Traitor Tracing with Optimal Transmission Rate

Nelly Fazio[1]*, Antonio Nicolosi[2]*, and Duong Hieu Phan[3]**

[1] IBM Almaden Research Center
nfazio@us.ibm.com
[2] New York University and Stanford University
nicolosi@scs.stanford.edu
[3] France Telecom R&D
duonghieu.phan@orange-ftgroup.com

Abstract. We present the first traitor tracing scheme with efficient black-box traitor tracing in which the ratio of the ciphertext and plaintext lengths (the *transmission rate*) is asymptotically 1, which is optimal. Previous constructions in this setting either obtained constant (but not optimal) transmission rate [16], or did not support black-box tracing [10]. Our treatment improves the standard modeling of black-box tracing by additionally accounting for pirate strategies that attempt to escape tracing by purposedly rendering the transmitted content at lower quality. Our construction relies on the *decisional bilinear Diffie-Hellman* assumption, and attains the same features of public traceability as (a repaired variant of) [10], which is less efficient and requires non-standard assumptions for bilinear groups.

Keywords: Traitor Tracing, Constant Transmission Rate, Fingerprint Codes, Bilinear Maps.

1 Introduction

Traitor tracing schemes constitute a very useful tool against piracy in the context of digital content distribution. They are multi-recipient encryption schemes that can be employed by *content providers* that wish to deliver copyrighted material to an exclusive set of users. Each user holds a decryption key that is fingerprinted and bound to his identity. If a group of subscribers (the *traitors*) collude to construct an illegal device (the *pirate decoder*), the *security manager* can run a specialized traitor tracing algorithm to uncover the source of the leakage. Therefore, a traitor tracing scheme deters subscribers of a distribution system from leaking information by the mere fact that the identities of the leaking entities can then be revealed.

The first formal definition of traitor tracing scheme appears in Chor *et al.* [11, 12], whose construction requires storage and decryption complexity $O(t^2 \log^2 t \log(n/t))$ and communication complexity $O(t^3 \log^4 t \log(n/t))$, where n is the size of the universe of users and t is an upper bound on the number of traitors. Stinson and Wei later suggested in [22] explicit combinatorial construction that achieve better efficiency for small values of t and n.

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** Research conducted in part while at ENS, Paris and University College London.

The work of [19, 12] introduced the notion of *threshold* traitor tracing scheme, where the tracing algorithm is only required to guarantee exposure of the traitors' identities for pirate decoders whose decryption probability is better than a given threshold β. The scheme of [19] achieves storage complexity $O(t/\beta \log(t/\varepsilon))$, where ε is the probability of successfully tracing one of the traitors. Moreover, the scheme has communication complexity linear in t and constant decryption complexity.

In [4], Boneh and Franklin present an efficient public-key traitor tracing scheme with deterministic t-tracing based on an algebraic approach. Its communication, storage and decryption complexities are all $O(t)$. The authors also introduce the notion of *non-black-box traceability*: given a "valid" key extracted from a pirate device (constructed using the keys of at most t users), recover the identity of at least one traitor. This is in contrast with the notion of *black-box tracing* (on which we focus in this paper), where the traitor's identity can be uncovered by just observing the pirate decoder's replies on "well crafted" ciphertexts. More recently, Boneh *et al.* [5, 7] proposed traitor tracing schemes that withstand any number of traitors (*full traceability*), while requiring a sub-linear ciphertext length ($O(\sqrt{n})$).

Constant Transmission Rate. As pointed out by Kiayias and Yung in [16], an important problem in designing practical traitor tracing schemes is to ensure a low *transmission rate*, defined as the asymptotic ratio of the size of ciphertexts over the size of plaintexts, while at the same time minimize the *secret-* and the *public-storage* rates, similarly defined as the asymptotic ratio of the size of user-keys and of public-keys over the size of plaintexts.[1] Under this terminology, the transmission rate of all the above mentioned solutions is linear w.r.t. the maximal number t of traitors, whereas in [16], Kiayias and Yung show that if the plaintexts to be distributed are large (which is the case for most applications of traitor tracing, such as distribution of multimedia content), then it is possible to obtain ciphertexts with constant expansion rate. Their solution is based on collusion-secure fingerprint codes [6, 23] and its parameters are summarized in Figure 1.

Besides the clear benefit in terms of communication efficiency, schemes with constant transmission rate also enjoy efficient black-box traceability, while schemes with linear transmission rate are inherently more limited in this regard [15] (*e.g.,* the black-box traitor tracing of [4] takes time proportional to $\binom{n}{t}$).

In [10], Chabanne *et al.* extend the setting of [16] with the notion of *public traceability*: Whereas traditional tracing algorithms require knowledge of the system's secret information, in a scheme with public traceability everyone can run the tracing algorithm. In this paper, we also consider *local public traceability*, whereby public information suffices to carry out the preliminary phase of tracing, which requires interaction with the pirate decoder, and results in an encoding of the traitor's identity that can be decoded with a master key. This separation of tasks ensures that the system's secret information is only needed for off-line operations (*i.e.*, user registration and possibly the

[1] We adopt a terminology slightly different from the one of [16], which uses the term *ciphertext/user-key/public-key* rates, for what we called *transmission/secret-storage/public-storage* rates. Moreover, in [16] *transmission rate* refers to the sum of the all the three rates. Our choice is of course mostly a matter of taste: we prefer the terminology of this paper as it makes more evident the role played by each quantity in a concrete implementation of the system.

	Trans. Rate	S-Storage Rate	P-Storage Rate	BB Tracing	Public Traceability	Hardness Assumption
BF[4]	$2t+1$	$2t$	$2t+1$	$\times$	$\times$	DDH
KY[16]	3	2	4	$\surd*$	$\times$	DDH
CPP[10]	1	2	1	$\times$	$\times$	$\mathsf{DBDH}^2\text{-}\mathsf{E} \wedge \mathsf{DBDH}^1\text{-}\mathsf{M}$
PST[20]	7	1	1	$\surd$	full	DDH
Repaired CPP	3	2	6	$\surd$	local	$\mathsf{DBDH}^2\text{-}\mathsf{E} \wedge \mathsf{DBDH}^1\text{-}\mathsf{M}$
Our Scheme	1	2	10	$\surd$	local	DBDH

Fig. 1. Comparison of rates (*transmission*, *secret-* and *public-storage* rates) and tracing features (*black-box tracing* and *public traceability*) between existing schemes and our construction. The "*" in the row labeled "KY" refers to the fact that the scheme of [16] can support black-box tracing using the tracing algorithm that we describe in the full version [13] The row labeled "PST" refers to instantiating their generic construction with ternary IPP codes and ElGamal-style encryption. The row labeled "Repaired CPP" refers to the variant of the scheme of [10] that we suggest in the full version [13] to support black-box tracing.

final phase of tracing), thus improving the overall security of the system by allowing for safer storage solutions.
The work of [20] describes a traitor tracing scheme with constant (but not optimal) transmission rate and (full) public traceability based on Identifiable Parent Property (IPP) codes. Figure 1 also reports on these two schemes. One could think that traitor tracing schemes with linear transmission rate (*e.g.* [4]) could easily be turned into schemes with constant transmission rate by means of hybrid encryption: To send a large message, pick a random session key, encrypt it with the given traitor tracing scheme, and append a symmetric encryption of the message under the chosen anonymous session key. This approach, however, suffers from a simple yet severe untraceable pirate strategy: Just decrypt the session key and make it available to the "customers" on the black market, *e.g.,* via anonymous e-mail, or via text-messaging from a pre-paid cellphone. Clearly, when a traitor tracing scheme is used to encrypt the content directly, this "re-broadcasting" strategy becomes much less appealing for would-be pirates, because of the higher costs and exposure risks associated with running a high-bandwidth darknet.
Our Contributions. We present the first public-key traitor tracing scheme with efficient black-box traitor tracing and local public traceability in which the transmission rate is asymptotically 1, which is optimal. Encryption involves the same amount of computation as in [10]; decryption is twice as fast. We also considerably simplify the computational hardness requirements, relying just on the DBDH assumption—much weaker and more widely accepted than the non-standard bilinear assumptions employed in [10].

Our treatment improves the standard modeling of black-box tracing by additionally accounting for pirate strategies that attempt to escape tracing by purposedly rendering the transmitted content at lower quality (*e.g.* by dropping every other frame from the decrypted video-clip, or skipping few seconds from the original audio file).

As additional contribution, we point out and resolve an issue in the black-box tracing of [16] (which was also independently addressed in a revised version of their work [17]). We then show that [10], which extends [16] and inherits its tracing mechanism, inherits in fact the above-mentioned problem, too. In this case, however, fixing the black-box functionality requires changes that intrinsically conflict with the optimizations put up by [10] to achieve optimal transmission rate. In other words, [10] can either provide optimal transmission rate with only non-black-box tracing, or support local public traceability with sub-optimal transmission rate, but cannot achieve both at the same time.

A Comparison with [5, 7]. The schemes of [5, 7] are the most efficient ones supporting full collusion, but they are not well suited for the more practical case of small number of traitors (say, logarithmic in the size of the entire user population). Indeed, in this case, the ciphertext in the schemes of [5, 7] still contains $O(\sqrt{n})$ elements. In our scheme, assuming the number of traitors t is logarithmic in the number of users n, the ciphertext has poly-logarithmic length $v = O(t^2(\log n + \log \frac{1}{\varepsilon})) = O(\log^3 n)$, which is asymptotically superior to the $O(\sqrt{n})$-ciphertexts of [5, 7]. More importantly, the tracing algorithms of [5, 7] require $O(n^2)$ decryption queries to the pirate decoder, whereas our scheme employs $O(v) = O(\log^3 n)$ decryption queries, and is moreover completely parallelizable.

2 Preliminaries

The security properties of our construction hinge upon the decisional bilinear Diffie-Hellman assumption (DBDH) for $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$. We refer the reader to the full version of this paper [13] for the relevant definitions.

Collusion-Secure Codes. Collusion-secure codes [6] provide a powerful tool against illegal redistribution of fingerprinted material in settings satisfying the following *Marking Assumption*: 1) it is possible to introduce small changes to the content at some discrete set of locations (the *marks*), while preserving the "quality" of the content being distributed; but 2) it is infeasible to apport changes to a mark without rendering the entire content "useless" *unless* one possesses two copies of the content that differ at that mark. Below, we include a formalization of the notion of collusion-secure codes, adapted from [6].

Definition 1. *Let Σ be a finite alphabet, and $n, v \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$. An (n, v)-code over Σ is a set of n v-tuples of symbols of Σ: $\mathcal{C} = \{\omega^{(1)}, \ldots, \omega^{(n)}\} \subseteq \Sigma^v$.*

Definition 2. *Let T be a subset of indices in $[1, n]$. The set of undetectable positions for T is: $R_T = \{\ell \in [1, v] \mid (\forall i, j \in T).[\omega_\ell^{(i)} = \omega_\ell^{(j)}]\}$.*

Notice that for each $i \in T$, the projection of each codeword $\omega^{(i)}$ over the undetectable positions for T is the same; we denote this common projected sub-word as $\omega_{|R_T}$. By the Marking Assumption, any "useful" copy of the content created by the collusion of the users in T must result in a tuple $\bar{\omega}$ whose projection over R_T is also $\omega_{|R_T}$. This is captured by the following:

Definition 3. *The set of feasible codewords for T is: $F_T = \{\bar{\omega} \in (\Sigma \cup \{?\})^v \mid \bar{\omega}_{|R_T} = \omega_{|R_T}\}$.*

Definition 4. *Let $\varepsilon > 0$ and $t \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$. $\mathcal{C}$ is an (ε, t, n, v)-collusion-secure code over Σ if there exists a probabilistic polynomial-time algorithm $\mathcal{T}$ such that for all $T \subseteq [1, n]$ of size $| T | \leq t$, and for all $\bar{\omega} \in F_T$, it holds that: $\Pr[\mathcal{T}(r_{\mathcal{C}}, \bar{\omega}) \in T] \geq (1 - \varepsilon)$, where the probability is over the random coins $r_{\mathcal{C}}$ used in the construction of the (n, v)-code $\mathcal{C}$, and over the random coins of $\mathcal{T}$.*

3 Public-Key Traitor Tracing Scheme with Public Traceability

Definition 5 (Public-Key Traitor Tracing Scheme). *A public-key traitor tracing scheme is a 5-tuple of probabilistic polynomial-time algorithms* (**Setup**, **Reg**, **Enc**, **Dec**, **Trace**)*, where:*

Setup: *On input a security parameter 1^κ, a collusion threshold 1^t, and a bound n on the maximum number of users, returns a public key* pk *along with some master secret information* msk *(*cf. **Reg** *and* **Trace***);*

Reg: *Given* msk *and a user index $i \in [1, n]$, outputs a "fingerprinted" user key sk_i;*[2]

Enc: *On input key* pk *and a message m (from the appropriate message space $\mathcal{M}$, implicitly described by* pk*), returns a (randomized) ciphertext ψ;*

Dec: *On input a user key sk_i and a ciphertext ψ, recovers the message encrypted within ψ;*

Trace: *Given the master secret key* msk*, the public key* pk*, and black-box access to a "pirate" decoder capable of inverting the* $\mathbf{Enc}(\mathsf{pk}, \cdot)$ *functionality, returns the user index of one of the traitors that contributed his/her user key for the realization of the pirate decoder, or the special user index 0 upon failure.*

For correctness, decryption with any user key output by **Reg** *should "undo" encryption,* i.e.*,* $\mathbf{Dec}(\mathsf{sk}_i, \mathbf{Enc}(\mathsf{pk}, m)) = m$.

Definition 6 (Full/Local Public Traceability). *A public-key traitor tracing scheme is said to support: 1)* public traceability *if the* **Trace** *algorithm can be implemented without the master secret key* msk*; or 2)* local public traceability *if the* **Trace** *algorithm can be split in an on-line phase, in which the pirate decoder can be queried without knowledge of the secret key, and an off-line phase, without access to the pirate decoder, that can retrieve the identity of the traitor from the master secret key and the output of the publicly executable on-line phase.*

Definition 7 (Indistinguishability under Chosen-Plaintext Attack). *A public-key traitor tracing scheme satisfies $\varepsilon_{\mathrm{ind}}$-indistinguishability if, for any pair of probabilistic polynomial-time algorithms $(\mathcal{A}_1, \mathcal{A}_2)$, it holds that:*

$$\Pr\left[\mathcal{A}_2(\mathsf{state}, \psi^*) = b^* \,\middle|\, \begin{array}{c} (\mathsf{pk}, \mathsf{msk}) \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbf{Setup}(1^\kappa, 1^t, n), \\ (m_0, m_1, \mathsf{state}) \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{A}_1(\mathsf{pk}), \\ b^* \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \{0,1\}, \psi^* \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbf{Enc}(\mathsf{pk}, m_{b^*}) \end{array}\right] \leq \frac{1}{2} + \varepsilon_{\mathrm{ind}},$$

where the probability is over b^*, and the random coins of $\mathcal{A}_1$, $\mathcal{A}_2$, **Setup***, and* **Enc**.

[2] Equivalently, we can think of **Setup** as outputting a vector of user keys, one per each user in the system; we will refer to either formalization interchangeably.

Requirements on the Tracing Functionality. Existing literature usually models black-box traceability as the ability to "extract" the identity of (at least) one traitor from pirate decoders that *correctly* invert the decryption algorithm (under appropriate efficiency and success probability constraints). This approach, however, is often criticized because it leaves the way open for pirate decoders that decrypt ciphertexts into plaintexts that closely resemble (but are not identical to) the original plaintexts. To account for pirate strategies of this sort, we allow traitors to specify a notion of "resemblance" in the form of a polynomial-time reflexive, symmetric binary relation $\mathcal{R}$ over plaintexts, with $\mathcal{R}(m, m') = 1$ if customers would accept m' as a reasonable replacement for m.[3] The only semantic constraint on $\mathcal{R}$ is that it shall not be so lax as to deem random[4] plaintexts similar to fixed ones, *i.e.*, the quantity $p_{\mathcal{R}} \doteq \max_{m \in \mathcal{M}} \Pr[\mathcal{R}(m, m') = 1 \mid m' \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{M}]$ shall be negligible (otherwise tracing is impossible, since a keyless decoder could simply output a random plaintext as a "reasonable" decryption of any ciphertext). Similarly, tracing needs only be effective against efficient decoders $\mathcal{D}$ whose success probability $p_{\mathcal{D}} \doteq \Pr[\mathcal{R}(m, \mathcal{D}(\mathbf{Enc}(\mathsf{pk}, m))) = 1 \mid m \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{M}]$ is non-negligible.

Definition 8. *A public-key traitor tracing scheme is $\varepsilon_{\mathrm{trac}}$-traceable if for any probabilistic polynomial-time traitor strategy $\mathcal{A}$, it holds that:*

$$\Pr\left[\mathbf{Trace}^{\mathcal{D}(\cdot)}(\mathsf{pk}, \mathsf{msk}) \notin T \;\middle|\; \begin{array}{c} (\mathsf{pk}, \mathsf{msk}) \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbf{Setup}(1^\kappa, 1^t, n), \\ (\mathcal{D}, \mathcal{R}) \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{A}(\mathsf{pk})^{\mathbf{Reg}(\mathsf{msk}, \cdot)} \end{array}\right] \leq \varepsilon_{\mathrm{trac}}$$

where $\mathcal{M}$ is the message space, $T \subseteq [1, n]$ is the set of up to t indices on which $\mathcal{A}$ queried the $\mathbf{Reg}(\mathsf{msk}, \cdot)$ oracle, $\mathcal{D}$ and $\mathcal{R}$ both run in probabilistic polynomial-time and are such that $p_{\mathcal{D}}$ is non-negligible and $p_{\mathcal{R}}$ is negligible, and the probability is over the coins of $\mathbf{Setup}$, $\mathbf{Reg}$, $\mathcal{A}$, $\mathcal{D}$ *and* $\mathbf{Trace}$.

Notice that Definition 8 subsumes the case that the traitor strategy $\mathcal{A}$ only produces a "good" pirate decoder $\mathcal{D}$ with a low (but non-negligible) probability: indeed, any such strategy can be "boosted" by simply keeping executing $\mathcal{A}$ on fresh random coins, until the pirate decoder $\mathcal{D}$ that $\mathcal{A}$ outputs is a good one (which can be efficiently tested by estimating $\mathcal{D}$'s decryption capability on the encryption of a random plaintext).

4 Public-Key Traitor Tracing with Public Traceability, Black-Box Tracing and Optimal Transmission Rate

Similarly to the schemes of [16] and [10], our construction is based on the use of an (ε, t, n, v)-collusion-secure code $\mathcal{C}$ over the alphabet $\{0, 1\}$ (*cf.* Definition 4). At a high level, the idea is to first define a two-user sub-scheme resilient against a single traitor, and then "concatenate" v instantiations of this sub-scheme according to the code $\mathcal{C}$. Although the overall architecture that we follow is well-known, achieving optimal transmission rate along these lines requires solving a number of technical problems, on which we elaborate in Section 4.4.

[3] Alternatively, the resemblance relation $\mathcal{R}$ could be specified as a parameter of the scheme in the definition of the $\mathbf{Trace}$ algorithm.

[4] For the sake of simplicity, in this paper we discuss only the case of random sampling from $\mathcal{M}$, but the treatment generalizes to the case of other plaintext distribution with high min-entropy.

4.1 Our Two-User Sub-Scheme

Setup: Given a security parameter 1^κ, the algorithm works as follows:

Step 1: Generate a κ-bit prime q, two groups $\mathcal{G}_1$ and $\mathcal{G}_2$ of order q, and an admissible bilinear map $e : \mathcal{G}_1 \times \mathcal{G}_1 \to \mathcal{G}_2$. Choose an arbitrary generator $P \in \mathcal{G}_1$.

Step 2: Pick random elements $a, b, c \in \mathbb{Z}_q^*$, and set $Q \doteq aP, R \doteq bP, h \doteq e(P, cP)$. Compute two linearly independent vectors (α_0, β_0) and (α_1, β_1) in $\mathbb{Z}_q$ such that $b\alpha_\sigma + a\beta_\sigma = c \bmod q$, for $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$. The private key of the security manager is set to be $\mathsf{msk} \doteq (a, b, \alpha_0, \beta_0, \alpha_1, \beta_1)$.

Step 3: For $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$, let $A_\sigma \doteq \alpha_\sigma R$ and $B_\sigma \doteq \beta_\sigma P$. Choose a universal hash function $H : \mathcal{G}_2 \to \{0, 1\}^\kappa$, and set the public key of the scheme to be the tuple

$$\mathsf{pk} \doteq (q, \mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2, e, H, P, Q, R, A_0, B_0, A_1, B_1).^5$$

The associated message space is $\mathcal{M} \doteq \{0, 1\}^\kappa$.

Reg: For $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$, the secret key of user σ is set to be $\mathsf{sk}_\sigma \doteq \alpha_\sigma$. Notice that $cP = \alpha_\sigma R + \beta_\sigma Q$ and hence $h = e(P, cP) = e(P, \alpha_\sigma R) \cdot e(Q, \beta_\sigma P) = e(P, A_\sigma) \cdot e(Q, B_\sigma)$, for $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$.

Enc: Given pk, anybody can encrypt a message $m \in \mathcal{M}$ by first selecting a random $k \in \mathbb{Z}_q$ and then creating the ciphertext $\psi \doteq \langle U, V, W \rangle \in \mathcal{G}_2 \times \mathcal{G}_1 \times \mathcal{M}$ where

$$U \doteq e(P, R)^k, \quad V \doteq kQ, \quad W \doteq m \oplus H(h^k)$$

Dec: Given a ciphertext $\psi = \langle U, V, W \rangle$, user σ computes $h^k = U^{\alpha_\sigma} \cdot e(V, B_\sigma)$ and recovers $m = W \oplus H(h^k)$. Correctness of the decryption algorithm is clear by inspection.

Trace: To trace a decoder $\mathcal{D}$ with resemblance relation, feed $\mathcal{D}$ with the "illegal" ciphertext $\hat{\psi} \doteq \langle e(P, R)^{k'}, kQ, \hat{m} \oplus H(e(P, A_\sigma)^{k'} e(Q, B_\sigma)^k) \rangle$, for random $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$, $k, k' \in \mathbb{Z}_q$, $\hat{m} \in \mathcal{M}$. If the output m^* of $\mathcal{D}$ satisfies $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1$, then return σ as the traitor's identity; otherwise, pick fresh random $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}, k, k' \in \mathbb{Z}_q, \hat{m} \in \mathcal{M}$ and repeat.

Before moving on to the security and traceability of our two-user scheme in the sense of Definitions 7 and 8 (*cf. Section 3*), we remark that **Trace** does not require knowledge of the master secret key msk, and thus it supports full public traceability (*cf.* Definition 6). Also, notice that decryption requires only one pairing computation.

4.2 Indistinguishability under Chosen-Plaintext Attack

Theorem 9. *Under the* DBDH *assumption for* $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$*, the scheme in Section 4.1 is secure w.r.t. indistinguishability under chosen-plaintext attack (*cf. *Definition 7).*

[5] Note that there is no need to explicitly include h in the public key, as it can be derived as $h = e(P, A_\sigma) \cdot e(Q, B_\sigma)$. Caching the value of h, however, is recommendable when public storage is not at a premium, as that would save two pairing computations during encryption.

Proof. To a contradiction, let us assume that the scheme does not satisfy Definition 7 *i.e.*, there is an adversary $\mathcal{A} = (\mathcal{A}_1, \mathcal{A}_2)$ that, given the public key $\mathsf{pk} = (q, \mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2, e, H, P, Q, R, A_0, B_0, A_1, B_1)$, can break the scheme with non-negligible advantage $\varepsilon_{\mathrm{ind}}$. We then construct an algorithm $\mathcal{B}$ (whose running time is polynomially related to $\mathcal{A}$'s) that breaks the DBDH assumption with probability $\varepsilon_{\mathsf{DBDH}} = \varepsilon_{\mathrm{ind}}$.

Algorithm $\mathcal{B}$ is given as input an instance (P', xP', yP', zP', h') of the DBDH problem in $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$; its task is to determine whether $h' = e(P', P')^{xyz}$, or h' is a random element in $\mathcal{G}_2$. $\mathcal{B}$ proceeds as follows:

Setup: $\mathcal{B}$ sets $P \doteq xP'$ and $Q \doteq P'$. Then, $\mathcal{B}$ picks $r \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q^*$, and sets $R \doteq rQ$. $\mathcal{B}$ now chooses $\beta_0, \beta_1 \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q^*$ and computes $B_0 \doteq \beta_0 P$ and $B_1 \doteq \beta_1 P$. Then, $\mathcal{B}$ sets $A_0 \doteq zP'$ and $h \doteq e(P, A_0) \cdot e(Q, B_0)$. Finally, $\mathcal{B}$ sets $A_1 \doteq A_0 + \beta_0 Q - \beta_1 Q$, so that in fact $h = e(P, A_\sigma) \cdot e(Q, B_\sigma)$, for $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$, as required.
$\mathcal{B}$ can now set $\mathsf{pk} \doteq (q, \mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2, e, H, P, Q, R, A_0, B_0, A_1, B_1)$ and send it to $\mathcal{A}_1$.

Challenge: $\mathcal{A}_1$ outputs two messages m_0, m_1 on which it wishes to be challenged, along with some state state to be passed to $\mathcal{A}_2$. To prepare the ciphertext, $\mathcal{B}$ picks random $b^* \in \{0, 1\}$, and sets

$$U \doteq e(P, yP')^r (= e(P, R)^y), V \doteq yP' (= yQ), W \doteq m_{b^*} \oplus H(h' \cdot e(yP', xP')^{\beta_0}).$$

(Notice that this implicitly defines $k = y$.) Then, $\mathcal{B}$ sends $\mathcal{A}_2$ the challenge ciphertext $\psi^* \doteq (U, V, W)$, along with the state information state.

Guess: Algorithm $\mathcal{A}_2$ outputs a guess $b' \in \{0, 1\}$. $\mathcal{B}$ returns 1 if $b' = b^*$ and 0 otherwise.

If $h' = e(P', P')^{xyz}$, then $\mathcal{A}_2$ gets a valid encryption of m_{b^*}, since (as we verify below) in this case the input to the hash function in the computation of W is just h^k:

$$\begin{aligned} h' \cdot e(yP', xP')^{\beta_0} &= e(P', P')^{xyz} \cdot e(yP', \beta_0(xP')) = e(xP', zP')^y \cdot e(P', \beta_0(xP'))^y \\ &= e(P, A_0)^y \cdot e(Q, B_0)^y = [e(P, A_0) \cdot e(Q, B_0)]^y = h^y = h^k, \end{aligned}$$

as required by the encryption algorithm. Therefore, in this case $\mathcal{A}$ will successfully guess $b' = b^*$ with probability $\varepsilon_{\mathrm{ind}} + 1/2$.

On the other hand, when h' is a random element of $\mathcal{G}_2$, the input to H is a random value, independent of any other information in the adversary's view. Since H is chosen from a universal hash function family, its output is also (almost) uniformly random in $\{0, 1\}^\kappa$, so that the value of W (and hence the whole challenge ciphertext ψ^*) is completely independent from m_{b^*}. Thus, in this case $b' = b^*$ holds with probability $1/2$.

It follows that adversary $\mathcal{B}$ breaks the DBDH assumption with non-negligible advantage $\varepsilon_{\mathsf{DBDH}} = \varepsilon_{\mathrm{ind}}$, contradicting our hardness assumption. □

4.3 Traceability

To assess the effectiveness of the **Trace** algorithm from Section 4.1, we start with some observations about the illegal ciphertexts that **Trace** uses in querying the decoder $\mathcal{D}$:

Definition 10 (Valid and Probe Ciphertexts). *Let $\sigma \in \{0,1\}$, $\hat{m} \in \mathcal{M}$, $\hat{U} \in \mathcal{G}_1$, $\hat{V} \in \mathcal{G}_2$, $\hat{W} = \hat{m} \oplus H(\hat{U}^{\alpha_\sigma} e(\hat{V}, B_\sigma))$, and $\hat{\psi} = \langle \hat{U}, \hat{V}, \hat{W} \rangle$. We say that the ciphertext $\hat{\psi}$ is:*

- ***valid**, if $\hat{U} = e(P,R)^k$, $\hat{V} = kQ$, for some $k \in \mathbb{Z}_q$;*
- ***σ-probe**, if $\hat{U} = e(P,R)^{k'}$, $\hat{V} = kQ$, for distinct $k, k' \in \mathbb{Z}_q$.*

Lemma 11 (Indistinguishability of Valid *vs.* Probe Ciphertexts). *Under the* DBDH *assumption for $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$, given the public key* $\mathsf{pk} = (q, \mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2, e, H, P, Q, R, A_0, B_0, A_1, B_1)$ *and the secret key* $\mathsf{sk}_\tau = \alpha_\tau$ *of user* $\tau \in \{0,1\}$ *(where $A_\tau = \alpha_\tau R$), it is infeasible to distinguish a valid ciphertext from a τ-probe.*

Proof. For simplicity, assume $\tau = 0$. We proceed by contradiction: assume there is an adversary $\mathcal{A}$ that, given the public key $\mathsf{pk} = (q, \mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2, e, H, P, Q, R, A_0, B_0, A_1, B_1)$ and the secret key α_0 of user 0, can distinguish valid ciphertexts from probes with probability ε. We then construct an algorithm $\mathcal{B}$ (whose running time is polynomially related to $\mathcal{A}$'s) that breaks the DBDH assumption with probability $\varepsilon_{\mathsf{DBDH}} = \varepsilon$.

Algorithm $\mathcal{B}$ is given as input an instance (P', xP', yP', zP', h') of the DBDH problem in $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$; its task is to determine whether $h' = e(P', P')^{xyz}$ or h' is a random element in $\mathcal{G}_2$. $\mathcal{B}$ proceeds as follows:

Setup: $\mathcal{B}$ lets $P \doteq xP'$, $Q \doteq P'$, $R \doteq yP'$, chooses $\alpha_0, \beta_0, \beta_1 \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q^*$ and computes $A_0 \doteq \alpha_0 R$, $B_0 \doteq \beta_0 P$ and $B_1 \doteq \beta_1 P$. $\mathcal{B}$ also sets $A_1 \doteq A_0 + \beta_0 Q - \beta_1 Q$, which implicitly defines $h = e(P, A_0) \cdot e(Q, B_0) = e(P, A_1) \cdot e(Q, B_1)$. $\mathcal{B}$ now defines $\mathsf{pk} \doteq (q,\ \mathcal{G}_1,\ \mathcal{G}_2,\ e,\ H,\ P,\ Q,\ R,\ A_0,\ B_0,\ A_1,\ B_1)$. Then, $\mathcal{B}$ prepares a challenge ciphertext $\hat{\psi} \doteq \langle \hat{U}, \hat{V}, \hat{W} \rangle$ by setting $\hat{U} \doteq h'$, $\hat{V} \doteq zP' (= zQ$, thus implicitly defining $k = z)$ and $\hat{W} \doteq \hat{m} \oplus H(\hat{U}^{\alpha_0} e(\hat{V}, B_0))$, for $\hat{m} \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{M}$. At this point, $\mathcal{B}$ feeds $\mathcal{A}$ with pk, $\hat{\psi}$, and α_0.

Attack: $\mathcal{A}$ returns her guess to whether $\hat{\psi}$ is a valid ciphertext or a probe (w.r.t. the public key pk).

Break: $\mathcal{B}$ outputs yes or no accordingly.

If $h' = e(P', P')^{xyz}$, then $\mathcal{A}$ gets a valid ciphertext since $h' = e(xP', yP')^z = e(P,R)^z$, consistently with the value of $\hat{V} = zQ$, as required by the encryption algorithm. Otherwise, h' is a random value in $\mathcal{G}_2$, of the form $h' = e(P,R)^{k'}$, for some k' totally independent from $k = z$, and thus $\hat{\psi}$ is a 0-probe. Therefore, $\mathcal{B}$ breaks the DBDH assumption with the same advantage as $\mathcal{A}$'s *i.e.*, $\varepsilon_{\mathsf{DBDH}} = \varepsilon$. $\square$

An important consequence of Lemma 11 is that pirate decoders created by user τ reply to τ-probes with an m^* such that $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1$ with non-negligible probability $\hat{p}_{\mathcal{D}}$:

Corollary 12. *Let $\mathcal{D}$, $\mathcal{R}$ be the pirate decoder and resemblance relation output by a traitor strategy $\mathcal{A}$ based on the user key α_τ, such that $p_{\mathcal{D}}$ is non-negligible and $p_{\mathcal{R}}$ is negligible (*cf. *Definition 8). Let $\hat{\psi}$ be a τ-probe for a message $\hat{m} \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{M}$. Under the* DBDH *assumption, $\hat{p}_{\mathcal{D}} \doteq \Pr[\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1 \mid m^* \overset{R}{\leftarrow} D(\hat{\psi})]$ is non-negligible.*

Proof. To a contradiction, assume $\hat{p}_{\mathcal{D}}$ to be negligible. We then construct an efficient algorithm $\mathcal{B}$ that, given pk and the secret key α_τ of a single user, distinguishes valid ciphertexts from τ-probes as follows: on input a ciphertext $\hat{\psi} = \langle \hat{U}, \hat{V}, \hat{W} \rangle$, $\mathcal{B}$ computes $\hat{m} \doteq \hat{W} \oplus H(\hat{U}^{\alpha_\tau} \cdot e(\hat{V}, B_\tau))$ from α_τ and $\hat{\psi}$. Notice that this value $\hat{m}$ is correct regardless of whether $\hat{\psi}$ is a valid ciphertext or a τ-probe. Then, $\mathcal{B}$ feeds $\mathcal{D}$ with $\hat{\psi}$, getting back a value m^*. If $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1$, then $\mathcal{B}$ concludes that $\hat{\psi}$ must be valid; otherwise, $\mathcal{B}$ concludes that $\hat{\psi}$ is a τ-probe. In other words, $\mathcal{B}$ "interpolates" between the experiment defining probabilities $p_{\mathcal{D}}$ and $\hat{p}_{\mathcal{D}}$, so that $\mathcal{B}$'s advantage in discerning valid ciphertext from τ-probes is clearly $p_{\mathcal{D}} - \hat{p}_{\mathcal{D}}$. But if $\hat{p}_{\mathcal{D}}$ were negligible, such algorithm $\mathcal{B}$ would violate the statement of Lemma 11, proving our argument. □

The next lemma addresses the case of pirate decoders fed with probes of the "wrong type":

Lemma 13. *Replacing $\hat{\psi}$ with a $(1 - \tau)$-probe in the setting of Corollary 12, $\Pr[\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1]$ is negligible.*

Proof. We start with the observation that if we could somehow remove the message $\hat{m}$ from the pirate decoder's view, then our thesis would follow immediately, since $\hat{m}$ would then be independent from the message m^* output by $\mathcal{D}$, and hence, by definition of $p_{\mathcal{R}}$, $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1$ would hold with probability $p_{\mathcal{R}}$, which is negligible.

In fact, $\hat{m}$ occurs in $\mathcal{D}$'s view only in the third component of the $(1 - \tau)$-probe $\hat{\psi} \doteq \langle \hat{U}, \hat{V}, \hat{W} \rangle$, as $\hat{W} = \hat{m} \oplus H(\hat{U}^{\alpha_{1-\tau}} e(\hat{V}, B_{1-\tau}))$, so it suffices to show that $\hat{U}^{\alpha_{1-\tau}} e(\hat{V}, B_{1-\tau})$ is indistinguishable from random in $\mathcal{D}$'s view. Since B_0, B_1 both appear in the public key pk of the system, this boils down to proving that $\mathcal{D}$ cannot distinguish $\hat{U}^{\alpha_{1-\tau}}$ from random. It also holds that $\hat{U}^{\alpha_{1-\tau}} = e(P, R)^{k' \alpha_{1-\tau}} = e(P, A_{1-\tau})^{k'}$, so that the task faced by $\mathcal{D}$ is to tell $e(P, A_{1-\tau})^{k'}$ apart from random, given $e(P, R)$, $e(P, A_{1-\tau})$, and $\hat{U} = e(P, R)^{k'}$. But this is just the DDH problem for group $\mathcal{G}_2$, whose hardness is implied by the DBDH assumption.

The above argument can be easily rephrased along the lines of the reductions described in the proofs of Theorem 9 and Lemma 11; we refrain from doing so due to space limitations. □

Theorem 14. *Under the DBDH assumption for $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$, our $\mathbf{Trace}$ algorithm has a negligible traceability error.*

Proof. Let $\mathcal{D}, \mathcal{R}$ be the pirate decoder and resemblance relation on which the $\mathbf{Trace}$ algorithm is being run, and let τ be the traitor index. Corollary 12 guarantees that $\mathbf{Trace}$ will on average terminate after $2/p_{\mathcal{D}}$ queries to $\mathcal{D}$. Upon termination, $\mathbf{Trace}$'s output will be wrong only if it happens that $\mathcal{D}$ replies to a $(1 - \tau)$-probe $\hat{\psi}$ with an m^* satisfying $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1$, *i.e.*, $\Pr[\mathbf{Trace}^{D(\cdot)}(pk, \perp) \notin T] = \Pr[\hat{\psi} \text{ is a } (1 - \tau)\text{-probe} \mid \mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1]$, which by Corollary 12, Lemma 13, and Bayes' theorem is easily seen to equal $p_{\mathcal{R}} / (p_{\mathcal{D}} + p_{\mathcal{R}})$, which is negligible. □

4.4 Our Multi-User Scheme

As mentioned at the beginning of Section 4, a common approach to extending a two-user construction to the multi-user setting is to concatenate several instantiations (say,

v) of the basic two-user scheme. Tracing in the resulting multi-user scheme can then be performed iteratively as a sequence of v stages; in each stage, the pirate decoder is queried with ciphertexts that are valid in all v components, except for one, which instead is crafted according to the **Trace** algorithm of the two-user construction. In this way, if the decoder does not have both sub-keys for the component currently under testing, it will be unable to tell that the ciphertext is invalid, and so the tracing procedure of the two-user subscheme will determine which of the two sub-keys the decoder holds for that component.

Since tracing requires the ability to set up each component of the ciphertext independently of all the others, it may seem necessary to use completely unrelated instantiations of the two-user sub-scheme for each component. This is done, for example, in [16]. Having independent components, however, clearly leads to a multi-user scheme with the same transmission rate as the underlying basic two-user scheme, and so it would not help us attaining optimal transmission rate. In fact, the scheme of [10] manages to get transmission rate 1 by sacrificing component independence, and instead using component-instances all very closely related to each other. As we show in the full version [13], though, their scheme does not support black-box traceability.

To solve this tension between transmission rate and black-box traceability, we move from the observation that, at each stage, it suffices that a single component can be appropriately set up independently from the rest; the remaining $v-1$ can all be closely related to each other. Therefore, ciphertexts in our construction include a "special" position ℓ, where encryption is performed with instance of our two-user scheme that is specific to the ℓ-th component; the remaining $(v-1)$ positions, instead, are encrypted using a "shared" two-user scheme.

To prevent pirate decoders from selectively ignoring the "special" position (which is the only part of the ciphertext that encodes tracing information), we follow the approach proposed in [16], by which the encryption algorithm preliminarily processes the plaintext with an *All-Or-Nothing* transform (AONT) [21, 8, 9]. This will force decoders to decrypt *all* blocks of the ciphertext, since ignoring even a single one would result in missing at least one block of the AONT-transformed plaintext, so that, by the properties of AONT's, such decoders would fail to recover *any* information about the original plaintext being transmitted. We remark that reliance on AONT's to force the pirate to include (at least) one key for each component was suggested in [16], but later dismissed by the authors in [17] as ineffective for the black-box setting, since it cannot prevent cropping of the plaintext once it has been decrypted. However, we believe their critique to be misleading, since traitor strategies in which the pirate decoder tampers with the decrypted plaintexts are dealt with the use of the resemblance relation $\mathcal{R}$ (see discussion in Section 3), while AONT's prevent the pirate from learning anything about the plaintext if even a single block cannot be decrypted.

For the sake of clarity, we first describe the scheme without explicitly mentioning the AONT pre-processing, and later discuss the details regarding the use of AONT's.

Setup: Given the security parameters 1^κ, 1^t and ε, the algorithm works as follows:

Step 1: Generate a κ-bit prime q, two groups $\mathcal{G}_1$ and $\mathcal{G}_2$ of order q, and an admissible bilinear map $e : \mathcal{G}_1 \times \mathcal{G}_1 \to \mathcal{G}_2$. Generate an (ε, t, n, v)-collusion-secure code $\mathcal{C} = \{\omega^{(1)}, \dots, \omega^{(n)}\}$.

Step 2a: Generate v independent copies of the 2-user scheme described in Section 4.1 (call these copies the *special* schemes). In particular, for $j = 1, \ldots, v$, let P_j be a generator of $\mathcal{G}_1$; pick random elements $a_j, b_j, c_j \in \mathbb{Z}_q^*$, and set $Q_j \doteq a_j P_j$, $R_j \doteq b_j P_j$, $h_j \doteq e(P_j, c_j P_j)$. Also, for $j = 1, \ldots, v$, compute linearly independent vectors $(\alpha_{j,0}, \beta_{j,0})$, $(\alpha_{j,1}, \beta_{j,1}) \in \mathbb{Z}_q^2$ such that $b_j \alpha_{j,\sigma} + a_j \beta_{j,\sigma} = c_j \bmod q$, for $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$.

Step 2b: Generate one more independent copy of the 2-user scheme of Section 4.1, in which we additionally select v values for h (call this the *shared* scheme). At a high level, the shared scheme can be thought of as v parallel copies of the 2-user scheme of Section 4.1, sharing the same values P, Q and R. More precisely, draw $P \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{G}_1$, $a, b \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q^*$, and set $Q \doteq aP$, and $R \doteq bP$; then, for each $j = 1, \ldots, v$, select $\bar{c}_j \in \mathbb{Z}_q^*$ and set $\bar{h}_j \doteq e(P, \bar{c}_j P)$. Also, for each $j = 1, \ldots, v$, compute two linearly independent vectors $(\bar{\alpha}_{j,0}, \bar{\beta}_{j,0})$, $(\bar{\alpha}_{j,1}, \bar{\beta}_{j,1})$ in $\mathbb{Z}_q^2$ such that $b\bar{\alpha}_{j,\sigma} + a\bar{\beta}_{j,\sigma} = \bar{c}_j \bmod q$, for $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$.

Step 2c: The master secret key msk of the security manager is set to be:

$$((a_j, b_j, (\alpha_{j,0}, \beta_{j,0}, \alpha_{j,1}, \beta_{j,1}))_{j=1,\ldots,v}, a, b, (\bar{\alpha}_{j,0}, \bar{\beta}_{j,0}, \bar{\alpha}_{j,1}, \bar{\beta}_{j,1})_{j=1,\ldots,v})$$

Step 3: For $j = 1, \ldots, v$ and $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$, let $A_{j,\sigma} \doteq \alpha_{j,\sigma} R_j$, $B_{j,\sigma} \doteq \beta_{j,\sigma} P_j$, $\bar{A}_{j,\sigma} \doteq \bar{\alpha}_{j,\sigma} R$ and $\bar{B}_{j,\sigma} \doteq \bar{\beta}_{j,\sigma} P$. Choose a universal hash function $H : \mathcal{G}_2 \to \{0, 1\}^\kappa$, and set pk to:[6]

$$(H, (P_j, Q_j, R_j, A_{j,0}, B_{j,0}, A_{j,1}, B_{j,1}), P, Q, R, (\bar{A}_{j,0}, \bar{B}_{j,0}, \bar{B}_{j,1}))$$

for all $j = 1, \ldots, v$. The associated message space is $\mathcal{M} \doteq (\{0, 1\}^\kappa)^v$.

Reg: For each user i, the security manager first retrieves the corresponding codeword $\omega_i \in \mathcal{C}$ and sets his/her secret key to: $\mathsf{sk}_i \doteq ((\alpha_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}})_{j=1,\ldots,v}, (\bar{\alpha}_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}})_{j=1,\ldots,v})$. Notice that, for $j = 1, \ldots, v$, it holds that:

$$c_j P_j = \alpha_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}} R_j + \beta_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}} Q_j \quad \text{and hence} \quad h_j = e(P_j, A_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}}) \cdot e(Q_j, B_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}}),$$
$$\bar{c}_j P = \bar{\alpha}_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}} R + \bar{\beta}_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}} Q \quad \text{and hence} \quad \bar{h}_j = e(P, \bar{A}_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}}) \cdot e(Q, \bar{B}_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}}).$$

Enc: Given pk, anybody can encrypt a message $m = (m^{(1)} \| \ldots \| m^{(v)}) \in \mathcal{M}$ as follows:
First, select $\ell \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \{1, \ldots, v\}$ and $k_\ell \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q$, and compute the special component of the ciphertext $(U_\ell, V_\ell, W_\ell) \in \mathcal{G}_2 \times \mathcal{G}_1 \times \{0, 1\}^\kappa$, where $U_\ell \doteq e(P_\ell, R_\ell)^{k_\ell}$, $V \doteq k_\ell Q_\ell$ and $W_\ell \doteq m^{(\ell)} \oplus H(h_\ell^{k_\ell})$.
Then, select $k \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q$, and compute the remaining pieces of the ciphertext as: $(U, V, W_1, \ldots, W_{\ell-1}, W_{\ell+1}, \ldots, W_v)$, where $U \doteq e(P, R)^k$, $V \doteq kQ$, and $W_j \doteq m^{(j)} \oplus H(\bar{h}_j^k)$, for $j = 1, \ldots, v$, $j \neq \ell$. The ciphertext is set to be the tuple $\psi \doteq \langle \ell, U_\ell, V_\ell, U, V, W_1, \ldots, W_v \rangle$.

[6] The shared scheme is not used for tracing, so $\bar{A}_{j,1}$ can be safely omitted ($\bar{A}_{j,0}$ is included only so that $\bar{h}_j$ can be computed.)

Dec: Given a ciphertext $\psi = \langle \ell, U_\ell, V_\ell, U, V, W_1, \ldots, W_v \rangle \in \mathbb{Z} \times (\mathcal{G}_2 \times \mathcal{G}_1)^2 \times \mathcal{M}$, u_i computes for each $j = 1, \ldots, v, j \neq \ell$:

$$h_\ell^{k_\ell} = (U_\ell)^{\alpha_{\ell, \omega_\ell^{(i)}}} \cdot e(V_\ell, B_{\ell, \omega_\ell^{(i)}}) \quad \text{and} \quad \bar{h}_j^k = (U)^{\bar{\alpha}_{j, \omega_j^{(i)}}} \cdot e(V, \bar{B}_{j, \omega_j^{(i)}})$$

recovers $m^{(\ell)} = W_\ell \oplus H(h_\ell^{k_\ell})$ and $m^{(j)} = W_j \oplus H(\bar{h}_j^k)$ (for $j \in \{1, \ldots, v\} \setminus \{\ell\}$) and outputs $m \doteq (m^{(1)} \| \ldots \| m^{(v)})$.

Trace: Given pk, anybody can extract the "traitor codeword" $\hat{\omega} \doteq (\hat{\omega}^{(1)}, \ldots, \hat{\omega}^{(v)}) \in \{0,1\}^v$ from a decoder $\mathcal{D}$ by making $O(v)$ queries to $\mathcal{D}$. At a high level, the idea is to iteratively derive each $\hat{\omega}^{(\ell)}$ by feeding $\mathcal{D}$ with an invalid ciphertext that looks valid in the "shared" components, but is actually a *probe* (in the sense of Section 4.3) on the ℓ-th "special" component. In this way, if $\mathcal{D}$ contains only one of the two user-keys for the ℓ-th "special" two-user component (say, $\alpha_{\ell, \tau^{(\ell)}}$), its reply will reveal the value of $\tau^{(\ell)}$. More in detail, to extract $\tau^{(\ell)}$ from $\mathcal{D}$, **Trace** queries $\mathcal{D}$ with ciphertexts of the form $\hat{\psi}^{(\ell)} \doteq \langle \ell, \hat{U}_\ell, \hat{V}_\ell, U^{(\ell)}, V^{(\ell)}, W_1^{(\ell)}, \ldots, \hat{W}_\ell^{(\ell)}, \ldots, W_v^{(\ell)} \rangle$, where $k_\ell, k'_\ell, k^{(\ell)} \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q$, $\hat{m}^{(\ell)} = \hat{m}_1^{(\ell)}, \ldots, \hat{m}_v^{(\ell)}$ is drawn at random from $\mathcal{M}$, $\sigma^{(\ell)}$ is a random bit, $W_j^{(\ell)} \doteq \hat{m}_j^{(\ell)} \oplus H(h_j^{k^{(\ell)}})$ for each $j = 1, \ldots, v, j \neq \ell$, and

$$\hat{U}_\ell \doteq e(P_\ell, R_\ell)^{k'_\ell} \qquad \hat{V}_\ell \doteq k_\ell Q_\ell \qquad U^{(\ell)} \doteq e(P, R)^{k^{(\ell)}} \qquad V^{(\ell)} \doteq k^{(\ell)} Q$$
$$\hat{W}_\ell^{(\ell)} \doteq \hat{m}_\ell^{(\ell)} \oplus H(e(P_\ell, A_{\ell, \tau^{(\ell)}})^{k'_\ell} \cdot e(\hat{V}_\ell, B_{\ell, \tau^{(\ell)}})).$$

Let $m^{*(\ell)} \doteq (m_1^{*(\ell)} \| \ldots \| m_v^{*(\ell)})$ be the plaintext output by $\mathcal{D}$ when fed with the ciphertext $\hat{\psi}^{(\ell)}$. If $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}^{(\ell)}, m^{*(\ell)}) = 1$, then set $\hat{\omega}^{(\ell)} = \sigma^{(\ell)}$; otherwise, pick fresh random $k_\ell, k'_\ell, k^{(\ell)}$ from $\mathbb{Z}_q$, $\hat{m}^{(\ell)}$ from $\mathcal{M}$, $\sigma^{(\ell)}$ from $\{0,1\}$, and repeat, until either $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}^{(\ell)}, m^{*(\ell)}) = 1$, or the iteration has failed some fixed polynomial number of time, in which case $\hat{\omega}^{(\ell)}$ is set arbitrarily.

After this process has been repeated for $\ell = 1, \ldots, v$, the resulting "traitor codeword" $\hat{\omega}$ is handed to the tracer, who (knowing the random coins $r_\mathcal{C}$ used in generating $\mathcal{C}$) can run it through the tracing algorithm $\mathcal{T}(r_\mathcal{C}, \cdot)$ of the collusion-secure code $\mathcal{C}$, thus obtaining a value in $\{1, \ldots, n, 0\}$, which is the output of **Trace**.

Remark 15. Since the **Trace** algorithm needs msk only in the off-line phase, which does not access the pirate decoder and is much less computation-intensive,[7] our multi-user scheme supports local public traceability.

Remark 16. We bound the number of trials that **Trace** performs to extract each bit $\hat{\omega}^{(\ell)}$ because a pirate decoder holding both keys for position ℓ could cause the test $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}^{(\ell)}, m^{*(\ell)}) = 1$ to fail with probability 1. A suitable value for this bound is $O(1/p_\mathcal{D})$, where $p_\mathcal{D}$ is the success probability (over random valid ciphertexts) of the decoder under tracing, which can be efficiently estimated using Chernoff bounds.

[7] For the scheme of [23], for example, such computation consists just of a matrix-vector multiplication.

Remark 17. Notice that the size of the message blocks can be shrunk to any $\kappa' \leq \kappa$, by choosing a universal hash function $H : \mathcal{G}_2 \to \{0,1\}^{\kappa'}$. This is possible as long as $\kappa' > \log v + \log(1/\varepsilon) = O(\log t + \log\log(n/\varepsilon) + \log(1/\varepsilon))$, which ensures that, during tracing, the probability of a hash collision in any of the v components of the scheme is bounded by ε. For a typical choice of parameters ($n = 2^{30}$, $\varepsilon = 2^{-30}$, $t = 30$), κ' can be chosen as low as 64 bits.

Pre-Processing Messages with AONT's. An AONT is an efficient, unkeyed, randomized transformation, with the property that it is hard to invert unless the *entire* output is known. (For a formal definition, see [8, 9].) As for specific instantiations, Boyko showed in [8] that the *Optimal Asymmetric Encryption Padding* (OAEP)[3] can be proven secure as an AONT in the Random Oracle Model. In [9], Canetti *et al.* described constructions in the standard model based on the notion of *Exposure-Resilient Functions*.

For our purposes, it suffices to think of an AONT as a length-preserving algorithm $\mathrm{AONT}(m; r)$, where $m \in (\{0,1\}^\kappa)^{v-1}$ is the message to be processed and r is an additional random value, of the same length as each message block *i.e.*, $|r| = \kappa$. In what follows, we denote by $M \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathrm{AONT}(m)$ the process of selecting a random r from $\{0,1\}^\kappa$ and setting $M \leftarrow \mathrm{AONT}(m; r)$. The resulting AONT-transformed message $M = (M_1, \ldots, M_v)$ is an element of $(\{0,1\}^\kappa)^v$, so that it can be encrypted with the $\mathbf{Enc}$ algorithm described above. We can thus define a multi-user scheme with AONT pre-processing by modifying the $\mathbf{Enc}$ and $\mathbf{Dec}$ algorithms as:

$$\mathbf{Enc}'(m) \doteq \mathbf{Enc}(\mathrm{AONT}(m)) \qquad \mathbf{Dec}'(\psi) \doteq \mathrm{AONT}^{-1}(\mathbf{Dec}(\psi))$$

Notice that the use of AONT pre-processing in the full-blown scheme implies an expansion in the message size by roughly a factor $1 + 1/v$, which still results in an asymptotical unitary ciphertext-to-plaintext ratio.

4.5 Indistinguishability under Chosen-Plaintext Attack

In this section, we assess the security of the multi-user scheme of Section 4.4. (For lack of space, we defer all proofs for this section to the full version [13].)

We start by verifying the intuition that AONT pre-processing does not hurt security:

Lemma 18. *If the multi-user scheme without AONT pre-processing is secure w.r.t. indistinguishability under chosen-plaintext attack, then the multi-user scheme with AONT pre-processing is secure w.r.t. the same notion.*

Next, we observe that the security of the multi-user scheme from Section 4.4 can be reduced (via a hybrid argument) to the security of the two-user scheme from Section 4.1:

Lemma 19. *If our two-user scheme is secure w.r.t. indistinguishability under chosen-plaintext attack, then our multi-user scheme without AONT pre-processing is secure w.r.t. the same notion.*

In light of Theorem 9, our main security theorem follows immediately from Lemmata 18 and 19:

Theorem 20. *Under the* DBDH *assumption for* $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$*, the scheme in Section 4.4 is secure w.r.t. indistinguishability under chosen-plaintext attack.*

4.6 Traceability

Similarly to the case of the 2-user scheme of Section 4.1, the traceability of our multi-user scheme (with AONT pre-processing) is based on the notions of *valid* and *probe* ciphertexts:

Definition 21. *Let $\ell \in [1, v]$, $\sigma \in \{0,1\}$, $\hat{m} \in \mathcal{M}$, $\hat{M} = (\hat{M}_1, \ldots, \hat{M}_v) \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathrm{AONT}(\hat{m})$, $\hat{U}_\ell \in \mathcal{G}_2$, $\hat{V}_\ell \in \mathcal{G}_1$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}_q$, $U = e(P, R)^k$, $V = kQ$, $W_j = \hat{M}_j \oplus H(h_j^k)$ $(j = 1, \ldots, v,\ j \neq \ell)$, $\hat{W}_\ell = \hat{M}_\ell \oplus H(\hat{U}_\ell^{\alpha_{\ell,\sigma}} e(\hat{V}_\ell, B_{\ell,\sigma}))$, and $\hat{\psi} = \langle \ell, \hat{U}_\ell, \hat{V}_\ell, U, V, W_1, \ldots, \hat{W}_\ell, \ldots, W_v \rangle$. We say that the ciphertext $\hat{\psi}$ is:*

- ***valid**, if $\hat{U}_\ell = e(P_\ell, R_\ell)^{k_\ell}, \hat{V}_\ell = k_\ell Q_\ell$, for some $k_\ell \in \mathbb{Z}_q$;*
- *(ℓ, σ)-**probe**, if $\hat{U}_\ell = e(P_\ell, R_\ell)^{k'_\ell}, \hat{V}_\ell = k_\ell Q_\ell$, for distinct $k_\ell, k'_\ell \in \mathbb{Z}_q$.*

Our analysis is organized as follows. Let T denote the set of indices of the t traitors. Lemma 22 proves the computational indistinguishability of valid ciphertexts *vs.* (ℓ, τ^ℓ)-probes when only the τ^ℓ subkey is known for position ℓ. It follows (Corollary 23) that pirate decoders must decrypt such (ℓ, τ^ℓ)-probes correctly (w.r.t. the chosen resemblance relation). Lemma 24 then shows that instead $(\ell, 1 - \tau^\ell)$-probes cannot be properly decrypted, and Lemma 25 combines Corollary 23 and Lemma 24 to argue that the chances that the ℓ-th stage of tracing fails to extract the correct bit $\hat{\omega}^{(\ell)} = \tau^\ell$ from $\mathcal{D}$ are negligible, which implies the overall traceability of our scheme (Theorem 26).

Lemma 22 (Indistinguishability of Valid *vs.* Probe Ciphertexts). *Under the* DBDH *assumption for $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$, given the public key $\mathsf{pk} = (q, \mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2, e, H, P_j, Q_j, R_j, (A_{j,0}, B_{j,0}, A_{j,1}, B_{j,1})_{j=1,\ldots,v}, P, Q, R, (\bar{A}_{j,0}, \bar{B}_{j,0}, \bar{B}_{j,1})_{j=1,\ldots,v})$ and the secret keys $\mathsf{sk}_i \doteq ((\alpha_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}})_{j=1,\ldots,v}, (\bar{\alpha}_{j,\omega_j^{(i)}})_{j=1,\ldots,v})$ for each $i \in T$, it is infeasible to distinguish valid ciphertexts from (ℓ, τ^ℓ)-probes, if the codewords of all traitors in T have bit τ^ℓ at position ℓ.*

Proof. Since the ℓ-th "special" sub-schemes is completely independent from the rest of our construction, the thesis follows as a simple reduction to Lemma 11. □

Corollary 23. *Let $\mathcal{D}$, $\mathcal{R}$ be the pirate decoder and resemblance relation output by a traitor strategy $\mathcal{A}$ based on the user keys of the traitors in T, such that $p_\mathcal{D}$ is non-negligible and $p_\mathcal{R}$ is negligible* (cf. *Definition 8). Assume the codewords of all the traitors in T have bit τ^ℓ at position ℓ, and let $\hat{\psi}$ be an (ℓ, τ^ℓ)-probe for a message $\hat{m} \overset{R}{\leftarrow} \mathcal{M}$. Under the* DBDH *assumption, $\hat{p}_\mathcal{D} \doteq \Pr[\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1 \mid m^* \overset{R}{\leftarrow} D(\hat{\psi})]$ is non-negligible.*

Proof. Reduces to Lemma 22 exactly as Corollary 12 reduces to Lemma 11.

Lemma 24. *Replacing $\hat{\psi}$ with an $(\ell, 1 - \tau^\ell)$-probe in the setting of Corollary 23, $\Pr[\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1]$ is negligible, if the AONT employed in the system is secure.*

Proof. The argument described in the proof of Lemma 13 implies that the AONT-transformed message block $\hat{M}_\ell$ is computationally hidden from the pirate decoder's view. By the properties of AONT's, the whole original message $\hat{m}$ is then also computationally hidden from $\mathcal{D}$, so that in fact $\hat{m}$ is just a random message independent from the output m^* of $\mathcal{D}$, and hence $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1$ holds with probability $p_{\mathcal{R}}$, which is negligible. □

Lemma 25. *Consider the ℓ-th stage of the* $\mathbf{Trace}$ *algorithm, when the tracer queries the decoder $\mathcal{D}$ with (ℓ, σ)-probes for random $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}$. If all codewords of the traitors in T have bit τ^ℓ in the ℓ-th position, then the ℓ-th stage will terminate setting $\hat{\omega}^\ell = 1 - \tau^\ell$ with negligible probability.*

Proof. The assumption that $\mathcal{D}$ does not contain both keys for position ℓ implies, by Corollary 23, that the ℓ-th stage of $\mathbf{Trace}$ will on average terminate after $2/p_{\mathcal{D}}$ queries to $\mathcal{D}$. Upon termination, $\mathbf{Trace}$'s output will be wrong only if it happens that $\mathcal{D}$ replies to an $(\ell, 1 - \tau^\ell)$-probe $\hat{\psi}$ with an m^* satisfying $\mathcal{R}(\hat{m}, m^*) = 1$, which by Corollary 23, Lemma 24, and Bayes' theorem is easily seen to equal $p_{\mathcal{R}}/(p_{\mathcal{D}} + p_{\mathcal{R}})$, which is negligible. □

Theorem 26. *Under the* DBDH *assumption for $(\mathcal{G}_1, \mathcal{G}_2)$, the multi-user* $\mathbf{Trace}$ *algorithm from Section 4.4 has a negligible traceability error.*

Proof. Let $\hat{\omega} = (\hat{\omega}^{(1)}, \ldots, \hat{\omega}^{(v)})$ be the "traitor codeword" recovered at the end of the publicly traceable phase of $\mathbf{Trace}$ (*cf.* Section 4.4). By the union bound, Lemma 25 implies that $\hat{\omega}$ will be correct in all positions ℓ where all traitors show the same bit, except with negligible probability. By the collusion resistance of the code $\mathcal{C}$ underlying the key assignment of $\mathbf{Setup}$, the codeword-tracing algorithm $\mathcal{T}$ (*cf.* Definition 4) will then be able to tie such traitor codeword $\hat{\omega}$ to the identity of one of the traitors in T (except with negligible probability ε), as required. □

Remark 27. As noted above, by employing AONT's, the security and tracing capabilities of our multi-user scheme follow almost directly from those of the embedded "special" sub-scheme. In fact, even if we were to suppress the shared sub-scheme (*e.g.*, by setting $W_j = M_j$, for $j = 1, \ldots, v, j \neq \ell$), the multi-user scheme would still be secure and tracing would still be possible (thanks also to the random rotation of the special position ℓ between 1 and v). Using the shared sub-scheme, however, reinforces the semantic security of the scheme, though at the cost of a greater computational load, due to the larger number of pairing computations needed for encryption and decryption.

5 Space and Time Parameters in a Concrete Instantiation

Existing constructions of constant-rate traitor tracing schemes (including ours) are based on the use of collusion-secure fingerprint codes[8] [6, 23], and in particular are applicable for messages of size proportional to the length of the code, which in the case of the optimal codes due to Tardos [23] is $O(t^2(\log n + \log \frac{1}{\varepsilon}))$. For a typical choice of

[8] [20] actually employs IPP codes, but similar considerations on code length and message size apply to such codes as well.

parameters, *e.g.* user population $n = 2^{30}$, tracing error probability $\varepsilon = 2^{-30}$ and traceable threshold $t = 30$, the resulting code length is about 5 million bits. Instantiating our construction with such codes yields a scheme with plaintext and ciphertext of size 41 MBytes. (The ciphertext size is equal to the plaintext size, as the additive overhead is less than 1 KByte.) These values are well within the range of multimedia applications, since 41 MBytes roughly corresponds to 33 seconds of DVD-quality (high-resolution) video, 4 minutes of VCD-quality (low-resolution) video and 25–50 minutes of audio. The resulting public and secret keys roughly require respectively 1.5GByte and 206 MBytes. Although quite large, such a public key could be stored in commodity hardware (*e.g.,* it would fit in the hard disk of an iPod), whereas user secret keys could be kept in Secure Digital memory cards, like those commonly available for PDAs.

Another important issue for a concrete instantiation is the rate at which encrypted content can be processed. In our scheme, decryption requires one paring per 1024 bits of content, which, using the PBC Library [18] on a desktop PC, takes approximately 16 msec. However, in our context, the pairings to be computed all have one of their two input-points in common: as reported in [2], pre-processing in similar settings more than halves the computation time, so that one easily gets in the order of 128 pairings/sec, corresponding to a near-CD-quality audio rate of 128 Kbits/sec. More specialized software implementations [1] of the pairing operation can further reduce its computational cost to around 3 msec; whereas hardware implementations, even under conservative assumptions on the hardware architecture [14], can obtain running time below 1 msec, attaining the 1Mbits/sec data rate needed for VCD-quality video.

6 Conclusion

We present the first public-key traitor tracing scheme with efficient black-box tracing and optimal transmission rate. Our treatment improves the standard modeling of black-box tracing by additionally accounting for pirate strategies that attempt to escape tracing by purposedly rendering the transmitted content at lower quality (*e.g.* by dropping every other frame from the decrypted video-clip, or skipping few seconds from the original audio file). We also point out and resolve an issue in the black-box traitor tracing mechanism of both the previous schemes in this setting [16, 10]. Our construction is based on the decisional bilinear Diffie-Hellman assumption, and additionally provides the same features of public traceability as (a repaired version of) [10], which is less efficient and requires non-standard assumptions for bilinear groups.

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