

# Bifurcated Signatures:

## Folding the Accountability vs. Anonymity Dilemma into a Single Private Signing Scheme

Benoît Libert  
ENSL, CNRS, France

Khoa Nguyen  
UOW, Australia

Thomas Peters  
UCLouvain, Belgium

Moti Yung  
Google, USA



Zagreb (remote) - the 21st of October



→ Initiate research on

## Bifurcated Cryptography

### On the one branch

End-to-End Encryption  
Unconditional Anonymity  
Everlasting Privacy  
Perfectly hiding...  
⋮

### On the other branch

Key Escrow  
Identity Escrow  
Accountability  
Perfectly binding...  
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**Goal:** reconcile both branches in a single scheme

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Ring Signatures  
(Unconditional Anonymity)

... even if linkable,  $k$ -times

### On the other branch

Group signatures  
(Traceability)

... even with restricted opening

One exception: Accountable tracing signatures

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*Why should we choose the branch  
at the key generation time?*

*Can we avoid authoritarily freezing  
the targeted security notions?*

*Can we have the best of both branches  
in a flexible and rallying feature?*

→ We introduce the primitive of

## Bifurcated Anonymous Signatures

### Predicate-based branching

Pointwise traceability, known at the signing time → educated choice

### Branch-Hiding

Whether a signature is traceable or not is hidden → free choice

### Branch-Soundness

Malicious signers/authority cannot flip the branch → secure choice



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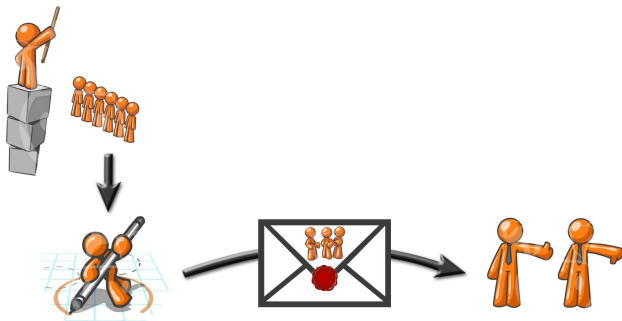
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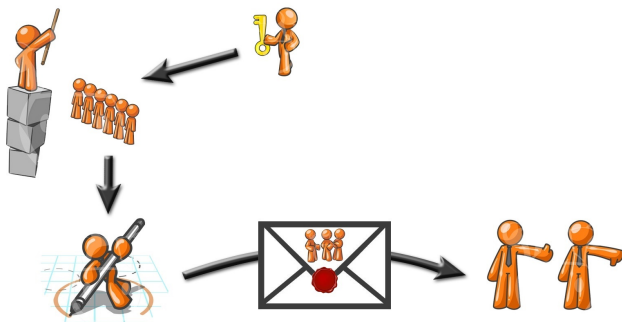


bifurcated: “two branches in one”

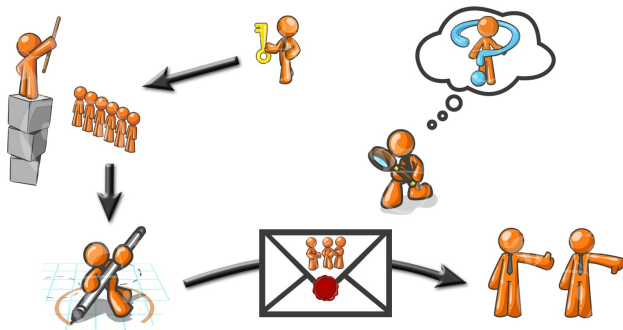
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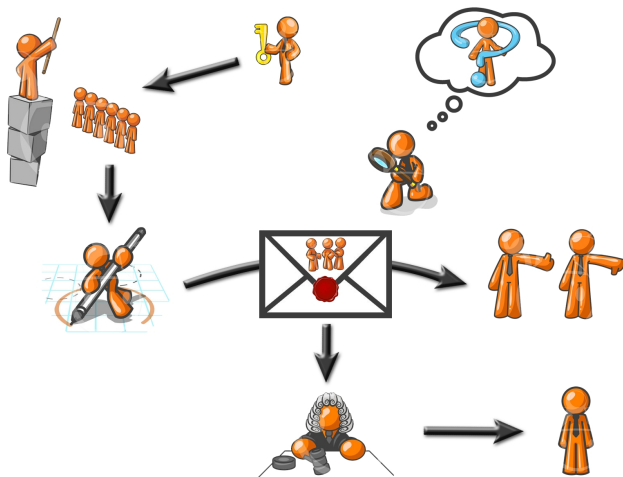
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# (Short) State of The Art

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Registered group members can sign messages while remaining anonymous
- Ateniese-Camenisch-Joye-Tsudik (Crypto'00): coalition-resistance  
... but analyzed *w.r.t.* a list of security requirements
- Bellare-Micciancio-Warinschi (Eurocrypt'03):  
Security model; construction based on trapdoor permutations
- Bellare-Shi-Zhang (CT-RSA'05), Kiayias-Yung (IJSN 2006):  
Model extensions to dynamic groups
- Rivest-Shamir-Tauman (Asiacrypt'01): birth of Ring Signatures  
How to leak a secret, whistleblowing app., unconditional anonymity
- Bender-Katz-Morselli (JoC'07):  
Stronger Definitions, constructions without random oracles



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# (Short) Related Work

- **Restricted openings in Group Signatures:**  
Message-dependent opening, Traceable signatures
- **Restricted anonymity in Ring Signatures:**  
Linkable/Traceable ring signatures,  $k$ -times anonymity
- Distinct (properties of) opening authorities, computational anonymity:  
Convertible linkable signatures, Accountable ring signatures, interactive
- Controlling who can sign what:  
Attribute-based/Policy-based/Functional signatures, Dynamic groups
- Ring and group signatures co-exist:  
Accountable tracing signatures, unnotified users, setup frozen

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# Our Contributions

## Bifurcated Anonymous Signatures

- Formal primitive: predicate family, branch-hiding, branch-soundness
- Unconditional anonymity if the predicate  $P(M, id, w)$  evaluates to 1
- Extractable mode (indistinguishable): traceability, unframeability

## Generic Constructions

- General predicate as bounded-depth Boolean circuit
- Signature-size independent of the circuit size
- LWE instantiation (FHE, poly-) + Paring-based instantiation ( $NC^1$ )

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## High-level Description

- **Setup:**  $\mathcal{S}_{GM}, \mathcal{S}_{OA}$ , predicate family  $\mathcal{P} = \{P_i : \mathcal{M} \times \mathcal{ID} \times \mathcal{W} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}\}_i$ ;
- **Join:**  $[GM(\mathcal{S}_{GM}) \Rightarrow \mathcal{U}] \rightarrow (\text{id}, \text{cert}, \text{sec})$ , **Sign:**  $(\text{id}, \text{cert}, \text{sec}, M, w, P) \rightarrow \sigma$
- **Open:**  $(\mathcal{S}_{OA}, M, \sigma, P) \rightarrow \text{id} \in \mathcal{ID} \cup \{\perp\}$ , **Verify:**  $(M, \sigma, P) \rightarrow 0/1$

## Potential Applications

- Money-laundering/Tax-evasion protection in financial transactions:  
 $M = \text{Enc}(\text{"who-to-who"})$ ,  $w = \text{"amount"}$ ,  $P_i = \text{"}w \in [a_i, b_i] \vee \text{Dec}(M):\text{local"}$
- Renting/Buying e-book:  $P_i = \text{"only harmless content?"}$
- Free investigative journalism:  $P_i = \text{"id in country}_i \text{ w/o freedom of speech?"}$

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# Security notions

## Privacy: complementary anonymity flavors

- **Non-traceable case:**  $P(M, \text{id}_0, w_0) = 1 = P(M, \text{id}_1, w_1)$   
 $\implies \sigma \leftarrow \text{Sign}(\text{id}_b, \text{cert}_b, \text{sec}_b, M, w_b, P)$  statistically hides  $b$
- **Traceable case:** includes  $P(M, \text{id}_0, w_0) \neq P(M, \text{id}_1, w_1)$ , branch-hiding  
 $\implies$  CCA-like definition with opening queries, computational

## Security: two-step notions

- **Extractable mode:**  $\text{SimSetup}$  creates  $\tau$ ,  $\text{Extract}_\tau$  retrieves  $(\text{id}, w)$  w.o.p.
- **Branch-soundness:** (comp.) indistinguishable modes given  $\mathcal{S}_{\text{GM}}$  and  $\mathcal{S}_{\text{OA}}$
- Given extracted  $(\text{id}, w)$  define **traceability** and **unframeability**

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# Generic Construction

To join the group, pick a signing key pair  $(sk_{id}, pk_{id})$ , set  $sec = sk_{id}$  and get

$$cert \leftarrow \text{GM.Sign}(\mathcal{S}_{\text{GM}}, (id, pk_{id}))$$

**Signing a message**  $M \in \{0, 1\}^\ell$ :

- Compute the message-dependent circuit  $C_M(\cdot, \cdot) = P(M, \cdot, \cdot)$
- Pick one-time key pair  $(VK, SK)$  of a SUF-CMA signature scheme

- Commit to  $(id, w)$  by computing an R-lossy ciphertext

$$ct_{(id, w)} \leftarrow \text{RL.Enc}(pk_{RL}, VK, (id, w))$$

- Let  $c_{ev} = C_M(id, w)$  and compute a lossy ciphertext of

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- Also compute a Homomorphic Equivocal Commitment of

$$\text{com}_{(id, w)} = \text{HE.Com}((id, w); r)$$

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# Conclusion

## New Bifurcated Cryptographic Primitive

- Anonymous signatures: unconditional anonymity vs. accountability
- Generic construction *in the standard model*, bounded-depth circuit
- Instantiations: LWE + Pairing-based ( $23 \cdot |w| + 44 \cdot |\text{id}| + 171$  in  $\mathbb{G}$ )

## Open Problems

- **Bifurcated encryption**: conditional escrow frozen in the predicate
- **Practical BiAS**: specific predicates (ROM, simple assumptions)
- **Model Extensions**: malicious keys (subverted anonymity), revocation

Thank you!

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- **Bifurcated encryption:** conditional escrow frozen in the predicate
- **Practical BiAS:** specific predicates (ROM, simple assumptions)
- **Model Extensions:** malicious keys (subverted anonymity), revocation

Thank you!



# Conclusion

## New Bifurcated Cryptographic Primitive

- Anonymous signatures: unconditional anonymity vs. accountability
- Generic construction *in the standard model*, bounded-depth circuit
- Instantiations: LWE + Pairing-based ( $23 \cdot |w| + 44 \cdot |\text{id}| + 171$  in  $\mathbb{G}$ )

## Open Problems

- **Bifurcated encryption:** conditional escrow frozen in the predicate
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**Thank you!**