

# An introduction to formal symbolic models

for verifying security protocols

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# Verifying security protocols: a difficult task

- ▶ **testing** their resilience against well-known attacks is **not sufficient**;
- ▶ **manual** security analysis is **error-prone**.



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## Security

### Defects in e-passports allow real-time tracking

This threat brought to you by RFID [The register - Jan. 2010](#)

Lifestyle > Tech > News

### Contactless card theft: Users warned to watch out for 'digital pickpockets'

[Independent - Feb. 2016](#)



# A successful approach: formal symbolic verification

—→ provides a **rigorous** framework and **automatic tools** to analyse security protocols and find their **logical flaws**.



**ProVerif**



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Some examples of logical flaws:

- ▶ **2008:** Authentication flaw in the Single Sign-On protocol used e.g. in **GMail**  
→ **Armando *et al.*** using Avantssar



- ▶ **2010:** a flaw in the french implementation of the BAC protocol



→ **Chothia & Smirnov**

## Logical flaw on an example



$\text{aenc}(\text{sign}(k_{AB}, \text{prv}(A)), \text{pub}(B))$



Is the Denning Sacco protocol a good key exchange protocol?

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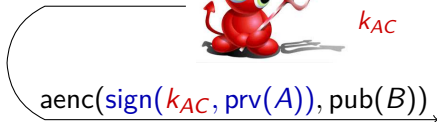
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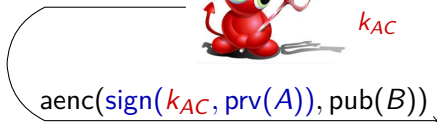


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$\text{aenc}(\text{sign}(k_{AC}, \text{prv}(A)), \text{pub}(B))$



A possible fix:  $\text{aenc}(\text{sign}(\langle B, k_{AB} \rangle, \text{prv}(A)), \text{pub}(B))$

# Two major families of models ...

... with some **advantages** and some **drawbacks**.

## Computational model

- ▶ + messages are bitstring, a general and powerful adversary
- ▶ - manual proofs, tedious and error-prone

## Symbolic model

- ▶ - abstract model, e.g. messages are terms
- ▶ + automatic proofs

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- ▶ + automatic proofs

Some results allowed to make a link between these two very different models.

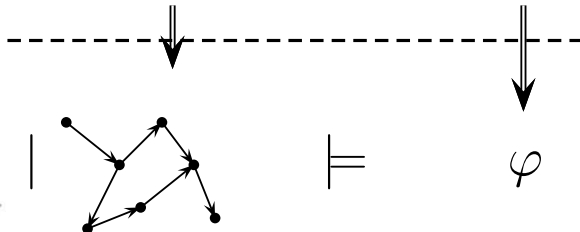
→ **Abadi & Rogaway 2000**



# Formal (symbolic) verification in a nutshell

Does the **protocol** satisfy a **security property**?

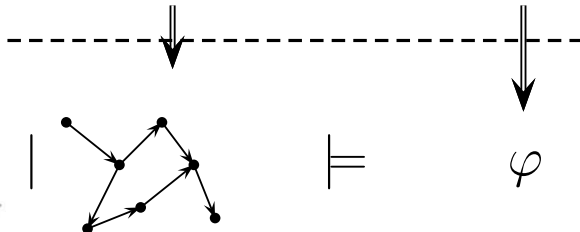
Modelling



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Does the **protocol** satisfy a **security property**?

Modelling



## Two main tasks

1. Modelling protocols, security properties, and the attacker
2. Designing verification algorithms and tools

## Modelling protocols, security properties and the attacker

# Symbolic models in a nutshell

Some well-known existing models:

- ▶ strand spaces [Guttman *et al.*, 99 ],
- ▶ Multiset Rewriting [Durgin *et al.*, 99] - Tamarin tool
- ▶ spi-calculus [Abadi & Gordon, 97],
- ▶ applied-pi calculus [Abadi & Fournet, 01] - ProVerif tool



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They share some common ingredients:

- ▶ messages are abstracted by terms (perfect cryptography)
- ▶ the Dolev-Yao attacker who controls the entire network
- ▶ language with constructs for concurrency and communication

## Messages as first-order terms

Terms are built over a set of **names**  $\mathcal{N}$ , and a **signature**  $\mathcal{F}$ .

$t$	::=	$n$	name $n$
		$f(t_1, \dots, t_k)$	application of symbol $f \in \mathcal{F}$

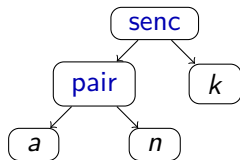
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**Example:** representation of  $\{a, n\}_k$

- ▶ Names:  $n, k, a$
- ▶ constructors: `senc`, `pair`,



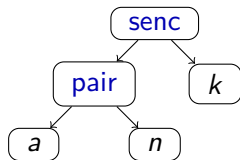
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- ▶ Names:  $n, k, a$
- ▶ constructors: **senc**, **pair**,
- ▶ destructors: **sdec**, **proj<sub>1</sub>**, **proj<sub>2</sub>**.



The term algebra is equipped with an **equational theory**  $E$ .

$$\begin{array}{ll} \text{sdec}(\text{senc}(x, y), y) = x & \text{proj}_1(\text{pair}(x, y)) = x \\ & \text{proj}_2(\text{pair}(x, y)) = y \end{array}$$

**Example:**  $\text{proj}_1(\text{sdec}(\text{senc}(\langle a, n \rangle, k), k)) =_E a$ .

# Protocols as processes

→ the applied pi calculus [Abadi & Fournet, 2001]

$P, Q$	$:=$	$0$	null process
		$\text{in}(c, x).P$	input
		$\text{out}(c, u).P$	output
		$\text{if } u = v \text{ then } P \text{ else } Q$	conditional
		$P \mid Q$	parallel composition
		$!P$	replication
		$\text{new } n.P$	fresh name generation

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Semantics →:

COMM	$\text{out}(c, u).P \mid \text{in}(c, x).Q \rightarrow P \mid Q\{u/x\}$
THEN	$\text{if } u = v \text{ then } P \text{ else } Q \rightarrow P \text{ when } u =_E v$
ELSE	$\text{if } u = v \text{ then } P \text{ else } Q \rightarrow Q \text{ when } u \neq_E v$
REPL	$!P \rightarrow P \mid !P$

## Going back to the Denning Sacco protocol (1/3)

$A \rightarrow B$  :  $\text{aenc}(\text{sign}(k, \text{prv}(A)), \text{pub}(B))$

$B \rightarrow A$  :  $\text{senc}(s, k)$

What symbols and equations do we need to model this protocol?

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3. signature: **ok**, **sign**, **check**, **getmsg**, and **pk**

$$\text{check}(\text{sign}(x, y), \text{pk}(y)) = \text{ok} \text{ and } \text{getmsg}(\text{sign}(x, y)) = x$$

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Alice and Bob as processes:

$P_A(sk_a, pk_b) = \text{new } k.$   
     $\text{out}(c, \text{aenc}(\text{sign}(k, sk_a), pk_b)).$   
     $\text{in}(c, x_a). \dots$

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$P_B(sk_b, pk_a) = \text{in}(c, x_b).$

if  $\text{check}(\text{adec}(x_b, sk_b), pk_a) = \text{ok}$  then

$\text{new } s.$

$\text{out}(c, \text{senc}(s, \text{getmsg}(\text{adec}(x_b, sk_b))))$

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$P_{DS} = \text{new } sk_a, sk_b. (P_A(sk_a, pk(sk_b)) \mid P_B(sk_b, pk(sk_a)))$

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this represents a **normal execution** between two **honest** participants

# Trace-based security properties

## Confidentiality (as non-deducibility)

For **all processes**  $A$ , for all execution  $A \mid P \rightarrow^* Q$ ,  
we have that  $Q$  is not of the form  
 $\text{new } \tilde{n}.(\text{out}(c, s).Q' \mid Q'')$  with  $c$  public.



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## Authentication (as a correspondence property)

1. add events of the form  $\text{endB}(\dots)$  or  $\text{beginA}(\dots)$  in processes
2. write a query:

$$\forall x_B, x_A, x_K. \text{endB}(x_B, x_A, x_K) \Rightarrow \text{beginA}(x_A, x_B, x_K).$$

For **all processes**  $A$ , for all execution  $A \mid P \rightarrow^* Q$  that goes through the event  $\text{endB}(b, a, k)$ , the event  $\text{beginA}(a, b, k)$  has been executed before.

# Equivalence-based security properties

## Vote privacy

the fact that a particular voter voted in a particular way is not revealed to anyone

$$V_A(\text{yes}) \mid V_B(\text{no}) \stackrel{?}{\approx} V_A(\text{no}) \mid V_B(\text{yes})$$



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## Unlinkability

the fact that a user may make multiple uses of a service or a resource without others being able to link these uses together.

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## Testing equivalence $P \approx Q$

$$P \approx Q \quad \text{iff} \quad (P \mid A) \downarrow_c \Leftrightarrow (Q \mid A) \downarrow_c \quad \text{for any process } A$$

where  $R \downarrow_c$  means that  $R$  can evolve and emits on public channel  $c$ .

# Designing verification algorithms and tools



# State of the art in a nutshell

## for analysing confidentiality/authentication properties

### Unbounded number of sessions

- ▶ undecidable in general [Even & Goldreich, 83; Durgin *et al.*, 99]
- ▶ decidable for restricted classes [Lowe, 99]  
[Rammanujam & Suresh, 03] [D'Oswaldo *et al.*, 17]

→ tools: ProVerif, Tamarin, Maude-NPA, ...

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### Bounded number of sessions

- ▶ a **decidability** result (NP-complete)  
[Rusinowitch & Turuani, 01; Millen & Shmatikov, 01]

→ tools: AVANTSSAR platform, ...

ProVerif is a verifier for cryptographic protocols that may **prove** that a protocol is secure or **exhibit attacks**.

`http://proverif.inria.fr`

## Advantages

- ▶ fully automatic, and quite efficient
- ▶ a rich process algebra: replication, else branches, . . .
- ▶ handles many cryptographic primitives
- ▶ various security properties: secrecy, correspondences, equivalences

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## No miracle

- ▶ the tool can say “can not be proved”;
- ▶ termination is not guaranteed

# ProVerif

ProVerif implements a **resolution strategy** well-adapted to protocols.

Approximation of the translation in Horn clauses:

- ▶ the **freshness** of nonces is partially modeled;
- ▶ the **number of times** a message appears is ignored, only the fact that it has appeared is taken into account;
- ▶ the **state** of the principals is not fully modeled.

→ These approximations are keys for an **efficient** verification.

## Experimental results

→ ProVerif works well in practice.

Protocol	Result	ms
Needham-Schroeder shared key	Attack	52
Needham-Schroeder shared key corrected	Secure	109
Denning-Sacco	Attack	6
Denning-Sacco corrected	Secure	7
Otway-Rees	Secure	10
Otway-Rees, variant of Paulson98	Attack	12
Yahalom	Secure	10
Simpler Yahalom	Secure	11
Main mode of Skeme	Secure	23

Pentium III, 1 GHz.

### Main limitations

# Dolev-Yao attacker

As any participant, the attacker can intercept, build, and send messages **without introducing any delay**.

→ not suitable to analyse distance bounding protocols

We need a model that takes into account:

- ▶ the fact that transmitting a message takes **time**,
- ▶ the **location** of participants.

How existing symbolic models/tools can be extended/adapted to analyse distance bounding protocols?

→ see talks given by T. Chothia, J. Toro-Pozo, and A. Debant



# Handling low-level operators

Distance bounding protocols often rely on some low-level operators.

**Single bit message:** Symbolic models do not allow one to reason at this level.

→ this is a problem to model rapid phases in distance bounding.

**Algebraic properties of low level operators:** A faithful model need to take into account the **algebraic properties** of those operators:

**Example:** exclusive-or operator

$$\begin{array}{lcl} (x \oplus y) \oplus z & = & x \oplus (y \oplus z) \quad x \oplus 0 = x \\ x \oplus y & = & y \oplus x \quad x \oplus x = 0 \end{array}$$

→ those operators are only partially supported in existing verification tools.

## Towards probabilistic models

Existing symbolic verification tools do not allow one to model probabilistic behaviours.

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To say that a bad state is reachable with **probability at most  $p$** , we need to introduce probability in our modelling  
→ *e.g.* partially observable Markov decision processes

Some recent works by R. Chadha et al.

- ▶ Verification of randomized security protocols LICS, 2017
- ▶ Modular Verification of Protocol Equivalence in the Presence of Randomness ESORICS, 2017

# Privacy-type properties

In comparison to trace-based security properties

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- ▶ Verification tools for a **bounded number of sessions** suffer from the well-known state explosion problem  
→ only able to analyse very few sessions of the protocol, *e.g.* 2 or 3 processes in parallel.

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**Open challenge:** extending existing verification tools to be able to analyse privacy-type properties on distance bounding protocols.



Reasoning about **Physical properties** Of  
**security Protocols**  
with an Application To **contactless Systems**

## Main issues:

- ▶ **specificities** of contactless systems are not well understood;
- ▶ a lack of **formal model** to reason about these systems.

## Main outcomes:

- ▶ solid **foundations** to reason about **physical properties**;
- ▶ new **algorithms** and **tools** to analyse the security and **privacy** of modern protocols;
- ▶ make the upcoming generation of **nomadic contactless devices** more secure.



Reasoning about **Physical properties** Of  
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<https://project.inria.fr/popstar/>

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- ▶ PhD positions and Post-doc positions;
- ▶ One research associate position (up to 3 years).

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