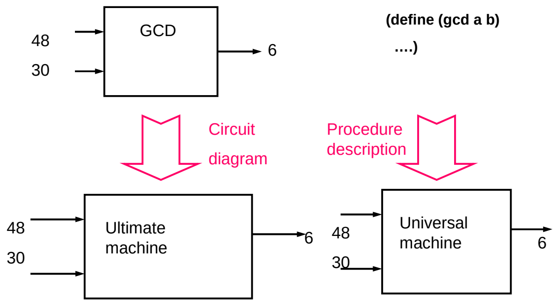
Register Machines

- Connecting evaluators to low level machine code

Plan

- Design a central processing unit (CPU) from:
  - wires
  - logic (networks of AND gates, OR gates, etc)
  - registers
  - control sequencer
- Our CPU will interpret Scheme as its machine language
- Today: Iterative algorithms in hardware
- Recursive algorithms in hardware
- Then: Scheme in hardware (EC-EVAL)
  - EC-EVAL exposes more details of scheme than M-EVAL

The ultimate goal



A universal machine

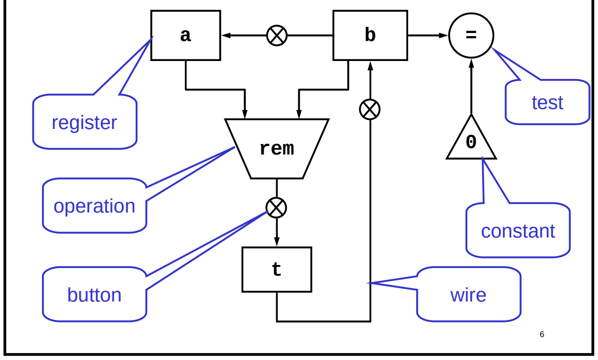
- Existence of a universal machine has major implications for what “computation” means
- Insight due to Alan Turing (1912-1954)
- “On computable numbers with an application to the *Entscheidungsproblem*, A.M. Turing, Proc. London Math. Society, 2:42, 1937
- Hilbert’s *Entscheidungsproblem* (decision problem) 1900: Is mathematics decidable? That is, is there a definite method guaranteed to produce a correct decision about all assertions in mathematics?
- **Church-Turing thesis:** Any procedure that could reasonably be considered to be an *effective procedure* can be carried out by a universal machine (and thus by any universal machine)

Euclid's algorithm to compute GCD

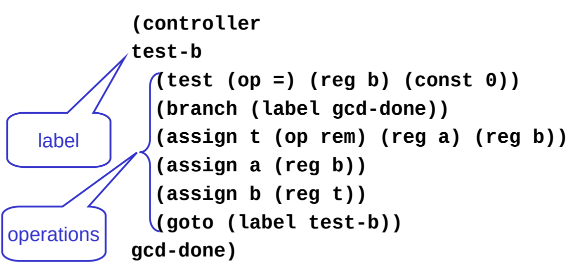
```
(define (gcd a b)
  (if (= b 0)
      a
      (gcd b (remainder a b))))
```

- Given some numbers a and b
- If b is 0, done (the answer is a)
- If b is not 0:
  - the new value of a is the old value of b
  - the new value of b is the remainder of a ÷ b
  - start again

Example register machine: datapaths

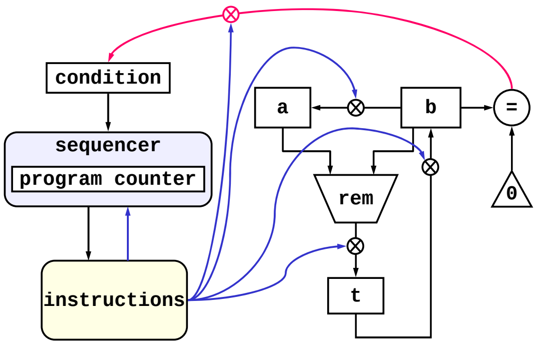


Example register machine: instructions



```
(controller
test-b
 (test (op =) (reg b) (const 0))
 (branch (label gcd-done))
 (assign t (op rem) (reg a) (reg b))
 (assign a (reg b))
 (assign b (reg t))
 (goto (label test-b))
gcd-done)
```

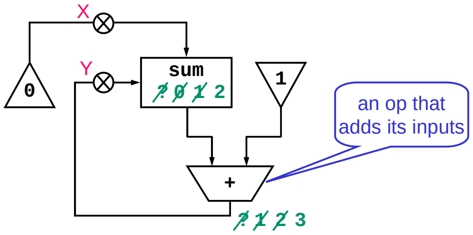
Complete register machine



Datapath components

- Button
  - when pressed, value on input wire flows to output
- Register
  - output the stored value continuously
  - change value when button on input wire is pressed
- Operation
  - output wire value = some function of input wire values
- Test
  - an operation
  - output is one bit (true or false)
  - output wire goes to condition register

Incrementing a register



- What sequence of button presses will result in the register **sum** containing the value 2?

X Y Y

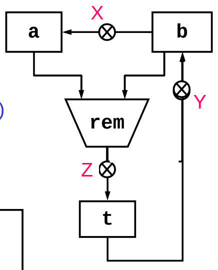
press	sum
	?
X	0
Y	1
Y	2

Euclid's algorithm to compute GCD

```
(define (gcd a b)
  (if (= b 0)
      a
      (gcd b (remainder a b))))
```

- Given some numbers a and b
- If b is 0, done   (the answer is a)
- If b is not 0:
  - the new value of a is the old value of b
  - the new value of b is the remainder of a ÷ b
  - start again

Datapath for GCD (partial)



- What sequence of button presses will result in:
  the register a   containing GCD(a,b)
  the register b   containing 0
- The operation **rem** computes the remainder of a ÷ b

press	a	b	t
	9	6	?
Z	9	6	3
X	6	6	3
Y	6	3	3
Z	6	3	0
X	3	3	0
Y	3	0	0

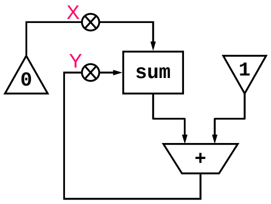
Example register machine: instructions

```
(controller
test-b
  (test (op =) (reg b) (const 0))
  (branch (label gcd-done))
  (assign t (op rem) (reg a) (reg b))
  (assign a (reg b))
  (assign b (reg t))
  (goto (label test-b))
gcd-done)
```

Instructions

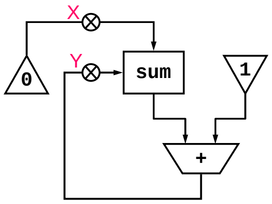
- Controller: generates a sequence of button presses
  - sequencer
  - instructions
- Sequencer: activates instructions sequentially
  - program counter remembers which one is next
- Each instruction:
  - commands a button press, OR
  - changes the program counter
    - called a branch instruction

Button-press instructions: the sum example



```
(controller
  (assign sum (const 0))                  <X>
  (assign sum (op +) (reg sum) (const 1)) <Y>
  (assign sum (op +) (reg sum) (const 1)))
```

Unconditional branch

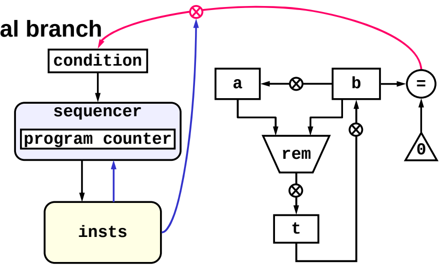


```
sequencer:
  nextPC <- PC + 1
  activate instruction at PC
  PC <- nextPC
  start again
```

PC	nextPC	press
0	1	X
1	2	Y
2	~~3~~ 1	--
1	2	Y
2	~~3~~ 1	--

```
  (controller
0    (assign sum (const 0))
  increment
1    (assign sum (op +) (reg sum) (const 1))
2    (goto (label increment)))
```

Conditional branch



```
(controller
test-b
  (test (op =) (reg b) (const 0))
  (branch (label gcd-done))
  (assign t (op rem) (reg a) (reg b))
  (assign a (reg b))
  (assign b (reg t))
  (goto (label test-b))
gcd-done)
```

Conditional branch details

`(test (op =) (reg b) (const 0))`

- push the button which loads the condition register from this operation's output

`(branch (label gcd-done))`

- Overwrite nextPC register with value if condition register is TRUE
- No effect if condition register is FALSE

Datapaths are redundant

- We can always draw the data path required for an instruction sequence
- Therefore, we can leave out the data path when describing a register machine

Abstract operations

- Every operation shown so far is abstract:
  - abstract = consists of multiple lower-level operations
- Lower-level operations might be:
  - AND gates, OR gates, etc (hardware building-blocks)
  - sequences of register machine instructions
- Example: GCD machine uses
  `(assign t (op rem) (reg a) (reg b))`
- Rewrite this using lower-level operations

Less-abstract GCD machine

```
(controller
test-b
  (test (op =) (reg b) (const 0))
  (branch (label gcd-done))
  ; (assign t (op rem) (reg a) (reg b))
  (assign t (reg a))
rem-loop
  (test (op <) (reg t) (reg b))
  (branch (label rem-done))
  (assign t (op -) (reg t) (reg b))
  (goto (label rem-loop))
rem-done
  (assign a (reg b))
  (assign b (reg t))
  (goto (label test-b))
gcd-done)
```

Importance of register machine abstraction

- A CPU is a very complicated device
- We will study only the core of the CPU
  - eval, apply, etc.
- We will use abstract register-machine operations for all the other instruction sequences and circuits:
  `(test (op self-evaluating?) (reg exp))`
- remember, **`(op +)`** is abstract, **`(op <)`** is abstract, etc.
- no magic in **`(op self-evaluating?)`**

Review of register machines

- Registers hold data values
- Controller specifies sequence of instructions, order of execution controlled by program counter
  - Assign puts value into register
    - Constants
    - Contents of register
    - Result of primitive operation
  - Goto changes value of program counter, and jumps to label
  - Test examines value of a condition, setting a flag
  - Branch resets program counter to new value, if flag is true
- Data paths are redundant

Machines for recursive algorithms

- GCD, **`odd?`**, **`increment`**
  - iterative, constant space
- **`factorial`**, EC-EVAL
  - recursive, non-constant space
- Extend register machines with subroutines and stack
- Main points
  - Every subroutine has a contract
  - Stacks are THE implementation mechanism for recursive algorithms

Part 1: Subroutines

- Subroutine: a sequence of instructions that
  - starts with a label and ends with an indirect branch
  - can be called from multiple places

- New register machine instructions
  - `(assign continue (label after-call-1))`
    - store the instruction number corresponding to label `after-call-1` in register `continue`
    - this instruction number is called the return point
  - `(goto (reg continue))`
    - an indirect branch
    - change the PC to the value stored in register `continue`

Example subroutine: increment

- set **sum** to 0, then increment, then increment again
- dotted line: subroutine

blue: call green: label red: indirect jump

```
(controller
   (assign (reg sum) (const 0))
   (assign continue (label after-call-1))
   (goto (label increment))
 after-call-1
   (assign continue (label after-call-2))
   (goto (label increment))
 after-call-2
   (goto (label done))
 increment
   (assign sum (op +) (reg sum) (const 1))
   (goto (reg continue))
 done)
```

Subroutines have contracts

- Follow the contract or register machine will fail:
  - registers containing input values and return point
  - registers in which output is produced
  - registers that will be overwritten
    - in addition to the output registers

```
increment
   (assign sum (op +) (reg sum) (const 1))
   (goto (reg continue))
```

- subroutine **increment**
  - input: **sum, continue**
  - output: **sum**
  - writes: none

End of part 1

- Why subroutines?
  - reuse instructions
  - reuse data path components
  - make instruction sequence more readable
    - just like using helper functions in scheme
  - support recursion

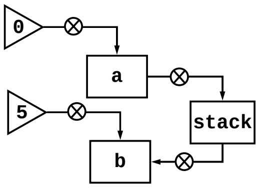
- Contracts
  - specify inputs, outputs, and registers used by subroutine

Part 2: Stacks

- Stack: a memory device
  - **save** a register: send its value to the stack
  - **restore** a register: get a value from the stack

•When this machine halts, **b** contains 0:

```
(controller
   (assign a (const 0))
   (assign b (const 5))
   (save a)
   (restore b)
)
```



Stacks: hold many values, last-in first-out

- This machine halts with 5 in **a** and 0 in **b**

```
(controller
0  (assign a (const 0))
1  (assign b (const 5))
2  (save a)
3  (save b)
4  (restore a)
5  (restore b))
```

contents of stack after step

2	3	4	5
0	5 0	0	empty

•5 is the top of stack after step 3
• **save**: put a new value on top of the stack
• **restore**: remove the value at top of stack

Check your understanding

- Draw the stack after step 5. What is the top of stack value?
- Add **`restore`**s so final state is **a**: 3, **b**: 5, **c**: 8, and stack is empty

```
(controller
0  (assign a (const 8))
1  (assign b (const 3))
2  (assign c (const 5))
3  (save b)
4  (save c)
5  (save a)



)
```

Things to know about stacks

- stack depth
- stacks and subroutine contracts
- tail-call optimization

Stack depth

- depth of the stack = number of values it contains

- At any point while the machine is executing
  - stack depth = (total # of saves) - (total # of restores)

- stack depth limits:
  - low: 0 (machine fails if restore when stack empty)
  - high: amount of memory available

- max stack depth:
  - measures the space required by an algorithm

Stacks and subroutine contracts

- Standard contract: subroutine **`increment`**
  - input: **`sum, continue`**
  - output: **`sum`**
  - writes: none
  - stack: unchanged
- Rare contract:

```
strange
  (assign val (op *) (reg val) (const 2))
  (restore continue)
  (goto (reg continue))
```

  - input: **`val,`** return point on top of stack
  - output: **`val`**
  - writes: **`continue`**
  - stack: top element removed

Optimizing tail calls

no work after call except `(goto (reg continue))`

Unoptimized version

```
setup
  (assign sum (const 15))
  (save continue)
  (assign continue (label after-call))
  (goto (label increment))
after-call
  (restore continue)
  (goto (reg continue))
```

Optimized version

```
setup
  (assign sum (const 15))
  (goto (label increment))
```

This optimization is important in EC-EVAL

- Iterative algorithms expressed as recursive procedures would use non-constant space without it

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End of part 2

- stack
  - a LIFO memory device
  - **`save`**: put data on top of the stack
  - **`restore`**: remove data from top of the stack
- things to know
  - concept of stack depth
  - expectations and effect on stack is part of the contract
  - tail call optimization

Part 3: recursion

```
(define (fact n)
  (if (= n 1) 1
      (* n (fact (- n 1)))))

(fact 3)
(* 3 (fact 2))
(* 3 (* 2 (fact 1)))
(* 3 (* 2 1))
(* 3 2)
6
```

- The stack is the key mechanism for recursion
  - remembers return point of each recursive call
  - remembers intermediate values (eg., **n**)

```
(controller
        (assign continue (label halt))
fact
        (test (op =) (reg n) (const 1))
        (branch (label b-case))
        (save continue)
        (save n)
        (assign n (op -) (reg n) (const 1))
        (assign continue (label r-done))
        (goto (label fact))
r-done
        (restore n)
        (restore continue)
        (assign val (op *) (reg n) (reg val))
        (goto (reg continue))
b-case
        (assign val (const 1))
        (goto (reg continue))
halt)
```

Code: base case

```
(define (fact n)
  (if (= n 1) 1
      ...))
```

```
fact    (test (op =) (reg n) (const 1))
        (branch (label b-case))
        ...
b-case  (assign val (const 1))
        (goto (reg continue))
```

• `fact` expects its input in which register?	`n`
• `fact` expects its return point in which register?	`continue`
• `fact` produces its output in which register?	`val`

Code: recursive call

```
(define (fact n)
   ...
      (fact (- n 1))
   ...)
```

```
        ...
        (assign n (op -) (reg n) (const 1))
        (assign continue (label r-done))
        (goto (label fact))
r-done
        ...
```

- At **`r-done`**, which register will contain the return value of the recursive call?

`val`

Code: after recursive call

```
(define (fact n)
   ...
      (* n <return-value> )
   ...)
```

```
        (assign val (op *) (reg n) (reg val))
        (goto (reg continue))
```

- Problem!
  - Overwrote register **n** as part of recursive call
  - Also overwrote **`continue`**

Code: complete recursive case

```
        (save continue)
        (save n)
        (assign n (op -) (reg n) (const 1))
        (assign continue (label r-done))
        (goto (label fact))

r-done  (restore n)
        (restore continue)
        (assign val (op *) (reg n) (reg val))
        (goto (reg continue))
```

- Save a register if:
  - value is used after call AND
  - register is not output of subroutine AND
  - (register written as part of call OR register written by subroutine)

Check your understanding

- Write down the contract for subroutine **`fact`**
  - input:
  - output:
  - writes:
  - stack:

Execution trace

- Contents of registers and stack at each label
- Top of stack at left

label	continue	n	val	stack
fact	halt	3	???	empty
fact	r-done	2	???	3 halt
fact	r-done	1	???	2 r-done 3 halt
b-case	r-done	1	???	2 r-done 3 halt
r-done	r-done	1	1	2 r-done 3 halt
r-done	r-done	2	2	3 halt
halt	halt	3	6	empty

- Contents of stack represents pending operations

  `(* 3 (* 2 (fact 1)))` at base case

End of part 3

- To implement recursion, use a stack
  - stack records pending work and return points
  - max stack depth = space required
    - (for most algorithms)

Where we are headed

- Next time will use register machine idea to implement an evaluator
  - This will allow us to capture high level abstractions of Scheme while connecting to low level machine architecture