

# Snake Mackerel – An Isogeny Based AKEM

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Swiss Isogeny Day 2025

# AKEM

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Authenticated **K**ey  
Encapsulation **M**echanism





Alice



Bob

# Definition

$(sk_A, pk_A) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$



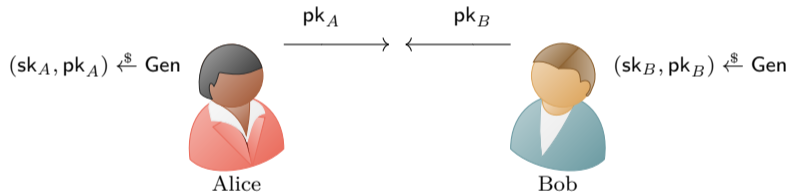
Alice

$(sk_B, pk_B) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$

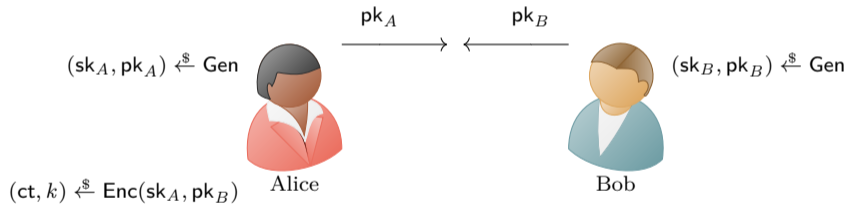


Bob

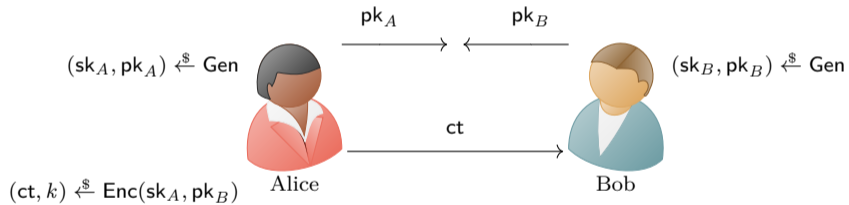
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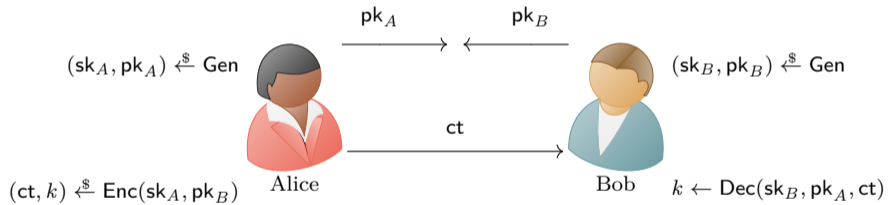
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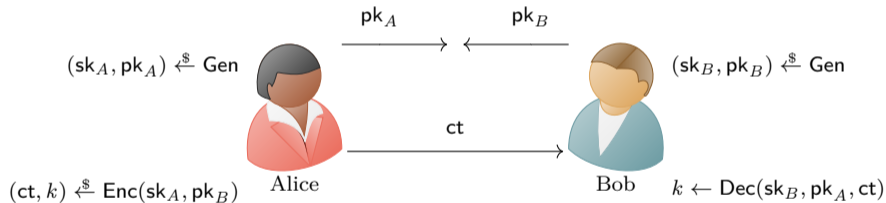
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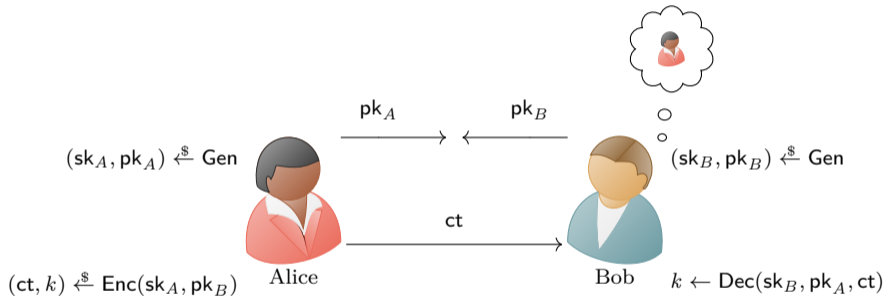


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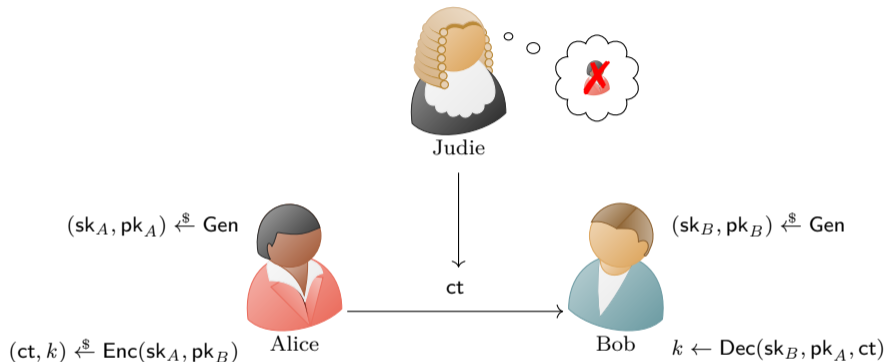
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- **Deniability:** Judie cannot be convinced that Alice sent  $ct$

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$\Rightarrow$  SnakeM is only **5 $\times$**  larger than DH-AKEM (64 vs. 296 Bytes) – naive approach 370 Bytes

# Snake Mackerel = POKÉ + SQIsignHD

- - -> non-rational

→ secret

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$E_0$   
●

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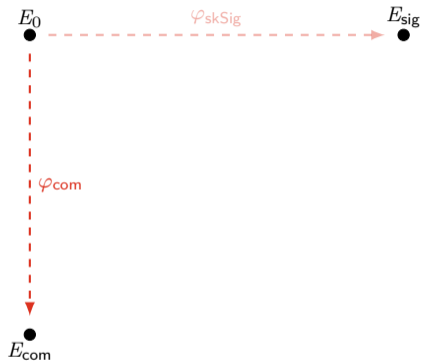
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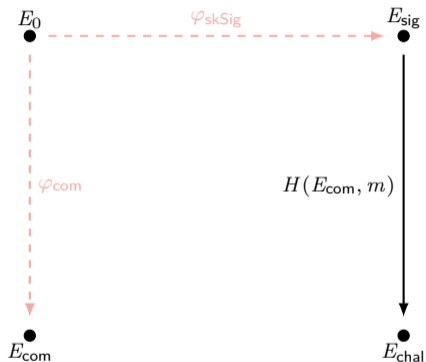
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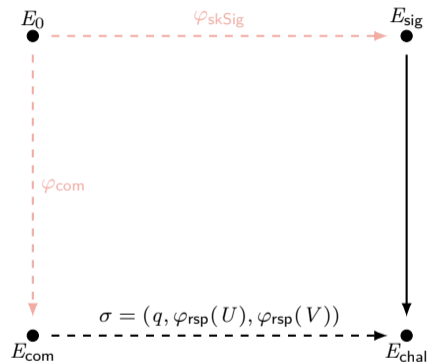
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$$X_0 \in E_0[D]$$

$E_0$

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$\varphi_{\text{skSig}}$

$E_{\text{sig}}$

$\varphi_{\text{com}}$

$\sigma = (q, \varphi_{\text{rsp}}(U), \varphi_{\text{rsp}}(V))$

$E_{\text{com}}$

$E_{\text{chal}}$

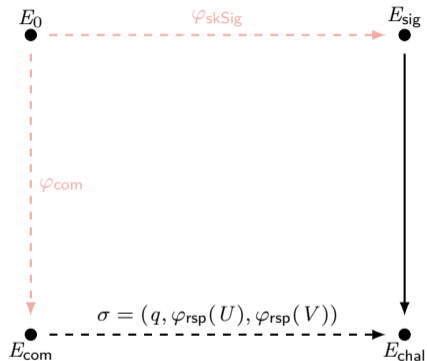
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$$X_1 = [\alpha]\varphi_{\text{skEnc}}(X_0)$$

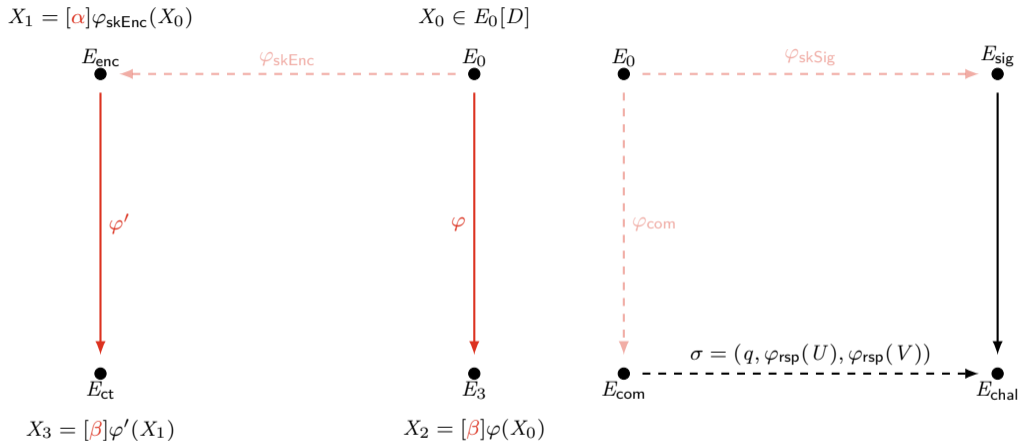
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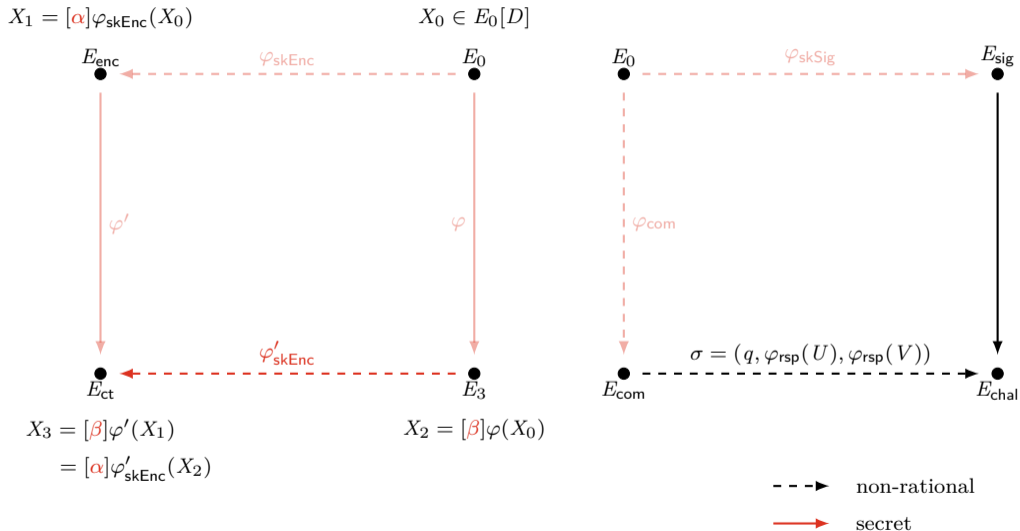
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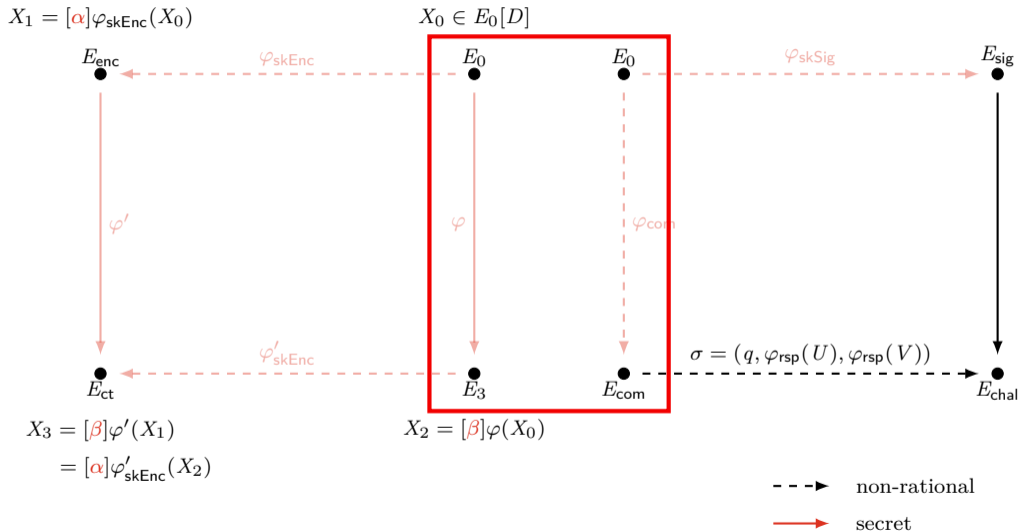
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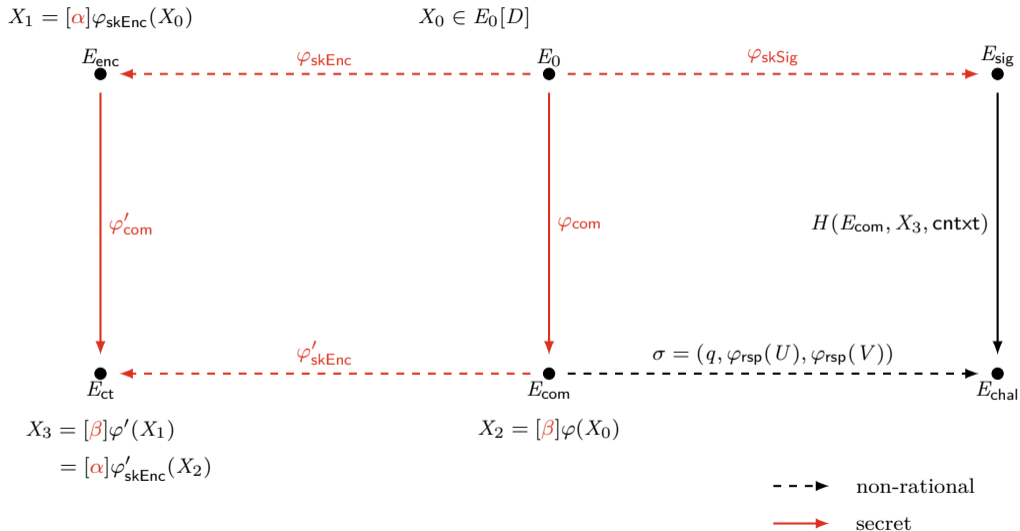
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$$(p+1)(p-1) = 2^a ND, \quad 2^a \in \mathcal{O}(2^\lambda), \quad N = \prod \ell_i \in \mathcal{O}(2^{2\lambda}), \quad D = q_1 q_2 q_3 \in \mathcal{O}(2^\lambda)$$

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$$p = 2^{133} \cdot 3^6 \cdot 7^2 \cdot 17^4 \cdot 47^2 \cdot 311^2 \cdot 367^2 \cdot 439^2 \cdot 1049^2 \cdot 1373 - 1$$
$$\log p = 247, \quad \max\{\ell_i\} = 1373, \quad \max\{\log q_i\} = 39$$

# Security

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The Best out of Both Worlds?





Challenger



Adversary

## Confidentiality: Ins-CCA, simplified

$$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$$



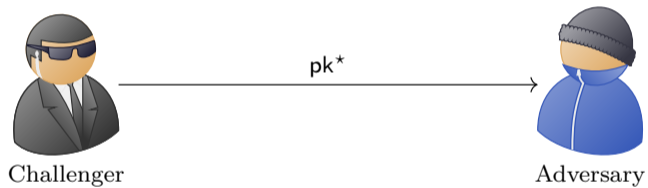
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Challenger

Send me a ciphertext!



Adversary

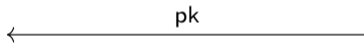
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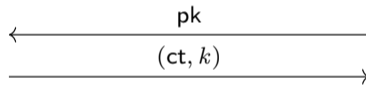
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Challenger

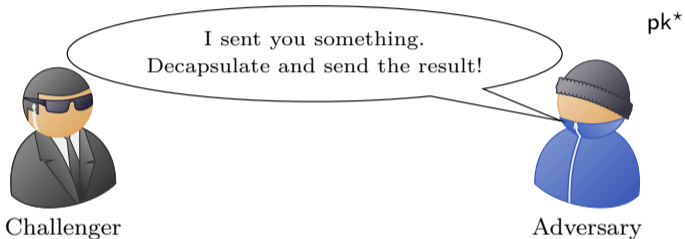


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Challenger

$pk, ct$



Adversary

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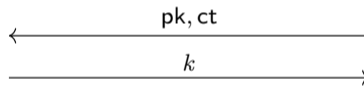
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$k \leftarrow \text{Decaps}(pk, sk^*, ct)$



Challenger



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Challenger

I'm ready!

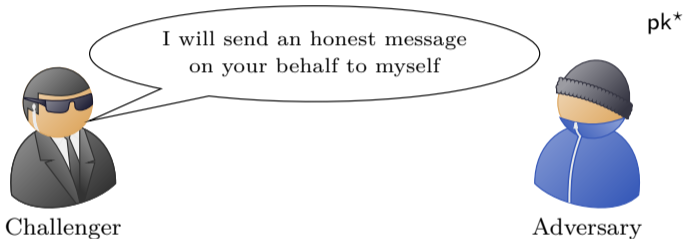


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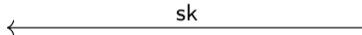


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Challenger



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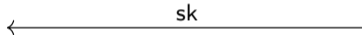
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**if**  $\beta = 1$

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Challenger



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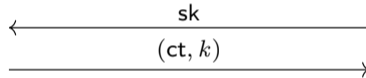
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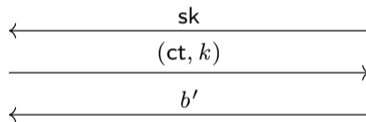
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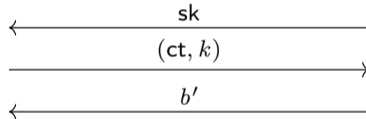
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### Note

$sk$  is used for the **signature** and should not help to decapsulate the **KEM** part of  $ct$

## Theorem

For any Ins-CCA adversary  $\mathcal{A}$  against SnakeM, there exist an adversary  $\mathcal{B}$  against OW-KCA of POKÉ such that

$$\text{Adv}_{\text{SnakeM}}^{\text{Ins-CCA}}(\mathcal{A}) \leq \text{Adv}_{\text{POKÉ}}^{\text{OW-KCA}}(\mathcal{B}) + \delta.$$

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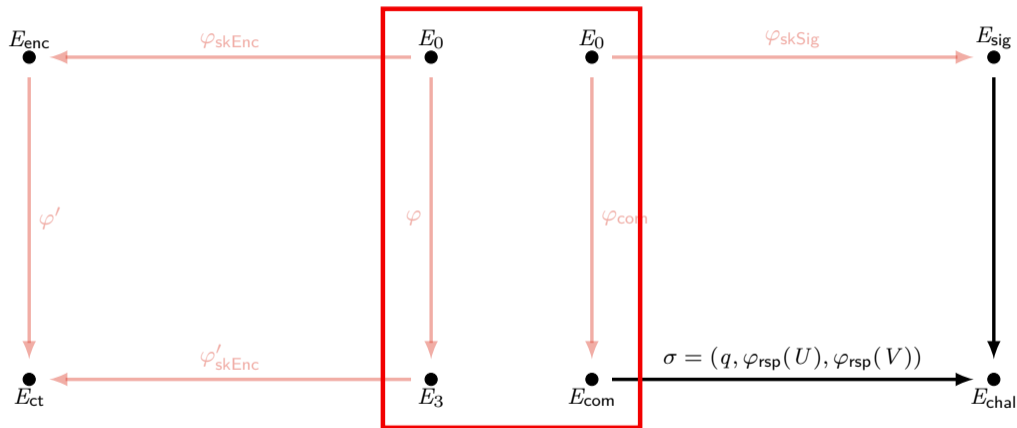
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# Confidentiality of SnakeM



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$$\text{IND-CPA} \xrightarrow{\text{T-Transform}} \text{OW-KCA} \xrightarrow{\text{U-Transform}} \text{IND-CCA}$$

- T-Transform makes the encryption randomness **explicit**  $\implies$  leaks **commitment**
- We include checks to avoid adaptive attacks like [GPST16, MOXZ24]

## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified



Challenger



Adversary

## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified

$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$



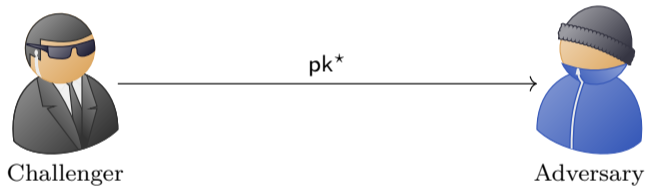
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Challenger



Adversary

$pk^*$

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$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$



Challenger

Send me a ciphertext!



Adversary

$pk^*$

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Challenger

$pk$



Adversary

$pk^*$

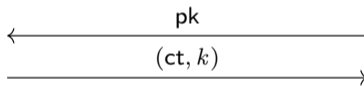
## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified

$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$

$(ct, k) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Encaps}(sk^*, pk)$



Challenger



Adversary

$pk^*$

## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified

$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$



Challenger

I sent you something.  
Decapsulate and send the result!



Adversary

$pk^*$

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Challenger

$pk, ct$



Adversary

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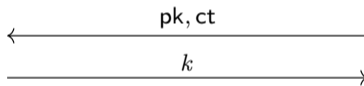
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$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$

$k \leftarrow \text{Decaps}(pk, sk^*, ct)$



Challenger



Adversary

$pk^*$

## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified

$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$



Challenger

I'm ready!



Adversary

$pk^*$

## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified

$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$



Challenger

Try to send a fresh  
ciphertext on my behalf!



Adversary

$pk^*$

## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified

$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$



Challenger

$sk, ct$



Adversary

$pk^*$

## Authenticity: Ins-Auth, simplified

$(sk^*, pk^*) \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Gen}$

if ct not fresh:

abort

$k \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Decaps}(pk^*, sk, ct)$

win if  $k \neq \perp$



Challenger

$sk, ct$



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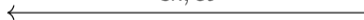
$k \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Decaps}(pk^*, sk, ct)$

win if  $k \neq \perp$



Challenger

$sk, ct$



Adversary

$pk^*$

### Note

An honest Decaps checks the **signature** against  $pk^*$  and returns  $\perp$  if the signature is invalid

# Non-Malleability: Return of the Lollipop

## Observation

For Ins-Auth the signature needs to be **non-malleable**

$$\text{ct} = (\text{ct}_{\text{KEM}}, \sigma) \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{ct}' = (\text{ct}_{\text{KEM}}, \sigma')$$

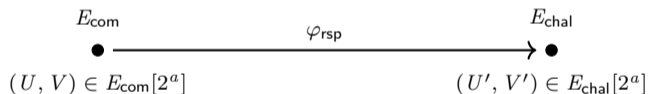
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In SQIsignHD, the signature is **interpolation data**  $\sigma = (q, U', V')$



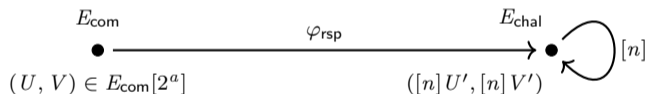
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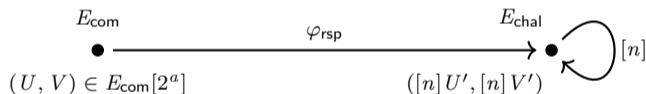
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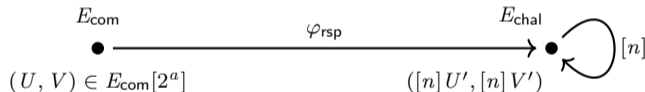
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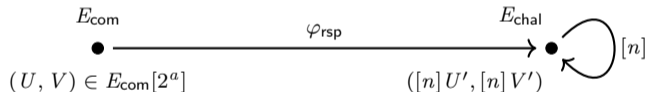
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$\Rightarrow$  **Non-Malleable version of SQIsignHD?**

It would be desirable to **check cyclicity** of HD-represented isogenies

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## Bad News

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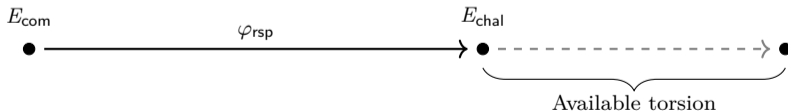
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### Idea:

- During signing: require **minimum length**  $q \geq 2^a / \log p$



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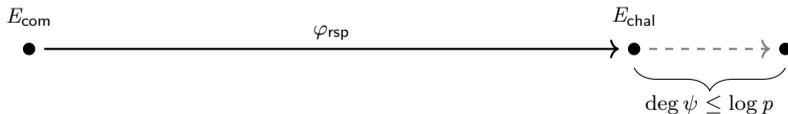
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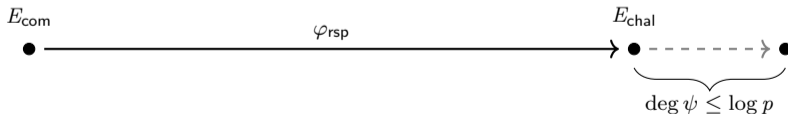
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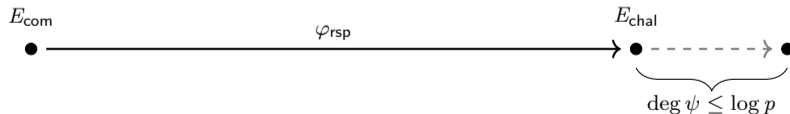
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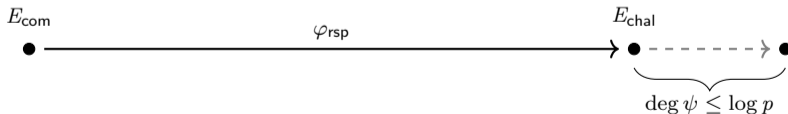
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- ▶ Large(r) scalar multiplication already **exceeds** the available  $2^a$ -torsion



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## Non-Malleability of SQIsignHD

For any NM adversary  $\mathcal{A}$  against a *slight modification* of SQIsignHD, there exist adversaries  $\mathcal{B}$  against OneEnd and  $\mathcal{C}$  against Cyclic RUGDIO indistinguishability (CR-IND) such that

$$\text{Adv}^{\text{NM}}(\mathcal{A}) \leq \text{Adv}^{\text{OneEnd}}(\mathcal{B}) + q_{\text{Trans}} \cdot \text{Adv}^{\text{CR-IND}}(\mathcal{C}).$$

## Theorem

For any Ins-Aut adversary  $\mathcal{A}$  against SnakeM, there exist an adversary  $\mathcal{B}$  against SS-Enc and an adversary  $\mathcal{C}$  against NM-Enc such that

$$\text{Adv}_{\text{SnakeM}}^{\text{Ins-Aut}}(\mathcal{A}) \leq +\text{Adv}_{\text{POKÉ}, \text{SQIsignHD}}^{\text{SS-Enc}}(\mathcal{B}) + \text{Adv}_{\text{POKÉ}, \text{SQIsignHD}}^{\text{NM-Enc}}(\mathcal{C}) + \delta.$$

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- NM: Given  $\text{pk}_{\text{ID}}$  and transcripts  $\mathcal{T} = \{(\text{com}_i, \text{chal}_i, \text{rsp}_i)\}$ , compute  $(\text{com}', \text{chal}', \text{rsp}') \notin \mathcal{T}$

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- ▶ NM-Enc: Additional Enc oracle that provides a consistent “POKÉ part” of the SnakeM ciphertext:

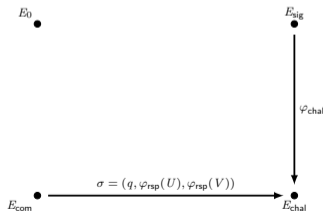
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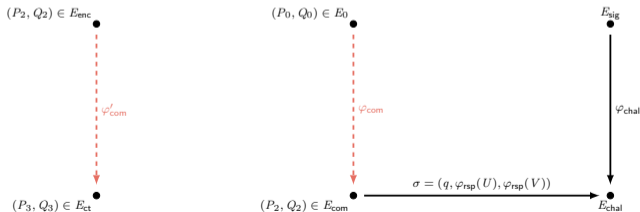
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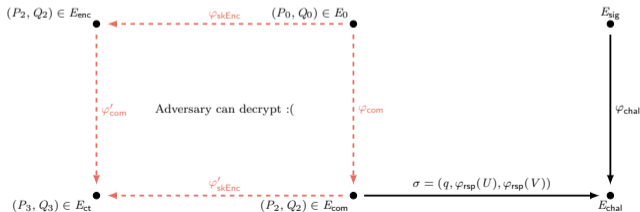
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- NM-Enc: Additional Enc oracle that provides a consistent “POKÉ part” of the SnakeM ciphertext:



# Compactness – Is It Worth It?

Scheme (variant)	Confidentiality	Authenticity	Deniability	PQ	Size (in bytes)	
					ct	pk
Group-based						
DH-AKEM [ABH <sup>+</sup> 21]	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	DR <sup>*</sup>	✗	32	32
Zheng [Zhe97, BSZ02]	Ins-CCA	Ins-Aut	HR <sup>*</sup>	✗	64	64
Lattice-based						
EtStH-AKEM (BAT + ANTRAG) [AJKL23]	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	—	✓	1 119	1 417
NIKE-AKEM (SWOOSH) [AJKL23]	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	DR <sup>*</sup>	✓	> 221 184	> 221 184
EaNTH-AKEM (BAT + SWOOSH)	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	DR <sup>*</sup>	✓	473	> 221 705
FRODOKEX+ [CHN <sup>+</sup> 24b]	IND-1BatchCCA	UNF-1KCA	DR	✓	72	21 300
DEN. AKEM (BAT + GANDALF) [GJK24]	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	HR & DR	✓	1 749	1 417
Isogeny-based						
EtStH-AKEM (POKÉ + SQUIGNHD) [AJKL23]	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	—	✓	493	432
NIKE-AKEM (CSIDH) [AJKL23]	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	DR <sup>*</sup>	✓	256 <sup>†</sup>	256 <sup>†</sup>
EaNTH-AKEM (POKÉ + CSIDH)	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	DR <sup>*</sup>	✓	384	624
DEN. AKEM (POKÉ + EREBOR) [GJK24]	Ins-CCA	Out-Aut	HR & DR	✓	740	432
SnakeM	Ins-CCA	Ins-Aut	HR	✓	296	368

## Cryptanalysis

- ▶ OW-KCA of POKÉ + Countermeasures
- ▶ Additional Enc oracle in SS and NM

## Other Constructions

- ▶ Though there are already some ideas...

## Better Security Proof

- ▶ Reduce NM-Enc and SS-Enc to (more) standard assumptions
- ▶ Maybe in an Algebraic Isogeny Model

# Questions?

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👉 [meers.org](https://meers.org)

✉ [research@meers.org](mailto:research@meers.org)



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## SnakeM.Gen

```
00  $(sk_{KEM}, pk_{KEM}) \xleftarrow{\$} KEM.Gen$   
01  $(sk_{ID}, pk_{ID}) \xleftarrow{\$} ID.Gen$   
02  $s \xleftarrow{\$} \{0, 1\}^\eta$   
03  $sk \leftarrow (sk_{KEM}, sk_{ID}, s)$   
04  $pk \leftarrow (pk_{KEM}, pk_{ID})$   
05 return  $(sk, pk)$ 
```

## SnakeM.Encaps( $sk_{SND}, pk_{RCV}$ )

```
06 parse  $sk_{SND} = (\cdot, sk_{ID}, \cdot)$   
07 parse  $pk_{RCV} = (pk_{KEM}, \cdot)$   
08  $pk_{ID} \leftarrow derive(sk_{ID})$   
09  $pk_{SND} \leftarrow derive(sk_{SND})$   
10  $(com, R) \xleftarrow{\$} ID.Com \quad \parallel com = ct_0$   
11  $(ct_1, K) \xleftarrow{\$} KEM.Encaps_1(pk_{KEM}, R)$   
12  $(chl, pad) \leftarrow G(pk_{ID}, com, pk_{RCV}, ct_1, K)$   
13  $rsp \xleftarrow{\$} ID.Rsp(sk_{ID}, com, chl, R)$   
14  $ct_{rsp} \leftarrow rsp \oplus pad$   
15  $ct \leftarrow (com, ct_1, ct_{rsp})$   
16  $k \leftarrow H(K, com, ct_1, rsp, pk_{SND}, pk_{RCV})$   
17 return  $(ct, k)$ 
```

## SnakeM.Decaps( $pk_{SND}, sk_{RCV}, ct$ )

```
18 parse  $pk_{SND} = (\cdot, pk_{ID})$   
19 parse  $sk_{RCV} = (sk_{KEM}, \cdot, s)$   
20 parse  $ct = (com, ct_1, ct_{rsp})$   
21  $pk_{RCV} \leftarrow derive(sk_{RCV})$   
22  $K \leftarrow KEM.Decaps(sk_{KEM}, com, ct_1)$   
23 if  $K = \perp$   $\parallel Decaps$  may fail  
24  $K \leftarrow s$   
25  $(chl, pad) \leftarrow G(pk_{ID}, com, pk_{RCV}, ct_1, K)$   
26  $rsp \leftarrow ct_{rsp} \oplus pad$   
27 if  $ID.Ver(pk_{ID}, com, chl, rsp) = 1$  :  
28  $k \leftarrow H(K, com, ct_1, rsp, pk_{SND}, pk_{RCV})$   
29 return  $k$   
30 return  $\perp$ 
```