

CALL FOR PAPERS

Social control practices and territories European and American societies (19th-20th centuries)

There are few concepts as tenacious as social control, which has been mobilised by the social sciences since the beginning of the 20th century. Many have tried to do away with it. Robert Castel wrote in 1988 that ‘this notion of social control seems today to be so discredited that most “researchers” cannot use it without blushing and disassociating themselves from it’¹. But it refuses to go away. It continues to appear in articles and books. We may criticise it, but we have not managed to get rid of it.

There are many reasons for this persistence. One probably lies in the concept’s malleability. It circulates between disciplines. It was first introduced into the field of sociology by Edward Alsworth Ross in 1901, but it has been worked on by historians, anthropologists and philosophers alike. It also has thematic mobility. Originally conceived to describe ‘the learning of conformity’, it was subsequently used, especially in the wake of Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish*, to also describe the ‘containment of non-conformity’.

The concept is equally applied to the past, present and future. The so-called totalitarian regimes of the past not to mention the great dystopias, from *1984* to *Minority Report*, have long had a monopoly on the representation of social control taken to its extreme, where an individual’s every waking moment is controlled both vertically by the state and its agents and horizontally through a population that spies and informs on one another. Recent developments in surveillance in China, with facial recognition and the social credit system, as well as the impacts of the Covid-19 epidemic on democratic societies worldwide have led to a renewed interest in the concept.

The circulation of this concept corresponds well to the multidisciplinary approach that has energised *Amnis* since its creation. This issue will be an opportunity to continue the already rich research in this area by increasing the number of perspectives and the range of micro/macro

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from French sources have been translated into English.

focuses. The objective here is not, of course, to completely revisit an imposing bibliography but to use this concept to examine the practices of domination and power.

The proposed articles may address the following major themes

1— Formal and informal actors in the exercise of social control

Exercising social control means enforcing norms. The main agents exerting this power are already well known, namely the state and religious institutions. This issue of *Amnis* could be an opportunity to also look at actors situated at the margins of these powerful protagonists. For example, articles could investigate forms of social control without or in spite of the state. The privatisation of social control, where responsibility for imposing the norm is delegated to private groups (militias, private prisons, etc.), also merits attention. Finally, how is a population's engagement with social control measures assessed to ensure their effectiveness?

2— Territory and social control

Variations in focus, from the central to the local, seems to be a key approach for understanding domination. What are the sites of social control? Social control is imposed on a given territory. What are the factors that explain or determine the variations? What impact does geography have on the modalities of social control? How can a norm be enforced over a large territory? What are the spaces that escape social control? And how?

3— The manufacturing of conformity

Ever since Foucault, historians and sociologists of social control have been very interested in the repression of deviance and opposition. It might be interesting to return to the conceptual model developed by early scholars to examine the construction of conformism in different political regimes. How does an individual learn to conform?

Article proposals (30 lines) may be written in French, English or Spanish. They should be sent, along with the author's Curriculum Vitae, to the following address by 20 December 2020: **amnis@revues.org**.

Accepted articles must be submitted by **1 June 2021** at the latest. Following appraisals by the journal's scientific committee and two external reviewers, the articles will be published on the journal's website (**<http://amnis.revues.org>**) during the course of 2021.

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