

K-Waay: Fast and Deniable Post-Quantum X3DH without Ring Signatures

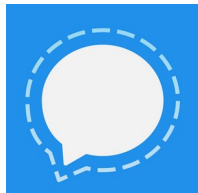
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Ngoc Khanh Nguyen, Nicolas Rolin, Serge Vaudenay*

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The Signal Protocol

- Two-party messaging between Alice and Bob.
- De-facto standard: *The Signal Protocol*.
- Two main components: key exchange and messaging proper.
- Key exchange: X3DH (Extended Triple Diffie-Hellman)
 - Recently: PQXDH (cf. this session!)



Extended Triple Diffie–Hellman (X3DH)

- X3DH provides secrecy, authentication, deniability, support for offline users...
- Due to Shor's algorithm, *post-quantum* cryptography is needed.
 - X3DH is classically secure [CCDGS20,VGIK20] but not post-quantum.
- Well-understood how to build post-quantum messaging (Double Ratchet [ACD19]).
 - Less so for X3DH.

Post-Quantum X3DH-Like Key Exchange

- **Challenge: post-quantum security *and* deniability.**
- **Recently: Signal deployed PQXDH (X3DH + PQ KEM).**
 - Secure against store-now, decrypt-later quantum attacks.
- **Hashimoto et al. [HKKP21, HKKP22] and Brendel et al. [BFGJS22] proposed fully PQ-secure X3DH protocols.**
 - Rely on PQ ring signatures and KEMs.
 - Ring signatures can be a bottleneck.

Split-KEM

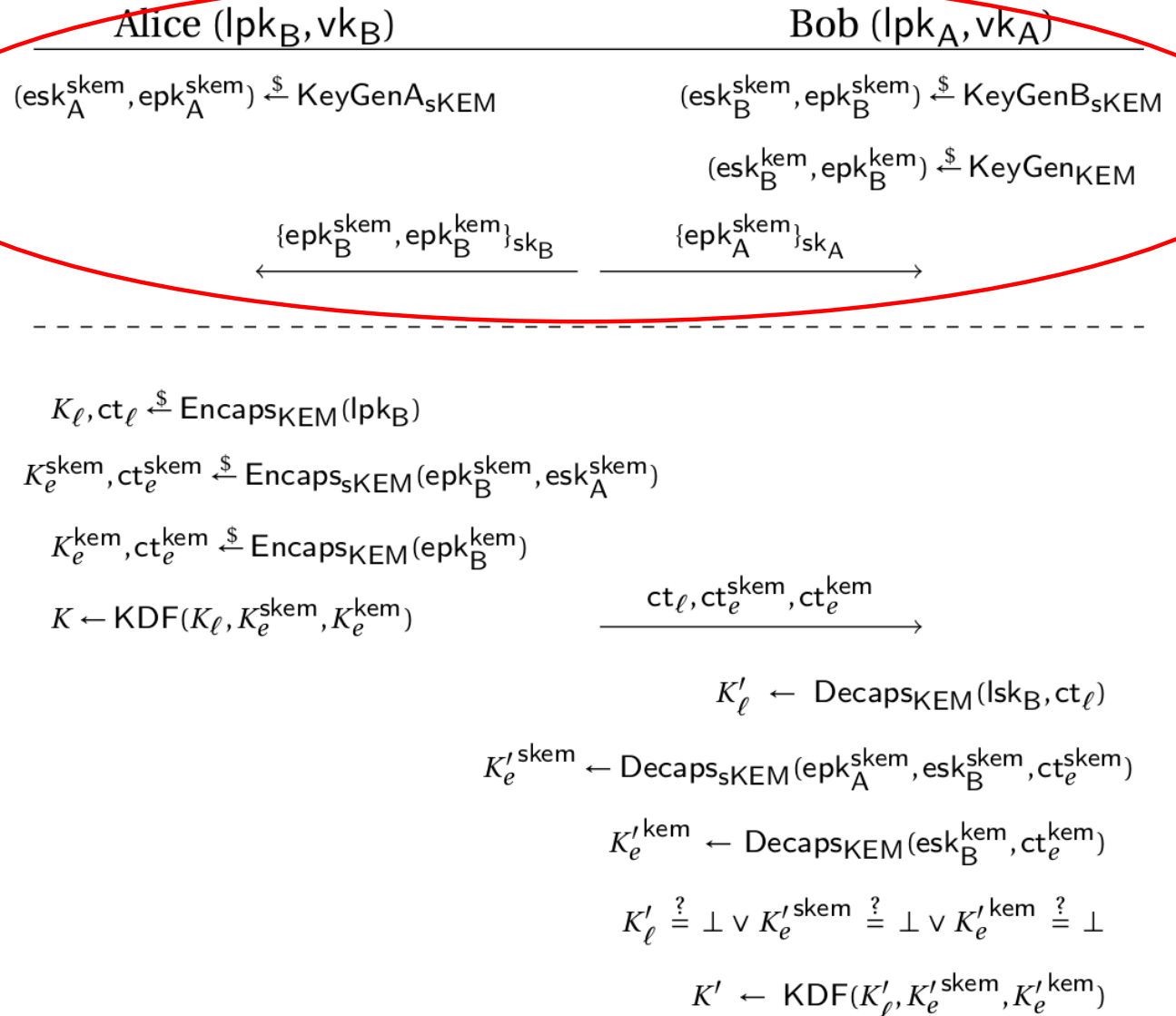
- [BFGJS20]: key encapsulation mechanism (KEM) where Encaps/Decaps take as input public *and* secret keys.
- Key generation: $(pk_A, sk_A) \leftarrow \text{KeyGenA}, (pk_B, sk_B) \leftarrow \text{KeyGenB}$
- Encapsulation: $(K, ct) \leftarrow \text{Encaps}(pk_B, sk_A)$
- Decapsulation: $K \leftarrow \text{Decaps}(pk_A, sk_B, ct)$
- Morally generalises Diffie–Hellman/NIKE with a ciphertext.
- Was not *formally* shown to imply key exchange by [BFGJS20].

Our Protocol: K-Waay

- K-Waay: deniable PQ X3DH based on *split-KEM* and KEMs.
- Uses split-KEM with ephemeral keys, ephemeral KEM, long-term KEM and long-term signatures for prekeys.
 - Security against different combinations of key exposure.

K-Waay

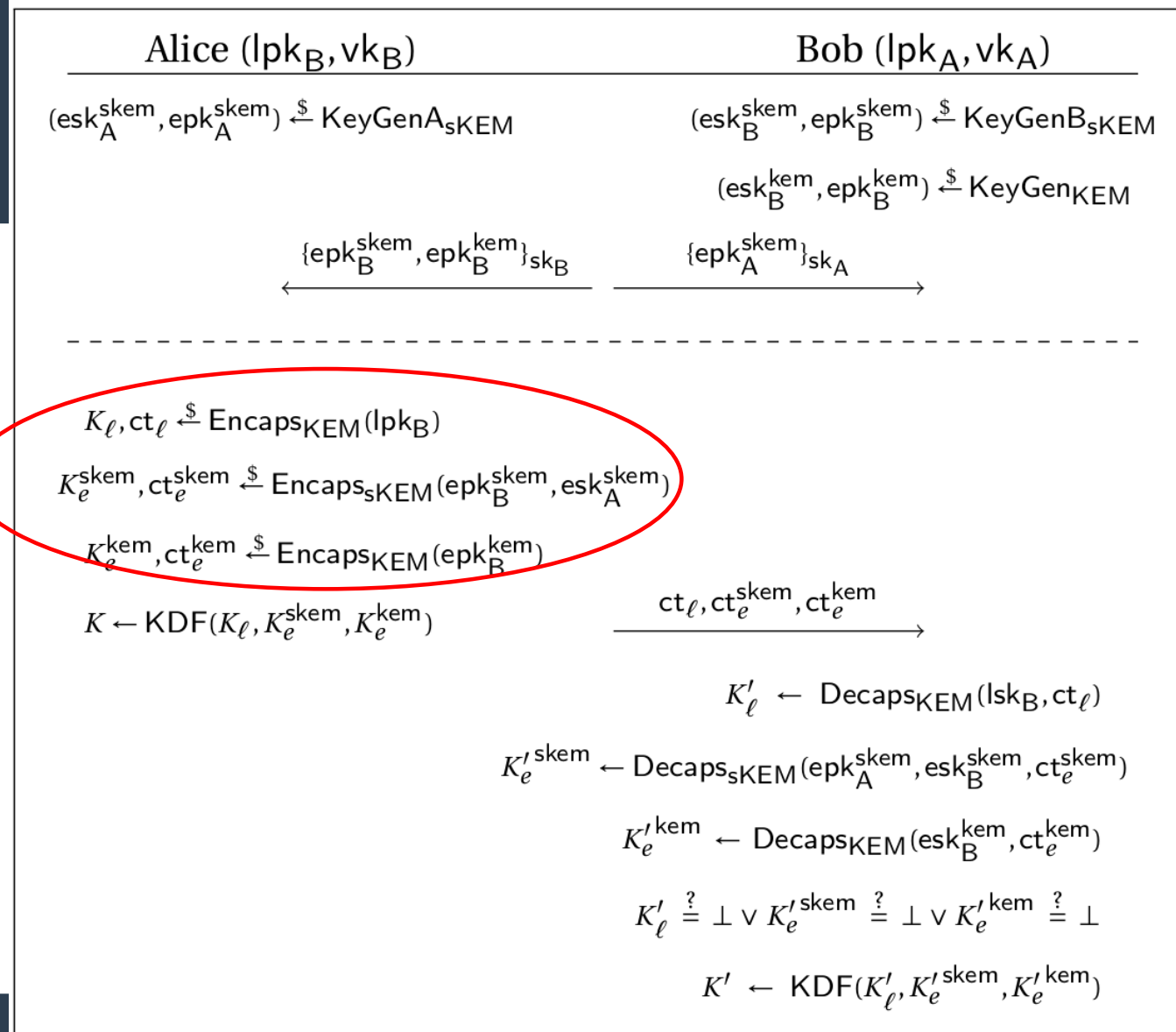
Init:
upload
signed
prekey
bundles



K-Waay

Send:
 - Encaps
 with two
 KEMs and
 Split-KEM

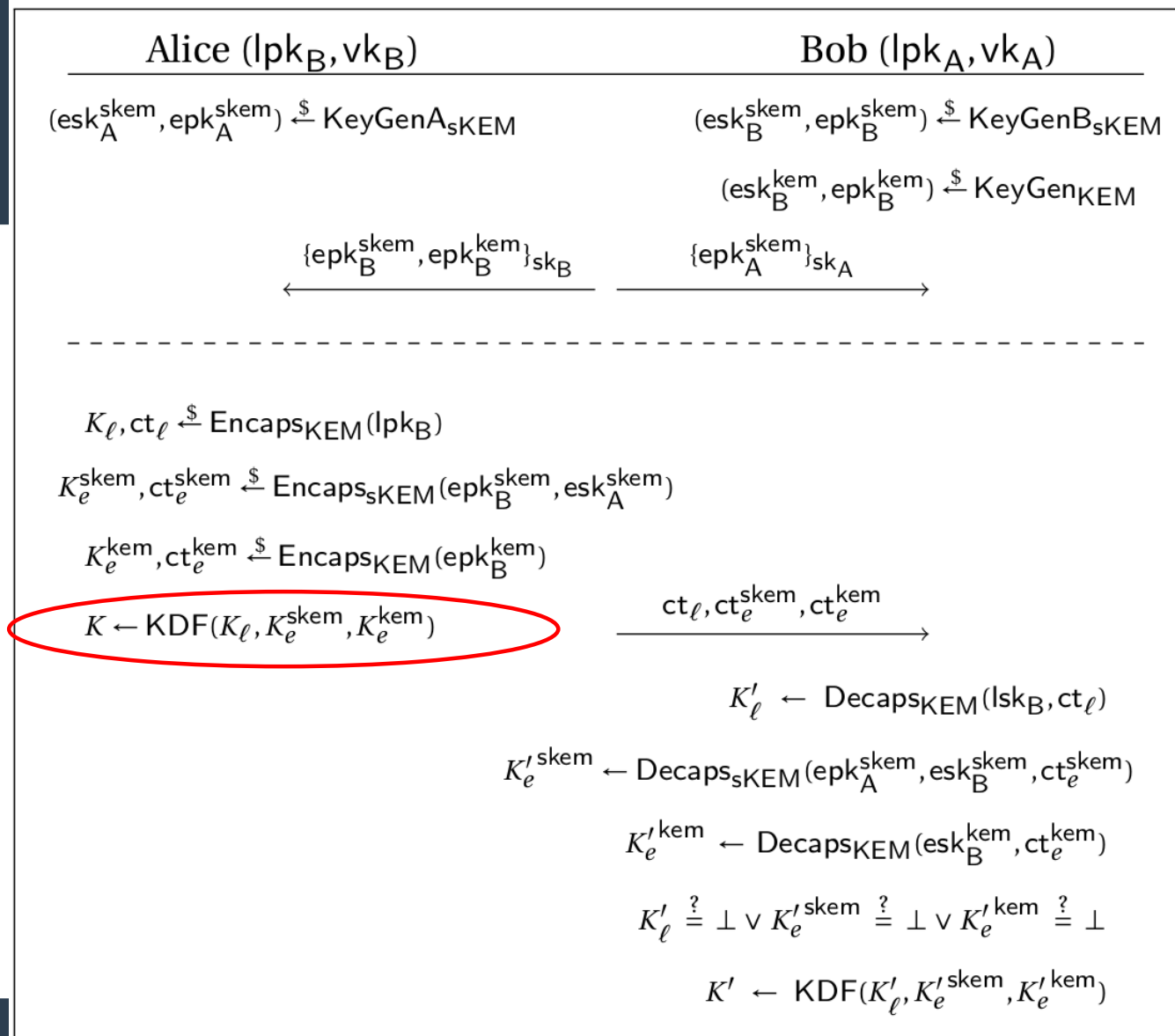
- KDF call



K-Waay

Send:
 - Encaps
 with two
 KEMs and
 Split-KEM

- KDF call



K-Waay

Alice (lpk_B, vk_B)

Bob (lpk_A, vk_A)

$$(esk_A^{skem}, epk_A^{skem}) \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \text{KeyGen}_{sKEM}$$

$$(esk_B^{skem}, epk_B^{skem}) \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \text{KeyGen}_{sKEM}$$

$$(esk_B^{kem}, epk_B^{kem}) \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \text{KeyGen}_{KEM}$$

$$\leftarrow \{epk_B^{skem}, epk_B^{kem}\}_{sk_B} \quad \{epk_A^{skem}\}_{sk_A} \rightarrow$$

$$K_\ell, ct_\ell \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \text{Encaps}_{KEM}(lpk_B)$$

$$K_e^{skem}, ct_e^{skem} \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \text{Encaps}_{sKEM}(epk_B^{skem}, esk_A^{skem})$$

$$K_e^{kem}, ct_e^{kem} \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \text{Encaps}_{KEM}(epk_B^{kem})$$

$$K \leftarrow \text{KDF}(K_\ell, K_e^{skem}, K_e^{kem})$$

$$ct_\ell, ct_e^{skem}, ct_e^{kem}$$

$$K'_\ell \leftarrow \text{Decaps}_{KEM}(lsk_B, ct_\ell)$$

$$K_e'^{skem} \leftarrow \text{Decaps}_{sKEM}(epk_A^{skem}, esk_B^{skem}, ct_e^{skem})$$

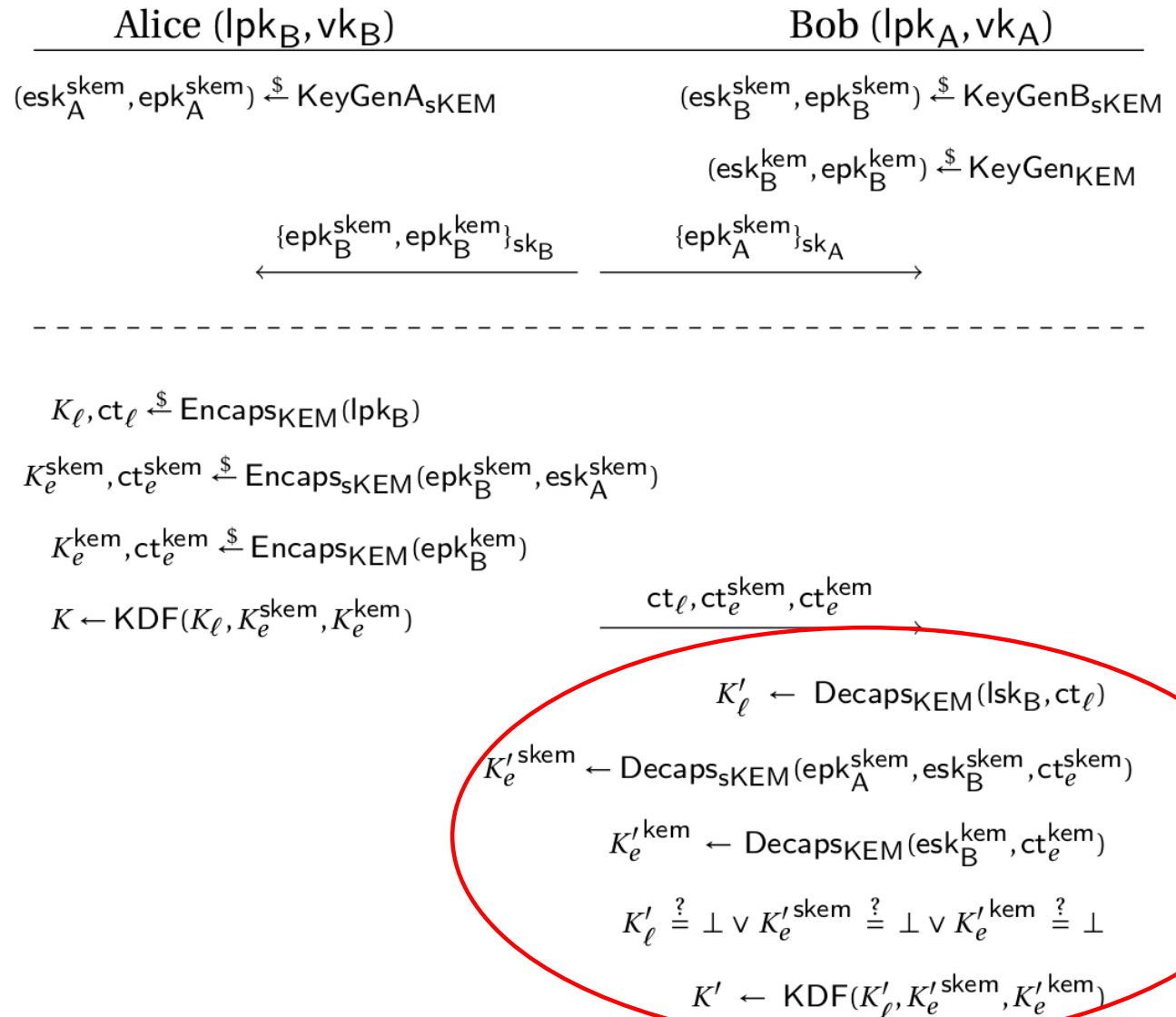
$$K_e'^{kem} \leftarrow \text{Decaps}_{KEM}(esk_B^{kem}, ct_e^{kem})$$

$$K'_\ell \stackrel{?}{=} \perp \vee K_e'^{skem} \stackrel{?}{=} \perp \vee K_e'^{kem} \stackrel{?}{=} \perp$$

$$K' \leftarrow \text{KDF}(K'_\ell, K_e'^{skem}, K_e'^{kem})$$

K-Waay

Receive:
corresponding
Decaps and
KDF calls



Split-KEM (2)

- **We revisit split-KEM: its original security notions are *insufficient* for X3DH-like key exchange.**
 - Authentication guarantees.
 - Semi-honest deniability, like [BFGJS22].
 - Support ephemeral key-reuse *without* full CCA security!
- **We propose a secure instantiation secure under plain learning-with-errors (LWE).**
 - Based on Frodo key exchange [BCD+16].

Frodo-based Split-KEM (pre-RO transform)

KeyGen:
extra noise
term,
otherwise
Frodo.

KeyGenA(1^λ)

- 1: $\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A \leftarrow \$ \chi(\mathbb{Z}_q^{n \times \bar{n}})$
- 2: $\mathbf{F}_A \leftarrow \$ \chi^{\bar{n} \times \bar{n}}$
- 3: $\mathbf{B}_A \leftarrow \mathbf{A}\mathbf{S}_A + \mathbf{D}_A$
- 4: $\text{pk}_A \leftarrow (\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}_A)$
- 5: $\text{sk}_A \leftarrow (\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A, \mathbf{F}_A)$
- 6: return $(\text{pk}_A, \text{sk}_A)$

KeyGenB(1^λ)

- 1: $\mathbf{S}_B, \mathbf{D}_B \leftarrow \$ \chi^{\bar{n} \times n}$
- 2: $\mathbf{F}_B \leftarrow \$ \chi^{\bar{n} \times \bar{n}}$
- 3: $\mathbf{B}_B \leftarrow \mathbf{S}_B\mathbf{A} + \mathbf{D}_B$
- 4: $\text{pk}_B \leftarrow (\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}_B)$
- 5: $\text{sk}_B \leftarrow (\mathbf{S}_B, \mathbf{D}_B, \mathbf{F}_B)$
- 6: return $(\text{pk}_B, \text{sk}_B)$

Encaps($\text{pk}_B = (\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}_B), \text{sk}_A = (\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A, \mathbf{F}_A)$)

- 1: // We assume A encapsulates
- 2: $\mathbf{E}_A \leftarrow \$ \chi^{\bar{n} \times \bar{n}}$
- 3: $\mathbf{V} \leftarrow \mathbf{S}_A\mathbf{B}_B + \mathbf{E}_A$
- 4: $\text{ct} \leftarrow \text{HelpRec}(\mathbf{V})$
- 5: $\mathbf{K} \leftarrow \text{Rec}(2\mathbf{V}, \text{ct})$
- 6: return (\mathbf{K}, ct)

Decaps($\text{pk}_A = (\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}_A), \text{sk}_B = (\mathbf{S}_B, \mathbf{D}_B, \mathbf{F}_B), \text{ct}$)

- 1: $\mathbf{V}' \leftarrow \mathbf{B}_A\mathbf{S}_B + \mathbf{F}_B$
- 2: $\mathbf{K}' \leftarrow \text{Rec}(2\mathbf{V}', \text{ct})$
- 3: return \mathbf{K}'

Frodo-based Split-KEM (pre-RO transform)

KeyGen:
extra noise
term,
otherwise
Frodo.

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- 1: $\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A \leftarrow \chi(\mathbb{Z}_q^{n \times \bar{n}})$
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- 4: $\text{pk}_B \leftarrow (\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}_B)$
- 5: $\text{sk}_B \leftarrow (\mathbf{S}_B, \mathbf{D}_B, \mathbf{F}_B)$
- 6: **return** $(\text{pk}_B, \text{sk}_B)$

Encaps($\text{pk}_B = (\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}_B), \text{sk}_A = (\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A, \mathbf{F}_A)$)

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- 1: $\mathbf{V}' \leftarrow \mathbf{B}_A\mathbf{S}_B + \mathbf{F}_B$
- 2: $\mathbf{K}' \leftarrow \text{Rec}(2\mathbf{V}', \text{ct})$
- 3: **return** \mathbf{K}'

Frodo-based Split-KEM (pre-RO transform)

Encaps:
Frodo.

KeyGenA(1^λ)

- 1: $\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A \leftarrow_{\$} \chi(\mathbb{Z}_q^{n \times \bar{n}})$
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- 1: $\mathbf{V}' \leftarrow \mathbf{B}_A\mathbf{S}_B + \mathbf{F}_B$
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- 3: **return** \mathbf{K}'

Frodo-based Split-KEM (pre-RO transform)

Decaps:
Noise from
KeyGen
added
to V'

KeyGenA(1^λ)

- 1: $\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A \leftarrow \$ \chi(\mathbb{Z}_q^{n \times \bar{n}})$
- 2: $\mathbf{F}_A \leftarrow \$ \chi^{\bar{n} \times \bar{n}}$
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- 5: $\text{sk}_A \leftarrow (\mathbf{S}_A, \mathbf{D}_A, \mathbf{F}_A)$
- 6: **return** $(\text{pk}_A, \text{sk}_A)$

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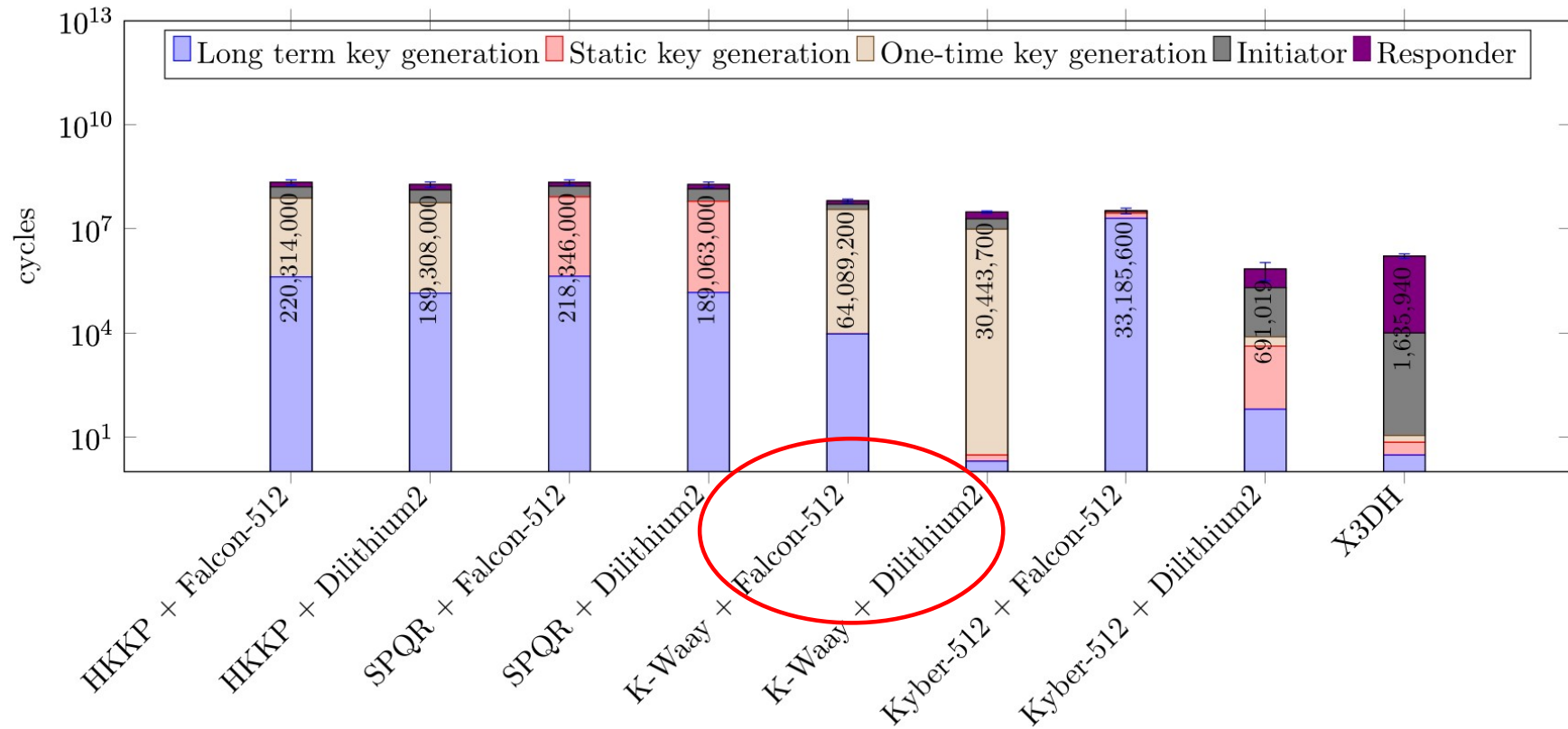
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- 3: **return** \mathbf{K}'

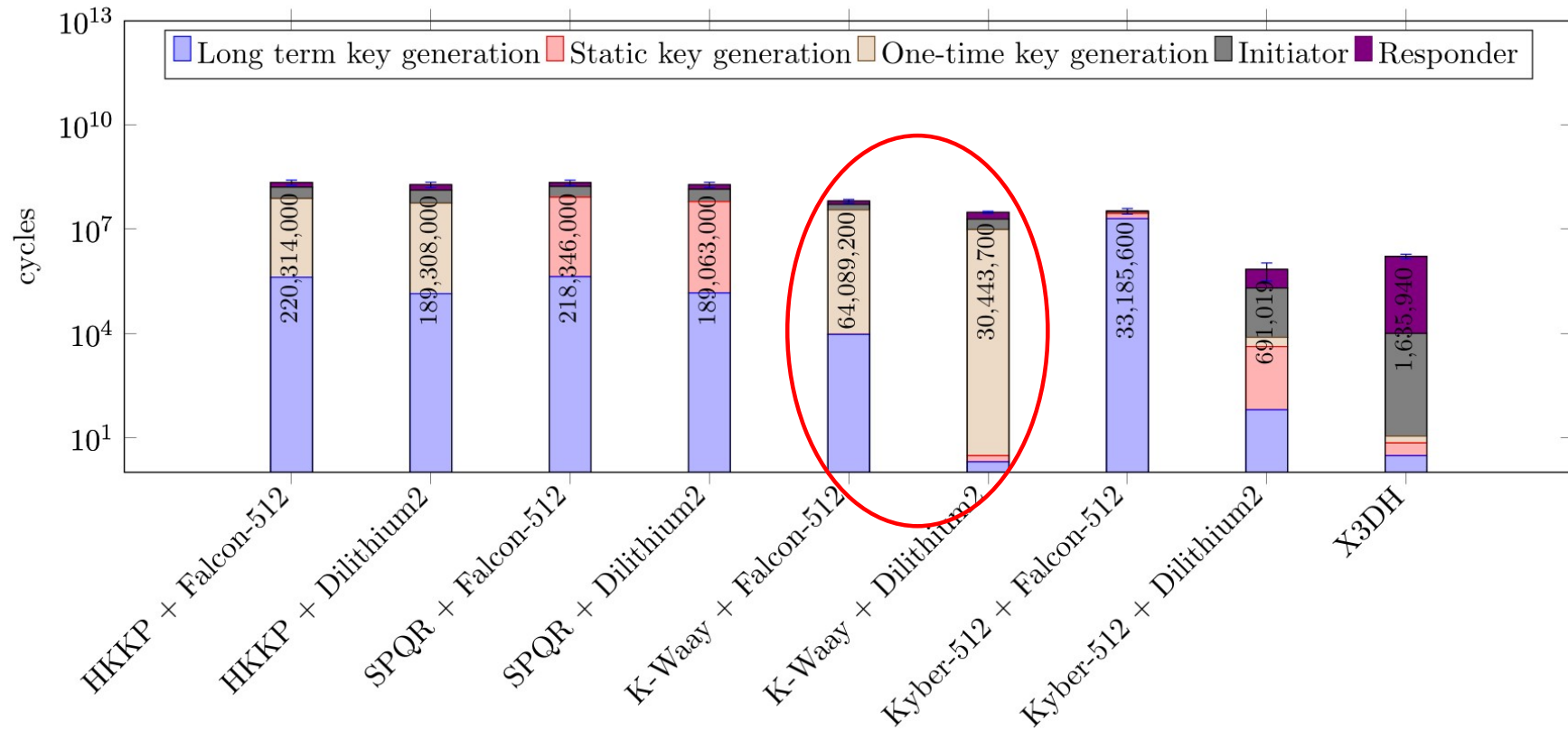
Parameters and Benchmarking

- We propose parameters for K-Waay.
- **Before** a random oracle (RO) transform (extra hash in ciphertext):
 - >192/128 bits of classical/quantum security (OW-CPA, decaps-OW-CPA, deniability).
- **After:**
 - 128-bit security, 64 bits in the QRROM (assuming 2^{64} RO queries).
- **Previous PQ X3DH benchmarks: worse concrete security!**
- We benchmark with Kyber-512 [BDK+18] and Raptor ring signatures [LAZ19] for related work.

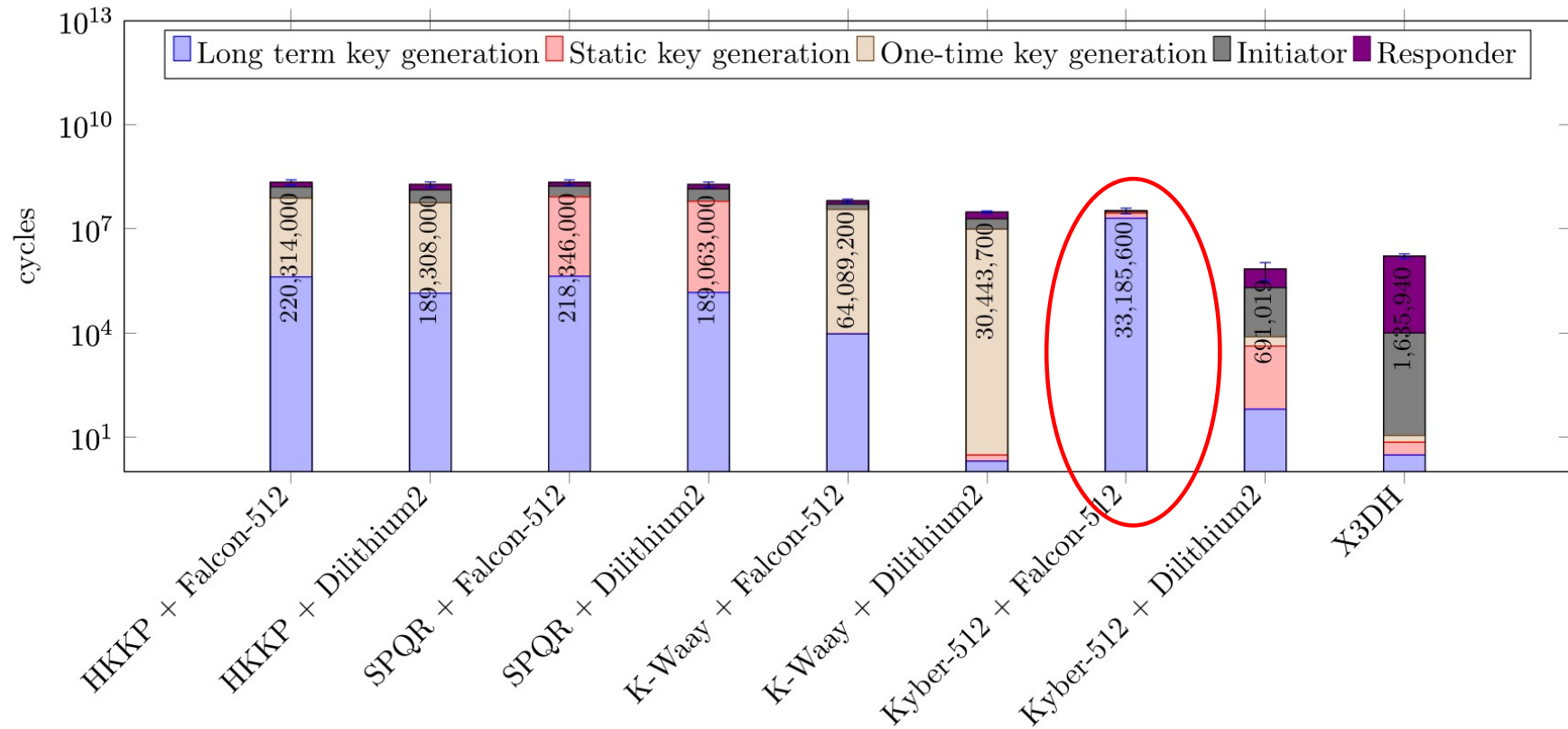
Speed



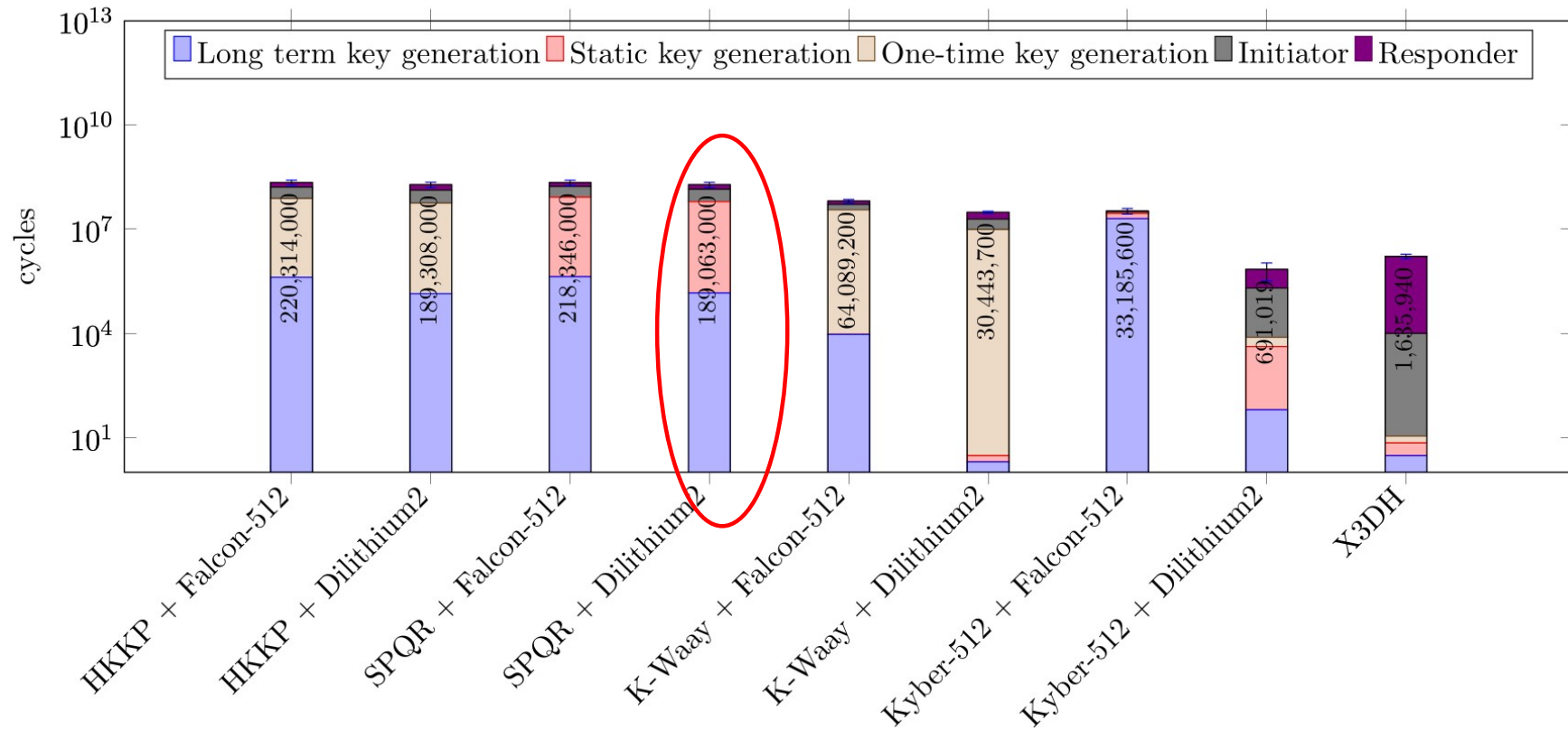
Speed



Speed



Speed



Size

Scheme	lpk	prek	ct
K-Waay + Dilithium	2112	24520	1632
K-Waay + Falcon	1697	22790	1632
HKKP Has+22	1700	1700	4056
HKKP Has+22 + Dilithium2	3012	4120	4056
HKKP Has+22 + Falcon	2597	2390	4056
SPQR Bre+22	3400	1632	4824
SPQR Bre+22 + Dilithium2	4712	4052	4824
SPQR Bre+22 + Falcon	4297	2322	4824

Wrapping Up

- K-Waay: faster deniable PQ X3DH.
- What about split-KEM from module LWE?
 - No fundamental barrier.
 - Keys should be smaller.
- Thanks! @dcol97 on X



Full version: <https://eprint.iacr.org/2024/120>

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- [HV22]: Huguenin-Dumittan, Vaudenay: On IND-qCCA Security in the ROM and Its Applications. EUROCRYPT 2022

Backup Slide: Comparison Table

Protocol	PQ Conf	PQ Auth	KCI	FS	SSR	RR	Deniability
X3DH MP16 ; Coh+20	✗	✗	✓	PFS	✓	✓	Malicious
PQXDH KS23 ; Bha+23	✓	✗	✓	PFS	✗	✗	Semi-honest+
KEM+Sigs Has+22	✓	✓	✓	PFS	✓	✗	✗
HKKP Has+22	✓	✓	✓	WFS	✓	✗	Semi-honest
SPQR Bre+22	✓	✓	✓	WFS	✗	✓	Semi-honest
K-Waay (Section 5)	✓	✓	✓	WFS	✓	✗	Semi-honest

Backup Slide: Our DAKE Formalism

- We propose a new Deniable Authenticated Key Exchange (DAKE) formalism to capture K-Waay.
- $\text{Init}(\text{sk}, \text{role}) \rightarrow (\text{st}, \text{prek})$: outputs a temporary state and prekey bundle prek .
- $\text{Send}(\text{sk}, \text{pk}, \text{st}, \text{prek}) \rightarrow (\text{k}, \text{m})$.
- $\text{BatchReceive}(\text{sk}, \text{st}, \{\text{pk}_j, \text{prek}_j, \text{m}_j\}_j) \rightarrow \{\text{k}_s\}_s$: captures key reuse (concurrency).
 - Split-KEM doesn't need full IND-CCA security, and is thus very efficient!

Our Split-KEM Security Notions (1)

- UNF-1KCA: adversary cannot forge a ciphertext when given a ciphertext (from Alice).
- Note Signal users upload 100 prekey bundles, but they can run out...
- Ind-1BatchCCA: ephemeral key reuse *without* full CCA security!
- Q(ROM) transform à la [HV22] to achieve these two:
 - Adds an extra hash $H(pk_A, pk_B, ct, K)$ to Alice's ciphertext.

Our Split-KEM Security Notions (2)

- **Semi-honest deniability.**
- **Even if the adversary is given one split-KEM secret (say Alice's).**
- **Implies semi-honest AKE deniability (morally stronger than [BFGJS22]).**