

Classical obfuscation for quantum circuits

Aparna Gupte
MIT



James Bartusek
Columbia



Saachi Mutreja
Columbia

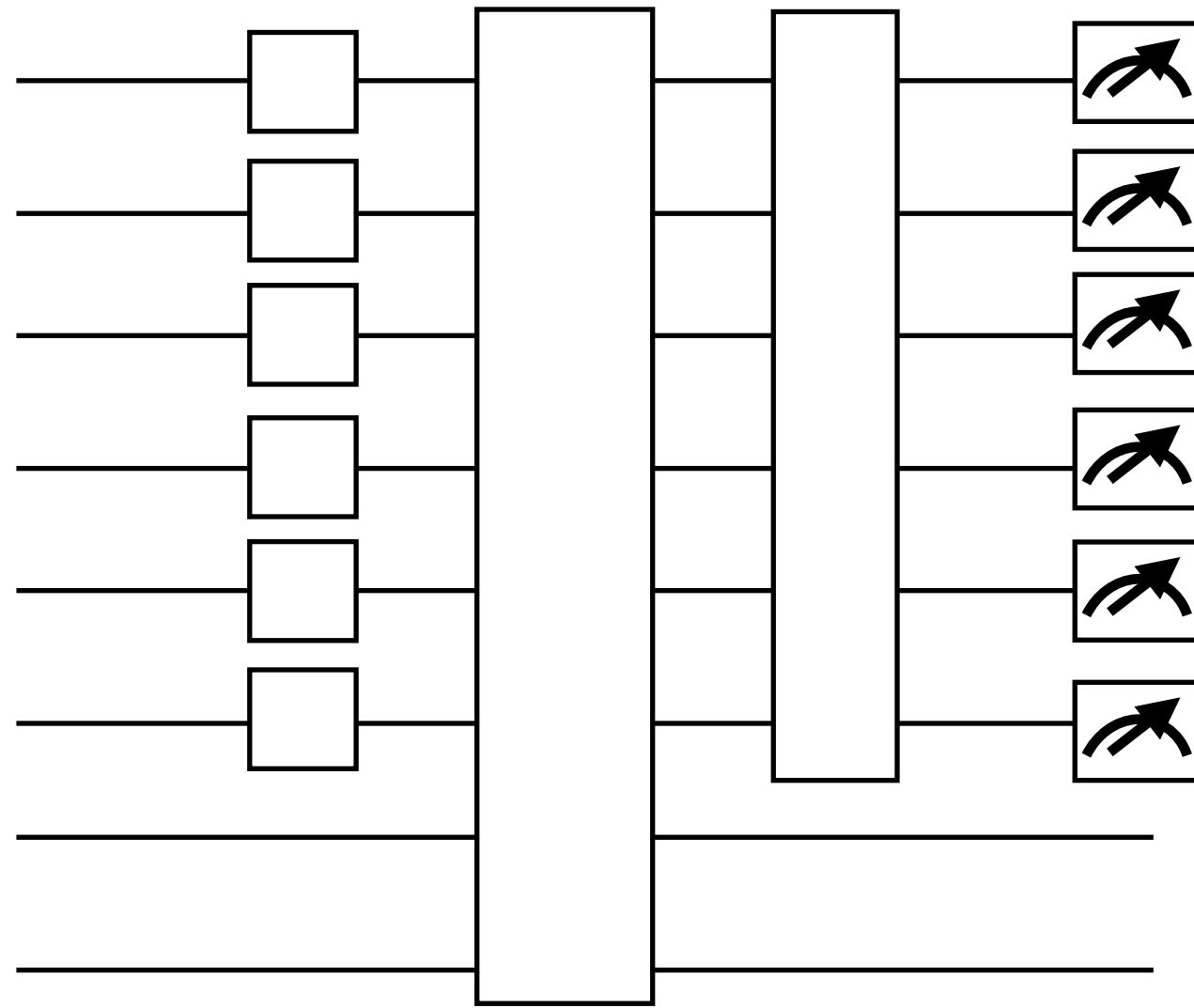


Omri Shmueli
NTT

A mystery: in all previous work^{*}, obfuscator must be quantum

^{*} with the exception of obfuscation for null circuits.

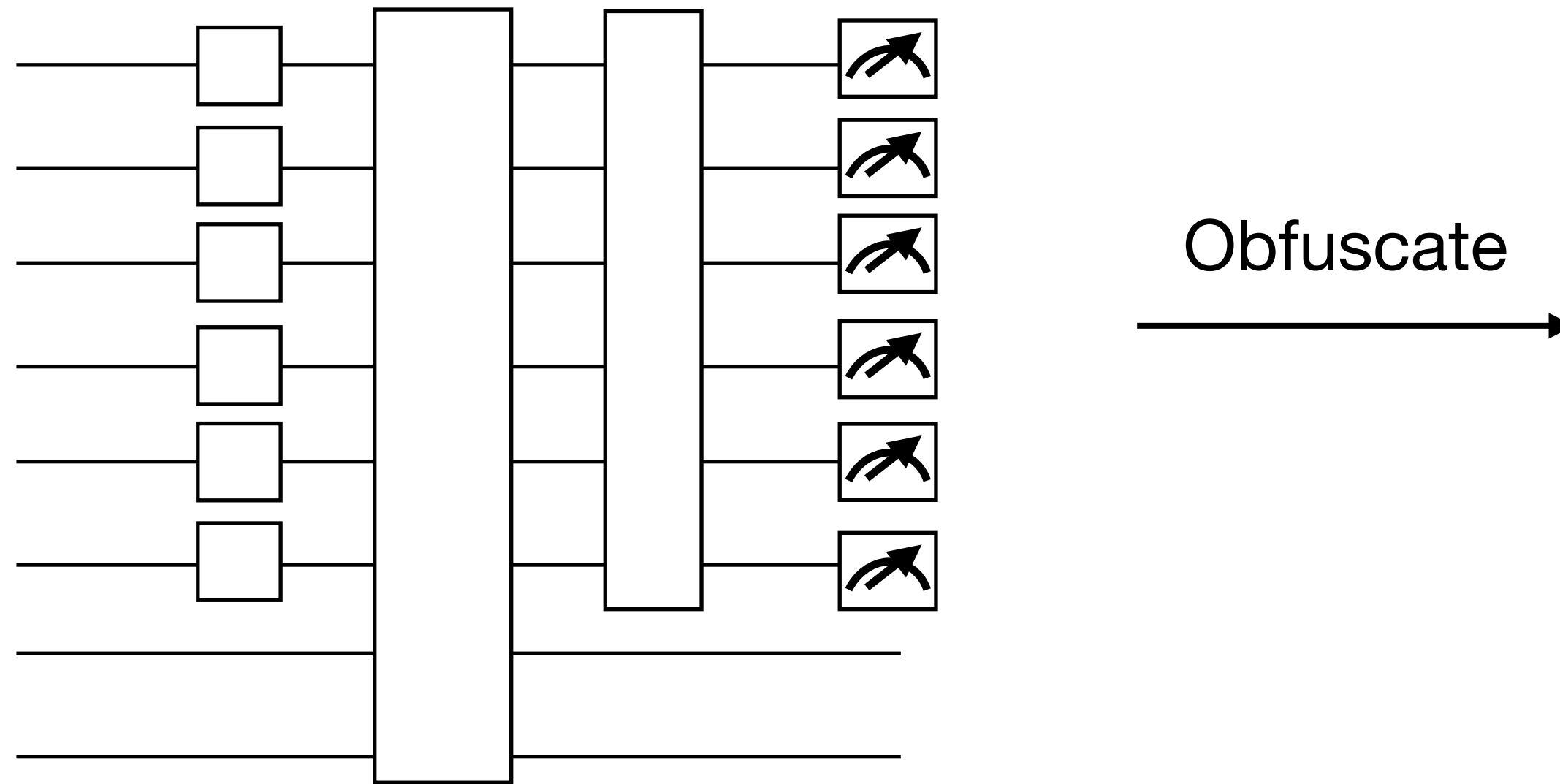
A mystery: in all previous work^{*}, obfuscator must be quantum



Even if we start with a quantum circuit,
with classical description of gates

^{*} with the exception of obfuscation for null circuits.

A mystery: in all previous work^{*}, obfuscator must be quantum



Even if we start with a quantum circuit,
with classical description of gates

^{*} with the exception of obfuscation for null circuits.

A mystery: in all previous work^{*}, obfuscator must be quantum

^{*} with the exception of obfuscation for null circuits.

A mystery: in all previous work^{*}, obfuscator must be quantum

Pros

- Stronger security thanks to the quantum no-cloning theorem
 - copy-protection [CG23, Aar09]
 - one-time programs [BGS13, **GLRRV24**, GM24, **GLQRRZ25**]

^{*} with the exception of obfuscation for null circuits.

A mystery: in all previous work^{*}, obfuscator must be quantum

Pros

- Stronger security thanks to the quantum no-cloning theorem
 - copy-protection [CG23, Aar09]
 - one-time programs [BGS13, GLRRV24, GM24, GLQRRZ25]

Cons

- Need quantum networks to send obfuscated quantum programs

^{*} with the exception of obfuscation for null circuits.

A mystery: in all previous work^{*}, obfuscator must be quantum

Pros

- Stronger security thanks to the quantum no-cloning theorem
- copy-protection [CG23, Aar09]
- one-time programs [BGS13, GLRRV24, GM24, GLQRRZ25]

Cons

- Need quantum networks to send obfuscated quantum programs
- Heuristic proofs of quantumness (eg. from obfuscation of “peaked” quantum circuits) need classical verifier to perform obfuscation [AZ24]

^{*} with the exception of obfuscation for null circuits.

Does obfuscation of quantum circuits require
quantum obfuscator?

Does obfuscation of quantum circuits require
quantum obfuscator?

Our main result:
No, at least for some quantum circuits.

Does obfuscation of quantum circuits require
quantum obfuscator?

Our main result:
No, at least for some quantum circuits.

Theorem [BGMS]. Assuming LWE, there is a compiler from
classical ideal obfuscation $\rightarrow$ ideal obfuscation
for quantum circuits that compute classical functions.

*All these results are in the classical oracle model, and achieve ideal obfuscation

** Table omits BK'21 (circuits with logarithmic T-depth) and BM'22 (null circuits) for simplicity

Obfuscation for quantum circuits that implement:	Classical functions (e.g. Shor's algorithm)	Unitary	General quantum maps
---	---	----------------	-----------------------------

*All these results are in the classical oracle model, and achieve ideal obfuscation

** Table omits BK'21 (circuits with logarithmic T-depth) and BM'22 (null circuits) for simplicity

Obfuscation for quantum circuits that implement:	Classical functions (e.g. Shor's algorithm)	Unitary	General quantum maps
Quantum obfuscator	BKNY'23 , BBV'24	HT'25	HT'26
Classical obfuscator	BGMS'26	?	?

*All these results are in the classical oracle model, and achieve ideal obfuscation

** Table omits BK'21 (circuits with logarithmic T-depth) and BM'22 (null circuits) for simplicity

Techniques

Techniques

Two distinct approaches to quantum obfuscation:

Techniques

Two distinct approaches to quantum obfuscation:

1. Homomorphic authentication scheme [BGS13, BBV24, HT25, HT26]

Techniques

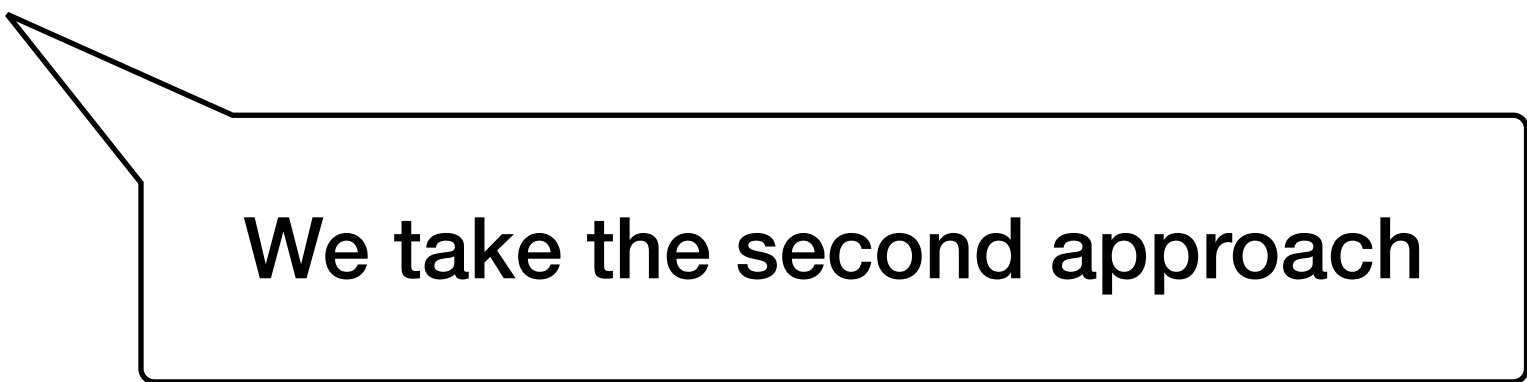
Two distinct approaches to quantum obfuscation:

1. Homomorphic authentication scheme [BGS13, BBV24, HT25, HT26]
2. FHE + (public) verification of FHE evaluation [BKNY23]

Techniques

Two distinct approaches to quantum obfuscation:

1. Homomorphic authentication scheme [BGS13, BBV24, HT25, HT26]
2. FHE + (public) verification of FHE evaluation [BKNY23]



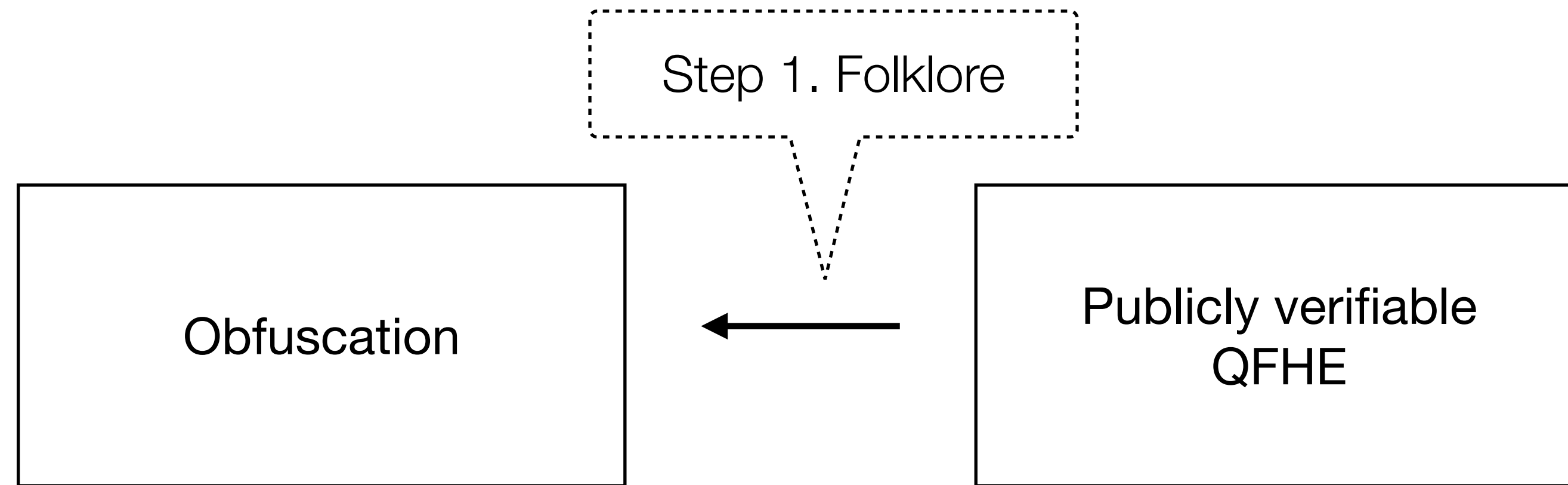
We take the second approach

Roadmap

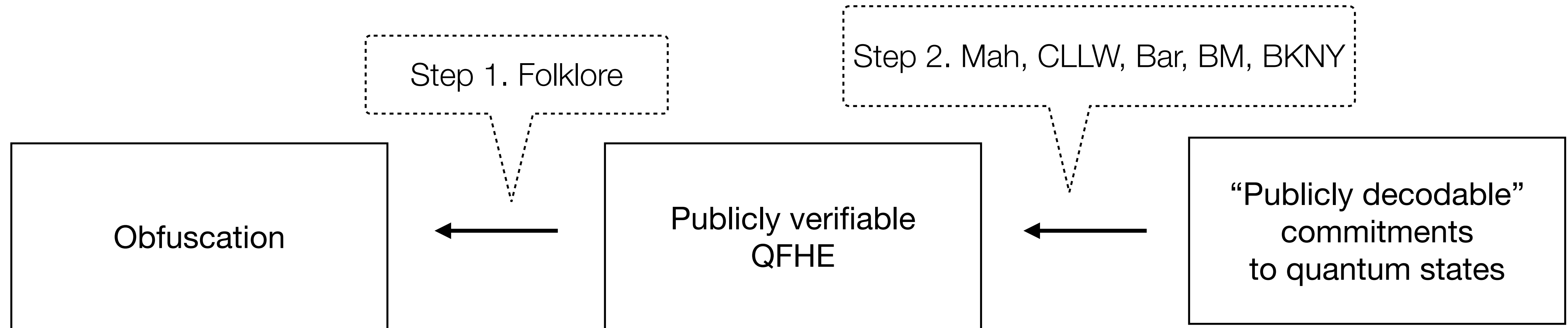
Roadmap

Obfuscation

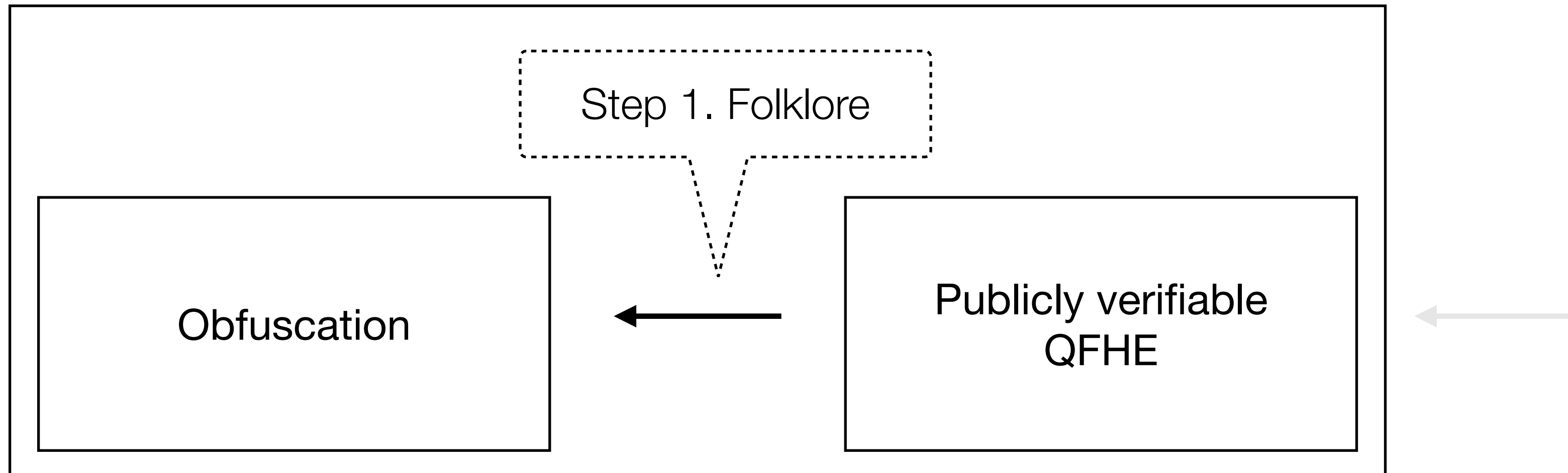
Roadmap



Roadmap



Roadmap



~~Publicly verifiable~~ Quantum FHE

Classical client can delegate quantum computation while keeping inputs private

$\text{LWE} \implies \text{QFHE}$ [Mah18]

~~Publicly verifiable~~ Quantum FHE

Classical client can delegate quantum computation while keeping inputs private

$\text{LWE} \implies \text{QFHE}$ [Mah18]

Classical client

Quantum server

~~Publicly verifiable~~ Quantum FHE

Classical client can delegate quantum computation while keeping inputs private

$\text{LWE} \implies \text{QFHE}$ [Mah18]

Classical client

- Input x

Quantum server

- Public quantum circuit Q

~~Publicly verifiable~~ Quantum FHE

Classical client can delegate quantum computation while keeping inputs private

$\text{LWE} \implies \text{QFHE}$ [Mah18]

Classical client

- Input x
- $\text{Enc}(\text{pk}, x) \rightarrow \text{ct}$

Quantum server

- Public quantum circuit Q

~~Publicly verifiable~~ Quantum FHE

Classical client can delegate quantum computation while keeping inputs private

$\text{LWE} \implies \text{QFHE}$ [Mah18]

Classical client

- Input x
- $\text{Enc}(\text{pk}, x) \rightarrow \text{ct}$



Quantum server

- Public quantum circuit Q

~~Publicly verifiable~~ Quantum FHE

Classical client can delegate quantum computation while keeping inputs private

$\text{LWE} \implies \text{QFHE}$ [Mah18]

Classical client

- Input x
- $\text{Enc}(\text{pk}, x) \rightarrow \text{ct}$



Quantum server

- Public quantum circuit Q
- $\text{Eval}(\text{evk}, \text{ct}, Q) \rightarrow \widetilde{\text{ct}}$

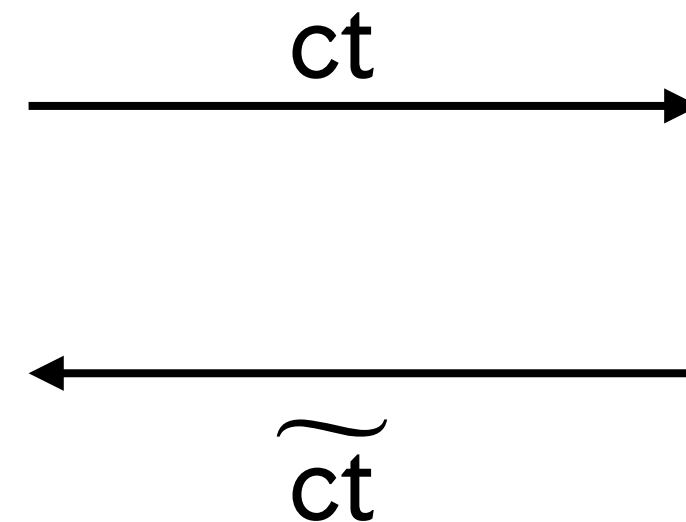
~~Publicly verifiable~~ Quantum FHE

Classical client can delegate quantum computation while keeping inputs private

$\text{LWE} \implies \text{QFHE}$ [Mah18]

Classical client

- Input x
- $\text{Enc}(\text{pk}, x) \rightarrow \text{ct}$



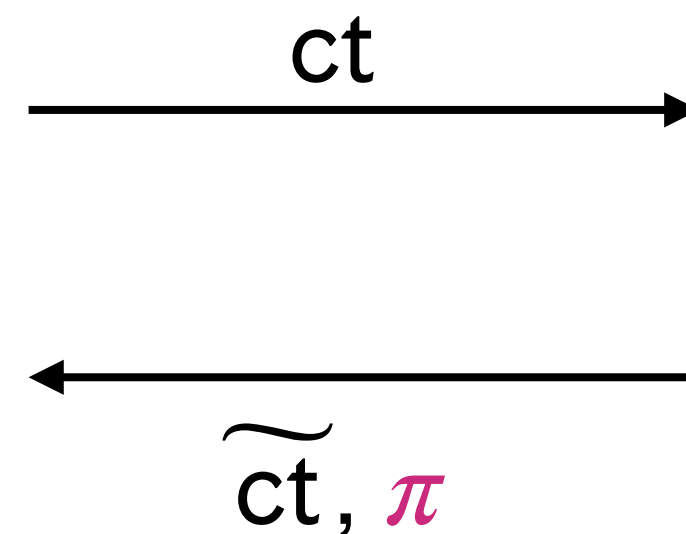
Quantum server

- Public quantum circuit Q
- $\text{Eval}(\text{evk}, \text{ct}, Q) \rightarrow \widetilde{\text{ct}}$

Publicly verifiable Quantum FHE

Classical client

- Input x
- $\text{Enc}(\text{pk}, x) \rightarrow \text{ct}$
- $\text{Dec}(\text{sk}, \text{ct}) \rightarrow Q(x)$



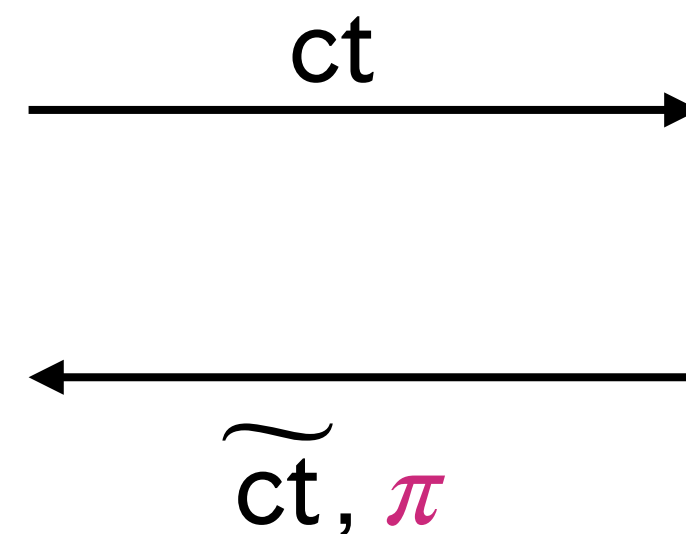
Quantum server

- Public quantum circuit Q
- $\text{Eval}(\text{evk}, \text{ct}, Q) \rightarrow \widetilde{\text{ct}}, \pi$

Publicly verifiable Quantum FHE

Classical client

- Input x
- $\text{Enc}(\text{pk}, x) \rightarrow \text{ct}$
- $\text{Dec}(\text{sk}, \text{ct}) \rightarrow Q(x)$



Quantum server

- Public quantum circuit Q

π = Proof that $\widetilde{\text{ct}}$ was computed honestly by homomorphically evaluating Q on ct .

- $\text{Eval}(\text{evk}, \text{ct}, Q) \rightarrow \widetilde{\text{ct}}, \pi$

