

'Gornji Grad': Global Trends And Local Concepts

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From the past to present, cities have used different methods to protect and defend themselves from various dangers.

The establishment of physical walls around them was not only the oldest way of protecting themselves from their enemies, but also a method of outlining their territorial identity. In Russia for example, a fortified settlement was called a *gorod* or *grad* (town), as distinct from an unfortified one, which was usually called a *ves'* or *selo* (village) [1].

In the Middle Ages, the right of a settlement to build a defensive wall was both a privilege and an obligation, and was usually granted by the so-called *right of crenellation* [2]. Consequently, upon gaining a city status, the citizens of a settlement would build a wall around it, for safety, unity and territorial purposes.

The walls came to embody not only a spatial enclosure, but also a process of inclusion and exclusion. The citizens residing within the defensive walls enjoyed governance, culture, commerce and protection, whilst those residing outside them were excluded from the 'obligations and privileges of urban life' [3].

The exact nature of the walls of a medieval city would depend on the resources available for building them, the nature of the terrain and the perceived threat. Normally the design consisted of a wall enclosure and its gates, from which it was possible to access the city. Over the course of the centuries various enhancements were made to this design, such as adding a ditch, tower and pre-wall. Of these improvements, the towers were the most commonly used, as the city's 'surveillance system' [4].

To provide constant surveillance, the residents kept several watches in the towers. The watches received salaries, were often policed by an overseer, and were fined if they failed to appear. Upon seeing a danger the watches gave warning signals to the residents by bells, horns, drums, or any other instrument that could be heard in long distance or noted visually by bonfires. The warning call applied to all obligated persons within earshot or who came in contact with others bearing the news. It applied through the entire territory under the city's control.

The practice of building these walls, along with their defence methods, was most refined during the rise of the city-states. However, as the power of cannons grew during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the walls became obsolete, since they were too thin to offer any realistic protection against prolonged bombardment. As a consequence, more modern defence mechanisms began to be used.

In Zagreb, the first walls were built around Gornji Grad in the mid-thirteenth century after Gornji Grad was proclaimed a 'free royal city' and was endangered by a Tartar invasion [5]. The physical shape of the hill dictated the ground plan for the walls - the southern side served as the base of a triangle, and its sides were the eastern and western slopes of the hill. This outward appearance can still be seen in Gornji Grad today.

The walls contained four gates on each side of the city (southern, eastern, northern, and western side), from which it was possible to enter Gornji Grad. Behind each gate stood a tower.

Of the four towers, the only remaining one is the Lotrščak Tower. It was built in the thirteenth century to guard the Small Gate, or the southern entrance to the city, at what is now Strossmayer Promenade. It obtained the name Lotrščak following the instalment of its bell 'campana latrunculorum' (thieves' bell), which rung to announce the closing of the city's gates, as well as warn against storms, fires, thieves and Tartars [6]. As the Tartars gave up their attacks, the tower lost its defensive and intelligence function, and underwent various changes and fulfilled different functions throughout the years. Today it is open to the public, who come to admire the beautiful view of both modern Zagreb (Dolnji Grad) and parts of old Zagreb (Gornji Grad).

Today Gornji Grad, apart from being Zagreb's historical nucleus, is also the seat of the highest bodies of both Zagreb and the Republic of Croatia. The parliament building, city hall, and the government building are all located in Gornji Grad, in close proximity to each other. In addition, numerous museums, archives, as well as foreign embassies, are also located in Gornji Grad.

The conversion of Gornji Grad from a residential into an administrative area began in the beginning of the twentieth century, when the Croatian Parliament was built in 1910 [7]. Since then, many other administrative bodies have taken their residence in the old houses of Gornji Grad. This transformation has made Gornji Grad unlike any other historic city centre of Europe. Instead of becoming an attractive tourist and leisure area, Gornji Grad, much like the old medieval city, is heavily guarded and controlled by CCTV, police officers, and a prohibition of public gatherings in close proximity to the government buildings. Thus, one should expect that when taking a stroll around Gornji Grad today, he or she would be under the constant gaze of surveillance. This notion, however, - being under the gaze - is something that most of us have come to be accustomed with in the modern city anyway.

In the last twenty years video surveillance has significantly risen in cities around the globe. With events such as 9/11 and the increased mobility of people both locally and internationally, cities have turned into a 'global stranger society' [8].

As information and communication technologies have advanced, a major commitment has been made into increasing the *visibility* within cities in order to detect and deter crime, terrorism and deviant behaviour, as well as to organise 'consumer demand, society and sociality' [9]. This means keeping urban space, or rather points of interest within urban space (e.g. transportation facilities, government buildings, banks, shopping malls, areas with high crime rate, schools) under a constant watch.

Thus, as we live our role within the city as a passenger, customer, or user of a public building, we are constantly being filmed. Everyday life turned into a theatrical spectacle.

As CCTV continues to grow on a global scale, many people begin to raise concerns about its side effects. These include, among others, *lack of privacy* [10], *limited freedom of movement* [11], *internalisation of control* [12], *voyeurism* [13], *exhibitionism* [14], *social exclusion* [15], and *privatisation of public space* [16]. Whether these are intentional or not, one thing is certain the politics of watching and being watched are complex. As David Lyon explains, surveillance has two faces, "*the same process, surveillance – 'to watch over' – both enables and constrains, involves care and control.*" [17].

Nevertheless, the current trajectory of CCTV is toward omnipresence, as more spaces are watched in more ways. It is thus, difficult to estimate whether in the future CCTV will continue to grow and develop with for examples more advanced features such as *face recognition* or *large-system integration*, or whether it will be replaced by another surveillance system.

History indicates in any event that surveillance as such is unlikely to disappear within cities.

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