

ABSTRACT

HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL EXAMINATION OF ‘SURVEILLANCE SOCIETY’ THEORIES

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Surveillance, a concept as old as humanities, has become the reality of our age with the developing communication and information technologies since the twentieth century. When observed historically, from the beginning of social relations onwards, the surveillance has been a means of holding the individual under control with different surveillance techniques and a prerogative way of being dominant. The metaphor of panopticon with Michel Foucault who has an important share in surveillance studies started to be questioned with the developing technologies.

In this study, the studies relating to surveillance society will be classified in two groups titled panopticon-centred and non-panopticon centred, and the changing nature of the surveillance will be explained. Most of theorists emphasise the fact that the nature of surveillance society has altered with the technological changes. David Lyon with his “Electronic Panopticon”, Mark Poster with his “Superpanopticon”, Thomas Mathiesen with his “Synopticon Society”, Emmanuel Pimenta with his “Omnipanopticon”, Didier Bigo with his “Banopticon”, Mark Andrejevič with his “Lateral Surveillance”, Steve Mann with his “Sousveillance” have tried to explain this area. Panopticon-centred surveillance studies have made the analysis of surveillance, by considering it with the negative, oppressive, control and survey mechanisms and by referring to a power mechanism, which holds the force in social stratification. Non-panopticon centred surveillance studies have tried to explain that it is present in multiple areas in social stratification and it provides participation, consent and mutual trust.

This study emphasises on the historical transformation of the surveillance society and tries to classify the surveillance studies systematically.

KEYWORDS: Panopticon, Synopticon, Omnipanopticon, Lateral Surveillance, Sousveillance