On the Need of Reaching the Origins of Security — an Introduction to the Discussion

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Abstract. This article presents basic issues concerning security research in the past, called reaching the origins of security. Reaching the origins is not a concept that finds its rightful place in security research. It has been used and thus fixed permanently in other areas, therefore, the issues discussed in this article concern problems from many fields of knowledge. Security testing covers a number of processes, including retrospective ones, the essence of which is a scientific look into the past. Reaching the origins, all in all, makes it possible to identify the sources of danger and the requirements to be met for safety to reach an acceptable level. It allows, on the one hand, to prevent the recurrence of these sources and, on the other hand, to apply the solutions of the past to today's and tomorrow's security efforts. It can also be said that reaching the origins of safety is connected with determining the methods of eliminating and minimizing threats, and thus indicating the procedures providing an appropriate level of security. It's a utilitarian effect. In the cognitive context, it should be emphasized that the results of reaching the origins may serve to enrich the contemporary knowledge in the field of security. In both cases the procedures of avoiding mistakes made in the past are going to be worked out, especially that their sources are usually human mistakes having their origins in the lack of knowledge of past times. The considerations presented in the article allowed to determine the meaning of reaching the origins, its types and mutual relations between it and the diagnosis, monitoring and forecasting of security. In conclusion, the presented deliberations are summarized.

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Reaching the origins as a valuable source of knowledge

It is common to hear the words 'history repeats itself'. What do those who say that mean? They seem to be convinced that certain symptoms, phenomena, processes, episodes and events from the past may occur in the future in very specific circumstances. The interpretation of safety researchers in this context may not be deprived of subjectivity, resulting from the fact that they will find similarities to current symptoms, phenomena, processes, episodes and events. Can we thus give up such research|? After all, the past needs to be taken into consideration. Without studying it, one can expose oneself and others to risks and failures, as Konrad H. J. Adenauer pointed out emphatically when he said 'Die Weltgeschichte ist auch die Summe dessen, was vermeidbar gewesen wäre', which in any translation means 'History is also the sum of what could have been avoided'. This is ceratinly one of the numerous views on the past and its connections with the present and the future. There are no explicit answers here. After all, Heraclitus of Ephesus used to say 'Πάντα ῥεῖ καὶ καὶ καὶ καὶ μένει', which is translated into the common sense that

everything in the world is changeable and unstable. We can therefore conclude that nothing is repeated, because there is always something new. Can we not, however, say that knowing something that may be the cause, we also know its effects when it occurs? It seems to be so.

One of the areas of security research is 'time' understood as commonly perceived uninterrupted sequence of events or a distinct period of time during which something happens. It may be divided into the past, the present and the future. The security researchers most often study the present and the future, which is obvious because they concern all of us directly. Moreover, which seem to be more important, they relate to possibilities of our futher existence. Why is the past marginalised in the context of security research? The answer is simple. Everything that has already happened is the past. People want to feel safe today and tomorrow. Is this a sufficient argument to still neglect the past? Is that a sufficient reason not to study safety in the recent, more or less distant and ancient past? Although the borderlines are not clear in such a division, we have to definitely answer — no! This research should be a necessary process of safety retrospection, because its effects are or may be applied at the stage of improvement of current safety procedures and preparation of the cycle of organization of future activities. This is related to the need to get to know the past thouroughly. A cognition that cannot do without imagination. Imagination, which is greater, the more security researchers realize that the more distant the past is, the more fragmentary it will be for them, and thus extremely difficult to be reconstructed without imagination¹ and knowledge. 'It is worth adding that the reflection on imagination (...) does not have to lead to the conclusion that imagination (...) is (or is not) a tool for cognition of the past reality. It is rather a question — and an attempt to answer it — about whether it participates in cognition in such an important way that it can be seen in research practice (...). It does not have to, and probably should not, force the thesis that the image of history (...) is a work of imagination, but rather it should take into account suggestions that with the participation of imagination (...) it is possible to make images of the past present'2. Imagination seems to be one of the most important skills for researchers to lay the foundations of reality³.

Security research today is characterised by, among other things, high breadth, high level of complexity, inter and trans-disciplinarity. They involve the knowledge of different scientific disciplines necessary to address challenges and threats to security. After all, "people who appreciate knowledge as the most important component of wisdom look for effective methods and techniques to obtain it in order to live well and have a good life, know what can and should be done, and what is better to be avoided. Ancient philosophers left us with the conviction that the most perfect method of cognition is the method of comprehensive intellectual reflection (holistic), total and searching for the first (universal, always present and eternal) causes of all existence. They treated them as such, which allows to explain

¹ See more: Pomian K, Historia. Nauka wobec pamięci. Lublin: Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2006, pp. 39–40, 47–48.

² *Compare*: Woźniak M, Przeszłość jako przedmiot konstrukcji. Lublin: Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2010, p. 13.

³ See more: Harpur P, The Philosophers' Secret Fire. A history of the imagination. London: Blue Angel Gallery, 2002, pp. 35–36; see also: Woźniak M, Przeszłość..., op.cit., pp. 85–86.

everything that a person perceives, experiences and does. They were considered to be a legendary point of reference⁷.

As has been pointed out earlier, there are many trends in security research that relate to one of the criteria for assessing the level of security, namely time. They have a common core in the discipline of security sciences. It is a forward-looking action. Is it possible to study security today and make forecasts for the future without analysing and assessing the level of security here and now? The answer to this question seems to be simple. Not because nothing can be ruled out in security. After all, the processes taking place in the world are based on eternal and unchanging laws, they determine reality. Fire causes fire, water causes floods, social discontent of revolts, and the fall of a meteorite can destroy life on earth. Human activity, civilization, culture only gives them meaning. Investigating the past allows us to: see the threats and relate them to the sources they come from and the effects they bring. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that in the future, events that have already occurred cannot happen. Of course, safety knowledge is "the product of predictive thinking (...). Of course, it is always created on the basis of existing knowledge and taking into account the achievements of history (...), which creates the basis for any concepts (...) even the most forward-looking ones"5. For these reasons alone, it is impossible to reject the need of reaching the origins of security, thus seeking rational solutions for the future. This is not the only argument related to the study of security in the past. After all, when considering security issues, it is important to point to the specificity of scientific knowledge on security. "Well, the majority of it are hypotheses, so (...) views not fully verified, based mainly on theoretical research, partly only and usually indirectly confirmed in practice. This is the reason for the constant openness of scientific knowledge (...), the necessity of continuous research into seemingly the same problems, confrontation of temporal solutions and findings with the results of other research"6.

It is worth noting at this point that the feasibility of the action is evidenced by the possibility of its implementation. This possibility includes both internal (dispositional) and external (situational) possibilities. "The ability to act in a dispositional sense (...) goes down to a combination of strength, efficiency and knowledge, of course with regards to contemporary circumstances. On the other hand, the ability to act in a situational sense concerns precisely the circumstances, i.e. what happens to things external to the individual and in what state they are at the moment of his or her impulse".

It also seems that to Tadeusz Kotarbiński's dispositional abilities (apart from knowledge and skills) the motivation (as a necessary source of taking action) and the perseverance (as an individual attribute of the perpetrator maintaining the action in the long term) should be added. It seems that in reaching the origins, it wouldn't be so interesting to determine the existence (or level) of some component elements of the possibility of action, but to determine the relations that

⁴ Świniarski J, Chojnacki W, Filozofia bezpieczeństwa. Podręcznik akademicki. Warsaw: Akademia Obrony Narodowej, 2004, p. 5.

⁵ Koziej S, Teoria sztuki wojennej. Warsaw: Bellona, 2011, pp. 50–51.

⁶ Ihid n 50

⁷ Kotarbiński T, Traktat o dobrej robocie. Wrocław-Warsaw-Krakow-Gdańsk-Łódź: Ossolineum, 1982, p. 57.

occur between these elements. For what if the subject is well prepared to act, if the situation does not favour it? What if the situation is favourable if the subject is not able to exert force adequately to it?

The methods of evaluation of safety analysis and assessment are subject to systematic improvement. "Modern information technologies provide many original solutions in the area of acquiring, processing and redundancy of information, facilitating cause and effect modeling, state inference, forecasting and reaching the origins (...). The difficult way of drilling down data to generate knowledge, causes further problems forcing the development and construction of a decision making system and dedicated diagnostic systems(...)"8. Due to the extensive knowledge of safety, there is a need for its systematization. This also applies to the question of security research in the past, which is related to reaching the origins of security.

A brief description of reaching the origins of safety

The considerations related to the reaching the origins of safety should be started by explaining the meaning. It is closely related to the term "genesis", which is referred to as:

- "A set of conditions and causes that made up the origin, appearance, ... of something, ... the manner of origin, development, origin, lineage",9
- "factors that have contributed to the creation and development of something,
- the way in which something is created and developed"10,
- "the conditions and causes of the creation of something; the origin, the source of something"¹¹
- ""a set of conditions for the emergence and development of a given phenomenon" ¹².

Thus, dictionary definitions link the concept of "genesis"-reaching the originsto the beginning of a given phenomenon, thing or theory.

The term "genesis" (reaching the origins) has many synonyms. Associated with it are words: lineage, origin, primordial cause, provenance, source, primordial source, etc. ¹³ Genesis (reaching the origins) concerns mainly:

- reference to something;
- reference to the source of something;
- stemming from something;
- determine the starting point of something;
- determine the genealogy of something;

⁸ Żółtowski B, Żółtowski M jr., Improvement the Systems of Exploitation Machine, [in:] *Journal of KONBiN*, No. 4(20)2011. Warsaw: Air Force Institute of Technology, 2011, p. 120.

⁹ Uniwersalny słownik języka polskiego, Grzegółka-Maciejewska A i in. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2003, p. 992.

¹⁰ Kopaliński W, Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych z almanachem. Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1994, p. 188.

¹¹ Słownik wyrazów obcych. *Electronic source*: https://www.bryk.pl, *accessed*: 25.11.2018.

¹² Ihid

¹³ Broniarek W, Gdy Ci słowa zabraknie. Słownik synonimów. Wydanie II rozszerzone. Brwinów: Akces, 2010, p. 162.

- determine the origin of something;
- determining the origin of something.

There is no doubt that all forms of security are connected with "all forms of existence (being), its models, ideas and patterns. Of course, they are entangled and depend on the other causes of the first of all existence. However, the form of existence (...) is determined by the material, building material or elements of which it is composed, is constructed and built, but not only, its functioning and duration depends on the cause, energy and power; and what is more, the influence on the shape and functioning of each form (security) has its purpose, purpose and vocation" 14. In this context, it should be noted that the methods of shaping security: war and peace methods. The effects of the former are deconstructive and maintenance. The latter, on the other hand, is structural and preventive.¹⁵ In the light of the above, it can be noted that genesis can be applied in both methods, which indicates its universality. There are changes in its organization and environment. These changes are wear and tear and aging. The first of them are related to the use of forces and means provided for its provision. The second, on the other hand, concerns the reduction of the ability to respond to emerging threats which, with the passage of time, naturally and irreversibly cause a reduction in the level of safety. These changes may take place in the following areas: 16

- the result of slow, irreversible ageing and wearability processes
- the result of the appearance of reversible processes of different intensity of the course
- a stepping method, manifested by the discontinuous passage of one or more characteristics beyond the limits accepted as admissible.

The main causes of the aforementioned changes can be classified as: 17

- constructional, resulting from the safety organization;
- operational, resulting from non-compliance with the applicable operation rules or from external influences unpredictible for the safety organisation conditions;
- ageing as a result of irreversible changes in the security environment.

From the perspective of the tendencies that occur in safety tests, it can be assessed that more and more often the need to formulate restrictive assessments is signalled "to the extent that it allows to formulate current diagnoses. This is due to the fact that obtaining such assessments requires less work and is much easier than the actions necessary to estimate the expected changes (...). It is obvious that such predictions cannot be regarded as satisfactory, because the definition of the state (...) at a given moment contains only information about (...) the current state (...)"¹⁸. It is therefore necessary to return to the past and to study it. This return can be the genesis of security.

So what is "reaching the origins"? In the literature, one can find a term for "reaching the origins" which consists in "diagnosing a situation, phenomena that took place much earlier and at the same time belong to a given process or may have an impact on its essence and development. It may also include a course of events

¹⁴ Świniarski J, Chojnacki W, Filozofia bezpieczeństwa..., op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ *Compare:* Tylicki H, Rozpoznawanie stanu w obsługiwaniu maszyn. *Scientific Journals*, No. 5(77) Akademii Morskiej in Szczecinie, p 467.

¹⁷ Cf. Ibid., p. 468.

¹⁸ Cf. Tylicki H, op.cit., p. 471.

that may take place both in a closer and further temporal perspective"¹⁹. In the context of the previous definition and the considerations presented above, it can be concluded that reaching the origins is a regular sequence of causal actions, involving a time preceding research and recreating the past, aimed at determining the level of safety in order to identify the reasons for such a level of safety²⁰ in order to indicate the reasons for that level and the conditions and causes which have caused, cause or may cause the existence of a particular level of safety in a facility²¹.

Reaching the origins of security consists mainly in determining:

- the level of security in the past;
- identification of risk factors;
- identification of sources of danger that pose a threat to safety;
- security trends and dynamics in the past;
- the security reserves, with an indication of their potential for an optimal use in the past;
- conclusions for the future on the prevention of negative developments and consequently the modification of safety actions or the identification of actions that in the past guaranteed an acceptable level of safety.

Reaching the origins allows to find an answer to two questions: 22

- 1) How did it happen?
- 2) Why did it happen?

There are three approaches to the problem of reaching the origins: 23

- 1) exploratory, consisting in the gathering of knowledge in relevant fields, on the basis of which cause-and-effect events are analysed;
- 2) normative, consisting in the identification of past phenomena and indicators describing them;
- 3) mixed, with a combination of both approaches.

In applying these approaches, there are no restrictions on the use of methods, techniques and research tools. It should be noted, however, that when reaching the origins of security, the superiority of one method, the research techniques and the other, cannot be demonstrated. This is because it depends only on the object of research and the purpose of reaching the origins.

The objective of reaching the origins of security is also to create the conditions for achieving an acceptable level of security now or in the future by preventing or minimising the effects of past damage i.e.:²⁴

- physical damage;
- psychological damage;

¹⁹ Dworecki S, Kęsoń T, Kulisz M, Współczesne konflikty zbrojne — aspekt prognostyczny. Warsaw: Academy of National Defence, 1998, pp. 15–21.

²⁰ Cf. Będkowski L, Dąbrowski T, Podstawy eksploatacji. Część I. Podstawy diagnostyki technicznej. Warsaw: Military University of Technology, 2000, p. 39.

²¹ Cf. Będkowski L, Dąbrowski T, Podstawy eksploatacji. Część II. Podstawy diagnostyki technicznej. Warsaw: Military University of Technology, 2006, p. 9.

²² Cf. Lewitowicz J, Genezowanie zdarzeń eksploatacyjnych. *Diagnostyka*, 2006, No. 3(39), p. 70.

²³ Cf. Ibid.

²⁴ Ethical and Policy Issues in Research Involving Human Participants. Volume I. Report and Recommendations of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission. Bethesda, 2001, pp. 71–72.

- damage to personal dignity;
- damage in the sphere of social relations;
- legal damage;
- material damage.

The main stages of reaching the origins of security are:

- formulating the purpose;
- defining a set of elements;
- determining the manner;
- description of the tested level of safety;
- completing the tasks.

The analysis of the scientific literature and the research carried out allow to distinguish several types of reaching the origins of security, namely:

- a) in terms of scope:
 - Horizontal genesis having unlimited application, regardless of the nature of the examined problem from the past and the relationship with the surroundings;
 - sequential genesis consisting in obtaining information from the past in relation to a part of reality without considering the relationship between this level and its surroundings;
 - probing genesis, the aim of which is to obtain information about the subject's past security level, taking into account the relationship between this level and its surroundings;²⁵
- b) in terms of borders:
 - internal reaching of the origins, the essence of which is to gather information from the past within one system, organisation or system, organisation fulfilling/executing similar functions or fulfilling/executing similar tasks;
 - external reaching of the origins consisting in collecting information from the past outside the system, organization in the system, organization in which the problem being generated has been solved in a valuable way;
- c) due to complexity:
 - parallel reaching of the origins carried out simultaneously with diagnosis, monitoring and forecasting;
 - non-complex reaching of the origins carried out without the need for simultaneous diagnosis, monitoring and forecasting.

It should be strongly emphasised that reaching the origins of security should take into account the results of analyses determining the level of security, the trend and the dynamics of its evolution in the past.

When trying to reach the origins of security, it is necessary to avoid errors such as:

- the use of incomplete, uncertain or false information from the past;
- incorrect definition of the set of elements;
- the selection of inappropriate research methods used in the course of reaching the origins;

The following aspects should be taken into account when we consider reaching the origins of security:

— a kind of reaching the origins;

²⁵ Cf. Będkowski L, Dąbrowski T, Podstawy eksploatacji. Część I..., op.cit., p. 39.

- changes in the safety environment;
- an optimal set of available methods for reaching the origins.

The current considerations allow us to consider reaching the genesis as one of the processes allowing to fulfill two out of four functions of the scientific research process in the area of security, which come down to²⁶:

- a descriptive function related to the search for answers to questions:
 - a) what symptoms foreshadowed the emergence of threats?
 - b) what facts influenced (positively or negatively) the level of security?
 - c) what is the impact of the types of threats on the security of the entity concerned?
- an explanatory function regarding the answers to the questions:
 - a) why did the threat occur?
 - b) what results has it had in terms of security?

Certainly, reaching the genesis has its own advantages and disadvantages.

The advantage of reaching the genesis seems not to be that the events are repeated, but that the repetition may concern events with similar characteristics, important from the point of view of the taxonomy of these events, which translates into the development of universal actions for a certain group of events. The advantages can also include:

- relatively easy access to data;
- innovativeness of the results.

However, the factors influencing its pejorative results cannot be omitted. These include in particular:

- objective:
 - a) restrictions on access to the information and knowledge to be examined,
 - b) insufficiently detailed information and knowledge in the research process,
 - c) time-consumingness,
 - d) difficult implementation of the results;
- subjective:
 - a) bias in the selection of materials documenting the past,
 - b) differences in interpretation of the past.

Conclusions

Security is associated with all kinds of existence. 'This definition is connected with the assumption that besides safe forms there are also other forms. It results from the principle of ambivalence, such as, for example, the struggle between good and evil, their coexistence, the pursuit of life and death, their mutual connection in the real world. Hence, it is always justified in axiological terms to distinguish good (positive) forms of existence from bad (negative) ones. On the other hand, in the dynamic view these forms can be divided into progressive or regressive, ascending or degrading, creative or degradative. And finally, in the processual perspective, the quality of existence is constituted by creation (birth), development and ultimately

²⁶ Compare: Buczyński J, Teoria bezpieczeństwa: procedury i metody badawcze. *Przegląd Naukowo-Metodyczny. Edukacja dla Bezpieczeństwa*, 2011, No. 2, pp. 53–63.

(...) disappearance, transformation or metanoia.²⁷ It seems that reaching the genesis of security can be used to identify good and bad forms of existence. It may as well be used for more complex activities aimed at analysing and assessing security in the past, which has an impact on the present and perhaps the future? In the light of previous considerations, it can be noted that reaching the genesis of security is particularly important in establishing the primary and secondary factors determining the level of security of a particular facility.

Knowledge derived from reaching the genesis of security 'gives decision-makers (...) a powerful tool for transformation (...) into current quality requirements (...). Progress in science is a rare event and is most often the result of long and arduous research work and a happy coincidence of time, place and people. The basic ideas of this work find their origins in the intellectual fodder for the meetings of the diagnostic environment, often associated with anonymous creators (...). Going beyond the officially transmitted facts and ideas taking place on the basis of respect for the clarity of logic and practical verification of the proposed methods and means gives the framework for the creation of a distinguished subject matter (...)⁷²⁸.

Reaching the genesis means binding causes to the effect and relating past events to those anticipated. Reaching the genesis also objectivizes retrospection by referring not only to the elements that we see through the prism of today's events, but also to what was then and what we do not see today, even when it is an indispensable cause of the event. Reaching the genesis also involves decoding symbols describing that security and transferring their meaning to the language of contemporary symbols, thus adapting them to the contemporary scientific shaping²⁹.

These are sufficient arguments for the legitimacy of reaching the genesis of security.

(ak, akl, ob, tm)

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²⁷ Świniarski J, Chojnacki W, Filozofia bezpieczeństwa. Podręcznik akademicki. Warsaw: Akademia Obrony Narodowej, 2004, pp. 13–14.

²⁸ Żółtowski B, Doskonalenie systemów eksploatacji maszyn. *Journal of Machine Construction and Maintenance. Problemy Eksploatacji*, 2012, No. 2, p. 18.

²⁹ Kulpińska J, Człowiek jako istota społeczna, [in:] Krawczyk Z, Morawski W (Eds.), Socjologia ogólna. Problemy podstawowe. Warsaw: PWN, 1991, p. 31.

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Streszczenie. W niniejszym artykule zaprezentowano zasadnicze zagadnienia dotyczące badania bezpieczeństwa w przeszłości, zwanego genezowaniem. Genezowanie nie jest pojęciem, które w badaniach bezpieczeństwa znajduje należne miejsce. Na trwałe zapisało się w innych obszarach, stąd też problemy przedstawiane w niniejszej pracy obejmują zagadnienia z wielu zakresów wiedzy. Badanie bezpieczeństwa obejmuje szereg procesów w tym również retrospektywnych, których istotą jest naukowe spojrzenie w przeszłość. Genezowanie, ogólnie rzecz ujmując pozwala określić źródła zagrożeń oraz wymagania niezbędne do spełnienia, aby bezpieczeństwo osiągnęło poziom akceptowalny. Pozwala ono z jednej strony zapobiegać ponownemu wystąpieniu wspomnianych źródeł, a z drugiej strony stosować rozwiązania z przeszłości w zabiegach o bezpieczeństwo dziś i jutro. Można również powiedzieć,

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że genezowanie związane jest z określaniem sposobów eliminacji i minimalizowania zagrożeń a tym samym wskazywanie zabiegów zapewniających odpowiedni poziom bezpieczeństwa. To efekt o charakterze utylitarnym. W kontekście poznawczym należy podkreślić, że wyniki genezowania mogą służyć wzbogaceniu wiedzy współczesnej z zakresu bezpieczeństwa. W obu przypadkach chodzić będzie o wypracowanie procedur unikania błędów popełnianych w przeszłości, tym bardziej, że ich źródłem są zazwyczaj ludzkie błędy mające swoje źródło w braku wiedzy z czasów minionych. Zaprezentowane w artykule rozważania pozwoliły na określenie znaczenia genezowania, jego rodzajów oraz wzajemnych relacji pomiędzy nim, a diagnozowaniem, monitorowaniem i proanozowaniem bezpieczeństwa. W konkluzii dokonano podsumowania prezentowanych rozważań.

Резюме. В статье представлены основные вопросы, связанные с исследованием безопасности в прошлом, называемые генезированием. По мнению автора, генезированию в исследованиях безопасности не отведено надлежащее место. Проблемы, представленные в данной работе, включают вопросы из многих областей знаний, так как генезирование является одним из важных инструментов в них применяемых. Исследования в области безопасности охватывают ряд процессов, в том числе ретроспективных, суть которых заключается в научном взгляде на прошлое. Генезирование, в общем, позволяет определить источники риска и требования необходимые для достижения определенного уровня безопасности. Это позволяет, с одной стороны, избежать повторения подобных источников риска, с другой — применять решения из прошлого в обеспечении безопасности сегодня. Можно также сказать, что генезирование связано с определением способов устранения и минимизации угроз и, соответственно, с определением мер по обеспечению соответствующего уровня безопасности. Это утилитарный результат. В познавательном аспекте следует подчеркнуть, что результаты генезирования могут служить расширению современных знаний в области безопасности. В обоих случаях целью станет разработка процедур, которые позволят избежать совершенных в поршлом ошибок, тем более, что их источником обычно являются человеческиий фактор, связанный с недостатком знаний в прошлом. Представленные в статье рассуждения позволили определить важность генезирования, его виды и взаимосвязь между ним и диагностикой, мониторингом и прогнозированием безопасности. В заключительной части кратко излагаются все представленные аспекты.

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