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Compiler-based Countermeasure Against Fault Attacks

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► **To cite this version:**

Thierno Barry, Damien Couroussé, Bruno Robisson. Compiler-based Countermeasure Against Fault Attacks. Workshop on Cryptographic Hardware and Embedded Systems, Sep 2015, Saint-Malo, France. . emse-01232664

HAL Id: emse-01232664

<https://hal-emse.ccsd.cnrs.fr/emse-01232664v1>

Submitted on 23 Nov 2015

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CONTEXT

The goal is to implement the instruction duplication technique as a countermeasure against Fault Attacks on an ARM 32-bit Microcontroller[1,2]. Operating inside a compiler allowed us to reduce the security overhead thanks to the flexibility and code transformations opportunities offered by compilers

WORKFLOW



The user identifies the portions of the program to protect

```
@__to_secure__("fault")
int foo(int a, int b){
    . . .
    return a * b + a;
}
```

C source code

The user has a full control over parts of the code to protect

Instructions cannot be duplicated at the middle-end due to the SSA form

```
entry:
    %mul = mul %a, %b
    %add = add %mul, %a
    ret %add
```

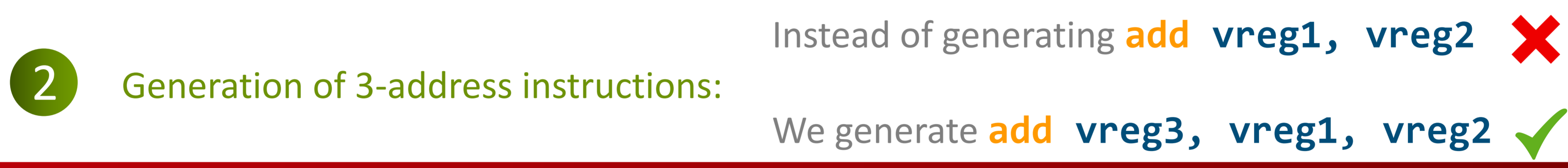
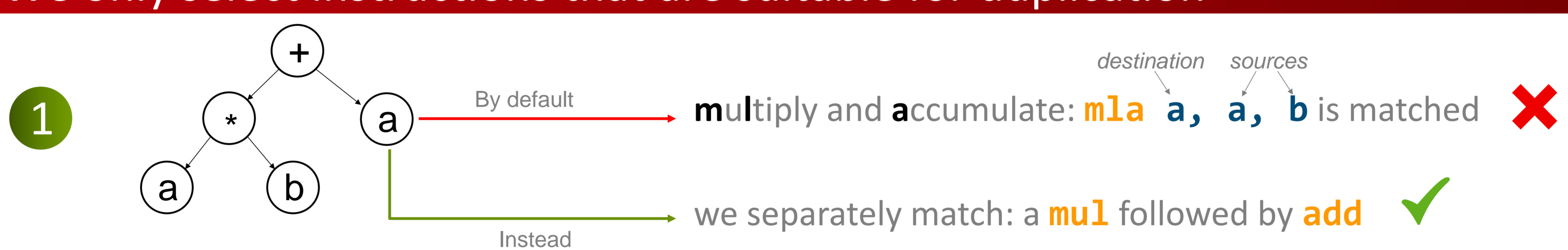
LLVM bytecode

Attempted duplication

```
entry:
    %mul = mul %a, %b
    %mul2 = mul %a, %b
    %add = add %mul, %a
    %add2 = add %mul, %a
```

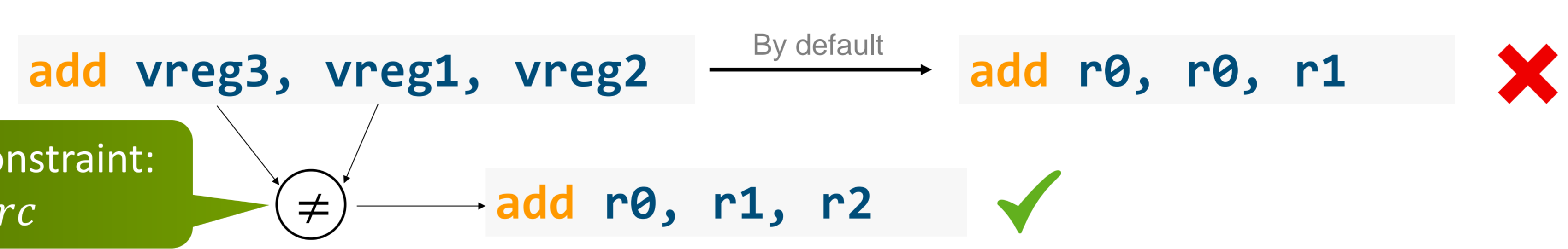
Unused and will be removed by the Dead Code Elimination pass

We only select instructions that are suitable for duplication

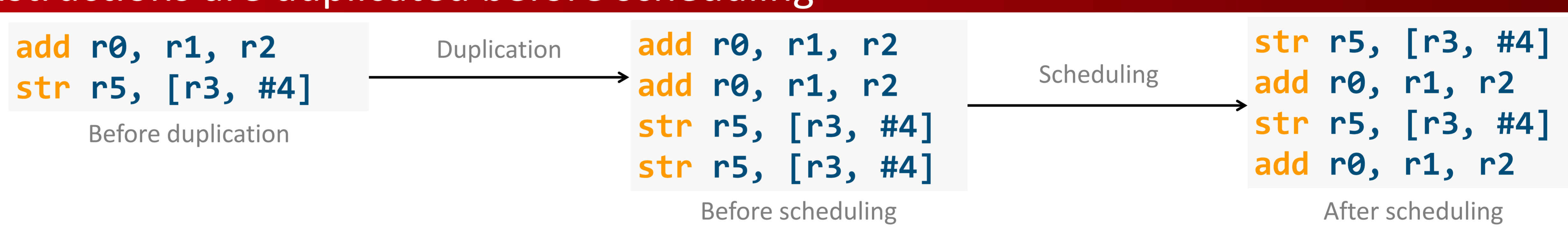


Registers are allocated in favor of duplication

The register allocator tends to reduce *register pressure*: Reusing the allocated registers as soon as possible
When the liveness intervals (L) of registers are disjoint: $\{L(vreg3)\} \cap \{L(vreg1), L(vreg2)\} = \emptyset$



Instructions are duplicated before scheduling



Comparison with assembly approach

	Instruction	Transformation	Duplication
Assembly approach	<code>add r0, r0, r2</code>	<code>mov rx, r0</code> <code>add r0, rx, r2</code>	<code>mov rx, r0</code> <code>add r0, rx, r2</code> <code>add r0, rx, r2</code> (X 4)
Our approach	<code>add r0, r1, r2</code>		<code>add r0, r1, r2</code> <code>add r0, r1, r2</code> (X 2)

AES 8-bit NIST on ARM Cortex-M3

Unprotected	Protected	Overhead
8541 cycles	17311 cycles	× 2.03

FUTURE WORK & REFERENCES

- ### FUTURE WORK
- Using code annotation for more flexibility when defining the code regions to protect
 - Automatic identification of the most vulnerable parts of the program
 - compiler-based implementation of the masking countermeasure

- ### REFERENCES
- [1] Barenghi et al. *Countermeasures against fault attacks on software implemented AES*
 - [2] Moro et al. *Electromagnetic Fault Injection : Towards a Fault Model on a 32-bit Microcontroller*

LEGEND
 ✅ Duplicable
 ❌ Not duplicable