

THE ENCLOSED ONES

WHY ARE GATED COMMUNITIES
SPREADING TO LOWER INCOME GROUPS
IN SÃO PAULO ?

This study has been carried out within the framework of the Minor Field Study (MFS) Scholarship Programme and the Travel Scholarship funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The MFS Scholarship Programme gives Swedish university students the opportunity to carry out fieldwork in low- and middle income countries, or more specifically in the countries included on the *DAC List of ODA Recipients*, in relation to their Bachelor's or Master's thesis.

Sida's main purpose with the Scholarships is to stimulate the students' interest in, as well as increasing their knowledge and understanding of development issues. The Minor Field Studies provide the students with practical experience of fieldwork in developing settings. A further aim of Sida is to strengthen the cooperation between Swedish university departments and institutes and organisations in these countries.

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SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
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Contents

Abstract	5
Acknowledgements	6
1. Introduction	8
2. Purpose & question	9
2.1. Research question	9
3. Theory	10
3.1. What gated community implies	10
3.2. Classification of gated communities	12
3.2.1. Gates to Paradise: Lifestyle Communities	13
3.2.2. I Have a Dream: The Prestige Communities	13
3.2.3 Enclaves of Fear: Security Zone Communities	14
3.3. What drives the spreading of gated communities?	14
4. Methodology	17
4.1. Quantitative method	18
4.2. Qualitative method	19
5. Research context	22
5.1. Brazil	22
5.2. Income groups in Brazil	24
5.3. The housing landscape of São Paulo	25
5.4. Alphaville 1	26
5.5. Condominio da Sucupira	28
5.6. Profile of the municipals of the gated communities	31
5.7. Profile of the respondents in the gated communities	32
5.7.1. Income group	32
6. Analysis	34
6.1. How Alphaville influenced planning in São Paulo	34
6.1.1. “In this moment of social chaos”	34
6.1.3. “Because it’s rare it can be sold”	36
6.1.5. “A new ideology is created”	37
6.1.6. “A complexity of centers and a multitude of peripheries”	38
6.1.7. “It turned into a model of obsession”	38
6.2. Why are lower income groups moving to gated communities?	41
6.2.1. “It’s a real estate strategy”	41
6.2.2. “As if it is in the imagination of people”	41

6.2.3. “The Brazilian has a dream”	41
6.2.4. “There is an economic motivation”	43
6.2.5. “Media helped the real estate market”	43
6.2.6. “I do not watch Globo”	44
6.2.7. “They are not specialists”	44
6.2.8. “Insecurity and security goes together”	45
6.2.9. “Wow, this is impregnable”	46
6.2.10. “It’s more an illusion”	47
6.2.11. “Because of the lack of government”	47
6.2.11. “Not because of security”	49
6.3. Feeling of living enclosed	50
6.4. Reasons for moving to a gated community?	51
6.5. Do gated communities change people?	54
6.6. Reasons to keep living in a gated community	55
6.7. Do people get used to living in gated communities?	56
6.8. Residents perception on security arrangements	58
6.8.1. Alphaville	59
6.8.2. Sucupira	60
6.9. Does the economic situation matter for living in a gated community?	61
7. Conclusions	64
7.1. Extreme opposites	64
7.2. Economic reasons most important	65
7.3. People change	65
7.4. Gated forever?	65
7.5. Gated – a less risky investment	66
7.6. Same way of rating different things	66
7.7. Fear scares people	67
8. References	69
8.1. Literature	69
8.2. Interviews	71

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the question of why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups in the metropolitan area of São Paulo, Brazil. To answer the question, fieldwork was done and primary data was collected by conducting in total 57 structured and 10 semi-structured interviews with residents in a the gated communities Alphaville 1 in Barueri and Condominio da Sucupira in Carapicuíba. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with seven key persons; one developer of gated communities for lower income groups, two journalists whereof one on O Estado de São Paulo and one on Folha de São Paulo, four professors in Urban Geography at FFLCH on University of São Paulo. As a theoretical framework Blakely and Snyder's book *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States*, was used. An interesting research result is that even though security might seem as the most important reason to why people move to gated communities for lower income groups, economy turns out to play an important role.

Key words

gated community, spreading, lower income groups, São Paulo, Brazil

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1. Introduction

A gated community is a physical area which is separated from the outside world by gates and fences or walls. People living inside gated communities are separated spatially from the outside world. Residents of gated communities often pay a fair amount to live in gated communities. In Brazil, in gated communities for higher income groups, the security measures are rigorous. Usually gated communities are under surveillance by guards, alarms and video surveillance systems. To enter a gated community one has to be approved by someone authorized to grant access to the area, usually a resident of the area.

I was interested in studying gated communities in São Paulo, Brazil. When doing some pre-research it came to my attention that gated communities, as a phenomenon, is spreading to lower income groups in the metropolitan area of São Paulo. Although not being as luxurious as gated communities are for the super rich and famous, this new insight inspired me to look further into this matter and it made me realize that gated communities now also come in more shapes and sizes, filled with more, or rather less attributes. This was news for me. Now gated communities aren't luxuries only for the chosen few. Now people from lower income groups seem to be demanding the possibility to live in some kind of gated communities as well. For example in Condominio da Sucupira, in Carapicuíba, São Paulo.

I wondered what it was that caused people to take the step of moving from a non-gated living into a gated community. I thought much about what kind of world we are creating with gates and walls or fences. Is it really fear that causes people to take this action? So I started studying the phenomenon of gated communities.

This thesis looks into why gated communities is spreading to lower income groups in the metropolitan area of São Paulo.

Marko Huttunen

In Lund, 29 February 2016

2. Purpose & question

In the metropolitan area of large cities like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, gated communities is a common phenomenon. When houses aren't located within gated communities they are usually surrounded by gates, walls and fences as a security measure to protect the houses and the people living in them from intruders. Many neighborhoods also have guards that keep watch, a service which is paid for by the house owners in the neighborhoods.

Human geography is a branch of social sciences where in short it can be said that we study people and their interaction with the world, in time and space. Gated communities is a way of restricting the usage of space in time to a chosen few. Space which otherwise could have been used by more people. Or perhaps by none. From a human geographical point of view, studying gated communities as a phenomenon is a way of gaining more understanding of people and their interaction with this restriction of space in time. One might for example be interested in studying segregation in this context, or even more specifically self segregation (Carvalho de Lima Seabra, 2004). However interesting that may be to study, it is not what this thesis looks into.

The intention of studying gated communities in São Paulo was to gain further understanding and more knowledge of gated communities from a country and a city which has a lot of experience of gated communities, a lot more than in Sweden and in Europe. From an academic point of view the purpose is at best to contribute with new knowledge about gated communities for lower income groups and perhaps an answer to the question of why this phenomenon is spreading.

2.1. Research question

The main research question is: “Why are gated communities spreading to lower income groups in São Paulo?”

3. Theory

When Edward J Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder started working on their book, *Fortress America: Gated communities in the United States*, there was no previous theoretical framework which they could turn to for more knowledge about this type of housing. Instead they themselves had to create this foundation of insight into the world of enclosed living environments.

Blakely and Snyder conducted their research in the United States of America, a context in which gated communities has increased rapidly during a short period. In 1985 only a handful of places had gated communities but by 1997 they had increased exponentially and could be found in all major metropolitan areas of the country (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:3). Even though the amount of gated communities has increased, the authors stress that complete numbers of gated communities aren't available. They explain that: "The difficulty is complicated by the rapidly increasing numbers, the lack of any national or state level data, and the lack of firm data even on the number of community associations" (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:180).

3.1. What gated community implies

This theoretical framework is relevant to use in this thesis because it has a setup of ways on how to relate to and/or perceive gated communities. This theoretical framework decreases the need to, *re-invent the wheel*.

Blakely and Snyder lay some weight into the meaning of the expression "gated community". They explain that: "Gated communities are residential areas with restricted access in which normally public spaces are privatized. They are security developments with designated perimeters, usually walls or fences, and controlled entrances that are intended to prevent penetration by nonresidents." (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:2)

With this in mind, what *gated* means is quite obvious, it is a completely or partly enclosed space which only a few have access to and others are kept out from. The reasons for gating can be several and it can be seen as a key element to control access to the settlement (Grant & Mittelstaedt, 2004).

But the meaning of *community* not only can be, but also is well debated (Grant & Mittelstaedt, 2004). Blakely and Snyder for example look a lot into the importance of social relations between people living inside gated communities, as well as raise the question of how gated communities affect people on the outside. They write: “In this book we are dealing with a place-based notion of community, one rooted in the territory of a residential development. Neighborhoods, if they are also communities, consist of more than friends and neighbors living in a set of residences within a collectively identified territory. Neighborhood as community also includes a sense of mutual responsibility, significant interaction, and cooperative spirit.” (Blakeley & Snyder, 1997:34)

And they continue: “The concept of community as we use it in this book represents the intensity of common values as expressed by social ties to a place and by the people within it. This notion of community has two facets. The first is the “private” aspect of community, the community of sentiment of “good feelings” that most Americans have in mind when they refer to community. It encompasses feelings of belonging or connection to and identification with a place and its people, and a local culture of mutual support and shared social relationships. The second facet of community is the “public” aspect. This is the community of mutual obligation, shared destiny or goals, direct democracy, and involvement in community affairs. It is a recognition of mutual interdependence, the awareness that the quality of our lives depends on our environment and the people in it. It is more than just living in the same place; and it is more than neighborliness.” (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:34)

Some parts of Blakely and Snyder’s definition of community are interesting for this thesis. As hastily mentioned in the previous chapter, questions are asked regarding reasons for moving into and continuing to live inside gated communities. Can it be of some importance to people that they live amongst other people that share the same ideas, values, age, economic situation and so on?

While defining what gated communities are, it might be of some importance to also define what gated communities are not. Blakely and Snyder write: “The residences we are discussing are not multi-unit, high-density apartment and condominium buildings with security systems or doormen in which gates or guards prevent public access to lobbies, hallways and parking lots. Gated communities are different: their walls and fences prelude public access to streets, sidewalks,

parks, beaches, rivers, trails, playgrounds, all resources that without gates or walls would be open and shared by all the citizens of a locality.” (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:2)

3.2. Classification of gated communities

In *Fortress America: Gated communities in the United States*, Blakely and Snyder contribute with a classification of gated communities. They have initially divided different types of gated or enclosed ways of living into three main categories; *Lifestyle Community*, *Prestige Community* and *Security Zone Community*. These three categories have then been divided into three subcategories.

This thesis looks in particular into one gated community for higher income groups and another for lower income groups. For this purpose, to understand those kind of gated communities, Blakely and Snyder’s classification has shed some light onto the world of gated communities. There might be some complications when trying to fit different types of gated communities into the different categories and their subcategories, because the different types don’t always differ that much from each other, so sometimes it isn’t obvious exactly which category and subcategory to fit the studied object into. This is after all a theoretical framework, as Blakely and Snyder mention themselves, which when applied in practice actually might reveal that gated communities may show a combination of features from these different types.

Below is first a short description of the classifications that Blakely and Snyder have done, and then a more detailed description of the two types of gated communities that will be looked into in this thesis.

Worth mentioning is that contributions have been made to augment the typology created by Blakely and Snyder, for example by Jill Grant and Lindsey Mittelsteadt. They emphasize that classifications simplifies reality and to have a more useful framework that is applicable in a world larger than the context of the United States of America, they present an upgraded version (Grant & Mittelsteadt, 2003).

3.2.1. Gates to Paradise: Lifestyle Communities

The categorization Lifestyle Communities contains three different subcategories that each have their own attributes.

The first one is the *Retirement Community* which is centered for example on a golf course and a clubhouse. These communities have recreational features and structured programs of social activity for club members, for residents and for their guests. Like the name of the category reveals, this type of gated community aims at a more economically settled market with people at the end of their working careers or that have already retired (Blakely & Snyder, 1997).

The second one is the *Golf and Leisure Community* which initially might seem like the lifestyle community described above, and it is similar physically but it aim's for a market of younger people, stretching from young families to so called empty nesters. These communities might offer features like a gated country clubs, golf developments and second-home resorts (Ibid).

The third subcategory are the *New Towns*. The idea with these kind of new towns is to provide large planned developments that offer a complete modern living experience. That is with schools, shopping centers, commercial offices and parks and recreation. The market is not as narrow as the two previously mentioned types and instead aims at a wider market (Ibid).

3.2.2. I Have a Dream: The Prestige Communities

The categorization The Prestige Communities contains three subcategories that each have their own attributes.

The first one is *Enclaves of Rich and Famous* which are exclusive residential areas that are exclusively located and often hidden as well as heavily defended. They usually have no recreational features. The gates are placed there to contribute with exclusivity and privacy. They can be said to be the original gated communities in the United States. It is the model which other gated communities build upon (Blakely & Snyder, 1997).

The second subcategory is the *Top-fifth Community* which aims for a market of people that do not shine as bright as the rich and famous stars, but which strive for the same kind of housing environment. The artificially created homogenous area has more security in form of physical and

social security (Ibid.).

The third subcategory of prestige is the *Executive Community* which can be interpreted as the rest that can be squeezed out of the market. Blakely and Snyder calls it the “wanna-be cousin”. They are essentially residential areas presented to the market as “executive” but scaled down for the middle class (Ibid.).

3.2.3 Enclaves of Fear: Security Zone Communities

The categorization Security Zone Communities contains the three last subcategories that also each have their own attributes.

The first one is the *City Perch*, which are residential areas in cities that aim at giving rise to gates and walls as a measure to protect existing residents in an area from violence and crime and to hold off traffic. This type of gating of an area is decided upon by the residents themselves and not by the original constructor of the areas. Residential areas for higher as well as for lower income groups apply this kind of fortification (Blakely & Snyder, 1997).

The second one is the *Suburban Perch* which reminds a lot of the *City Perch* but is resided in suburban areas instead, like inner-ring suburbs and smaller towns (Ibid.).

The third and last subcategory is the *Barricade Perch* which is not really fully gated communities and not fully closed areas, but rather areas which are barricaded in some places to hinder access to the areas. These are areas which used to be public, but which have partly been sealed off (Ibid.).

3.3. What drives the spreading of gated communities?

Gated communities can be seen as a product on the real estate market. As such it follows market rules of supply and demand and gated communities becomes a marketing device for developers.

Blakely and Snyder find part of the explanation for the increase in gated communities in what they call “the logic of developers”, to whom gated communities are products that are “organized

and marketed as a solution to a contemporary problem rather than a search for a better communal system” (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:15).

Developers are described as being trend followers, and as such they are apt to look at competitors and modify their own development strategies so that they are capable of also supplying new products that their competitors supply. Once gated communities are introduced to an area, a bandwagon effect takes over and the number of gated communities multiply quickly. As products gated communities can be modified pretty easily to fit different needs and demands and therefore the products can easily be differentiated and provided with a clear identity, thus opening up for different actors to meet demand with supply (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Grant & Mittelstaedt, 2004).

Whether the gates add value or not is something that Blakely and Snyder look into. They mention that there is little agreement on the matter among developers. In resale price comparisons between gated and non-gated communities that Blakely and Snyder made in Orange County in California, USA, from 1991 through 1995, they conclude that gated communities in general had a slight price disadvantage and that the price differences were small. They also conclude that gates not automatically adds a premium on the housing prices. They do however emphasize that these data can't be generalized for pricing of all local housing.

Security and social familiarity are mentioned by Blakely and Snyder as something that developers see themselves providing, especially for certain submarkets. They mention that security is viewed as freedom by these different submarkets, freedom not only from crime but also from annoyances and strangers of any kind. The drive for security is according to them also reflected in the housing market and it is predicted by many in the homebuilding and real estate industries that economic insecurity and fear of crime will “spur the rapid growth of gated communities and home security systems” (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:18). Security is also of primary concern for those who buy homes in gated communities, at least according to a survey of homeowner association boards that Blakely and Snyder conducted.

To some extent Grant & Mittelstaedt (2004:2) agree with Blakely & Snyder as to what drives gated communities: “The same issues that generate NIMBYism (that is, concerns about property values, personal safety, and neighborhood amenities) drive gating”.

To summarize, the spreading of gated communities can be said to be dependent upon a combination of things. First the introduction of gated communities to an area, which then leads to the developers competing on the market, a market which is nourished by security, social and economic reasons.

4. Methodology

In the search for an answer to the question of why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups in São Paulo, the question of which method or methods to use inevitably had to be dealt with. Because of the scholarship that I had been granted, the opportunity arose to actually visit São Paulo and collect primary data. Primary data being direct answers to questions, opinions, values and knowledge from people.

When choosing methods the decision fell upon using different type of interviews. That is structured and semi-structured interviews. These different types of interviews were conducted with people in different roles to get material from different perspectives. The idea of using mixed methods would be to accomplish a kind of triangulation in search for answers to the research question (Flowerdew, 2005).

To get answers to questions of how it is to live inside gated communities interviews were conducted with people that live inside gated communities. What are the peoples objectives for living there, why have they chosen to live in a gated community, what kind of values do they have about their way of living, and so on. Both structured as well as semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents (Flowerdew, 2005).

To broaden the perspective interviews were conducted with so called key people, experts that have more professional insight into gated communities, housing issues, urban geography and planning of the city (Flowerdew, 2005). I narrowed down the list of roles of key people to academics, constructors of gated communities, journalists and politicians. These key people would provide different types of answers, from different perspectives, but still from a professional point of view.

The academics that I would interview would have the perspective to study, research and teach urban geography, one part of the academic world where gated communities are studied. The constructor's perspective is more a practical one, to provide housing, for example gated communities, for the market. The journalist's perspective is to observe, study and report about the housing market in which gated communities are a part. And the politician's perspective is to make decisions regarding the development and planning of the city, in which gated communities

are a part.

To be able to conduct interviews in the gated communities, access to the areas was needed. The security measures differed from the gated community for higher income groups compared to the one for lower income groups, but still someone needed to grant me access to the areas, a so called gatekeeper. In Alphaville 1 it was a person known to me that got the role as a gatekeeper. My god parents have lived there for about 30 years and it was my godmother that acted as the gatekeeper. The person that got the role as a gatekeeper in Condominio da Sucupira was my godmother's gardener. I was introduced to him by my godmother and her family.

All interviews were conducted in Portuguese by me. The semi-structured interviews were all recorded with redundancy using a digital dictaphone and using the Voice Memo software on an iPhone 4. In total I have 7 hours and 48 minutes of recorded material. After returning to Sweden all semi-structured interviews have been transcribed, in Portuguese. The transcribing was made to be used in the process of writing this thesis, it is easier to find relevant information in text documents, rather than in audio recordings. Only a fraction of the recorded material has been used in this thesis. The quotes that can be found in this thesis are translated freely by me into English. One funny incident that occurred is that I have quoted a Brazilian journalist that quoted an American speaking Portuguese. So now that American has been translated from speaking Portuguese with an American accent, into English.

For research purposes and so on, digital copies of the recorded material might be arranged. Contact me for further information.

4.1. Quantitative method

Primary quantitative data is relevant to collect and use because it is measureable and comparable (Flowerdew, 2005). In this case it would be used to compare data between residents in two different gated communities. Mostly numerical data was collected conducting structured interviews. To compare answers from a gated community for higher income groups with a gated community for lower income groups the same questions was asked in both places. Data was collected that can be used to classify people, their circumstances and their environment but also data that can be used to study attitudes, opinions and values. This could be accomplished using

questionnaires (Flowerdew, 2005), so I could have used questionnaires and handed them out and collected them when they had been answered. But questionnaires open up for misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the written questions asked. It also decreases the amount of interaction with the people living in gated communities. Interaction was instead valued and it gave more insight to these questions. Another issue with questionnaires is that it can require that they aren't handed out for example to illiterate people. To eliminate, or minimize these risks, structured interviews as a method was chosen instead. The questions were asked verbally and the responses were filled in manually by me in a questionnaire. Asking the questions verbally also opened up for verbal communication, to ask questions or answer questions, to solve misinterpretations or misunderstandings and also to exchange ideas, experiences and viewpoints.

To conduct the structured interviews the method of door-to-door interviewing was primarily used. Besides door-to-door interviewing, in a couple of cases in both gated communities I simply asked people walking in the street, on their way to or from their home, if they agreed on being interviewed.

In total 57 structured interviews were conducted, 26 with residents in Alphaville and 31 with residents in Condominio da Sucupira.

The structured interviews were conducted in Condominio da Sucupira in Carapicuíba on January 13 and 15 of 2016 and in Alphaville 1 in Barueri on January 12, 16, 17 and one interview was conducted by phone on January 21 of 2016.

4.2. Qualitative method

To get qualitative material from people living inside gated communities semi-structured interviews was used. The point of using semi-structured interviews as a method is to be pre-prepared, to have some pre-formulated questions, but with the option to ask more questions during the interview if more questions arise, depending on what kind of answers one gets and where the interview goes (Flowerdew, 2005).

In total ten interviews were conducted with people living inside gated communities; five people living inside Alphaville 1 in the municipality of Barueri and five people living in Condominio da

Sucupira in the municipality of Carapicuíba. In most cases they were residents that already had responded questions in the structured interviews. They were asked because they showed an interest to talk about the life inside a gated community.

One interview was conducted on January 20, 2016 with the developer Jairo Zabballa, the president of Cooperativa, a constructor of gated communities for lower income groups in his car between several meetings in Carapicuíba.

Two journalists were interviewed. One interview was conducted on December 15, 2015 with Claudio Marques at his office, he is editor for the real estate pages on O Estado de São Paulo, the fourth largest newspaper in Brazil in 2014 (Associação Nacional de Jornais, 2015). The other interview was conducted on December 21, 2015 with Deise de Oliveira at her office, she is deputy-editor for the real estate pages on Folha de São Paulo, the largest newspaper in Brazil in 2014 (Ibid.).

Four different professors in Urban Geography at the University of São Paulo were interviewed. It was Amélia Luisa Damiani on December 3 2015, Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos on January 11 2016, Isabel Aparecida Pinto Alvarez on November 30 2015 and Simone Scifoni on December 10 2015. They were conducted in their offices at FFLCH at University of São Paulo, except for the Amélia Luisa Damiani that was interviewed in the corridor outside of a class room. My aim was to interview only one of the professors, but after speaking to Amélia Luisa Damiani, she suggested that I should interview all four of them to get an even broader perspective.

I wanted to conduct an interview with a constructor of gated communities for higher income groups as well. My aim was to interview Marcelo Takaoka, the president of one of the more prominent developers of gated communities in Brazil. I spoke to him on the phone several times and sent several e-mails to him trying to book an interview, and I also sent him an e-mail with the sort of questions that I wanted to ask him during an interview, but he didn't answer any of my e-mails and each time I spoke to him he told me that he didn't have his calendar at hand so that we could book an interview. I did however ask if I could quote him in this thesis and to that he agreed.

I also wanted to conduct an interview with a politician in Carapicuíba. I started calling the mayor's staff already in the end of November as soon as I arrived in São Paulo. On their request I even sent the questions I wanted to ask to the staff by e-mail. I finally succeeded booking an interview with the mayor to January 19, 2016 16:00. But in the morning at the day of the interview, a representative for the mayor's staff canceled the interview. So I asked for another appointment before returning to Sweden on January 23, 2016, but they did not comply. I have sent them e-mails asking if I could get answers from the mayor by e-mail, but they have not even bothered answering.

5. Research context

OVERVIEW BRAZIL



MAP MATERIAL: INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA, IBGE, 2014
MAP LAYOUT: MARKO HUTTUNEN, 2016

Figure 5.1

5.1. Brazil

Brazil is the world's fifth largest country measured geographically. In South America it is the largest country and represents by itself almost half of the continent's surface. The Brazilian population is the fifth largest in the world with more than 205 million people. Even though the population growth rate has been decreasing every year since the mid 1960's the population keeps on growing in size (IBGE, 2015). In the list of countries in the world measured by nominal GDP, Brazil was in 2014 ranked as number seven. Measured by nominal GDP per capita Brazil was ranked as number 60 in 2014 by IMF as well as the World Bank. The nominal GDP per capita for Brazil amounts to circa \$11,600, which can be compared to Sweden's \$58,491 (IMF, 2015). Younger generations might not know of Biafra, today a part of Nigeria in Africa, but once one of the poorest countries in the world. Growing up I recall a description of the social and economic differences between the poor and the rich in Brazil as *ten Biafra's and one Switzerland*. In Brazil some call heavily guarded mansions a home whilst others call the Brazilian slums known as

favelas their home. So on the one hand Brazil has people that are super rich and on the other hand there are a lot more people that are really poor and live way below acceptable conditions for human beings.

The motto of the city of São Paulo in Latin is "*Non ducor, duco*", which translates to "*I am not lead, I lead*". Measured by population and economically São Paulo is the leading city in Brazil. The city of São Paulo lies in the state with the same name and measured spatially the state of São Paulo is only the twelfth largest in Brazil. With an area of 248,222 km² it is slightly larger than the 242,495 km² that constitutes the United Kingdom. The population of the state of São Paulo is roughly 44 million people. Almost 20,9 million people live in the metropolitan area of the city and the urban area houses around 11,8 million. Perhaps the word "*houses*" might give a wrong impression of the living conditions of the people in São Paulo. With around 15,000 people homeless in the city center and a lot of people living in favelas, the living conditions are far from idealistic and even though the GDP per capita in Brazil is one sixth of the Swedish, the housing conditions are far from it (Prefeitura do Município de São Paulo, 2011).



Figure 5.2 Heberson Jorge da Silva is homeless and sleeps on Avenida Paulista.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

5.2. Income groups in Brazil

As the main question for this thesis has to do with lower income groups, a definition of income groups is in its place. One of my contact persons in Brazil had brought up that Brazilians do not feel comfortable talking about their income and he was worried that I would ask for too much detailed information about the respondent's income and that they wouldn't want to share information about their income and even lie about it. But I did not want to deduce my way to their income levels and I felt that I needed some way of measuring the income of the people I would conduct interviews with, so I had to find some way of asking them for an income, without asking too much about it and making them uncomfortable.

While being in Brazil and searching for different ways to measure income groups I was introduced to two different ways of doing this. There is the way that ABEP does it and the way IBGE does it. ABEP stands for Associação Brasileiras de Empresas de Pesquisa which means Brazilian Association of Research Companies, known as Criterion Brazil. IBGE stands for Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística which means Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics and is used in the population census. ABEP:s classification of income groups have eight classes being A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2, D and E. As a geographer my choice fell on IBGE:s classification which has five classes for their income groups, that is from A to E.

Because I asked my respondents for the income for the year 2015 I used the 2015 minimum wage which was \$R 788 per month.

Table 5.1 IBGE classification of minimum wages:

Class	Minimum wages per month
A	Above 20 minimum wages
B	10 to 20 minimum wages
C	4 to 10 minimum wages
D	2 to 4 minimum wages
E	Below 2 minimum wages

Source: Carneiro (2015)



Figure 5.3 Not Wall Street but a walled street in São Paulo.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

5.3. The housing landscape of São Paulo

It is a wide range of housing types that the market has to offer in the metropolitan area of São Paulo. From areas of slums, so called favelas, to gated communities for the super rich. From simple constructions built with lumber to the most expensive architect designed mansions, creations one can and even cannot imagine. A place to live is obtained on the market by renting or buying it, but people also illegally occupy private and public space and real estate to have a place to live. This is amongst other things due to the government, not taking full social responsibility for the people and seeing to that they have a place to live (Paiva, 2015).

Since homes come in different shapes and sizes so does the security systems that protect them. From no security at all to the most rigorous arrangements. Houses for higher income groups have better security arrangements whilst houses for lower income groups have lesser arrangements. Houses are often surrounded by gates and walls or fences. On the top of the gates, walls or fences often sharp or pointy objects are placed, on walls splinter of glass and barbed wire is common.



Figure 5.4 Fences made of spear-like objects, a way to discourage intruders.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

It is common in neighborhoods for lower middle income groups and upwards in the metropolitan area of São Paulo to have security guards in residential areas. They are usually paid for monthly by the people living in the neighborhood. The presence of someone in the neighborhood contributes to an environment which people feel is more secure. The guards can intervene if anything happens, they can alert the police and they are present. Critics might call this false security, but it might also be better than not having any security at all.

5.4. Alphaville 1

In beginning of the 1970's in the eastern outskirts of the metropolitan area of São Paulo two entrepreneurs in the construction business had a dream. Renato Albuquerque and his partner Yojiro Takaoka dreamt of creating the first gated community of its kind in Brazil. With closeness to nature, but at the same time close enough to the city center so that the residents could commute by car (Caldeira, 2000; Marques, 2015).

Albuquerque and Takaoka wanted to contribute with a new kind of housing. It took time, but the trademark Alphaville, as well as the gated community with the same name grew exponentially over the years. Alphaville, which today is a wellknown trademark in the world of gated



Figure 5.5 This Alphaville mansion might give an idea on what houses can look like. Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

communities in Brazil, was not planned from the start to expand the way it did. It started out as Alphaville Residencial, the first gated community of its kind. The plan was to build houses for the higher and upper middle income groups in an enclosed area. In the beginning it was hard to sell the concept of Alphaville to the market and to people. The distance from the city center was too big for people to cope with it. So prices of the houses fell on the market. But as time went by and Albuquerque and Takaoka were persistent, the concept started growing on the market and on people (Marques, 2015). The concept which started with the idea of closeness to nature took on a new discourse as violence and crime increased which lead to an increase of demand for security on the market (Marques, 2015).

Alphaville 1 can be categorized amongst the *Prestige Communities* as a *Top-fifth Community*. There is however a club for sports and leisure activities attached to it known as Alphaville Tênis Clube, the Alphaville tennis club. It can be reached from inside the gated community as well as externally from the street. The club was founded in 1976 as a marketing object to attract people to buy houses in Alphaville 1 (Alphaville Tênis Clube, 2014). The fact that Alphaville 1 has a sports club does however not make it a Lifestyle Community, mainly because even though the club is popular, life inside Alphaville 1 does not revolve around the club.



Figure 5.6 Condomínio da Sucupira. Some houses have gates, some don't.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

5.5. Condomínio da Sucupira

The history of the gated community Condomínio da Sucupira in the municipal of Carapicuíba is not as famous or extravagant as Alphaville 1 and also not as well documented. The following documentation has been done during my visits there in interviews and talks with the residents.

Condomínio da Sucupira in form of a gated community is about ten years old. Amongst the people that I interviewed, the person living there longest had lived there for 25 years. He told me that the street had changed a lot during the years. It had gone from being an area with just a couple of houses into the crowded place that it is today. The street, you might ask. Well basically that is what Condomínio da Sucupira is today, an enclosed street which is connected by an intersection with the streets Estrada do Jacarandá and Estrada do Pequiá. The enclosed street stretches from that intersection which lies on top of a hill, circa 220 meters down the hill in a southwestern direction. About ten years ago the area was planned for allotments which then were sold on the market. At this point in time some houses already existed on the street. About eight years ago the street, which at that point stretched farther than 220 meters, was closed with the wall. There has been some controversies related to the creation of Condomínio da Sucupira. For example regarding the splitting of the land into allotments and the selling of the allotments. I was

told that a former local politician was involved in these controversies and someone even told me that the politician ended up in jail. This will however not be further elaborated upon in this thesis.

Condominio da Sucupira has houses built wall to wall on both sides of the street. There are in total 87 houses. The size of the allotments which the houses are built upon are circa 250 m² each. The quality and aesthetics of the houses differ a lot. That which doesn't fit horizontally is compensated for vertically and some of the residents have been really creative when planning and building their houses. Several houses have two or three floors. Some residents have built gates that separate their allotment to some extent from the street. Inside of the gate they have a garage or parking space. There are some small trees in the street, but other than that it is a concrete landscape.



Figure 5.7 A couple of trees are found on the street, the rest is concrete.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2016



Figure 5.8 The wall at the end of the street in Condominio da Sucupira.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2016

As mentioned earlier, in the end of the street a wall has been built and barbed wire has been placed on top of it. Today the wall separates Condominio da Sucupira from another street on the other side of the wall. The streets used to be connected earlier, but some of the residents told me that they had to close the street because there was too much traffic, noise and in some cases fights between residents from this part of the street with some from the other part of the street that now has been sealed off. The street might also have been closed as a result of the planning of the allotments and the building of the gated community. It is however somewhat unclear.

The security of the area consists of the gate which is opened and closed by a doorman when people wants to enter or exit. The role of the doorman is held by a crew of three that do shift work. There is some basic camera surveillance by the gate. And there is the earlier mentioned wall with barbed wire in the end of the street.

The residents pay an amount each month that covers the fees for the doorman and some administrative work. Some residents do not recognize the form of gating that has been done and therefor refuse to pay the monthly fee. A couple of residents mentioned that they have filed one or several lawsuits and that they are waiting for responses in that case or those cases.

METROPOLITAN AREA OF SÃO PAULO

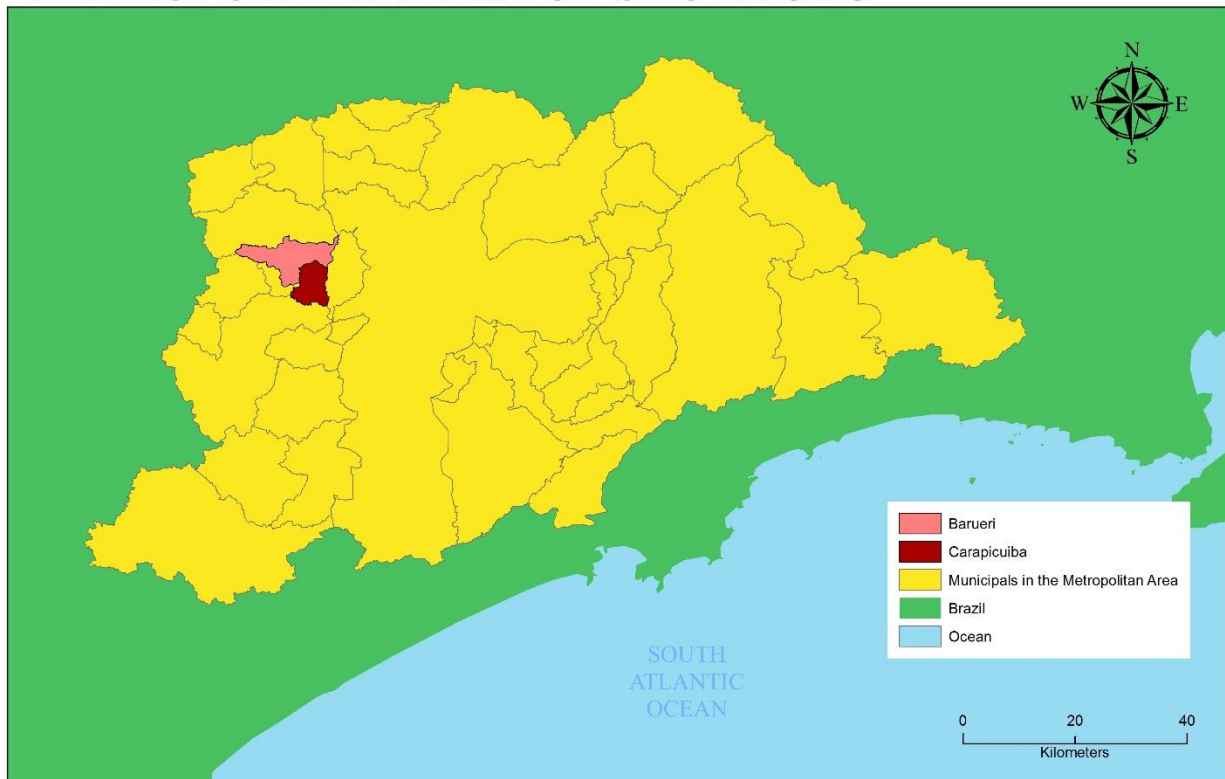


Figure 5.9

Condominio da Sucupira reminds categorically most of something that can be placed amongst the Security Zone Communities as a City Perch, but the gates and walls haven't been built by the residents. Instead it was a developer that raised them.

5.6. Profile of the municipals of the gated communities

The gated community Alphaville 1 is located in the municipal of Barueri and the gated community Condominio da Sucupira is located in the municipal of Carapicuíba. Even though Barueri and Alphaville are neighboring municipals, they have completely different profiles. A larger comparison will not be made, but here are some key data to get an understanding of the similarities and differences between the municipals.

Table 5.2 Profile data of the municipalities where studied objects are located:

	Barueri	Carapicuíba	São Paulo (State)
Area	64 167 km ²	34 967 km ²	248 222 362 km ²
Population, total	240 749	369 584	41 262 199
Population, men (%)	48,62	48,51	48,66
Population, women (%)	51,38	51,49	51,34
Monthly income, average (R\$)	1 868,19	1 226,78	1 721,96

Source: IBGE, Censo Demográfico 2010

5.7. Profile of the respondents in the gated communities

The respondents were asked for their age and sex. How many children do you have? How many children live at home? How many people live in their home? What is your monthly income? How many years have you been living in this gated community? How many years have you been living in this municipality? Some respondents did not answer all questions in the interview, when they didn't it will be mentioned.

5.7.1. Income group

To get an average number for the income groups, the letters from table 5.1 are swapped for numbers so that A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2 and E=1. All of the respondents did not answer the question regarding their monthly income, but almost all did. In Alphaville 3 of 26 did not answer the question and in Carapicuíba 1 out of 31 did not answer the question. To recalculate this into income groups, the average for Alphaville is slightly higher than 4 which gives an average of slightly above the group B, which means an income of 10-20 minimum wages per month. And for Carapicuíba it is almost 1,5, but still below 2. That makes it the income group E, which is a monthly income below 2 minimum wages per month.

Table 5.3 Profile data of respondents in gated communities:

	Alphaville 1	Sucupira
Number of respondents	26	31
Average age of respondents (years)	55	46
Female respondents (%)	57,69	48,39
Male respondents (%)	42,31	51,61
Average number of children	1,92	2,81
Average number of children living at home (0-18 years)	0,54	1,61
Average number of people living in their home (incl. children)	3,08	4,23
Average monthly income *	4,09 (B)	1,46 (E)
Average years living in this gated community **	18	8
Average years living in this municipality	19	24

* The monthly income is an average of the income groups recalculated to numbers.

** The age of Condomínio da Sucupira is 10 years. Some of the respondents answered that they have lived in their houses that now are part of a gated community more than 10 years. The average in the table has been calculated with 10 year as a maximum number of years for living in the gated community. The average for total number of years of living in the area that now constitutes the gated community is 10 years.

6. Analysis

In this chapter results of the field work in São Paulo as well as an analysis of that material will be presented. This will be done intermittently and intertwined throughout the chapter. To answer the question of why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups in São Paulo it is essential to get acquainted with the historical context, which will contribute to a better understanding of the events that are unfolding today, that is the spreading of gated communities for lower income groups.

6.1. How Alphaville influenced planning in São Paulo

The gated community of Alphaville 1 is considered being a pioneer as one of the first gated communities that were built in São Paulo during the 1970s. But the question is how that pioneer has influenced the developments of the different municipals in the metropolitan area of São Paulo from its birth until today.

6.1.1. “In this moment of social chaos”

Simone Scifone, professor at University of São Paulo in Urban Geography says that if we are to think in the metropolitan scale of São Paulo, an analysis of municipal by municipal is in place, because the situations in each municipal are divergent (Scifoni, 2015-12-10). In the case of São Paulo, a metropolitan logic exists. This logic articulates some spaces of the metropolis while it doesn't articulate other. Particularly in São Paulo in the 1970s and 1980s, mostly in the 1980's, there are different scenarios of huge metropolitan crisis. Crises of unemployment, industrial draining, the moment of restructuring. She explains them as two combined elements, one of industrial dispersion output and one of internal economic crises which result in massive unemployment. It is a scenario which has repercussions on the metropolis, in form of social crisis.

This creates a scenario of urban crisis, which Scifoni explains will nourish an exit for the wealthier parts of the population to these more isolated gated communities. Well, some are isolated, others aren't. Because there were already gated communities in some parts of the city, for example in Granja Julieta. But they moved to other more distant gated communities as well.

Scifoni thinks that the social crisis led to people avoiding to walk in public spaces. And because people wanted to provide a better environment for their children to grow up in, where they could play in the streets and so on, they searched for options outside of the city. This she explains as the first scenario (Ibid.).

And then she emphasizes a second scenario which is one that São Paulo is going through now, where instead of horizontal gated communities vertical gated communities are increasing. Instead of living isolated people are returning to the city centers, still in the form of a gated community but vertically instead of horizontally. But what also can be seen in planning is that it eases up and adapts to meet market demands, we see a lot of that in São Paulo, from the 1980's until 2002 when a new master plan is implemented (Ibid.).

I asked Scifoni if the development that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s could have been different, could the development perhaps have chosen a different path. She answered that she didn't think so, she said: "In this moment of social chaos people didn't even have courage to visit public parks like the Trianon" (Ibid.). The Trianon is one of the most central public parks in São Paulo, located on one of the most trafficked places, that is the central avenue Avenida Paulista. Nowadays the park is very popular, and between the trees one can find refuge from the concrete jungle outside. But during the 1970s and 1980s people were frightened to go there. It is worth remembering the context, one of the biggest cities in the world, a crowded metropolis where there was a big demand for closeness to nature.

6.1.2. "São Paulo grew so much"

Journalist Deise de Oliveira, deputy editor for the real estate pages at Folha de São Paulo says that it took some time for the concept of Alphaville and other gated communities to grow on people and really become a success, a model that would be established and consolidated (Oliveira, 2015-12-21). The slow development was partly due to the large distance to the city center. But as people started moving to Alphaville and its surroundings many companies also moved to Barueri. She says that because many companies moved there the municipal granted tax benefits, which led to more companies moving there. The companies moving there also led to more people moving there and this helped to ease the problematic situation with the daily displacement of people that used to drive to and from the city center (Ibid.).

She explains: “At the same time, São Paulo grew so much, so much, so much, so much, that people who wanted to move to their own houses had to move out of the city. Today São Paulo is growing upwards” (Ibid). This vertical development is the same vertical development that Scifoni mentioned earlier in, when she was speaking of as a second scenario.

6.1.3. “Because it’s rare it can be sold”

Professor Isabel Aparecida Pinto Alvarez at University of São Paulo speaks like Scifoni also of a city in deep social crisis during the 1970s and 1980s (Alvarez, 2015-11-30). On one hand jobs and infrastructure was concentrated to a few areas of the city and on the other hand there were these immense peripheries without public infrastructure, homes built by the people living there, peripheries that essentially were created for “reproduction of labor power”.

Alvarez says that it is in this timeframe and in this context that one developer - referring to Alphaville - notices a market niche in constructing gated communities for the wealthier part of the population that can afford to pay for infrastructure and that can commute by car to work in the city center. A feud appears between those that live in the surrounding peripheries and those that live inside the walls of the gated community, those inside that considers themselves as common peers. Those inside that can afford to live more exclusively. Alvarez says: “It is in these gated communities and around them that a world of illusion is created. A world that tries to escape the real world with real problems, but which still is affected by the real problems of the city” (Ibid.). So they still end up living a life, constantly reacting to what happens in the reality outside.

Like Blakely and Snyder professor Alvarez portrays gated communities as mere products on the real estate market. As one key element in the sales process of the gated communities she mentions nature. She says that several gated communities are planned close to nature, next to a park, near forest or next to a river or a lake. Alvarez says: “Nature is rare in the city and because it is rare it can be sold expensively” (Ibid).

6.1.4. “Obviously you’re going to exploit it commercially”

Claudio Marques, a journalist and editor for the real estate pages on O Estado de São Paulo agrees with Alvarez about the use of the green, the nature as a sales argument (Marques, 2015-12-15). Marques says: “I think that Alphaville influenced in that sense that it was an object of desire at the same time that you could live in a place where you felt more comfortable. At that time you didn’t have the idea about security. I can be wrong, but I think that the question of exploiting the fear of people. The question of security, comes later. At that time it was more a sales hook of comfort, wellbeing, to be in a place closer to nature” (Ibid.).

I asked journalist Marques if the development of gated communities during the 1970s and 1980s could have been different. He says that he doesn’t know if the development could have been different. He says: “Because it was what people imagined was good, the ideal. It is obvious that the market encourages people. So you’re investing in a project, say I’m going to make a community, a gated community, so you are investing. Obviously you’re going to exploit it commercially. Advertise in TV, in newspapers, but if it doesn’t appeal to people, if it doesn’t touch something inside them, if it isn’t something that they want, it’s not going to work, it’s not going to sell. I don’t think that the development would have been different and it couldn’t have been different. It was what people thought at the time. It was something that people saw on television, or in the cinemas in American movies, those big houses without walls, without things, they wanted that as well” (Ibid.).

6.1.5. “A new ideology is created”

Professor Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos in Urban Geography at the University of São Paulo speaks of an expansion of São Paulo, surpassing the boundaries of the municipal of São Paulo stretching towards the western zone of the metropolitan area (Carlos, 2016-01-11). She says: “There is movement in the urban sprawl where using nature, the green, a new ideology is created. So you have green, you are close to nature, and as a function of this closeness to nature another idea of living is constructed. Not only for the rich and famous but also made available for the middle class and the upper middle class in plots which are larger than in the more central parts of São Paulo” (Ibid.). And this she means is part of a real estate strategy. A strategy built on the fact that land is cheaper in the peripheral parts of the metropolitan area, and it is in the peripheral parts that great land masses can be found for construction. So that is where they start building these

gated communities.

6.1.6. “A complexity of centers and a multitude of peripheries”

Professor Amélia Luisa Damiani in Urban Geography at University of São Paulo says that it is not possible to comprehend the city of São Paulo by itself, but instead it is to be understood in a process of metropolization (Ibid.). She says: “This process of metropolization opened up for the possibility of having more than one center in São Paulo, which meant that strictly applying models of center and periphery to comprehend the urban, no longer would be sufficient because you have a dialectics of centers and peripheries, a complexity of centers and a multitude of peripheries” (Ibid.). She continues explaining that this is part of the metropolitan process, this complexity of centers and peripheries and this is to say that the urban economy, or the urban as real estate business which has great importance to the economy as a whole, was a way to take advantage of the metropolis as a territorialized economy. She says: “It is possible to transform all of the metropolitan area into a real estate agency. So the development of São Paulo as a metropolis coincides with the possibilities of these business opportunities that occur” (Ibid.). And this occurs in the 1970’s, the same decade that São Paulo turns into a metropolitan region. And she says: “To comprehend the business of gated communities, important real estate business, it cannot be understood without understanding the process of metropolization” (Ibid.).

6.1.7. “It turned into a model of obsession”

Jairo Zabballa, president of the real estate company Cooperativa in Carapicuíba, gives the same overall image of the changes from the 1970s until today as others have done (Zabballa, 2016-01-20). He says that Barueri really seemed far from the capital of São Paulo and the people resisted at first, and then I presume he’s referring to Marco Polo, the traveler and merchant, when he says: “When that Polo conquers that phase, with the pioneers really, it turned into a model of obsession almost, of craving, the people really wanted it. As this concept was propagated in the media and so on, everybody started to look at gated communities with different eyes. First because of security. Second because it gave a sense of the countryside since the people lived closer to one another, it was the same objectives, everybody knew each other, and so on, and so on, and so on, and so on” (Ibid.).

The historic context has been somewhat cleared up. Extreme social crisis occur in São Paulo during the 1970s and the 1980s. These social crisis, or results thereof such as fear of violence and crime together with the hope for a more prosperous future, act as a push factor that drives wealthier people out from central parts of São Paulo to more peripheral parts, where entrepreneurs are waiting with arms open to supply exclusive houses located within walls in gated communities built on cheap land. In this change that the metropolitan area of São Paulo has gone through, or process of metropolization as Damiani explains it, the developers have played an important part.

But there were some factors that made this thing possible. The municipality of Barueri allowed the gated community of Alphaville to be built, the local politicians allowed the developer to build the gates and walls. And the people allowed the politicians to let it to happen. This all happened in a timeframe in São Paulo when they were transitioning from dictatorship to democracy. I asked the professors and journalists if there had been a public debate about gated communities, but none of them could recall such a public debate.

Freedom House is a foundation that conducts research of freedom in the world and publishes their results in form of reports on a yearly basis to promote human rights, democracy, market economy and so on. They publish two reports that are interesting to look at. It is the report Freedom in the World and the report Freedom of the Press. The report about press freedom in the world has a scale from 0 to 100. The lower points a country has, the more press freedom the country is considered having. Countries like Sweden and other countries in Northern and Western Europe, North American and other countries in the western world are considered being free. Brazil has the last 20 years fallen from 30 to 45 points with some improvements in the years 2000, 2001 and 2002 (Freedom House, 2015b). But all in all, it is a negative trend during the last years. At the same time Brazil is evolving democratically and it is being more and more liberalized. In the ranking of freedom in the world, countries are ranked on a scale from 1 to 7 points where 1 is considered free and 7 is considered not free. During the last 20 years Brazil has gone from 3 points, which is considered partly free to 2 points, which is considered free (Freedom House, 2015a).

These results can be interpreted somewhat contradictory. While political rights and civil liberties increases, the press freedom decreases. The population of a country apt to be affected by the way



Figure 6.1 Manifestation in front of Trianon against the closing of public schools. Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

the press in the country is treated. Brazil transitioned to democracy during the late 1970s and during the 1980s. But the dictatorship remained in the minds of the Brazilian population to such extent that people of older generations were reminded and worried when manifestations were held on the streets of São Paulo and other Brazilian cities in July 2013. Initially the manifestations were against increases in ticket prices for busses, trains and metros in some Brazilian cities. But the manifestations grew to include other issues as well, such as the high corruption in the government and against the police brutality used against some demonstrators. Still nothing about the gated communities, but maybe in the future. Now they at least have some kind of freedom to protest and even if the military police follow manifestations immensely, people are allowed to protest and a high tolerance is shown even towards illegal protests.

One does however ask if the Brazilian people have democratic tools to change the planning discourse and if they use these democratic tools enough. When talking to the professors in Urban Geography I am in general told that yes, the people have democratic tools, but they don't always use them enough. Laws have been changed and planning departments in cities have opened up for a more democratic process which means that the public can contribute during planning processes much more than before. The public however doesn't always seize these opportunities.

6.2. Why are lower income groups moving to gated communities?

Lower income groups have started moving into gated communities, for example in Carapicuíba. It is another type of gated communities than the exclusive gated communities for higher income groups. But it is a form of gated communities. I want to know why we are seeing this development in the metropolitan area of São Paulo.

6.2.1. “It’s a real estate strategy”

Professor Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos emphasizes that gated communities - as she mentioned earlier - also for lower income groups is a real estate strategy. She says: “In order to attend a population with low purchasing power, you have to create large tracts, because as they have low purchasing power and buy smaller houses, which therefore are cheaper. Creating large sets and selling them to people with low purchasing power, leads to a trend with decreasing profit-margins, in order to increase the profit you instead have to sell to more people” (Carlos, 2016-01-11).

6.2.2. “As if it is in the imagination of people”

The journalist Claudio Marques isn’t quite sure. He says: “I don’t know, I think that it can also be because of security, I think that it adds a certain meaning of value, but I think also that there is that idea that, I don’t know, that the desire nowadays to live, as if it is in the imagination of the people, that a good place to live, has to have a wall, for example. I think that it is something deeply rooted” (Marques, 2015-12-15).

6.2.3. “The Brazilian has a dream”

His colleague, the journalist Deise de Oliveira says that she thinks that people are seeking space and security, but in a model completely different from Alphaville, in another dimension. The ones that buy in the eastern and southern zones of the metropolis for example. She says: “It’s about a person going after the dream of the house, to live in a house, even if it doesn’t have a courtyard, even if it doesn’t have a garden, even if it doesn’t have anything. But that’s it! To live and have a house is much connected to a dream, it is a dream, at least here” (Oliveira, 2015-12-21). She explains that it’s a very Brazilian thing, to buy a house, to buy a residence. She has recently been to the United States of America and says: “In the United States a lot of people live



Figure 6.2 Advertisement: “Realize your dreams in 41.000 m² of land”.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

paying rent or something. No, here the thing is that I’m going to purchase and have my house, not there, they are always negotiating rent. Here the thing is to buy and pay off the house” (Ibid.). And she continues explaining that it reveals the fact that it’s very cultural, it’s very Brazilian. She repeats it several times. The Brazilian has a dream of their own house.

She elaborates more on the issue: “People dream and people materialize. So, let’s say I don’t have the money to live in a house with a courtyard, a pool, you know, all that which they have in Alphaville for example. So you transport this to your own reality. That’s what it’s about, to have the sensation, the feeling of space and security. I think so. Of course, we live in, we passed through times of growth in which there was a party, the real estate industry was constructing, building, abundant credit, people had credit, they had income, they had employment and they had credit, so, we were living in a moment of when everything you produced was sold, everything you created, so, so the middle class dreams of that, in another scale, but dream of that. I think it was that. Gated communities for lower income. They benefited. They benefited” (Ibid.).

6.2.4. “There is an economic motivation”

Jairo Zabballa at Cooperativa, the developer of gated communities for lower income groups says: “There is an economic motivation for the entrepreneur. Because if you’re going to build a house, you’re going to have a cost. Say you’re going to build 20 houses and you already have the cost for the first, quantity of material, all this will lead to lower prices, for the construction, in splitting the plots, in the ideal portion of the plot, so there is a financial economic contingent there. Combined with market expectation, people that wants to be living inside, inside a bell jar, no matter the scale, the quality of the bell jar, as long as it gives those feelings of security, sociability, provision of common use, the pool, the court, so all of that comes with a gated community, in greater or lesser quality” (Zabballa, 2016-01-20).

When talking to a developer of the gated communities for lower income groups it undoubtedly gives the impression of a gated community as nothing but a product. And the arguments to sale comes to mind, security being the first one mentioned by Jairo. But is security only a sales argument, or does it actually have grounds for being used by real estate industry?

6.2.5. “Media helped the real estate market”

Professor Isabel Aparecida Pinto Alvarez elaborates on how the security discourse has come into being: “The fear of crime and violence, much of this fear during the 1970s, was produced by media. In the 1980s we had crisis of unemployment, the population starved. There was pillaging of supermarkets. But it wasn’t violence against people. It was an act so that people could eat. Fundamentally. But then there is a starting point, of creation of a media, of production of information and images about crime. Many times they transformed isolated cases into generalizations. So if we look into areas where the crime rate was higher, it wasn’t in the richer areas, it was exactly in the poorer areas. That’s where you have the murdered, the young ones, especially the poor ones” (Alvarez, 2015-11-30).

Alvarez continues explaining: “However the real estate market sold this product as it was security to the rich. But if you compare the crime data, the ones that suffered from crime were the people of lower income, not the people of higher income. And from the beginning the gated communities were produced for people of higher income. So I’m not saying that there is no crime, it’s not that, but for a very long time media helped the real estate market to produce this

feeling of insecurity, actually to sell these products” (Ibid.).

Fear, born out of violence and crime happening to someone else, not in the neighbourhood perhaps, but close enough to start getting people worried. The logic of fear is easy to comprehend. If violence and crime can happen to someone else, it can happen to me. The tolerance and the courage to wait until it is resolved is rare.

6.2.6. “I do not watch Globo”

The fact that media plays a role when it comes to fear, is also confirmed to some extent by the journalist Claudio Marques. When I interviewed him I mentioned how the Brazilian television network Globo recently had portrayed crime against a celebrity he said: “You know, I have a colleague that has an American friend. He came to Brazil, stayed here for a while. He came, got into a relationship with a man that he met through the Internet. So he came here. Stayed with the guy here, they got married here and so on. But the American always said like this: “I do not watch Globo, I don’t watch the news, because if you look at the news you get scared, you don’t go to the street” (Marques, 2015-12-15). It’s like that. There are cases of violence, there are assaults, there are robberies, there is everything, but it seems like in the heads of people it is much worse than I think that it actually is. Of course, if we go walking in the street I’m going to look, I’m going to pay attention, but I don’t stop walking in the streets, I don’t stop taking the bus if necessary, to go out at night, at last, São Paulo has a thrilling nightlife” (Ibid.).

From the thrilling nightlife back to the quotidian where fear of violence and crime exists. The question is if fear of violence and crime is what drives the spreading of gated communities for lower income groups.

6.2.7. “They are not specialists”

Professor Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos opposes strongly the idea that gated communities is a product of violence and crime. She says: “The gated community is not a product of violence and crime. The gated community is a product of the urban dynamics. It is the discourse that the real estate market uses to sell, crime. It is not the sign. Because look carefully, outside of the city of São Paulo, in other cities where the crime rate is almost zero, they construct and sell gated

communities and they use this discourse to sell. It is the same thing as Elix, to sell a pair of jeans, they create an idea, they create a special consumer for the jeans. You also create, through an ideological discourse, the consumer for this real estate product.” (Carlos, 2016-01-11) -----
“It is a real estate strategy that appears in the case of the metropolis of São Paulo, as a construction and the dynamics of the process of urbanization of the process of São Paulo” (Ibid.).

Ever since I landed in São Paulo, met people and told them that I was conducting a study about the spreading of gated communities to lower income groups, whether I asked for their opinion or not, people told me that it was because of security. So I told Carlos that and she answered: “Yes but what happens is that they are not specialists, they are not geographers, the geographer analyzes the city, is able to see that it is something else. The following happens, if the idea of gated communities and violence is sold, if people buy it, then because we are seeing an increase of violence, it appears as a response, but in reality it is not what it is about. But it is how people see it” (Ibid.).

6.2.8. “Insecurity and security goes together”

Her colleague professor Damiani uses another approach: “In geography the representation of security is studied. There is an idea of representation of insecurity. They sell gated communities in medium sized cities that have no crime. The gated community is sold on the legacy of protection against theft, murder, crimes in general, but there is no crime in those cities. There aren’t problems that justify this type of discourse. But the representation of insecurity is generalized at the moment of sale and the forms of representations of the necessities of these gated communities. So the wall, is a constitutive part of the representation of security, out of which, it gets potential and attraction. As a lifestyle it is an efficient representation of the real estate sector to sell this type of residences. So insecurity and security goes together, in the process of sale, and the forms of representation of these gated communities as a lifestyle. Now, if this attracts crime? No, he would say that it attracts business, this point of view” (Damiani, 2015-12-03).

There are obvious similarities in the way of reasoning between the two professors and I can see the connection to ideas by geographers like Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre amongst others. So I looked carefully, like professor Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos asked me to do. I tried



Figure 6.3. Christian identifying himself to enter a gated community.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

to grasp the concept and I can understand the logic of it. However, I am not studying the sales discourse of gated communities in other cities. I am studying why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups in São Paulo. With all due respect, it is in this context that I want to gain understanding, so my study continues.

6.2.9. “Wow, this is impregnable”

Professor Damiani spoke of a discourse where gated communities attracts business. Interviewing Jairo Zabballa I asked him if he would say that insecurity is used in general on the real estate market by companies, constructors of gated communities and so on, as a way to raise prices of houses and to have a better arguments to sell houses, or if it just is a demand from the market which they as developers are responding to by supplying gated communities for lower income groups. Zabballa answers: “It is the main theme for the sale. Because as a rule, what you offer at first is not consistent with what is implanted later. Usually it gets outdated. Even because, because it doesn’t exist. You can’t be 100 percent Big Brother. So you installed a camera, so you trained the personnel and so on and so on. There will always be an exception. There is no totality. There is no 100 percent of security, but it is the main theme for the sale and people go

with it, they visit properties, they visit gated communities and say “Wow, this is impregnable”. So it’s a theme for sale, in response as to what people really demand, but it is a theme for sale” (Zabballa, 2016-01-20).

Zabballa doesn’t contradict Damiani. One can claim to be confused, but on a higher level. Now it is portrayed not only as a sales argument, it is portrayed as a whole theme for sale. The question is if it’s more than that.

6.2.10. “It’s more an illusion”

Professor Simone Scifoni says that gated communities has turned out to be a lifestyle really, a lifestyle that is associated with a social feeling. Scifoni explains: “For the poor to say that he lives in a gated community, well he does, but he doesn’t live in Alphaville, he doesn’t have a pool or anything. But the thing of living in a gated community has turned out to be an important social brand, even if you don’t have the same quality, the same infrastructure that in gated communities. I think that it’s a thing of society, values of society actually. Sometimes it might even have to do with security. Say I live in a favela and it is dangerous in the favela, so I can’t arrive after ten at night, sometimes there are curfews. Sometimes there is an illusion that gated communities has this security, but it hasn’t because the problems of the city is all over the city. In São Paulo there are many cases of assaults in gated communities. The guys show up, laughing on the lookout and then enter and plunder, inside the gated community. So it isn’t much of a security. It’s not 100 percent. At the same time you think that you can raise your children in the streets because it’s inside a gated community, that they can ride their bikes in the streets, when there is internal violence within the classes. I don’t think that it is very safe, it’s more an illusion, it’s the discourse of security, that not always... It’s a value in the society in São Paulo, and a value for all classes” (Scifoni, 2015-12-10).

6.2.11. “Because of the lack of government”

The search for an answer to the question why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups was also asked in Alphaville 1, the genesis of gated communities in Brazil. Five semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents and they were asked why they think that gated communities are spreading to lower income groups in São Paulo.

Resident #1 answered: “Why is that. Maybe it is because they also want to sleep peacefully (Alphaville 1, Resident #1, 2016-01-12).

Resident #2 answered: “Because everybody is afraid. Everybody wants to live inside gates so that nobody can enter. To be able to have some things in life, otherwise you lose everything, if someone comes. You don’t sleep, you don’t do anything if you are free from walls. This is good. In all classes you have gated communities nowadays. The day that we will have more security, it will cease to exist. I think. Because people don’t like to live that way, mounded. Because there are gated communities in the periphery that really are mounded. But people live like that because they are safer. That is when we don’t have flooding. Because here it isn’t only thieves that takes away things, water does that too. There are people that lose everything” (Alphaville 1, Resident #2, 2016-01-12).

Respondent #3 answered: “People started earning a little more and started trying to protect themselves within the boundaries of their reality, like we try to protect ourselves within the boundaries of our reality, because of a lack of confidence, because of the lack of government” (Alphaville 1, Resident #3, 2016-01-12).

Respondent #4 answered: “That is a good question. Well, a little also has to do with security, because they are running the same risks. There was a news report the other day on television, an older man, a really simple man from a part of São Paulo, I don’t remember which part, but he couldn’t pass on the corner of a street at night because they were always mugged there, it was a very simple person. They end up being subject to those kind of things” (Alphaville 1, Resident #4, 2016-01-16).

Respondent #5 answered: “Because the people of lower income also suffer the same violence, everybody suffers violence because there is no security in the state, there is no security in the municipals, so people have to protect themselves. The American, what does he do? He buys a weapon. The Brazilian doesn’t have weapons, so what does he do? He lives in a place that is more protected than the street, because you are abandoned on the street. So the social class doesn’t matter. What matters is that you get to feel a little more protected. So that’s when groups are getting organized and paying for security. Because all the security that we have here is paid by us, they aren’t paid by the state” (Alphaville 1, Resident #5, 2016-01-18).

Five out of five people interviewed answered that security is what people in lower income groups seek in gated communities.

6.2.11. “Not because of security”

In Condominio da Sucupira five semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents. Condominio da Sucupira is a gated community for lower income groups. Until now between the respondents, it has only been Jairo Zabballa, the developer of gated communities for lower income groups that actually has daily experience in his professional role, of gated communities for lower income groups. It is his area of expertise. The question now is why do potential, perhaps even previous customers of Zabballa, think that the spreading is occurring?

Respondent #1 answers: “Because they want security. They want to enclose themselves. But what good does it do? If you go outside, it is violent out there. It’s no use. Say you exit the gates and you are shot at the gate, then what? Did it help anything? I at least don’t think that it solves anything, I don’t think so, in my opinion” (Condominio da Sucupira, Resident #1, 2016-01-13).

Respondent #2 answers: “I think it has to do with space, the less space that is available and the more people that can fit on a smaller space, the more advantages we will have. Today we don’t have much space, unfortunately, so these gated communities they occupy less space and they occupy more people. You wouldn’t fit as many people on the same space outside” (Condominio da Sucupira, Resident #2, 2016-01-13).

Respondent #3 answers: “Not so much because of security but because it is easier to do business. If you have a house to sell outside of a gated community it takes a lot more time to sell. So, that’s what I think” (Condominio da Sucupira, Resident #3, 2016-01-13).

Respondent #4 answers: “You know what, I don’t know. It is a good question, I don’t know. Why, because people of lower income are having this chance, no? Because in general gated communities are for the rich. Like Alphaville, only the rich live in Alphaville, you have to have an income. You can’t live there. I don’t know why. Because the people in the favelas, they are constructing apartments, and then it turns into a gated community, so it’s because of that.

Because of the free areas, they are removing people from the free areas, putting them in gated communities, some in apartments and other in small houses. It is a chance that people are having to get their own corner. A decent place. But then there are people that can't afford to pay the gated community, the fee is so high and they require so much, put so many things in there, that people can't even afford it, in here they put a company to take care of administration that increased the monthly fee from R\$ 60 it went to R\$ 70, from \$70 it went to R\$ 100. And from now on I don't know what is going to happen. If I'm going to stay here or if I will be forced to sell my house to pay for the gated community. Or live in a... somewhere else, that's what I'm afraid of" (Condominio da Sucupira, Resident #4, 2016-01-15).

Respondent #5 answers: "Gated communities, not because of security. These gated communities, they took after the villas of the gated communities from the higher classes, you understand, they took after them. But even in gated communities for higher classes have thugs, sometimes they enter there as well. So these gated communities take after the fashion of the higher classes, because it has a little more security" (Condominio da Sucupira, Resident #5, 2016-01-15).

The discourse was unison in Alphaville, in Condominio da Sucupira however it wasn't as unison. Not only fear of violence and crime is on the minds of people living in a gated community for lower income groups. Respondent #1 speaks of the widespread violence and crime and rejects that gated communities would be a solution. Economy seems to play an important part for the respondents #3 and #4. There is even some reject to the idea that fear of violence and crime is an explanation to the question in the answers #3 and #5.

I wanted to know more about the residents in Condominio da Sucupira. My hope was to find something to build an answer on, in that gated community.

6.3. Feeling of living enclosed

Gated communities for lower income groups are spreading and the question is why. How current residents feel about living there surely affects other people not living there. Do people living there like it? Are people moving there because they think that they will feel good about living there or perhaps because they will feel safe? How does it feel to live in a gated community and particularly in a gated community for lower income groups? To get a notion, perhaps even an

attempt at a general picture of how it feels to live in an enclosed environment, semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents of Alphaville 1 and Condominio da Sucupira. They were asked “How do you feel about living in a gated community?” and “How safe do you feel in this gated community?”.

The answers from Alphaville 1 indicate that they really enjoy living in their gated community, and they feel, not as safe as one can possibly rate - maximum 7 - in the conducted interviews, but very safe. That means that there is room for improvement. In Sucupira they do not feel as good as living where they do, as the people living in Alphaville 1. And they do not feel as safe. On a scale from 1 to 7, 4 is in between, in the middle, so 4,38 makes the glass slightly half full instead of slightly half empty as would have been the case if it was 0,38 below 4. But they are on the positive side of the scale. Something makes it worth living in gated communities. But what is it they seek in gated communities?

Table 6.1 Feeling of living in a gated community:

	Alphaville 1	Sucupira
Average feeling about living in a gated community (1-7)	6,65	4,94
Average feeling of safety living in this gated community (1-7)	6,54	4,42

6.4. Reasons for moving to a gated community?

There ought to be reasons for moving to a gated community and continue living there. I spoke with Marcelo Takaoka, the president of A Y.Takaoka Empreendimentos S.A and the oldest son of Yohiro Takaoka, which was one of the two founders of Alphaville. When I told Marcelo Takaoka about this study and that the main question was: “Why are gated communities increasing for lower income groups in São Paulo?” he answered “Security. It is only about security”.

Blakely and Snyder write about several reasons for people wanting to move to and keep living in gated communities. Security being the most common answer, and the reason of most importance.

But there can be economic reasons for wanting to move to gated communities, and there can also be social reasons, like wanting to live amongst common peers, that is to live amongst people that have the same values, interests, opinions, age, economic situation and so on and so forth. So the question of why gated communities is increasing for lower income groups in São Paulo, cannot simply be answered with “security”.

Table 6.2 Rating the importance of reasons for moving to this gated community:

Reasons	Alphaville 1	Sucupira
Security (1-7)	6	3,77
Economic (1-7)	3,08	4,3
Common peers (1-7)	3,38	3,1

The respondents were asked the question: “Please rate the importance of the following reasons for moving to this gated community.” And then they were asked if they moved there because of security reasons? If they asked what security meant, they were not given a more precise answer than “Security as not being a victim of crime”. Then they were asked to rate the importance of economic reasons for moving to this gated community. If they had questions about the meaning of economic reasons, they were told that the interpretation of “economic” really was up to them, but that “economic reasons” could be “any economic reasons, for example that they moved there because it was what they could afford to buy, the monthly cost that they could afford with their monthly income or maybe that the house was an investment”. And last but not least they were asked the question, about what is mentioned in table 6.2 as “common peers” which was a the question to rate the importance of the reason of living “amongst people that are like you? People that for example have the same values, interests, opinions, age, economic situation etc?”

The results in table 6.2 above show that the importance of security as a reason for moving to Alphaville 1, was higher than in Sucupira. In comparison the average in Alphaville 1 is almost twice as high as in Sucupira. The importance of economic reasons for moving to Alphaville 1 was lower rated than in Sucupira. And the importance of living amongst common peers was

slightly higher rated as a reason in Alphaville than in Sucupira, but about the same.

People that live in Alphaville 1 have more economic freedom and they can to a higher extent choose to live in a gated community with rigorous security arrangements. The security arrangements of Sucupira are not even close to the ones in Alphaville, but compared to living in a house in a neighborhood without gates, perhaps with a guard patrolling the streets, then Sucupira does offer a somewhat more secure environment. This difference is probably what keeps the rate up. When it comes to living amongst common peers no greater difference can be interpreted.

The respondents also had the opportunity of answering if they had other reasons of importance as to why they moved to their gated community and they could rate the importance of that reason from 1-7. In Alphaville 1 the answers were many. The most common answer was that they had moved to a house of their own and amongst the other reasons they answered that it was because of family, work, to be closer to nature, security (sic!), the club and the opportunity of sports that is offers, and silence and tranquility. These other answers were highly rated mostly with 6's and 7's.

In Sucupira the answers differed in part, some for obvious reasons. They for example don't have a club nor nature to be close to. But otherwise the answers were similar. The most common answer was that they had the opportunity of buying either a piece of land and building a house or buying a house of their own house. Among the other reasons they answered that they didn't need to pay rent, because of family, work, silence and tranquility. These other reasons were highly rated, only 7's.

An interesting fact though is that the people in Alphaville 1 rate security as the most important reason for moving there. One person even mentioned it as an "other reason of importance" for moving there and rated it as a 6. The people in Sucupira do not rate security as being the most important reason for moving there, instead they consider economic reasons being more important. Many mention that they've had the opportunity of buying a house of their own or a piece of land as the "other reason of importance" of moving there. They all rated it as a 7.

There is a weakness in the questions asked, and it is that they are broad. They are open for interpretation by the respondent and the result is also open for interpretation. To have wide

questions was an active choice I made, I had to be efficient while conducting the interviews and there were more questions that needed to be asked. Also they were not meant to give a precise answer, but instead give a notion. More questions about security and economy have been asked and they are presented further on.

6.5. Do gated communities change people?

Different type of living environments and living conditions affects a person. You might even notice the difference of how you feel in a room before and after it has been cleaned. Surely gated communities also affect people, but the question is how.

I asked the respondents in Alphaville 1 if they think that gated communities contribute to changing people, for example to change the way that people view other people, to change people's political opinions and to change values and so on.

Resident #1 answered: "I don't know. The guy comes to live here in the gated community and changes opinion? What I think instead is that the one who comes to live here feels less worried with what happens in society, doesn't even think about society". I asked: "So it changes a little?". And the resident answered: "Yes, it changes your vision of society, but opinion, naaaah!".

I told Resident #3 that I also was going to conduct interviews in a gated community for lower income groups in Carapicuiba and to my question I got the following answer: "No, I think it is like this. Who lives inside, yes, this feeling of security is created. I'll say it like this, as much as I too have this feeling, I think that the feeling of security that I have actually is stronger than I ought to feel in here. Because it's like this, they have already stolen things in here, they already stole carpets from my car. Everything I left out there, disappeared". And I asked: "Here?" And the resident answered: "You will see when you go to the gated community in Carapicuiba. When people have a little more access, they seek more, it's a natural path, do you understand? I don't think that it helps to accomplish any change, but I think it's a natural path. Because people will defend themselves if possible, in a way that they can. So then, if the government doesn't give people security, then people will seek security".

In Sucupira the respondents got the same questions but the answers differed somewhat. Resident #1 answered: “Some people grew into something they are not. Here in this gated community we are all poor. We simply got one, what it is here, every person here bought a house here, because it was much cheaper at that time. You have to give thanks to God for having a corner. Here nobody likes nobody. It’s like you see it. Here nobody arranges parties, you don’t call nobody, understand? When someone does arrange party here. Look, my neighbor in front of me, you won’t believe me. He pretends that I don’t even exist! Ohh! He pretends that I don’t exist. The whole night listening to his loud music, and doesn’t call me over, he annoys me with his music”.

Resident #4 answered: “It changes, it changes, it changes, it changes. Because in the beginning there was people that were humble, nowadays humility ceased. Because it’s like I told you, the one who can cries less, who cries less stays quiet in his corner. Haha, it changes!”

Resident #5 answered: “No. it doesn’t contribute no. The opinion, no. I think not, in my opinion no”.

Even if the answers weren’t unanimous, they reflect some thoughts and opinions that people do have. I would say that the overall opinion was that people don’t move to gated communities without being affected by it somehow. How much it changes them and in what ways is yet to be seen.

6.6. Reasons to keep living in a gated community.

Do people change with time in space? One way of measuring this would be to ask the same residents that rated the importance of reasons for moving to their gated communities to also rate the importance of reasons to continue living in their gated communities. In this way the importance of reasons for moving there and the importance of reasons to continue living there could be compared. The average number of years that residents had lived in Alphaville 1 was 18 years as mentioned in table 5.3 and in Sucupira it was 8 years. Do have in mind that they started building Alphaville 1 in 1973 and Sucupira became a gated community roughly only ten years ago.

Table 6.3 Rating of reasons for continuing living in this gated community:

Reason	Alphaville 1	Sucupira
Security (1-7)	6,85 (+0,85)	4,74 (+0,97)
Economic (1-7)	4,15 (+1,05)	3,80 (-0,5)
Common peers (1-7)	3,92 (+0,54)	3,74 (+0,64)

Even though the focus of the question was slightly altered, the importance of security as a reason to continue living in Alphaville 1 was rated higher than in Sucupira. In Alphaville 1 compared to the importance of reason for moving to Alphaville 1 had increased closer to the total possible maximum average of 7. In Sucupira the importance of security as a reason for continuing living there had also increased. What this might indicate is that moving to a gated community, actually might increase the way that the residents rate the importance of security. Even if the security arrangements aren't as rigorous as in Alphaville 1. Presuming that one's view on security changes after having moved to a gated community and lived there for some years, what does it mean? Is it good or is it bad? Is it normal? Is it a desirable change or an undesirable change?

The importance of economic reasons for continuing living in Alphaville 1 increased compared to the importance of economic reasons for moving to Alphaville 1. But in Sucupira it decreased, even if barely so. I don't have any thought about why it is so.

The importance of living amongst common peers increased about as much in Alphaville 1 as in Sucupira. It might be due to getting to know the neighbours and thinking more positively of them than before moving there, when most of them were considered as strangers.

6.7. Do people get used to living in gated communities?

In different phases in life people tend to move to different types of living for different reasons. When a person moves out of their parent's home the very first time, maybe it is to a smaller apartment rather than a huge mansion. And if looking for a new home when reaching the age of retirement, maybe a huge house which requires a lot of maintenance isn't the obvious choice for

Table 6.4 Resident preferences if they have to move (Alphaville 1):

	Yes	No
Wants to move to a gated community (%)	100	0
Can consider not moving to a gated community (%)	12	88
The next home has to be a gated community (%)	88	12

The number of respondents that answered these questions were 25 out of 26 interviewed.

everyone. But if a person has lived in a gated community and is about to move, do they necessarily want to move to a gated community? I asked the respondents in Alphaville 1 and Condominio da Sucupira three hypothetical questions to get a notion of which kind of living they would chose in the future, a gated or a nongated?

One flaw with the formulation of the question is that I didn't define the location of the next home that the respondent hypothetically is moving to. I was asked during a couple of interviews about this and answered that the context was São Paulo. I also did not define which type of gated community that the hypothetical next home would be in. I assume that the respondent while answering imagines the hypothetical next gated community to be somewhat similar to the current they live in.

Table 6.5 Resident preferences if they have to move (Condominio da Sucupira):

	Yes	No
Wants to move to a gated community (%)	67,74	32,26
Can consider not moving to a gated community (%)	67,74	32,26
The next home has to be a gated community (%)	29,03	70,97

A small observation is that in Table 6.5, the results are the same for two of the questions. That is not an error.

So what does the numbers tell us. They tell us that the respondents in Alphaville 1 want to move to a gated community, if they have to move. By belonging to a higher income group they have more economic freedom to choose whether their next home actually will be in a gated community or not. This seems to be their reality, even if they are answering a hypothetical question. I don't have any ideas as to why some people answered that they can consider not moving to a gated community, maybe it is because they are open for other options, maybe they are more humble for what might happen in the future.

Compared to the respondents in Alphaville 1, the respondents in Condominio da Sucupira want to move to a gated community in a smaller extent. That is if they have to move. When conducting interviews I encountered more people negative to gated communities in Sucupira than in Alphaville 1. Some actually said that they wanted to move out of Sucupira, that they had put their house for sale and wanted to move to a home not located in a gated community. Some even had strong feelings against gated communities. This is reflected in the answers too. Almost 1 out of 3 respondents answered that they don't want to move to a gated community if they have to move. And almost 2 out of 3 respondents can consider not moving to a gated community. But in comparison with the residents in Alphaville 1, the respondents in Sucupira are much more humble when it comes to answering that the next home has to be in a gated community. By belonging to a lower income groups they have less economic freedom to choose whether their next home has to be in a gated community or not. Their economic situation is more exposed and it seems that for people with low margins it is another more harsh reality with less choices that reveals itself if they have to move, even if the situation is hypothetical.

6.8. Residents perception on security arrangements

Both Alphaville 1 as well as Condominio da Sucupira have security arrangements. The security arrangements differ. Alphaville 1 has high end security arrangements whilst Sucupira only has a few necessary arrangements. The security arrangements reflect to some extent how safe and secure residents feel and also to some extent the level of fear of violence and crime that they feel.

Table 6.6 Perceptions on security arrangements in their gated community:

Attribute	Alphaville 1	Sucupira
The gates and walls (1-7)	6,5	5,52
Guards and other personnel (1-7)	6,85	4,52
Surveillance (1-7)	6,65	4,21*

* Only 19 out of 31 people answered the question. The 12 people that didn't answer the question did not consider that they had a surveillance system.

I wanted to know how the residents of Alphaville 1 and Sucupira perceive their security systems. Therefore I asked them to rate the importance of different attributes.

6.8.1. Alphaville

In Alphaville 1 they rated the guards and other personnel as the most important attribute for the security arrangements. While conducting the research residents in general seemed very pleased and satisfied with their work and spoke very highly of them. Several respondents said that many of the guards had worked there for many years, that they get to know the guards to some extent and the guards them. The guards know the names of the people living in the gated communities and know them by appearance, which house they live in, family relations and which vehicle(s) they drive. The surveillance was the second highest rated attribute, besides having cameras in Alphaville 1 they also have patrolling guards inside the gated community that patrol by car or by motor cycle. It might seem like a paradox living in a gated community and not rating the gates and walls as the most important attribute for the security arrangements and even though the gates and walls isn't highest rated they is still rated high with 6,5 out of a possible maximum of 7. So much for the paradox. The gates consists of a gatehouse with four lanes for vehicles entering Alphaville 1 and three lanes exiting. Facial recognition is like mentioned done by guards, ID-control is mandatory if not allowed to enter. Nobody passes the bars of the gatehouse if they haven't been identified and been granted access to the area, personally by someone who is allowed to grant them access, usually a resident. The several meter high wall surrounds the whole area. On top of the wall there is an electric fence.

I also gave the respondents the opportunity to answer if there was some other thing about the security arrangements that I hadn't thought of asking which they also could rate. Of the ones that answered this question they rated these other answers highly, they gave them a 7 but one gave his answer a 6. The most common answer had to do with the guards, one said that they have polite guards that work there, a couple said that the circulating guards was good and one person said that "The security team is not outsourced. Most have worked there many years. They know the people that live here". A third complimented the importance of the surveillance. One person said that the access control is important. And another said that the gates are important. One person said that the people living there is important for security, that they report if something is going on, and that they too have an important part to play regarding the security of the gated community. One person said that the tranquility is important for security. Finally one person said that they currently have some kind of analog markings on the cars for recognition, but the current system can be forged and that it was about time to change to a digital marking system instead, because it would be more difficult to forge.

6.8.2. Sucupira

In Sucupira the respondents rated the gates and walls as the attribute of most importance of the security arrangements. They only have one entrance to Sucupira which is through the gate that can be opened in one part of the gate for entrance to the gated community and another part for exit from the gated community. The gate is opened by a doorman that resides in a shed and if needed speaks to people passing by through a window. There is no ID-control on people entering or exiting the gated community and even though the plan has been to install an intercom system, it hasn't been installed, so there is no communication between the doorman and the resident that a person entering claims that he or she is going to visit. There is also no control if the person that entered the gated community actually went to visit the person that they claimed that they were going to visit. The wall of Sucupira is the wall at the end of the street. It is a couple of meters high and there is barbed wire on top of it. It is not a big wall as it only stretches from one side of the street to the other. There are also some plots which haven't been built upon. There is a piece of wall on those plots too, but there are in some cases houses built on the other side, so there is no need for barbed wire there. Because the gates and the wall(s) is the primary security attribute of Sucupira it is also rated highest. They don't really have any guards, neither at the entrance, nor that patrol the area. All they really have is the doorman that sits in a shed. The doorman is not

likely going to interfere if some intruder wants to enter. There is only video surveillance at the gates and like mentioned before there are no patrolling guards. Therefore guards, other personnel and surveillance got lower ratings. While conducting the interviews I got the impression that the thing that keeps up the rating of the personnel is that residents actually appreciate the three people that have the role of the doorman, and appreciate the work that they do.

Some residents in Sucupira also seized the opportunity to answer if there was some other thing about the security that I hadn't thought of. An answer that I wasn't expecting was one person that answered: "God, he keeps us safe". One person said that the residents have to be cautious of their own houses, and a second person said that the residents themselves are important for the security and a third said that the residents have to be more alert and inform one another. One person said that the low traffic is important for security. One person complained about some other residents for not paying the monthly fee. One person complained about the access control and that it could be better and finally one person said that tranquility is of importance for security. The respondents rated these other answers with a 7, but one person rated the answer with a 5.

Even though the security arrangements differ between Alphaville 1 and Sucupira, the conclusion that can be done from the result of the interviews is that the respondents in Alphaville 1 are more satisfied with their security arrangements than the people in Sucupira.

6.9. Does the economic situation matter for living in a gated community?

Living in a gated community is not free, at least not free of charge. The house in there costs to buy or rent and there is the monthly fee which differ depending on the type of gated community it is. As mentioned earlier, talking about income and people's economic situation can be sensitive in Brazil, but I still wanted to know something more about the economic situation. During the interviews I asked the residents to rate the importance of their own personal economic situation for continuing living in the gated community and also to rate the importance of the house that they live in, as an investment.

A weakness that I didn't foresee was that some respondents rent the houses that they live in, so the house isn't an investment. All people renting the houses they live in answered 1, so they bring the average down somewhat.

Table 6.7 Importance of economic matters:

	Alphaville 1	Sucupira
Importance of personal economic situation for living there (1-7)	4,38	4,23
Importance of the house as an investment (1-7)	4,5	5,29

On a scale from 1 to 7, the respondents in Alphaville and Sucupira answered the question of the importance of their personal financial situation for continuing living there, almost the same. An average around 4, that is in the middle of the scale. I don't know really how to interpret this answer.

The result of the second question was kind of expected. At least I interpret that the importance of the house is more considered an investment in Sucupira, than in Alphaville. I presume that the wealthy in Alphaville 1 probably have more investments than just the house and that they probably spread the risks of their investments and don't *put all eggs in one basket*. That is if the house at all is considered as an investment, and not just a place to live in. I did not ask any questions about the respondent's wealth, their assets, investments and so on. In Sucupira on the other hand the importance of the house as an investment, is rated higher. The plot and the house in the gated community is probably the largest investment that they have, therefore it is of greater importance to them.

Table 6.8 House inside a gated community less financial risk than a house outside?

	Yes	No
Alphaville 1 *	84%	16%
Sucupira	87,1%	12,9%

* 25 out of 26 respondents answered the question.

Blakely and Snyder made some research in California about house prices inside gated and non-gated communities and couldn't find any discrepancies of importance. I have not looked into the house prices neither in Alphaville 1 nor in Sucupira. But I have asked the residents if they think that houses inside gated communities are considered being an investment with less risk than a house not located in a gated community.

I anticipated that a majority would respond "Yes" instead of "No". Partly because a majority of the respondents own houses that are located within gated communities. Most of the respondents have a house in a gated community, so perhaps the respondents might be considered biased. It would be interesting to compare these results with results from other gated communities as well as results from respondents that don't live in a gated community.



Figur 6.4 The Alphaville streets are different compared to Sucupira's street.

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

7. Conclusions

This thesis looks into different aspects that might answer the question of why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups in São Paulo.

The theory and theoretical framework used in this paper describes what drives the spreading of gated communities in general. Gated communities are described as mere products on the real estate market. Blakely & Snyder call this driving process “the logic of developers”. In short what happens is a market process, where a combination of events have to coincide for the spreading of gated communities to occur. The first step is the introduction of gated communities to an area. The second step is the phase of competition between developers on the market. The third step is that the market consolidates and establishes.

With help of seven key people the history of how gated communities started and spread in São Paulo is explained. After that the seven key people answer the question of why gated communities for lower income groups are spreading in São Paulo. The market of gated communities started in the 1970s and 1980s, but the niche market of gated communities started more recently.

7.1. Extreme opposites

In search for an answer to the question of why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups, to go more into depth with the matter, I turned to residents of Condomínio da Sucupira, a gated community for lower income groups located in Carapicuíba in the western outskirts of the Metropolitan area of São Paulo. There I conducted structured and semi-structured interviews with residents. To be able to put the answers from Condomínio da Sucupira in relation to something else, I conducted interviews in the extreme opposite, Alphaville 1, a gated community for higher income groups that lies in the neighboring municipal Barueri.

If living in a gated community for lower income groups feels good, then it is likely to become desirable and attractive for more people to move there, and thereby increasing demand. Answers from structured interviews indicate that they are more positive than negative to living there and that they feel more safe than unsafe. The respondents in Alphaville 1 on the other hand show that

they like very much living in their gated community and they feel very safe.

7.2. Economic reasons most important

When asked to rate the importance of reasons for moving to that gated community that they live in, the residents of Condominio da Sucupira rated economic reasons as most important, followed by security reasons and then social reasons. In Alphaville 1 the residents rated security reasons as most important, followed by economic reasons and last social reasons. The fact that respondents in Condominio da Sucupira rated economic reasons higher than security reasons for moving there is an interesting result which I will get back to later.

7.3. People change

How people living in a gated community are changed while living there is interesting to study. Depending on the outcome it might make it more or less desirable to move to a gated community. Thus affecting the demand and the market. Thereby affecting the spreading of gated communities.

When asked to rate the importance of reasons for continuing living in Condominio da Sucupira, their residents ratings changed compared to the reasons for moving there. Instead they rated security as the reason with most importance, followed by economic reasons and last social reasons. In Alphaville the order remained the same, but the ratings increased. One explanation for the change in rating importance of reasons for living in a gated community, even for lower income groups, is that they might have gotten used to living there.

7.4. Gated forever?

If people get used to living in gated communities for lower or for higher income groups, it might give an indication as to whether they want to live in a gated community in the future as well. If they move and want to live in a gated community, it might lead to an increase of demand on the market. To get a notion as to how they would affect the spreading of gated communities if they were to move today, I asked them to answer yes or no to the questions if they were to move today, do they i) want to, ii) can consider not to, or iii) have to, move to a gated community? The respondents in Condominio da Sucupira compared to Alphaville 1 answered that they i) wanted

to a higher extent not move to a gated community, ii) they could to a higher extent consider not moving to a gated community and iii) to a lower extent they answered that they have to move to a gated community. That economic reasons are a great part of these answers to a hypothetical question, is probably the case. I did not ask to which kind of gated community they would move to, but it can be assumed that they even while answering a hypothetical question would take their actual economic situation in consideration and answered according to that.

7.5. Gated – a less risky investment

The economic situation seems to be important. I wanted to know more about that. Blakely and Snyder write about economic reasons connected to gated communities, for example as investments and they study if house prices inside gated communities increase more than in non-gated communities. The residents of Condominio da Sucupira as well as Alphaville 1 were asked of the importance of their personal economic situation for continuing living there. They were asked to rate the importance of their house as a financial investment. And they were asked to answer if they consider houses inside gated communities to be an investment with less financial risk than outside. The personal economic situation was not rated as a particularly important reason for them continuing living there, neither in Condominio da Sucupira nor in Alphaville. But the residents of Condominio da Sucupira, even though some of the respondents do not own their houses, rate highly the importance of their house as an investment. In Alphaville they did not rate the importance of their house as an investment as highly as in Condominio da Sucupira, which might be explained by their better economic situation. And a great majority in both gated communities thinks that the houses inside gated communities is a less financial risk than outside.

7.6. Same way of rating different things

Last but not least, I asked about the security arrangements, even if economic reasons are important, security plays a roll. If the residents appreciate their security arrangements, it might be an indication that they like living where they do. The question is how the residents think about their security. In Condominio da Sucupira they rated their security arrangements lower than the residents in Alphaville. But they still rate them considerably high, in my opinion, considering what kind of security arrangement it is they have. But they didn't rate their security arrangement comparing it to the reality of Alphaville, they rated it in relation to their own reality.

7.7. Fear scares people

Blakely and Snyder emphasize that there are several reasons that nourishes the market. Even though they mention economic as well as social reasons, fear of violence and crime is emphasized as the primary reason. And they write: “Fear is a powerful force that can overcome all reason” (Blakely & Snyder, 1997, p 151).

Even though the discourse of fear and security is strong in São Paulo, this study shows that economic reasons might be an indication that economic matters are more important to people that want to move to gated communities for lower income groups. If more studies are conducted that come up with results that show the importance of economy rather than the importance of fear, then the status quo of fear as a main reason can be challenged.

Blakely and Snyder’s book was not about gated communities for lower income groups, it was about gated communities in general, and it is from 1997. A lot has happened since, for example the fact that a market for lower income groups has emerged in São Paulo. Condominio da Sucupira has been built and it has a gate and a wall.

Blakely and Snyder’s book has come to great use as a theoretical framework, showing what aspects to study. And my study shows that the spreading of gated communities for lower income groups are driven by the same reasons that drive the spreading of regular gated communities. Even though for example Professor Carlos doesn’t agree with the reasons, her reasons apply both for gated communities for lower income groups as well as for gated communities in general, that it’s a market strategy.

Market strategy or not. The question is for how long the gates and walls will stand.



Figure 7.1. Splinters of glass placed on top of a wall. A security measure...

Foto: Marko Huttunen, 2015

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