

COMPARING WITH RSA

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Abstract. A multi-set (MS) is a set where an element can occur more than once. MS hash functions (MSHFs) map MSS of arbitrary cardinality to fixed-length strings.

This paper introduces a new RSA-based MSHF. The new function is efficient and produces small hashes. We prove that the proposed MSHF is collision-resistant under the assumption of unforgeability of deterministic RSA signatures.

In many practical applications, programmers need to compare two (unordered) sets of integers. A trivial solution consists in sorting both sets ($\mathcal{O}(n \log n)$) and comparing them linearly. We show how MS hash functions can be turned into a quasi-linear-time, quasi-constant-space integer set equality test.

An interesting advantage of the proposed algorithm is its ability to compare MSS without sorting them. This can prove useful when comparing very large files which are read-only or otherwise hard to sort (e.g. on tapes, distributed across web-sites etc).

1 Introduction

A multi-set (MS) is a set where elements can occur more than once. MS hash functions (MSHFs) were introduced by Clarke *et alii* in [5]. While standard hash functions map arbitrary-length strings to fixed-length strings, MSHFs map MSS of arbitrary cardinality to fixed-length strings.

An MSHF \mathcal{H} is *incremental* if $\mathcal{H}(A \cup B)$ can be computed from $\mathcal{H}(A)$ in time proportional to $\#B$.

The **MSet-Mu-Hash** MSHF defined in [5] is MS-collision-resistant, produces small hashes (typically $\cong q$ such that solving discrete logarithms modulo q is hard³) and is computationally efficient. **MSet-Mu-Hash** is provably secure in the random oracle model under the discrete logarithm assumption.

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³ e.g. 1024 bits.

In this work we introduce a new MSHF. The proposed function is MS-collision resistant, produces hashes of the size of an RSA modulus and is computationally efficient (comparable to `MSet-Mu-Hash`). However, we prove the new MSHF's security under an assumption different than [5]'s, namely: the unforgeability of deterministic RSA signatures.

Moreover, we show that MSHFs provide a practical solution to the *Set Equality Problem* (SEP). SEP consists in deciding whether two (unordered) sets of n integers are equal. Efficient SEP solutions allow, for instance, to check that two hard drives contain the same files, or that two differently indexed databases contain the same fields. The SEP is related to the *Set Inclusion Problem* (SIP) where one needs to decide whether a set A is a subset of another set B .

In the algebraic computation model where the only allowed operation is comparison, the SEP can be solved in $O(n \log n)$ by sorting both lists; Ben-Or showed that this is optimal [2]. In 2004, Katriel [9] proposed a linear-time set equality test in the algebraic computation model where simple algebraic computations are allowed. Katriel maps the sets into $\mathbb{Z}[X]$ and compares polynomials rather than integers. In essence, [9] shows that SEP is easier when the sets contain integers. However, [9] is impractical as it requires to evaluate the polynomial of a huge value.

Using our MSHF, we propose a *practical* quasi-linear-time, quasi-constant-space integer MS equality test. The algorithm can be used in practice to compare very large MSS and does not yield false negatives. Immunity against false positives is guaranteed if a specific type of RSA signatures is secure.

This non cryptographic application of RSA is quite unusual as, in general, cryptography "borrows" techniques from other fields (such as complexity theory, number theory or statistics) rather than the other way round.

2 The MSet-Mu-Hash Function

Let B be a set. We consider a MS $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\} \in B^n$. The `MSet-Mu-Hash` function proposed by Clarke *et alii* [5] is defined as follows: Let q be a large prime and $H : B \rightarrow GF(q)$ be a poly-random function⁴.

$$\text{MSet-Mu-Hash}(X) = \prod_{i=1}^n H(x_i) \bmod q$$

This function is proven to be MS-collision resistant in the random oracle model under the discrete logarithm assumption. It produces small hashes (typically, the size of a prime q such that solving discrete logarithms modulo q is hard) and is computationally efficient.

⁴ H is a poly-random function if no polynomial time (in the logarithm of q) algorithm with oracle access H can distinguish between values of H and true random strings, even when the algorithm is permitted to select the arguments to H . *cf.* to [7].

3 Katriel's Set Equality Test

Let $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\} \in \mathbb{Z}^n$ and $Y = \{y_1, \dots, y_n\} \in \mathbb{Z}^n$. Katriel [9] defines the polynomials:

$$p(z) = \prod_{i=1}^n (z - x_i), \quad q(z) = \prod_{i=1}^n (z - y_i) \quad \text{and} \quad d(z) = p(z) - q(z)$$

As $d(z) \equiv 0 \Leftrightarrow X = Y$, the test ascertains that $d \equiv 0$.

A trivial way to do this would be to check that d has $n + 1$ roots. However, this would require $n + 1$ evaluations of d and as an evaluation of d is linear in n , the test will become quadratic in n .

Katriel evaluates $d(z)$ only once, at a point α which is too large to be a root of $d(z)$, unless $d(z) \equiv 0$:

$$\alpha = 1 + 2(mn)^n \quad \text{where} \quad m = \max\{x_1, \dots, x_n, y_1, \dots, y_n\}$$

The test is simply :

$$\text{return}(d(\alpha) \stackrel{?}{=} 0)$$

Complexity: This test requires the computation of:

$$\prod_{i=1}^n (\alpha - x_i) - \prod_{i=1}^n (\alpha - y_i)$$

Which can be done in $2(n-1)$ multiplications but requires a memory capacity quadratic in n . Indeed:

$$\prod_{i=1}^n (\alpha - x_i) \cong \alpha^n \cong ((mn)^n)^n = (mn)^{n^2}$$

Storing this value requires $n^2 \log_2(mn)$ bits. e.g., to compare lists of 2^{20} two-byte integers ($m = 2^{16}$, $n = 2^{20}$), one needs a 36×2^{40} bit memory, i.e. ~ 4 terabytes. This makes [9] of little practical use.

4 A New RSA-Based MSHF

We now describe a new RSA-based MSHF and a corresponding MS equality test.

4.1 Digital Signatures

The digital signature of a message m is a string that depends on m and a secret known only to the signer. Digital signatures are traditionally (e.g. [8]) defined as follows:

Definition 1 (Signature Scheme). *A signature scheme $\{\text{Generate}, \text{Sign}, \text{Verify}\}$ is a collection of three algorithms:*

- *The key generation algorithm **Generate** is a probabilistic algorithm that, given 1^k , outputs a pair of matching public and secret keys, $\{\text{pk}, \text{sk}\}$.*
- *The signing algorithm **Sign** takes the message m to be signed and the secret key sk and returns a signature $x = \text{Sign}_{\text{sk}}(m)$. **Sign** may be probabilistic.*
- *The verification algorithm **Verify** takes a message m , a candidate signature x' and the public key pk . It returns a bit $\text{Verify}_{\text{pk}}(m, x')$, equal to one if the signature is accepted, and zero otherwise. We require that:*

$$\text{Verify}_{\text{pk}}(m, \text{Sign}_{\text{sk}}(m)) = 1$$

The security of signature schemes was formalized in an asymptotic setting by Goldwasser, Micali and Rivest in [8]. Here we use the definitions of [1] that provide a framework for a concrete security analysis of digital signatures and consider resistance against *adaptive chosen-message attacks*; i.e. a forger \mathcal{F} who dynamically obtains signatures of messages of his choosing and attempts to output a valid forgery.

A *valid forgery* is a message/signature pair (\tilde{m}, \tilde{x}) such that $\text{Verify}_{\text{pk}}(\tilde{m}, \tilde{x}) = 1$ whilst the signature of \tilde{m} was never requested by \mathcal{F} .

Definition 2. *A forger \mathcal{F} is said to $(t, q_{\text{sig}}, \varepsilon)$ -break the signature scheme if after at most $q_{\text{sig}}(k)$ signature queries and $t(k)$ processing time, \mathcal{F} outputs a valid forgery with probability at least $\varepsilon(k)$ for any $k > 0$.*

Definition 3. *A signature scheme is EUF-CMA $(t, q_{\text{sig}}, \varepsilon)$ -secure if there is no forger capable of $(t, q_{\text{sig}}, \varepsilon)$ -breaking the signature scheme.*

Definition 4. *A signature scheme is EUF-CMA-secure if for any forger \mathcal{F} that $(t(k), q_{\text{sig}}(k), \varepsilon(k))$ -breaks the scheme, if $t(k)$ and $q_{\text{sig}}(k)$ are polynomial, then $\varepsilon(k)$ is negligible.*

4.2 RSA Signatures

RSA [10] is certainly the most famous public-key cryptosystem:

System parameters : Two integers $k, \ell \in \mathbb{N}$ and a function $\mu : \{0, 1\}^\ell \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^k$.

Generate : On input 1^k ,

- Randomly select two distinct $k/2$ -bit primes p and q .

- Compute $N = pq$.
 - Pick a random encryption exponent $e \in \mathbb{Z}_{\phi(N)}^*$
 - Compute the corresponding decryption exponent $d = e^{-1} \bmod \phi(N)$.
- The output of the key generation process is $\{N, e, d\}$; the public key is $\text{pk} = \{N, e\}$ and the private key is $\text{sk} = \{N, d\}$.

Sign : Return $y = \mu(m)^d \bmod N$.

Verify : If $y^e \bmod N = \mu(m)$ then return 1 else return 0.

4.3 Coron-Koeune-Naccache Long-Message RSA Encoding

Signing long messages with RSA is possible using a construction proposed by Coron, Koeune and Naccache (CKN) in [6] (and improved in [4]). CKN split a long message into short blocks, encode each block with μ and multiply all the encoded blocks modulo N . Before encoding a block, CKN's procedure appends to each block a 0 and the block's index i . Then the product of so-formed encodings is appended to 1 and re-encoded again with μ .

System parameters : Two integers $k > 0$ and $a \in [0, k - 1]$ and a function

$$\mu : \{0, 1\}^{k+1} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^k$$

Generate : As in standard RSA.

Sign : Split the message m into $(k - a)$ -bit blocks such that $m = m[1] || \dots || m[r]$.

Let $\alpha = \prod_{i=1}^r \mu(0 || i || m[i]) \bmod N$ where i is an a -bit string representing i .

Let $y = \mu(1 || \alpha)$ and return $y^d \bmod N$.

Verify : Let $y = x^e \bmod N$ and recompute $\alpha = \prod_{i=1}^r \mu(0 || i || m[i]) \bmod N$.

If $y = \mu(1 || \alpha)$ then return 1 else return 0.

4.4 The New MSHF

Let N, e, d be parameters selected as in sub-section 4.3. We additionally require that e is a prime number and $e > n$. Let $\mu : \{0, 1\}^k \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^k$ be an encoding function. We propose the following MSHF:

Apply μ to all the elements of $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$ and multiply all the encoded integers modulo N :

$$\mathcal{H}(X) = \prod_{i=1}^n \mu(x_i) \bmod N$$

Note that d and e are not used in the function⁵ and that \mathcal{H} is incremental as it can be updated easily if new elements need to be added to the set.

⁵ e is only needed in the security reduction, so strictly speaking the only requirement for the definition of our MSHF is that there is some prime between N and n .

This construction is very similar to CKN’s long-message RSA encoding. The difference is that indices are omitted because the order of the elements is not taken into account. The equality test for two MSS X and Y is simply :

$$\text{return}(\mathcal{H}(X) \stackrel{?}{=} \mathcal{H}(Y))$$

The setup is a slightly modified RSA since we additionally require that e is a prime number and that $e > n$. The latter requirement is not a problem as n is the size of the compared MSS (e.g. $n < 2^{30}$).

5 MS Collision-Resistance Proof

We now prove the MS collision-resistance of our MSHF. We show that computing a collision in time t with probability ε implies forging μ -encoded RSA signatures in polynomially-related t' and ε' .

Let $\text{Generate}'(k, n)$ be an algorithm that, given two positive integers k and n , returns (N, e, d, μ) such that (N, e, d) are RSA parameters, $|N| = k$ and e is a prime number such that $e > n$. Moreover, $\mu : \{0, 1\}^k \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^k$ is such that the deterministic-padding RSA scheme obtained using μ and (N, e, d) is EUF-CMA secure.

Given k and n and an output of $\text{Generate}'(k, n)$, we consider two different games.

In the first game Game_1 , a forger \mathcal{F} is given $\{N, e, \mu\}$. \mathcal{F} has access to a signing oracle \mathcal{S} that, when given $m_i \in \{0, 1\}^k$, answers $\mu(m_i)^d \bmod N$. After $q_1(k, n)$ signature requests to \mathcal{S} and $t_1(k, n)$ computing time, \mathcal{F} outputs with probability $\varepsilon_1(k, n)$ a forgery (m, s) such that $s = \mu(m)^d \bmod N$ and m was never signed by \mathcal{S} . When $n = n(k)$ is a polynomial in k , the security of the μ -based RSA deterministic-encoding signatures implies that, for any \mathcal{F} , if $t_1(k)$ and $q_1(k)$ are polynomial then $\varepsilon_1(k)$ is negligible.

In the second game Game_2 , an adversary \mathcal{A} is given $\{N, e, \mu, n\}$. This adversary’s goal is to produce a collision. It wins if it can find two sets $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_{n'}\}$ and $Y = \{y_1, \dots, y_{n''}\}$ where $x_i, y_i \in [0, 2^k[$ such that $X \neq Y$, $n' \leq n$, $n'' \leq n$ and

$$\prod_{i=1}^{n'} \mu(x_i) \equiv \prod_{i=1}^{n''} \mu(y_i) \pmod{N}$$

\mathcal{A} runs in time $t_2(k, n)$ and succeeds with probability $\varepsilon_2(k, n)$.

Theorem 1. *If there exists an adversary \mathcal{A} that finds a collision in time $t_2(k, n)$ with probability $\varepsilon_2(k, n)$, then there exists a forger \mathcal{F} that finds a forgery after $q_1(k, n) < 2n$ queries to \mathcal{S} and $t_1(k, n) = t_2(k, n) + \mathcal{O}(n^2) + \mathcal{O}(nk^2)$ computing time, with probability $\varepsilon_1(k, n) = \varepsilon_2(k, n)$.*

Proof. Let \mathcal{A} be an adversary that finds a collision in time t_2 with probability ε_2 . We construct a forger \mathcal{F} as follows.

\mathcal{F} first uses \mathcal{A} to try to obtain a collision. If, after t_2 time units, \mathcal{A} does not succeed, \mathcal{F} stops. This happens with probability $1 - \varepsilon_2$.

Otherwise, \mathcal{A} returns a collision. This happens with probability ε_2 and in this case \mathcal{F} learns $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_{n'}\}$ and $Y = \{y_1, \dots, y_{n''}\}$ such that $X \neq Y$ and:

$$\prod_{i=1}^{n'} \mu(x_i) \equiv \prod_{i=1}^{n''} \mu(y_i) \pmod{N}$$

We denote by $\#X(x)$ number of occurrences of an element x in a MS X .

Since $X \neq Y$, there exists x_{i_0} such that $\#X(x_{i_0}) \neq \#Y(x_{i_0})$ and without loss of generality, we assume that $\#X(x_{i_0}) > \#Y(x_{i_0})$.

Let $a = \#X(x_{i_0}) - \#Y(x_{i_0})$ (note that $1 \leq a \leq n'$).

The forger \mathcal{F} finds x_{i_0} and a by sorting and comparing X and Y . We have:

$$\prod_{i \in V} \mu(x_i) \times \mu(x_{i_0})^{\#X(x_{i_0})} \equiv \prod_{i \in W} \mu(y_i) \times \mu(x_{i_0})^{\#Y(x_{i_0})} \pmod{N}$$

where V is the subset of $\{1, \dots, n'\}$ corresponding to the indices of the x_i not equal to x_{i_0} and W is the subset of $\{1, \dots, n''\}$ corresponding to the indices of the y_i not equal to x_{i_0} .

We get:

$$\mu(x_{i_0})^a \equiv \prod_{i \in V} \mu(x_i)^{-1} \times \prod_{i \in W} \mu(y_i) \pmod{N} \quad (1)$$

The integer x_{i_0} does not appear on the right side of this equation.

\mathcal{F} computes u and λ such that $au = \lambda e + 1$ (since e is prime and $0 < a \leq n' \leq n < e$, a is invertible modulo e). \mathcal{F} obtains from the signing oracle \mathcal{S} the signatures $s_i = \mu(x_i)^d \pmod{N}$ of all x_i such that $i \in V$ and the signatures $s'_i = \mu(y_i)^d \pmod{N}$ of all y_i for $i = 1, \dots, n''$. Then \mathcal{F} computes:

$$s = \left(\left(\prod_{i \in V} s_i \right)^{-1} \times \prod_{i \in W} s'_i \right)^u \times \mu(x_{i_0})^{-\lambda} \pmod{N}$$

One can show that $s = \mu(x_{i_0})^d \pmod N$ using equation (1):

$$\begin{aligned}
\mu(x_{i_0})^{au} &\equiv \prod_{i \in V} \mu(x_i)^{-u} \times \prod_{i \in W} \mu(y_i)^u && \pmod N \\
\mu(x_{i_0})^{\lambda e+1} &\equiv \prod_{i \in V} \mu(x_i)^{-u} \times \prod_{i \in W} \mu(y_i)^u && \pmod N \\
\mu(x_{i_0}) &\equiv \prod_{i \in V} \mu(x_i)^{-u} \times \prod_{i \in W} \mu(y_i)^u \times \mu(x_{i_0})^{-\lambda e} && \pmod N \\
\mu(x_{i_0})^d &\equiv \prod_{i \in V} \mu(x_i)^{-ud} \times \prod_{i \in W} \mu(y_i)^{ud} \times \mu(x_{i_0})^{-\lambda} && \pmod N \\
\mu(x_{i_0})^d &\equiv s && \pmod N
\end{aligned}$$

This implies that (x_{i_0}, s) is a valid (message, signature) pair. Since the message x_{i_0} was never sent to \mathcal{S} , \mathcal{F} succeeds in finding a forgery. The number of queries to \mathcal{S} is $\#V + n'' = (n' - a) + n'' < 2n$.

We now evaluate \mathcal{F} 's running time. First, \mathcal{F} runs \mathcal{A} in time $t_2(k, n)$. Finding x_{i_0} and a by sorting and comparing X and Y takes $\mathcal{O}(n \log n)$ time⁶. Computing u and λ takes $\mathcal{O}(n^2)$ time⁷; s can be computed in $2n$ modular multiplications (i.e. $\mathcal{O}(nk^2)$ time), n modular inversions (still $\mathcal{O}(nk^2)$ time), two modular exponentiations ($\mathcal{O}(k^2 \log n)$ dominated by $\mathcal{O}(nk^2)$) and an evaluation of μ , that we omit. All in all, the total running time of \mathcal{F} is:

$$t_1(k, n) = t_2(k, n) + \mathcal{O}(n^2) + \mathcal{O}(nk^2)$$

□

Using Theorem 1 we infer that no algorithm can efficiently find collisions:

Theorem 2. *If $n = n(k)$ is polynomial, the success probability of any adversary that running in polynomial time $t_2(k)$ is negligible.*

Proof. Assume that $n(k)$ is polynomial and that \mathcal{A} finds a collision in polynomial time $t_2(k)$. We want to show that $\varepsilon_2(k)$ is negligible.

By virtue of Theorem 1, there exists an \mathcal{F} that finds a forgery after $q_1(k)$ signature queries in time $t_1(k)$. The number of queries $q_1(k) < 2n(k)$ is polynomial. As we have seen that $t_1(k, n) = t_2(k, n) + \mathcal{O}(n^2) + \mathcal{O}(nk^2)$ is also polynomial. Therefore the attacker's success probability $\varepsilon_1(k)$ is negligible. By virtue of Theorem 1, $\varepsilon_1(k) = \varepsilon_2(k)$ and hence $\varepsilon_2(k)$ is negligible. □

Theorem 2 validates the MSHF's asymptotic behavior.

In practical terms the above means that if a modulus N and a deterministic encoding function μ can be safely used to produce RSA signatures, they can also be used to compute MS hashes. The proposed hash function is comparable in term of efficiency and security to MSet-Mu-Hash while having the merit of relying on a weaker assumption.

⁶ Dominated by $\mathcal{O}(n^2)$.

⁷ Extended Euclidean algorithm.

6 *Caveat Lector: Complexity Estimates*

In this section we would like to clarify the expressions "quasi-linear time" and "quasi-linear space" used throughout this paper.

Formally, time complexity is at least $\mathcal{O}(n \log N)$ and space complexity is $\mathcal{O}(\log N)$. We need N to be bigger than the largest integer in the MS and, to make the security reduction work, we require that $N > e > n$. Hence, asymptotically N is not constant, and time complexity is at least $\mathcal{O}(n \log N)$.

However, if N is chosen to provide adequate security guarantees (say 2048 bits) then this will suffice to hash MSS larger than the known universe (e.g. n up to 2^{256}) and a random e will present no problems for the security reduction. In other words, this is a case where we have in any "practical" terms constant space, even though not asymptotically.

For a fixed N , the algorithm then takes time linear in n , as long as the integers are bounded by N , which might be a more serious constraint. Also, with a fixed upper bound on the size of integers, there exist linear-time sorting algorithms (such as radix sort). This suggests again that time complexity is not better than sorting and comparing (though as mentioned above there may well be cases where sorting before comparing is not feasible.)

Finally, the construction depends on a function μ mapping k -bit strings to k -bit strings where $k = \log N$. A careful choice of μ is necessary: N and k are variables hence the complexity of μ must also be factored into the overall complexity of the algorithm.

7 Conclusion & Further Research

In this paper, we proposed a new MSHF whose collision-resistance is directly linked to the security of deterministic-encoding RSA signatures.

The function allows to test if two integer sets are equal using moderate memory and computational resources. The test does not yield false negatives and with carefully chosen parameters, it does not yield false positives either since we prove that a single false positive would imply the insecurity of deterministic RSA signature encoding.

While this gives a practical answer to a theoretical question asked by Katriel, we still do not know how to generalize the proposed construction to solve the SIP i.e. test if a set A is a subset of a set B .

Another open question is whether a similar construction based on an aggregate signature scheme (e.g. [3]) could also be used to provide MSHF functions. The idea would be to multiply hashes⁸ of set elements and prove the resulting MSHF's collision-resistance under the assumption that the aggregate signature scheme is secure.

⁸ Obtained using the hash function of the aggregate signature scheme.

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