

# Authentication protocols



## Identity attributes

### ▷ Set of attributes for setting apart individuals

- ♦ Name
- ♦ Numerical identifiers
  - Fixed for life
  - Variable with context
- ♦ Address
- ♦ Photo
- ♦ Identity of relatives
  - Usually parents
- ♦ ...



## Authentication: Definition

▷ Proof that an entity has a claimed identity attribute

- Hi, I'm Joe
- Prove it!
- Here are my Joe's credentials
- Credentials accepted/not accepted
  
- Hi, I'm over 18
- Prove it!
- Here is the proof
- Proof accepted/not accepted



## Authentication: proof types

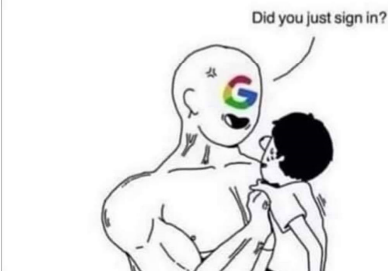
- ▷ Something we know
- ♦ A secret memorized (or written down...) by Joe
- ▷ Something we have
- ♦ An object/token solely held by Joe
- ▷ Something we are
- ♦ Joe's Biometry
- ▷ Multi-factor authentication
- ♦ Join or consecutive use of different proof types



## Multi-factor verification jokes

me: \*enters password correctly on new device\*

google:



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

5

## Authentication: goals

- ▷ Authenticate interactors
  - ♦ People, services, servers, hosts, networks, etc.
- ▷ Enable the enforcement of authorization policies and mechanisms
  - ♦ Authorization  $\Rightarrow$  authentication
- ▷ Facilitate the exploitation of other security-related protocols
  - ♦ e.g. key distribution for secure communication



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

6

## Authentication: requirements

### ▷ Trustworthiness

- ♦ How good is it in proving the identity of an entity?
- ♦ How difficult is it to be deceived?
- ♦ Level of Assurance (LoA) (NIST, eIDAS, ISO 29115)
  - LoA 1 - Little or no confidence in the asserted identity
  - LoA 2 - Some confidence in the asserted identity
  - LoA 3 - High confidence in the asserted identity
  - LoA 4 - Very high confidence in the asserted identity

### ▷ Secrecy

- ♦ No disclosure of secrets used by legitimate entities



## Authentication: requirements

### ▷ Robustness

- ♦ Prevent attacks to the protocol data exchanges
- ♦ Prevent on-line DoS attack scenarios
- ♦ Prevent off-line dictionary attacks

### ▷ Simplicity

- ♦ It should be as simple as possible to prevent entities from choosing dangerous shortcuts

### ▷ Deal with vulnerabilities introduced by people

- ♦ They have a natural tendency to facilitate or to take shortcuts



## Authentication: Entities and deployment model

### ▷ Entities

- ♦ People
- ♦ Hosts
- ♦ Networks
- ♦ Services / servers

### ▷ Deployment model

- ♦ Along the time
  - Only when interaction starts
  - Continuously along the interaction
- ♦ Directionality
  - Unidirectional
  - Bidirectional (or mutual)



## Authentication interactions: Basic approaches

### ▷ Direct approach

- ♦ Provide **credentials**
- ♦ Wait for verdict
- ♦ Authenticator checks credentials against what it knows

### ▷ Challenge-response approach

- ♦ Get **challenge**
- ♦ Provide a **response** computed from the **challenge** and the **credentials**
- ♦ Wait for verdict
- ♦ Authenticator checks response for the challenge provided and the credentials it knows



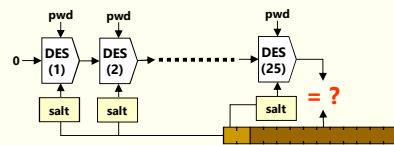
## Authentication of people: Direct approach w/ known password

- ▷ A password is matched with a stored value
  - ♦ For a claimed identity (username)

- ▷ Personal stored value:

- ♦ Transformed by a unidirectional function
  - Key Derivation Function (KDF)
  - Preferably slow!
  - Bcrypt, scrypt, Argon2, PBKDF2
- ♦ UNIX: DES hash + salt
- ♦ Linux: KDF + salt
- ♦ Windows: digest function

DES hash =  $\text{DES}_{\text{pwd}}^{25}(0)$   
 $\text{DES}_k^n(x) = \text{DES}_k(\text{DES}_k^{n-1}(x))$   
 Permutation of 12 subkeys' bit pairs with salt (12 bits)



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

## Authentication of people: Direct approach w/ known password

- ▷ Advantage

- ♦ Simplicity!

- ▷ Problems

- ♦ Usage of predictable passwords
  - They enable dictionary attacks
- ♦ Different passwords for different systems
  - To prevent impersonation by malicious admins
  - But our memory has limits!
- ♦ Exchange along insecure communication channels
  - Eavesdroppers can easily learn the password
  - e.g. Unix remote services, PAP



### Top 15 2019 by Splashdata

- 1 - 123456
- 2 - 123456789
- 3 - qwerty
- 4 - password
- 5 - 1234567
- 6 - 12345678
- 7 - 12345
- 8 - iloveyou
- 9 - 111111
- 10 - 123123
- 11 - abc123
- 12 - qwerty123
- 13 - 1q2w3e4r
- 14 - admin
- 15 - qwertyuiop



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

source: <https://www.teampassword.com/blog/top-50-worst-passwords-of-2019>  
 Image <https://www.pinterest.com/networkboxusa/it-humor>

12

## Password selection jokes

Someone figured out my PASSWORD  
Now I have to rename my dog.

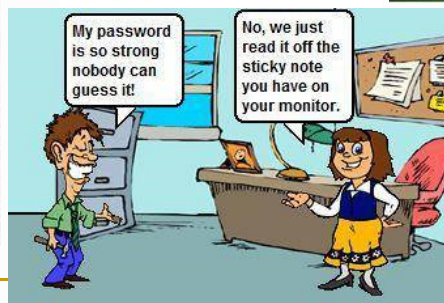
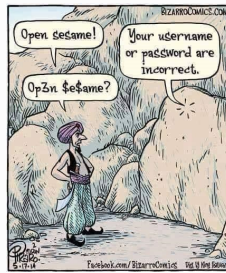


Dear IT,  
the more "secure" you try to make our passwords by making them impossible to remember, the more likely I am to save them all in a big word doc named "Passwords"

Signed,  
Everyone



Sorry, but your password must contain an uppercase letter, a number, a haiku, a gang sign, a hieroglyph, and the blood of a virgin.

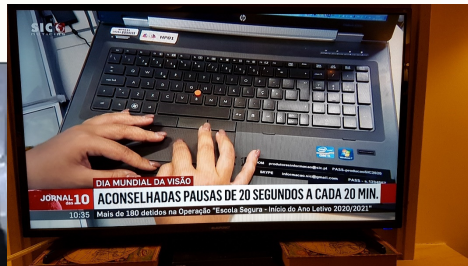


© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

13

## Password bloopers



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

14

## Authentication of people: Direct approach with biometrics

- ▷ People get authenticated using body measurements
  - ♦ Biometric samples or features
  - ♦ Common modalities
    - Fingerprint
    - Facial recognition
    - Palm print
    - Iris scan
    - Voice recognition
    - DNA
- ▷ Measures are compared with personal records
  - ♦ Biometric references (or template)
  - ♦ Registered in the system with a previous enrolment procedure



## Biometrics: advantages

- ▷ Convenient: people do not need to use memory
  - ♦ Just be their self
- ▷ People cannot chose weak passwords
  - ♦ In fact, they don't chose anything
- ▷ Credentials cannot be transferred to others
  - ♦ One cannot delegate their own authentication
- ▷ Stealth identification
  - ♦ Interesting for security surveillance





# Biometrics: problems



- ▷ Usability
  - ♦ Comfort of people, ergonomic
  - ♦ Exploitation scenario
- ▷ Biometrics are still being improved
  - ♦ In many cases they can be easily cheated
  - ♦ Liveness detection
- ▷ People cannot change their credentials
  - ♦ Upon their robbery
- ▷ It can be risky for people
  - ♦ Removal of body parts for impersonation of the victim



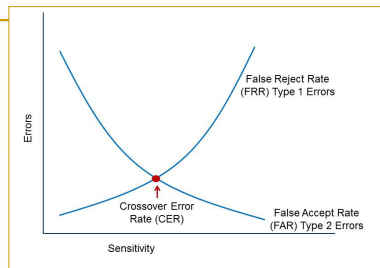
© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

Image source: <https://biometrics.mainguet.org/types/tongue.htm>

17

# Biometrics: problems



- ▷ Sensitivity tuning
  - ♦ Reduction of FRR (annoying)
  - ♦ Reduction of FAR (dangerous)
  - ♦ Tuning is mainly performed with the target population
    - Not with attackers!
- ▷ Not easy to deploy remotely
  - ♦ Requires trusting the remote sample acquisition system
- ▷ Can reveal personal sensitive information
  - ♦ Diseases
- ▷ Credentials cannot be (easily) copied to others
  - ♦ In case of need in exceptional circumstances



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

Image source: <http://www.pearsonitcertification.com/articles/article.aspx?p=1718488>

18

## Authentication of people: Direct approach with OTPs

- ▷ One-time password (OTP)
  - ♦ Credential that can be used only once
- ▷ Advantage
  - ♦ OTPs can be eavesdropped
  - ♦ Eavesdroppers cannot impersonate the OTP owner
    - True for passive eavesdroppers
    - False for active attackers!



## Authentication of people: Direct approach with OTPs

- ▷ Problems
  - ♦ Interactors need to know which password they should use at different occasions
    - Requires some form of synchronization
  - ♦ People may need to use extra resources to maintain or generate one-time passwords
    - Paper sheets
    - Computer programs
    - Special devices, etc.



## Authentication of people: OTPs and secondary channels

- ▷ OTPs are codes sent through secondary channels
  - ♦ A secondary channel is a channel that is not the one where the code is going to be used
    - SMS, email, Twitter, Firebase, QR codes, NFC, etc.
  - ♦ The secondary channel provides the synchronization
    - Just-in-time provision of OTP
- ▷ Two authentications are possible
  - ♦ Confirm a secondary channel provided by a profile owner
    - In order to trust that that channel belongs to the profile owner
  - ♦ Authenticate the owner of a profile
    - Which is bound to a secondary channel



## Authentication of people: OTPs produced from a shared key

- ▷ HOTP (Hash-based One Time Password, RFC 4226)
  - ♦ OTP generated from a counter and a shared key
  - ♦ Counters are updated independently
- ▷ TOTP (Time-based One Time Password, RFC 6238)
  - ♦ OTP generated from a timestamp and a shared password
  - ♦ TOTP is HOTP with timestamps instead of counters
  - ♦ Clocks need a rough synchronization



## Token-based OTP generators: RSA SecurID



- ▷ Personal authentication token
  - Or software modules for handhelds (PDAs, smartphones, etc.)
- ▷ It generates a unique number at a fixed rate
  - Usually one per minute (or 30 seconds)
  - Bound to a person (User ID)
  - Unique number computed with:
    - A 64-bit key stored in the token
    - The actual timestamp
    - A proprietary digest algorithm (SecurID hash)
    - An extra PIN (only for some tokens)



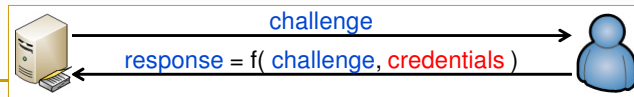
## RSA SecurID

- ▷ OTP-based authentication
  - A user combines their User ID with the current token number  
$$\text{OTP} = \text{User ID}, \text{Token Number}$$
- ▷ An RSA ACE Server does the same and checks for match
  - It also knows the person's key stored in the token
  - There must be a synchronization to tackle clock drifts
    - RSA Security Time Synchronization
- ▷ Robust against dictionary attacks
  - Keys are not selected by people



## Challenge-response approach: Generic description

- ▷ The authenticator provides a challenge
- ▷ The entity being authenticated transforms the challenge
  - ♦ With its authentication credentials
- ▷ The result (response) is sent to the authenticator
- ▷ The authenticator checks the response
  - ♦ Produces a similar result and checks if they match
  - ♦ Transforms the result and checks if it matches the challenge or a related value



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

25

## Challenge-response approach: Generic description

- ▷ Advantage
  - ♦ Authentication credentials are not exposed
- ▷ Problems
  - ♦ People may require means to compute responses
    - Hardware or software
  - ♦ The authenticator may have to have access to shared secrets
    - How can we prevent them from using the secrets elsewhere?
  - ♦ Offline dictionary attacks
    - Against recorded challenge-response dialogs
    - Can reveal secret credentials (passwords, keys)



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

26

## Challenge-response protocols: selection of challenges

- ▷ Challenges cannot be repeated for the same entity
  - ♦ Same challenge → same response
  - ♦ An active attacker can impersonate a user using a previously recorded protocol run
- ▷ Challenges should be nonces
  - ♦ Nonce: number used only once
  - ♦ Stateful services can use counters
  - ♦ Stateless services can use (large) random numbers
  - ♦ Time can be used, but with caution
    - Because one cannot repeat a timestamp



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

27

## Authentication of people: Challenge-response with smartcards

- ▷ Authentication credentials
  - ♦ The smartcard
    - e.g. Citizen Card
  - ♦ The private key stored in the smartcard
  - ♦ The PIN to unlock the private key
- ▷ The authenticator knows
  - ♦ The corresponding public key
  - ♦ Or some personal identifier
    - Which can be related with a public key through a (verifiable) certificate

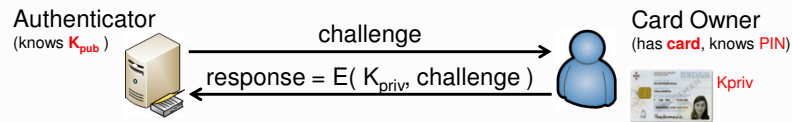


© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

28

## Authentication of people: Challenge-response with smartcards



### ▷ Signature-based protocol

- ♦ The authenticator generates a random challenge
  - Or a value not used before
- ♦ The card owner ciphers the challenge with their private key
  - PIN-protected
- ♦ The authenticator decrypts the result with the public key
  - If the output matches the challenge, the authentication succeeds

### ▷ Encryption-based protocol

- ♦ Possible when private key decryption is available



## Authentication of people: Challenge-response with memorized password

### ▷ Authentication credentials

- ♦ Passwords selected by people

### ▷ The authenticator knows

- ♦ All the registered passwords; or
- ♦ A transformation of each password
  - Preferable option
  - Preferably combined with some local value (salt)
  - Preferable using a tunable function (e.g. iterations)



## Authentication of people: Challenge-response with memorized password

- ▷ The authenticator generates a random challenge
- ▷ The person computes a function of the challenge and password
  - ♦ e.g. a joint digest:  $\text{response} = \text{digest}(\text{challenge}, \text{password})$
  - ♦ e.g. an encryption  $\text{response} = E_{\text{password}}(\text{challenge})$
- ▷ The authenticator does the same (or the inverse)
  - ♦ If the output matches the response (or the challenge), the authentication succeeds
- ▷ Examples
  - CHAP, MS-CHAP v1/v2, S/Key



## PAP & CHAP (RFC 1334, 1992, RFC 1994, 1996)

- ▷ Protocols used in PPP (Point-to-Point Protocol)
  - ♦ Unidirectional authentication
    - Authenticator is not authenticated
- ▷ PPP developed in 1992
  - ♦ Mostly used for dial-up connections
- ▷ PPP protocols are used by PPTP VPNs
  - ♦ e.g. vpn.ua.pt





## PAP & CHAP

(RFC 1334, 1992, RFC 1994, 1996)

### ▷ PAP (PPP Authentication Protocol)

- Simple UID/password presentation
- Insecure cleartext password transmission

### ▷ CHAP (CHallenge-response Authentication Protocol)

Aut → U: authID, challenge

U → Aut: authID, MD5( authID, pwd, challenge ), identity

Aut → U: authID, OK/not OK

- The authenticator may require a reauthentication anytime



## MS-CHAP (Microsoft CHAP)

(RFC 2433, 1998, RFC 2759, 2000)

### ▷ Version 1

A → U: authID, **C**

U → A: **R1, R2**

A → U: OK/not OK

$R1 = \text{DES}_{\text{LMPH}}(C)$

$R2 = \text{DES}_{\text{NTPH}}(C)$

$\text{LMPH} = \text{DEShash}(\text{pwd}')$

$\text{NTPH} = \text{MD4}(\text{pwd})$

$\text{pwd}' = \text{capitalized}(\text{pwd})$

### ▷ Version 2

A → U: authID, **C<sub>A</sub>**

U → A: **C<sub>U</sub>, R1**

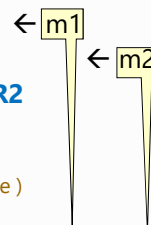
A → U: OK/not OK, **R2**

$R1 = \text{DES}_{\text{PH}}(C)$

$C = \text{SHA}(C_U, C_A, \text{username})$

$\text{PH} = \text{MD4}(\text{password})$

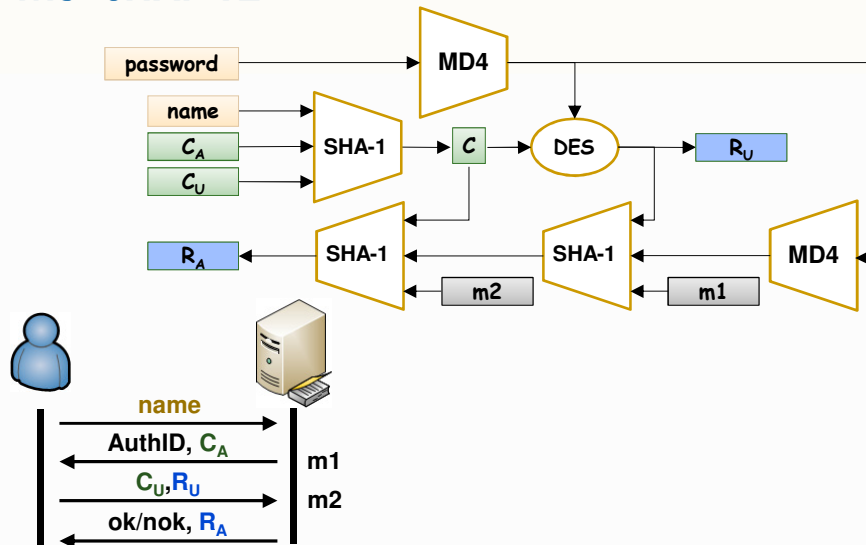
$R2 = \text{SHA}(\text{SHA}(\text{MD4}(\text{PH}), R1, m1), C, m2)$



- Mutual authentication
- Passwords can be updated



## MS-CHAP v2



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

35

## Authentication of people: Generation of OTPs with challenges

- ▷ OTPs can be produced from a challenge received
  - ♦ The fundamental protocol is password-based
    - But passwords are OTPs
  - ♦ OTPs are produced from a challenge
  - ♦ One can use several algorithms to handle OTPs



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

36



## S/Key setup

- ▷ The authenticator defines a random seed
- ▷ The person generates an initial OTP as:  
$$OTP_n = h^n(\text{seed}, \text{pwd}), \text{ where } h = \text{MD4}$$
  - ♦ Some S/Key versions also use MD5 or SHA-1
- ▷ The authenticator stores seed, n and  $OTP_n$  as authentication credentials



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

39

## S/Key authentication protocol

- ▷ Authenticator sends seed & index of the person
  - ♦ They act as a challenge
- ▷ The person generates index-1 OTPs in a row
  - ♦ And selects the last one as result
  - ♦  $\text{result} = OPT_{\text{index}-1}$
- ▷ The authenticator computes  $h(\text{result})$  and compares the result with the stored  $OPT_{\text{index}}$ 
  - ♦ If they match, the authentication succeeds
  - ♦ Upon success, stores the recently used index & OTP
    - $\text{index}-1$  and  $OPT_{\text{index}-1}$



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

40

## S/Key

### ▷ Advantages

- ♦ Users passwords are unknown to authenticators
- ♦ OTPs can be used as ordinary passwords

### ▷ Disadvantages

- ♦ People need an application to compute OTPs
- ♦ Passwords can be derived using dictionary attacks
  - From data stored in authenticators
  - From captured protocol runs



## HOTP (HMAC-based one-time password, RFC 4226)

### ▷ Numeric OTP computed from shared key $K$ and synchronized counter $C$

- ♦ Hash key and counter
  - And increase counter
- ♦ From hash, get a (floating) portion of 31 contiguous bits
  - Dynamic Binary Code (DBC)
- ♦ Compute a  $d$ -long decimal number
  - $d \geq 6$

### ▷ Issues

- ♦ Counter synchronization upon a failure
  - If the authenticator keeps it after a failure, exhaustive search attacks are viable
  - If the authenticator always increments it, DoS attacks are possible
- ♦ Acceptance windows
  - Mitigates minor desynchronizations, but decreases security



## TOPT (Time-based one-time password, RFC 6238)

▷ HOTP with a counter derived from time

$$\triangleright C_T = \left\lfloor \frac{T - T_0}{T_x} \right\rfloor$$

- ♦  $T$  – initial time
- ♦  $T_0$  – initial time
- ♦  $T_x$  – time interval (default: 30 seconds)

▷  $\text{TOTP}(K) = \text{HOTP}(K, C_T)$



## Authentication of people: Challenge-response with shared key

▷ Uses a shared key instead of a password

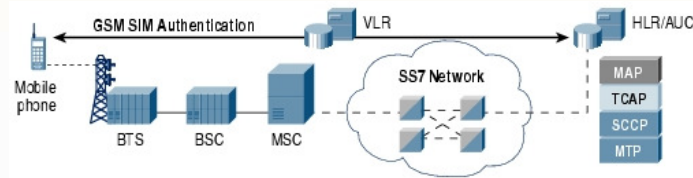
- ♦ Robust against dictionary attacks
- ♦ Requires some token to store the key

▷ Example:

- ♦ GSM



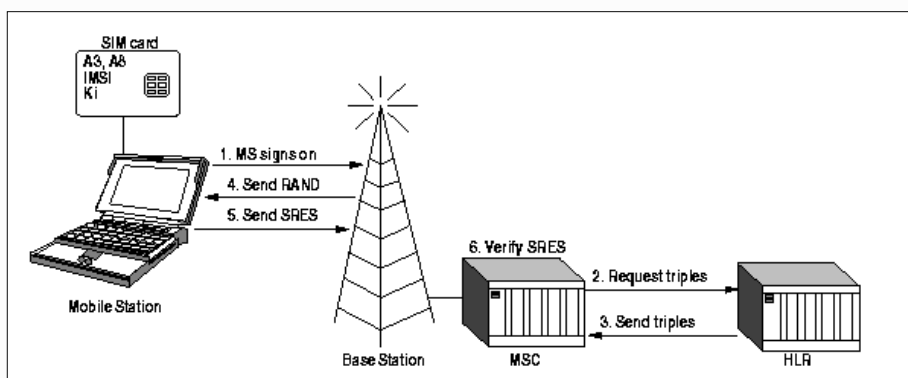
## GSM: authentication architecture



- ▷ Based on a secret key shared between the HLR and the station
  - 128 Ki, stored in the station's SIM card
  - Can only be used after entering a PIN
- ▷ Algorithms (initially not public):
  - A3 for authentication
  - A8 for generating a session key
  - A5 for encrypting the communication
- ▷ A3 and A8 implemented by SIM card
  - Can be freely selected by the operator



## GSM: mobile station authentication



# GSM: mobile station authentication

- ▷ MSC fetches trio from HLR
  - ♦ **RAND, SRES, Kc**
  - ♦ In fact more than one are requested
- ▷ HLR generates RAND and corresponding trio using subscriber's Ki
  - ♦ **RAND**, random value (128 bits)
  - ♦ **SRES** = A3 (Ki, RAND) (32 bits)
  - ♦ **Kc** = A8 (Ki, RAND) (64 bits)
- ▷ Usually operators use COMP128 for A3/A8
  - ♦ Recommended by the GSM Consortium
  - ♦ **[SRES, Kc]** = COMP128 (Ki, RAND)



## Host authentication

- ▷ By name or address
  - ♦ DNS name, IP address, MAC address, other
  - ♦ Extremely weak, no cryptographic proofs
    - Nevertheless, used by many services
    - e.g. NFS, TCP *wrappers*
- ▷ With cryptographic keys
  - ♦ Keys shared among peers
    - With an history of usual interaction
  - ♦ Per-host asymmetric key pair
    - Pre-shared public keys with usual peers
    - Certified public keys with any peer





## Service / server authentication

### ▷ Host authentication

- ♦ All co-located services/servers are indirectly authenticated

### ▷ Per-service/server credentials

- ♦ Shared keys
  - When related with the authentication of people
  - The key shared with each person can be used to authenticate the service to that person
- ♦ Per-service/server asymmetric key pair
  - Certified or not



## TLS (Transport Layer Security, RFC 8446)

### ▷ Secure communication protocol over TCP/IP

- ♦ Created upon SSL V3 (Secure Sockets Layer)
- ♦ Manages per-application secure sessions over TCP/IP
  - Initially conceived for HTTP traffic
  - Actually used for other traffic types

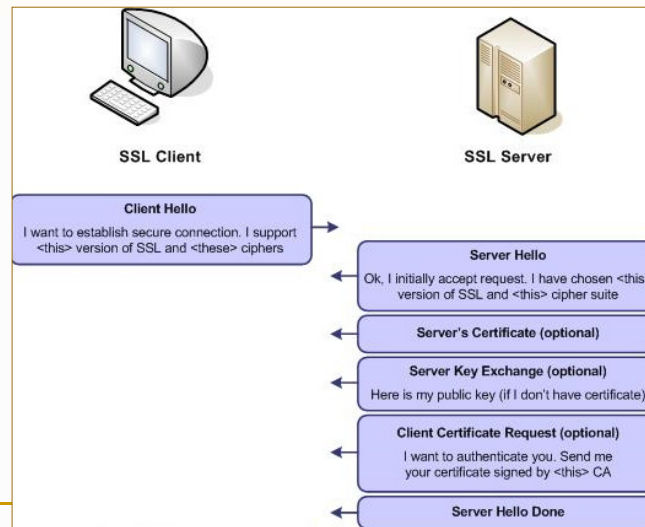
### ▷ There is a similar version for UDP (DTLS, RFC 6347)

### ▷ Security mechanisms

- ♦ Communication confidentiality and integrity
  - Key distribution
- ♦ Authentication of communication endpoints
  - Servers (or, more frequently, services)
  - Client users
  - Both with asymmetric key pairs and certified public keys



## SSL/TLS interaction diagrams (1<sup>st</sup> part)

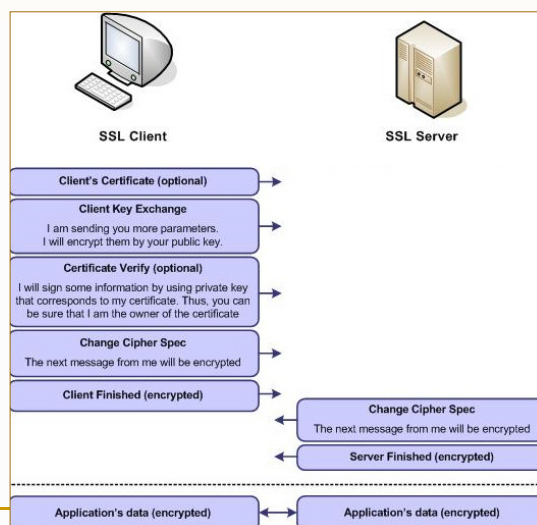


© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

51

## SSL/TLS interaction diagrams (2<sup>nd</sup> part)



© André Zúquete

Identification, Authentication and Authorization

52

# SSH (Secure Shell, RFC 4251)

## ▶ Alternative to telnet/rlogin protocols/applications

- Manages secure consoles over TCP/IP
- Initially conceived to replace telnet
- Actually used for other applications
  - Secure execution of remote commands (rsh/rexec)
  - Secure copy of contents between machines (rcp)
  - Secure FTP (sftp)
  - Creation of arbitrary secure tunnels (inbound/outbound/dynamic)

## ▶ Security mechanisms

- Communication confidentiality and integrity
  - Key distribution
- Authentication of communication endpoints
  - Servers / machines
  - Client users
  - Both with different techniques



# SSH authentication mechanisms

## ▶ Server: with asymmetric keys pair

- Inline public key distribution
  - Not certified!
- Clients cache previously used public keys
  - Caching should occur in a trustworthy environment
  - Update of a server's key raises a problem to its usual clients

## ▶ Client users: configurable

- Username + password
  - By default
- Username + private key
  - Upload of public key in advance to the server



## Single Sign-On (SSO)

### ▷ Unique, centralized authentication for a set of federated services

- ♦ The identity of a client, upon authentication, is given to all federated services
- ♦ The identity attributes given to each service may vary
- ♦ The authenticator is called **Identity Provider (IdP)**

### ▷ Examples

- ♦ SSO authentication @ UA
  - Performed by a central IdP (idp.ua.pt)
  - The identity attributes are securely conveyed to the service accessed by the user



## Authentication metaprotocols

### ▷ Generic authentication protocols that encapsulate other authentication protocols

### ▷ Examples

- ♦ EAP (Extensible Authentication Protocol)
  - Used in 802.1X (Wi-Fi, enterprise mode)
  - e.g. PEAP (Protected EAP) and EAP-TLS run over EAP
- ♦ ISAKMP (Internet Security Association and Key Management Protocol)
  - Used in IPSec
  - e.g. IKE (Internet Key Exchange) runs over ISAKMP



## Authentication services

- ▷ Trusted third parties (TTP) used for authentication
  - ♦ But often combined with other related functionalities
- ▷ AAA services
  - ♦ Authentication, Authorization and Accounting
  - ♦ e.g. RADIUS



## Key distribution services

- ▷ Services that distribute a shared key for authenticated entities
  - ♦ That key can then be used by those entities to protect their communication and ensure source authentication
- ▷ Examples
  - ♦ 802.1X (Wi-Fi, enterprise mode)
  - ♦ Kerberos

