

Surveillance in Historical Archaeology: Theories and Technologies, and the Material Culture of Social Control

The concepts of surveillance and social control can be related to power dynamics and power relationships. In historical archaeology notions of surveillance are in many cases derived from Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon and Michel Foucault's development of the idea of panoptic surveillance. Surveillance has been an important research topic in historical archaeology since the 1990s. Mark P. Leone has studied the pre-Independence period development of the panoptic society and the monitoring of individuals in the eastern seaboard American towns of Annapolis (refs). Stephen A. Mrozowski and Paul A. Shackel have both discussed how surveillance has been conducted in different urban industrial environments (refs). Taking a step back, Matthew Johnson has connected the surveillance and the development of capitalism in the modernization process of English society, which preceded American colonial life (refs). The development of control and surveillance has deep roots in other European countries. In early-modern Sweden urban planning and mapping was used to control subjects of the Crown from the 17th century (refs).

We would encourage researchers to present papers which identify and analyze the instruments of social control through surveillance, and the monitoring of individuals in the historical processes of urbanization, modernization and industrialization. The subject of surveillance/control can be explored using a wide range of source from the early modern and modern period, and we would encourage session participants to draw upon documentary, pictographic, and cartographic sources, buildings archaeology, and the evidence of material culture.

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Session Discussant: Professor Mark P. Leone, (University of Maryland)

Patrons and clients in Roman Pompeii – Social control in the cityscape and city blocks?

Roman society was strongly hierarchical in nature and the status of a person was visible in many ways from items of clothing to the address where one lived. The upper classes dominated the society in a variety of ways and one of the basic social rituals for the lower classes was a daily visit to their patron's home. Literary descriptions of these events have been connected to the ground plan of the archaeologically known Roman houses. But social control could also be perceived in many other ways in the Roman cityscape and housing arrangements. Roman Pompeii offers a possibility to analyze how the rich and the powerful could control the city and its functioning: where were the big houses located?, what kind of activities can be found around them? In the level of a city block, the analysis concerns the ownership of house units which were located physically next to each other. By observing arrangements in which these units were connected in one way or another, we can begin to sketch the possible property boundaries. This provides a means to deepen our understanding of social dominance and trace the landscape of power relations on the scale of individual city blocks.

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Distance and visibility – Strategies of control in the early modern rural space

Material culture and manifestation of power, surveillance and control are closely linked together in the archaeological record and in the study of historical archaeology. The theoretical discussions that have flourished on the topic in the last decades have given new perspectives and tools to deconstruct and diversify earlier views on the structure of power. This paper presents a study on the rural space in early modern southern Finland. In this area, an increase in the erection of stone buildings took place in the early modern period, at a time when the erection of this type of semi-military private buildings seems to cease in other parts of Sweden. Traditionally, this has been seen as a reaction to military threats from the other side of the eastern border. However, an analysis of the landscape, architecture and that archaeological record shows that this phenomenon is more complex. The stone houses can also be seen as a manifestation of the dynamics and conflicts between peasants and the nobility. The landscape is used as an active tool for surveillance, control and the organization of power structures in society.

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Slipping through the net – acts of resistance and concealment in Early Modern Sweden

Modernization came with increased control and surveillance. New laws regulated many aspects of daily life, new town plans made control and surveillance easier and the increased use of maps, tax rolls, church registers and probate inventories helped authorities to keep track of nearly every individual. But people tried – and sometimes succeeded – to “slip through the net” and resist power and control, sometimes openly, at other times in concealment. In this paper I want to explore how people reacted to new laws and regulations and specifically how we as archaeologists can identify different acts of resistance and concealment in the material culture. Examples are gathered from towns and the countryside, looking for things that seem to be “out of context”. Remains from slaughtered cattle where slaughter was forbidden. Valuable ceramics in a crofter’s cottage. Resistance against new and regulated town plans. Smuggling of objects that were out-lawed or restricted – all these observations can be drawn together to give us a deeper insight in the various ways resistance was materialized in the early modern period.

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The Bothnian Embargo (1350–1765) and the accessibility of commercial goods in the Gulf of Bothnia during the early modern period

The Bothnian Gulf is the northernmost part of the Baltic Sea. The Gulf region became a part of the Kingdom of Sweden by the early medieval period. Ever since the beginning of the Swedish control the Kingdom has aimed to control the maritime trade of the Gulf area by strengthening trade legislation. The Gulf region was under trade embargo since the liberation of maritime trade in 1765. The Swedish trade politics have had strong influence on the flow of goods in the area and thus it has influenced on the available products, which again have influenced on the accumulation of archaeological assemblages. Archaeological assemblages do not only represent the artifacts and goods people used in different time periods, however. They also represent the people’s conception of artifacts and changes in it during the time. In general the Bothnian assemblage appears seemingly monotonous and narrow in versatility, but on the other hand it reveals elements of locality and the development of consumer culture when studied in a deeper scrutiny.

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Regulated space! Regulated mind? An archaeology of early modern production of Space

This paper deals with the rise of regulated space in the 17th century northern Europe and its connections to global colonialism. Starting in England in the 16th century, but soon spreading to other countries, the enclosure movement changed the landscape and perceptions of space throughout the 17th century. Mapping, surveying and for the Europeans, an augmented importance of the overseas world, meant the rise of a new perception of space. Rural landscape, as well as townscapes was becoming regulated and as argued in this paper, part of a commodification process.

With examples from manorial estates, the mining industry and iron production this paper discusses what the changes in land and landscape meant to 17th century society and how the use of it changed the perception of space and laid the foundation of modernity.

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The garden as social space

Today we mostly see our gardens as social spaces. We spend time there in social meetings or simply on a daily basis. The utilization of garden vegetables as a source of food is uncommon. This has not always been the case, however. The gardens, whether they were herb gardens or orchards, had different kind of social values through different times. The study of historic gardens raises several questions that are examined in this paper using archaeological material culture from Ostrobothnia. Were planned orchards only a part of the new garden fashion? What did people grow actually in their backyards? Why did people have gardens in the first place? Were they for the food or for medicinal plants? In gardens, people performed their chores, but not all members of the household, not to mention animals, were allowed to enter the garden. For some high-status members of the community garden symbolically functioned as guest rooms or banqueting halls. Whether the garden was a status symbol or kitchen garden, it always reflected the user or the owner of it. The character of the garden reflected the human mind and the attitude towards environment and the natural resources. As a part of Enlightenment ideology, people wanted to control and arrange chaotic nature. In a way that represented human power over nature.

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The regulated town as surveillance, social control and/or signs of modernity?

The project of modernizing the townscapes of early modern Sweden may be envied by later social engineers. Almost all of the old and new towns were transformed into a new schedule, promoting renaissance ideal-plans, with straight-lined streets and quadrangular blocks. The new urban style was planned and to some extent carried through, during a couple of generations. Previous work in Sweden has focused on the social topography of these new town-plans, and the newly founded or moved towns of Jönköping, Kalmar and Göteborg has been in scientific fore-front. Scholars have tried to answer questions about ideals and reality, and what was done on the drawing-desks and on the urban ground.

But what was the meaning of these changes? What did the plans mean to contemporary people and what was realized when it comes to details on the ground? The profound change can be seen either as an instrument of an absolute monarchy, as implements of surveillance and social control or as acts of modernity. But these assumptions may be too simplistic. How was the new townscape perceived by contemporary inhabitants? In what way and to what extent does spatial regulation change urban life? How was life in for instance Kalmar changed when people were forced to move from the medieval town to the newly laid out renaissance-planned town?

Surveillance and social control may be understood as both horizontal and vertical, or maybe better expressed as internal and external biased. The new straight-lined streets combined with the new plot structure, with the private dwellings more clearly displayed towards the street, may be interpreted both as ways of control and surveillance, and/or as showing off and displaying a fortunate new life. The paper tries to discuss questions about social control in early-modern town, with reference to ongoing research in south-eastern Sweden.

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Urban planning in the early modern Northern Finland - control and resistance

Control and resistance have been much studied subjects in historical archaeology. In the University of Oulu the study has been focused on the formation and alterations of built environment in early modern Northern Swedish towns, Tornio and Oulu: how the crown's control over urban planning and residents' resistance to these alterations are seen in these processes.

Urban planning and mapping can be seen as a larger-scale process that was executed in towns of Swedish realm during the 17th century. This paper concentrates on the micro-level analysis on how this process was executed in the town of Oulu. Changes and the development of the built environment in Oulu are studied, not only through control and resistance, but through ideas of social

memory. Social encounters and social memory constructed of them affected the use and formation of the built, perceived and used townscape. We give an example of Oulu how the crown's plans for executing a regular grid plan were resisted by local people and how this resistance can be explained by the strong social memory affecting the use of townscape.

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