Analyzing Security Architectures

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Problem background

- Engineers use tools like **data flow diagrams (DFDs)** to analyze security properties of software systems.
- Often these are constructed from developers’ recollection of how a system works, with little automated support.
- This architectural representation may fail to capture all communication present in the system.
Architecture conformance

- In essence, this is a problem of architecture conformance
- Want to reason at an architectural level but relate it to code at the same time
Security architectures as runtime architectures

- A security architecture is an example of a runtime architecture
  - Shows runtime components such as objects and data stores
  - Shows runtime connectors such as communication links and points-to relations
  - May have many instances of a single component type

- Contrast with static code views such as class diagrams
The challenge of analyzing security architectures

- Tools for analyzing **conformance of runtime architectures** are immature compared to those for code architectures.
- A security analysis must consider the **worst case**, not the typical case, of possible component communication.
  - Demands **static analysis**
  - Dynamic analysis can tell us about only a limited number of runs.
Our contribution

• An architecture-centric approach, **SECORIA**, that enables reasoning at the level of a **security runtime architecture**, and relating it to code at the same time

• Can enforce both code-level and global architectural constraints
Evaluation

• Validated SECORIA on CryptoDB, a secure database system designed by a security expert
• Database architecture that provides cryptographic protections against unauthorized access
• Includes 3,000-line sample implementation in Java
Approach
Overview of SECORIA

• Specialization of SCHOLIA [Abi-Antoun & Aldrich, OOPSLA’09], which analyzes conformance between object-oriented code and a hierarchical, target runtime architecture

• SECORIA is an iterative process with two main stages: conformance and enforcement
Overview of SECORIA

- Problem
- **Approach**
- Extract
- Abstract
- Analyze
- Enforce
- Conclusion
Conformance stage: annotate; extract object graph

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
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At runtime, an object-oriented system appears as a Runtime Object Graph (ROG)

- A node represents a runtime object
- An edge represents a points-to relation
Abstract objects into “components”
Abstract relations between components
Organize components into groups/tiers
Make some components part of others

Component

Connector

Object relation

Object

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
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Make some components part of others

- Problem
- Approach
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- Conclusion
Make some components part of others

- Component
- Connector
- Object relation
- Object

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
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- Conclusion
Make some components part of others

- Problem
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Annotate code and extract object graph

- **Problem:** Architectural hierarchy not readily observable in arbitrary code
- To solve this, we use **annotations** to capture architectural intent
- Developer picks top-level entry point
- Use annotations to impose an **ownership hierarchy** on objects
- Annotations are minimally invasive, modular, and statically typecheckable
Ownership domains are groups of objects

[Aldrich and Chambers, ECOOP’04] [Krishnaswami and Aldrich, PLDI’05]

@Domains(""OWNED", "KEYS")

class LocalKeyStore {
    @Domain("OWNED") List<LocalKey> keys;
    @Domain("KEYS") LocalKey key;
    ...
}

- Ownership domain = conceptual group of objects
- Each object in exactly one domain

• Problem • Approach • Extract • Abstract • Analyze • Enforce • Conclusion
Annotations define two kinds of object hierarchy

• A public domain provides **logical containment**: an object is conceptually “part of” another
  • Having access to an object also gives access to objects inside its public domains

• A private domain provides **strict encapsulation**
  • E.g., a public method cannot return an alias to an object in a private domain, even though Java allows returning an alias to a private field
Examples of object hierarchy

- LocalKeyStore has a **public domain** to hold LocalKey objects
- LocalKeyStore stores the ArrayList of LocalKey objects in a **private domain**
Conformance stage: Abstract object graph

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
- **Abstract**
- Analyze
- Enforce
- Conclusion
Object graph vs. target architecture

- Often, object graph **not isomorphic** to architect’s intended architecture
- So **abstract** and represent in **component-and-connector** view

CryptoDB object graph  CryptoDB target architecture

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
- **Abstract**
- Analyze
- Enforce
- Conclusion
Represent abstracted object graph as component-and-connector (C&C) view

- object graph ↔ C&C view
  - top-level object ↔ system
  - object ↔ component
  - domain ↔ group
  - interface ↔ provide port
  - field reference ↔ use port
  - object relation ↔ connector
  - substructure ↔ representation

CryptoDB
- KEYMANAGEMENT
  - keyTool
- KEYSTORAGE
  - keyStore
  - keyAlias

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
- Abstract
- Analyze
- Enforce
- Conclusion
Conformance stage: Document target architecture; check conformance

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
- Abstract
- **Analyze**
- Enforce
- Conclusion

```java
class LocalKeyStore {
    ...
}
```

- **Built Architecture**
- **Conformance View**
- **Designed Architecture**

- **Abstract**

- **Extract**

- **Object Graph**

- **Ownership Annotations**
  ```java
  @Domains({"OWNED", ...})
  class LocalKeyStore {
      ...
  }
  ```

- **Annotate**

- **Compare**

- **Enrich**
  - Enrich Architecture with types, properties, & constraints

- **Trace Violations**

- **Trace Discrepancies**

- **Code-Level Constraints**
  - expressed with domain links
CryptoDB: Document designed architecture

CryptoDB: Level-1 DFD
[Kenan, Fig. 3.2]
Analyzing conformance of system to target architecture

- Conformance analysis based on **communication integrity**
  [Luckham and Vera, TSE’95]

- Identifies following differences:
  - **Convergence**: node or edge in both built and in designed view ✓
  - **Divergence**: node or edge in built view, but not in designed view +
  - **Absence**: node or edge in designed view, but not in built view ✗
Developer investigates reported differences

- Study findings
- Trace to code

Convergence ✓
Divergence +
Absence ✗
Enforcement stage

- Problem
- Approach
- Extract
- Abstract
- Analyze
- **Enforce**
- Conclusion
Architectural types

• Target architecture described in an architecture description language such as Acme

• Architectures described using components, connectors, and other elements

• These elements participate in a type system
  • E.g., many component instances may belong to a single component type
Architectural families

• Element types are used to build up families
  • Encapsulate types applicable to a broad class of software architectures

• We have a reusable DFD family
  • Component types like Process, DataStore, etc.

• A family can also define architectural properties
  • trustLevel, howFound, etc.
Architectural constraints

- **Security constraints**
  - Automatically applied when the security family is imported and types and properties are set

- **Application-specific constraints**
  - Can be introduced as constraints in the target architecture
  - Based on the specific security requirements of the system under study
Security constraints

- Common constraints defined by the DFD family
- **Well-formedness** constraints
  - E.g., two DataStores cannot be connected directly
- **Information flow** constraints
  - Based on STRIDE principles
    - Spoofing, Tampering, Repudiation, Information Disclosure, Denial of Service, Elevation of Privilege
  - E.g., **information disclosure**: The trustLevel of a DataFlow’s source should not be higher than its destination
Application-specific constraints

• Documentation of the target architecture:
  • “Access to the key vault [...] should be granted to only security officers and the cryptographic engine” [Kenan, p. 71]

• Our interpretation:
  • Only KeyManager and EngineWrapper should have access to KeyVault

• Our formalization:
  • forall c : SyncCompT in self.COMPONENTS | pointsTo(c, KeyVault)  
    -> c.label = "KeyManager"
  or c.label = "EngineWrapper"
Validation results; related work
CryptoDB: Summary of findings

• We successfully related the security architecture and implementation

• Renames: The structural comparison allowed us to analyze conformance despite naming discrepancies (e.g., KeyManager versus KeyTool)

• Conformance findings: Top-level components in the target architecture and implementation were mostly consistent
Defect prevention

- Manually injected manufactured architecture violation into code
  - Coupled Provider and LocalKeyStore
- Conformance view showed new divergence between provider and keyVault
- Predicate raised warning about violation
Related work

• **Architecture extraction & conformance**
  • Most work focuses on static extraction of a **code architecture** [Murphy et al., TSE’01]

• Approaches based on **dynamic analysis** or **testing**
  • Cannot check all runs

• **Threat modeling tools**
  [Swiderski & Snyder, *Threat Modeling*]
  • Provide architectural analysis of security, but do not relate architecture to code
Summary

- First approach, **SECORIA**, to analyze, entirely statically, a **security runtime architecture** for some **information flow vulnerabilities** and for **conformance** to an object-oriented implementation.
- Evaluation shows we can detect code changes that introduce architectural violations.
- **Architecture-based** analysis matches the way experts reason about security during threat modeling.
Supplementary material

Download Acme specifications, our DFD security family, and other related material at:

http://www.cs.wayne.edu/~mabianto/cryptodb/