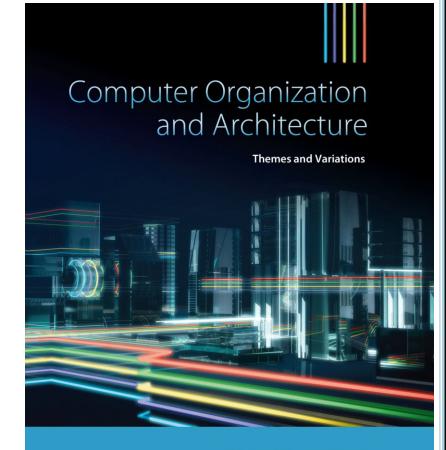
Part E

CHAPTER 3

Architecture and Organization



Alan Clements

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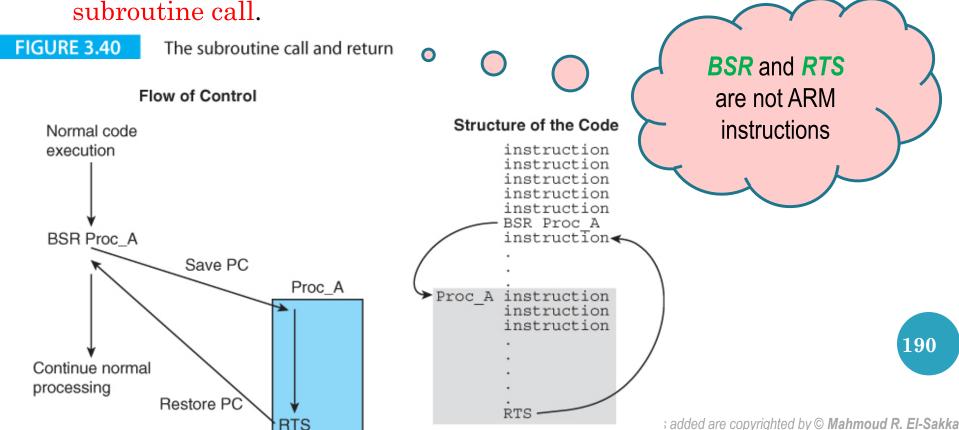
Subroutine Call and Return

- □ A *subroutine* (a.k.a. *function*, *procedure*, and *subprogram*) is a *set of instructions* that *may be repeatedly called* by a program to do a given function.
- □ A *subroutine* gives the simplest form of program abstraction.
- ☐ There are two main characteristics in any subroutine.
 - 1. A subroutine can be called from anywhere in the program.
 - 2. Once the subroutine is completed, it should return to the instruction directly after the subroutine calling location.

Subroutine Call and Return

- \square A *hypothetical* instruction *BSR Proc_A calls* subroutine *Proc_A*.
 - The processor saves the address of the next instruction to be executed in a safe place, and
 - o loads the program counter with the address of the first instruction in the subroutine.
- \square At the end of the subroutine a return from subroutine instruction, RTS,

o causes the processor to return to the point immediately following the subroutine call



ARM Support for Subroutines

- □ RISC processors (including ARM) do not provide a fully automatic subroutine call/return mechanism like CISC processors.
- **ARM**'s branch with link instruction, **BL**,
 - o automatically saves the return address in register r14.

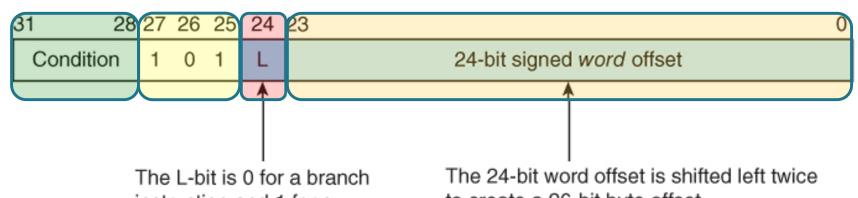
This is the main difference between B and BL

The branch instruction (Figure 3.41) has a 24-bit **signed** program counter relative offset (word address offset). • •

> You may want to review slides 89 to 91 to remember how to encode and decode this 24-bit offset.

FIGURE 3.41

Encoding ARM's branch and branch-with-link instructions



instruction and 1 for a branch with link instruction. to create a 26-bit byte offset.

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ARM Support for Subroutines

- □ The *branch with link* instruction behaves like the branch instruction but the processor also copies the return address (i.e., the address of the next instruction to be executed following a return) into the link register **r14**.
- ☐ If you execute:

```
BL Sub_A ;save return address in r14; branch to "Sub_A"
```

ARM will take care of (reverse) the effect of the pipelining

- ☐ At the end of the subroutine, you return by
 - o *copying the return address* in r14 to the program counter by executing:

```
MOV pc, lr
```

or

MOV **r15**, r14

Should it be LT

or LE?

ARM Support for Subroutines

□ Suppose that you want to evaluate the following expression several times in a program.

```
if x > 0 then x = 16*x + 1 else x = 32*x
```

 \square Assuming that **x** is loaded into **r0**, we can write:

```
Func1 CMP r0,#0 ;test for x > 0

MOVGT r0,r0, LSL #4 ;if x > 0 x = 16*x

ADDGT r0,r0,#1 ;if x > 0 then x = 16*x + 1

MOVLT r0,r0, LSL #5 ;ELSE if x < 0 THEN x = 32*x

MOV pc,lr ;return by restoring saved PC
```

□ Consider the following invocation of the above subroutine.

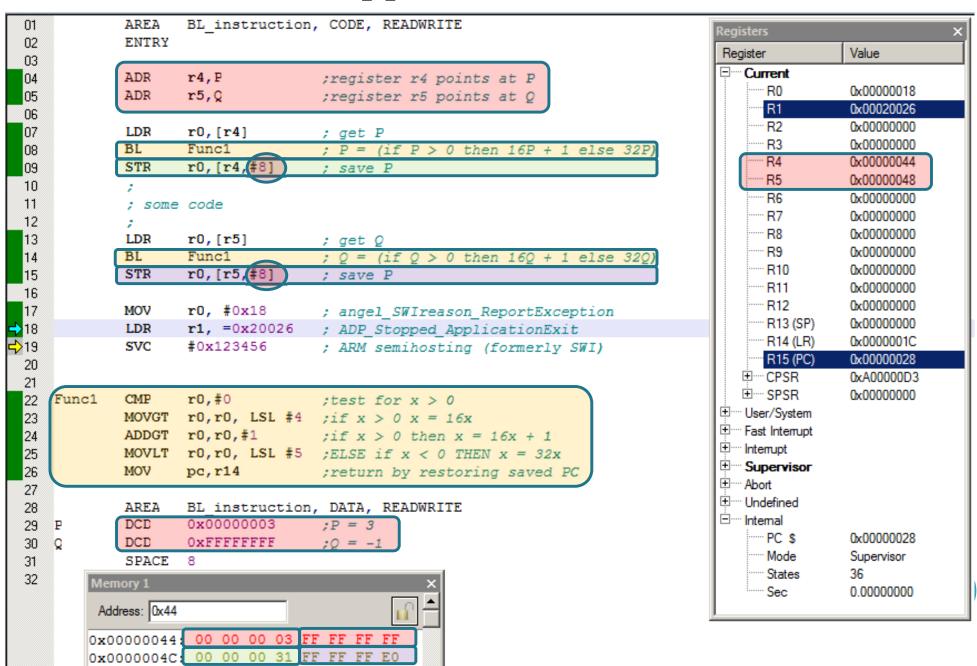
```
LDR r0,[r4] ;get P
BL Func1 ;First call
    ;P = (if P > 0 then 16*P + 1 else 32*P)
STR r0,[r4] ;save P
```

Later on ...

```
LDR r0,[r5] ;get Q
BL Func1 ;Second call
    ;Q = (if Q > 0 then 16*Q + 1 else 32*Q)
STR r0,[r5] ; save Q
```

0x00000054: 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00

ARM Support for Subroutines



Conditional Subroutine Calls

- □ **BL** instruction can be conditionally executed.
- ☐ For example

```
CMP r9, r4 ; if r9 < r4
```

BLLT ABC ; then call subroutine ABC

- **BLLT** means
 - o Branch
 - o with Link
 - o execute on condition Less Than

Subroutine Call and Return

- ☐ An important application of the stack is to save the address to return to after executing the subroutine.

 This is another method to
 - A subroutine call can be implemented by • call, other than using R14.
 - Pushing the return address onto the stack
 - o Branching to the target address.
 - Once the execution of the subroutine code is completed, a *return from subroutine* instruction is executed
 - o Popping the return address from the stack
 - o Copy the return address to the **PC** register

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Subroutine Call and Return

Grows up

□ Example

This is B. It is NOT BL

You need to re-map the memory to make the stack space read/write enabled (Debug/Memory Map).
The other option is to use a .ini file
You may want to review tutorial 7, slides 93-106.

```
STR r15, [r13,#-4]!

B Target

The proper return address
```

```
; assume that the stack grows towards
; low addresses and the SP points at
; the top item on the stack.
; pre-decrement the stack pointer AND
; push the return address on the stack
; jump to the target address (B not BL)
; to return here
```

Due to the pipeline effect, the PC value will not be the address of the current instruction. Instead, it will be current address +12. Yes, it is +12, not +8, as it is STR instruction

The address pushed onto the stack.

□ Because ARM does not support a stack-based subroutine return mechanism, you would have to write:

```
LDR r12, [r13], #+4

SUB r15, r12, #4
```

;get saved PC and post-increment
;stack pointer
;fix PC and load into r15 to return

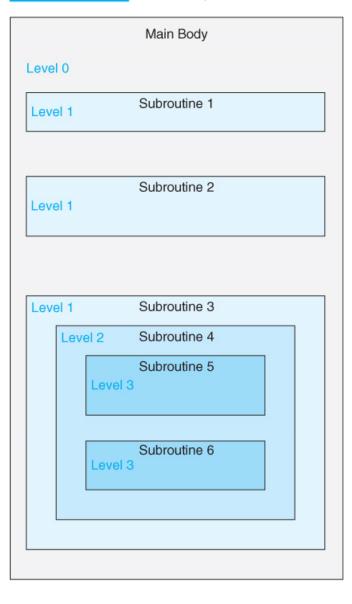
The 4 is subtracted to make the popped address pointing to the proper return address.

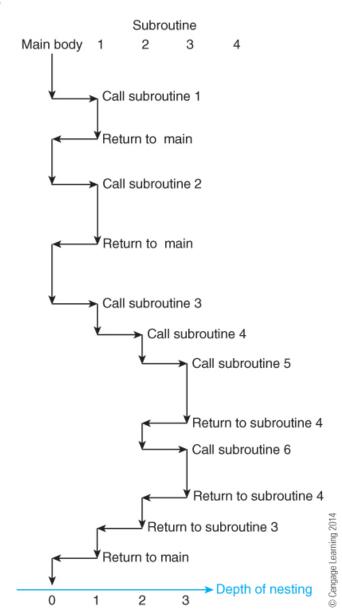
Why did not we copy the stack content directory to r15?

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Nested subroutines

FIGURE 3.48 An example of nested subroutines



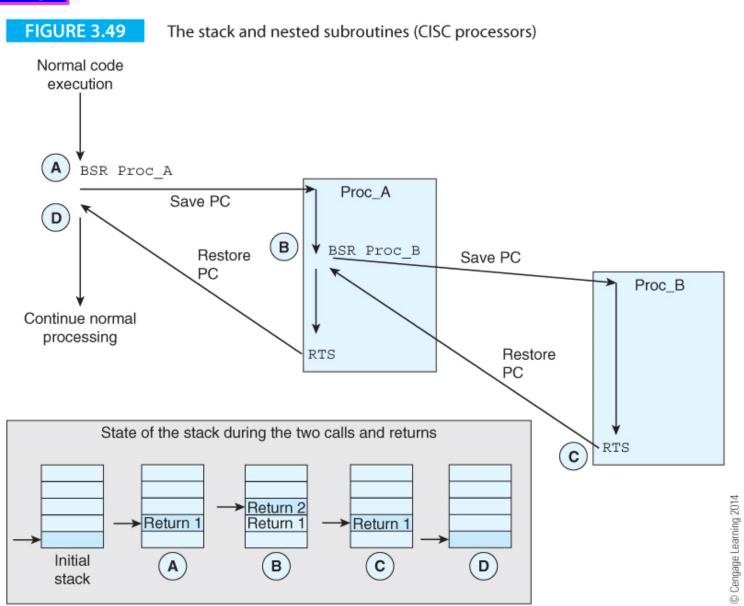


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Occupied memory

Example of nested subroutine

Grows up

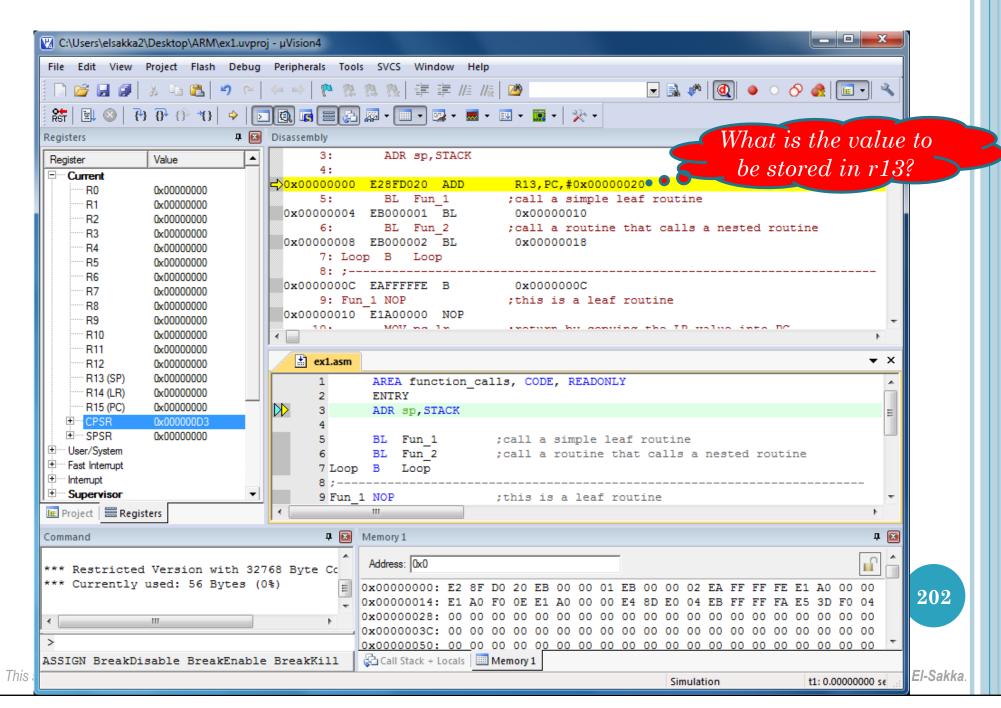


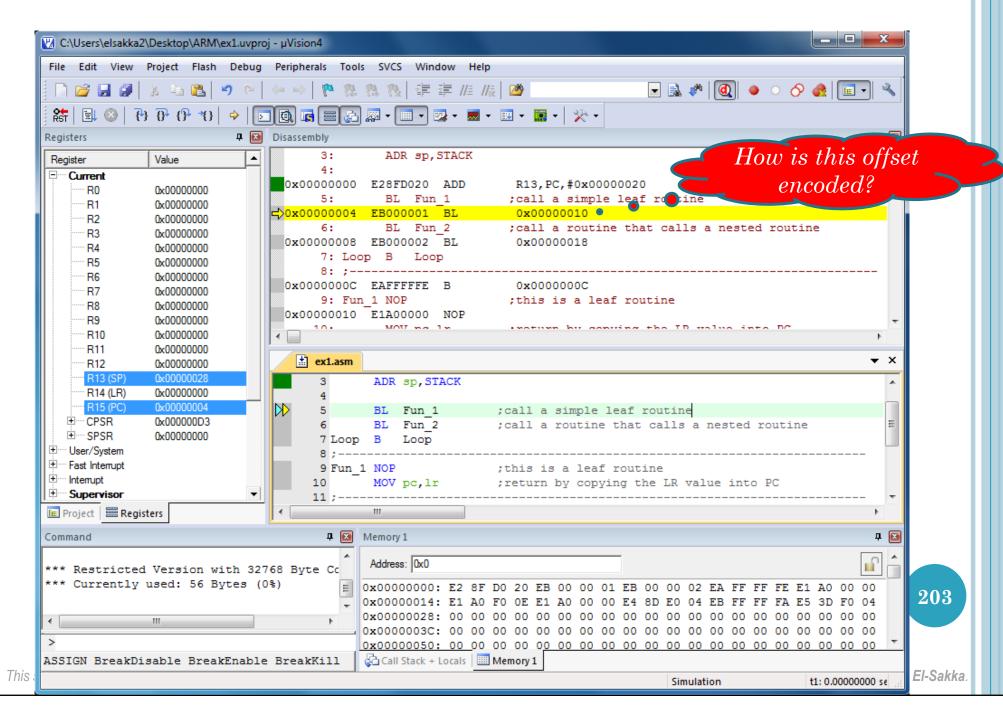
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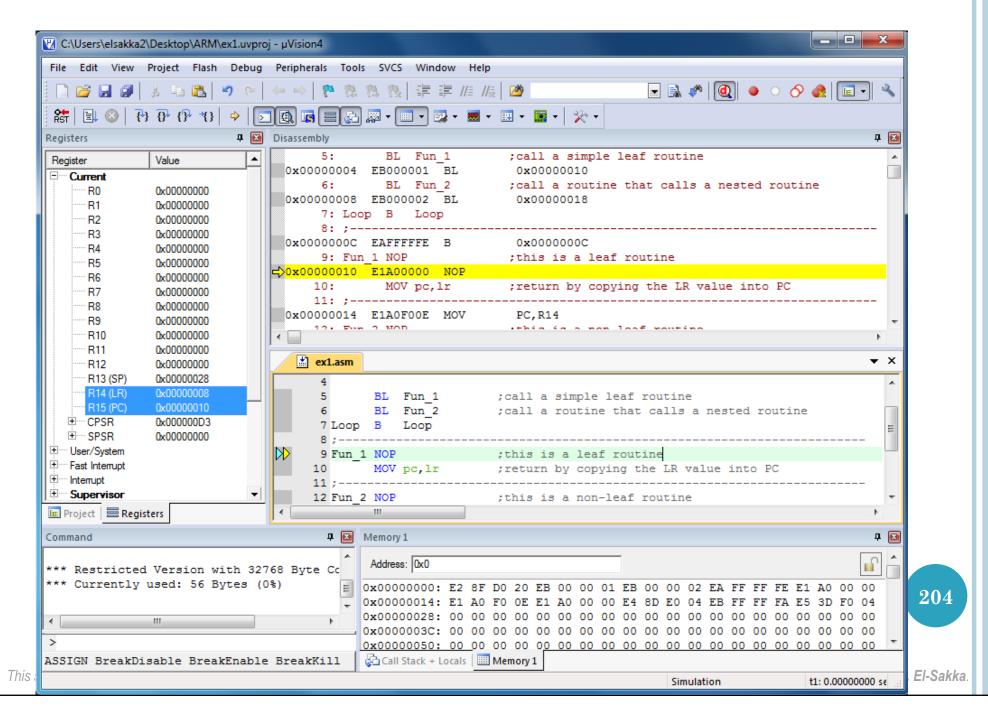
What is the maximum depth that can be called using this stack?

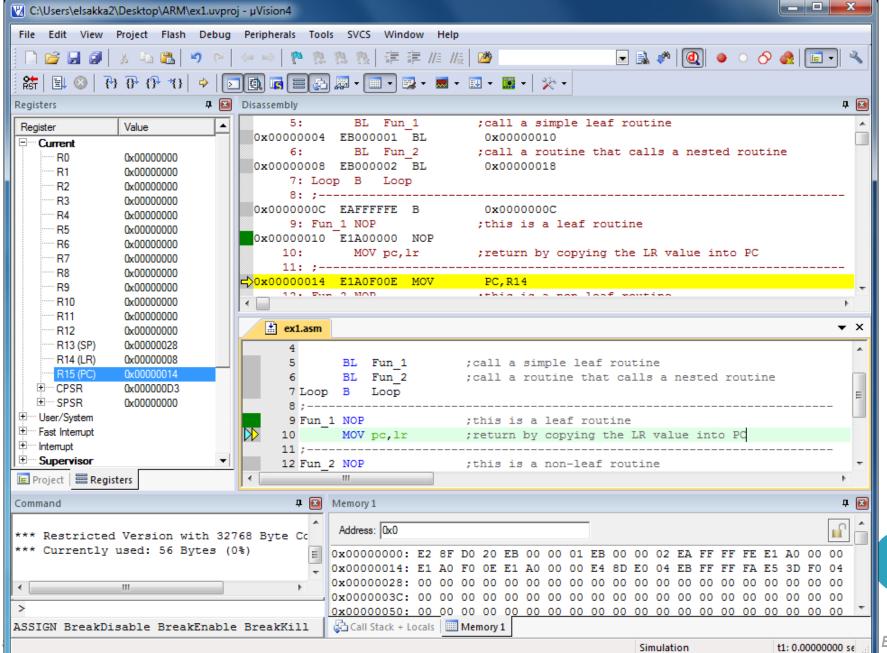
ounnd.

- □ Subroutine Fun_1 is a leaf subroutine that does not call any other subroutine and, therefore, we don't have to worry about saving the link register, r14, and we can return by executing MOV pc, lr.
- □ Subroutine Fun_2 contains a call to another subroutine (i.e., nested subroutine) and we have to save the link register in order to return from Fun_2.
- \Box The simplest way of *saving* the link register is to *push* it onto the stack.
- ☐ To return from Fun_2, we *restore the pushed* r14 into the program counter.



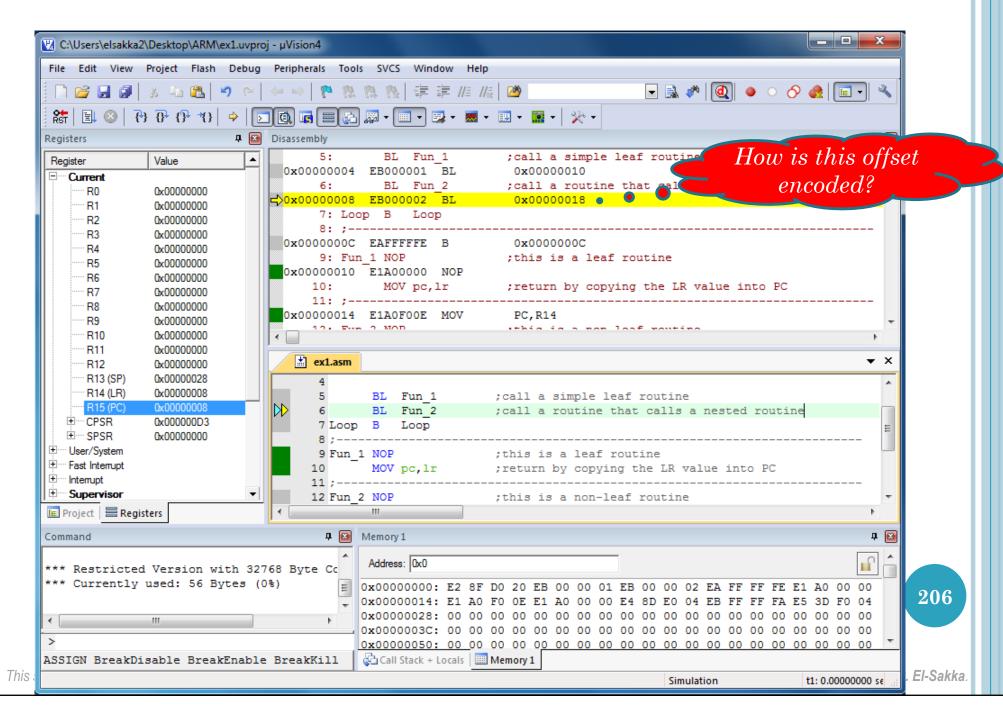


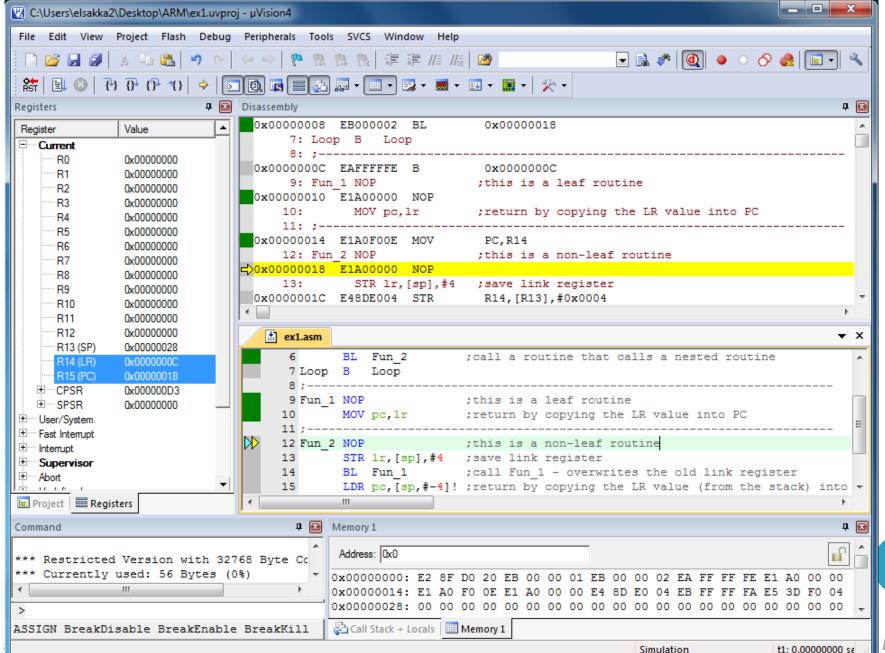




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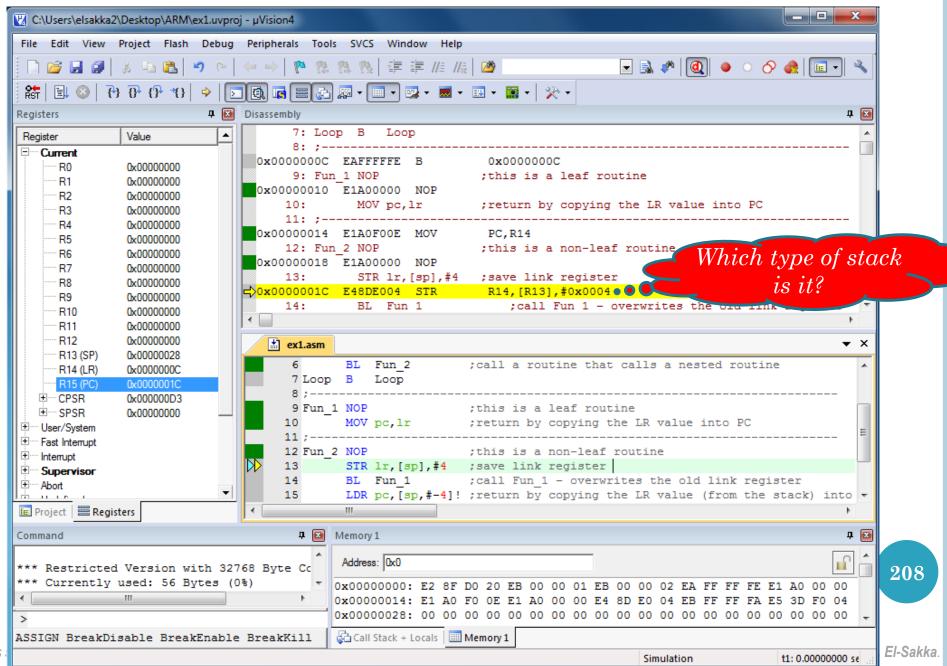


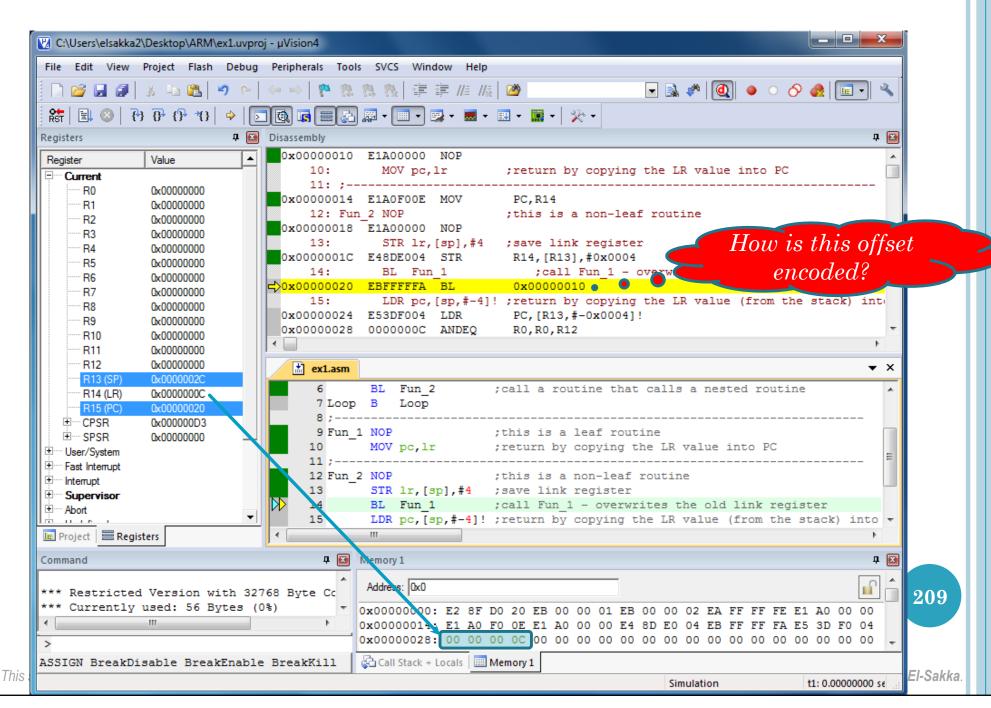


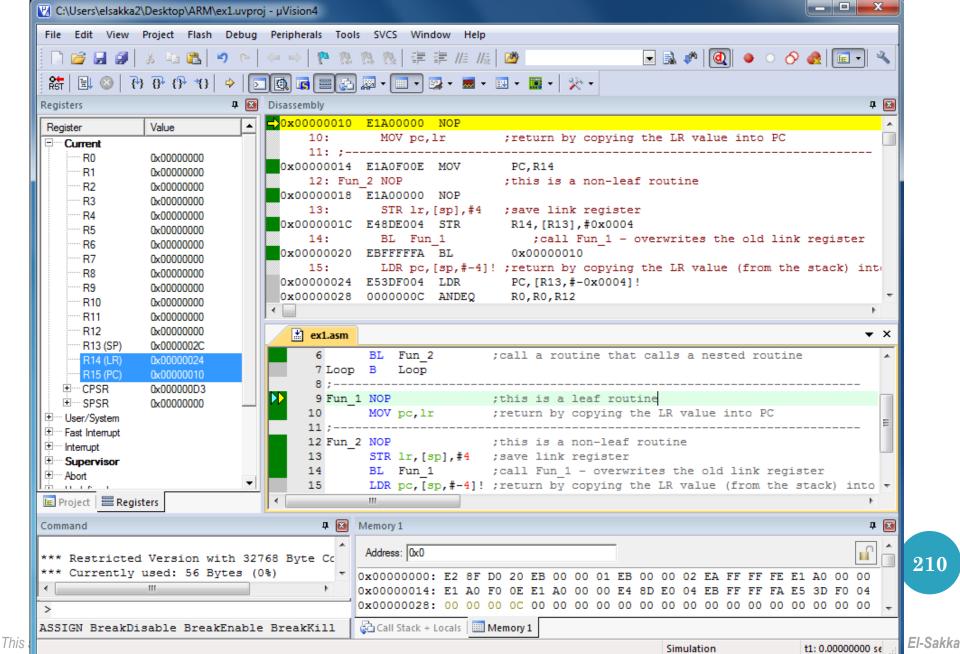
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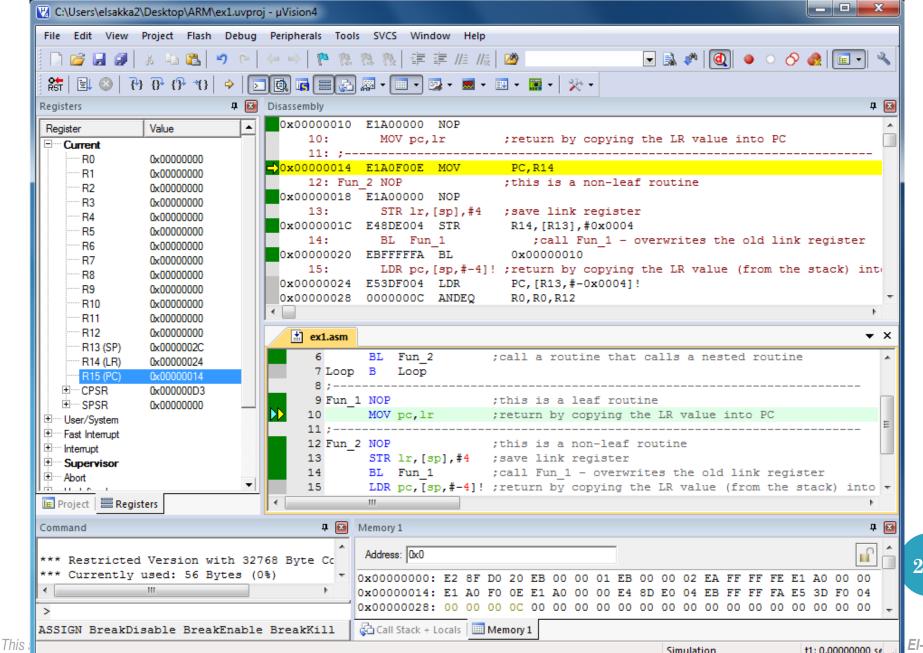
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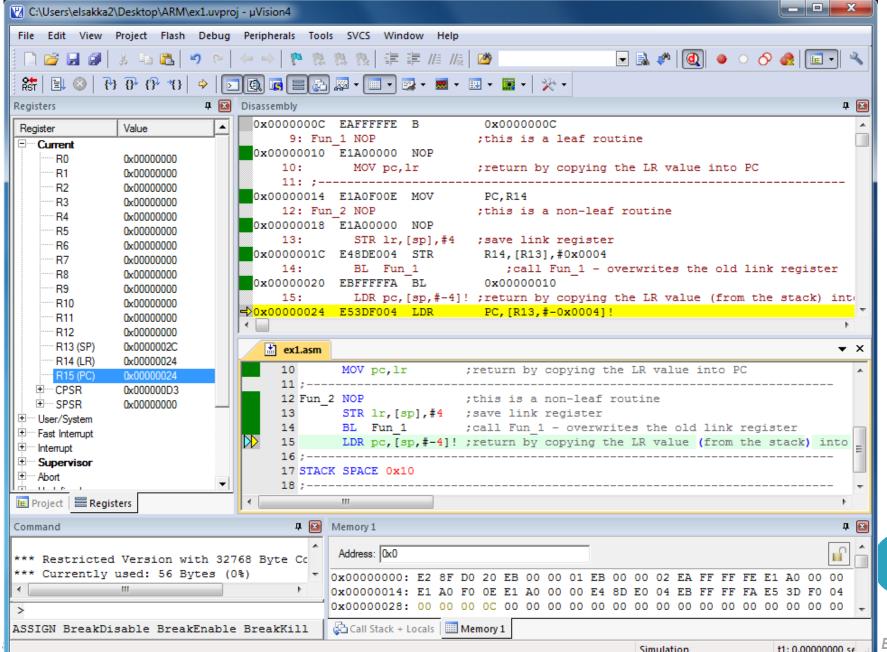






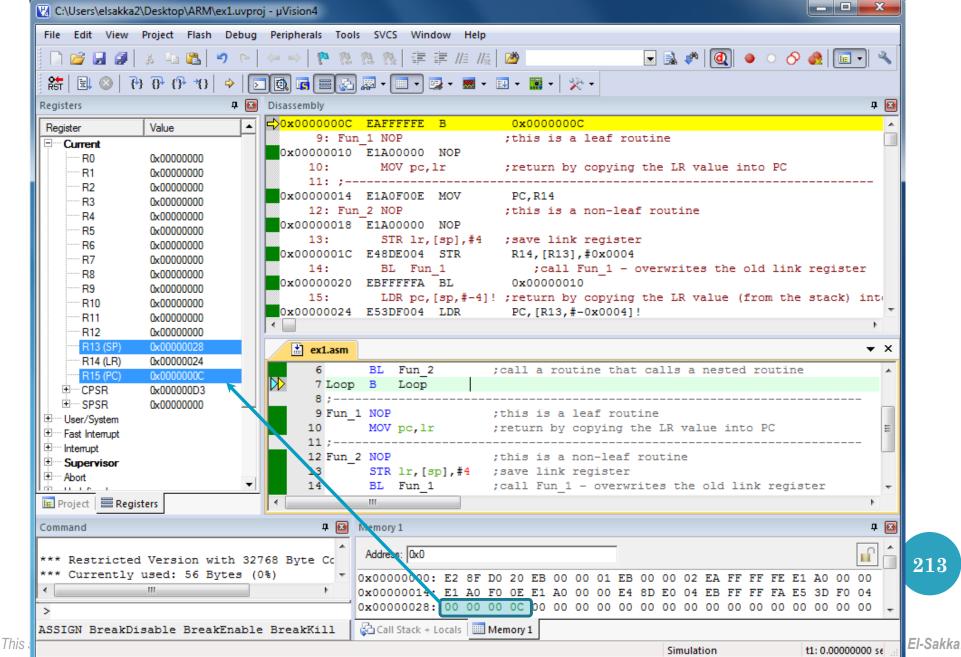
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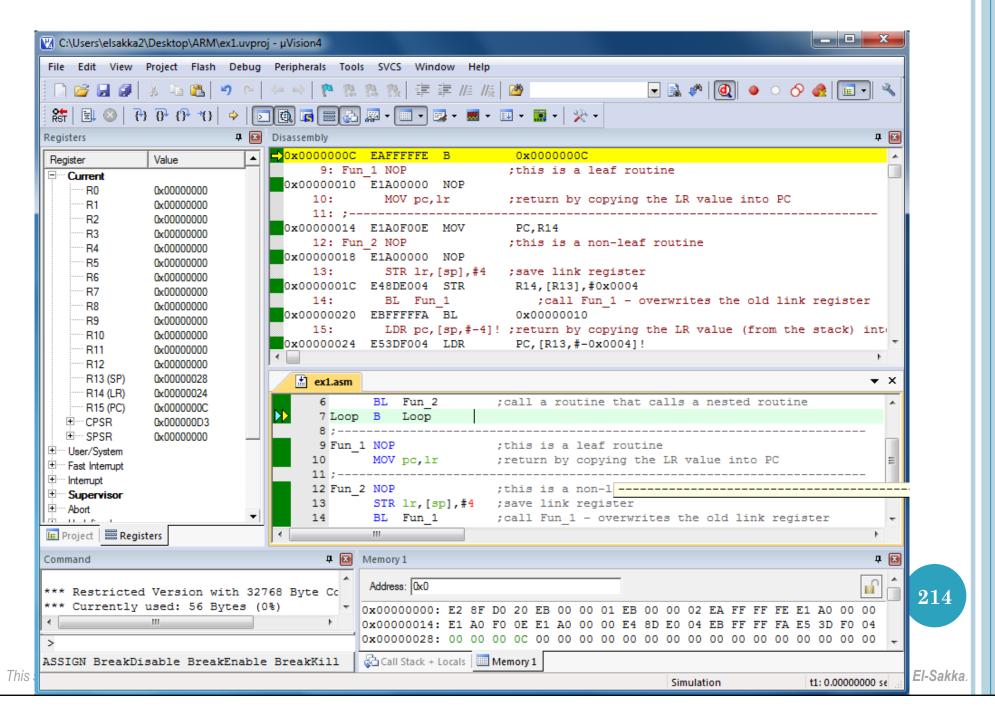
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Subroutines and Block Move Instructions

- ☐ All subroutines commonly use the same set of registers to save values, and this might cause problems.
 - Assume that a program used R1 to store a temporary value.
 - Later, this program called a function.
 - The function also used R1 to store a different value.
 - After returning from the function, the program will not have access to the original **R1** value that was there before calling the function.
- ☐ To solve this issue, the followings need to be done:
 - At the beginning of the function, the values of all registers that will be used in the function must be pushed onto a stack.
 - Just before returning from the function, all pushed values must be popped and loaded to the same registers.

Subroutines and Block Move Instructions

- ☐ The *ARM*'s block move instructions can be used to
 - save register values once entering a subroutine and
 - restore registers just before returning from a subroutine.
- ☐ Consider the following ARM code:

```
BL test ;call test, save return ;address in r14
...

test STMFD r13!,{r0-r4,r10} ;subroutine test, save working ;registers
. body of code
.
LDMFD r13!,{r0-r4,r10} ;subroutine completes, ;restore the registers
MOV pc,r14 ;copy the return address in ;r14 to the PC
```

You need to re-map the memory to make the stack space read/write enabled (Debug/Memory Map).

The other option is to use a .ini file
You may want to review tutorial 7, slides 93-106.

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Subroutines and Block Move Instructions

☐ If you are using block move STM/LDM instructions to store/load multiple registers to/from the stack, you may also want to store the link register (R14) as well and then load its value directly into the program counter (R15) to save an instruction.

We can write:

- □ At the beginning of the subroutine, we push the *link register r14* containing the return address onto the stack, and then at the end we pull the saved register values, including the value of the return address which is placed into the *PC*, to make the return.
 - By doing so, we reduced the size of this code by one instruction

You need to re-map the memory to make the stack space read/write enabled (Debug/Memory Map).

The other option is to use a .ini file You may want to review tutorial 7, slides 93-106.

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