DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATICS

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT MÜNCHEN

Bachelor's Thesis in Informatics

Implementation of Attribute-Based Encryption in Rust on ARM Cortex M Processors

Daniel Bücheler

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Implementierung von Attributbasierter Verschlüsselung in Rust auf ARM Cortex M Prozessoren

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I confirm that this bachelor's thesis in informatics is my own work and I have documented all sources and material used.

Munich, 15.04.2021 Daniel Bücheler

Acknowledgments

Abstract

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Section

Citation test [**latex**].

1.1.1 Subsection

See Table 1.1, Figure 1.1, Figure 1.2, Figure 1.3.

Table 1.1: An example for a simple table.

A	B	C	D
1	2	1	2
2	3	2	3

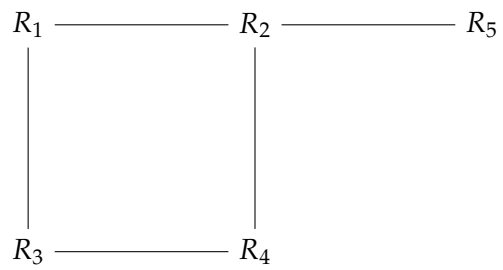


Figure 1.1: An example for a simple drawing.

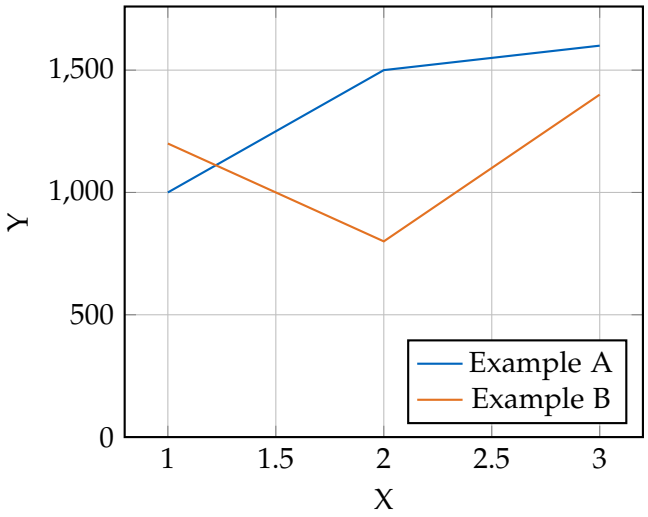


Figure 1.2: An example for a simple plot.

```
SELECT * FROM tbl WHERE tbl.str = "str"
```

Figure 1.3: An example for a source code listing.

2 Background

This chapter shall provide a high-level introduction to the cryptographical and mathematical tools used to implement attribute-based encryption in this thesis. For further reference, please refer to

2.1 Classic Symmetric and Asymmetric Cryptography

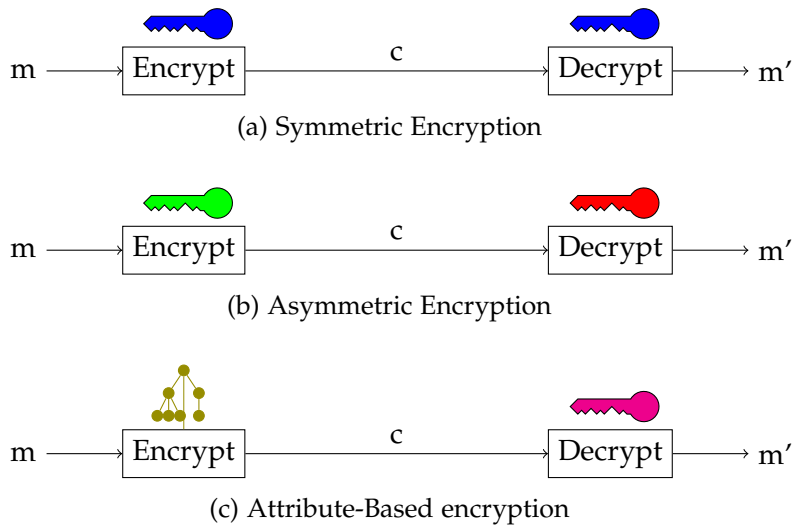
Today's conventional cryptography knows two main classes of cryptosystems: *Symmetric* or *Private-Key systems* and *Asymmetric* or *Public-Key systems*. The main difference lies in their use of encryption and decryption keys:

In *symmetric* systems, the key used for encryption and decryption is identical. That is, a user *Alice* encrypting a message to send to another user *Bob* will encrypt the message using a key k that she had agreed on with Bob beforehand. When he receives the encrypted message, Bob will use the same key k to decrypt it. See Figure 2.1a.

In *asymmetric* systems, on the other hand, the keys used for encryption and decryption differ. When Alice encrypts a message with key k_{enc}, she will not be able to encrypt it again. Instead, when Bob receives the encrypted message, he will use a different key k_{dec} to decrypt it. See Figure 2.1b. Thus, in symmetric systems, keys always come in *pairs* of an *encryption key* k_{enc} and a *decryption key* k_{dec}. Because k_{enc} can not be used to decrypt messages meant for Bob, there is no harm to making it publicly available. For example, he might put it up on his website for anyone wishing to send him an encrypted message to download. This is why k_{enc} is also often called the *public key* and k_{dec} the *private key*.

Asymmetric cryptosystems make secure communication among a large group of participants much easier: Consider n participants wanting to communicate securely using a symmetric system. Each participant would need to share a unique secret key with each of the other participants, requiring a total of $\frac{n(n-1)}{2}$ keys. In the asymmetric setting, one key per participant is sufficient: The same public key may be shared with the whole group, as the private key remains private anyway. This reduces the total number of keys to n.

Another problem remains, however: Encrypting a single message to a large number of participants requires encrypting it with everyone's public key separately. For a large



(a) Symmetric Encryption

(b) Asymmetric Encryption

(c) Attribute-Based encryption

Figure 2.1: Keys used for encryption and decryption in different classes of encryption schemes

number of recipients, this is inefficient. So, for example, to encrypt a message for all students of a certain university, we'd need to obtain each student's public key and encrypt the message with each key separately.

Even worse, what if we want to encrypt data for any student of said university, even if they *haven't joined the university yet*. In this case, our only option using classic public-key cryptography would be to have some trusted instance encrypt the data for any new student after they joined the university. Attribute-Based encryption solves this problem much more nicely.

2.2 Attribute-Based Encryption

Attribute-Based Encryption Schemes (ABE schemes) are asymmetric in the sense that different keys are used for encryption and decryption. However, in constrast to classic asymmetric systems, the 'public key' used for encryption is not attached to an identity, but to certain attributes defined by the system. This is represented by a tree of attributes in Figure 2.1c.

2.2.1 KP-ABE and CP-ABE

ABE schemes can further be divided into *Key-Policy* and *Ciphertext-Policy* schemes (KP-ABE and CP-ABE, respectively). In KP-ABE, the ciphertext is associated with a

set of attributes, and the key is associated with an access structure. CP-ABE works the other way around, so the key is associated with a set of attributes and the ciphertext is encrypted under an access structure.

In both cases, a ciphertext can be decrypted if and only if the set of attributes specified in one part satisfy the access policy associated with the other part.

2.2.2 Components of an ABE scheme

With respect to ABE, we say that a ciphertext is *encrypted under an access structure* (*under a set of attributes*, respectively) if it has been encrypted using the public key derived from the access structure (set of attributes, resp.). Because the public key w.r.t. some access structure (set of attributes, resp.) can be derived by anyone, private keys are usually referred to as just *keys*.

Definition 2.1. An Attribute-Based Encryption scheme (ABE scheme) consists of the following four algorithms: [1]

- *Setup*. Run once by the central trusted authority (key generation center). Sets up the system and outputs a public master key PK and a private master secret s.
- *KeyGen(PK, s, ω)*. Run exclusively by the trusted authority. For a given set of attributes (CP-ABE) or access structure (KP-ABE) ω, uses the master secret s to generate a private key k corresponding to the given access structure.
- *Encrypt(PK, m, ω)*. Run by any participant of the system. On input of a plaintext message m and an access structure (CP-ABE) or set of attributes (KP-ABE) ω, outputs a ciphertext c
- *Decrypt(c, k)*. Run by any participant holding a private key generated by *KeyGen*. On input of a ciphertext c created by *Encrypt* and a key k generated by *KeyGen*, it outputs a correctly decrypted message if and only if
  - in the case of CP-ABE: the access structure under which m was encrypted is satisfied by the set of attributes under which k was created
  - in the case of KP-ABE: the set of attributes under which m was encrypted satisfies the access structure under which k was created.

How exactly these algorithms work in concrete ABE schemes will be discussed in Section 2.5.

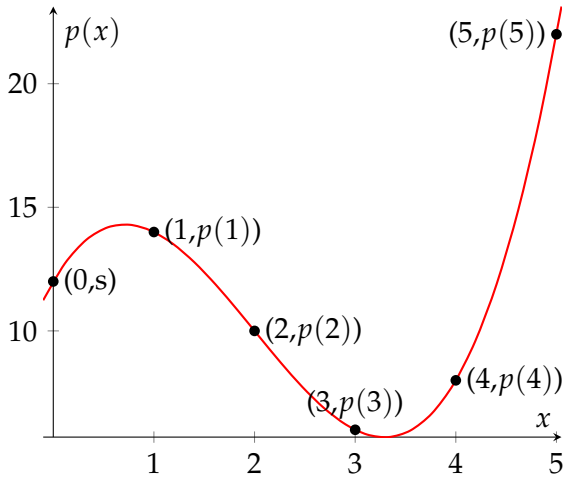


Figure 2.2: Example for a $(5,4)$-threshold scheme with $s = 12$ and $p(x) = 12 + 7x - 6x^2 + x^3$. As $p(x)$ has degree three, at least four of the five shares are required to reconstruct s.

2.3 Shamir's Secret Sharing

This secret sharing scheme based on polynomial interpolation was first introduced by Adi Shamir in 1979 [2]. It allows a secret s, which is generally just a number, to be shared among a number of n participants. The shares are computed such that s can be reconstructed if, and only if, at least k participants meet and combine their shares. Such a theme is then called a (k, n)-threshold scheme. [2]

Shamir's scheme makes use of a property of polynomials: A polynomial of degree d is unambiguously determined by $d + 1$ points (x_i, y_i). In other words, any polynomial of degree d can be unambiguously interpolated (reconstructed) from $d + 1$ distinct points. Thus, if we hide our secret in a polynomial $p(x)$ of degree d and give out secret shares as $(x, p(x))$ with $x = 1, 2, 3, \ldots$, we can use $d + 1$ shares to reconstruct $p(x)$ and by that the secret. [2]

Definition 2.2. Shamir's (k, n)-threshold secret sharing scheme [2]. To share a secret s among n participants such that s can be recovered if and only if k or more shares are combined, do:

1. Pick coefficients $a_1, ..., a_{k-1}$ at random
2. Set $a_0 = s$. This results in the polynomial $p(x) = a_0 + a_1 x + \cdots + a_{k-1} x^{k-1}$. Note that $p(0) = s$.

3. The secret shares are $(1, p(1)), (2, p(2)), \ldots, (n, p(n))$. Give one to each participant.

To reconstruct the secret from any subset of k shares, interpolate the polynomial $p(x)$ and evaluate $p(0) = s$. See also Figure 2.2 for illustration.

The polynomial can be interpolated unambiguously if at least k points are known, because it has degree $k - 1$. If only $k - 1$ points (or less) are known, there are infinitely many ways to construct a polynomial that passed through all $k - 1$ points. Therefore, then there are also infinitely many possibilities for s. [2]

2.4 Elliptic Curves

The mathematics of modern cryptosystems (including, but not limited to ABE) work on a great variety of mathematical structures, and elliptic curves are just one of them. They have become very popular since their discovery by *citation needed* in *year needed* because they provide an equivalent security level at shorter key length and smaller computational cost than other systems (e.g. based on RSA) [3]. Exact definitions and notations differ, these are taken from the textbook *Introduction to Modern Cryptogaphy* by Katz and Lindell [3].

Definition 2.3. Given a prime $p \geq 5$ and curve parameters $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}_p$ with $4a^2 + 27b^2 \neq 0 \bmod p$, the Elliptic Curve over $\mathbb{Z}_p$ is: [3]

$$E(\mathbb{Z}_p) := \{(x, y) \mid x, y \in \mathbb{Z}_p \text{ and } y^2 = x^3 + ax + b \bmod b\} \cup \{\mathcal{O}\} \tag{2.1}$$

a and b are called the curve parameters, and the requirement that $4a^2 + 27b^2 \neq 0 \bmod p$ makes sure that the curve has no repeated roots. The curve is simply the set of points $(x, y) \in \mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p$ that satisfy the curve equation $y^2 = x^3 + ax + b \bmod b$. One special point is added, the *point at infinity* denoted by $\mathcal{O}$. This will help define the point addition as a group operation in the next paragraph. [3]

2.4.1 Point Addition

Now, it is possible to show that every line intersecting a curve $E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$ intersects it in exactly three points, if you (1) count tangential intersections double and (2) count any vertical line as intersecting the curve in the point at infinity $\mathcal{O}$. Therefore, $\mathcal{O}$ can be thought of as sitting "above" the end of the y-axis [3]. Figure 2.3 shows all four different combinations, feel free to convince yourself that this statement indeed makes sense for the plotted curve.

Using this intersecting line, we can define an operation on curve points.

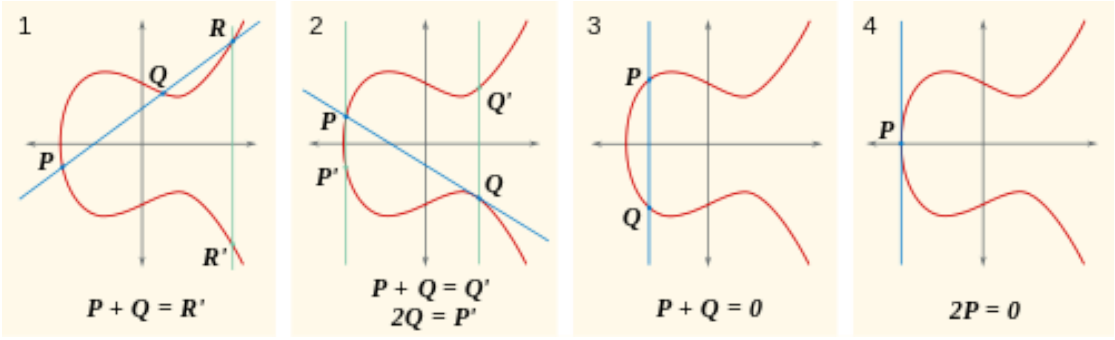


Figure 2.3: Elliptic Curve point addition
(Image by SuperManu, licensed under Creative Commons.)

Definition 2.4. Given an Elliptic Curve $E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$, we define a binary operation called *(point) addition* and denoted by $+$: [3]
Let $P_1, P_2 \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$.

- For two points $P_1, P_2 \neq \mathcal{O}$ and $P_1 \neq P_2$, their sum $P_1 + P_2$ is evaluated by drawing the line through P_1 and P_2 (if $P_1 = P_2$, draw a tangential line). This line will intersect the curve in a third point, $P_3 = (x_3, y_3)$. Then the result of the addition is $P_1 + P_2 = (x_3, -y_3)$, i.e. P_3 is reflected in the x-axis. If $P_3 = \mathcal{O}$, then the result of the addition is $\mathcal{O}$.
- If $P_1, P_2 \neq \mathcal{O}$ and $P_1 = P_2$, as above but draw the line as tangent on the curve in P_1
- If $P_1 = \mathcal{O}$, then $P_1 + P_2 = P_2$ and vice-versa.

We will be adding points to themselves a lot. Therefore, we define for ease of notation:

Definition 2.5. Point-Scalar multiplication: Given a point $P \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$ and a scalar $d \in \mathbb{N}$:

$$d \cdot P = \underbrace{P + P + \cdots + P}_{d \text{ times}} \tag{2.2}$$

That is, the product of a scalar with a point is again a point on our curve.

2.4.2 Groups on Elliptic Curves

Theorem 2.1. *The points of an Elliptic Curve $E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$ plus the addition law as stated in Definition 2.4 forms an abelian (commutative group) [3], [4]:*

Proof. An actual proof is omitted, but here's why:

- Existence of Identity: $P + \mathcal{O} = P$ (as per definition)
- Commutativity: For all $P_1, P_2 \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$, $P_1 + P_2 = P_2 + P_1$ (obvious, because the line through P_1 and P_2 will be the same)
- Unique inverse: For any point $P = (x, y) \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$, the unique inverse is $-P = (x, -y)$ (obvious).
- Associativity: For all $P_1, P_2, P_3 \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$, $(P_1 + P_2) + P_3 = P_1 + (P_2 + P_3)$ (much less obvious, see e.g. [4, Chapter 2.4] for a proof).

□

Of particular interest to cryptography are *cyclic* groups on elliptic curves.

Definition 2.6. A (multiplicative) group $\mathbb{G}$ is cyclic if there is an element $g \in \mathbb{G}$ that generates $\mathbb{G}$, i.e. $\mathbb{G} = \langle g \rangle = \{g^n | n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$.

Translated to our (additive) groups on elliptic curves, this means that there is a generator point $P \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$, such that every point $Q \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$ can be written as $Q = nP$ with some $n \in \mathbb{N}$.

In particular, if a group has prime order (i.e. the number of points $\#E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$ on a curve is prime), all points except $\mathcal{O}$ are generators. This follows from the fact that for any point $P \in E(\mathbb{Z}_p)$, its order $\text{ord}(P) = |\langle P \rangle|$ must divide the group order. A prime has exactly two divisors: One (the order of $\mathcal{O}$) and itself (the order of all other points).

These cyclic elliptic curve groups (or, cyclic subgroups of non-cyclic elliptic curves) are exactly the groups we are interested in for doing actual cryptography. See also [3, p. 321].

2.4.3 Hardness Assumptions

Most ECC schemes are build upon three hardness assumptions: The Discrete Logarithm Problem (DLP), the Decisional Diffie-Hellman Problem (DDHP) and the Computational Diffie-Hellman Problem (CDHP). Given an additive, cyclic group $\mathbb{G}$ with $P \in \mathbb{G}$ a generator, they are stated as follows:

Discrete Logarithm Problem. Given an arbitrary $Q \in \mathbb{G}$, compute an $n \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $nP = Q$.

Computational Diffie-Hellman Problem. Given the triple (P, aP, bP) where $a, b \in \mathbb{N}$ chosen uniformly at random, compute abP.

Decisional Diffie-Hellman Problem. Given two triples (aP, bP, abP) and (aP, bP, Q) where $a, b \in \mathbb{N}$ and $Q \in \mathbb{G}$ chosen uniformly at random, distinguish between the two.

Now, the hardness *assumption* is that, for some groups, these problems are hard to solve, i.e. solving them requires so much time and computational power that it is infeasible. From this, we can build secure asymmetric encryption schemes.

These three problems might all be assumed to be *hard*, but that doesn't mean they are equally so: If, in a certain group $\mathbb{G}$, the DLP problem is easy, so is CDHP: Just compute a and b, and then use them to calculate abP. And if CDHP is easy w.r.t some $\mathbb{G}$, so is DDHP: Just compute abP, and compare the third element of each tuple. The inverse is not generally true, i.e. there are groups in which DLP and CDHP are hard to solve, even though DDHP is easy to solve. In that sense, DLP is the hardest and DDHP the easiest of the three. [3] (TODO find out if this is true. [5])

2.4.4 Bilinear Pairings

Introduction

The final primitive needed for pairing-based encryption schemes are bilinear pairings. These are functions mapping two points on (possibly different) elliptic curves to elements of a finite field (*not* another point on a curve).[6]

Let $n \in \mathbb{N}_0$, $\mathbb{G}_1$ denote an additive abelian group of order n with generator P and identity $\mathcal{O}$. Let $\mathbb{G}_T$ be another group of order n, this time written multiplicatively with generator g and identity 1. A *bilinear pairing* then is a function $e : \mathbb{G}_1 \times \mathbb{G}_1 \to \mathbb{G}_T$ with the following properties:

- *Bilinearity.* For all $Q_1, Q_2, Q_3 \in \mathbb{G}_1$, $e(Q_1 + Q_2, Q_3) = e(Q_1, Q_3) + e(Q_2, Q_3)$ and $e(Q_1, Q_2 + Q_3) = e(Q_1, Q_2) + e(Q_1, Q_3)$
- *Non-Degeneracy.* $e(P, P) \neq 1$

Using a bilinear pairing with a group $\mathbb{G}_T$ where the DLP is easy to solve, the DLP in $\mathbb{G}_1$ can also be solved easily: To find n such that $Q = nP$, compute $e(P, Q) = e(P, nP) = e(P, \underbrace{P + \cdots + P}_{n \text{ times}}) = \underbrace{e(P, P) \cdots e(P, P)}_{n \text{ times}} = e(P, P)^n$. Thus, the discrete logarithm of Q with respect to P is the discrete logarithm of $e(P, Q)$ with respect to $g = e(P, P) \in \mathbb{G}_T$. [5]

Bilinear Hardness Assumption

Since the DLP can be easy to solve using pairings, we need to adapt our hardness assumption. Therefore, we define

The *Bilinear Diffie-Hellman Problem* (BDHP): Given P, aP, bP, cP with $a, b, c \in \{1, \ldots, n-1\}$ chosen randomly, compute $e(P, P)^{abc}$. [5]

If the BDHP is hard for a pairing e on groups $\mathbb{G}_1$ and $\mathbb{G}_T$, this implies that the DLP is hard in both $\mathbb{G}_1$ and $\mathbb{G}_T$. [5]

2.5 Different ABE schemes for use in Embedded Devices

3 Challenges encountered during the implementation

3.1 Rust specialties

The borrow checkaaa...

3.2 Lack of Operating System

This means lack of

- allocator and standard library (replaced by `core`, but much less powerful)
  - any dynamically allocated data structures
  - No Vectors and HashMaps Vectors and HashMaps
  - no easy implementation of (access-) trees using recursive enums (as these would become infinitely large when not using indirections)
  - most dependencies depend on `std` in some way, so a lot more work to make all those independent
  - Solution: `heapless` crate and linear representation of access trees (TODO make bounds on size of data types configurable)
- Random Number Generation
  - Problem: need cryptographically secure randomness, but have no OS randomness pool
  - can't just use `/dev/urandom` to get randomness (there is no such thing as a file anyway)
  - standard implementations of `random` resp. `getrandom` crates don't work (rely on stdlib)
  - need own randomness source
  - nrf50 series provides hardware RNG, but we need Rust to be able to interface with this

  - probably need own implementation of `getrandom` crate for Zephyr OS or bare-metal nrf50

- Unit testing abilities

3.3 Performance Limitations

That is, CPU speed (64MHz) and RAM size (..KiB?).

- probably too slow for computing actual pairings
- Solution 1: Scheme without pairings (Yao et al 2015)
- Solution 2: Still do pairings, but hyper-optimize (see TinyPBC on AVR)

List of Figures

List of Tables

Bibliography

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