Laboratory Exercise 9

A Simple Processor

Figure 1 shows a digital system that contains a number of 16-bit registers, a multiplexer, an adder/subtracter unit, a counter, and a control unit. Data is input to this system via the 16-bit *DIN* input. This data can be loaded through the 16-bit wide multiplexer into the various registers, such as $R0, \ldots, R7$ and A. The multiplexer also allows data to be transferred from one register to another. The multiplexer's output wires are called a *bus* in the figure because this term is often used for wiring that allows data to be transferred from one location in a system to another.

Addition or subtraction is performed by using the multiplexer to first place one 16-bit number onto the bus wires and loading this number into register A. Once this is done, a second 16-bit number is placed onto the bus, the adder/subtracter unit performs the required operation, and the result is loaded into register G. The data in G can then be transferred to one of the other registers as required.
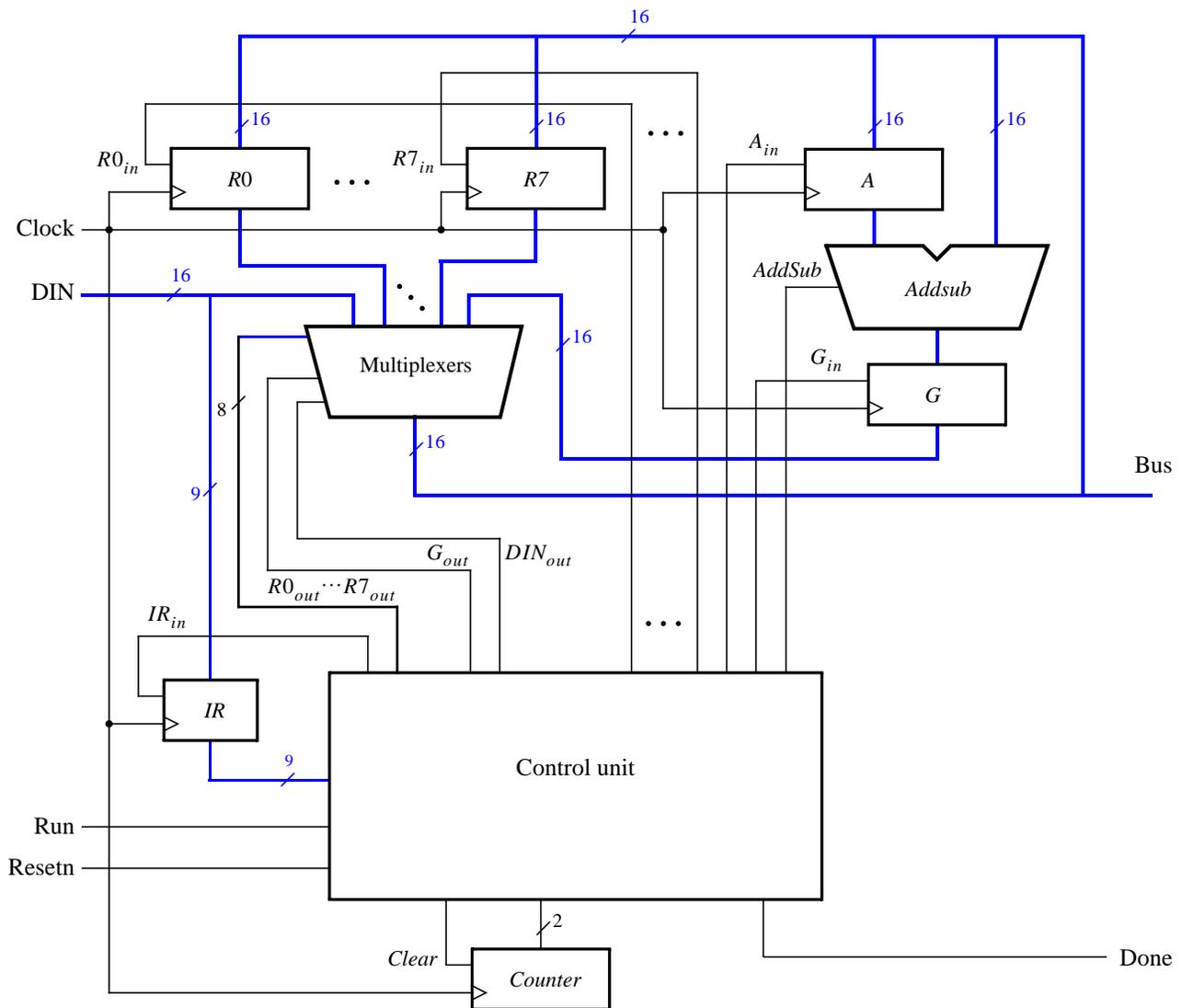

Figure 1. A digital system.

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The system can perform different operations in each clock cycle, as governed by the *control unit*. This unit determines when particular data is placed onto the bus wires and it controls which of the registers is to be loaded with this data. For example, if the control unit asserts the signals $R0_{out}$ and A_{in}, then the multiplexer will place the contents of register $R0$ onto the bus and this data will be loaded by the next active clock edge into register *A*.

A system like this is often called a *processor*. It executes operations specified in the form of instructions. Table 1 lists the instructions that the processor has to support for this exercise. The left column shows the name of an instruction and its operand. The meaning of the syntax RX ← [RY] is that the contents of register RY are loaded into register RX. The **mv** (move) instruction allows data to be copied from one register to another. For the **mvi** (move immediate) instruction the expression RX ← D indicates that the 16-bit constant D is loaded into register RX.

Operation	Function performed
mv Rx,Ry	$Rx \leftarrow [Ry]$
mvi $Rx,\#D$	$Rx \leftarrow D$
add Rx, Ry	$Rx \leftarrow [Rx] + [Ry]$
sub Rx, Ry	$Rx \leftarrow [Rx] - [Ry]$

Table 1. Instructions performed in the processor.

Each instruction can be encoded and stored in the *IR* register using the 9-bit format IIIXXXYYY, where III represents the instruction, XXX gives the RX register, and YYY gives the RY register. Although only two bits are needed to encode our four instructions, we are using three bits because other instructions will be added to the processor in later parts of this exercise. Hence *IR* has to be connected to nine bits of the 16-bit *DIN* input, as indicated in Figure 1. For the **mvi** instruction the YYY field has no meaning, and the immediate data #D has to be supplied on the 16-bit *DIN* input after the **mvi** instruction word is stored into *IR*.

Some instructions, such as an addition or subtraction, take more than one clock cycle to complete, because multiple transfers have to be performed across the bus. The control unit uses the two-bit counter shown in Figure 1 to enable it to "step through" such instructions. The processor starts executing the instruction on the *DIN* input when the *Run* signal is asserted and the processor asserts the *Done* output when the instruction is finished. Table 2 indicates the control signals that can be asserted in each time step to implement the instructions in Table 1. Note that the only control signal asserted in time step 0 is IR_{in}, so this time step is not shown in the table.

	T_1	T_2	T_3
(**mv**): I_0	$RY_{out}, RX_{in},$ *Done*		
(**mvi**): I_1	$DIN_{out}, RX_{in},$ *Done*		
(**add**): I_2	RX_{out}, A_{in}	RY_{out}, G_{in}	$G_{out}, RX_{in},$ *Done*
(**sub**): I_3	RX_{out}, A_{in}	$RY_{out}, G_{in},$ *AddSub*	$G_{out}, RX_{in},$ *Done*

Table 2. Control signals asserted in each instruction/time step.

Part I

Design and implement the processor shown in Figure 1 using VHDL code as follows:

1. Create a new Quartus II project for this exercise.

2. Generate the required VHDL file, include it in your project, and compile the circuit. A suggested skeleton of the VHDL code is shown in parts a and b of Figure 2, and some subcircuit entities that can be used in this code appear in parts c and d.

3. Use functional simulation to verify that your code is correct. An example of the output produced by a functional simulation for a correctly-designed circuit is given in Figure 3. It shows the value $(2000)_{16}$ being loaded into *IR* from *DIN* at time 30 ns. This pattern represents the instruction **mvi** R0,#D, where the value $D = 5$ is loaded into $R0$ on the clock edge at 50 ns. The simulation then shows the instruction **mv** R1,R0 at 90 ns, **add** R0,R1 at 110 ns, and **sub** R0,R0 at 190 ns. Note that the simulation output shows *DIN* as a 4-digit hexadecimal number, and it shows the contents of *IR* as a 3-digit octal number.

4. Create a new Quartus II project which will be used for implementation of the circuit on the Altera DE2 board. This project should consist of a top-level entity that contains the appropriate input and output ports for the Altera board. Instantiate your processor in this top-level entity. Use switches SW_{15-0} to drive the *DIN* input port of the processor and use switch SW_{17} to drive the *Run* input. Also, use push button KEY_0 for *Resetn* and KEY_1 for *Clock*. Connect the processor bus wires to $LEDR_{15-0}$ and connect the *Done* signal to $LEDR_{17}$.

5. Add to your project the necessary pin assignments for the DE2 board. Compile the circuit and download it into the FPGA chip.

6. Test the functionality of your design by toggling the switches and observing the LEDs. Since the processor's clock input is controlled by a push button switch, it is easy to step through the execution of instructions and observe the behavior of the circuit.

```
LIBRARY ieee; USE ieee.std_logic_1164.all;
USE ieee.std_logic_signed.all;

ENTITY proc IS
    PORT (  DIN                  : IN        STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(15 DOWNTO 0);
            Resetn, Clock, Run   : IN        STD_LOGIC;
            Done                 : BUFFER    STD_LOGIC;
            BusWires             : BUFFER    STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(15 DOWNTO 0));
END proc;

ARCHITECTURE Behavior OF proc IS
    ... declare components
    ... declare signals
BEGIN
    High <= '1';
    Clear <= ...

    Tstep: upcount PORT MAP (Clear, Clock, Tstep_Q);
    I <= IR(1 TO 3);
    decX: dec3to8 PORT MAP (IR(4 TO 6), High, Xreg);
    decY: dec3to8 PORT MAP (IR(7 TO 9), High, Yreg);
```

Figure 2a. Skeleton VHDL code for the processor.

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```vhdl
   controlsignals: PROCESS (Tstep_Q, I, Xreg, Yreg)
   BEGIN
      . . . specify initial values
      CASE Tstep_Q IS
         WHEN "00" => - - store DIN in IR as long as Tstep_Q = 0
            IRin <= '1';
         WHEN "01" => - - define signals in time step T1
            CASE I IS
               . . .
            END CASE;
         WHEN "10" => - - define signals in time step T2
            CASE I IS
               . . .
            END CASE;
         WHEN "11" => - - define signals in time step T3
            CASE I IS
               . . .
            END CASE;
      END CASE;
   END PROCESS;

   reg_0: regn PORT MAP (BusWires, Rin(0), Clock, R0);
   . . . instantiate other registers and the adder/subtracter unit
   . . . define the bus
END Behavior;
```

Figure 2*b*. Skeleton VHDL code for the processor.

```vhdl
LIBRARY ieee;
USE ieee.std_logic_1164.all;
USE ieee.std_logic_signed.all;

ENTITY upcount IS
   PORT (  Clear, Clock     : IN      STD_LOGIC;
           Q                : OUT     STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(1 DOWNTO 0));
END upcount;

ARCHITECTURE Behavior OF upcount IS
   SIGNAL Count : STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(1 DOWNTO 0);
BEGIN
   PROCESS (Clock)
   BEGIN
      IF (Clock'EVENT AND Clock = '1') THEN
         IF Clear = '1' THEN
            Count <= "00";
         ELSE
            Count <= Count + 1;
         END IF;
      END IF;
   END PROCESS;
   Q <= Count;
END Behavior;
```

Figure 2*c*. Subcircuit entities for use in the processor.

```vhdl
LIBRARY ieee;
USE ieee.std_logic_1164.all;

ENTITY dec3to8 IS
    PORT (  W    : IN      STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(2 DOWNTO 0);
            En   : IN      STD_LOGIC;
            Y    : OUT     STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(0 TO 7));
END dec3to8;

ARCHITECTURE Behavior OF dec3to8 IS
BEGIN
    PROCESS (W, En)
    BEGIN
      IF En = '1' THEN
        CASE W IS
          WHEN "000" => Y <= "10000000";
          WHEN "001" => Y <= "01000000";
          WHEN "010" => Y <= "00100000";
          WHEN "011" => Y <= "00010000";
          WHEN "100" => Y <= "00001000";
          WHEN "101" => Y <= "00000100";
          WHEN "110" => Y <= "00000010";
          WHEN "111" => Y <= "00000001";
        END CASE;
      ELSE
          Y <= "00000000";
      END IF;
    END PROCESS;
END Behavior;

LIBRARY ieee;
USE ieee.std_logic_1164.all;

ENTITY regn IS
    GENERIC (n : INTEGER := 16);
    PORT (  R            : IN      STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(n-1 DOWNTO 0);
            Rin, Clock   : IN      STD_LOGIC;
            Q            : BUFFER  STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(n-1 DOWNTO 0));
END regn;

ARCHITECTURE Behavior OF regn IS
BEGIN
    PROCESS (Clock)
    BEGIN
      IF Clock'EVENT AND Clock = '1' THEN
        IF Rin = '1' THEN
            Q <= R;
        END IF;
      END IF;
    END PROCESS;
END Behavior;
```
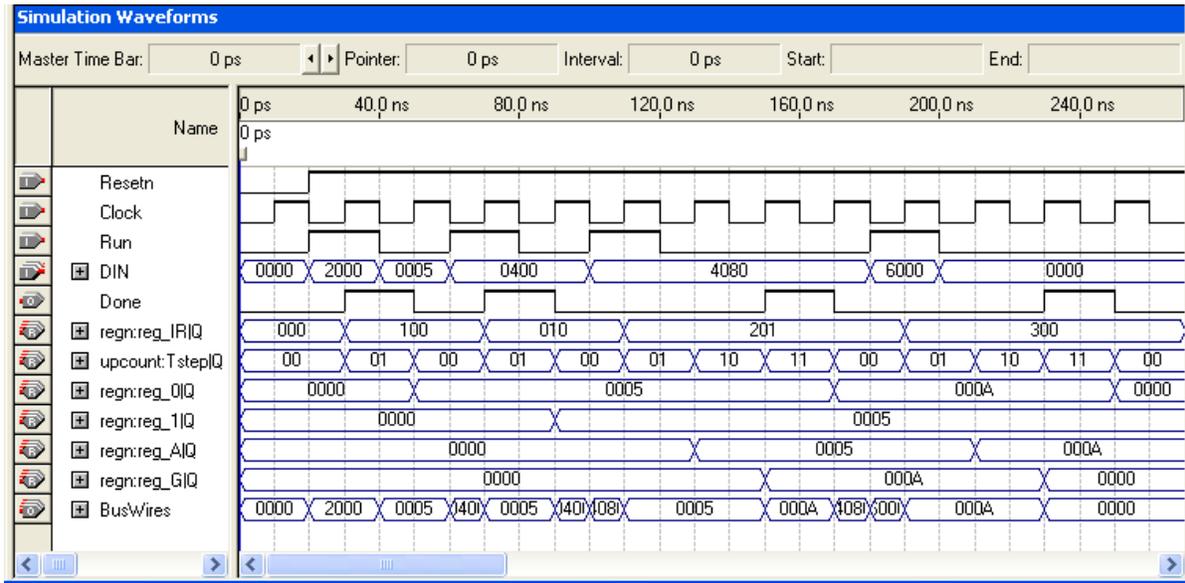
Figure 2*d*. Subcircuit entities for use in the processor.

Figure 3. Simulation of the processor.

Part II

In this part you are to design the circuit depicted in Figure 4, in which a memory module and counter are connected to the processor from Part I. The counter is used to read the contents of successive addresses in the memory, and this data is provided to the processor as a stream of instructions. To simplify the design and testing of this circuit we have used separate clock signals, *PClock* and *MClock*, for the processor and memory.
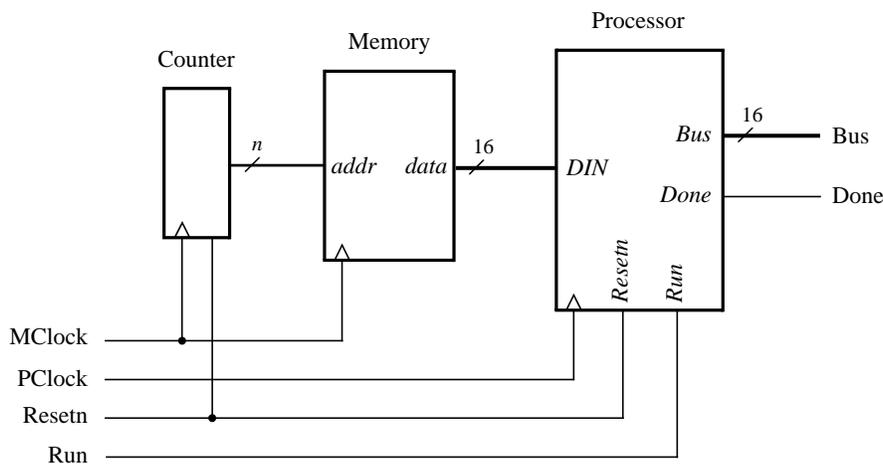

Figure 4. Connecting the processor to a memory and counter.

1. Create a new Quartus II project which will be used to test your circuit.

2. Generate a top-level VHDL file that instantiates the processor, memory, and counter. Use the Quartus II MegaWizard Plug-In Manager tool to create the memory module from the Altera library of parameterized modules (LPMs). The correct LPM is found under the *storage* category and is called *ALTSYNCRAM*. Follow the instructions provided by the wizard to create a memory that has one 16-bit wide read data port and is 32

words deep. The first screen of the wizard is shown in Figure 5. Since this memory has only a read port, and no write port, it is called a *synchronous read-only memory (synchronous ROM)*. Note that the memory includes a register for synchronously loading addresses. This register is required due to the design of the memory resources on the Cyclone II FPGA; account for the clocking of this address register in your design.

To place processor instructions into the memory, you need to specify *initial values* that should be stored in the memory once your circuit has been programmed into the FPGA chip. This can be done by telling the wizard to initialize the memory using the contents of a *memory initialization file (MIF)*. The appropriate screen of the MegaWizard Plug-In Manager tool is illustrated in Figure 6. We have specified a file named *inst_mem.mif*, which then has to be created in the directory that contains the Quartus II project. Use the Quartus II on-line Help to learn about the format of the *MIF* file and create a file that has enough processor instructions to test your circuit.

3. Use functional simulation to test the circuit. Ensure that data is read properly out of the ROM and executed by the processor.

4. Make sure your project includes the necessary port names and pin location assignments to implement the circuit on the DE2 board. Use switch SW_{17} to drive the processor's *Run* input, use KEY_0 for *Resetn*, use KEY_1 for *MClock*, and use KEY_2 for *PClock*. Connect the processor bus wires to $LEDR_{15-0}$ and connect the *Done* signal to $LEDR_{17}$.

5. Compile the circuit and download it into the FPGA chip.

6. Test the functionality of your design by toggling the switches and observing the LEDs. Since the circuit's clock inputs are controlled by push button switches, it is easy to step through the execution of instructions and observe the behavior of the circuit.
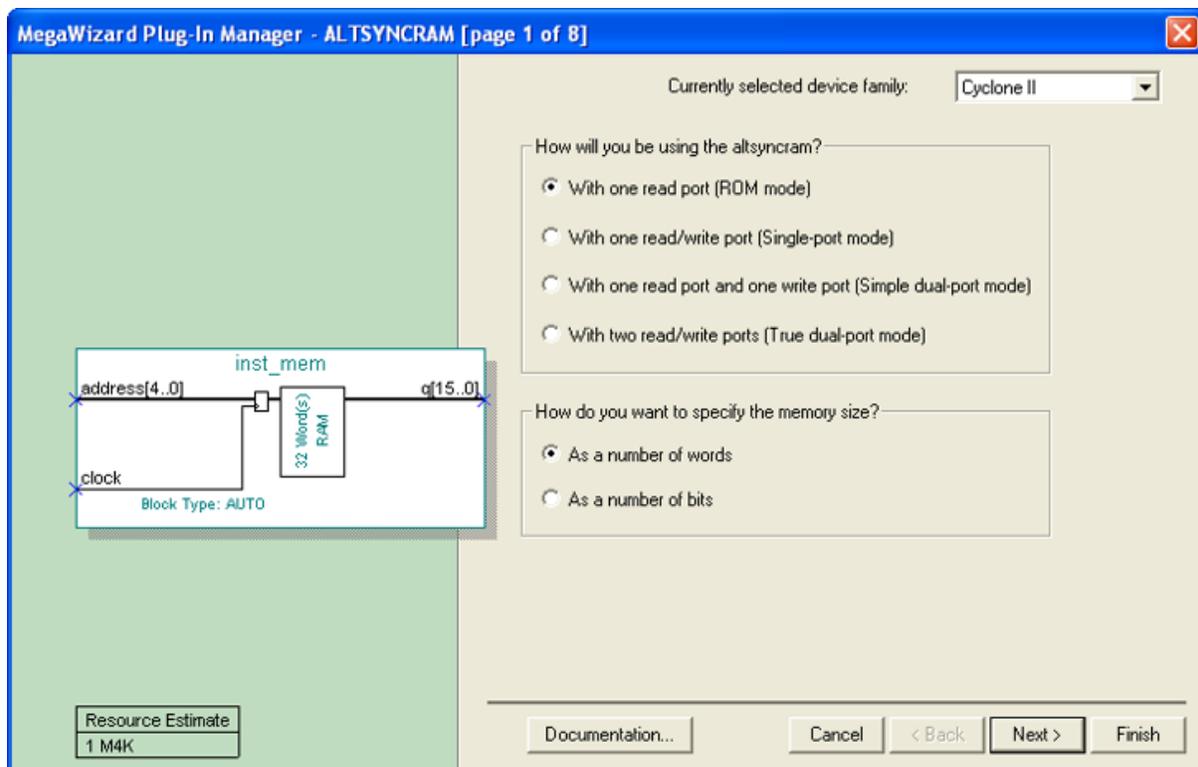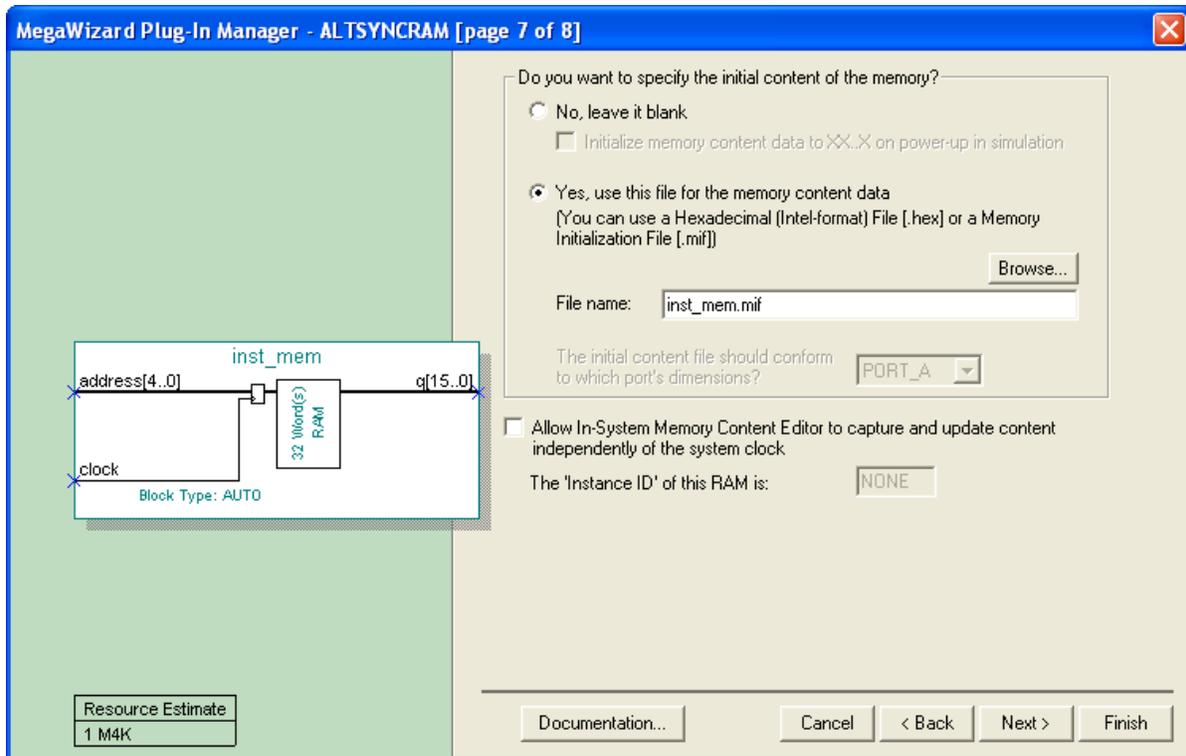

Figure 5. ALTSYNCRAM configuration.

Figure 6. Specifying a memory initialization file (MIF).

Enhanced Processor

It is possible to enhance the capability of the processor so that the counter in Figure 4 is no longer needed, and so that the processor has the ability to perform read and write operations using memory or other devices. These enhancements involve adding new instructions to the processor and the programs that the processor executes are therefore more complex. Since these steps are beyond the scope of some logic design courses, they are described in a subsequent lab exercise available from Altera.

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