

Transient Execution Attacks

Daniel Gruss

June 20, 2019

Graz University of Technology



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- Why do you have fancy names? → what was CVE-2017-5754 again?
 - People will throw things together that don't belong together
→ Names enable unambiguous communication
- Why do you need a logo?
 - Otherwise: media makes their own → no control over how inappropriate these are



side channel
= obtaining meta-data and
deriving secrets from it

CHANGE MY MIND



- Profiling cache utilization with performance counters?



- Profiling cache utilization with performance counters? → No





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- Observing cache utilization with performance counters and using it to infer a crypto key?



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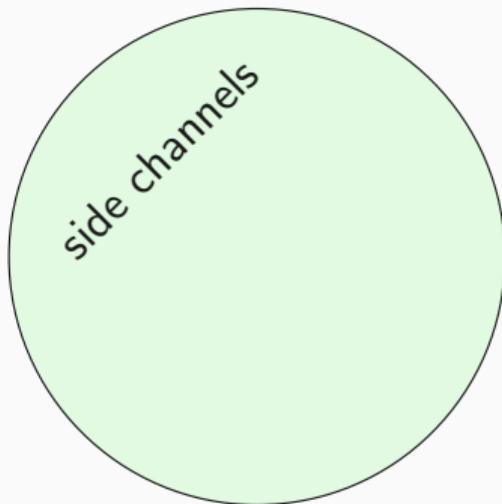
Intel Analysis of Speculative Execution Side Channels

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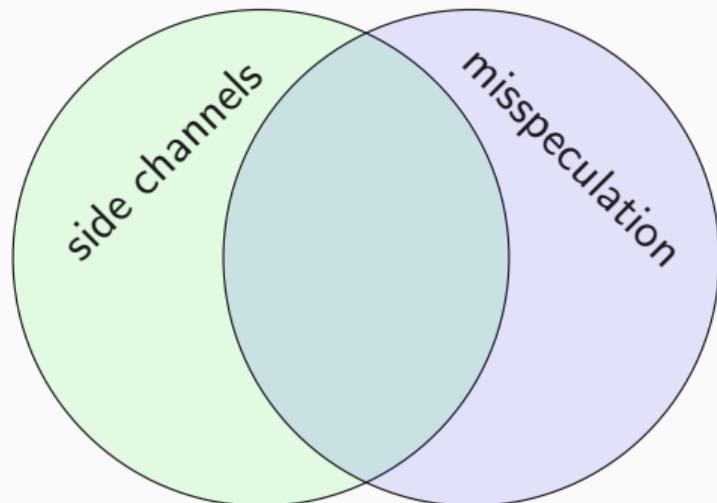


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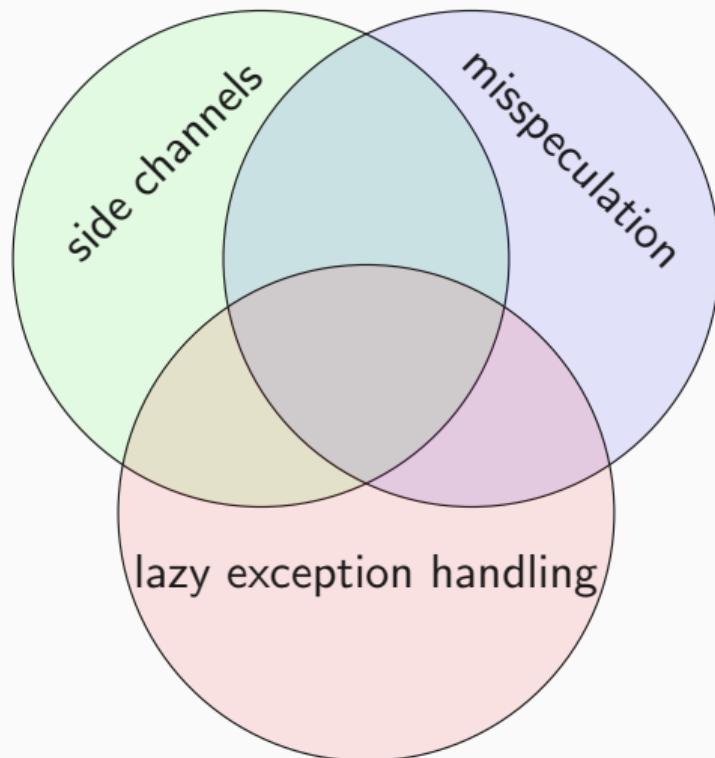
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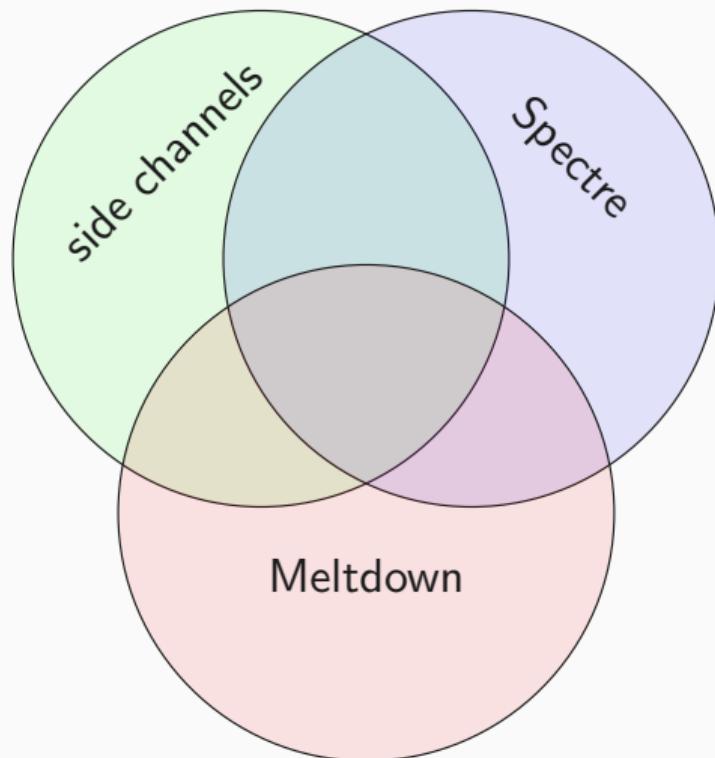
- traditional cache attacks (crypto, keys, etc)



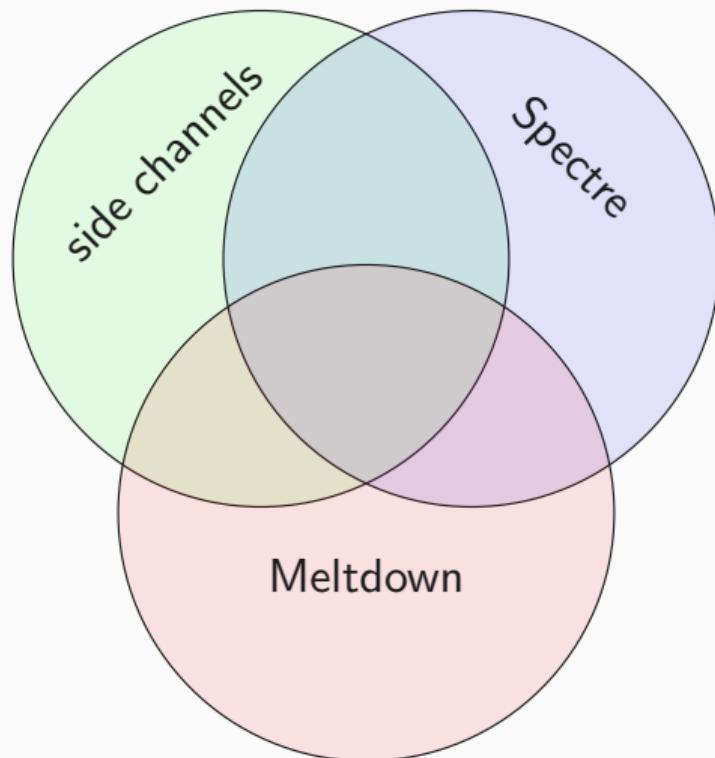
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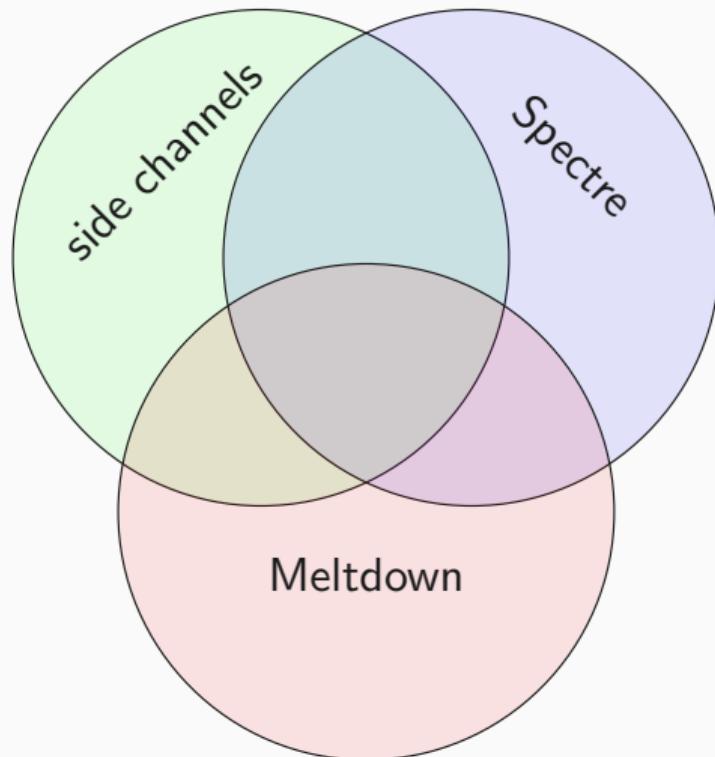
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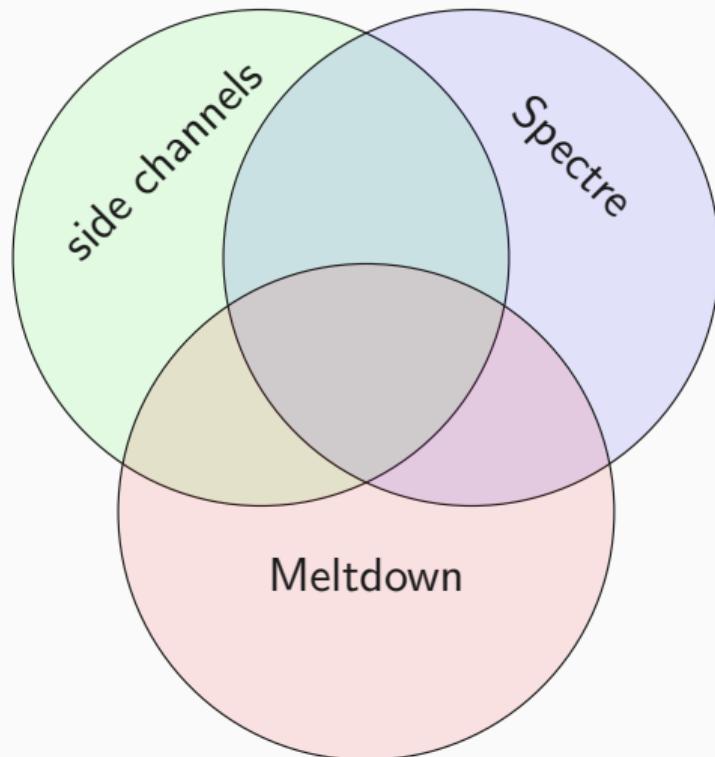
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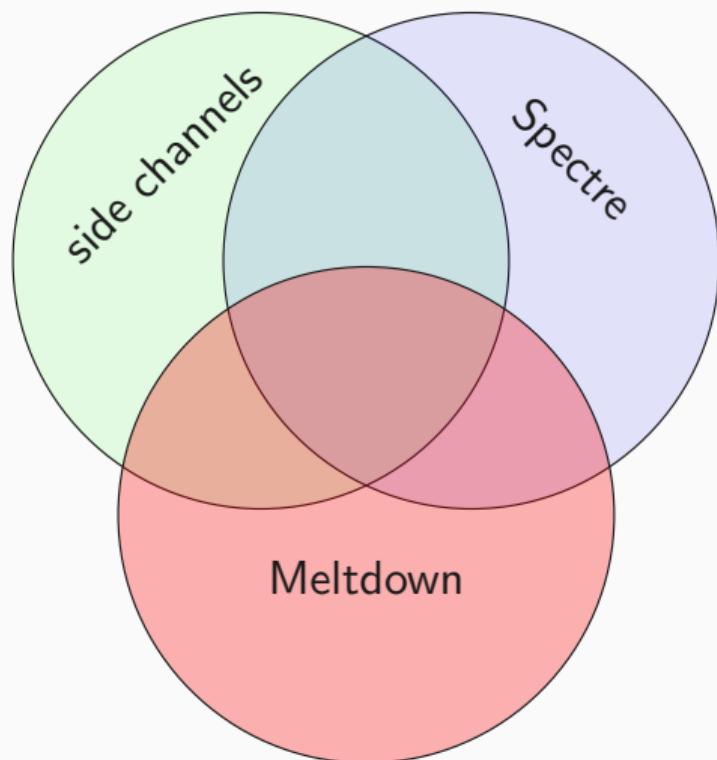
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- **Let's avoid the term Speculative Side-Channel Attacks**



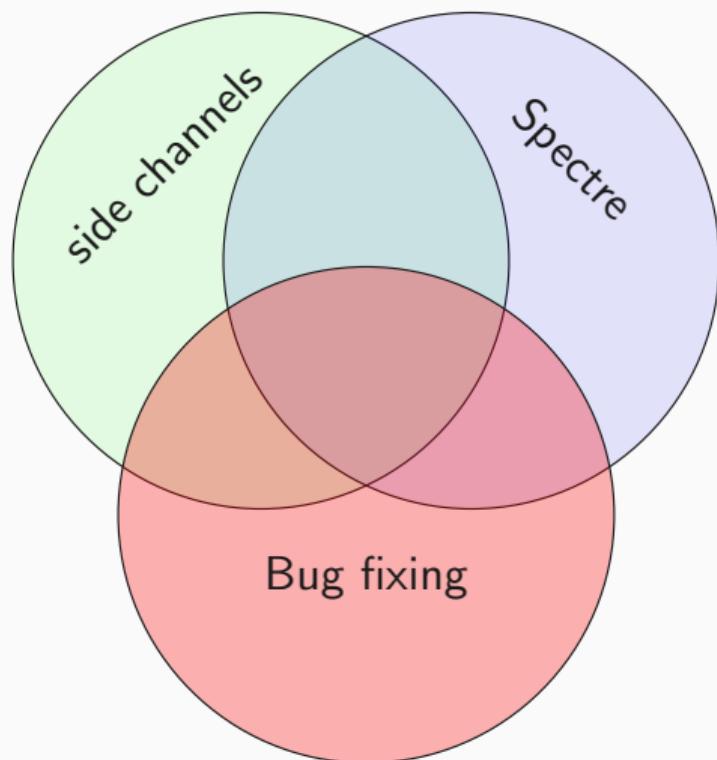
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- Let's be more precise



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- Meltdown, Foreshadow, ZombieLoad, etc
- **Let's avoid the term Speculative Side-Channel Attacks**
- Let's be more precise
- → then we can think about actual mitigations



Speculative Side-Channel Attacks?





Back to Work

*7. Serve with cooked
and peeled potatoes*





Wait for an hour





Wait for an hour

LATENCY

*1. Wash and cut
vegetables*

*2. Pick the basil leaves
and set aside*

*3. Heat 2 tablespoons of
oil in a pan*

*4. Fry vegetables until
golden and softened*



Dependency

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Parallelize



```
int width = 10, height = 5;

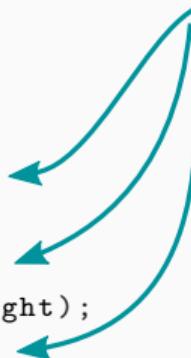
float diagonal = sqrt(width * width
                      + height * height);
int area = width * height;

printf("Area %d x %d = %d\n", width, height, area);
```

Parallelize

Dependency

```
int width = 10, height = 5;  
  
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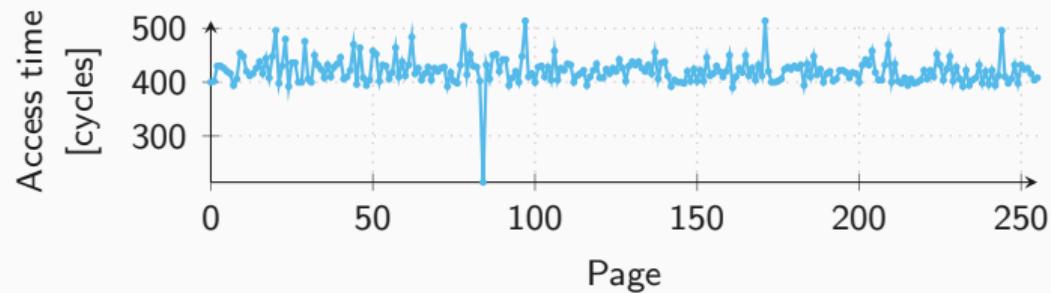




```
*(volatile char*) 0;  
array [84 * 4096] = 0;
```



- Flush+Reload over all pages of the array





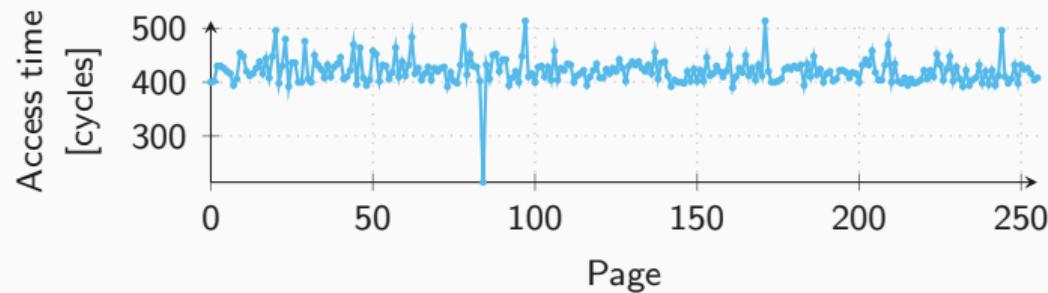
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- “Unreachable” code line was **actually executed**



- Flush+Reload over all pages of the array



- “Unreachable” code line was **actually executed**
- Exception was only thrown **afterwards**



- Out-of-order instructions leave microarchitectural traces



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 - We can see them for example through the cache



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- Give such instructions a name: **transient instructions**



- Out-of-order instructions **leave microarchitectural traces**
 - We can see them for example through the cache
- Give such instructions a name: **transient instructions**
- We can indirectly observe the **execution of transient instructions**



- Add another **layer of indirection** to test

```
char data = *(char*) 0xffffffff81a000e0;  
array[data * 4096] = 0;
```



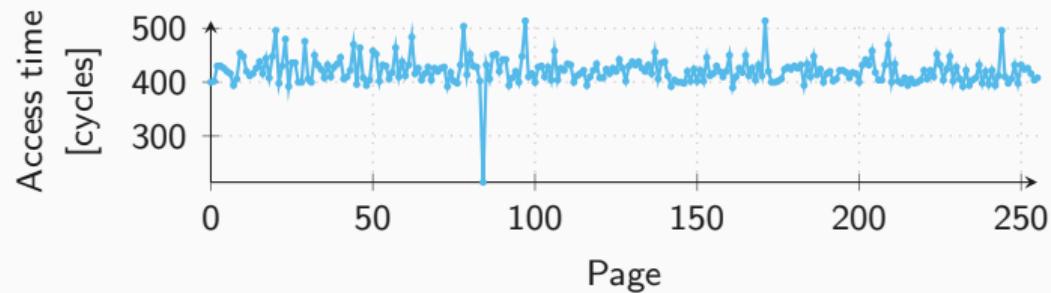
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```
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```

- Then check whether any part of array is **cached**



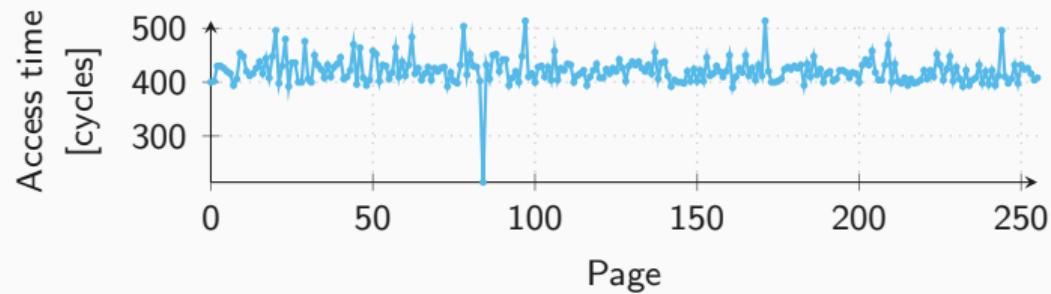
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- Index of cache hit reveals **data**



- Flush+Reload over all pages of the array

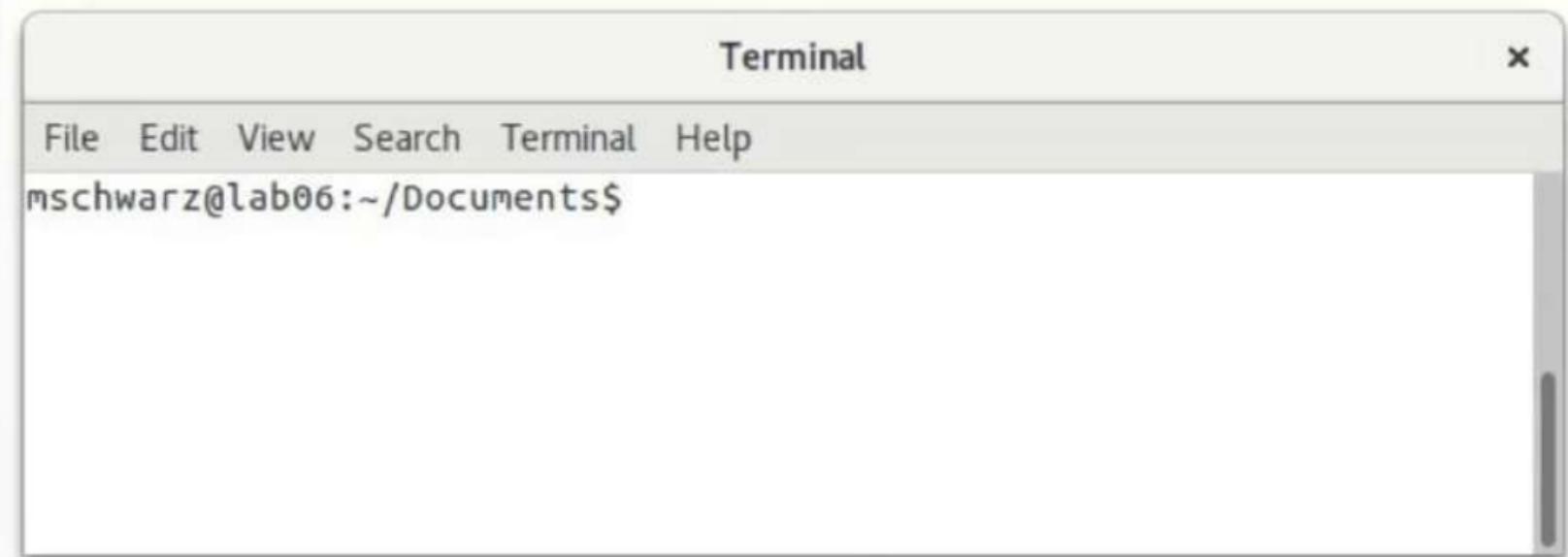
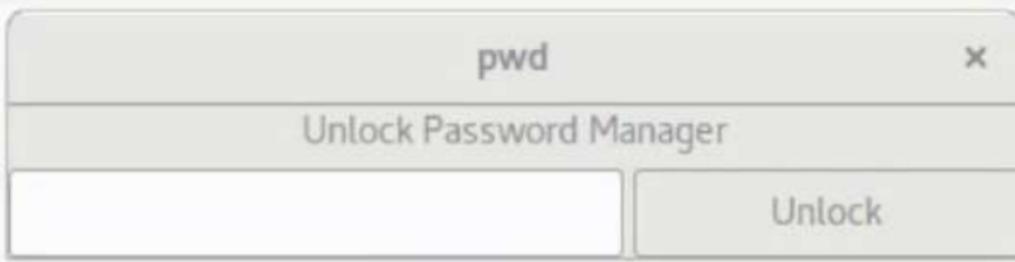


- Index of cache hit reveals **data**
- Permission check is in some cases **not fast enough**

I SHIT YOU NOT

THERE WAS KERNEL MEMORY ALL
OVER THE TERMINAL

e01d8130: 20 75 73 65 64 20 77 69 74 68 20 61 75 74 68 6f | used with autho
e01d8140: 72 69 7a 61 74 69 6f 6e 20 66 72 6f 6d 0a 20 53 | rization from. S
e01d8150: 69 6c 69 63 6f 6e 20 47 72 61 70 68 69 63 73 2c | ilicon Graphics,
e01d8160: 20 49 6e 63 2e 20 20 48 6f 77 65 76 65 72 2c 20 | Inc. However,
e01d8170: 74 68 65 20 61 75 74 68 6f 72 73 20 6d 61 6b 65 | the authors make
e01d8180: 20 6e 6f 20 63 6c 61 69 6d 20 74 68 61 74 20 4d | no claim that M
e01d8190: 65 73 61 0a 20 69 73 20 69 6e 20 61 6e 79 20 77 | esa. is in any w
e01d81a0: 61 79 20 61 20 63 6f 6d 70 61 74 69 62 6c 65 20 | ay a compatible
e01d81b0: 72 65 70 6c 61 63 65 6d 65 6e 74 20 66 6f 72 20 | replacement for
e01d81c0: 4f 70 65 6e 47 4c 20 6f 72 20 61 73 73 6f 63 69 | OpenGL or associ
e01d81d0: 61 74 65 64 20 77 69 74 68 0a 20 53 69 6c 69 63 | ated with. Silic
e01d81e0: 6f 6e 20 47 72 61 70 68 69 63 73 2c 20 49 6e 63 | on Graphics, Inc
e01d81f0: 2e 0a 20 2e 0a 20 54 68 69 73 20 76 65 72 73 69 | ... This versi
e01d8200: 6f 6e 20 6f 66 20 4d 65 73 61 20 70 72 6f 76 69 | on of Mesa provi
e01d8210: 64 65 73 20 47 4c 58 20 61 6e 64 20 44 52 49 20 | des GLX and DRI
e01d8220: 63 61 70 61 62 69 6c 69 74 69 65 73 3a 20 69 74 | capabilities: it
e01d8230: 20 69 73 20 63 61 70 61 62 6c 65 20 6f 66 0a 20 | is capable of.
e01d8240: 62 6f 74 68 20 64 69 72 65 63 74 20 61 6e 64 20 | both direct and
e01d8250: 69 6e 64 69 72 65 63 74 20 72 65 6e 64 65 72 69 | indirect renderi
e01d8260: 6e 67 2e 20 20 46 6f 72 20 64 69 72 65 63 74 20 | ng. For direct
e01d8270: 72 65 6e 64 65 72 69 6e 67 2c 20 69 74 20 63 61 | rendering, it ca
e01d8280: 6e 20 75 73 65 20 44 52 49 0a 20 6d 6f 64 75 6c | n use DRI. modul
e01d8290: 65 73 20 66 72 6f 6d 20 74 68 65 20 6c 69 62 67 | es from the libg



File Edit View Search Terminal Help

attacker@meltdown ~/exploit %

File Edit View Search Terminal Help

victim@meltdown ~ %

- Basic Meltdown code leads to a crash (segfault)

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Fault
Handling



Fault
Suppression



Fault
Prevention

- Intel TSX to suppress exceptions instead of signal handler

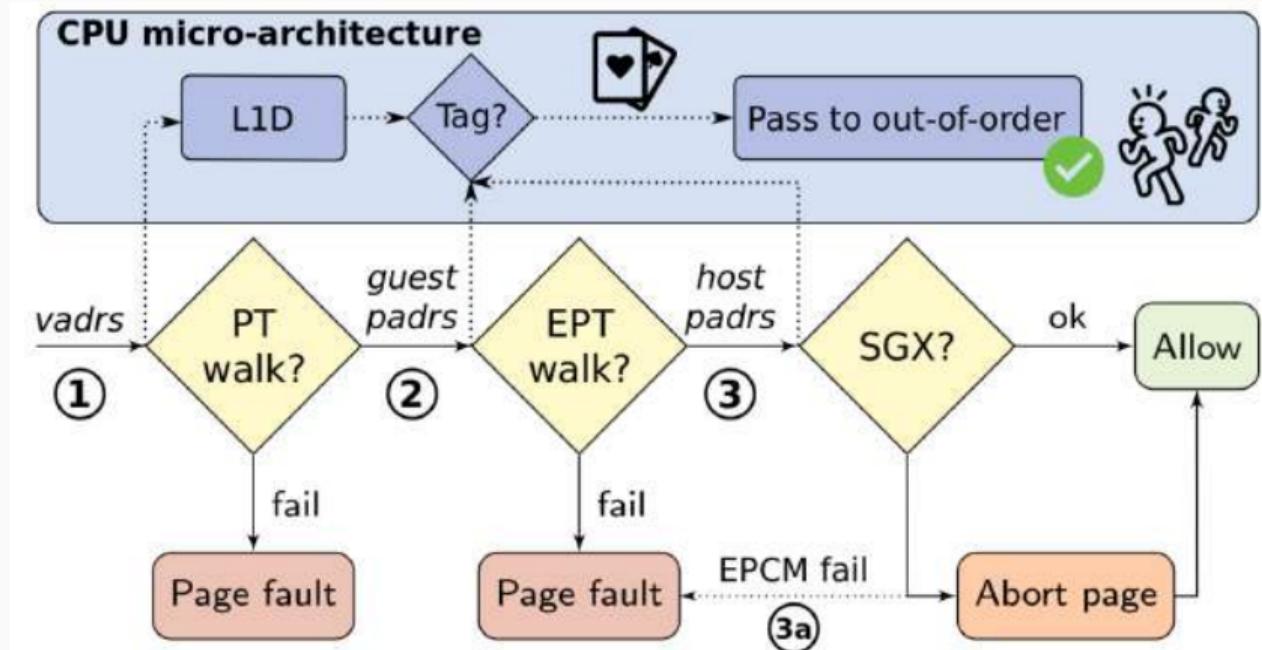
```
if(xbegin() == XBEGIN_STARTED) {
    char secret = *(char*) 0xffffffff81a000e0;
    array[secret * 4096] = 0;
    xend();
}

for (size_t i = 0; i < 256; i++) {
    if (flush_and_reload(array + i * 4096) == CACHE_HIT) {
        printf("%c\n", i);
    }
}
```

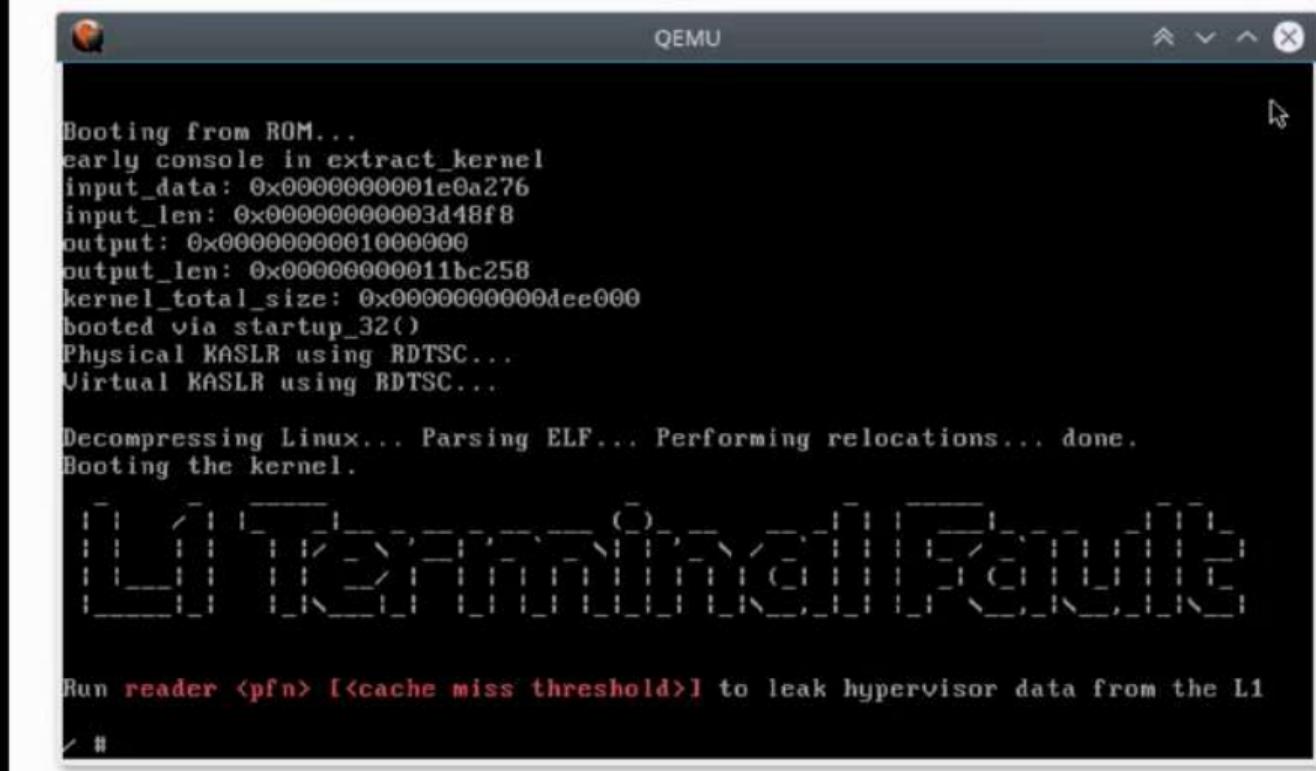
- Speculative execution to prevent exceptions

```
int speculate = rand() % 2;
size_t address = (0xffffffff81a000e0 * speculate) +
                  ((size_t)&zero * (1 - speculate));
if(!speculate) {
    char secret = *(char*) address;
    array[secret * 4096] = 0;
}

for (size_t i = 0; i < 256; i++) {
    if (flush_and_reload(array + i * 4096) == CACHE_HIT) {
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```



¹ Jo Van Bulck et al. Foreshadow: Extracting the Keys to the Intel SGX Kingdom with Transient Out-of-Order Execution. In: USENIX Security Symposium. 2018.







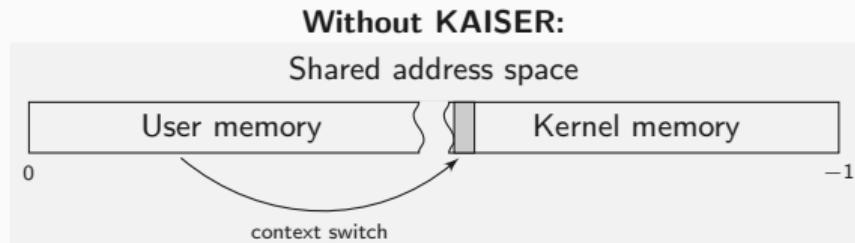
K_{er}nel A_{dd}ress I_{sol}ation to have S_{ide} channels E_{fficiently} R_{emoved}

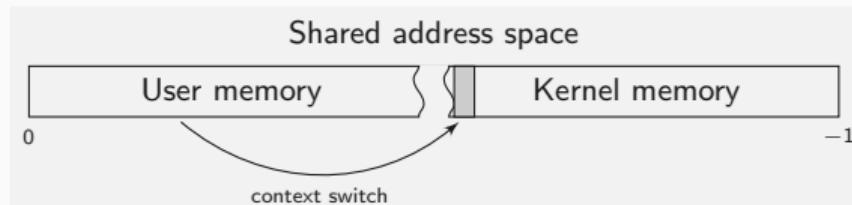
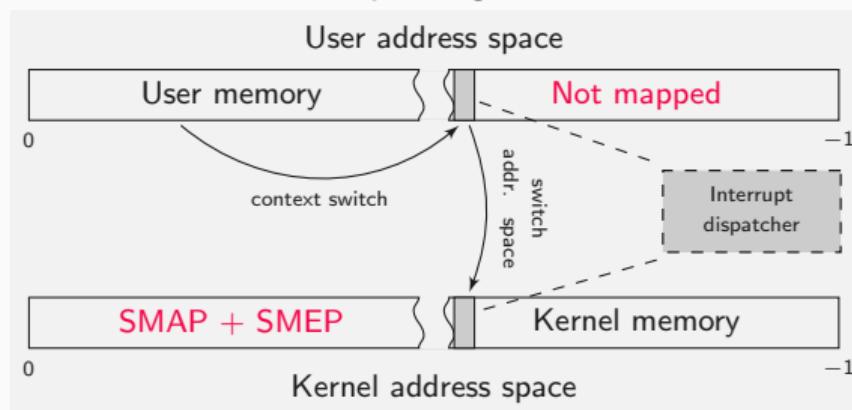
KAISER /'kʌɪzə/

1. [german] Emperor, ruler of an empire
2. largest penguin, emperor penguin



K_{er}nel A_{dd}ress I_{sol}ation to have S_{ide} channels E_{fficiently} R_{emoved}



Without KAISER:**With KAISER:**

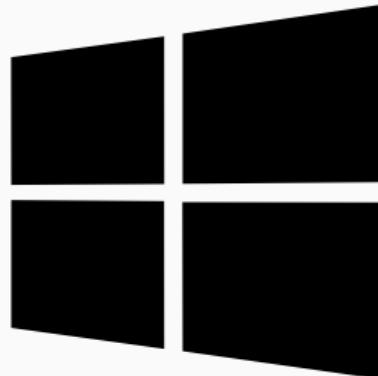




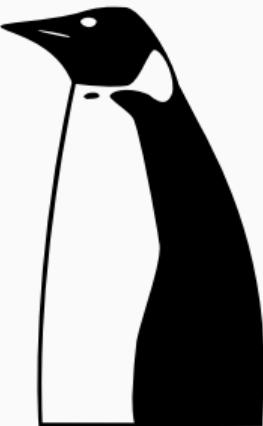
- Our patch
- Adopted in
Linux



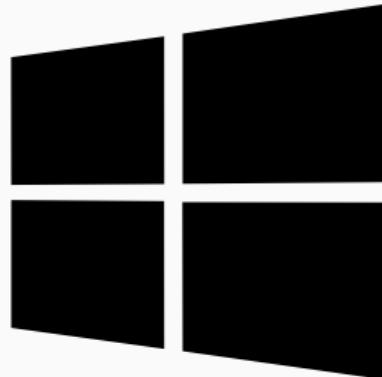
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- Adopted in Windows



- Our patch
- Adopted in Linux



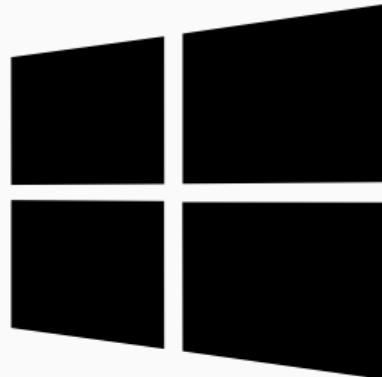
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- Adopted in OSX/iOS



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→ now in every computer

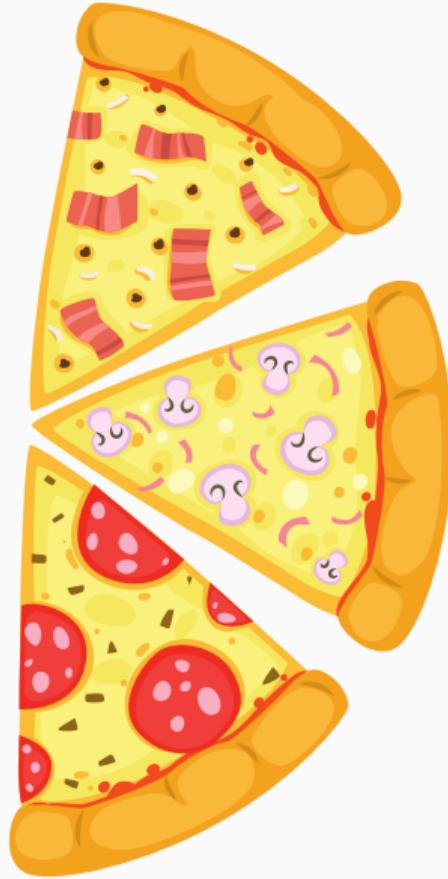


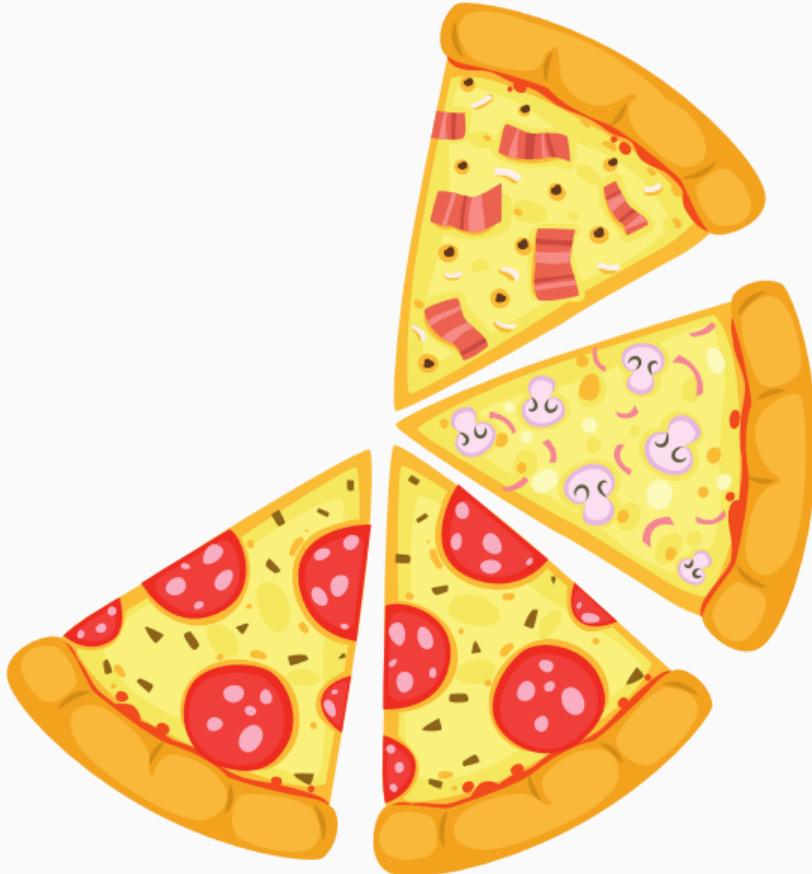
PIZZA

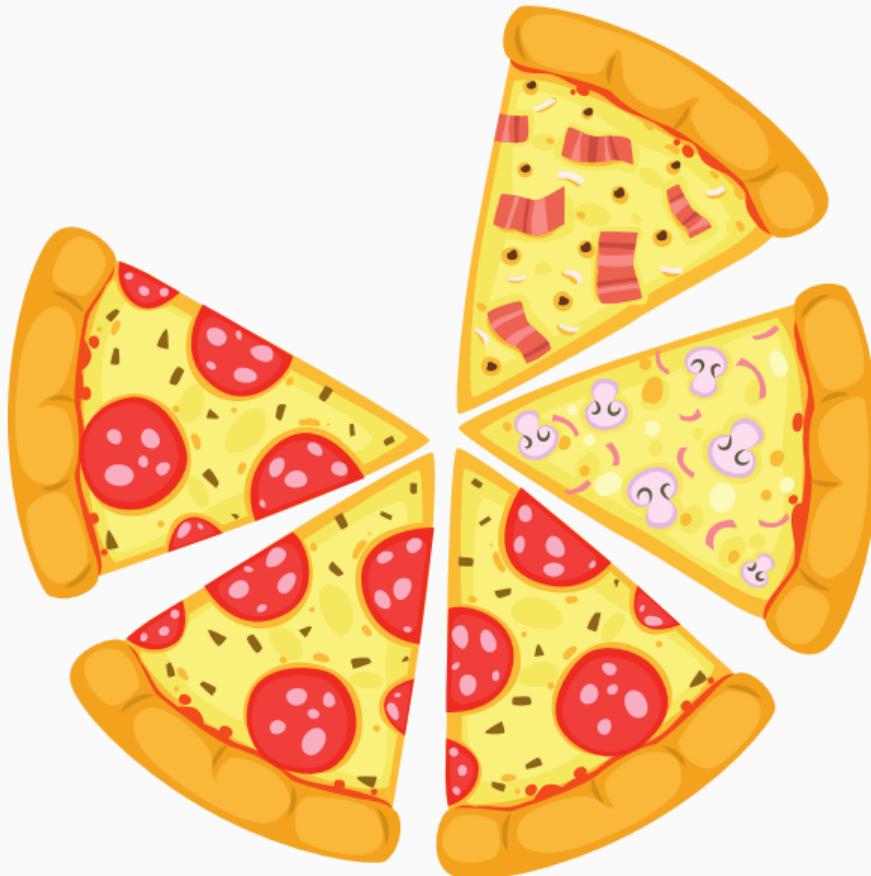
SPECIAL RECIPES















›A table for 6 please‹



Speculative Cooking





A table for 6 please





PIZZA

SPECIAL RECIPES



PIZZA

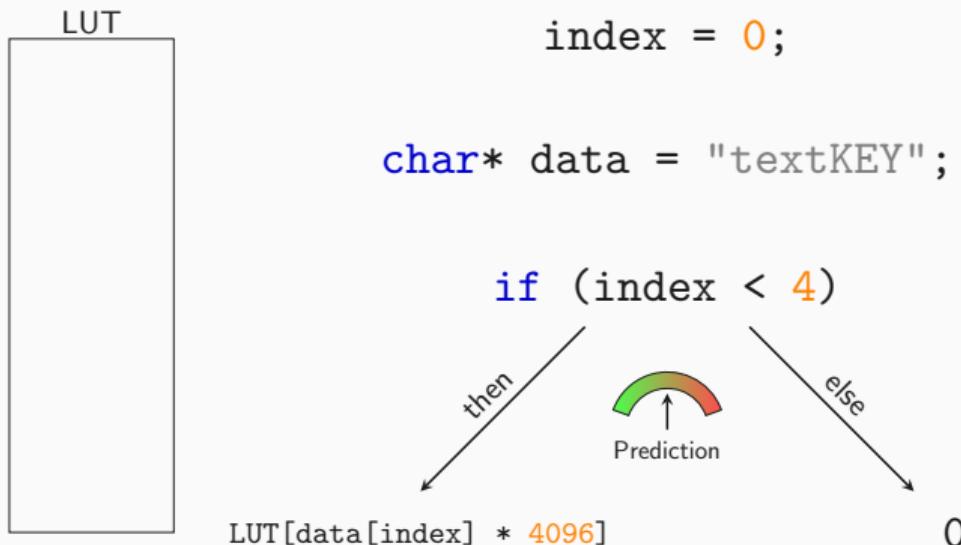
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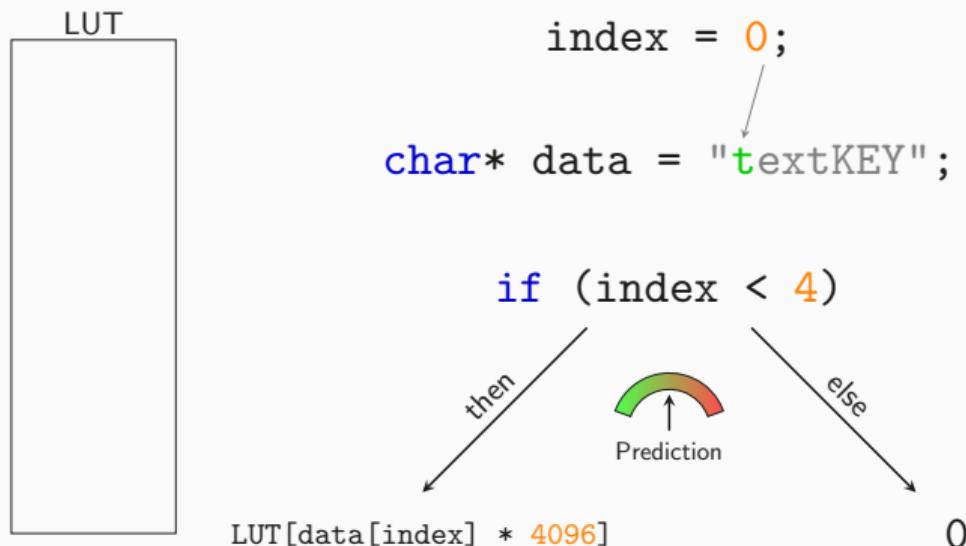
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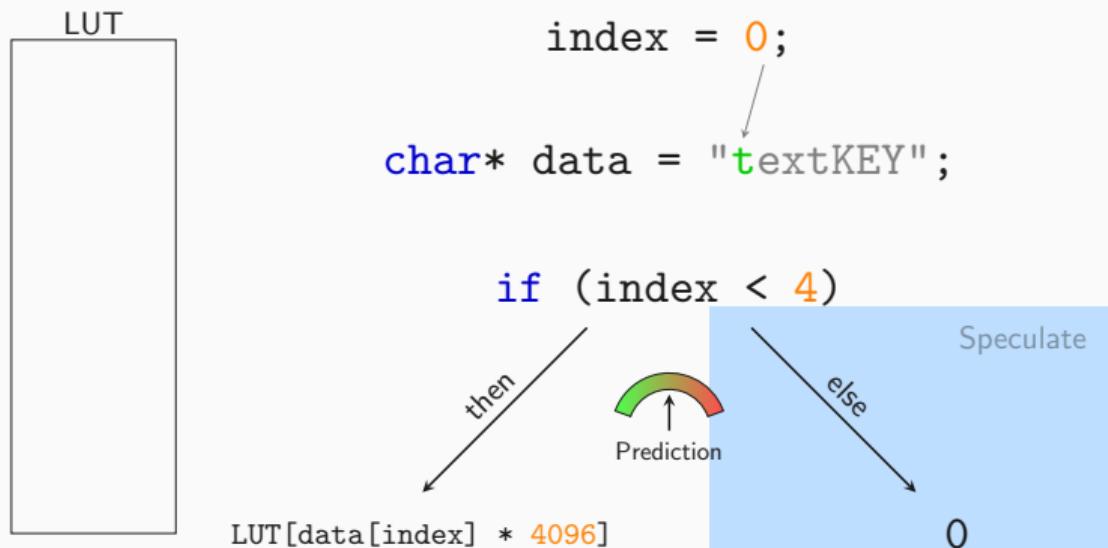


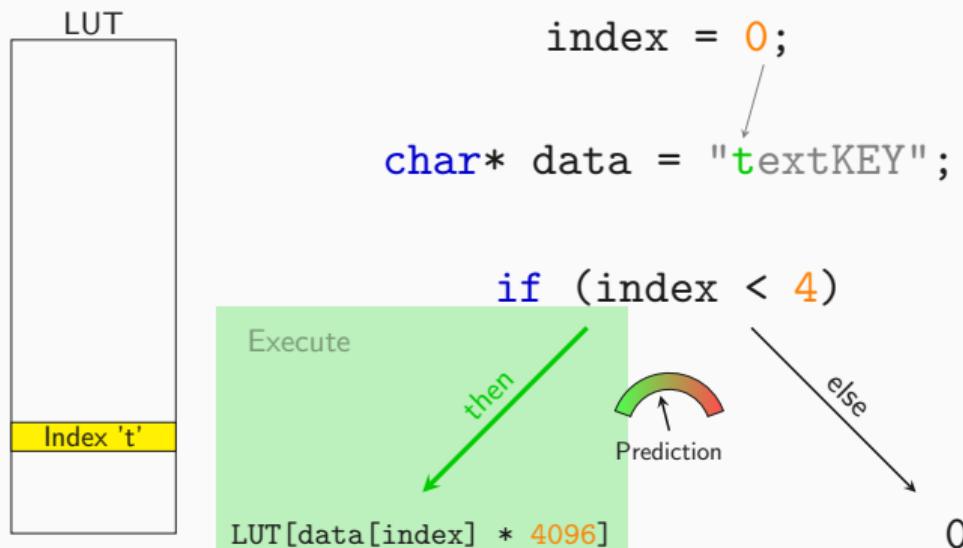


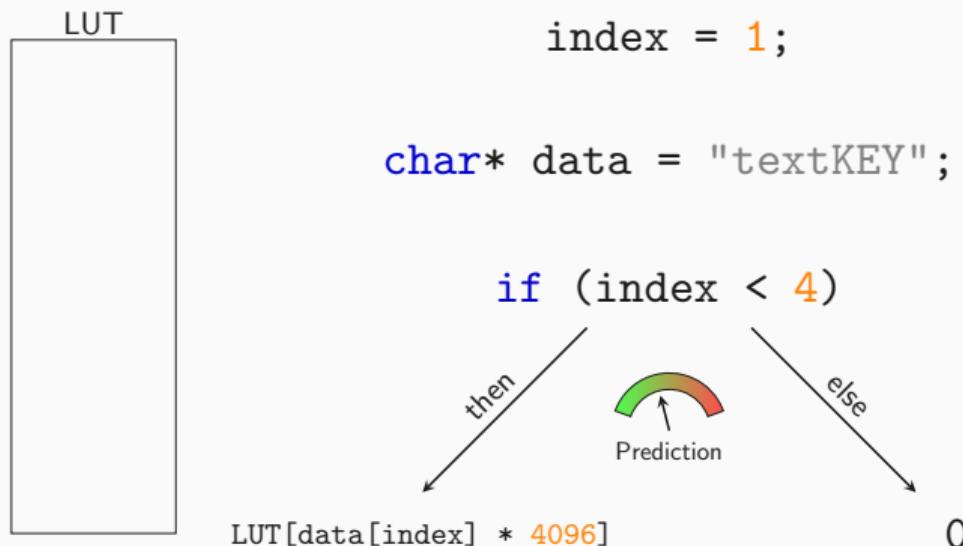


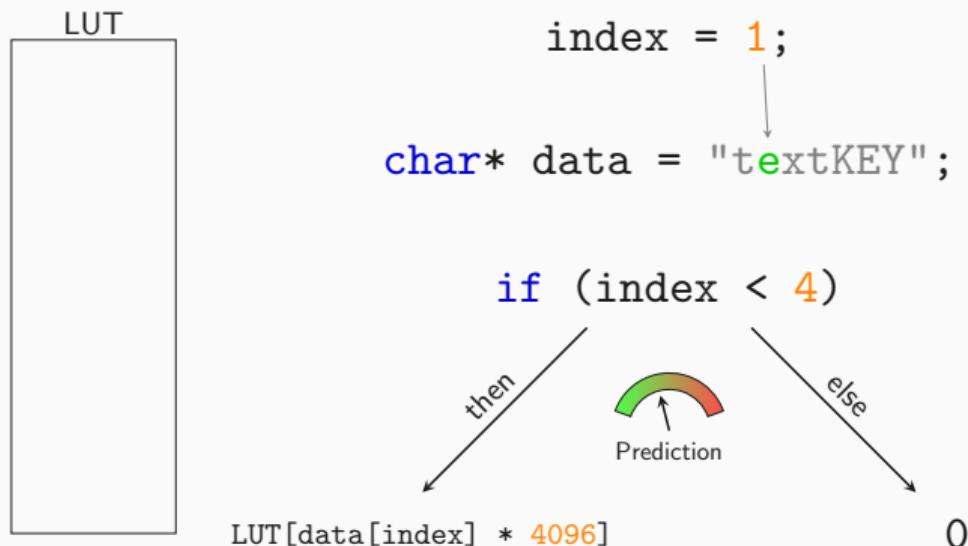


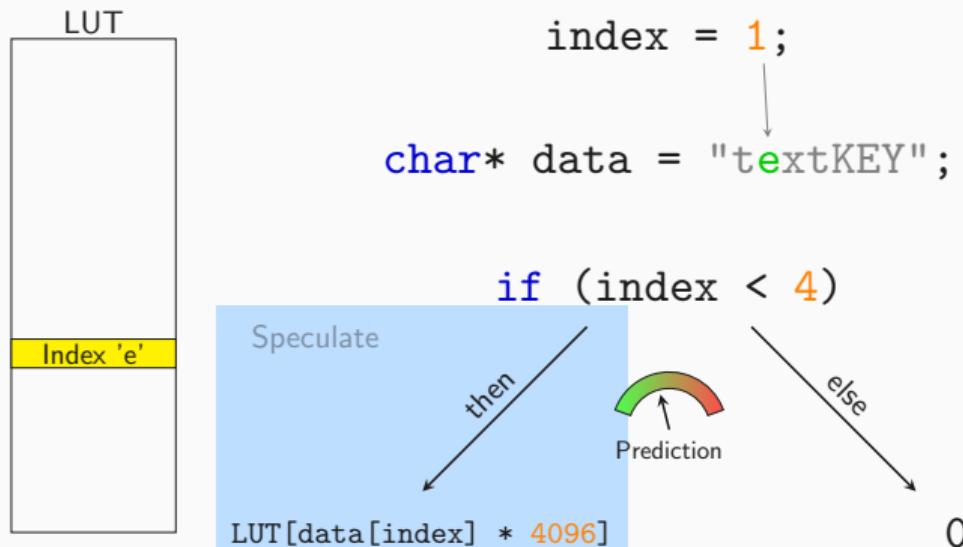


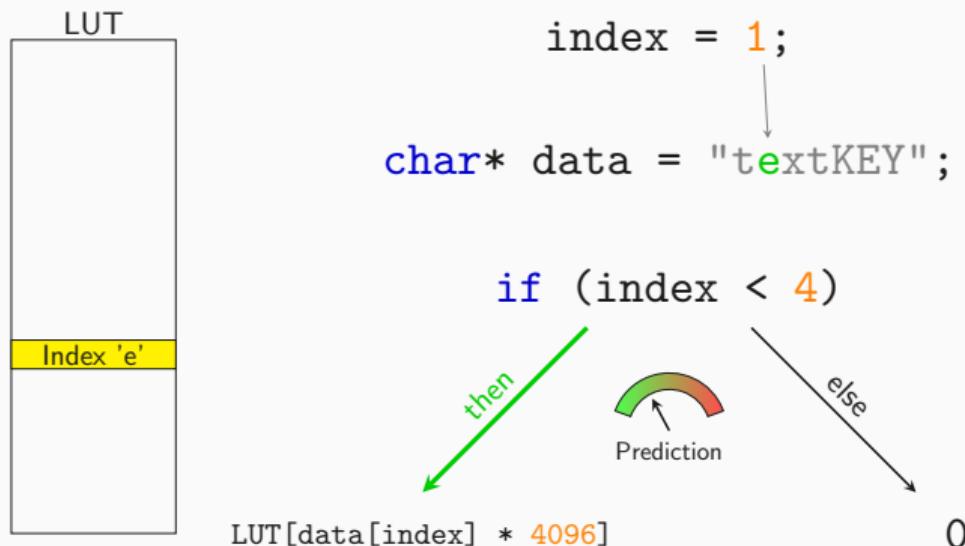


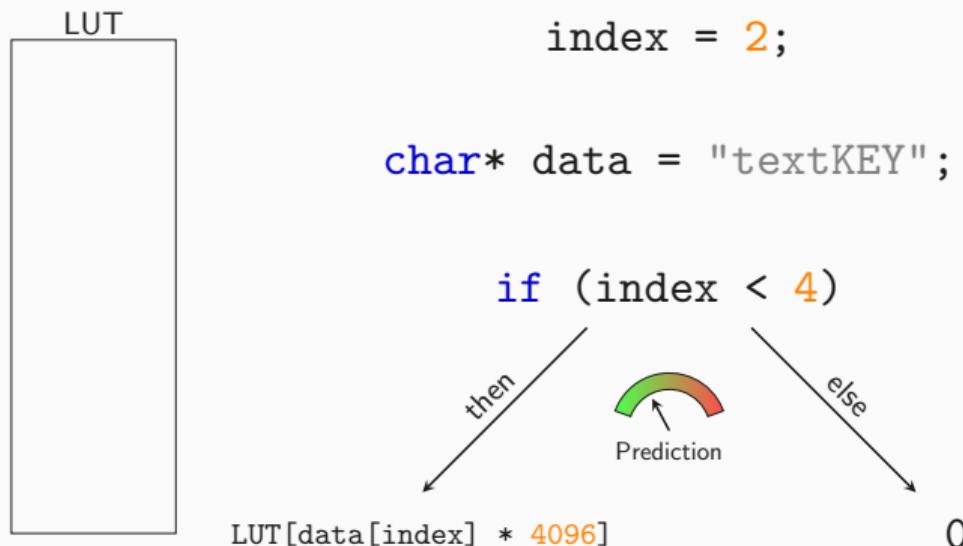


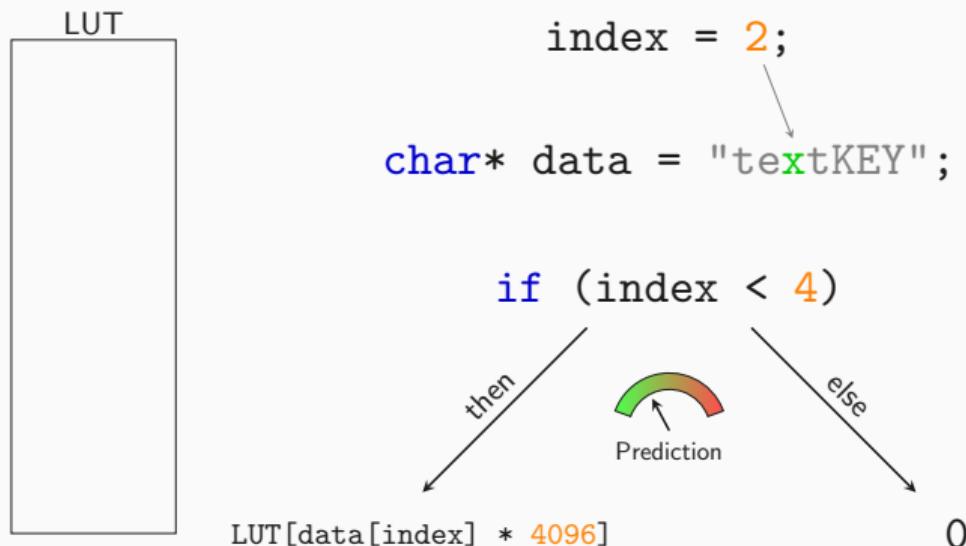


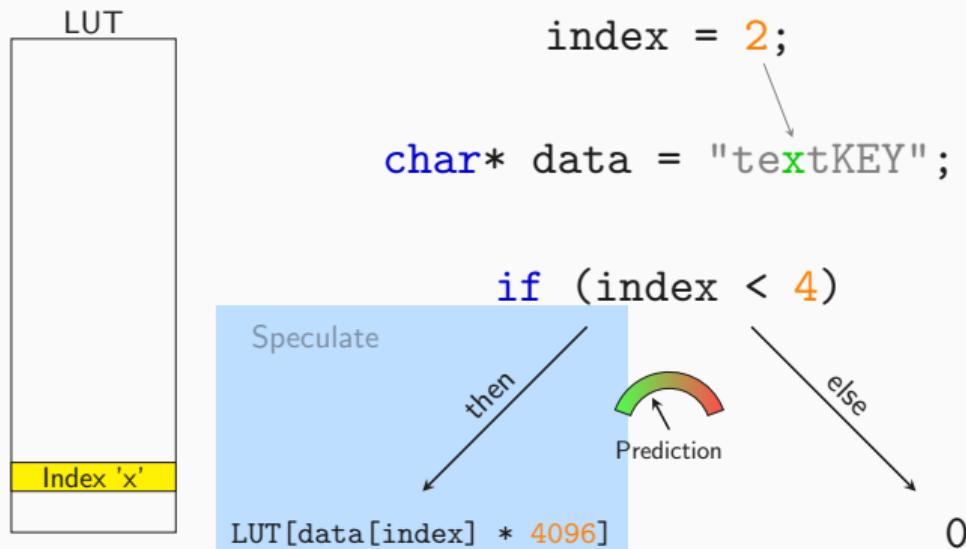


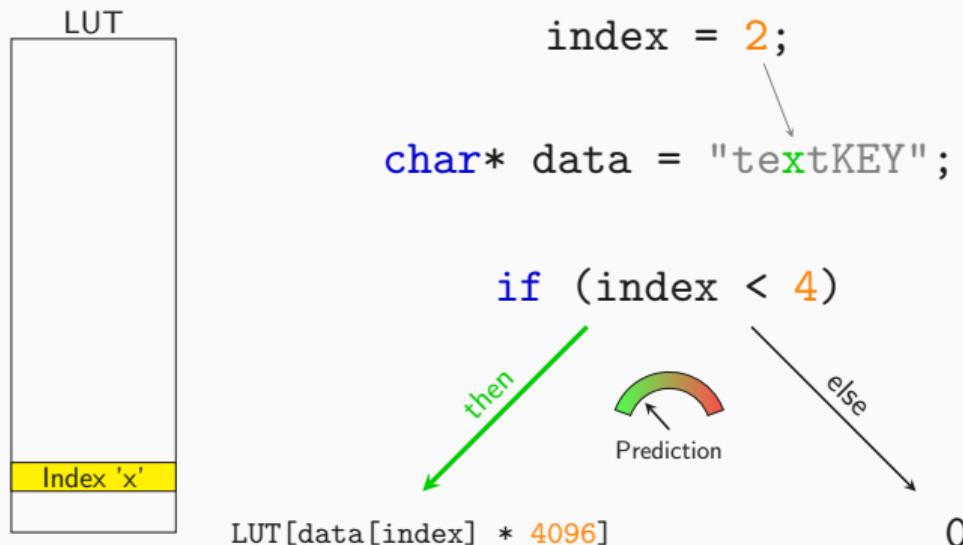


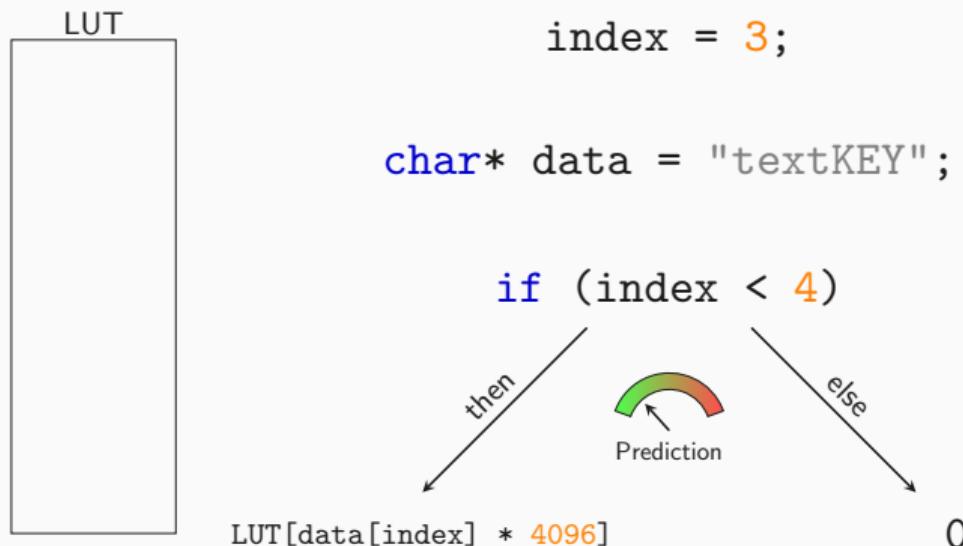


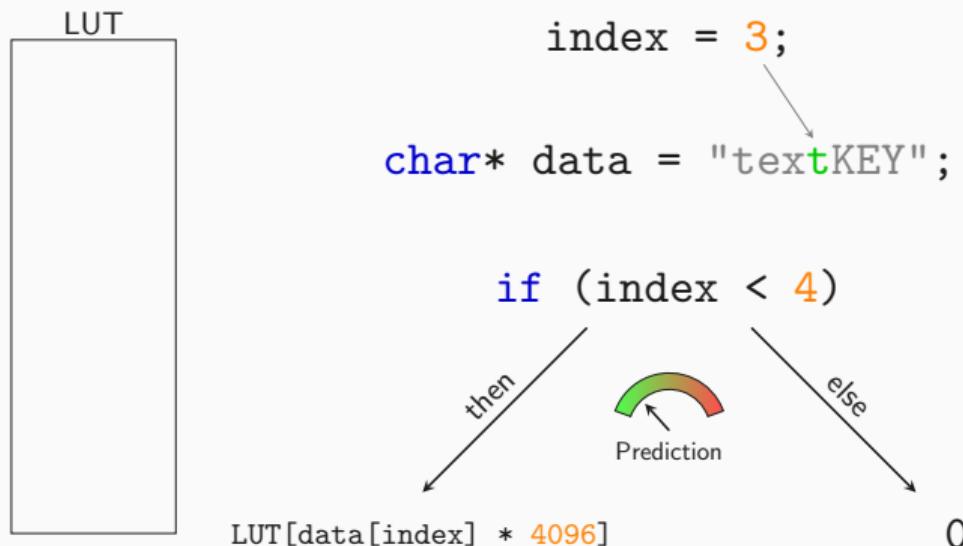


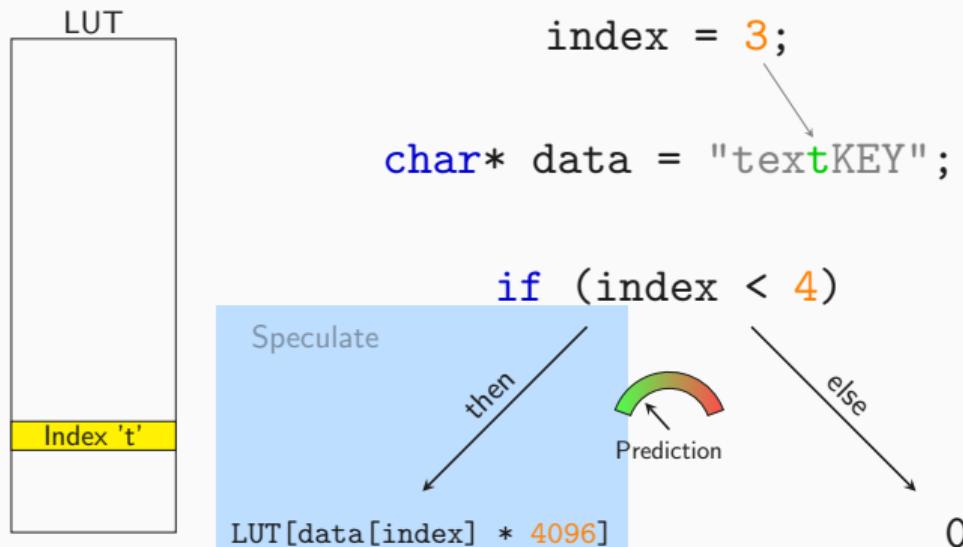


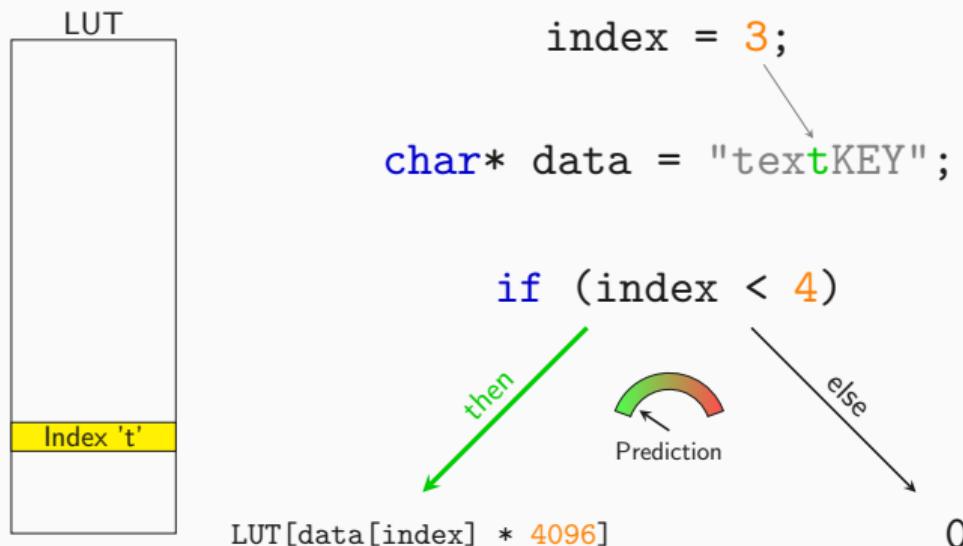


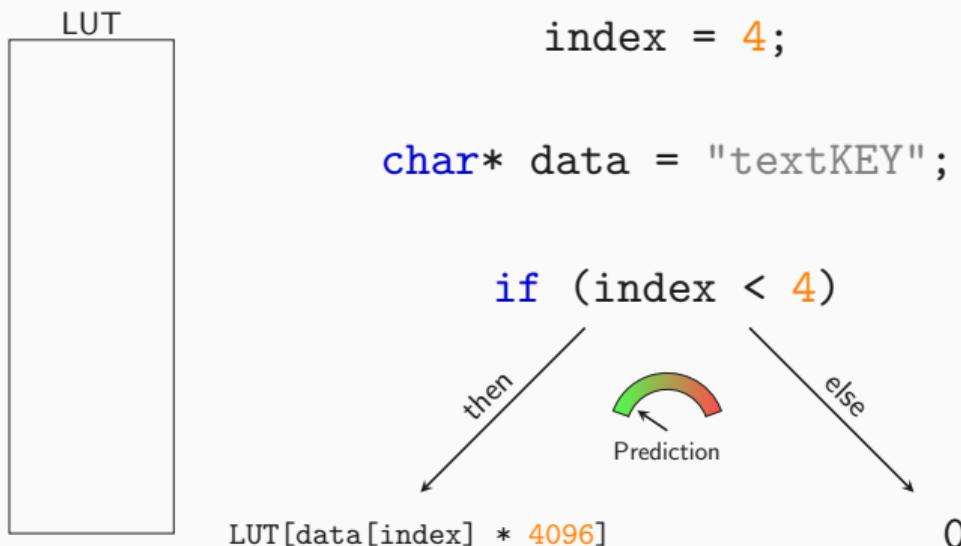


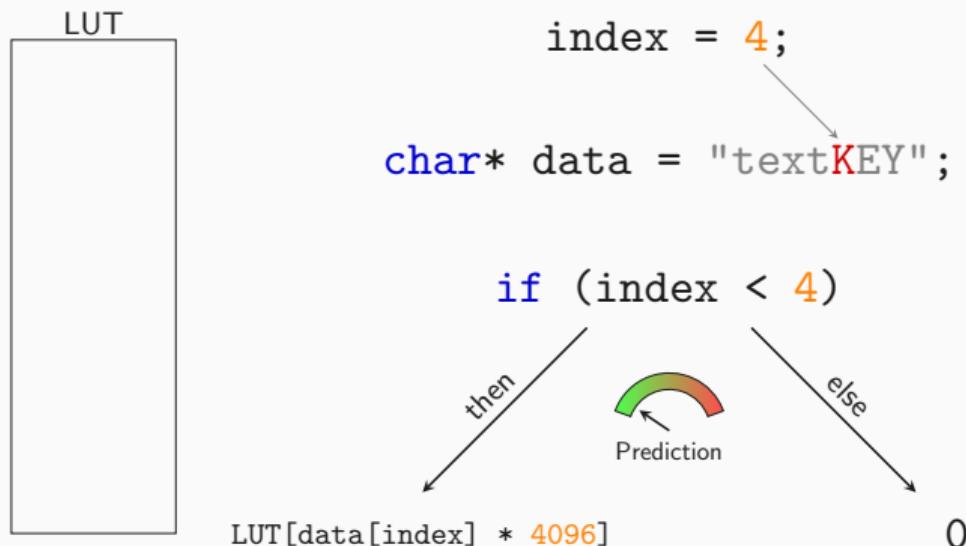


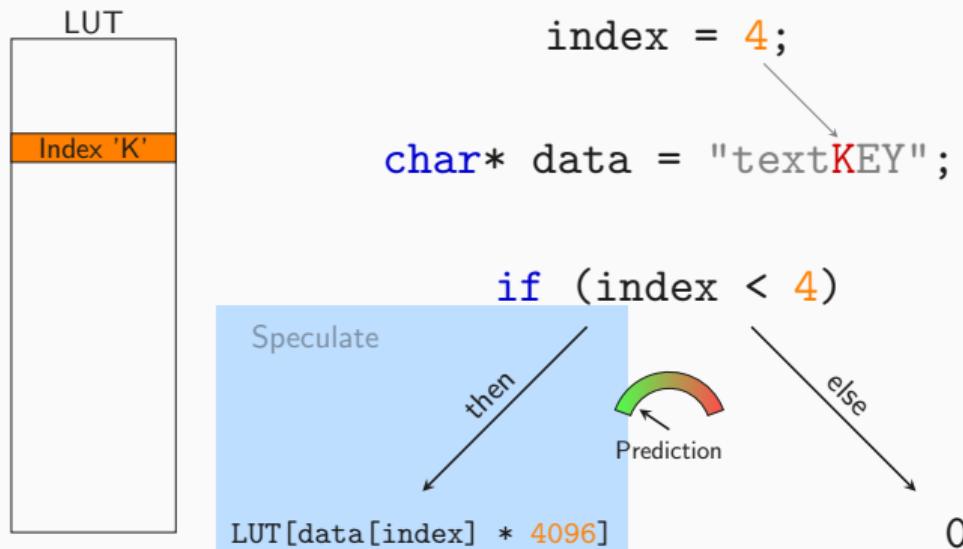


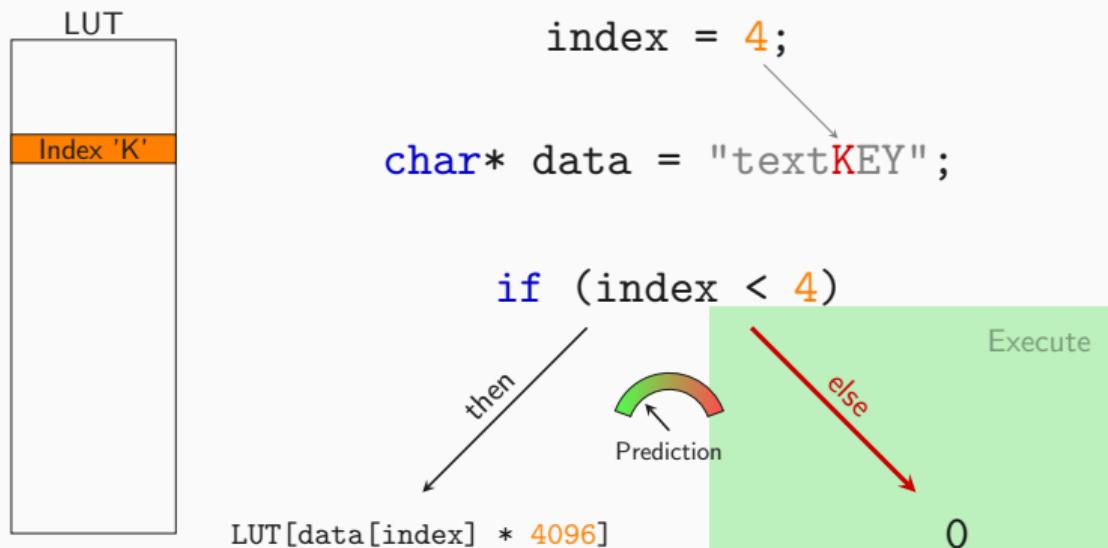


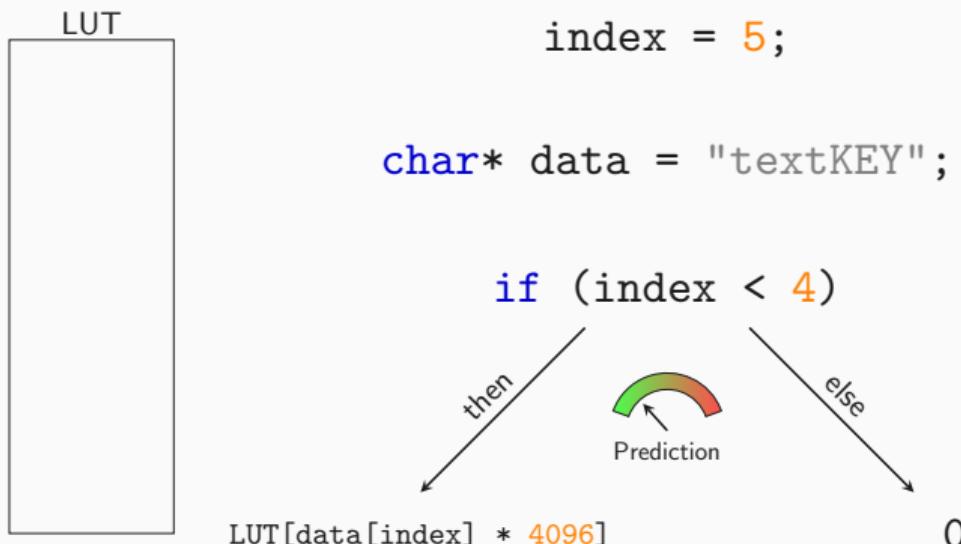


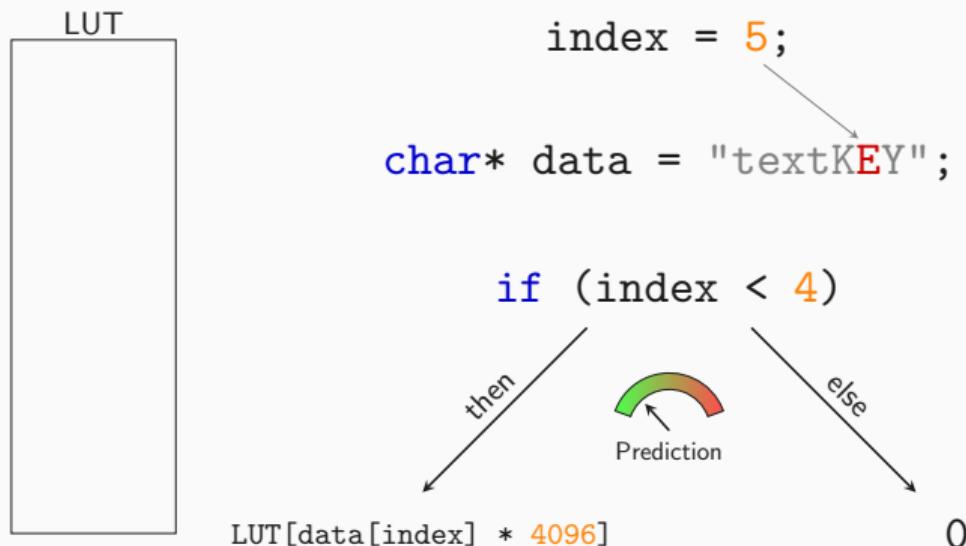


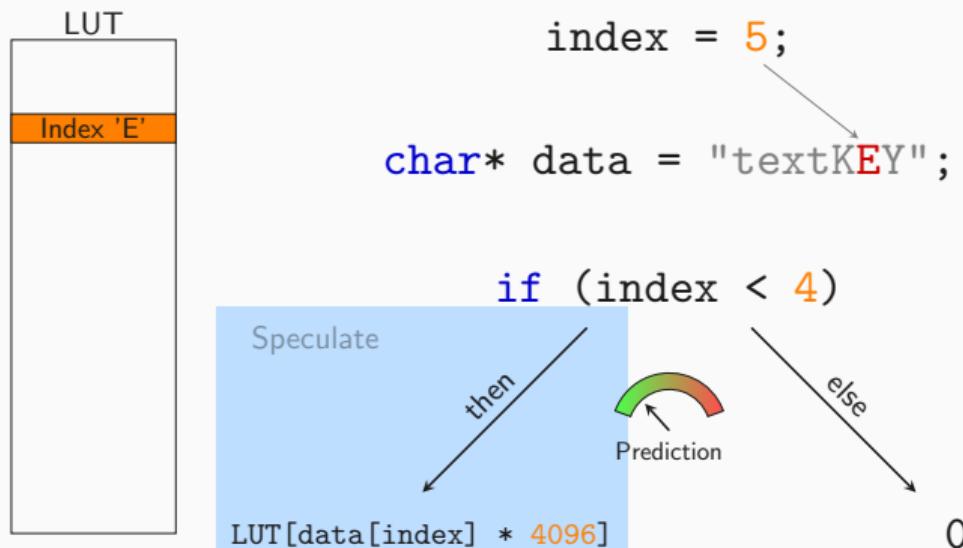


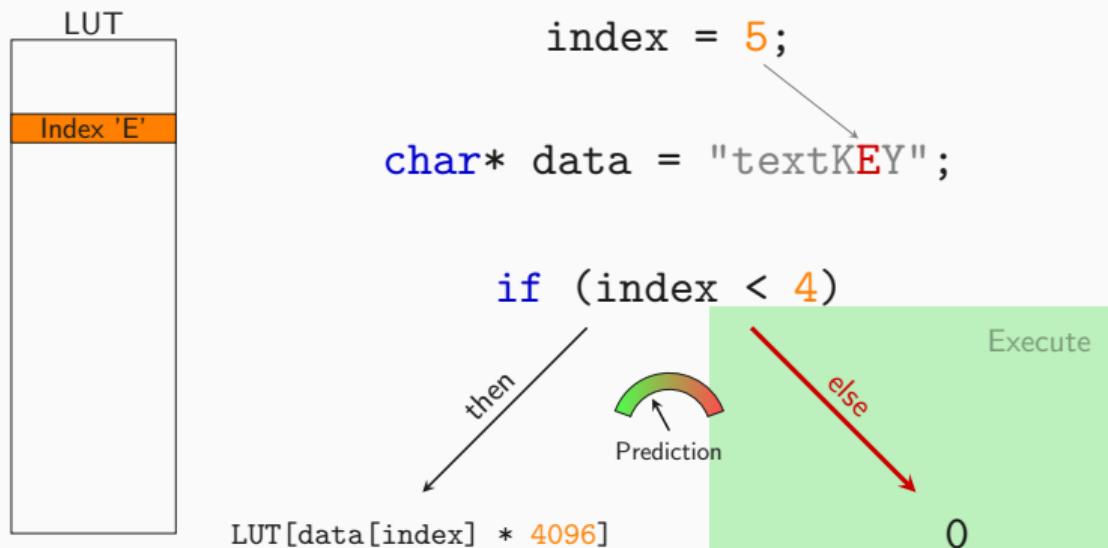


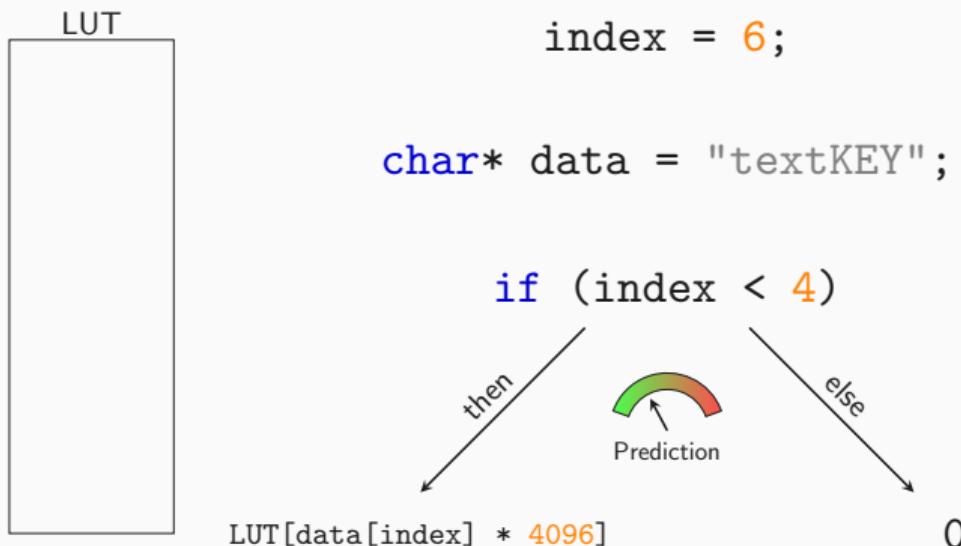


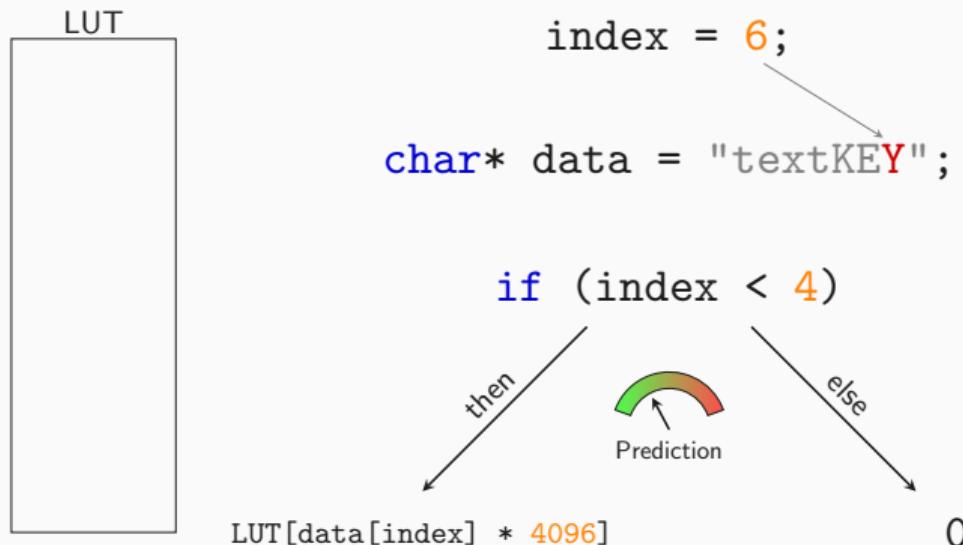


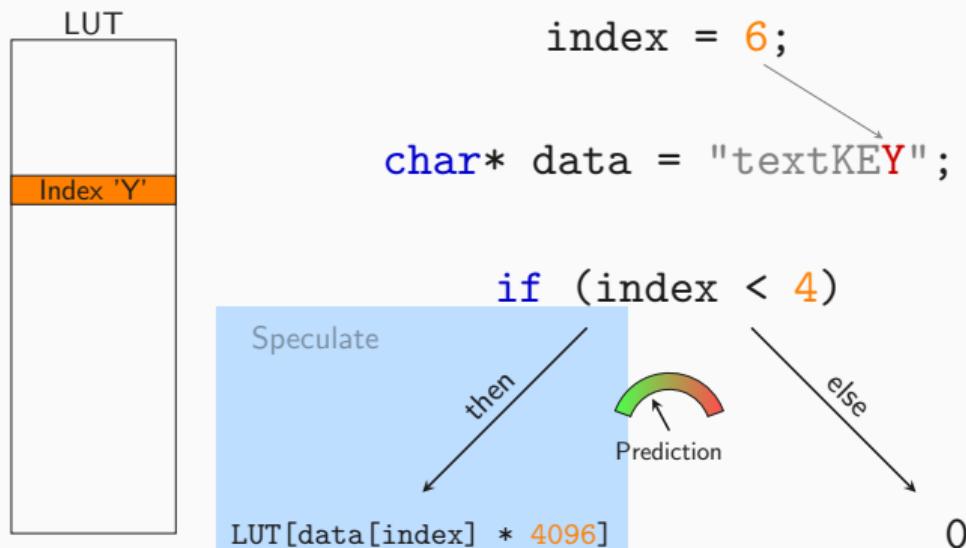


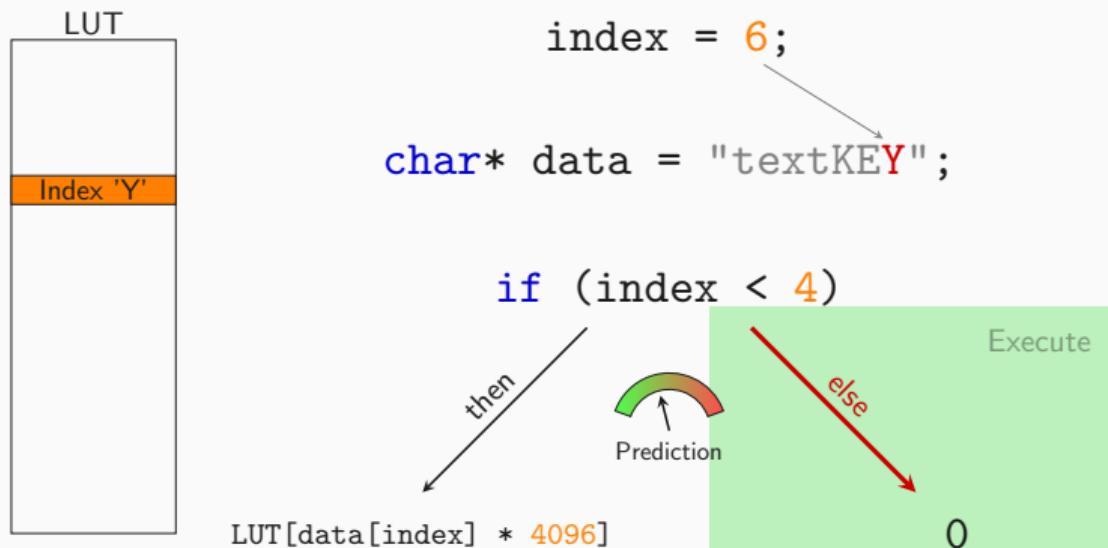


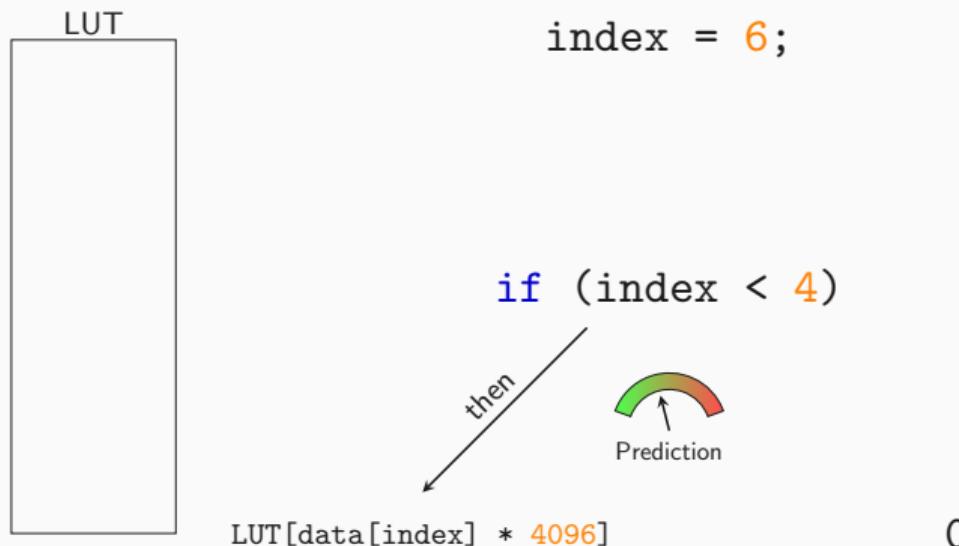






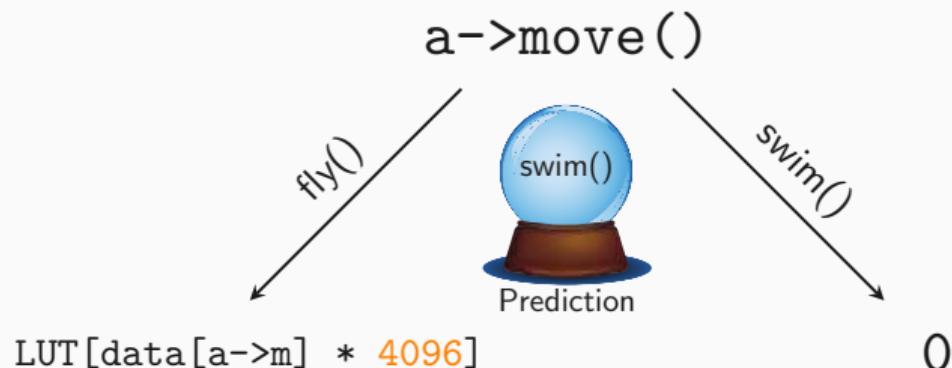




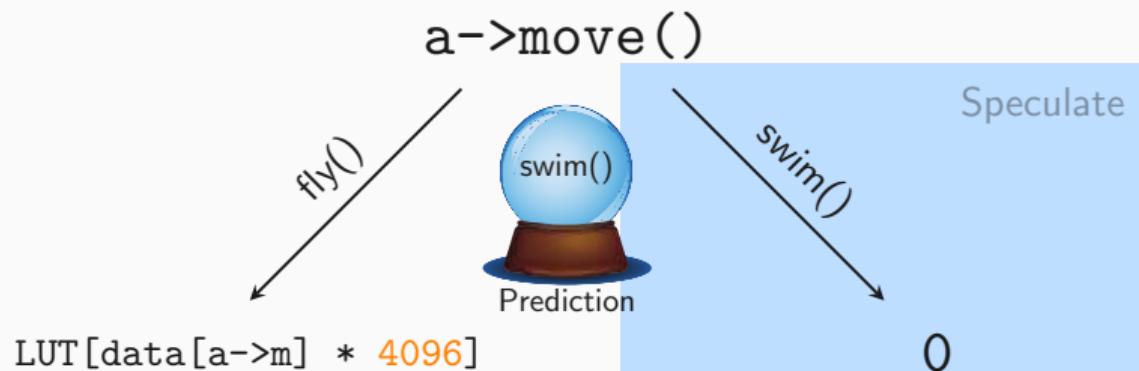


Spectre-STL (v4): Ignore sanitizing write access and use unsanitized old value instead

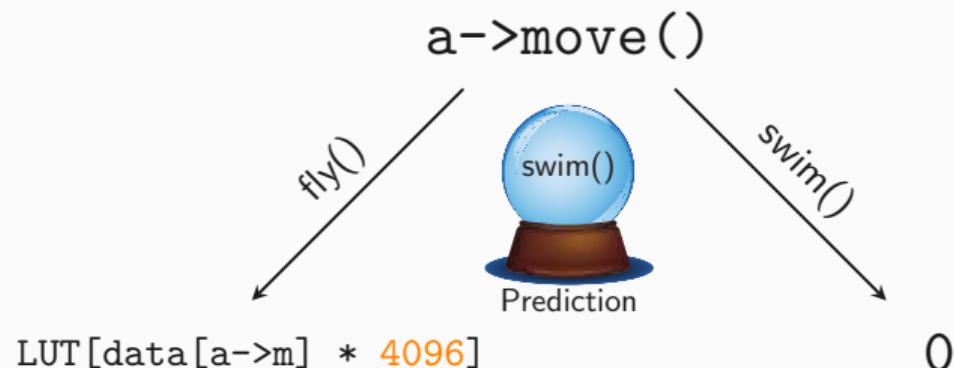
```
Animal* a = bird;
```



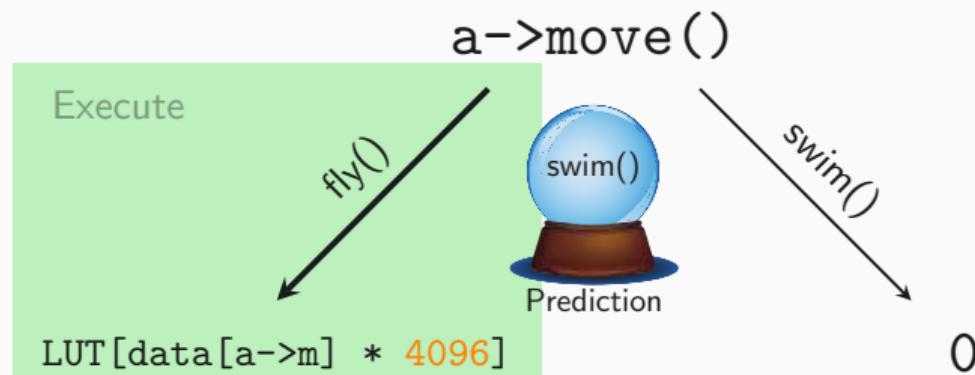
```
Animal* a = bird;
```



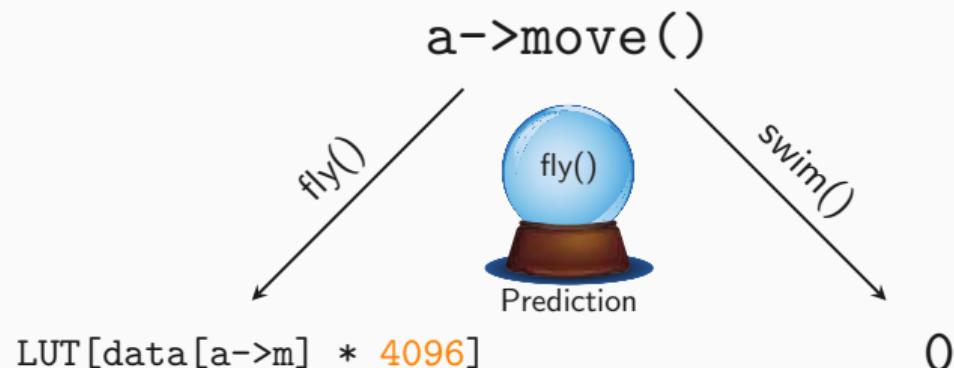
```
Animal* a = bird;
```



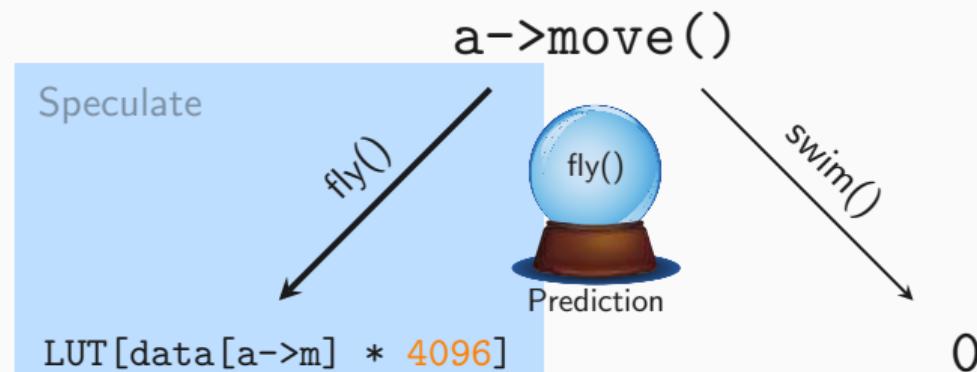
```
Animal* a = bird;
```



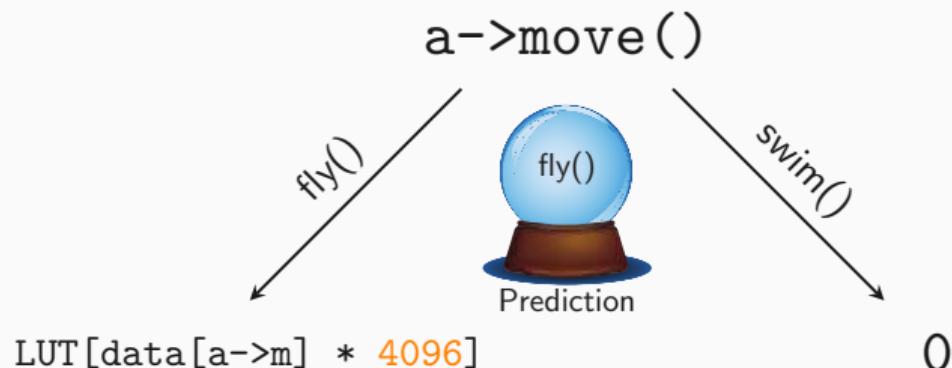
```
Animal* a = bird;
```



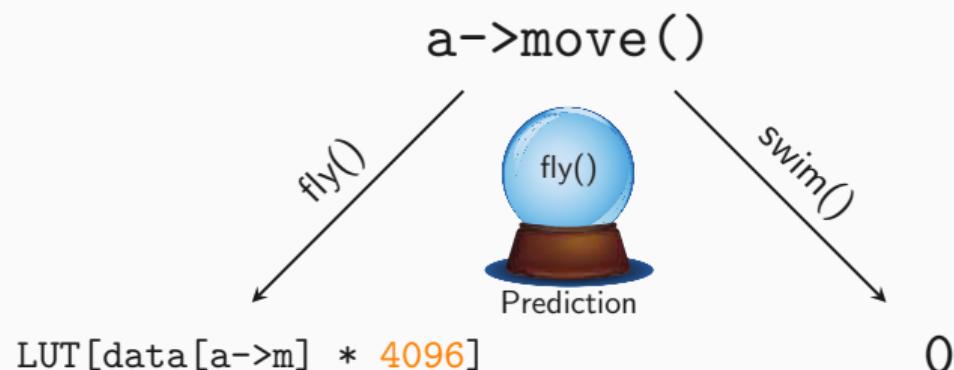
```
Animal* a = bird;
```



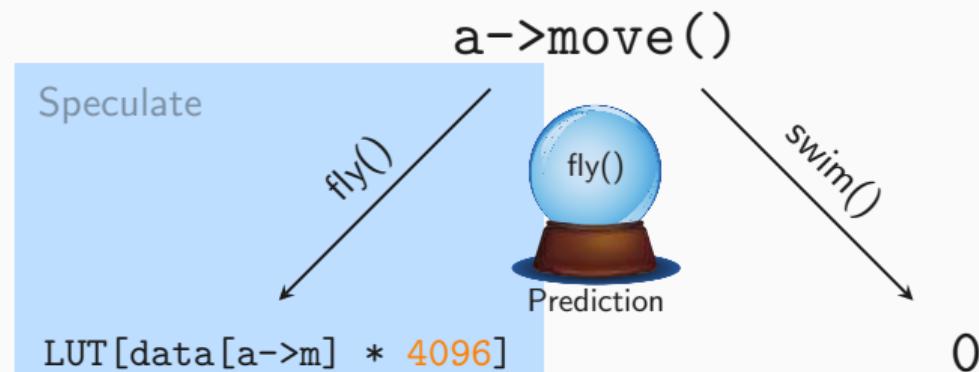
```
Animal* a = bird;
```



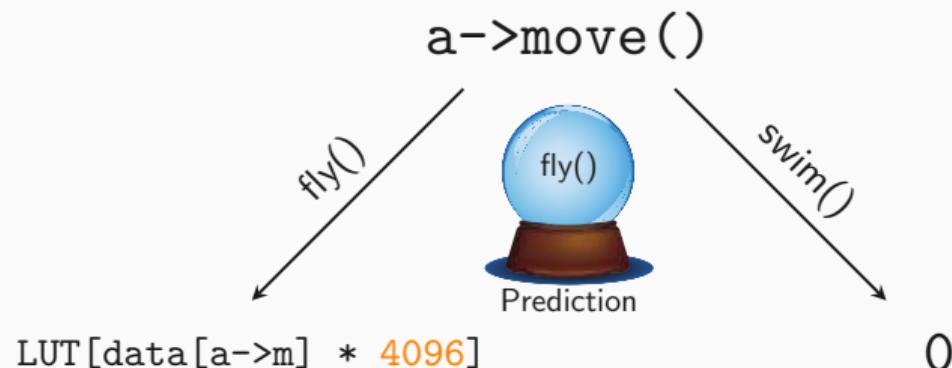
```
Animal* a = fish;
```



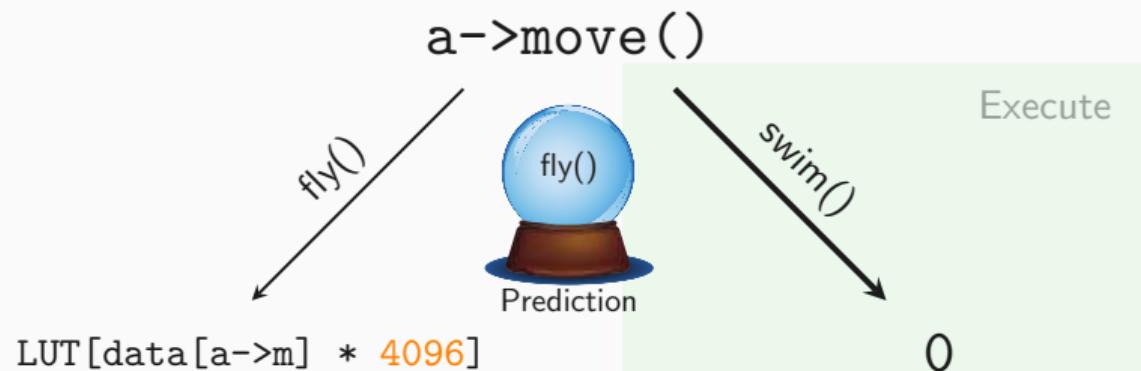
```
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```



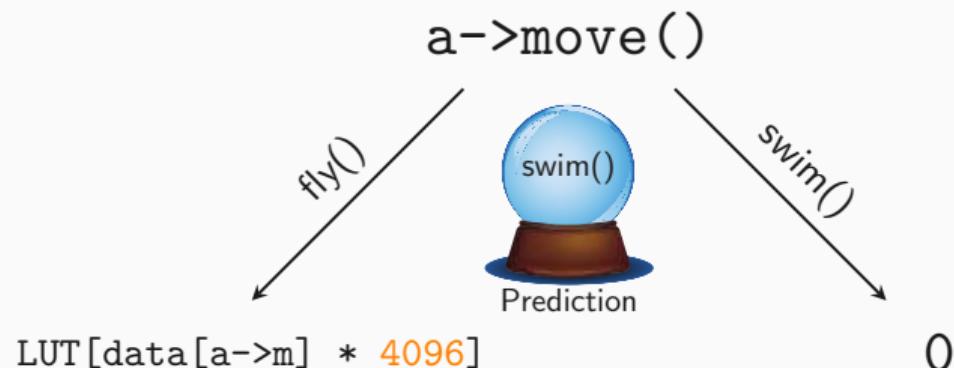
```
Animal* a = fish;
```



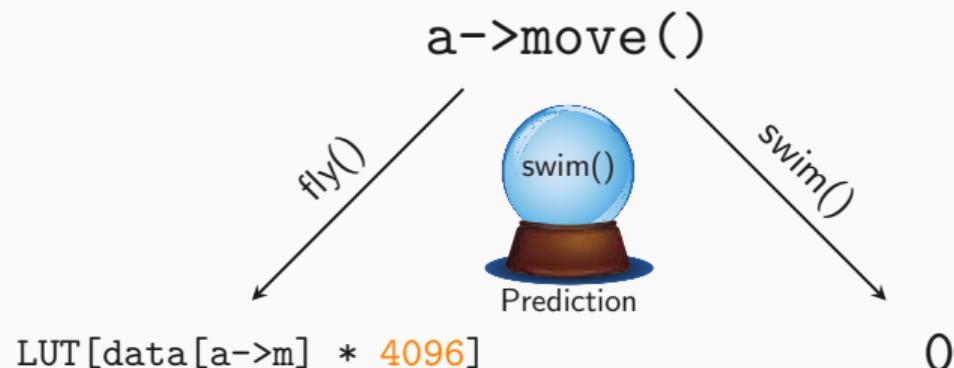
```
Animal* a = fish;
```



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Animal* a = fish;
```

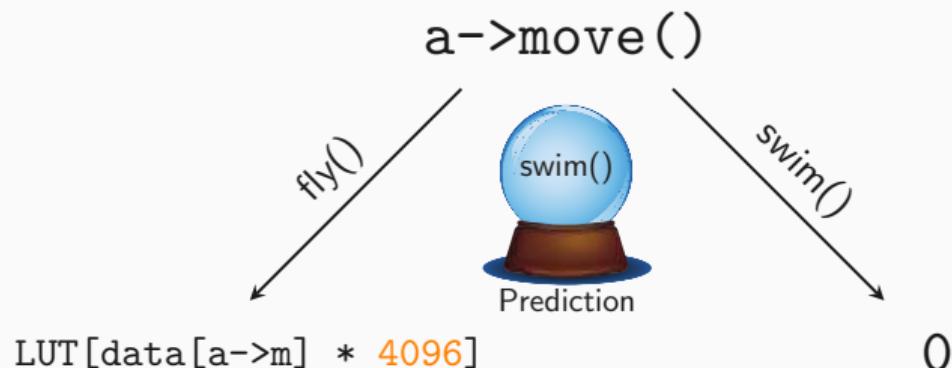


```
Animal* a = fish;
```



Spectre-BTB (v2): mistrain BTB → mispredict indirect jump/call

```
Animal* a = fish;
```



Spectre-BTB (v2): mistrain BTB → mispredict indirect jump/call

Spectre-RSB (v5): mistrain RSB → mispredict return

- v1.1: Speculatively write to memory locations

²Vladimir Kiriansky et al. Speculative Buffer Overflows: Attacks and Defenses. In: arXiv:1807.03757 (2018).

- v1.1: Speculatively write to memory locations
→ Many more gadgets than previously anticipated n

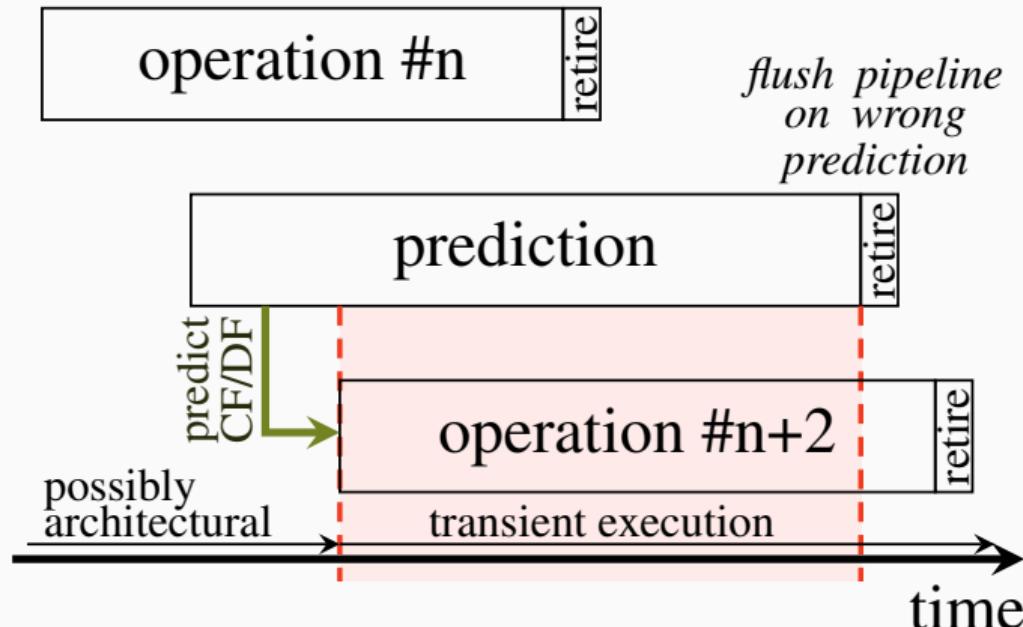
²Vladimir Kiriinsky et al. Speculative Buffer Overflows: Attacks and Defenses. In: arXiv:1807.03757 (2018).

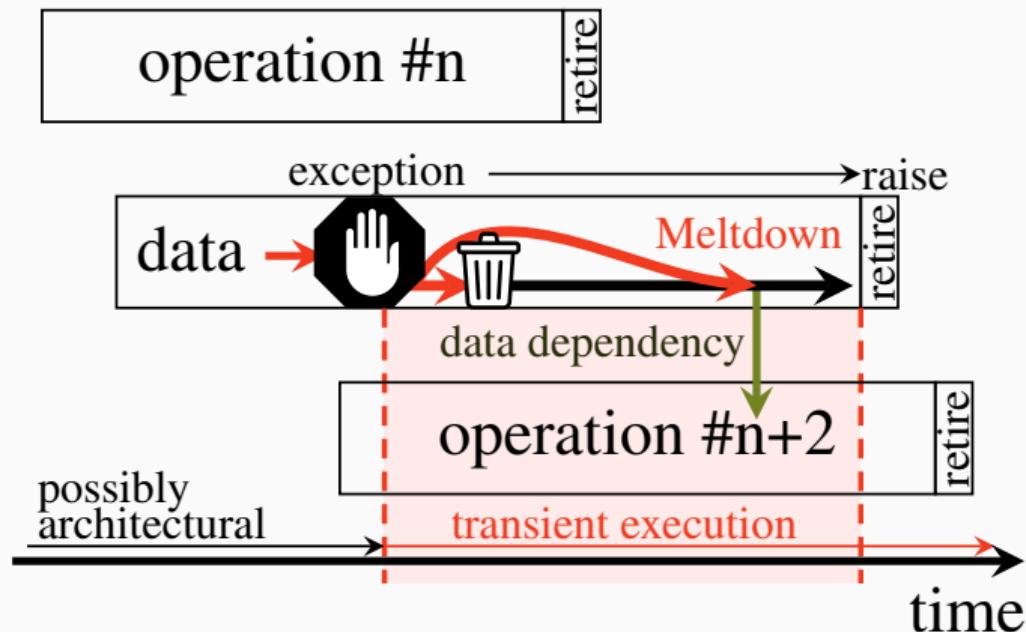
- v1.1: Speculatively write to memory locations
→ Many more gadgets than previously anticipated n
- v1.2: Ignore writable bit

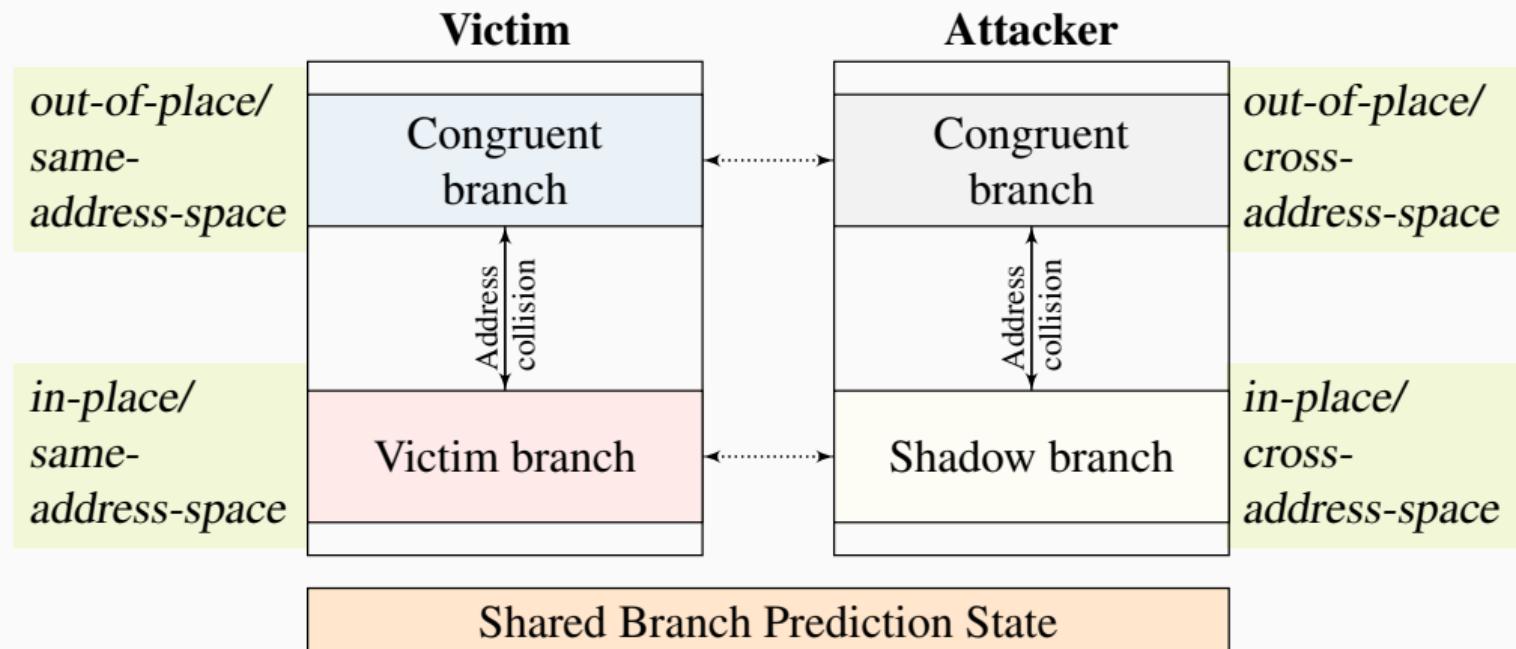
²Vladimir Kiriensky et al. Speculative Buffer Overflows: Attacks and Defenses. In: arXiv:1807.03757 (2018).

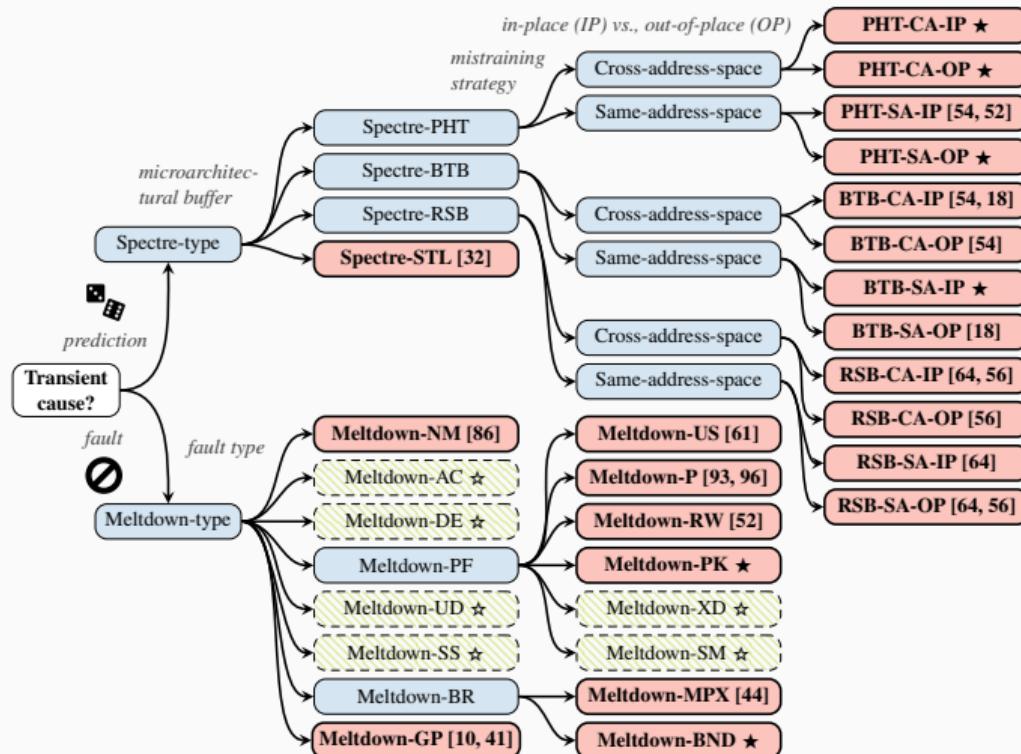
- v1.1: Speculatively write to memory locations
 - Many more gadgets than previously anticipated n
- v1.2: Ignore writable bit
 - = Meltdown-RW

²Vladimir Kiriensky et al. Speculative Buffer Overflows: Attacks and Defenses. In: arXiv:1807.03757 (2018).













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Let's Keep it to Ourselves: Don't Disclose Vulnerabilities

by Gus Uht on Jan 31, 2019 | Tags: Opinion, Security



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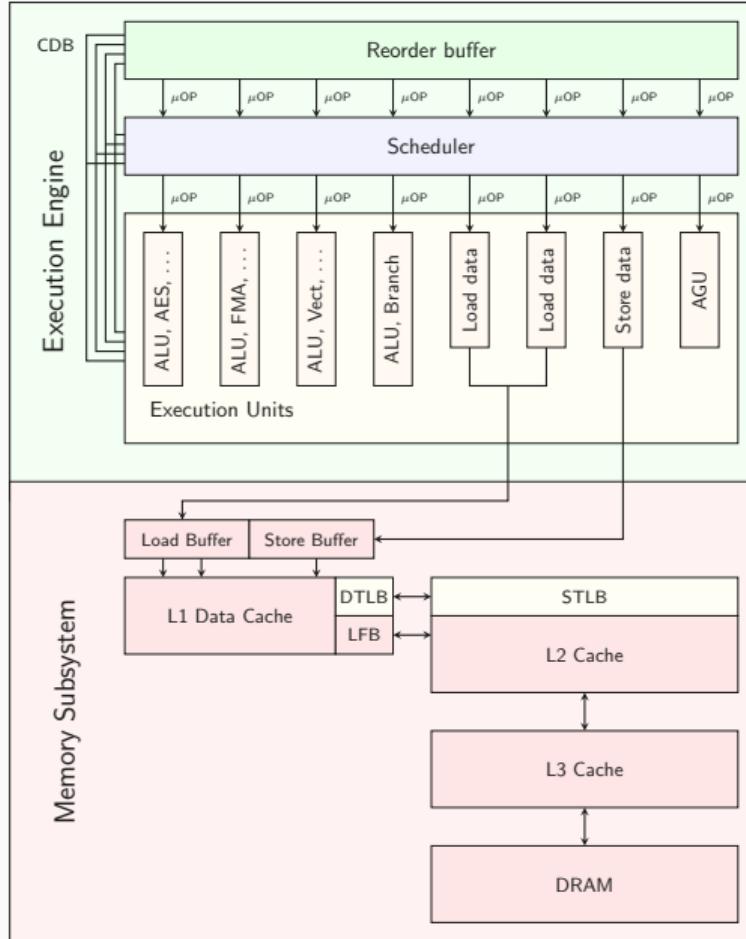
Table 1: Spectre-type defenses and what they mitigate.

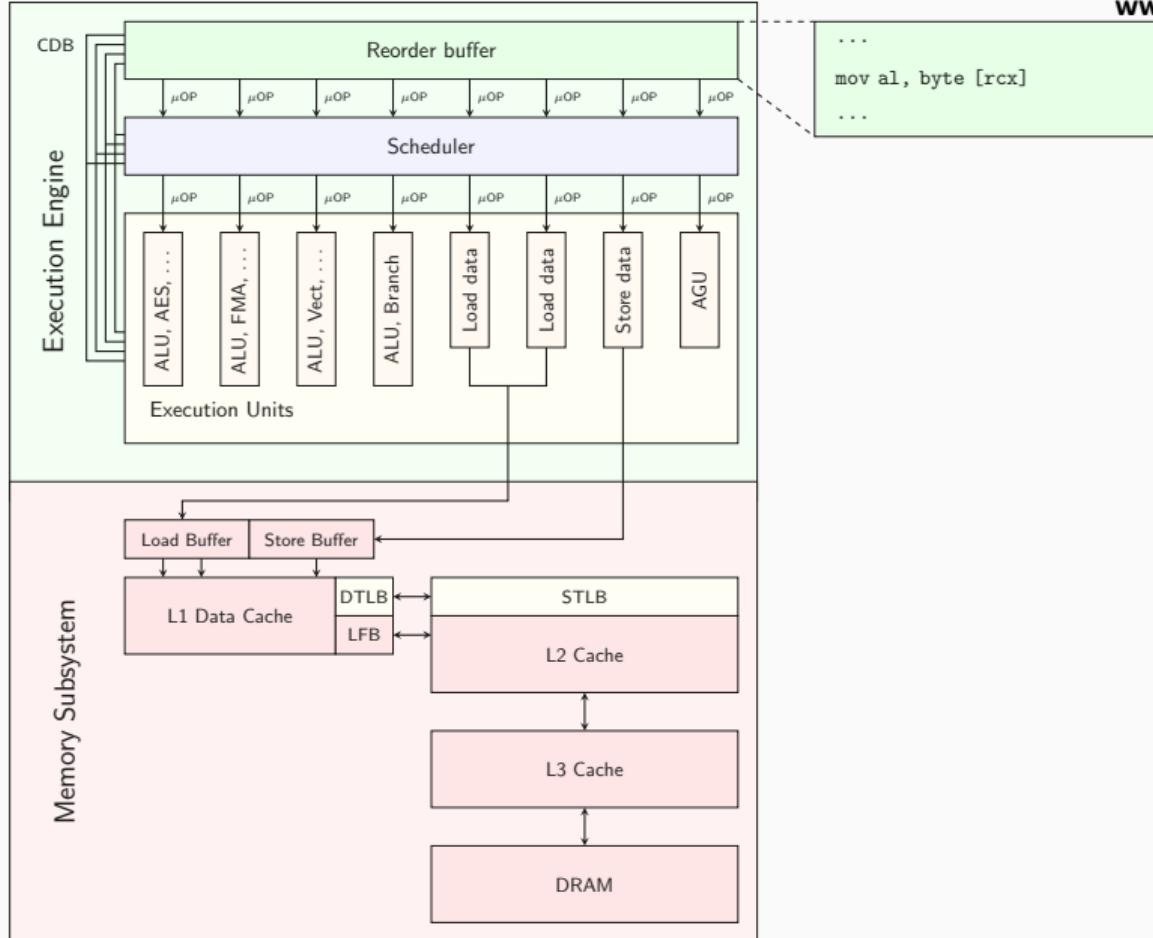
		Defense	InvisISpec SafeSpec DAMG RSB Stuffing Retpoline Poison Value Index Masking Site Isolation SLH YSNB IBRS STIPB IBPB Serialization Taint Tracking Timer Reduction Sloth SSBD/SSBB
	Attack		
Intel	Spectre-PHT	□□□□◊◊●○●○●○◊◊◊●■●□◊	
	Spectre-BTB	□□□□◊●◊◊○◊◊●●○◊■●○◊◊	
	Spectre-RSB	□□□□●◊◊◊○◊◊◊◊◊◊■●○◊◊	
	Spectre-STL	□□□□◊◊◊◊●◊◊◊◊◊◊■●■●●	
ARM	Spectre-PHT	□□□□◊◊●○●○●○◊◊◊●■●□◊	
	Spectre-BTB	□□□□◊●◊◊○◊◊◊◊◊◊■●○◊◊	
	Spectre-RSB	□□□□●◊◊◊○◊◊◊◊◊◊■●○◊◊	
	Spectre-STL	□□□□◊◊◊◊●◊◊◊◊◊◊■●●■●●	
AMD	Spectre-PHT	□□□□◊◊●○●○●○◊◊◊●■●□◊	
	Spectre-BTB	□□□□◊●◊◊○◊◊◊■■■□◊■●○◊◊	
	Spectre-RSB	□□□□●◊◊◊○◊◊◊◊◊◊■■●○◊◊	
	Spectre-STL	□□□□◊◊◊◊●◊◊◊◊◊◊■●●■●●	

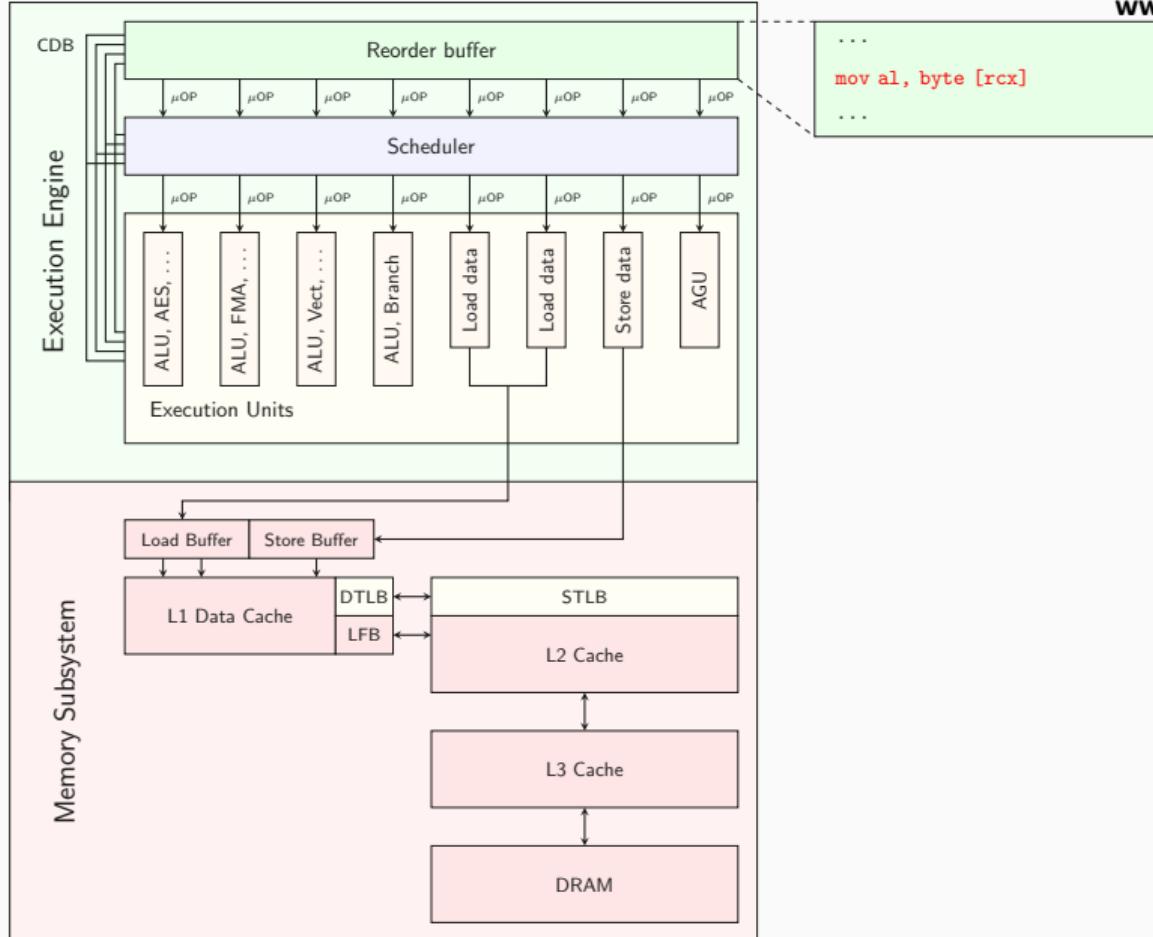
Symbols show if an attack is mitigated (●), partially mitigated (○), not mitigated (○), theoretically mitigated (■), theoretically impeded (■), not theoretically impeded (□) or out of scope (◊)

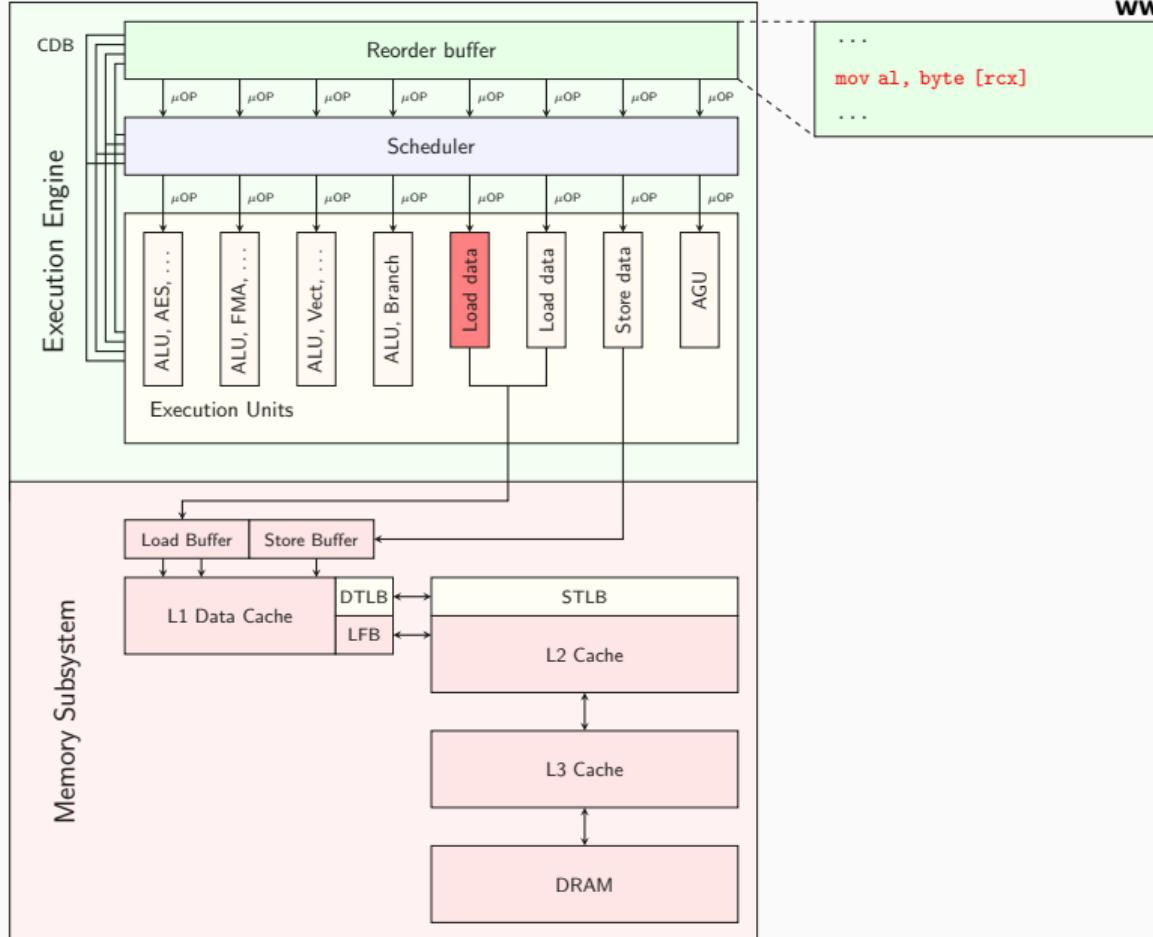
Table 2: Reported performance impacts of countermeasures

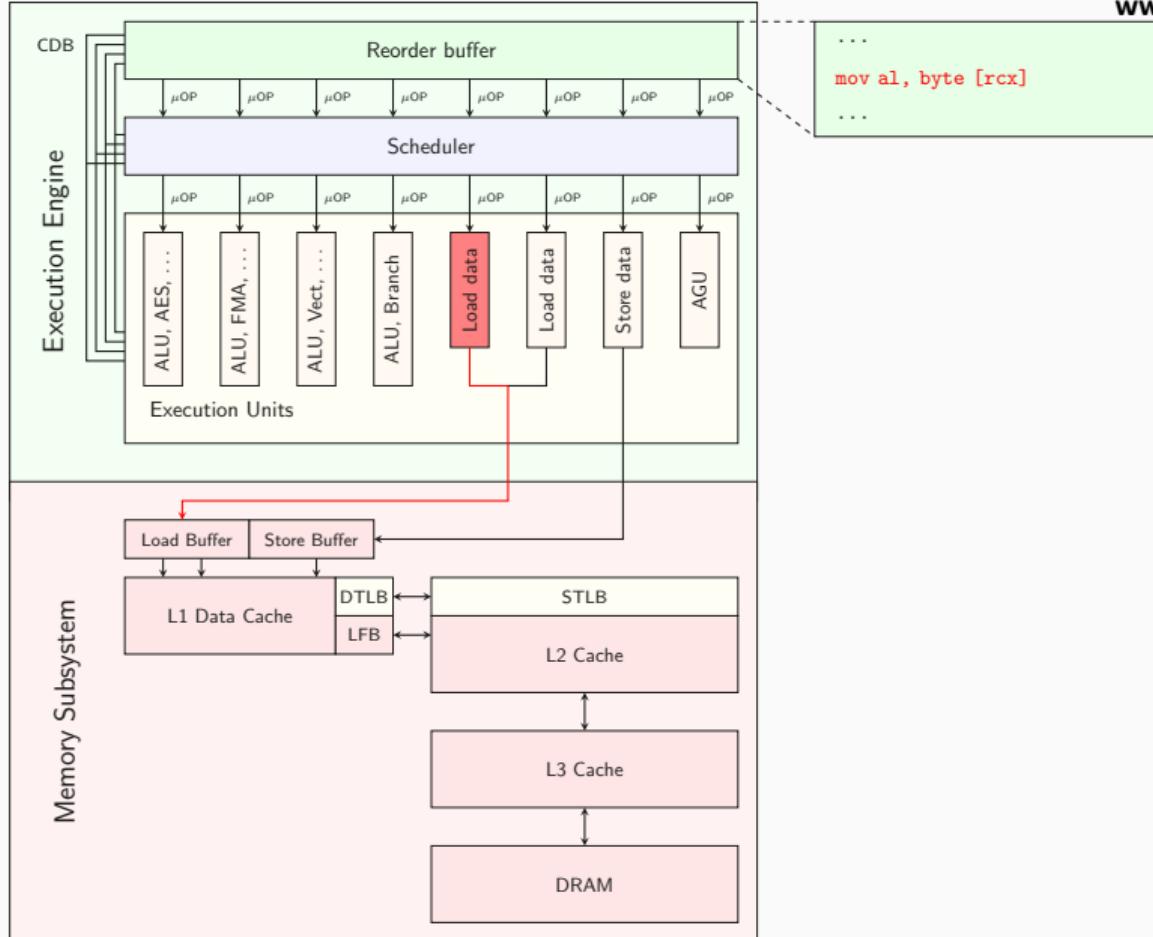
Defense \ Impact	Performance Loss	Benchmark
Defense		
InvisiSpec	22%	SPEC
SafeSpec	3% (improvement)	SPEC2017 on MARSSx86
DAWG	2–12%, 1–15%	PARSEC, GAPBS
RSB Stuffing	no reports	
Retpoline	5–10%	real-world workload servers
Site Isolation	only memory overhead	
SLH	36.4%, 29%	Google microbenchmark suite
YSNB	60%	Phoenix
IBRS	20–30%	two sysbench 1.0.11 benchmarks
STIPB	30– 50%	Rodinia OpenMP, DaCapo
IBPB	no individual reports	
Serialization	62%, 74.8%	Google microbenchmark suite
SSBD/SSBB	2–8%	SYStmark®2014 SE & SPEC integer
KAISER/KPTI	0–2.6%	system call rates
L1TF mitigations	-3–31%	various SPEC

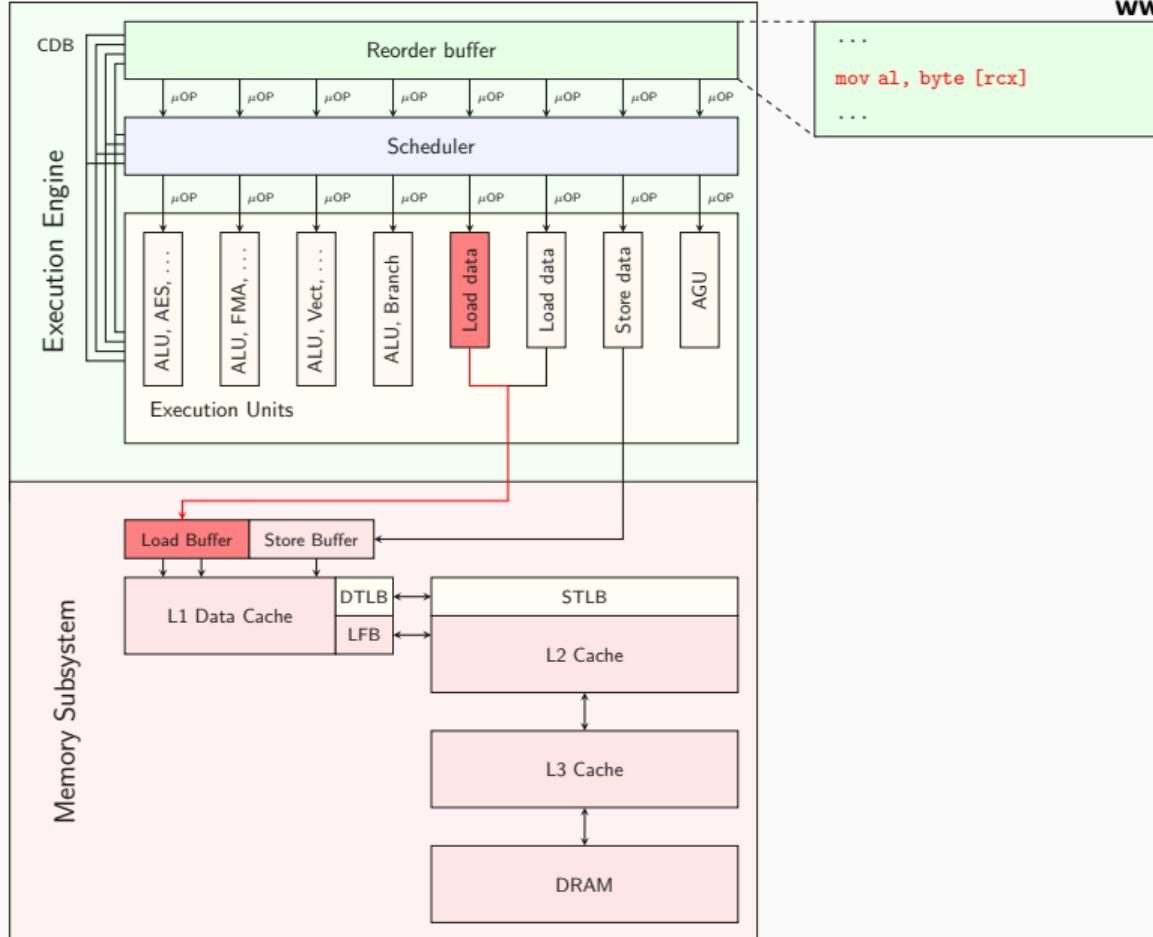


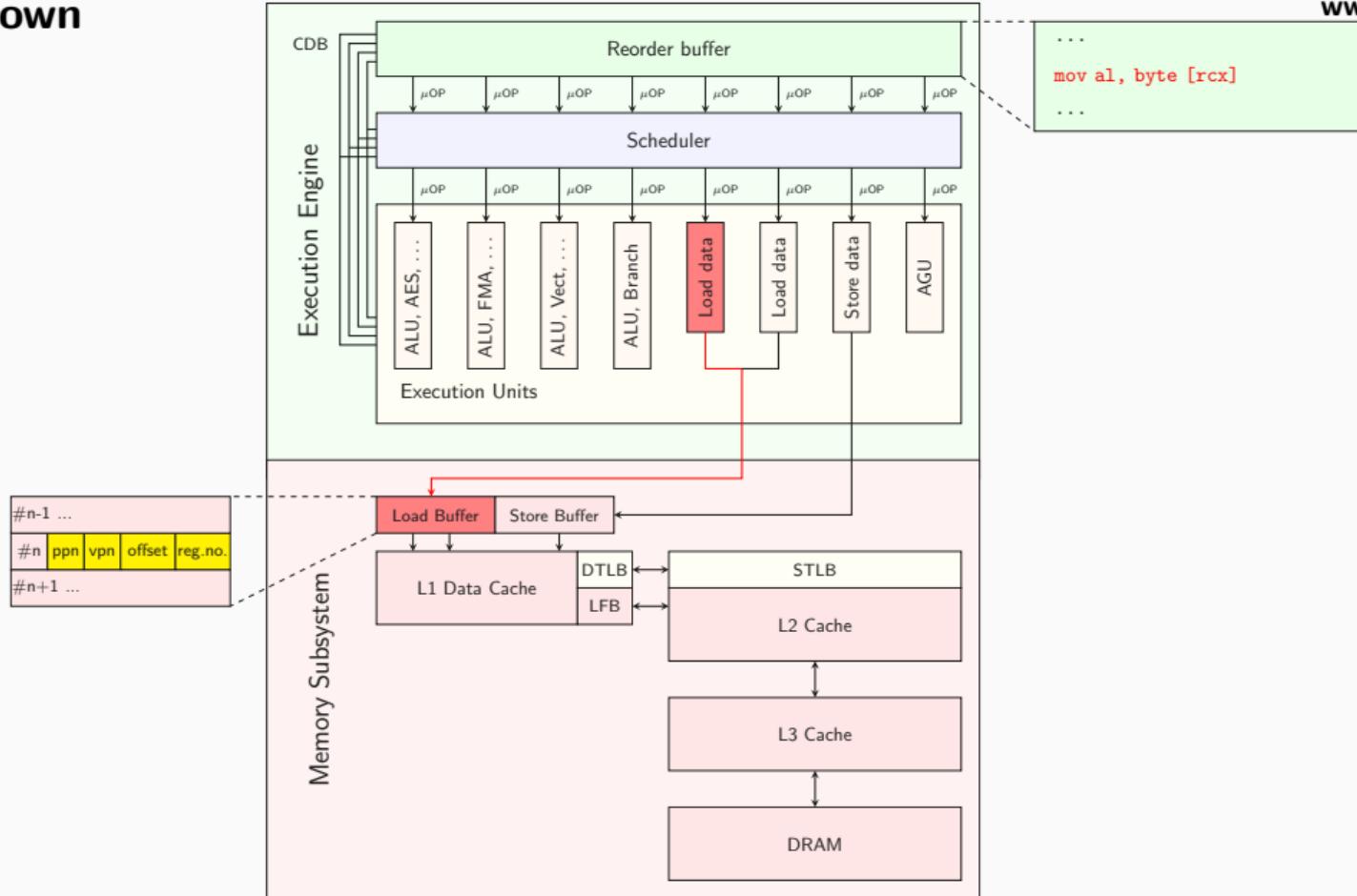


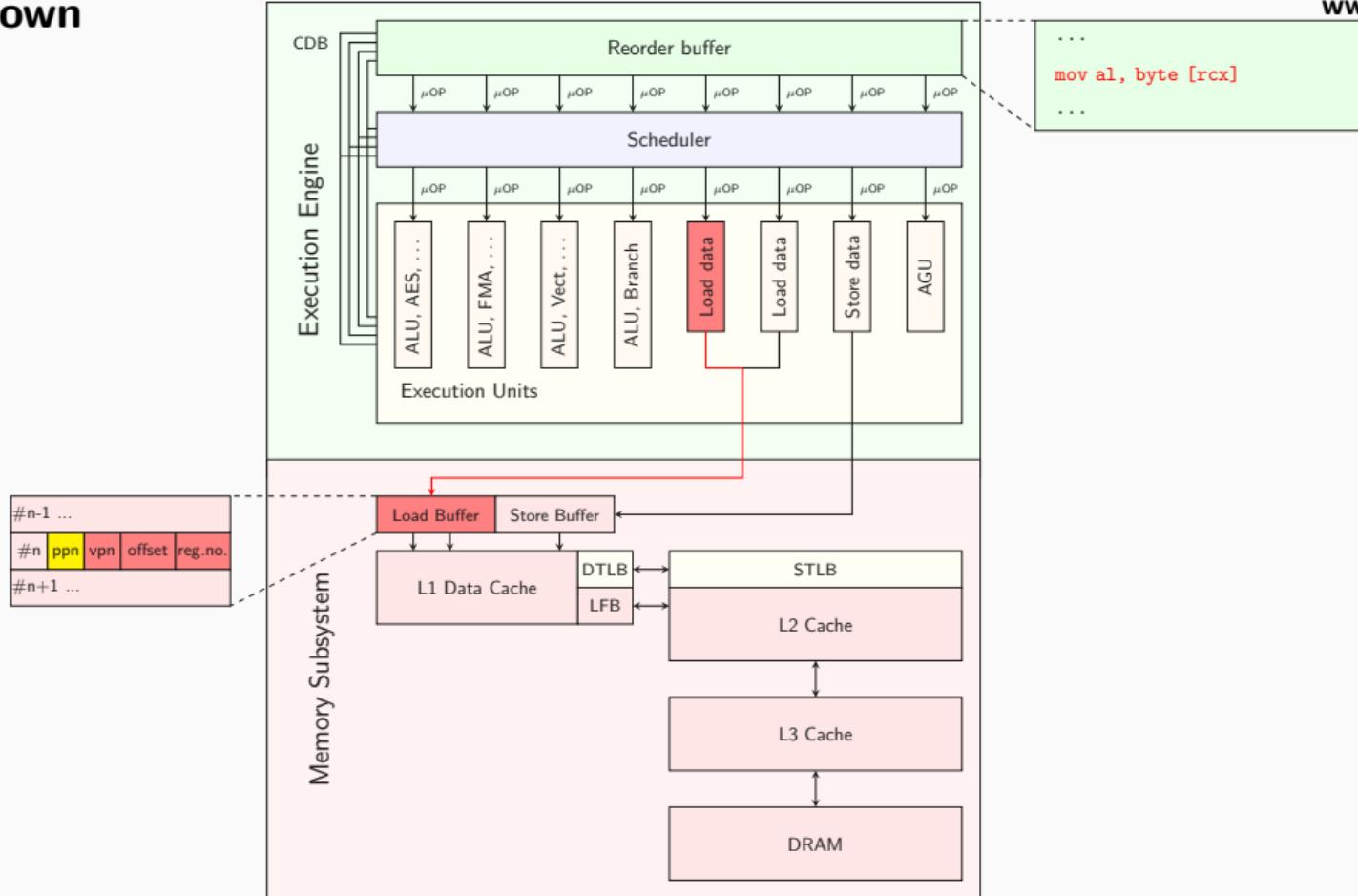


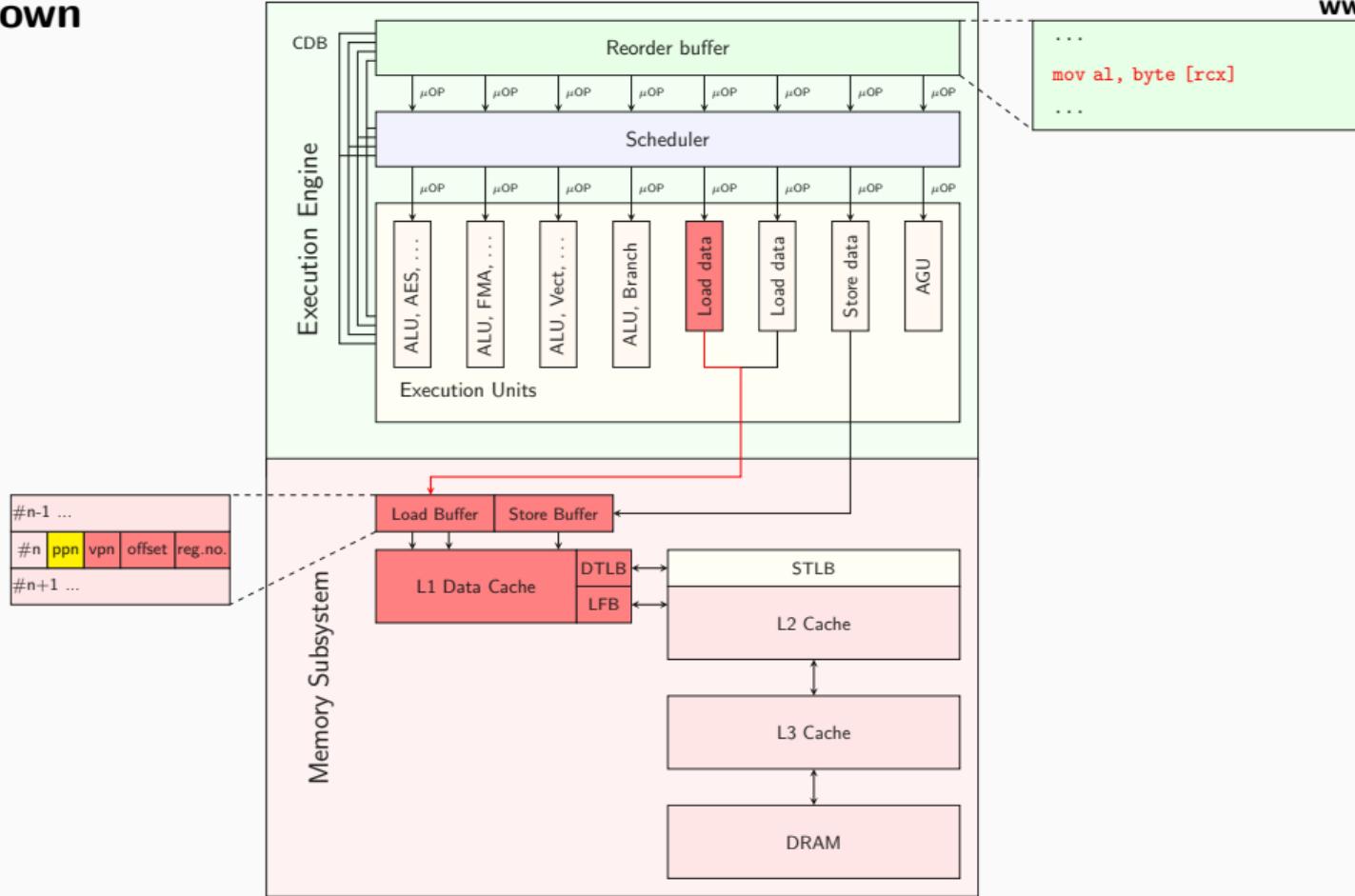


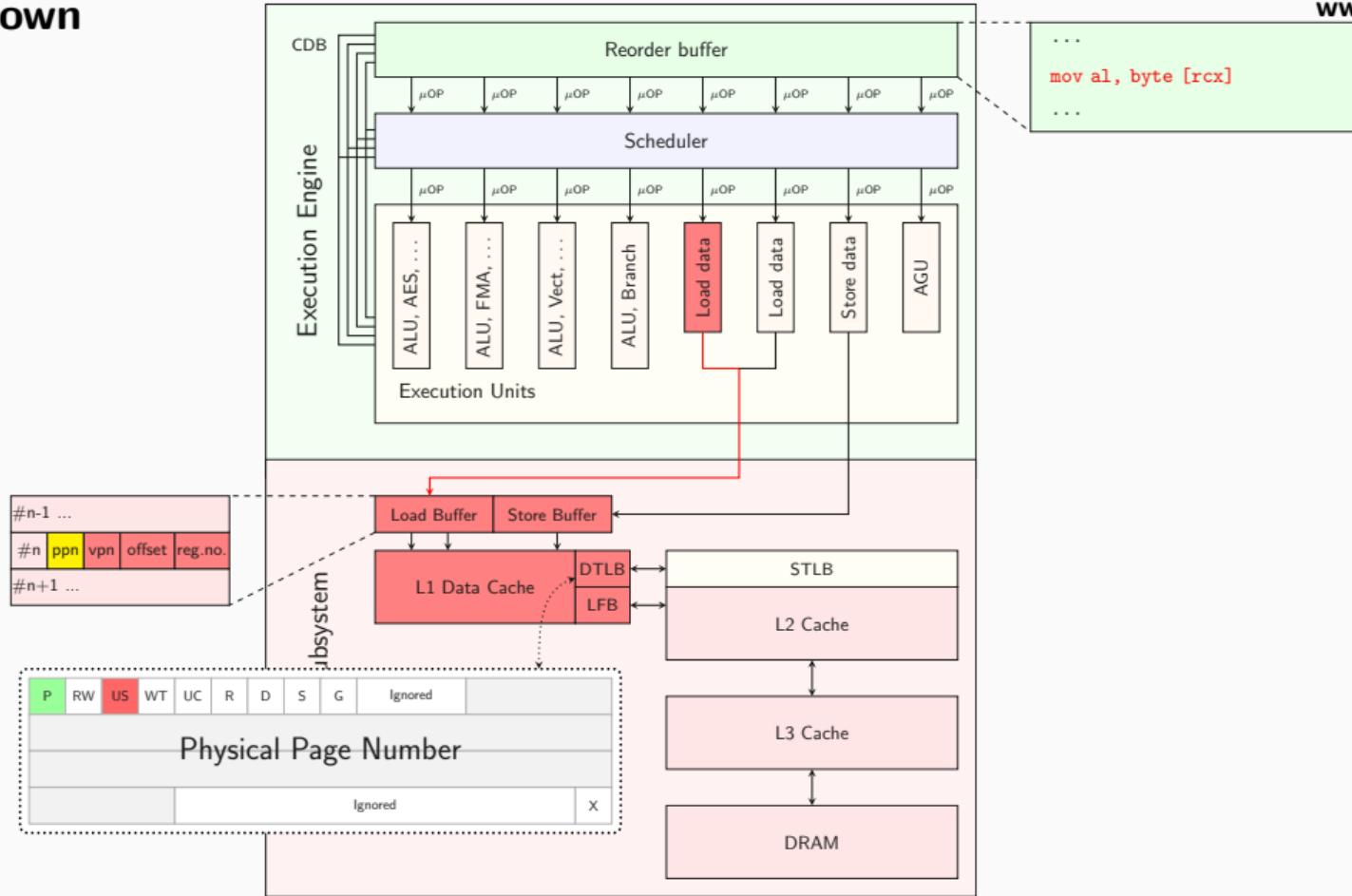


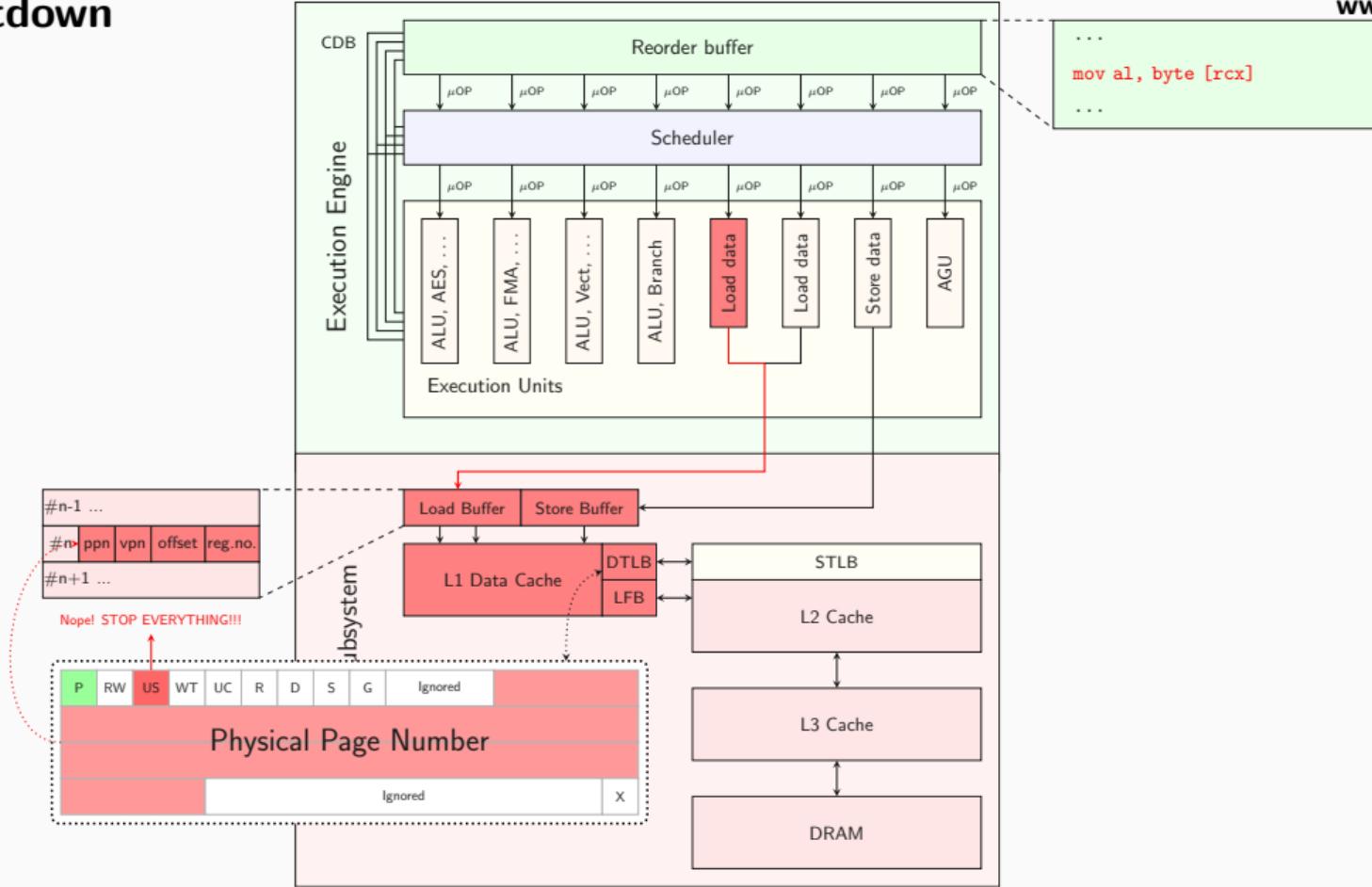


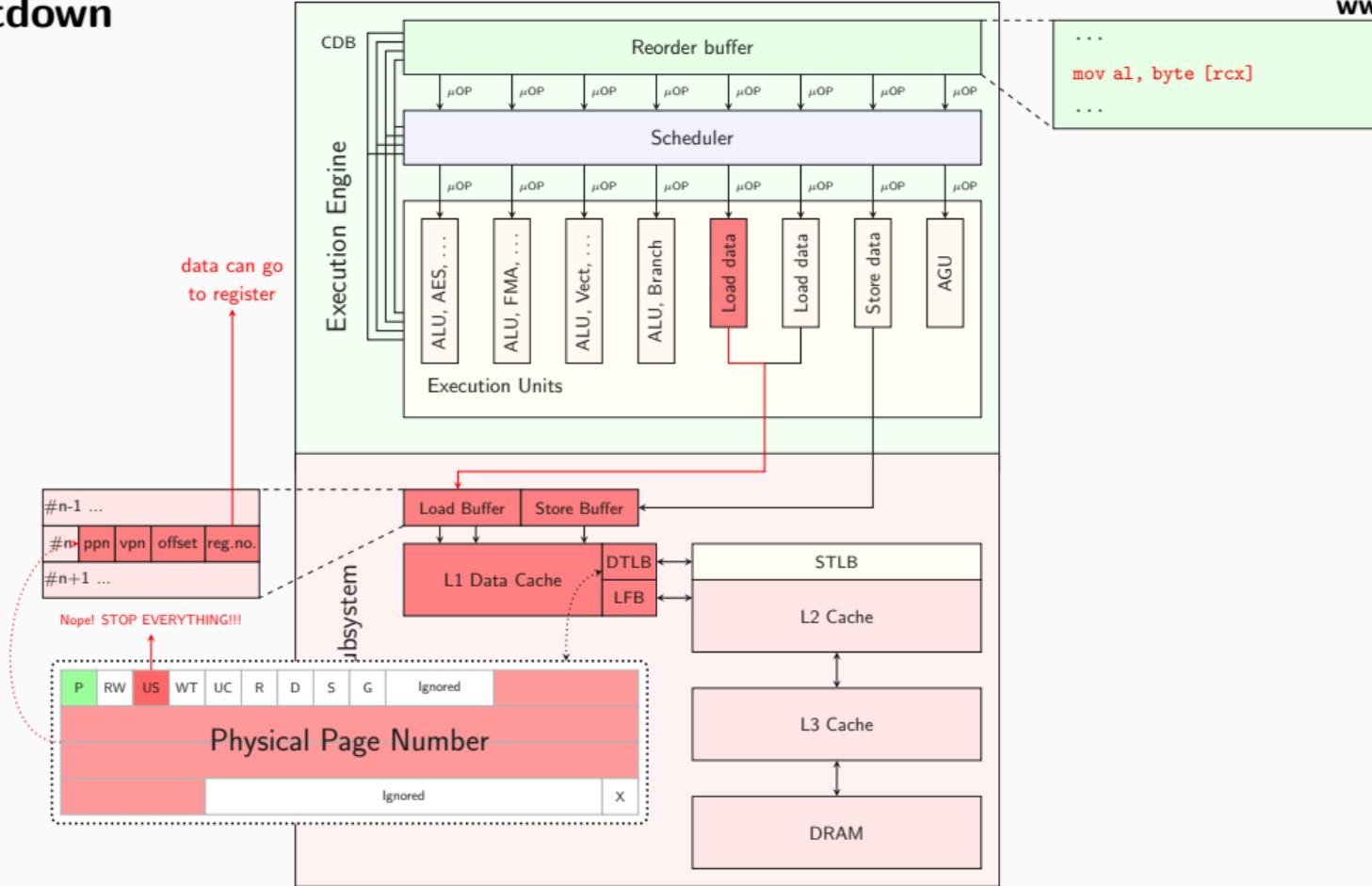


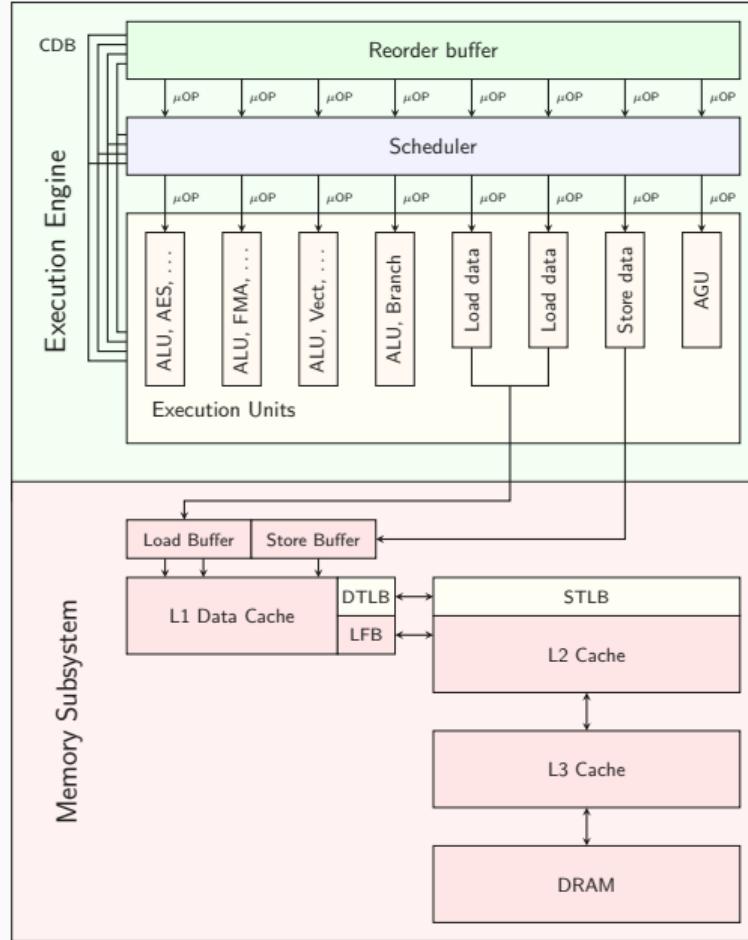


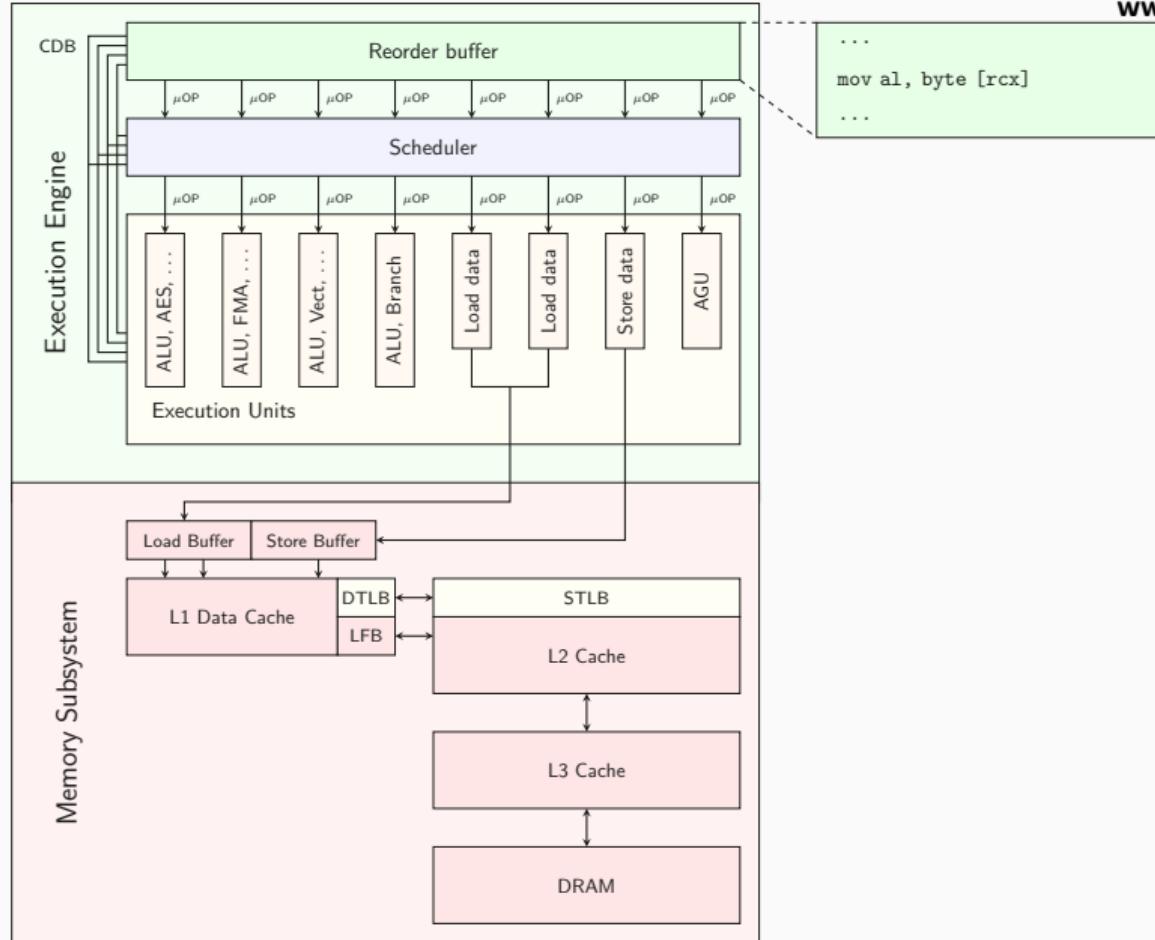


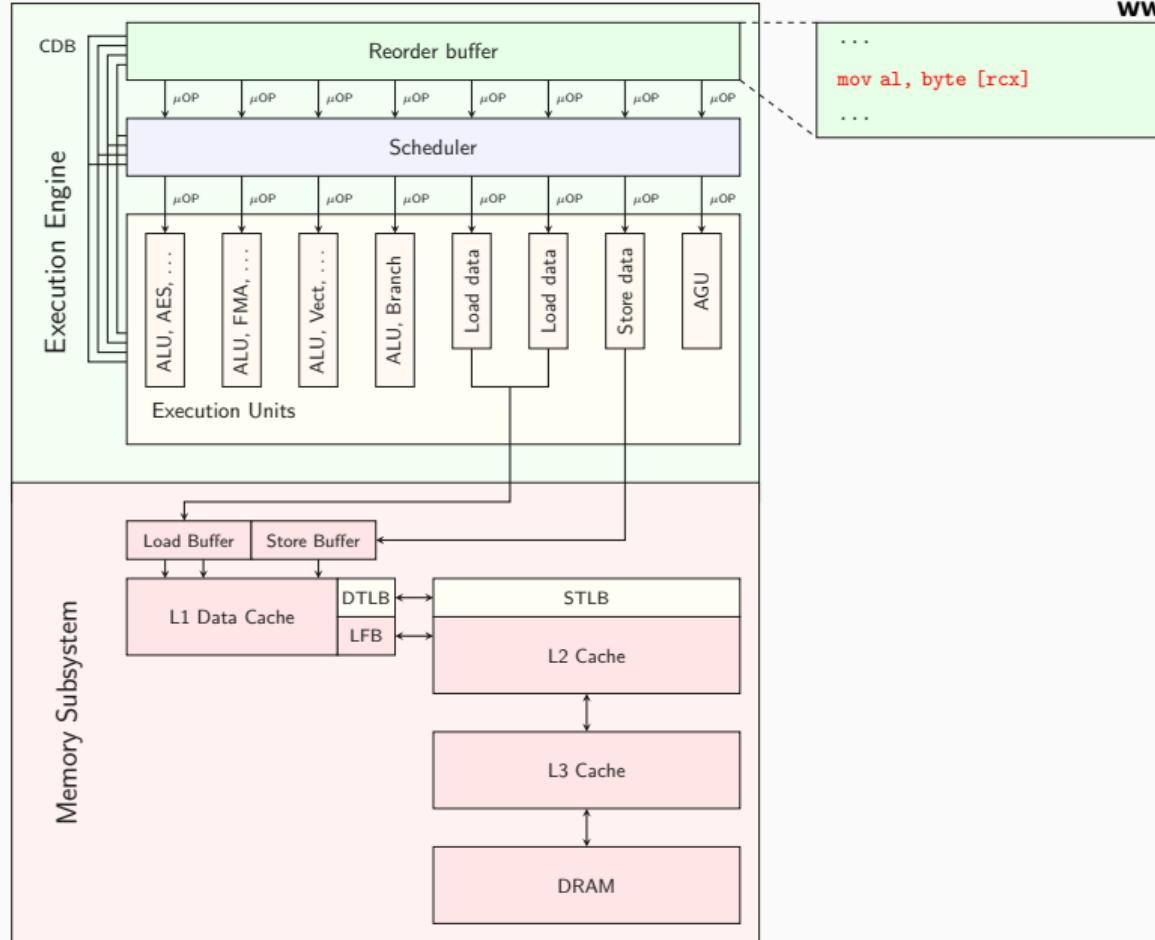


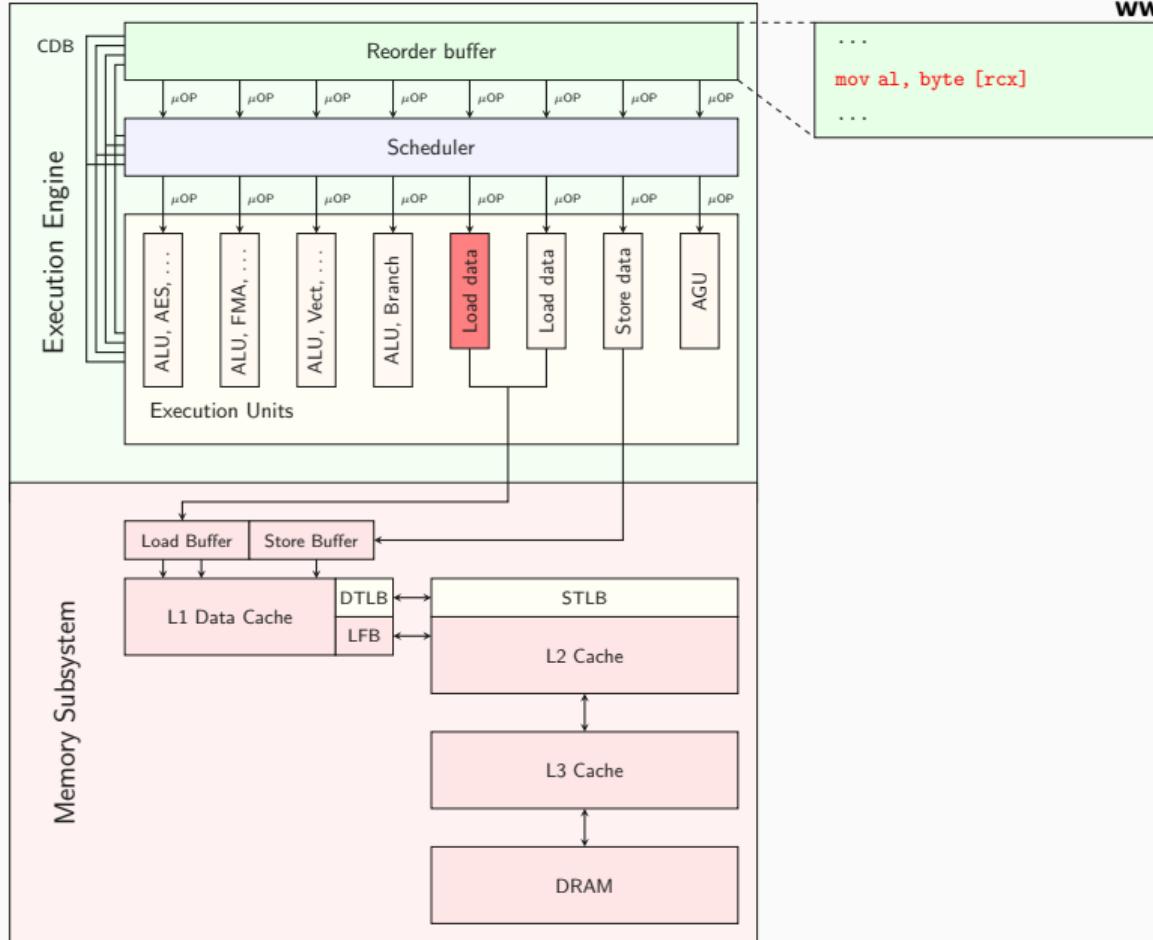


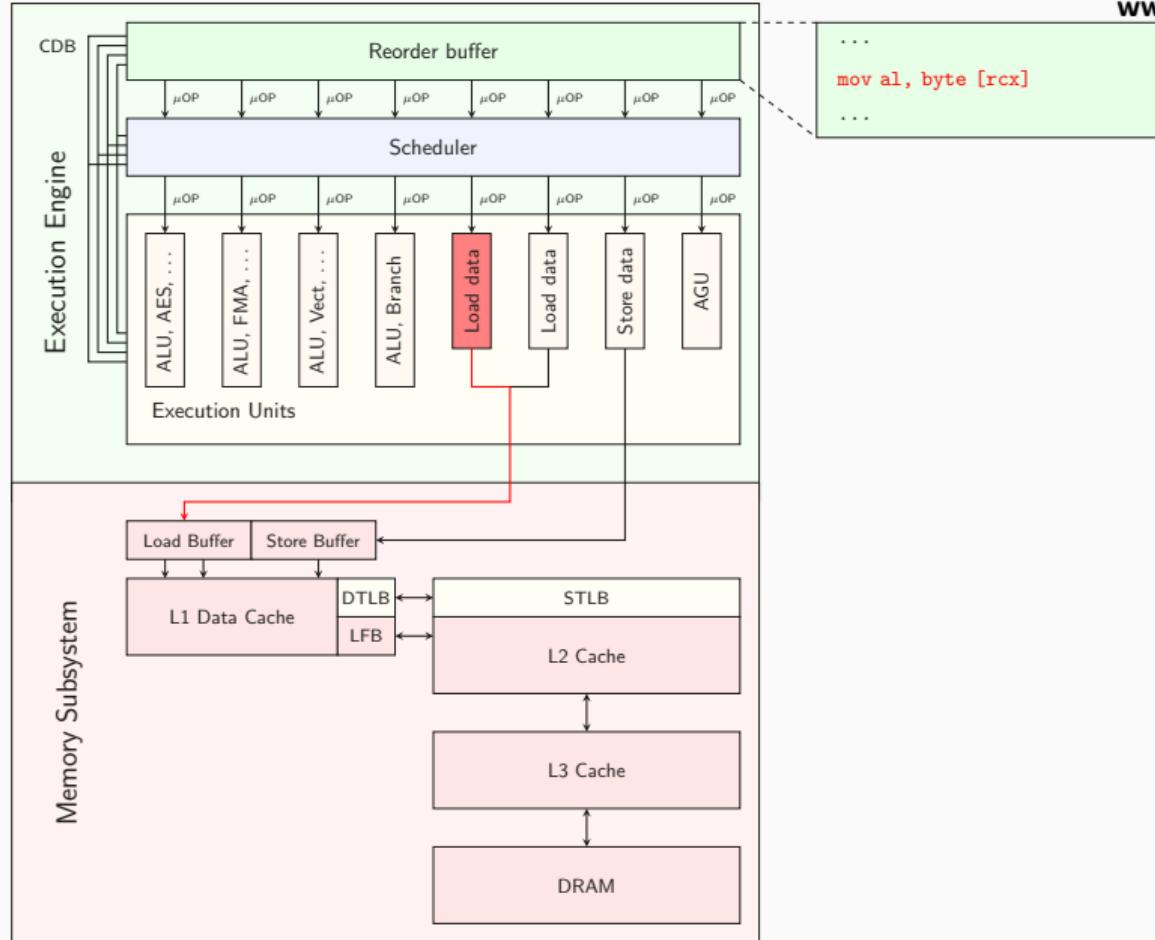


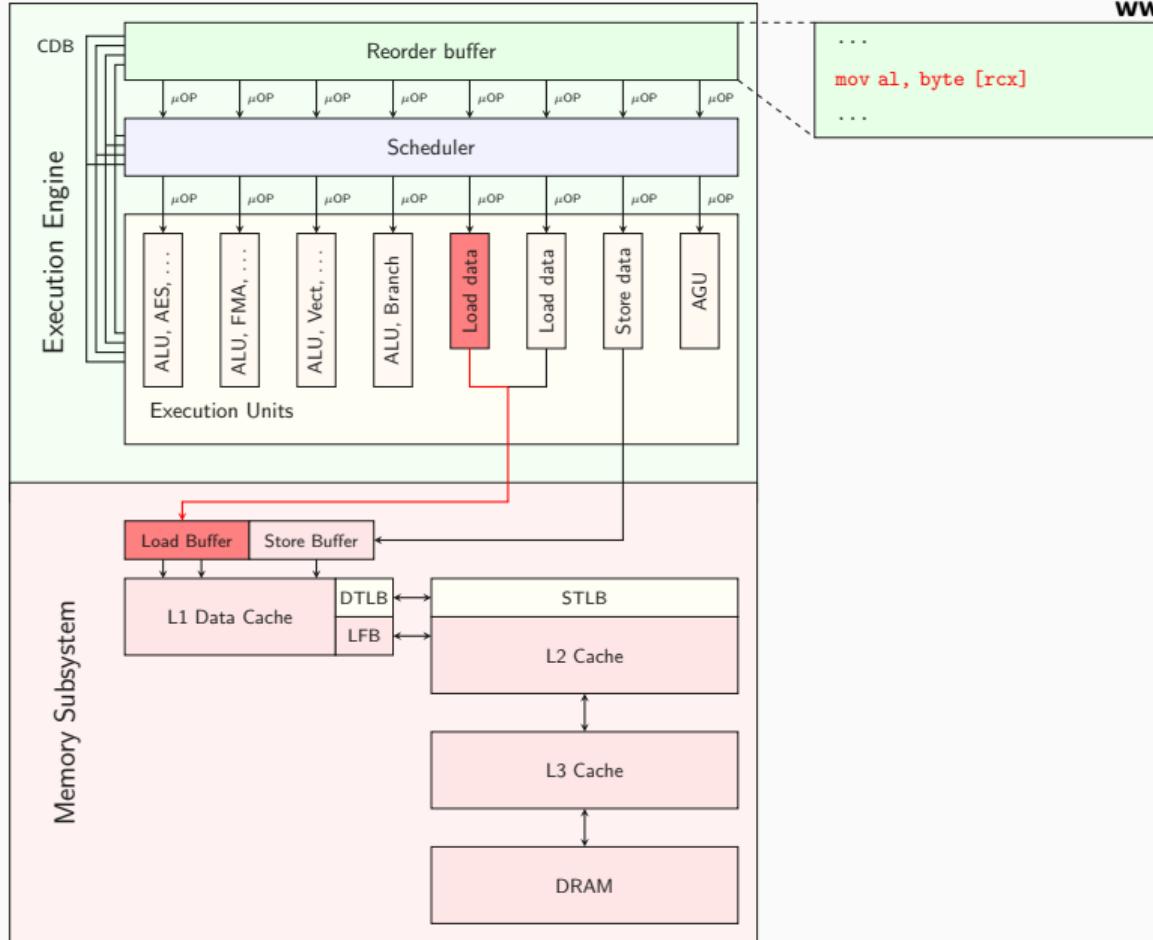


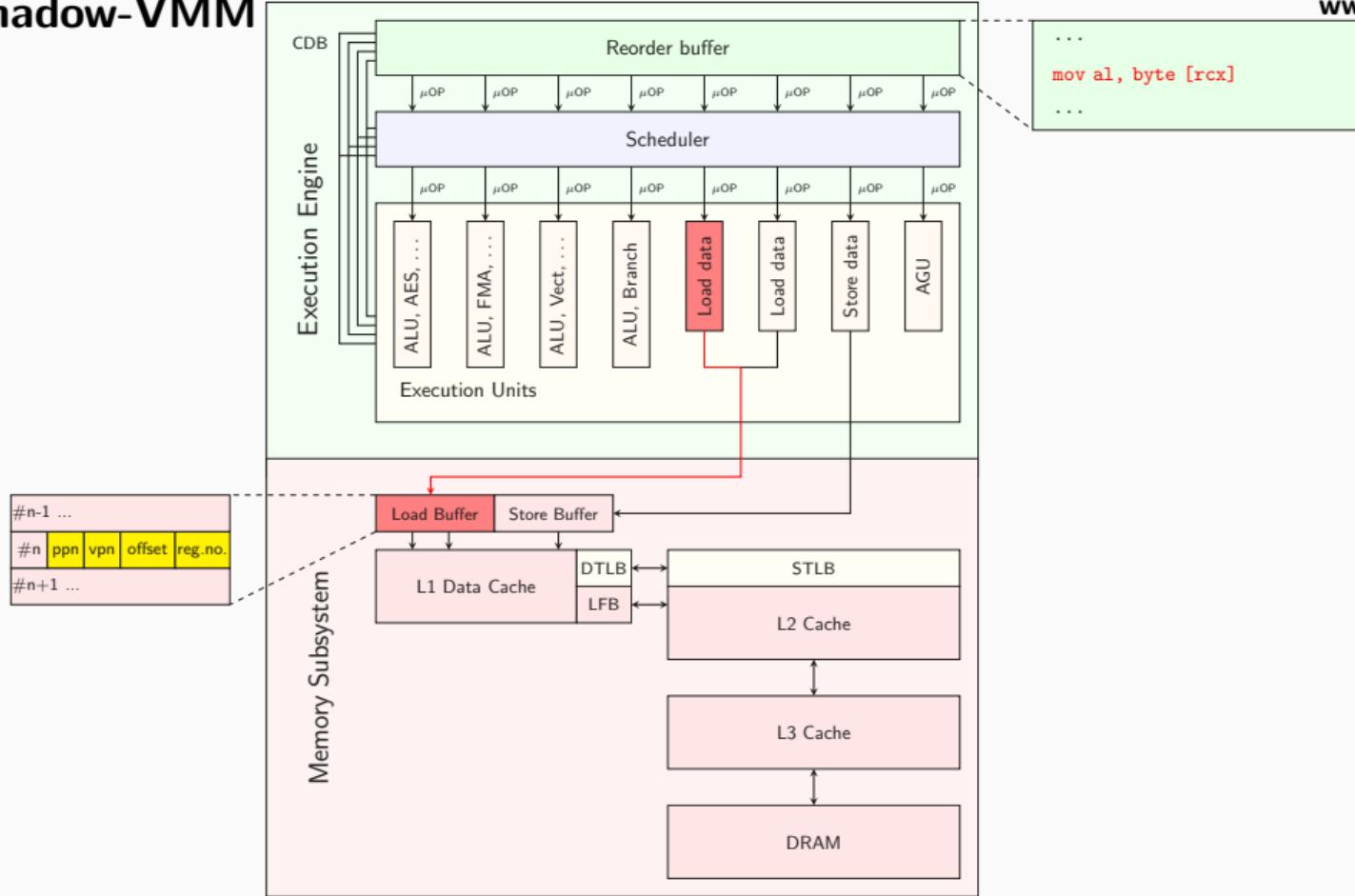


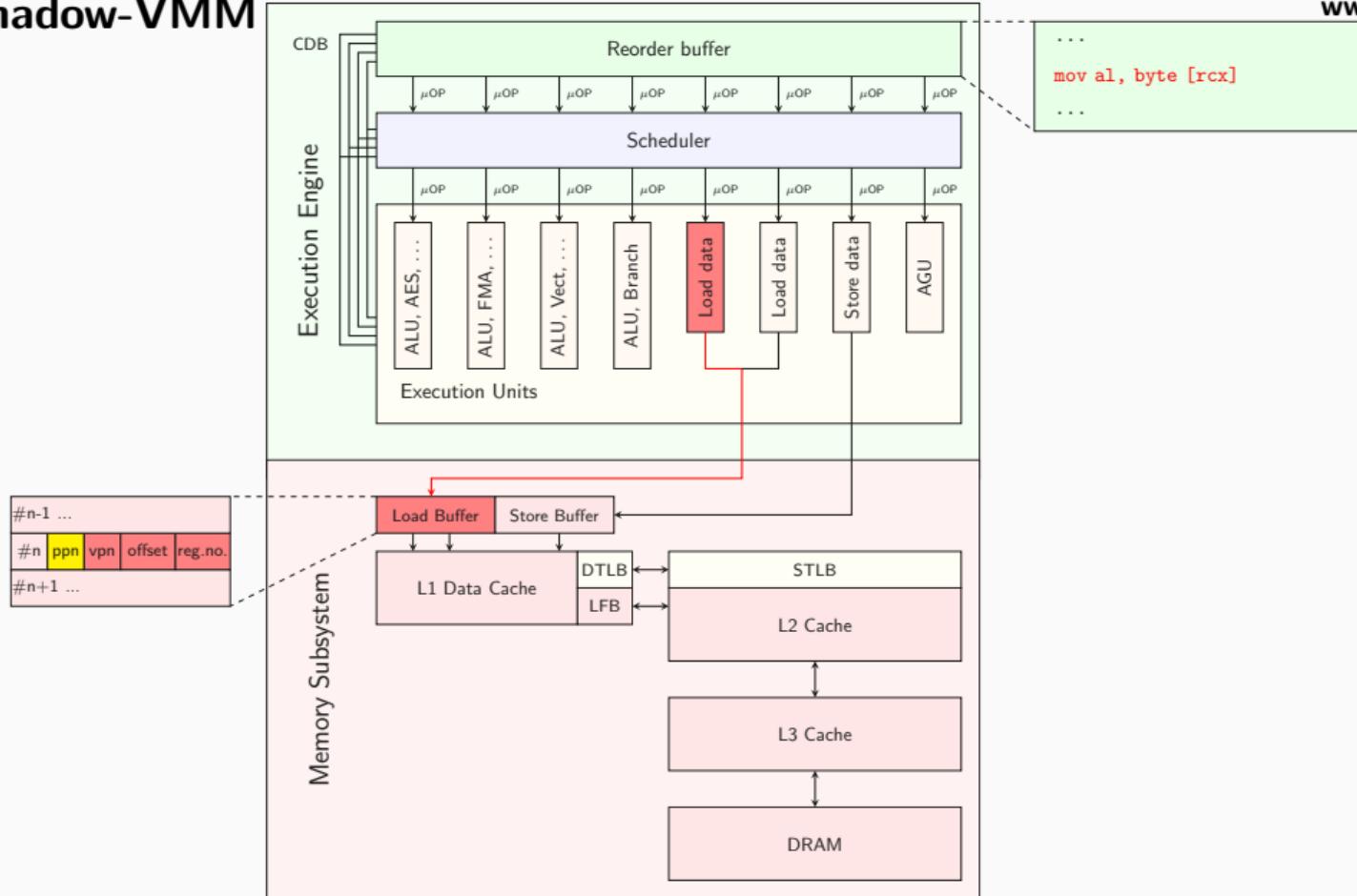


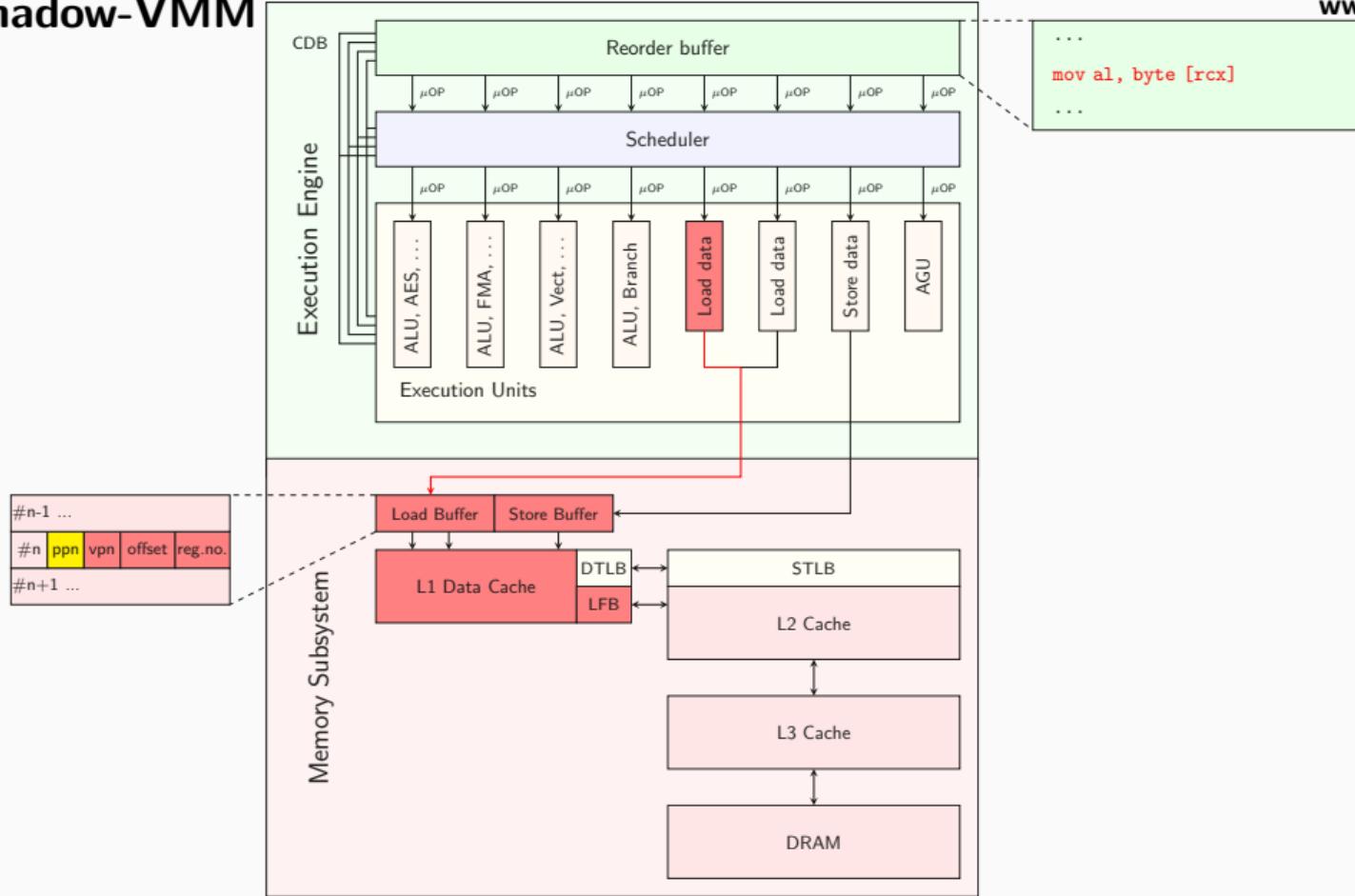


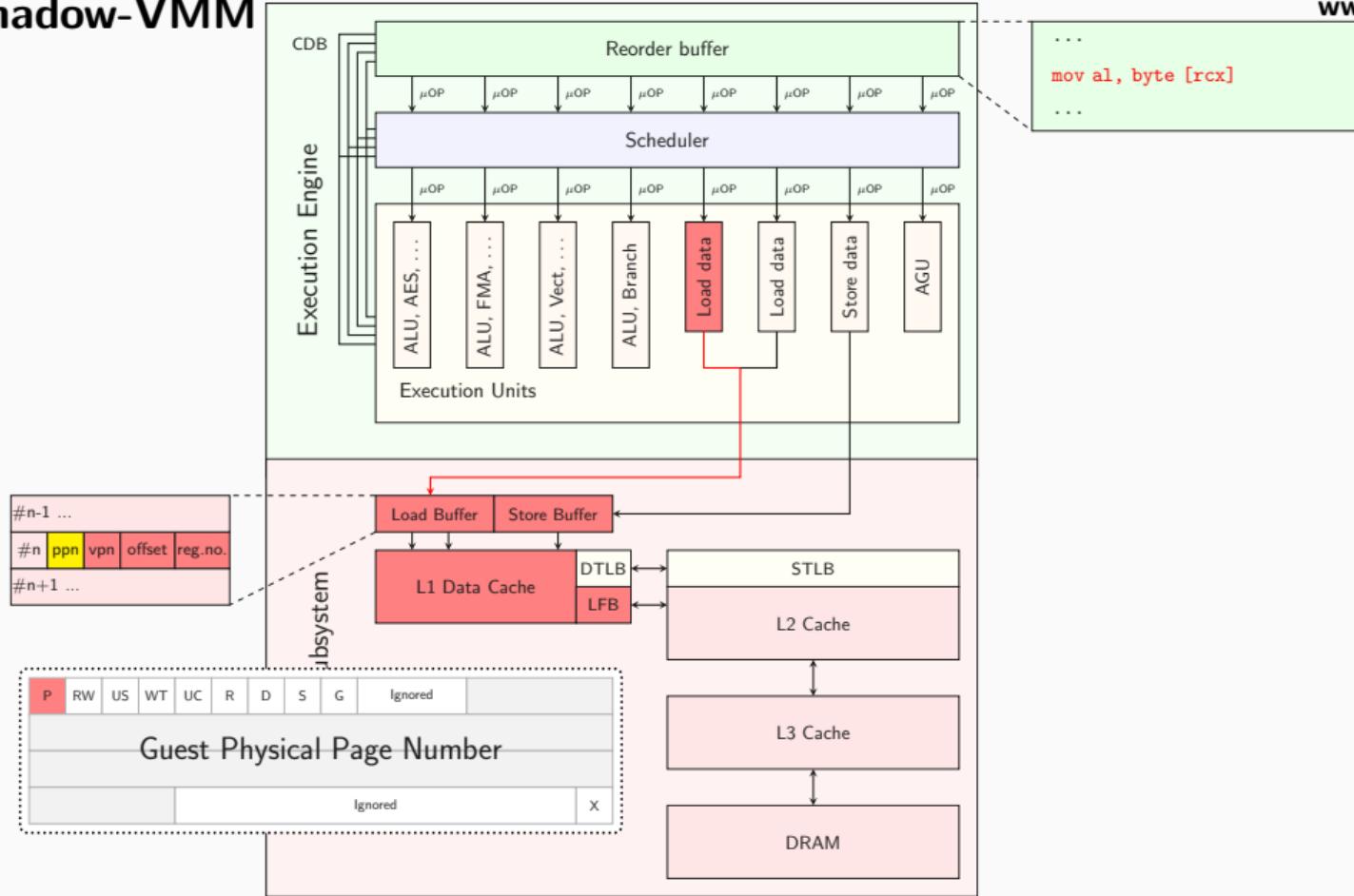


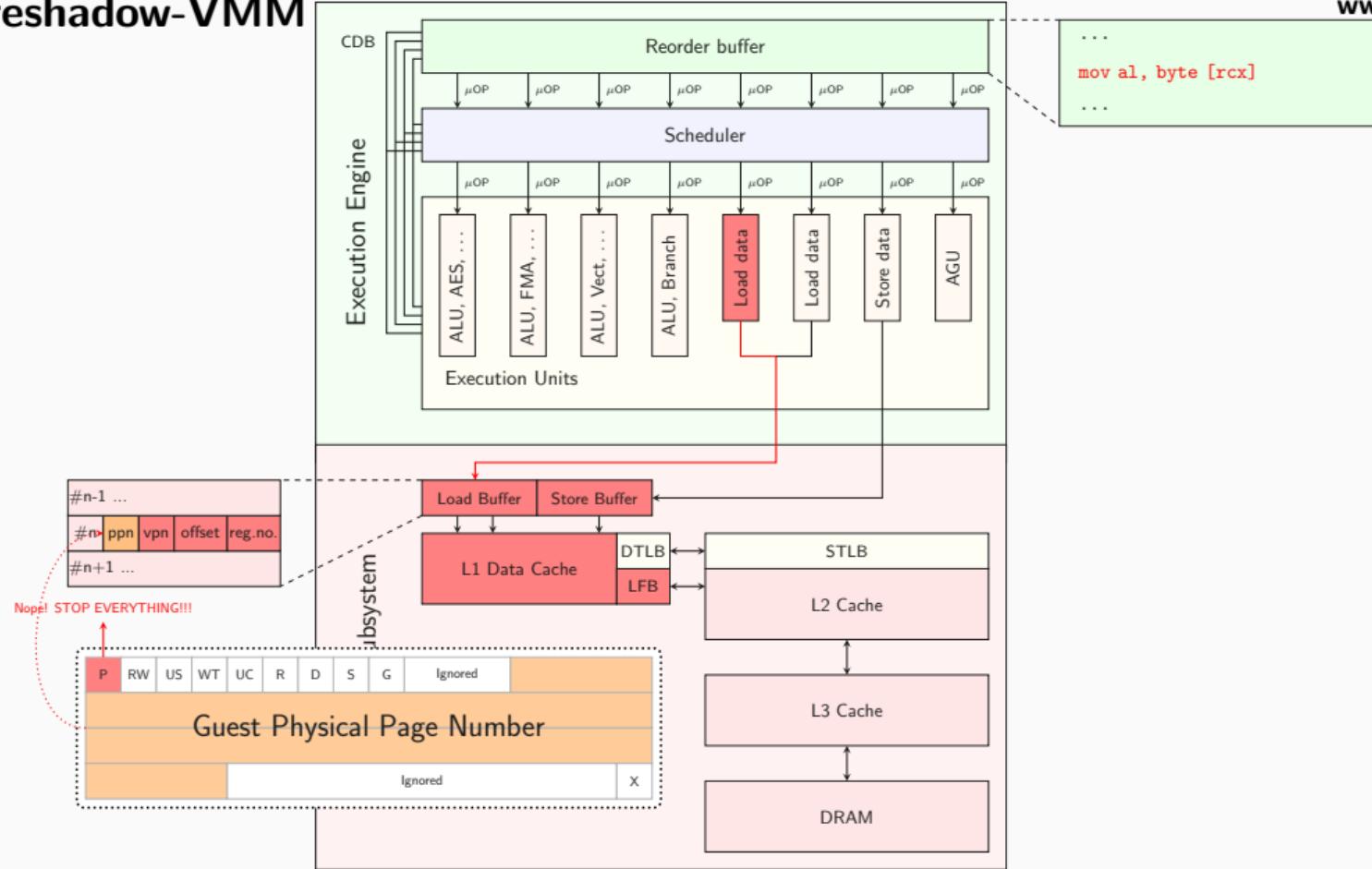


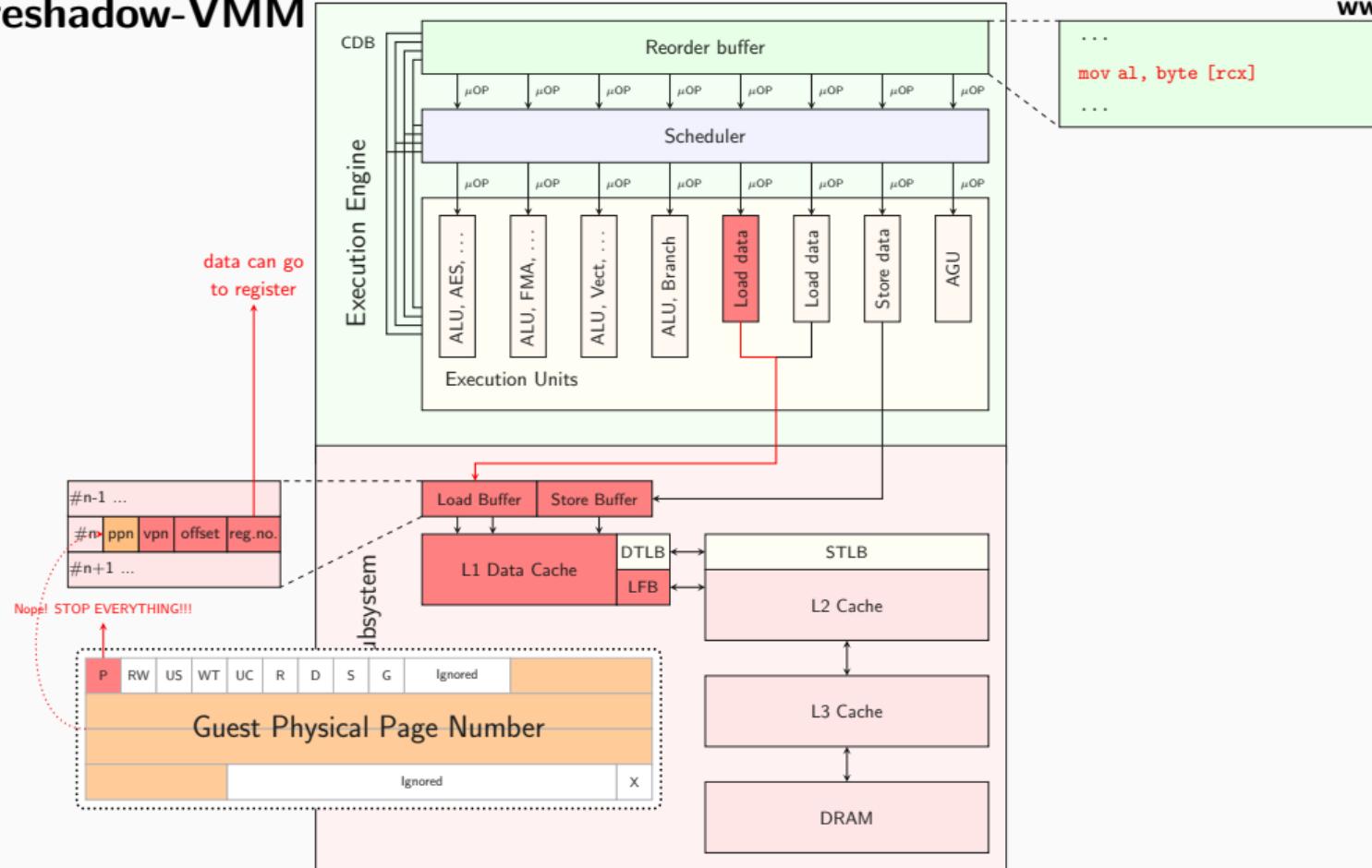


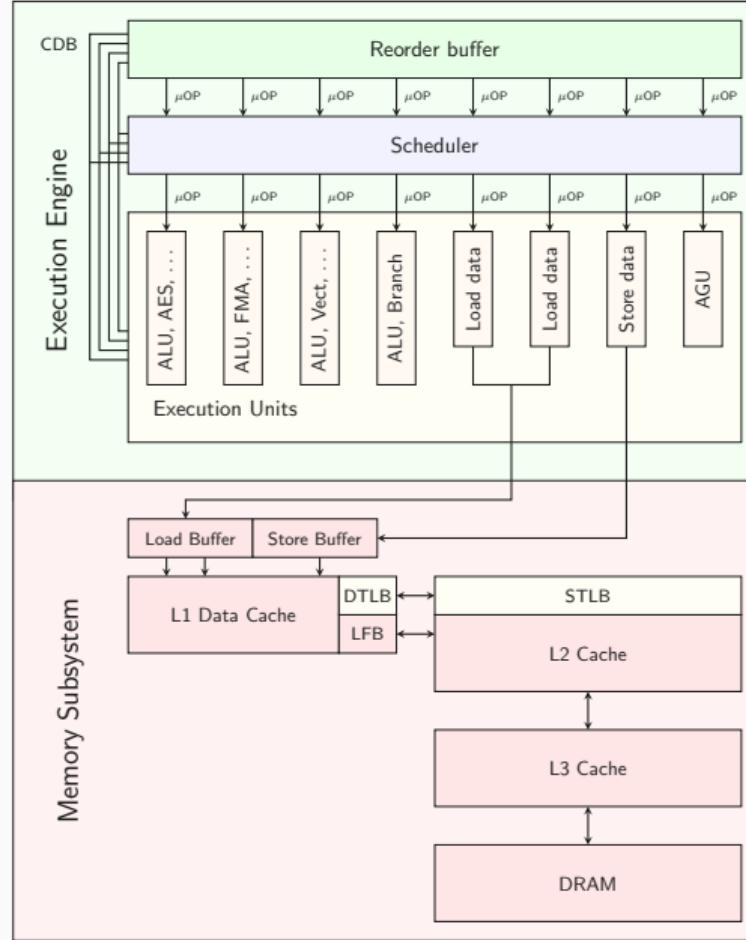


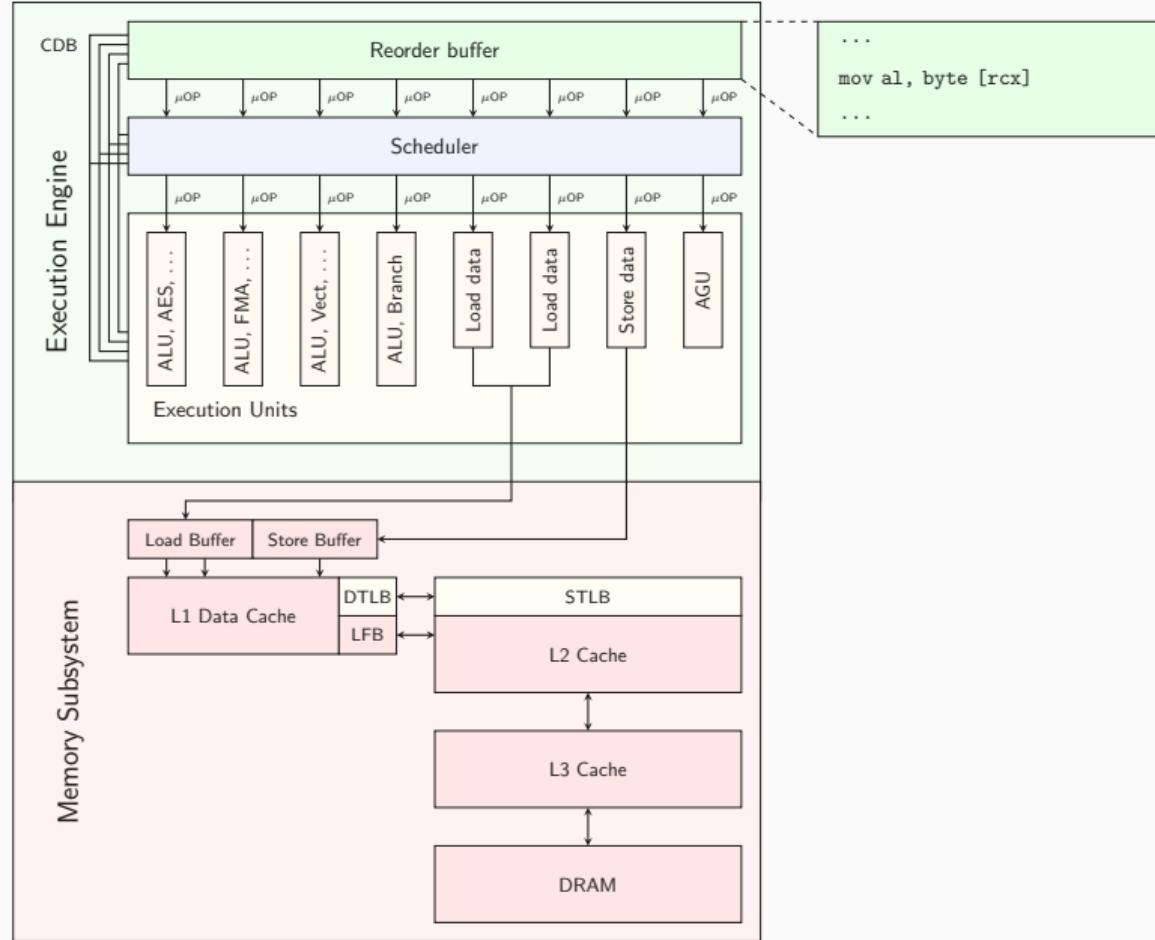


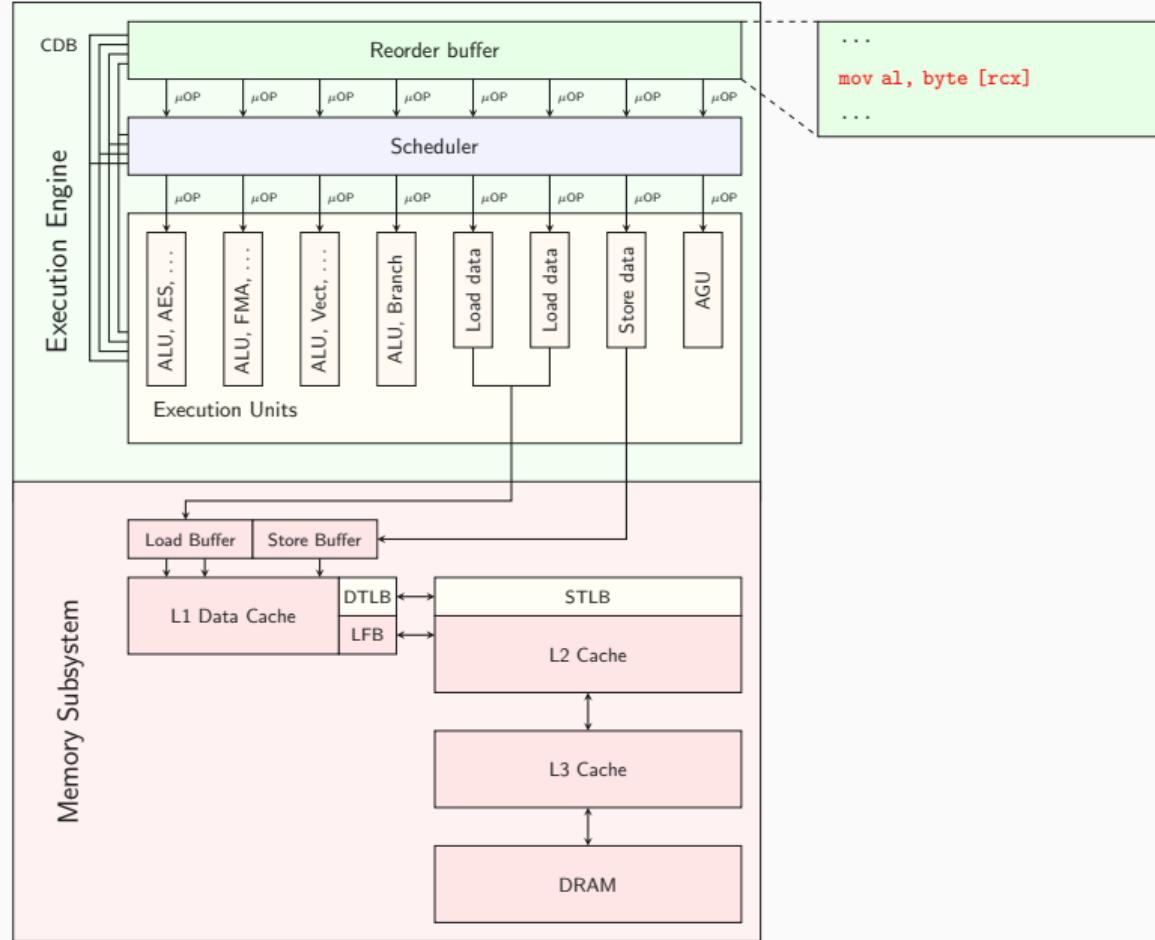


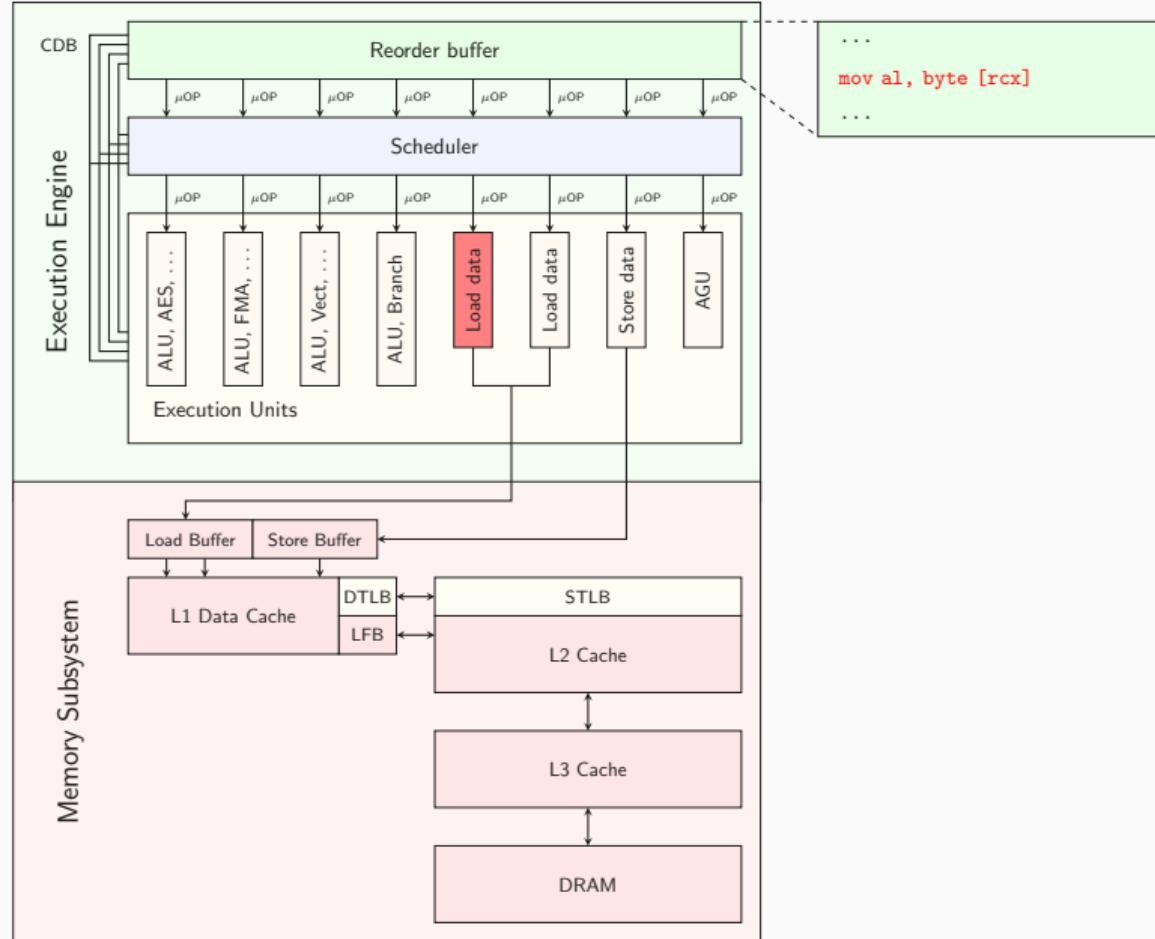


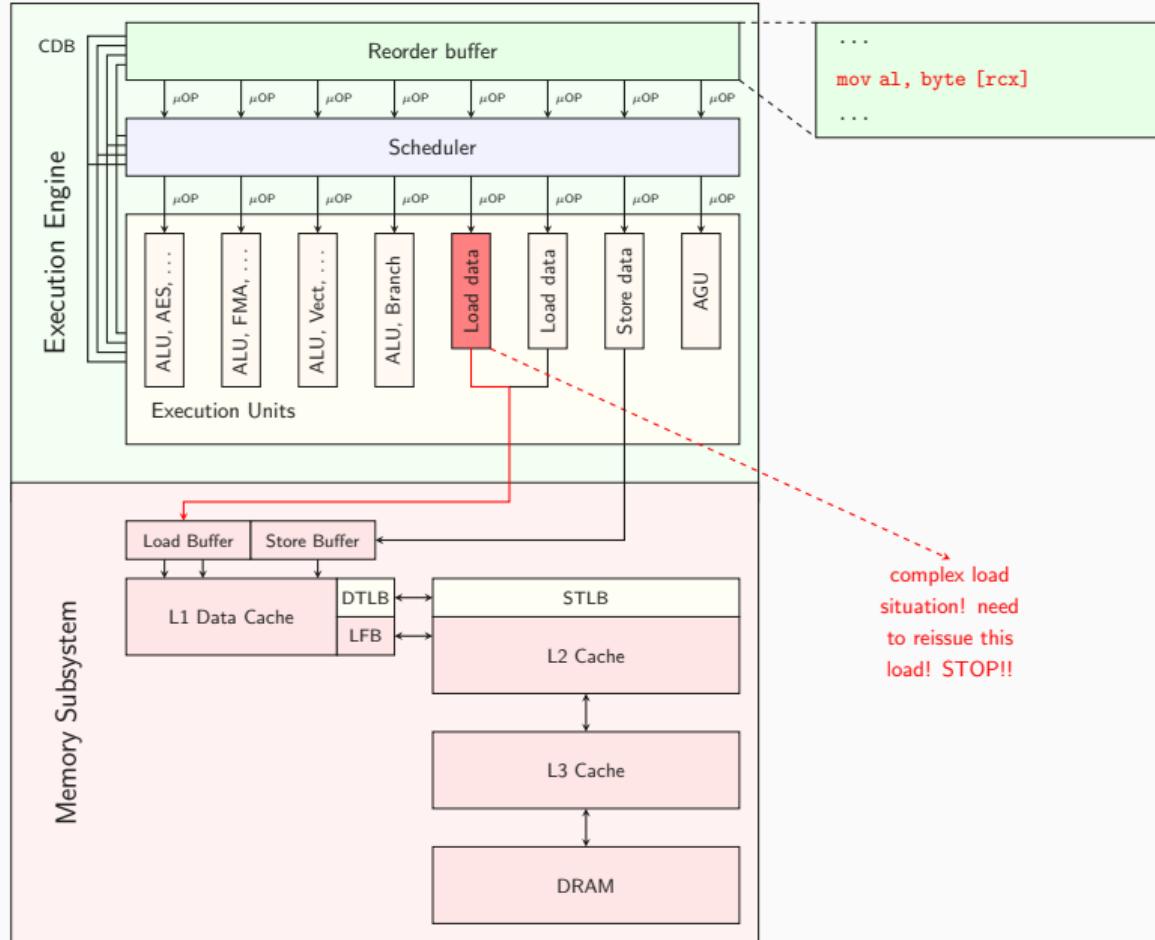


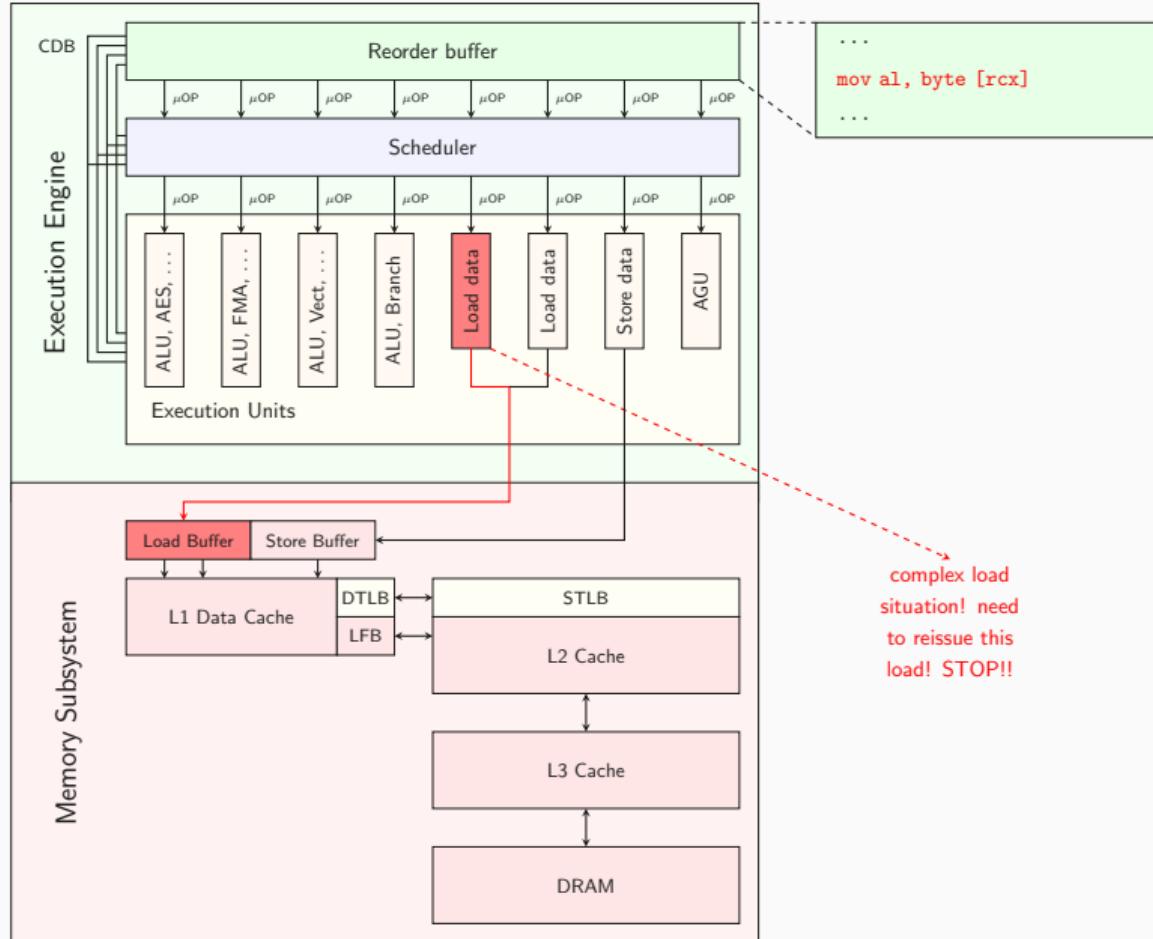


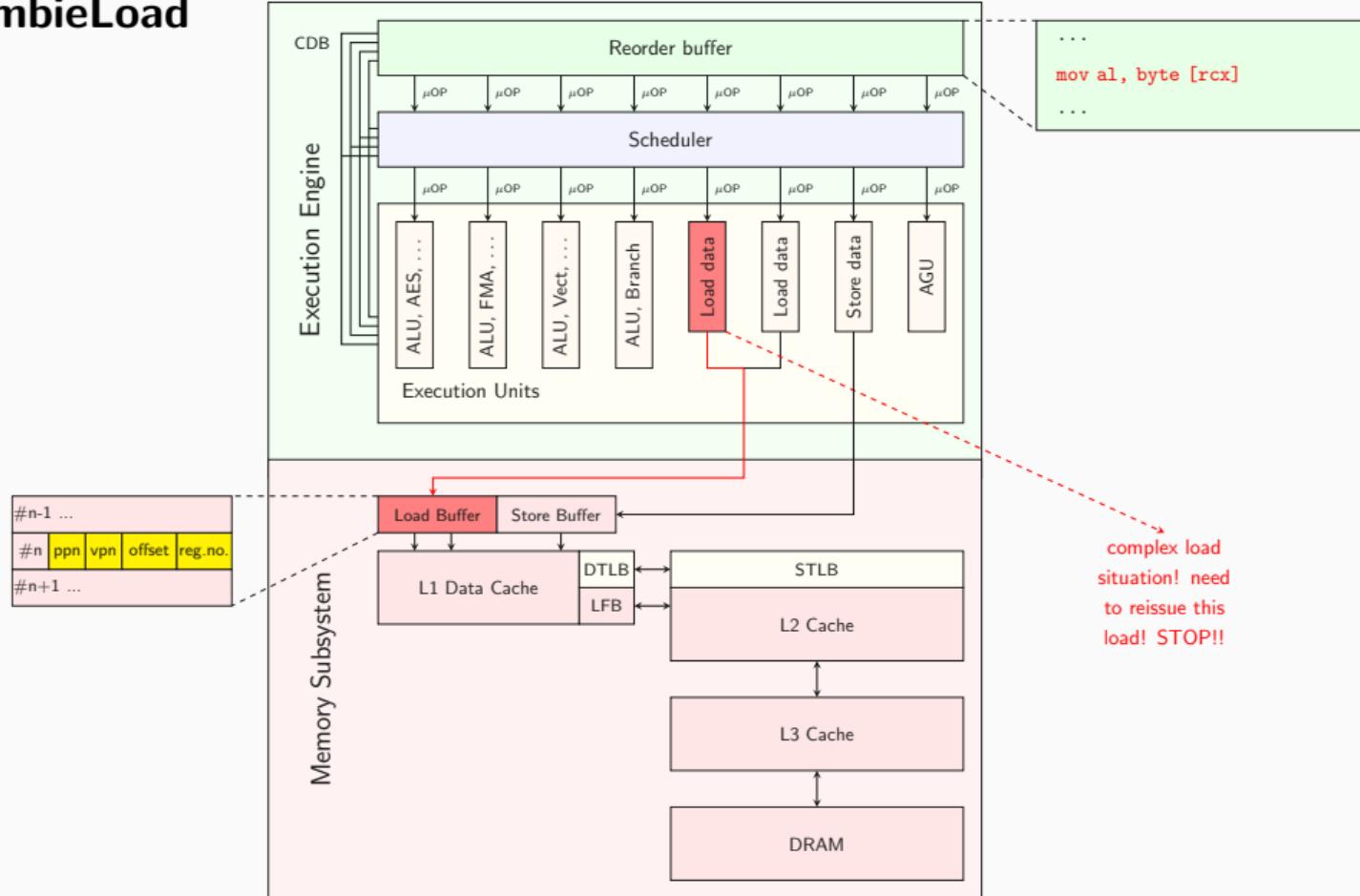


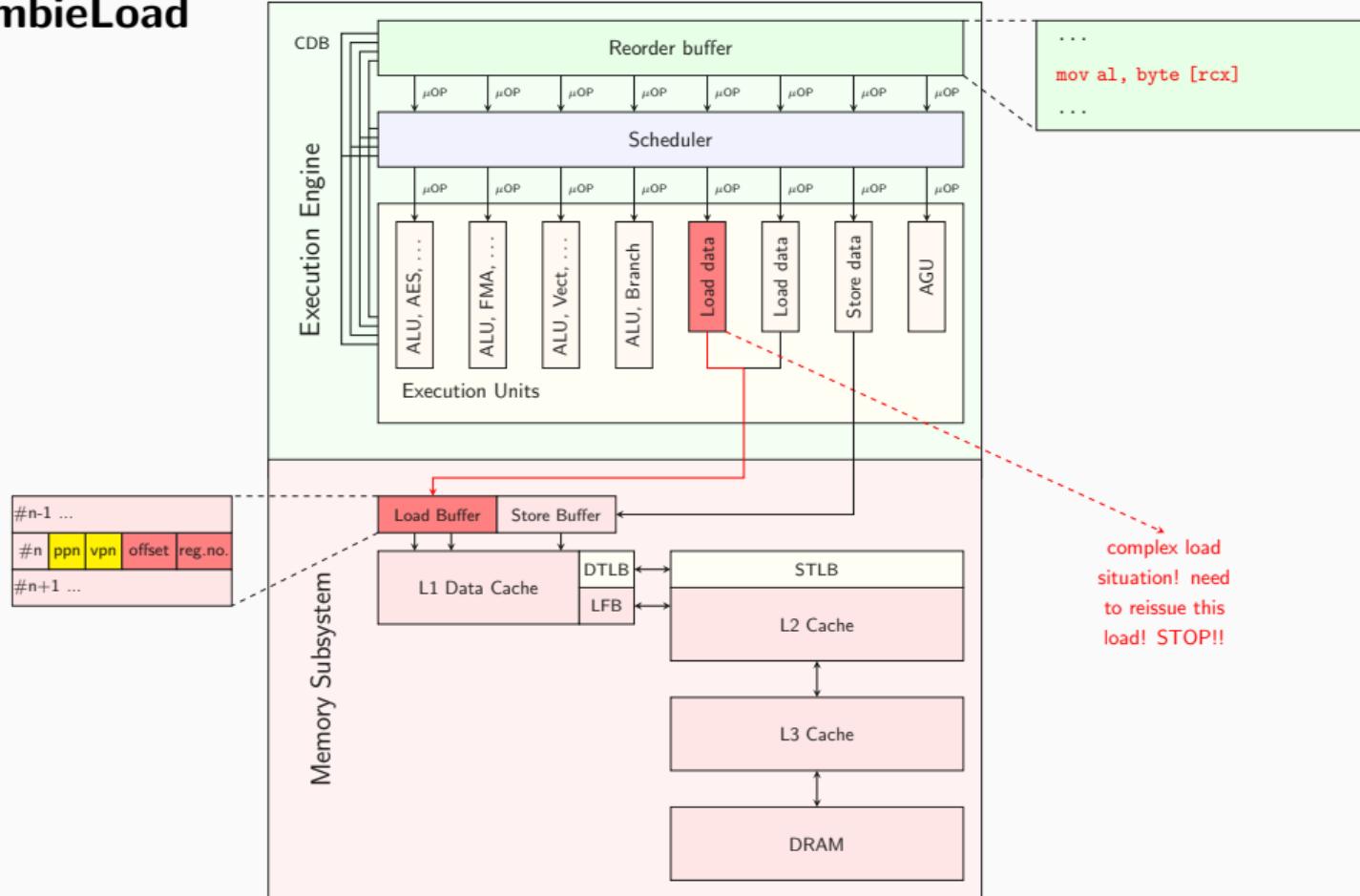


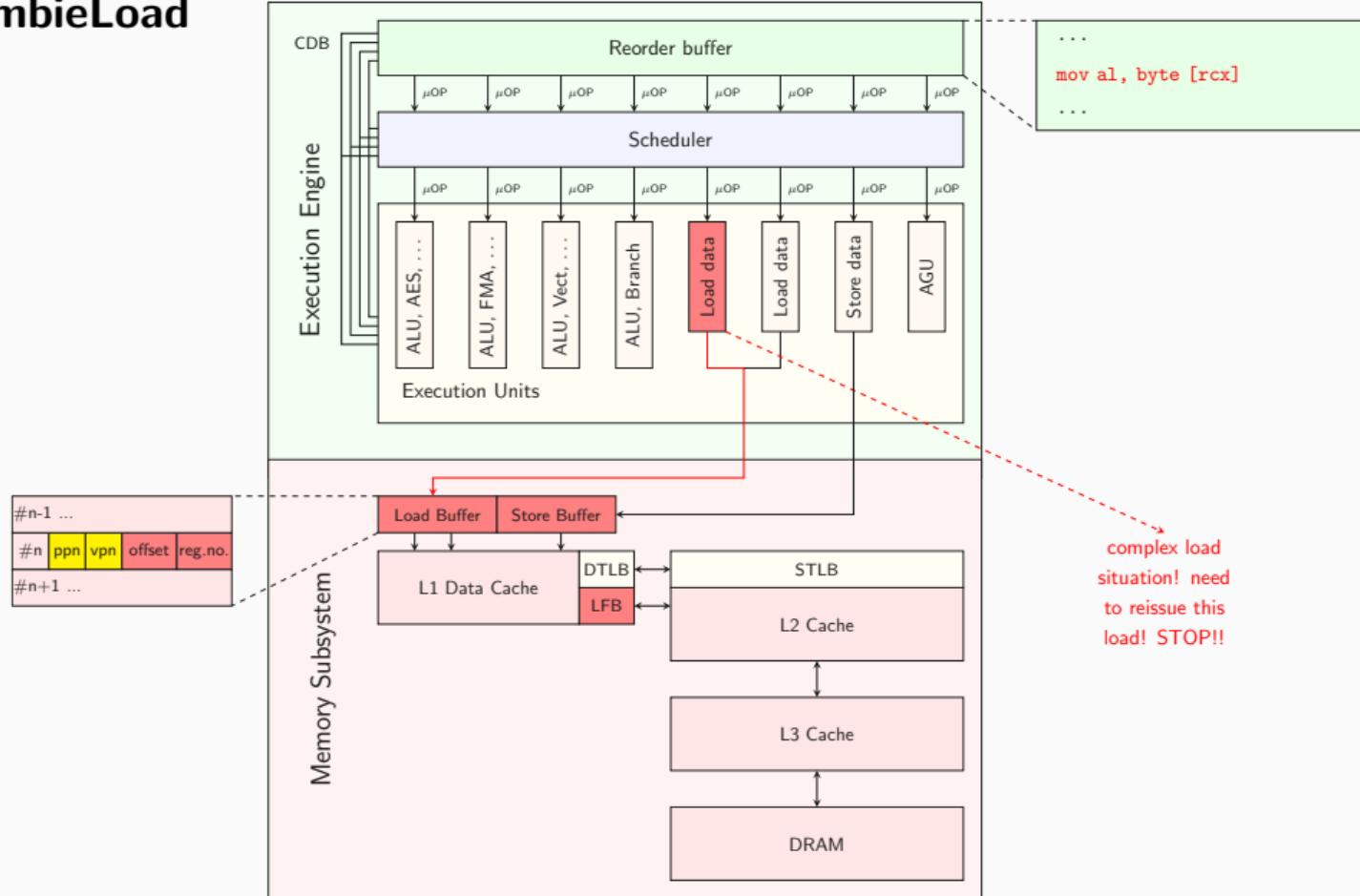


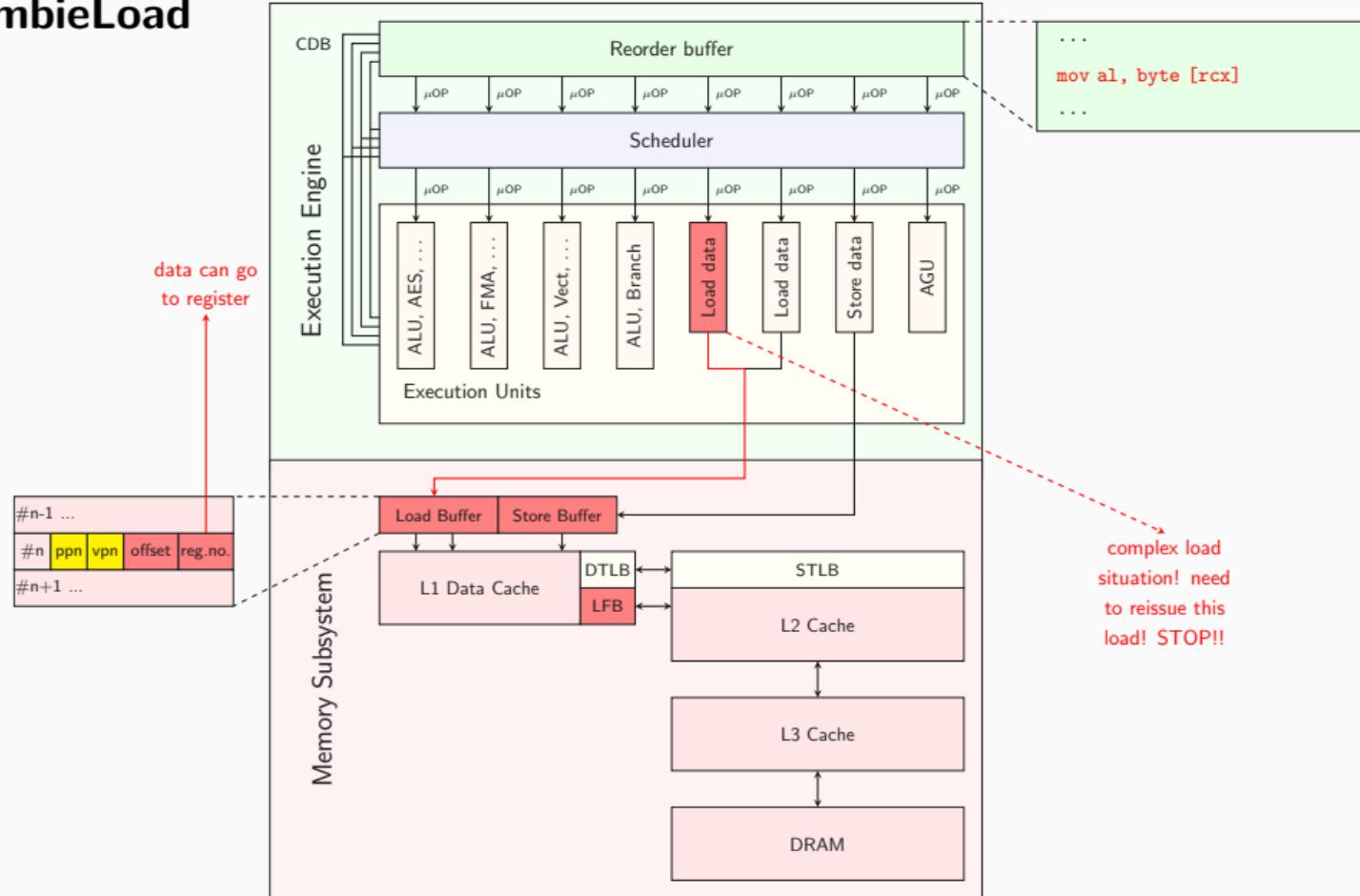














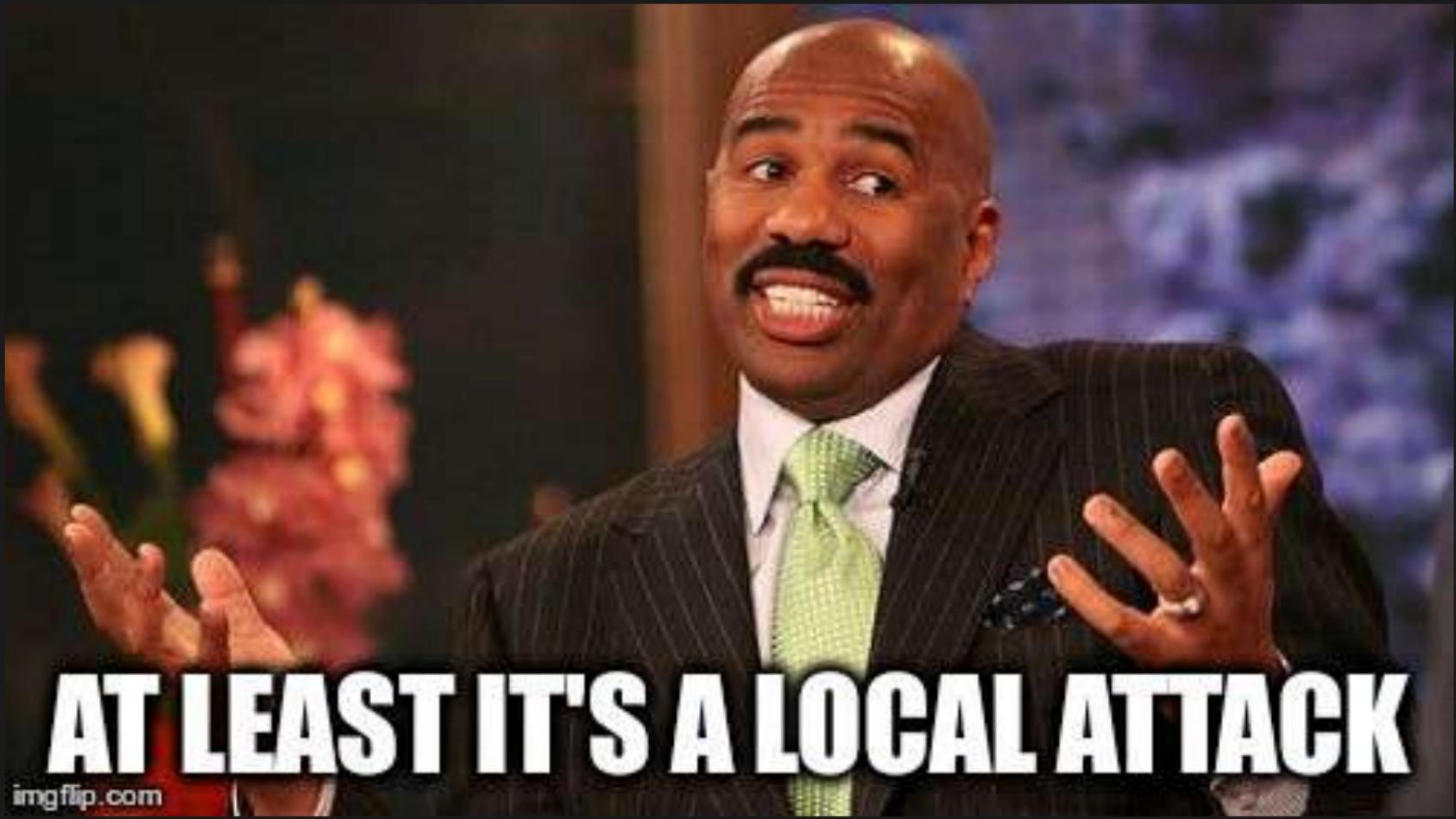
zombieLoad : zsh — Konsole <2>

File Edit View Bookmarks Settings Help

michael@hp /tmp/zombieLoad %



zombieLoad : zsh



AT LEAST IT'S A LOCAL ATTACK



Just a few examples:



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- Remote timing attacks on crypto ([Ber04; BB05] and many more)



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- ThrowHammer and NetHammer



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- NetSpectre

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 - Rowhammer → “only affects cheap sub-standard modules”
- for years we solely optimized for performance



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- ECC memory → fewer bit flips



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- it's an optimization problem
 - what if “too aggressive” changes over time?
 - difficult to optimize with an intelligent adversary



- new class of software-based attacks



- new class of software-based attacks
- many problems to solve around microarchitectural attacks and especially transient execution attacks



- new class of software-based attacks
- many problems to solve around microarchitectural attacks and especially transient execution attacks
- dedicate more time into identifying problems and not solely in mitigating known problems

Transient Execution Attacks

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