BIOMETRICS: a compelling answer to the age-old question of identity

Biometrics, has quickly established itself as the most pertinent means of identifying and authenticating individuals in a reliable and fast way, through the use of unique biological characteristics. If we were to define biometrics in the simplest sense, we would say the “measurement of the human body.”

But when was biometrics first invented?

Going back to archaic times, early humans had a feeling that certain characteristics such as the trace of his fingers were sufficient to identify him, and he “signed” with his finger.

In the second century B.C., the Chinese emperor Ts’In She was already authenticating certain seals with a fingerprint.

In the 1860s, telegraph operators using Morse code recognized each other by sending dash and dot signals.

In the 19th century, Alphonse Bertillon, a French police officer, took the first steps in scientific policing. He used measurements taken of certain anatomical characteristics to identify people who had committed crimes, even when other evidence had been destroyed, though without offering any real guarantee of reliability.

During World War II, allied forces used the same method to identify senders and authenticate messages they received.

This is the basic principle of biometrics: to identify a person based on certain unique characteristics. Biometrics is growing fast, particularly in the field of identity documents, it is generally combined with other security technologies such as smart cards.

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