behind the step planet, because usually the radially larger roller bearings cannot be accommodated in the interior of the planet wheels, especially the smaller planet wheels.

- 2 -

If the two gearing characteristics of a step planet are projected in axial direction in one plane and if the tooth forces resulting from the pressure with the sun wheel and the internal geared wheel (1st and 2nd stage) are analysed according to size and direction, then it becomes evident that the two tooth forces point in the same general direction with the acute angle between their vectors corresponding to the sum of the two pressure angles (approx. 40° to 50°). If the two tooth forces are vectorially added, we arrive at a resultant force significantly higher than that of each of the individual forces. From the point of view of construction this means that the step planet design leads to high bearing forces so that the carrying capacity of the step planet bearings becomes a decisive criterion for the power that can be transmitted by the gearing. Additional loading of the bearings results from the speed-related centrifugal forces acting on the step planets. In this context it must also be taken into account that propeller gearing is to be designed for a service life of for example 30,000 h, which of course also applies to the roller bearings installed.

It is thus **an** object of the invention to modify planetary gears with step planets in such a way that with only a slight increase in design volume and construction expenditure (number of parts etc.) at a specified transmission ratio, significantly higher power can be transmitted at the best possible efficiency.

Each planet wheel is constructed as a separate unit which is rotatably held on both sides, i.e. axially in front of and behind its centre plane, in the planet carrier, in each case via at least one roller bearing with high stability under load. Thus for each step planet there are four large-dimension bearing positions with high stability under load, ensuring minimal friction losses. Each bearing position may comprise several individual roller bearings axially one behind the other. Torque transmission from the large to the small planet wheel of a step planet is by positive locking via an additional shaft which is practically only subjected to torsional load. This bridges the axial spacing, increased according to the invention, between the coupled planet wheels of various sizes. Thus the gear according to the invention can also be referred to as a planetary gear with coupled stage planets.

In one embodiment, the present invention provides a planetary gear made of gearwheels, in particular for use as a speed reduction gear between a turboshaft gas turbine and a propeller or two contra-rotating coaxial propellers; comprising a gear housing, a first shaft and a second shaft located coaxially opposite said first shaft; an internal geared wheel connected to the gear housing or to a third coaxial shaft so as to be torsion resistant; a sun wheel connected to the first shaft so as to be torsion resistant; a planet carrier which forms a design unit with the second shaft which design unit is rotatably held in at least two positions axially spaced apart, and with several identical step planets, each of which comprises two planet wheels connected so as to be torsion resistant, with different effective diameters/reference diameters, with all larger planet wheels intermeshing only with the sun wheel, and all

3a

smaller planet wheels intermeshing only with the internal geared wheel, characterised in that each planet wheel (16, 17) is made as a separate construction unit and on both sides, i.e. axially in front of and behind its centre plane, comprising at least one roller bearing (25, 26) with high stability under load and in that the two planet wheels (16, 17) of each step planet (15) are coupled via an additional shaft (22) axially and radially torsion-proof, but with limited relative movement to each other, with the shaft (22) engaging in a positive-locking way in circumferential direction each planet wheel (16, 17).

All rotary bearings (25 to 29) can be designed as lubricated roller bearings; that each planet wheel (16, 17) is symmetrically retained in two roller bearings (25, 26), and the unit (14) of planet carrier (13) and second shaft (12) can be a fixed-loose bearing arrangement with a fixed bearing (30) on one side and a movable bearing (31) on the other side of the planet carrier (13), with the fixed bearing (30) absorbing the axial forces comprising a ball bearing (29) and a roller bearing (27) in axially adjoining arrangement, with the movable bearing (31) being a roller bearing (28).

The gearwheels (7, 8, 16, 17) can intermesh via straight toothing and/or herringbone gearing/double helical gearing or so-called cogged gearing, preferably involute toothing.

The shafts (22) coupling the planet wheels (16, 17) so as to be torsion resistant can comprise two external straight tooth arrangements (23, 24), and each of the planet wheels (16, 17) can comprise an internal straight tooth arrangement (20, 21) fitting with little radial play, with

3b

the internal straight tooth arrangement (20) of each larger planet wheel (16) being worked into a catch (19) which intermeshes with the planet wheel (16) via helical gearing (18) and by adjustment of its axial position being rotatable in circumferential direction relative to the planet wheel (16).

The internal geared wheel (8) by way of a conical carrier (9) with a gearing each (10, 11) towards the gear housing (2) and towards the internal geared wheel (8) can be held in the manner of a ball and socket joint, so as to be swivellable on its centre while being torsion resistant but - within narrow limits- at the same time being radially flexible.

In or on the first shaft (6) a coaxial meter tube (32) can be held, at one end (33) connected to the shaft (6) so as to be torsion resistant, with the relative torsion between the loose end (34) of the torsion-free meter tube (32) and the shaft (6) representing a measure for establishing torque.

When the planetary gear is for power transfer with speed reduction between a turboshaft gas turbine and a propeller, the smaller planet wheels (17) and the internal geared wheel (8) in relation to their axial position can be arranged nearer to the gas turbine than is the case with the larger planet wheels (16) and the sun wheel (7).

The conical carrier (9) of the internal geared wheel (8) can be larger towards the front, i.e. towards the propeller.

3c

The gear housing (2) can comprise two shells (3, 4) with flange connection (5) with the joint face being arranged transversely to the shafts (6, 12). The rear shell (4) of the gear housing (2) can be integrated in the compressor inlet housing of the turboshaft gas turbine.

In another embodiment, the present invention provides a planetary gear arrangement of gearwheels, comprising a gear housing, a first shaft, a second shaft arranged coaxially opposite the first shaft, an internal geared wheel that is torsionally fixedly connected to the gear housing or to a third coaxial shaft, a sun wheel that is torsionally fixedly connected to the first shaft, a planet carrier that forms, together with the second shaft, a structural unit that is rotatably supported at at least two axially spaced-apart positions, and a plurality of identical step planets, each of which comprises a larger planet wheel having a relatively larger effective diameter and intermeshing with the sun wheel, a smaller planet wheel having a relatively smaller effective diameter and intermeshing with the internal geared wheel and being a separate structure relative to the larger planet wheel, at least one respective highly loadable roller bearing arranged respectively on both sides axially in front of and axially behind a center plane of each respective one of the planet wheels, and an additional shaft that torsionally fixedly couples the larger planet wheel and the smaller planet wheel to each other while allowing limited axial and radial movement relative to each other, wherein the additional shaft engages each the planet wheel in a positive form-locking manner in a circumferential direction.

3d

Below, the invention is shown by means of a drawing, showing a longitudinal centre section of a planetary gear intended as a propeller gear for a large aircraft.

The planetary gear 1 represents an at least largely rotation-symmetrical structure comprising a horizontal longitudinal centre axis X. The propeller (not shown) arranged at the front in the direction of flight, would be arranged on the left while the driving turboshaft gas turbine (also not shown) or its compressor inlet would be arranged on the right of the planetary gear 1. Thus in this diagram left means front and right means rear. The "normal" power-flow in pulling operation is thus from right to left through the planetary gear 1. The mechanical functional elements of the oil-

- 4 -

lubricated gear are surrounded by a sealed-off gear housing 2 into which on the drive side (right) a first shaft 6 leads, and from which gear housing on the driven side (left) a second shaft 12 with a propeller flange 35 leads. The gear housing 2 comprises a front shell 3 and a rear shell 4 with a flange connection 5 in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal centre axis. In the diagram, the rear shell 4 is shown as a separate component but, together with the movable bearing 31, it could also be integrated in the compressor inlet housing, i.e. it could be formed by said compressor inlet housing. As the only non-rotating gear, the internal geared wheel 8 is connected to the gear housing 2 so as to be torsion-proof, thus forming a moment support for the rotating gear elements. The special support of the internal geared wheel 8 by way of a thin-walled support 9, conically widening towards the front, and two straight/axial gearing arrangements 10, 11, results overall in a certain radial elasticity as well as a minimal ball and socket type mobility of the internal geared wheel 8 around its centre while maintaining unimpeded torsion resistance. This adaptability ensures an optimal contact pattern of the internal geared wheel gearing and the counter gearing, thus maximising the transmittable power. Under torsional load, the gearing arrangements 10 and 11 should, if at all possible, generate no axial forces, an objective best achieved with straight toothing. In view of increased angular mobility, the gearing 11 could also be designed in the form of curved toothing with the centre being formed by the centre of the internal geared wheel.

For driving two contra-rotating propellers, the internal geared wheel could also be coupled in a torsion-resistant way to a third coaxial shaft (not shown).

- 5 -

In particular the lower half of the Figure shows that the planet carrier 13 forms a unit 14 with high stability under load and a broad bearing base with the second shaft 12. The roller bearing arrangement of this unit 14 is a fixed-loose bearing arrangement, with the fixed bearing 30 in the region of the housing end facing the propeller; and with the bearing 31 located in the region of the housing end facing the engine. The fixed bearing 30 which must also absorb the axial forces generated by the propeller, is made to be particularly stable and fail-safe by being a combination of a roller bearing 27 and a ball bearing 29, if need be in the form of a so-called four-point bearing. A roller bearing 28 is provided for the movable bearing 31 which only experiences radial load and is not stressed as much. The cage-like planet carrier 13 is designed as a screw construction with mutually centring design elements so that the cogs, bearings and shafts borne by it can be quickly and simply installed and deinstalled, e.g. for purposes of inspection, maintenance or exchange.

The first shaft 6 which carries the sun wheel 7 and which in the region of the gearing does not have a bearing is characterised by incorporating a device for measuring the input torque. To this purpose, the interior of said shaft 6 comprises a meter tube 32 concentrically housed in such a way that one of its ends 33 is connected to the first shaft 6 so as to be rotationally rigid, while its other end 34 is guided in the first shaft 6 so as to be centred and freely movable. Under load, the first shaft 6 is under torque; by contrast the meter tube 32 which is not exposed to any load, does not experience any deformation. In this way the relative torsion between the first shaft 6 and the free end 34 of the meter tube 32 can be acquired

- 6 -

and mathematically converted to a torque value. This measured value can now be used for regulating the engine to avoid overloading the gearing and the propeller. The sun wheel 7 intermeshes with several, for example three, identical planet wheels 16 which are elements of so-called step planets 15. Each step planet 15 comprises two planet wheels 16, 17 connected so as to be torsion-resistant, with very different effective diameters/reference diameters. The sun wheel 7 intermeshes with the larger planet wheels 16 while the smaller planet wheels 17 intermesh with the internal geared wheel 8. According to this principle, transmission ratios exceeding 10:1 can be realised with the use of only one sun wheel and only one internal geared wheel.

In the present case the special characteristics consist of each planet wheel 16, 17 being constructed as a separate unit and on both sides, i.e. axially in front of and behind the centre plane of its wheel, being rotatably held in the planet carrier 13 by way of roller bearings with high stability under load. Preferably this is a "floating" mounting of symmetrical arrangement with two identical roller bearings each. In view of a uniform design life, the roller bearings are adapted to the gearing forces which is why the roller bearings 26 on the "exit side" are of noticeably stronger build than the roller bearings 25 on the "input" side. Floating mounting with radial bearings and little axial play of the wheels is possible in that all intermeshing gearing arrangements are free of axial forces, i.e. no single helical gearing is used. When compared to plain bearings, roller bearings provide an advantage in that they can be exposed to full load even at low speeds/differential speeds and in that generally they operate at higher efficiency, i.e. less loss

- 7 -

performance, in particular at low ambient temperatures such as occur during flight at high altitudes.

The arrangement of the gearwheel planes in the planetary gear 1 is a characteristic which from the point of view of performance flow seems to be rather unfavourable. The sun wheel 7 and the larger planet wheels 16, which here form the input stage, are not arranged towards the engine but instead towards the propeller (further to the left). By contrast the smaller planet wheels 17 and the internal geared wheel 8 which form the output stage are positioned closer to the engine (further to the right). In the present case this arrangement was intentionally selected to make it possible to design the planetary gear 1 with an external contour tapering off towards the engine (right side) and thus to improve the inlet conditions for the turboshaft gas turbine, i.e. to allow a more favourable flow. Of course, within the scope of the invention, the conventional inverse arrangement of stages is also possible.

Construction of each planet wheel 16, 17 as a separate functional element with roller bearings on both sides, requires within each step planet 15 an additional mechanical coupler link for torque/power transfer from wheel to wheel. To this purpose, additional torsionally rigid shafts 22 are installed which in circumferential direction intermesh in a positive lock with the planet wheels 16, 17. To this effect each shaft end comprises an external straight tooth arrangement 23, 24; each wheel comprises an internal straight tooth arrangement 20, 21. The gearing 20, 23, 21, 24 is free of axial forces and, if fitted with some play, allows minimal angular deviations, i.e. radial displacement of the wheels without any constraining forces. Thus the shafts 20 are practically exclusively exposed to torsional

- 8 -

forces; they can be made from high strength materials with relatively thin walls, including hollow shafts. The ability to withstand loads can be further increased by incorporating such shaft gearing in the oil lubrication system of the gearbox. This ensures a high degree of resistance to wear and additional damping at the teeth.

A further performance-optimising advantage is achieved in that prior to commissioning, the angle of the planet wheels 16, 17 can be slightly adjusted and fixed in relation to each other so as to achieve optimal intermeshing of the toothwork. To this effect, each larger planet wheel 16 comprises a catch 19 as a transmission member between the wheel and the shaft. On the side of the shaft, the catch 19 carries the already mentioned internal straight tooth arrangement 20. Helical gearing 18 provides the power transmission to the wheel body. Thus by axial movement of the catch 19 relative to the wheel body, compulsory relative rotation between wheel and catch, and thus between wheel and shaft, is achieved. Fixing the axial position takes place by screwing a flange on the catch 19 to the face of the wheel body, with one or several shims of suitable thickness (axial measure). If the helical gear arrangement 18 is at a small angle, only small loads act on the screws during operation.

As already mentioned, all intermeshing gearing with changing tooth pressure should operate free of any axial force, irrespective of the shaft toothwork which is always engaged with all teeth. Of the involute toothing which is practically used without exception, straight toothing, cogged gearing, herringbone gearing and double helical gearing are suitable. In the case of herringbone gearing, the teeth directly touch at the "point of the arrow" whereas in the case of double

- 9 -

helical gearing there is an axial gap between the symmetrically arranged helical teeth which has advantages from the point of view of production technology. The expert is well aware of the advantages and disadvantages of these variants both from the point of view of operation and production technology.

For other applications of a planetary gear according to the invention, the power flow can also be reversed or modified within the scope of all kinematic possibilities provided by designs using two or three coaxial shafts.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A planetary gear arrangement of gearwheels, comprising:

a gear housing;

a first shaft;

a second shaft arranged coaxially opposite said first shaft;

an internal geared wheel that is torsionally fixedly connected to said gear housing or to a third coaxial shaft;

a sun wheel that is torsionally fixedly connected to said first shaft;

a planet carrier that forms, together with said second shaft, a structural unit that is rotatably supported at at least two axially spaced-apart positions; and

a plurality of identical step planets, each of which comprises a larger planet wheel having a relatively larger effective diameter and intermeshing with said sun wheel, a smaller planet wheel having a relatively smaller effective diameter and intermeshing with said internal geared wheel and being a separate structure relative to said larger planet wheel, at least one respective highly loadable roller bearing arranged respectively on both sides axially in front of and axially behind a center plane of each respective one of said planet wheels, and an additional shaft that torsionally fixedly couples said larger planet wheel and said smaller planet wheel to each other while allowing limited axial and radial movement relative to each other, wherein said additional shaft engages each said planet wheel in a positive form-locking manner in a circumferential direction.

2. The planetary gear arrangement according to claim 1, wherein all of said bearings are respective lubricated roller bearings, each said planet wheel is symmetrically retained in two of said roller bearings, and said structural unit of said planet carrier and said second shaft further comprises a fixed-loose bearing arrangement with a fixed bearing on one side and a movable bearing on another side opposite said one side of the planet carrier, with said fixed bearing absorbing axial forces and comprising a first ball bearing and a first roller bearing in axially adjoining arrangement, and with said movable bearing comprising a second roller bearing.

3. The planetary gear arrangement according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said sun wheel, said internal geared wheel, and said planet wheels respectively comprise and intermesh via at least one of straight tothing, herringbone gearing, double helical gearing, cogged gearing, and involute tothing.

4. The planetary gear arrangement according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein said additional shaft respectively coupling said larger and smaller planet wheels respectively comprise two external straight tooth arrangements, each of said planet wheels respectively comprises an internal straight tooth arrangement fitting into a respective one of said external straight tooth arrangements with a small radial play, each one of said larger planet wheels respectively comprises a planet wheel body and a catch that include a helical gearing therebetween, said internal straight tooth arrangement being worked into said catch which intermeshes with said planet wheel body of said larger planet wheel via said helical gearing, and an adjustment of an axial

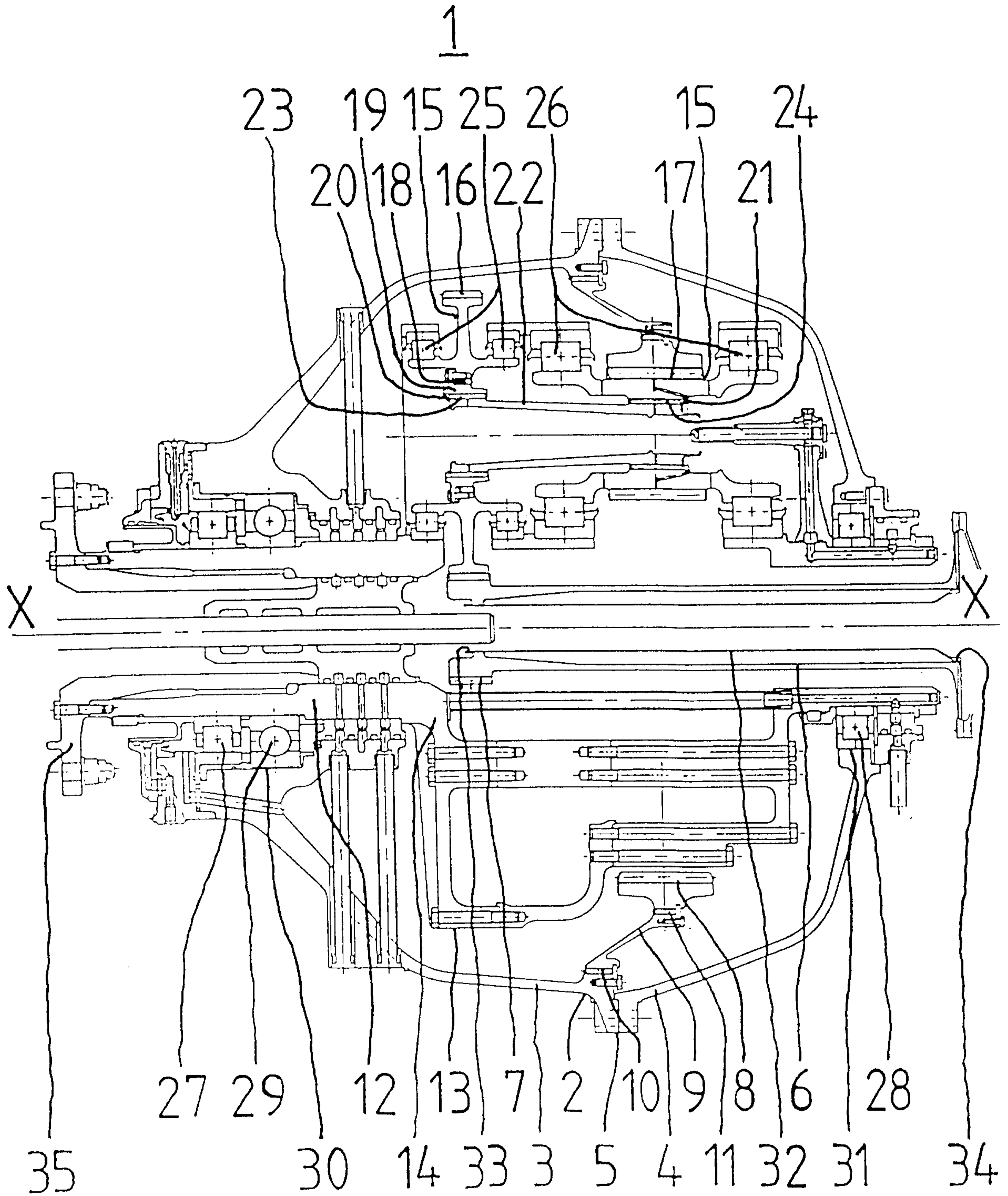
position of intermeshing of said helical gearing effectuates a rotational adjustment of said catch in a circumferential direction relative to said planet wheel body of said larger planet wheel.

5. The planetary gear arrangement according to any one of claims 1 to 4, further comprising a conical carrier with a first carrier gearing toward said gear housing and a second carrier gearing toward said internal geared wheel, wherein said conical carrier carries said internal geared wheel in the manner of a ball and socket joint, so that said internal geared wheel is swivellable about a center thereof and radially yielding within narrow limits, yet in a torsionally fixed manner.

6. The planetary gear arrangement according to any one of claims 1 to 5, further comprising a coaxial meter tube that is arranged coaxially in or on said first shaft, and that has a first fixed end which is connected in a torsionally fixed manner to said first shaft and a second loose end which is not connected to said first shaft in a torsionally fixed manner, so that a relative torsion arising between said loose end of said meter tube and said first shaft represents a measure for establishing torque.

7. The planetary gear arrangement according to any one of claims 1 to 4, further in combination with and for power transfer with speed reduction between a turboshaft gas turbine and a propeller, wherein said smaller planet wheels and said internal geared wheel are arranged axially closer to said gas turbine than are said larger planet wheels and said sun wheel.

8. The planetary gear arrangement according to claim 7, further comprising a conical carrier with a first carrier gearing toward said gear housing and a second carrier gearing toward said internal geared wheel, wherein said conical carrier carries said internal geared wheel in the manner of a ball and socket joint, so that said internal geared wheel is swivellable about a center thereof and radially yielding within narrow limits, yet in a torsionally fixed manner, and wherein said conical carrier expands conically larger toward said propeller.
9. The planetary gear arrangement according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein said gear housing comprises two shells with a flange connection therebetween, with a joint face of said flange connection being arranged transversely to said first and second shafts.
10. The planetary gear arrangement according to claim 9, further in combination with and for power transfer with speed reduction between a turboshaft gas turbine and a propeller, wherein said turboshaft gas turbine includes a compressor inlet housing, and said rear shell of said gear housing is integrated with said compressor inlet housing of said turboshaft gas turbine.
11. The planetary gear arrangement according to any one claims 1 to 10, wherein all of said bearings are respective lubricated roller bearings, and each said planet wheel is symmetrically retained in two of said roller bearings.



Marks-Clerk

1

23 19 15 25 26 15 24

20 18 16 22 17 21

