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► **To cite this version:**

Chun-Ta Li, Cheng-Chi Lee, Chen-Ju Liu, Chin-Wen Lee. A Robust Remote User Authentication Scheme against Smart Card Security Breach. Yingjiu Li. 23th Data and Applications Security (DBSec), Jul 2011, Richmond, VA, United States. Springer, Lecture Notes in Computer Science, LNCS-6818, pp.231-238, 2011, Data and Applications Security and Privacy XXV. <10.1007/978-3-642-22348-8\_18>. <hal-01586587>

**HAL Id: hal-01586587**

**<https://hal.inria.fr/hal-01586587>**

Submitted on 13 Sep 2017

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# A Robust Remote User Authentication Scheme Against Smart Card Security Breach

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**Abstract.** Remote user authentication is important to identify whether communicating parties are genuine and trustworthy using the password and the smart card between a login user and a remote server. Recently, we find that Kim et al.'s password-based authentication scheme [1] assume that the attacker cannot extract the secret information of the smart card. However, in reality, the authors in [2, 8] show that the secrets stored in the card can be extracted by monitoring its power consumption. Therefore, Kim et al.'s scheme fail to resist smart card security breach. As the main contribution of this paper, a robust remote user authentication scheme against smart card security breach is presented, while keeping the merits of the well-known smart card based authentication schemes.

*Keywords:* Cryptanalysis; Network security; Password; Remote user authentication; Smart card.

## 1 Introduction

With the significant advances in communication networks over the last couple of decades, remote user authentication based on passwords [1, 3, 6, 7] or biometrics [4, 5] over insecure networks is the conventional method of authentication and has already been accepted warmly. Typically a network of remote servers are responsible for managing and supplying network services to login users for which user authentication protocols have been provided during a login procedure.

Recently, Liao et al. [7] proposed nine requirements for rating performance of a new password authentication scheme in terms of security, friendliness and efficiency. A new password authentication scheme using smart cards should satisfy the following requirements: (1) without maintaining verification tables; (2) users can freely choose and update passwords; (3) resistance to password disclosure to the server; (4) prevention of masquerade attacks; (5) resistance to replay, modification, parallel session and stolen-verifier attacks; (6) a easy-to-remember

password; (7) low communication cost and computation complexity; (8) achieve mutual authentication between login users and remote servers; (9) resistance to guessing attacks even if the smart card is lost or stolen by attackers. Besides requirements stated in reference [7], we list three additional requirements to solve all problems in smart card-based authentication schemes, including: (10) session key agreement; (11) resistance to insider attacks; (12) prevention of smart card security breach attacks. For Requirement (12), it is important to note that secret information stored in a smart card can be extracted by analyzing and monitoring its power consumption [2, 8]. Obviously, if a legal user's smart card is lost and it is picked up by a malicious attacker or an attacker steals user's smart card, the user's sensitive password may be derived out by an attacker. After that, there is no way to prevent the attacker from masquerading as the legal user. In this paper, we focus on the security of password authentication schemes for the merit that the design scheme achieves Requirement (12) and we will propose a robust remote user authentication scheme with better security strength while keeping the above-mentioned requirements.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 is a brief review of Kim et al.'s authentication scheme and we show their security weaknesses in Section 3. The new remote user authentication scheme against smart card security breach is proposed in Section 4. Security analysis of the proposed scheme is presented in Section 5 and Section 6 concludes the paper.

## 2 A Review of Kim et al.'s scheme

In this section, we review Kim et al.'s password-based remote authentication scheme [1] and their scheme is composed of three phases, registration, authentication and password update. For convenience of description, terminology and notations used in the paper are summarized as follows:

- $U_i$ : The login user.
- $(ID_i, PW_i, SC_i)$ : The identity, password and the smart card of  $U_i$ .
- $S$ : The remote server.
- $X$ : The master secret key, which is kept secret and only known by  $S$ .
- $N$ : The number of times  $U_i$  re-registers to  $S$ .
- $SK$ : The common session key.
- $\oplus$ : The bitwise XOR operation.
- $H(\cdot)$ : A collision free one-way hash function.
- $\parallel$ : String concatenation.
- $E_K(\cdot)/D_K(\cdot)$ : The symmetric encryption/decryption function with key  $K$ .
- $\implies$ : A secure channel.
- $\longrightarrow$ : A public channel.

### 2.1 Registration Phase

**(R.1)**  $U_i \implies S : ID_i, PW_i$

$U_i$  choose his/her identity  $ID_i$  and password  $PW_i$  and submits  $\{ID_i, PW_i\}$  to the remote authentication server  $S$ .

**(R.2)**  $S \implies SC_i : K_1, K_2, R, H(\cdot)$

Upon receiving  $U_i$ 's login request,  $S$  computes  $K_1 = H(ID_i \oplus X) \oplus b$ ,  $K_2 = H(ID_i \oplus X \oplus b) \oplus H(PW_i \oplus H(PW_i))$ , and  $R = K_1 \oplus H(PW_i)$  and stores  $K_1$ ,  $K_2$ ,  $R$ , and  $H(\cdot)$  into the smart card  $SC_i$ , where  $b$  is a random number unique to the user  $U_i$ . Finally,  $S$  releases  $SC_i$  to  $U_i$  and the registration phase is completed.

## 2.2 Authentication Phase

**(A.1)**  $SC_i \longrightarrow S : ID_i, T_{U_i}, C_1, C_2$

The user  $U_i$  enters  $ID_i$  and  $PW_i$  and the smart card  $SC_i$  computes  $C_1 = R \oplus H(PW_i)$  and checks if  $C_1$  is equal to the stored  $K_1$ . If it does not hold,  $SC_i$  terminates  $U_i$ 's login request; otherwise, it computes  $C'_1 = K_2 \oplus H(PW_i \oplus H(PW_i))$  and  $C_2 = H(C'_1 \oplus T_{U_i})$ , where  $T_{U_i}$  is the current timestamp generated by  $U_i$ . Then,  $SC_i$  submits  $\{ID_i, T_{U_i}, C_1, C_2\}$  to the server.

**(A.2)**  $S \longrightarrow SC_i : T_S, C_3$

Upon receiving the login request,  $S$  verifies the validity of  $T_{U_i}$ . If it is invalid,  $S$  rejects  $U_i$ 's login request; otherwise,  $S$  checks if the hashed value  $H(H(ID_i \oplus X \oplus M') \oplus T_{U_i})$  is equal to received  $C_2$ , where  $M' = C_1 \oplus H(ID_i \oplus X)$ . If it does not hold,  $SC_i$  terminates communication; otherwise,  $S$  succeeds to authenticate  $U_i$  and submits  $T_S$  and  $C_3 = H(H(ID_i \oplus X \oplus M') \oplus C_2 \oplus T_S)$  to  $SC_i$ , where  $T_S$  is the current timestamp generated by  $S$ . Upon receiving the message from  $S$ ,  $SC_i$  verifies the validity of  $T_S$ . If it is invalid,  $U_i$  terminates communication; otherwise,  $U_i$  checks if the hashed value  $H(C'_1 \oplus C_2 \oplus T_S)$  is equal to received  $C_3$ . If it holds,  $U_i$  succeeds to authenticate the remote server  $S$ .

## 2.3 Password Update Phase

In this phase,  $U_i$  inserts  $SC_i$  into the card reader and enters  $ID_i$  and  $PW_i$ . Then,  $SC_i$  computes  $K'_1 = R \oplus H(PW_i)$  and checks if the value  $K'_1$  is equal to stored  $K_1$ . If it does not hold,  $SC_i$  rejects  $U_i$ 's password update request; otherwise,  $U_i$  enters a new password  $PW'_i$  and  $SC_i$  computes  $R' = K'_1 \oplus H(PW'_i)$  and  $K'_2 = K_2 \oplus H(PW_i \oplus H(PW_i)) \oplus H(PW'_i \oplus H(PW'_i))$  and replaces  $(R, K_2)$  with  $(R', K'_2)$ .

## 3 The Various Kinds of Attacks with Smart Card Security Breach

In this section, we show some attacks with smart card security breach in Kim et al.'s authentication scheme. Let us consider the following scenarios. If a user's smart card is lost and it is picked up by an attacker  $U_A$  or an attacker steals user's smart card. The secrets stored in the smart card can be extracted by monitoring its power consumption [2, 8], then the attacker can off-line guess user's password and masquerade as a legitimate user.

### 3.1 Off-line Password Guessing Attack on Kim et al.'s Scheme

In Kim et al.'s scheme [1], the attacker  $U_A$  can breach the secrets  $K_1 = H(ID_i \oplus X) \oplus b$ ,  $R = K_1 \oplus H(PW_i)$  and  $H(\cdot)$ , which are stored in the smart card. Then,  $U_A$  can use the breached secrets  $K_1$ ,  $R$  and  $H(\cdot)$  to perform the following steps:

- Step 1.** Select a guessed password  $PW_i^*$ .
- Step 2.** Compute  $K_1' = R \oplus H(PW_i^*)$ .
- Step 3.** Compare  $K_1$  to  $K_1'$ .

A match in Step 3 above indicates the correct guess of user's password. Therefore, the attacker succeeds to guess the low-entropy password  $PW_i$  and Kim et al.'s scheme is vulnerable to off-line password guessing attack.

### 3.2 Masquerading Attack on Kim et al.'s Scheme

Once the attacker  $U_A$  has correctly derived the user's password  $PW_i$ , he/she can also use the stored information on the stolen or lost smart card to forge a valid login request to masquerade as a legal user.

During the authentication phase of Kim et al.'s scheme, the attacker  $U_A$  can use the information on the lost or stolen smart card to make a valid login request with ease. For example,  $U_A$  is able to compute  $C_1^* = R \oplus H(PW_i^*)$  and  $C_2^* = K_2 \oplus H(PW_i^* \oplus H(PW_i^*) \oplus T_{U_A})$  by using the current timestamp  $T_{U_A}$  and the derived password  $PW_i^*$  on the lost or stolen smart card. Finally,  $U_A$  can successful make a valid login request message to impersonate  $U_i$  by sending  $\{ID_i, T_{U_A}, C_1^*, C_2^*\}$  to the server  $S$ .

## 4 The Proposed Scheme

In this section, we describe a robust remote user authentication scheme which resolves all the above security flaws of smart card security breach. There are four phases in our scheme - registration, login, verification and password update.

### 4.1 Registration Phase

**(R.1)**  $U_i \implies S : ID_i, H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$

To register, the user  $U_i$  chooses his/her identity  $ID_i$  and password  $PW_i$  and generates a random number  $RN_1$ . Then,  $U_i$  computes  $H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$  and sends  $ID_i$  and  $H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$  over a secure communication channel to  $S$ .

**(R.2)**  $S \implies SC_i : ID_i, C_1, H(\cdot)$

Upon receiving  $ID_i$  and  $H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$ ,  $S$  maintains a account table ( $AT$ ) for a registration service and the format of  $AT$  is shown as follows:

User identity	Registration times	Verification parameter
$ID_i$	$N = 0$	$H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$

where the 1st field of  $AT$  records the user's identity, the 2nd field of  $AT$  records  $N = 0$  if it is  $U_i$ 's initial registration, otherwise,  $S$  sets  $N = N + 1$  in the existing field for  $U_i$ , and the 3rd field records  $U_i$ 's verification parameter  $H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$  for a later login request.

Finally,  $S$  computes  $C_1 = H(ID_i || X || N) \oplus H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$  and stores  $\{ID_i, C_1, H(\cdot)\}$  into the smart card  $SC_i$  and releases it to  $U_i$ .

**(R.3)**  $U_i \implies SC_i : ID_i, C_1, H(\cdot), RN_1$

Upon receiving  $SC_i$ ,  $U_i$  stores  $RN_1$  into  $SC_i$  and  $U_i$  finishes the registration procedure. Note that  $U_i$ 's  $SC_i$  contains  $\{ID_i, C_1, H(\cdot), RN_1\}$  and  $U_i$  does not need to remember  $RN_1$  after finishing this phase. Note that the bit length of random numbers  $RN_i$  and  $S$ 's master secret key  $X$  are assumed to be 256. That is,  $RN_i$  and  $X$  are two high entropy random numbers.

## 4.2 Login Phase

When  $U_i$  wants to login  $S$ , the following operations will perform:

**(L.1)**  $U_i \implies SC_i : ID_i, PW_i, RN_2$

$U_i$  inserts his/her  $SC_i$  into the smart card reader and enters  $ID_i$ ,  $PW_i$  and a new random number  $RN_2$ , where  $RN_2$  is used for next login request. Then,  $SC_i$  generates a random number  $RC$  and computes  $C_2 = H(PW_i \oplus RN_1)$ ,  $C_3 = C_1 \oplus H(C_2)$ ,  $C_4 = C_3 \oplus C_2$ , and  $C_6 = E_{K_{U_i}}(C_5, RC)$ , where  $C_5 = H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_2))$  and  $K_{U_i} = H(C_2 || C_3)$ .

**(L.2)**  $SC_i \longrightarrow S : ID_i, C_4, C_6$

$SC_i$  sends  $\{ID_i, C_4, C_6\}$  over a public communication channel to the remote server  $S$ .

## 4.3 Verification Phase

Upon receiving the login request from  $U_i$ , the remote server  $S$  and the smart card  $SC_i$  performs the following operations:

**(V.1)**  $S \longrightarrow SC_i : E_{K_S}(RC, RS, C_5)$

If  $ID_i$  is invalid,  $S$  rejects  $U_i$ 's login request. Otherwise,  $S$  computes  $C_7 = H(ID_i || X || N)$ ,  $C_8 = C_4 \oplus C_7$ , and  $C_9 = H(C_8)$  and compares the third entry  $H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$  to the computed  $C_9$ . If equal,  $S$  successfully authenticates  $U_i$  and computes symmetric key  $K'_{U_i} = H(C_8 || C_7)$ , which equals to  $K_{U_i} = H(C_2 || C_3)$ , to obtain  $(C_5, RC)$  by decrypting  $D'_{K'_{U_i}}(C_6)$ . Then,  $S$  replaces the third entry  $H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_1))$  with  $C_5 = H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_2))$  and sends  $E_{K_S}(RC, RS, C_5)$  over a public communication channel to the smart card  $SC_i$ , where  $RS$  is a random number generated by  $S$  and  $K_S = H(C_7 || C_8)$ . Finally, the format of  $AT$  is shown as follows:

User identity	Registration times	Verification parameter
$ID_i$	$N = 0$	$H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_2))$

(V.2)  $SC_i \longrightarrow S : H(RS)$

Upon receiving the message from  $S$ ,  $SC_i$  computes symmetric key  $K'_S = H(C_3||C_2)$ , which equals to  $K_S = H(C_7||C_8)$ , to obtain  $(RC, RS, C_5)$  by decrypting  $D'_{K'_S}(E_{K_S}(RC, RS, C_5))$ . Then,  $SC_i$  verifies if generated  $(RC, C_5)$  equals received  $(RC, C_5)$ . If not equivalent,  $SC_i$  terminates communication; otherwise,  $SC_i$  now successfully authenticates  $S$  and replaces original  $RN_1$  and  $C_1$  with new  $RN_2$  and  $C_3 \oplus C_5$ , respectively. Finally,  $SC_i$  sends a response  $H(RS)$  to  $S$  and  $S$  can make sure that it is communicating with a legitimate  $U_i$ . Note that both  $U_i$  and  $S$  can compute the agreed session key  $SK = H(RC \oplus RS)$  for securing future communications.

#### 4.4 Password Update Phase

This phase is extremely similar to the login and verification phases of the proposed scheme and  $U_i$  is strongly recommended not to use any previous parameters for his/her update request, e.g. random number  $RN_2$ . When a user  $U_i$  wants to update his/her password  $PW_i$  with a new password  $PW'_i$ ,  $U_i$  inserts his/her  $SC_i$  into the smart card and enters his/her  $ID_i$ , the original password  $PW_i$ , the new password  $PW'_i$ , and a new random number  $RN_3$ . Then,  $SC_i$  computes  $C_2 = H(PW_i \oplus RN_2)$ ,  $C_3 = C_1 \oplus H(C_2)$ ,  $C_4 = C_3 \oplus C_2$ , and  $C_6 = E_{K_{U_i}}(C'_5, RC)$ , where  $C'_5 = H(H(PW'_i \oplus RN_3))$  and  $K_{U_i} = H(C_2||C_3)$ . Finally,  $SC_i$  sends  $\{ID_i, C_4, C_6\}$  over a public communication channel to the remote server  $S$ . Upon receiving the message,  $S$  performs Step (V.1) and finally the format of  $AT$  is shown as follows:

User identity	Registration times	Verification parameter
$ID_i$	$N = 0$	$C'_5 = H(H(PW'_i \oplus RN_3))$

Note that the new password  $PW'_i$  and the new random number  $RN_3$  stored in  $S$ 's  $AT$  are simultaneous updated. Moreover,  $SC_i$  replaces original  $RN_2$  and  $C_1$  with new  $RN_3$  and  $C_3 \oplus C'_5$ , respectively. Now, the new password  $PW'_i$  and the new random number  $RN_3$  are successfully updated and this phase is terminated.

## 5 Security Analysis of The Proposed Scheme

The proposed authentication scheme benefits from the protection of smart cards to prevent the secret information for an attacker to steal and guess the real secrets stored in the stolen smart card or in the exchange of authentication messages. In the following propositions, we give an in-depth analysis of the proposed scheme in terms of security properties.

**Proposition 1.** *The present scheme is secure against off-line password guessing attack with smart card security breach.*

*Proof.* With the assumption that the attacker can collect the transmitted messages  $\{ID_i, C_4 = H(ID_i||X||N) \oplus H(PW_i||RN_i), C_6 = E_{K_{U_i}}(H(H(PW_i \oplus$

$RN_{i+1}))), E_{K_S}(RC, RS, H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_{i+1}))), H(RS)\}$  and extract the secrets  $\{ID_i, C_1 = H(ID_i||X||N) \oplus H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_{i+1})), H(\cdot), RN_{i+1})\}$  stored in the lost or stolen smart card, where  $i = 1, 2, 3, \dots, K_{U_i} = H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_i)||H(ID_i||X||N))$  and  $K_S = H(H(ID_i||X||N)||H(PW_i||RN_i))$ .

Throughout the proposed scheme,  $U_i$ 's password  $PW_i$  makes four appearances as  $C_4 = H(ID_i||X||N) \oplus H(PW_i||RN_i)$ ,  $C_6 = E_{K_{U_i}}(H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_{i+1}))), E_{K_S}(RC, RS, H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_{i+1})))$  and  $C_1 = H(ID_i||X||N) \oplus H(H(PW_i \oplus RN_{i+1}))$ . However, for each new login request, the previous random number  $RN_i$  stored in the smart card have to be replaced with new random number  $RN_{i+1}$ . Therefore, an attacker cannot launch off-line password guessing attack without knowing the previous secret  $RN_i$  and our proposed authentication scheme can resist off-line password guessing attack with smart card security breach.

**Proposition 2.** *The proposed scheme can withstand masquerade attack with smart card security breach.*

*Proof.* Let us assume an attacker  $U_A$  has extracted smart card's secrets and has got the transmitted messages between  $U_i$  and  $S$ .  $U_A$  inserts  $U_i$ 's  $SC_i$  into the card reader and then enters the guessing password  $PW_i^*$  and a random number  $RN_i^*$ . As described above, throughout the proposed scheme, if any trial value of the password is used during an on-line session,  $U_A$  has only one chance to guess the original password to pass server's validation. Once  $U_A$ 's guessing password is wrong, the server can immediately detect the validity of fake login request and terminate  $U_A$ 's login session. In this case,  $U_A$  cannot masquerade as a legal user to send a valid login request message and the masquerade attack cannot work in the proposed scheme.

**Proposition 3.** *The proposed scheme is able to provide mutual authentication and a agreed session key between  $U_i$  and  $S$  in every login session.*

*Proof.* By the proposed scheme, let us assume that  $A$  and  $B$  be the two communication parties, namely the login user and the remote server. Let  $A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B$  denotes the agreed session key  $SK$  shared between  $A$  and  $B$ . Hence, the mutual authentication is achieved between  $A$  and  $B$  if there exists a session key  $SK$ , then  $A$  would believe  $A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B$ , and  $B$  would believe  $A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B$ . As a result, we have stated that a strong mutual authentication should satisfy the following equations:

$$A \text{ believes } B \text{ believes } A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B. \quad (1)$$

$$B \text{ believes } A \text{ believes } A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B. \quad (2)$$

In Step (L.2) of the login phase, after  $B$  receives the login request  $\{A, C_4 = H(A||X||N) \oplus H(PW_A \oplus RN_i), C_6 = E_{K_A}(H(H(PW_A \oplus RN_{i+1})), RC)\}$ ,  $B$  will verify  $H(PW_A \oplus RN_i)$  by computing  $C_4 \oplus H(A||X||N)$  and check whether the hashed value  $H(C_4 \oplus H(A||X||N))$  is equal to  $H(H(PW_A \oplus RN_i))$ . If it holds,  $B$  decrypts  $C_6$  and gets  $RC$  in Step (V.1) of the verification phase. Moreover,  $B$



generates  $RS$  and submits  $E_{K_S}(RC, RS, C_5 = H(H(PW_A \oplus RN_{i+1})))$  to  $A$ . After  $A$  receives the response message,  $A$  will verify  $H(H(PW_A \oplus RN_{i+1}))$  and  $RC$  by computing  $D_{H(H(A||X||N)||H(PW_A \oplus RN_i))}(E_{K_S}(RC, RS, C_5 = H(H(PW_A \oplus RN_{i+1}))))$ . If these values are valid,  $A$  computes the session key  $SK = H(RC \oplus RS)$  and believes  $A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B$ . Since  $RC$  is chosen by  $A$ ,  $A$  believes  $B$  believes  $A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B$ . Also, in Step (V.2) of the verification phase, a response  $H(RS)$  will be sent to  $B$ . After  $B$  received the response message from  $A$ ,  $B$  uses  $RS$  to compute  $H(RS)$  and checks whether the hashed value contains a response  $RS$ . If it holds,  $B$  believes  $A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B$ . Since  $RS$  is chosen by  $B$ ,  $B$  believes  $A$  believes  $A \xleftrightarrow{SK} B$ . Finally, after Equations (1) and (2) are satisfied, and together they accomplish the mutual authentication and dynamic session key agreement in the proposed scheme.

## 6 Conclusions

This paper proposed a robust user authentication scheme using smart cards. We have showed that the proposed scheme avoids smart card security breach attacks and maintains the merits of related works such as provision of mutual authentication, prevention of password guessing attack, detection of masquerade attack, session key agreement, and so on. In our future works, a formal security proof and a experimental simulation would have been a better picture to demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed scheme. and the proposed scheme can be further extended with the countermeasure against the Denial-of-Service (DoS) attacks.

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