# Timing Analysis and Timing Constraints

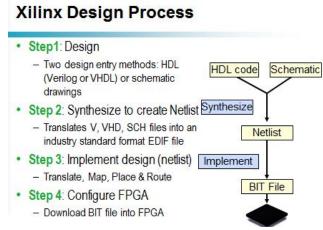
# 1. Synopsis:

The objective of this lab is to make you familiar with two critical reports produced by the Xilinx ISE during your design synthesis and implementation. The lab introduces you to timing constraints and uses a division-by-subtraction example to illustrate "packing" more computations per clock to utilize the clock period fully and to reduce the number of clocks needed for the complete operation.

An easy to read reference is: http://www2.units.it/marsi/elettronica2/lucidi/XSTsynthesis.ppt

### 2. Introduction

Translating Verilog code to a configuration bit stream is a three-step process in the Xilinx ISE. (1) Synthesis. Using Xilinx Synthesis Tool (XST) is the first step (the Synthesize-XST in the Processes pane). (2) Implementation (Implement Design). (3) Generation of the bit stream (Generate Programing File). Xilinx ISE generates several reports during these operations to help you understand how the tool inferred (understood) and implemented your design. Knowing how to parse these



reports for critical information is a vital part of learning the Xilinx ISE toolset. The next two sections discuss the information reported in two of these reports.

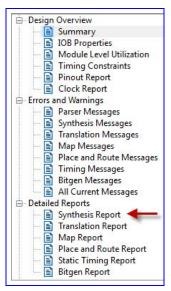
# 3. Reading Synthesis Report:

XST translates behavioral Verilog code to logic components during the first step. Once it completes, it produces a detailed report that you can

view under the Processes pane by clicking on Design Summary/Reports Or you can do



Right Click on Synthesize - XST => View Text Report Processes: divider\_timing\_top Processes: divider\_timing\_top Design Summary/Reports 翼 既 Design Summary/Reports Design Utilities Design Utilities PC. **User Constraints** . **User Constraints** ⊕ 🔁 🛕 Implement 👯 Run ⊕ ₹2▲ Implement Design Can Generate Programming File Generate P ReRun Configure Target Device **1** Configure Rerun All Analyze Design Using ChipScope Analyze De 受 Stop View Text Report ©t Design Force Process Up-to-Date



This report provides information about how the tool inferred your Verilog design. The report contains following main sections (reported as "Table of Contents" at the top of the report).

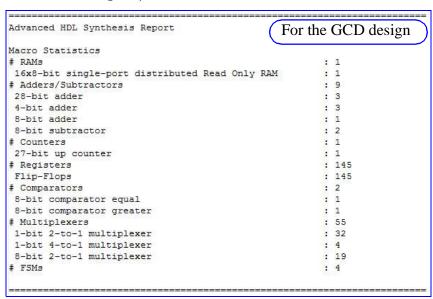
The three sections that are of most importance to us are sections 5.1, 8.2, and 8.4.

# 3.1 Advanced HDL Synthesis Report (Section 5.1)

This section lists the logic components (or "macros") that XST inferred from your code. This report will indicate problems in

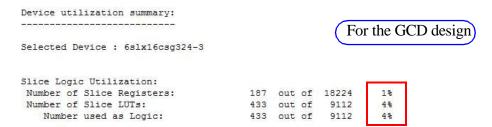
```
TABLE OF CONTENTS
 1) Synthesis Options Summary
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           8.4.5) Cross Clock Domains Report
```

your design, such as extra flip flops inferred because of bad coding. Here is an excerpt from this section after a sample synthesis of the GCD lab on Spartan 6 FPGA on our Nexys3 board (FPGA: xc6slx16-3-csg324) and also Part 1 of this lab.



### 3.2 Device Utilization Summary (Section 8.2)

This section reports the FPGA resources that your design will take up.



The above is from the GCD lab utilization section (synthesized on Nexys3 FPGA) shows that this

design takes 1% of the available registers in the FPGA. A design that takes more resources than the FPGA has can not fit into the FPGA

### 3.3 Timing Report (Section 8.4)

The Timing Report (8.4) section lists paths with the highest delay. By default the three longest paths are reported. The longest path-delay determines the maximum frequency at which the design can operate. This report is only an *estimate though and not an actual value*. The true path-delay value can be determined only after the tool implements your design (in the Place & Route Timing Report -- discussed next). An *example* of the timing summary is shown below.

```
Timing Summary:

Speed Grade: -3

Minimum period: 5.215ns (Maximum Frequency: 191.767MHz)

Minimum input arrival time before clock: 3.706ns

Maximum output required time after clock: 8.163ns

Maximum combinational path delay: 4.595ns
```

The report contains more details about the timing of certain paths (a path originates at a given starting point, goes through some combinational logic, and then to a certain terminal point).

XST provides this information so that you do not reduce the delay of one path of the design only to have another path slowed to the point where it becomes the longest path. The above is an excerpt from the synthesis report that details the delay of a single path. While we can easily identify the source and destination in this path the intermediate signal names are obfuscated! But note that the delay through logic (i.e. gates) is about half of the total path delay (here it is actually less than half). The rest is the interconnect delay. This is typical in FPGA-based designs though.

# 4. Reading the Place & Route Report

Place & Route is the final step before the tools generates a configuration file for the FPGA. In this step the Xilinx tool maps the circuit to physical locations in the FPGA and creates the signal-routes that connect various logic elements. Recall that routes contribute almost half of the latency in the circuit. So only after Place & Route is complete can the tools compute the precise delay of

each path. To see if the circuit meets the timing constraints placed on it we refer to the Place & Route report. You can view this report under the Implement Design option in the Processes pane (Implement Design -> Place & Route (right click) -> View Text Report). You can view this report under the Processes pane (Design Summary/Reports -> Detailed Reports -> Place and Route Report). The portion of the Place & Route report explaining the timing constraints is shown below. The key figure is the Worst Case Slack. A positive worst case slack means the constraint is met and a negative slack means that the longest path has path-delay longer than the clock period of the circuit.

					(	For the G	CD design
Constraint	1	Check	1	Worst Case   Slack	Best Case   Achievable	Timing   Errors	Timing Score
NET "BUFGP1/IBUFG" PERIOD = 10 ns HIGH 50 %	1	SETUP HOLD	1	4.362ns  0.425ns	5.638ns	01	0
PATH "TS_LD_path" TIG	1	MAXDELAY	1	N/A	7.451ns	N/A	0
PATH "TS_SSD_path" TIG	1	MAXDELAY	1	N/A	9.158ns	N/A	0

# **5. Applying Timing Constraints:**

Timing constraints are instructions that the designer gives to the Xilinx tool about the speed at which the designer wants to run the design. The Xilinx tool uses these instructions to construct an implementation that meets the timing constraints. Remember that the tool reports failures in the Place & Route report by indicating a negative slack if the constraint is not met. Then you can either modify the constraint or the design based on your system objective.

Timing constraints are specified in the User Constraint File (.ucf) file. This is the same file that you used in previous labs to specify pin location constraints. Two more constraints are discussed in this lab: Clock period constraint (PERIOD) and False Path constraint (TIG).

#### 5.1 PERIOD Constraint

The first is a constraint on the clock period. This constraint tells the tool the frequency at which you want to run the design. The tool tries to ensure that all combinational paths between registers have delays shorter than this clock period so that the design will work reliably at that frequency. The syntax for this constraint is:

```
NET "<net_name>" PERIOD = <clock_period> ns HIGH <duty_cycle>%;
```

where net\_name is the name of the clock signal (e.g., clk, sys\_clk, or Clk\_Port as in our designs), clock\_period is the time period of the clock and duty\_cycle is the duty cycle. So if you want to specify a 10ns clock signal with 50% duty cycle for the "sys\_clk" net you would add this constraint to the UCF file:

```
NET "sys_clk" PERIOD = 10.0ns HIGH 50%;
```

Alternatively, you can specify

```
Net "ClkPort" TNM_NET = sys_clk_pin;
TIMESPEC TS_sys_clk_pin = PERIOD sys_clk_pin 100000 kHz;
```

#### **5.2** TIG Constraint

The second constraint that we use, instructs the tool to ignore the signal(s) when determining the timing path. These paths are called "false paths". To instruct the tool to ignore an input (switches or buttons) signal the syntax is:

```
PIN "Sw1" TIG;
```

TIG stands for Timing Ignore Group. By assigning a signal to a TIG the tool ignores any timing paths involving this signal. You would declare all other inputs (switches and buttons) as belonging to a TIG using the above syntax.

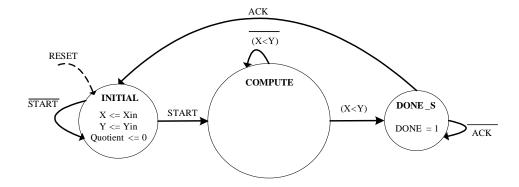
For output (LEDs and SSDs) signals you cannot use the above syntax (a limitation of the Xilinx tool). Instead you must first assign these signals to a new timing group. Then you must instruct the tool to ignore the path timing issues that terminate to these signals. If your design uses only two LEDs (i.e. Ld1 & Ld2) then the syntax would be:

```
NET "Ld1" TNM_NET = "LED_GROUP";
NET "Ld2" TNM_NET = "LED_GROUP";
TIMESPEC "TS_LD" = FROM "FFS" TO "LED_GROUP" TIG;
```

"LED\_GROUP" is the name of the group (arbitrary and chosen by us) that you assign all the "ignorable" LEDs to. TS\_LD is the name (arbitrary and chosen by us) for this timing constraint and the key word FFS means all flip flops. This constraint then ensures that all paths originating from any flip flop and terminating at signals in the LED\_GROUP (Ld1, Ld2) are ignored during the timing check.

# 6. Description of the Circuit

The design that will be used in this lab is a division-by-subtraction design. You will not need to modify the state machine (below) except for adding RTL in COMPUTE state. You will experiment with the number of subtraction operations performed in each clock cycle when the state machine is in the COMPUTE state.

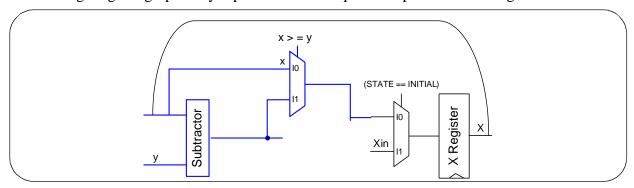


#### 6.1 Part 1

In **part 1** you perform only one subtraction per clock. The complete control unit and data path code for this design (part 1) is given below. This code shows the simplest implementation with only one subtraction performed during each cycle in the COMPUTE state (highlighted code).

```
always @(posedge Clk, posedge Reset)
 begin : CU_n_DU
    if (Reset)
       begin
        state <= INITIAL;</pre>
        x <= 4'bxxxx;
        y \ll 4 bxxxx;
        Quotient <= 4'bXXXX;
       end
    else
       begin
          (* full_case, parallel_case *)
         case (state)
            INITIAL:
              begin
                // state transitions in the Control Unit
                if (Start)
                  state <= COMPUTE;</pre>
                // RTL operations in the Data Path Unit
                  x \le Xin;
                  v <= Yin;
                  Quotient <= 0;
              end
            COMPUTE:
              begin
                if (x < y)
                  state <= DONE_S;</pre>
                if (x >= y)
                  begin
                    x \ll x - y;
                    Quotient <= Quotient + 1;
                  end
              end
            DONE_S:
              begin
                if (Ack)
                  state <= INITIAL;</pre>
              end
      endcase
    end
  end
```

The following diagram graphically represents the data path components for X register.

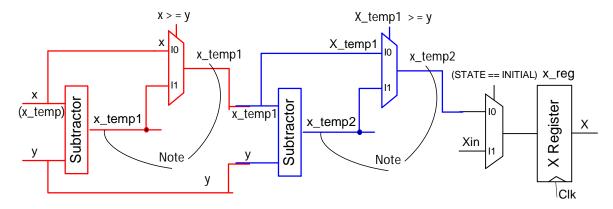


#### 6.2 Part 2

In **part 2** you will modify the data path to perform more than one subtractor (in a cascaded fashion). The following code implements a chain of subtractors using temporary variables (x\_temp, x\_temp1, x\_temp2,etc.). It is best to declare these temporary variables locally in the named procedural block:

```
begin: The_Compute_Block
         // local variable declarations
             reg [3:0] x_temp, x_temp1, x_temp2, Quo_temp, Quo_temp1, Quo_temp2;
         x_temp = x; // gather x into x_temp
         Quo_temp = Quotient; // gather Quotient into Quo_temp;
         x_{temp1} = x_{temp};
         Quo_temp1 = Quo_temp;
                                                                               two subtractions were combined
         if (x_temp >= y)
            begin
              x_{temp1} = x_{temp} - y;
              Quo_temp1 = Quo_temp + 1;
            end
         x_{temp2} = x_{temp1};
         Quo_temp2 = Quo_temp1;
         if (x_temp1 >= y)
            begin
              x_{temp2} = x_{temp1} - y;
              Quo_temp2 = Quo_temp1 + 1;
            end
         \ensuremath{//} final gathering of the computed combinational outputs into registers
         x \le x_{temp2};
         Quotient <= Quo_temp2;
```

The above code produces the following logic for the X register. Each additional subtraction adds one 4-bit subtractor and one 4-bit, 2-to-1 multiplexer to the X-path in the DPU.



Note: When designing, in your schematic, you can not use a label (ex: x\_temp) for the input as well as for the output of a mux. But it makes sense in the sequential code in your Verilog always block. As shown below we can just use one x\_temp variable instead of the x\_temp, x\_temp1, and x-temp2. Notice the blocking assignments for each intermediate combinational output.

```
x_temp = x; // gather x into x_temp
Quo_temp = Quotient; // gather Quotient into Quo_temp;
                                                                       two subtractions were combine
if (x_temp >= y)
   begin
     x_{temp} = x_{temp} - y;
     Quo temp = Quo temp + 1;
   end
if (x_{temp} >= y)
   begin
     x_{temp} = x_{temp} - y;
     Quo_temp = Quo_temp + 1;
   end
// final gathering of the computed combinational outputs into registers
x \le x_{temp};
Quotient <= Quo_temp;
```

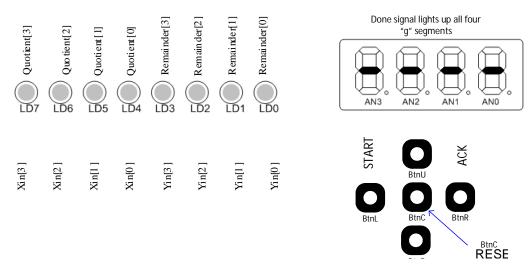
### 6.3 Part 3

In **part 3** we experiment with a for-loop to construct the multiple subtraction blocks. The method used in part 2 is error prone and laborious if you were to do more subtractions (more than 2 subtractions) in a clock. It can be replaced by a for-loop that implicitly performs the same function. The synthesis tool "unrolls" the for loop and generates logic that performs as many subtractions as you specify with the loop bounds. By adjusting the loop bounds you can control the number of subtraction operations performed in each cycle. The following code implements two subtractions per cycle. It leads to the same hardware as shown the figures in part 2 above.

Note that the "for" loop executes in *zero-time* in simulation. The above for loop does not take **two clocks.** The "for" loop is only a convenience mechanism to describe the datapath here.

### 6.4 Top Design

BtnC is connected to reset, Xin is SW7-SW4, and Yin is SW3-SW0. BtnL generates the START signal and BtnR generates ACK. The computed quotient appears on LD7-LD4 and the remainder on LD3-LD0. All four SSDs display "-" when the Done signal goes true.



### 7. Procedure:

Download the Xilinx ISE project zip file ee2011\_divider\_timing.zip from Blackboard. Extract the zipped project into the projects folder (C:\Xilinx\_Projects\). Open the project file ee2011\_divider\_timing.ise in the Xilinx Project Navigator. Since all core files (divider\_timing\_part1.v, divider\_timing\_part2.v, divider\_timing\_part3.v) use the same module name (divider\_timing), you can replace one core file with another core file and synthesize the same TOP (divider\_timing\_top.v) with the new core file. Also you can simulate the same test-bench (divider\_timing\_tb.v) with the new core file.

File	Description	
ee2011_divider_timing.ise	Xilinx Project File.	
divider_timing_top.v	This top file is complete and is common to all three parts.	
divider_timing_part1.v	This Verilog code for Part 1 of this lab is complete. The code implements the data path executing one subtraction per cycle. You do NOT have to modify this code in Part 1.	
divider_timing_part2.v	Modify divider_timing_part1.v to create this Verilog code for Part 2 of this lab. Section of code to implement data path with two subtractions per cycle was given in this handout. You will create and modify this file as explained in Procedure Part 2.	
divider_timing_part3.v	Modify divider_timing_part1.v to create this Verilog code for Part 3 of this lab. Section of code with a "for" loop to implement data path with two subtractions per cycle was given in this handout. You will create and modify this file as explained in Procedure Part 3. Instead of writing in-line code for each subtraction as in Part 2, a for-loop is specified in Part 3. By changing the bounds of this for-loop you can easily perform as many subtractions as you want within one clock period.	
divider_timing_tb.v	This testbench for the core design is complete. The same testbench is used for all three designs.	
divider_timing_top.ucf	This is the User Constraint File that you are required to modify in Part 1. In addition to pin location constraints, the UCF file has timing constraints. The same UCF file is used for all three designs.	

7.2 Open the top file divider\_timing\_top.v and understand its function. Recall that *all* constraints -- pin location and timing constraints -- are applied to signals in the top level module (the UCF file is associated with the top module). So you must be familiar with the signals (and their names) in the top file and the function they perform in order to apply timing constraints. Simulate the core design divider\_timing\_part1.v using the testbench divider\_timing\_tb.v. Verify the operation by analyzing the waveform and explain it to your TA.

### Part 1(a): Reading the Synthesis Report

The objective in this part of the lab is to read the synthesis report and record the resource utilization and *estimated* timing of the simple divider circuit.

7.3 Open the core design for Part 1 (divider\_timing.v). Note the RTL operations in the COMPUTE state.

```
begin
  // state transitions in the control unit
  if (x < y)
     state <= DONE_S;

// RTL operations in the data path unit
  if (x >= y)
     begin
     x <= x - y;
     Quotient <= Quotient + 1;
  end
end</pre>
```

- Open the UCF file divider\_timing\_top.ucf using Notepad++ or by selecting the file in the Hierarchy pane on the top and selecting User Constraints -> Edit Constraints (Text) in the Processes pane. Notice that we have not specified any timing constraint in the UCF yet. It only contains pin location constraints (you are already familiar with these).
- 7.5 Without making any changes to the project, **synthesize the top design** by selecting the top design in the Hierarchy pane on the top and double-clicking Synthesize XST in the Processes pane. Open the synthesis report by right-clicking Synthesize XST and selecting View Text Report when the process is complete.
- 7.6 Browse to the Advanced HDL Synthesis Report section and **record the types and numbers of various logical components** ("macros") inferred by the synthesis tool (Lab Report Q8. 5). Explain which statements in the code lead to the inference of each component.
- 7.7 Next, browse to the device utilization summary and **record the resource usage** in the Lab Report Q 8. 6.
- 7.8 Finally, browse to the Timing Report section at the bottom of the report. **Record the maximum estimated frequency** at which the design can run (Report Q 8. 7). Also **record the logical names for the starting and ending points** of the three longest paths (Report Q 8. 8).

### **Part 1(b): Applying Timing Constraints**

The objective for this part is to enforce a 10ns period constraint on the design and check if the design meets this constraint. In other words we want to check if the simple divider design with only one subtractor in the data path can run at 100MHz.

7.9 In the UCF file, add the following statement to apply the period constraint on the clock signal (Clk\_Port as the clock signal, a period of 10ns and a duty cycle of 50%):

```
NET "ClkPort" PERIOD = 10.0ns HIGH 50%;
```

7.10 Declare all input paths (from switches to registers holding X and Y) as false paths. The syntax for declaring Sw1 as a source of a false path is given below. Use this syntax to declare Sw0-Sw7, and also BtnL, BtnU, BtnR, BtnD, BtnC, on "false paths":

```
PIN "Sw1" TIG;
```

7.11 Next, declare all output paths (from any flip flop to the LEDs) as "false paths". First all of the LED signals must be gathered in a timing group. Syntax for adding (e.g. Ld1) to a timing group is given below. Follow this to add Ld0-Ld7 to the timing group "LED\_GROUP" (repeat the statements below with a unique Ld number for each line).

```
NET "Ld1" TNM NET = "LED GROUP";
```

Similarly add all SSD related signals (Ca, Cb, Cc, Cd, Ce, Cf, Cg, Dp, and also An0, An1, An2, An3) to another group called SSD\_GROUP.

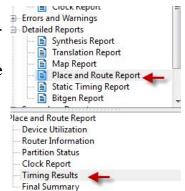
7.12 Finally, declare the timing group "LED\_GROUP" as a false path using the syntax below:

```
TIMESPEC "TS_LD" = FROM "FFS" TO "LED_GROUP" TIG;
TIMESPEC "TS_SSD" = FROM "FFS" TO "SSD_GROUP" TIG;
```

7.13 **Implement the design** by selecting the top file in the Sources pane and double-clicking Implement Design in the Processes pane.



(Implement Design -> Place & Route -> Place & Route Report or Design Summary/Reports Detailed Reports Place and Route Report Timing Results ) to check if the clock period timing constraint was met. Record the worst case slack in the setup and hold times (Lab Report Q 8. 9).



### Part 2: Performing More Than One Subtraction Per Cycle

In Part 2 of this lab our goal is to modify the divider code so that it performs as many subtractions in one cycle within the 10ns clock period as possible.

7.15 Copy divider\_timing\_part1.v as divider\_timing\_part2.v and modify the RTL code corresponding to the COMPUTE state as suggested in section 6.2 to execute two subtractions each cycle.

Keep divider\_timing\_top.v and the divider\_timing\_top.ucf in the project in the Sources window. Remove divider\_timing\_part1.v and replace it with divider\_timing\_part2.v.

First simulate the core design divider\_timing\_part2.v using the provided testbench divider\_timing\_tb.v. Verify the operation by analyzing the waveform and explain it to your TA.

- 7.16 Implement the design (Processes -> Implement Design) without modifications and check if the 10ns clock period constraint is met by looking at the Place & Router Report. Record the worst case slack and the FPGA slices utilized in Lab Report Q 8. 9.
- 7.17 **Modify the code** to perform one more subtraction operation in each cycle (altogether three subtractions per clock). Follow the template provided for the two subtractors earlier. Implement the design (Processes -> Implement Design) and check if the setup time slack is still positive. Record the slack and slices utilized in Lab Report Q 8.9.

## Part 3: Using a "for loop"

7.18 In this part you will replace the in-line code for multiple subtractions with a "for loop". Copy divider\_timing\_part2.v as divider\_timing\_part3.v and modify the RTL code corresponding to the COMPUTE state as suggested in section 6.3 to execute two subtractions each cycle.

Keep divider\_timing\_top.v and the divider\_timing\_top.ucf in the project in the Sources window. Remove divider\_timing\_part2.v and replace it with divider\_timing\_part3.v.

First simulate the core design divider\_timing\_part3.v using the provided testbench divider\_timing\_tb.v. Verify the operation by analyzing the waveform and explain it to your TA.

7.19 You will need to change the loop bounds to increase the number of subtractions. Progressively change loop bounds and implement each of those different designs. Check if the 10ns clock period constraint is met by looking at the Place & Router Report. Record the worst case slack and the FPGA slices utilized for each case (for subtractors 4 and above) in Lab Report Q 8. 9. Keep doing this until the setup time slack eventually becomes negative.

for 
$$(I = 0; I \le 1; I = I+1)$$

8.	Lab	Re	<b>po</b> i	rt:
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Name:	Date:
Lab Session:	TA's Signature:

For TAs:	
Comments:	

Q 8. 1: How many subtraction operations are necessary to accomplish 13 divided by 3? How many cycles in the COMPUTE state (include the *failed* subtraction clock, but do not count clocks in INITIAL and DONE\_S states) does the given state machine take to perform this subtraction using the data path in Part 1 (one subtractor)?

Number of Subtraction Operations \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Cycles \_\_\_\_\_

Q 8. 2: Assuming you have two subtractors (i.e., the data path given in Part 2) how many cycles (in the COMPUTE state) will it take to do 13 divided by 3? Complete the table below (add more lines, if necessary).

State: Initial Xin = 13 Yin = 3 Quotient = 0

State: Compute X = 13 Y = 3 Quotient = 0

State: X = Y = Quotient =

State:

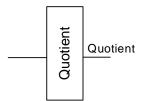
State:

State:

State:

Q 8. 3: What would happen if we give Xin = 6 and Yin = 12. Write the list of states visited and the final values of Quotient and Remainder using the format of Q 8.2.

Q 8. 4:	Complete the block-level diagram for the Quotient register. Assume two cascaded sub-
	tractors. Refer to similar figure on page 8 for the register X.



Q 8. 5: Report the number of each of the following logical components inferred by XST from the code in Part 1 and explain what is that component used for in the design (alternatively, which line of the code lead to the inference of that component).

<b>Logical Component</b>	Number Inferred	Explanation
4-bit adder		
4-bit subtractor		
Flip Flops		
Comparators	1	To compare X with Y and produce $X \ge Y$ to help in state transitions as well as in datapath operations.

Q 8. 6: Record the FPGA resources consumed by the design in Part 1.

FPGA Resources	Utilization	Total Available	Percentage Utilization
Slice LUTs (LookUp Tables	45	9112	0%
Slice Registers			

Q 8. 7:	8. 7: What is the maximum <i>estimated</i> to What is the corresponding minim			can run?
	Maximum Frequency:	MHz	Minimum Clock Period:	ns

Q 8. 8: Record the path reported under "Timing constraint: Default period analysis for Clock 'ClkPort' " for the design in Part 1 (from the synthesis report ).

Path	Starting point (Logical name)	Ending point (Logical name)	Total Delay (ns )	%age of Logic Delay

Q 8. 9: Record the summary of results for an increasing number of subtractors in the data path. Fill the table up and including the number of maximum subtractors for which the PERIOD constraint is met and then one more.

Worst Case Slack Note 1: From Place and Route Report, Timing Results, Worst Case Setup Slack FPGA Slices Note 2: From Place and Route Report, Device Utilization section

Slice Logic Distribution: Number of occupied Slices: 18 out of 2,278 1%

<b>Procedure Step</b>	# of subtractors	Worst Case Slack (ns)	FPGA Slices
7.14 (Part 1)	1	4.599 (Note 1 above)	18 (Note 2 above)
7.16 (Part 2)	2		
7.17 (Part 2)	3		
7.19 (Part 3)	4		
7.19 (Part 3)	5		
7.19 (Part 3)	6		
7.19 (Part 3)	7		