

GLOBAL IMAGE HEGEMONY: ISTANBUL'S GATED COMMUNITIES AS THE NEW MARKETING ICONS

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Abstract

In this paper we investigated how marketing strategies of the developing consumer society has affected housing production in Istanbul as a corollary development of globalization in Turkey. We aim to analyze marketing strategies as active agents that shape the design of emerging gated communities in Istanbul through advertising media based on the theme of 'an ideal life style,' in the form of TV commercials, newspaper ads, publicity brochures etc. We focus on the representation and dissemination of this elusive 'ideal' to the public via the advertising campaigns of these housing settlements. Therefore the cases studied in the paper concentrates on the Turkish architectural scene after 1990, when consumer culture's most significant impacts on architectural products are observed. Marketing of a new type of suburbanization in Turkey is concomitant with the rise of a new middle class having a high purchasing power and these housing projects are marketed via life style characteristics 'desired' by this class.

Keywords: Marketing; social segregation; gated communities; ideal life style; housing; Istanbul.

INTRODUCTION

Housing production in Turkey is dominated by marketing strategies and advertising jargon more than any time in the past. Offering innumerable versions of the 'ideal house' to the upper middle class clientele, it is marketing strategies that prefigure architectural production rather than references to clichés like the 'Traditional Turkish House,' which were prevalent in the 1980s. Advertising through mass media is the most common and effective way of marketing these settlements. In housing commercials, the major strategy is to make customers believe that it is not only an ideal home that one buys, but it is distinction and privileged status (Keyder, 2006).

There has been a remarkable growth of gated communities in metropolises around the world. Gated communities emerged in Istanbul by the early 1990s and since, their numbers have continued to increase. According to Genis, "embedded in the political economy and cultural imaginary of neo-liberal American urbanism of recent decades gated communities are becoming global commodities and cultural icons eagerly consumed by urban elites worldwide." (Genis, 2007) Gating, the physical form of which has a long history, can be dated back to the walled city used for military defence and was not directly utilized for social exclusion. As a concept 'gated community' itself, involves a complex tension- as 'community' presupposes shared lifestyles of social interaction, yet as a gated space it is based on exclusion.

In the last 30 years, the understanding of lifestyle has gradually shifted from the procurement of privileged social status (Weber, 1946) to that of increasing demand for cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984; Yetkin, 2004). Turkish print media illustrates a vast array of design products which encourages readers to purchase, use and display in their homes in order for them to express

good taste, appropriate style, high status and success. Advertising is the major fuel of conspicuous consumption (Veblen,1994) in which commodities are sign values in conveying social meaning and forming status hierarchies based on social distinctions (Bourdieu,1984). Thus home-related designs and products are more than objects; they signify a general social end.

What dominates these commercials and brochures is the vague representation of a type of housing as indispensable to a new life style associated with a 'new Turkey.' Such assertions of 'a new life style' are externalized under striking slogans 'unique' to each development. This 'new life style' is almost always represented by total security and isolation against urban violence, chaos, and lack of hygiene; characteristic of a metropolis in global disarray.

The analyses in this paper are mainly inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's work regarding class, lifestyle and taste. The case studies are physically and socially segregated urban settlements that target privileged high-income groups. They were selected in order to investigate how publicity products shape and define consumer choices, through a clever formulation of project names, mottoes and slogans that accompany the housing projects' imagery. The primary sources for the analyses are the projects' representational tools for marketing, which are original project catalogs, brochures, films, computer animations. We aim to understand how the design and marketing of a number of gated communities in Istanbul are affected within the context of global urban transformations—decentralization, dissolution between locality and architecture, spatial segregation, social change and its direct reflections on Turkey.

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF GATED COMMUNITIES AND THEIR MARKETING IN TURKEY

During the post-1980s early globalization, the 'new elites' of Istanbul began searching for residences away from the 'gecekondu's and the city centre, and looked for 'secure,' 'adequate,' and 'culturally clean' places. Praying on this desire, high-end housing settlements in the form of gated villa groups or tower blocks called 'residences' (a transliteration that gained popularity due to the word's 'foreignness') were constructed in the centre and the periphery. What marked this effort was an enormous marketing expense and organized marketing practices within which we question the architect's role as part of the overall dynamics of consumption.

In the 1990s, developers secured large stretches of valuable real estate at relative proximity to Istanbul eyeing the city's fast growth and aiming maximum return they opted for luxury housing within gated communities. At a convenient spatial and social distance to the city the forests that surround Istanbul emerged as a perfect location for these communities. From the very beginning of the construction effort, distance from the city was advertised as the guarantee for the new communities' safe and exclusive nature.

Housing cooperatives, TOKİ (Mass Housing Administration), municipal organizations supported by TOKİ (such as Istanbul's Kiptaş), private developers, and Emlak Bank can be listed as the five main developers for gated communities in Turkey. (Özüekren, 1996). Usually TOKİ, Emlak Bank and municipal organizations hire contractors after they bring in capital and land. There is generally no clear distinction between the private companies' roles as developer, investor or constructor.

Istanbul's new gated communities and their marketing bring forward intertwined global and local issues that center around privacy, security and exclusive life styles. Paralleling global patterns, the growing upper classes want to spatially remove themselves from an overwhelming metropolis, and be simultaneously distinguished by means of material possessions. The new projects promise salvation from the fears of the masses and the streets, and an escape from the pollution, density, political tension and noise of Istanbul. Conceived for the well-travelled and globalized elite of Istanbul, these projects are localized versions of global models.

Developers market different 'community' lives for different budgets. Therefore most of the middle and lower middle classes flee to 'site's (pronounced like the French word cité) where they can enjoy these lives in a 'clean' environment. Figure 1 presents the range of regions they prefer to live in Istanbul. According to the study 'Spatial Segregation's Process' (Perouse,2003), by the end

of 2003s, approximately 400 gated communities were established in Istanbul and approximately 60-70 thousand people lived in these communities. Perouse adds that people who live in gated communities, are usually reknowned from media, sport and finance sectors or wealthy executives of international firms (Perouse, 2003). This new trend in housing developed in the last 10 years on both sides of the Bosphorus in the peripheries of the central business district. For instance the construction of the TEM (Transit European Motorway) and the consequent development of the metro system which now reaches its neighbouring region Halkalı, increased development pressures on Bahçeşehir. Development began in Bahçeşehir in the 1990s, and at the time the development was conceived there was a total of 16,000 residential units on 4,700,000 m² of land (Ergin, M. 2008). The number of gated communities in the city was estimated to be around 650 at the end of 2005 and construction of more than 150 new gated developments started in the same year (Danış & Pérouse, 2005). There is no reliable source on the population housed in gated communities, but the demand is so high that the units are sold even before construction. These residential areas display considerable variation in terms of location, size, design and the amenities they offer. Despite their differences they are all compound units offering a favourable infrastructure and a variety of private services for a socially and economically homogeneous clientèle, mixing the characteristics of the prestige and lifestyle communities found in the US. (Blakely & Snyder, 1997). A typological classification of high-end gated communities in Istanbul can be outlined as shown in Table 1.

In contrast to Blakely and Snyder's categorization (lifestyle, prestige and security zone communities) most gated communities in Istanbul show a mixture of the three types. Resulting from the socio-economic and cultural background, security always seems to be the basis for such developments. However, with the growth of upper classes, prestige and lifestyle become more and more important, and expressed in marketing media.

Table 1. Typological classification of gated communities in Istanbul (Source: Authors).

Typology of high-end gated communities in Istanbul	
Type	Features
High-rise condominium (vertical gated communities)	Located in the city centre, particularly in prestigious areas; high-technology security; private management, smart building, consumption and service facilities.
Exclusive villa	Located along the Marmara coastline, Bosphorus and forest areas; small in size and highly exclusive in price; high-technology security coupled with small number of private security personnel; top-notch communication, sport and service facilities, limited social services; private management.
Gated town (Horizontal gated communities)	Located at the fringes of the city on rural land and near the lakes and forests; large in size with a variety of housing types; high-technology security and large private security personnel; infrastructure and sport facilities; large variety of social services; private government.

We should add that today Turkish development firms are founded and operate like the ones in Europe and the United States. The government encourages the real estate sector and works closely with international banks, mortgage institutions, architecture firms. The utilization of transnational expertise and capital is not limited to large developers. Istanbul Metropolitan City Administration works with architects of global reknown, such as Zaha Hadid, and global capital like Sheikh Maktoum of Dubai as well. The increase in marketing expense is directly linked to the increase in real estate investment by private firms, the sizes of which are now unprecedented in

scale. These firms find a good marketing strategy indispensable for housing sales, and the representation of a distinct way of life through architectural media has proven the most effective.

As a result, housing provision takes up a new scale and nature where the role of developers is not simply to build houses as empty shells to be filled, but spaces already filled with lifestyles. Aestheticization accompanies this privatization, and provides the symbolic imagery that renders these places appropriate for upper-class consumption. Both in the construction and representation of these new gated communities, discourses of community, autonomy and livability are reorganized by market forces and packed as commodities for Istanbul's elite consumption. These strategies are found essential in translating this global urban form into local tastes and the socio-cultural sensibilities of Istanbul's elites.



Figure 1: Gated Communities of Istanbul in the post-1990s by Region
(Source : Maison Francaise Emlak + Yaşam özel sayısı, Kış 2008-2008, 2007/01:148,1).

THE CASE STUDY

The gated communities selected in the paper are located on the most preferred locations for new housing in Istanbul such as; Bahçeşehir, Beylikdüzü-Büyükçekmece, Göktürk- Kemerburgaz, Halkalı-Esenyurt, Kilyos-Zekeriyaköy and Silivri on the European side, and Ataşehir, Ümraniye-Çekmeköy, Samandıra-Ömerli, Kurtköy-Tepeören, Beykoz and Riva-Şile on the Asian Side. These locations offer advantages such as proximity to main highways (access to TEM, E5, Atatürk Airport, railroads), and to office complexes of nearby large companies. The unit prices of the selected projects, range between USD 730/sqm–USD 2067/sqm. Case identification was based on the advertising frequency of the project, their high popularity rate, the value of the project, the distinction that the project seems to offer, and construction dates (years 2000-2005).

During the case study period we analysed the marketing media and interviewed the marketing branches of eight construction firms that produced the settlements. The interview consisted of both multiple choice and open-ended questions. A questionnaire was prepared in order to analyze the underlying motives/desires of the new urban way of life constructed by the marketing agencies that designed the media. It addressed the type of marketing strategies, the types of media used in their marketing processes, the key issues that factor into the development of their advertising messages, the importance of marketing research, the cost of the marketing process, how they see the status of their company within the housing sector and the characteristics of the housing development. We also analysed print media, such as publicity brochures, community bulletins, collections of advertisements published in various papers and magazines, and in some cases research reports prepared by the management.

After the data was analyzed, a number of repeating key themes emerged. These were 'Fear', 'Nostalgia', 'Nature', 'Originality, Technology and Simplicity of Design', 'Belonging', and 'Gender' which are explained below:

- **'Are You Safe?' The Marketing of 'Fear':** Fear is sine qua non to the marketing process. In overt textual references and pictures, advertisements employ specific subtexts that address fears, anxieties, concerns and demands specific to security of living in Istanbul.

- **‘State of the Art,’ The Marketing of ‘Originality, Technology and Simplicity of Design’:** Marketing media point to the assumption that new technologies make life simpler and reduce the amount of time allocated to house chores. An emphasis on information technology and imported luxury appliances for which new configurations of domestic space are needed dominate the ads.
- **‘So Close Yet So Far’: The Marketing of Isolation from the City and Closeness to Nature’:** A frequently repeated message is **‘So close yet so far,’** meaning that these settlements can in fact provide all that a city can for comfort and yet they are far away from its turmoil. This signifies an alternative city life which proposes an exclusive environment in the countryside keeping the wicked conditions of the city center at arm’s length (Figure 2).

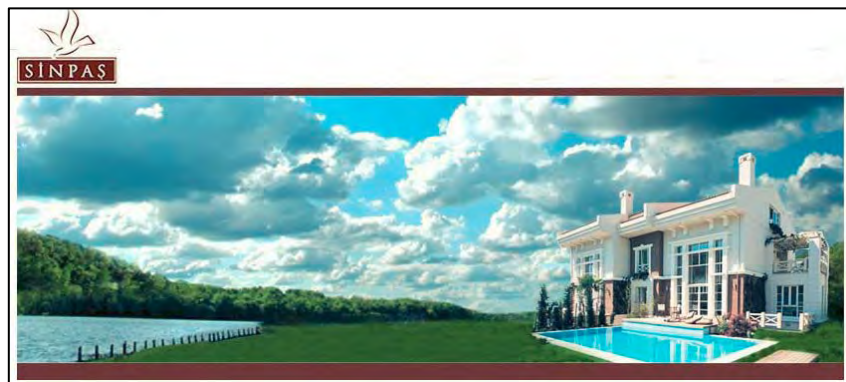


Figure 2: A picturesque photomontage of Sinpaş Marenegro Houses with a commanding the view of the – forest and the lake (Source: From the website of Sinpaş Marenegro, www.sinpasgyo.com, April,2008).

- **‘The Good Old Days: The Marketing of ‘Nostalgia’:** Another dominant marketing strategy is the use of so-called ‘traditional’ or ‘authentic’ elements of architectural culture. Marketing preys on the idea that nostalgia for a given period or periods is quite attractive for the new buyers (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Sinpaş Bosphorus City rendering that aims to recreate the Bosphorus.
(Source: Sinpaş Bosphorus City, www.sinpasgyo.com, May,2008).

- **‘Where are you from? I’m from Kemer Country’: The Marketing of ‘Belonging and Distinguished Neighbors:** Another strategy is the creation of a desire for an illusion of belonging. Marketing delineates *an ideal community* and a kind of identity, both celebrated with the settlement itself. By doing so, the consumer can be easily convinced of his/her privileged position and social status, as she or he becomes a part of this very special environment (Figure 4).



Figure 4: ‘They became neighbors in Selenium Twins’ Headline in ad emphasizing a community of elite neighbours like ex-prime ministers Tansu Çiller, Mesut Yılmaz, tycoon Rahmi Koç, and the presentation of ex-president Bill Clinton a flat free of charge as part of the firms’ marketing strategy (Source: From the website of Aşçıoğlu, www.ascioglu.com.tr, 2009).

- **Marketing of ‘Gender’:** The meaning of home is generally perceived as gender-specific and as such, constructed differently for women and men in advertising media. While women are mostly portrayed as liberated from house chores and enjoying themselves, man are usually involved in masculine activities such as playing golf or the like (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Sinpaş Avangarden ads depict a feminine view of life to Avangarden Project (Source: From the website of Sinpaş Avangarden Project, www.sinpasgyo.com, 2007).

THE ‘MARKETING OF A NEW LIFE’

In Istanbul, representations of ‘a distinct life’ are packaged and sold by marketers, and consumed by those who appropriate these signs as ‘symbolic capital’ that bestow upon their owners ‘a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honour.’(Bourdieu,1984). Such representations draw on a limited repertoire of ideas, depicting idealized residential landscapes which reflect and reinforce exclusivist middle-class housing aspirations. What mainly characterizes

such distinction is, of course, the social and spatial separation from the rest of the society. Developers create a sense of 'admiration' by associating their housing developments with the extravagant lifestyles of the elite via the advertisement industry's seductive renderings. However the so-called 'distinct life' in gated communities is usually marketed via recurrent themes, rhetoric and symbols that are hardly beyond clichés. Often seen in these housing advertisements is the spatial 'imagineering' of foreign (usually 'Western') suburban lifestyles, or Istanbul's jet set living in 'Western' mansions, and even sometimes the elites themselves supposedly live in the advertised communities (Figure 6).

It is important to acknowledge that print media is only one of a number of media through which home-related popular taste is conveyed. Since the late 1990s, for example, home and gardening television programmes have proliferated and have been an important source of ideas about house and garden design, services and products which remain to be researched. In Istanbul, at least, magazines and other print media have played an important role for a very long time, and other media (television and the internet in the present) are supplements to printed media. It is apparent that the lifestyles portrayed in these media have arisen within a global framework and the products and ideas highlighted in Istanbul could be discussed with reference to many different places with comparative ease.



OBAMA'NIN OTTOMANORS'LA NE İLGİSİ VAR?

Bir hatırlayın: çok değil, bundan 5 sene önce ABD'nin siyasi bir idare öbeği söyleyecek, kimse inanmazdı. "Görmeden inanamam" dorusu anlayacağınız.

Bir de, tıbbi Obama gibi büyük bir başarıya imza atacağımız ve çok yakın bir gelecekte "Ottomanors'u" "Yeni Bursa" yapılaşmasını bekliyoruz, ister inansın, ister inansın...

Bize inanan yüzlerce seçkin Bursa'sı aile, "Yeni Bursa"da yaşamak üzere girdikleri evlerini aldılar. Hatta 1. Etabın tamamı bitirdi bu yüzden istediklerini 2. Etabın da satışta sunduk.

Sizi de, geleceğe güvenle bakarak, gündem, gündemle birlikte gelen "Yeni Bursa Ottomanors'u" bekliyoruz. "Görmeden inanamam" diyorsanız; ne yapalım, sizde de seneye geliyoruz.

İSTE YENİ BİR İSTE 2.ETAP

Ottomanors Devrimci Ödeme Planı

Ödeme Planı	Ödeme Tutarı	Ödeme Süresi	Ödeme Tutarı	Ödeme Süresi
1. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
2. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
3. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
4. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
5. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
6. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
7. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
8. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
9. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay
10. Etap	1.000.000 TL	120 Ay	8.333 TL	120 Ay

SINPAŞ GYO Ottomanors

Figure 6: 'What's Obama got to do with Ottomanors?': An ad from Sinpaş GYO that takes its provocative edge from the unprecedented election of a black American president, claiming that the provided housing development is as unprecedented as this election. (Source: www.sinpasgyo.com, May 2009).

According to Mark Gottdiener, while millions of people shifted to a high consumption lifestyle, the advertising industry followed by shifting into high gear as the general purveyor of consumer fantasies and themes. In order to cover some of the channels through which marketing concepts entered the profession of architecture in Turkey, we have to map out the role of advertisements in the post-1990 period. In comparison to the pre-1990s the number of printed media focusing on architecture increased highly in number. This media presence reflects the marketing activity of development firms and the architectural firms' interest in more publicity via diverse channels like the internet and television. We can also note the growing use of consultancy firms by architects and development firms for marketing policy and public relations. It would not be an aberration to say that the marketing of architecture has almost equalled the marketing of other consumer products.



Figure 7: Images depicting the lifestyle marketed via Selenium Twins by Aşçıoğlu (Source: From the website of Aşçıoğlu, www.selenium.com.tr, May 2008).

As production lost its privileged status in culture, and consumption became the means through which individuals define their self-images, marketing rose to become the primary agent that defined identity formation. Advertisers take a hegemonic role in the representational process of 'home' (Figure 7). Baudrillard suggests that we purchase objects because we are swayed by the sense that advertisers are taking an interest in us, that they exude some warmth and that this personalizes the objects for sale. Gottdiener confirms Baudrillard, and adds that 'advertising has heightened the extent to which commodities of all types are fetishised and made to symbolise attributes that are craved.' (Gottdiener,2000). Products are fetishised because they are bought in the belief that they can enhance the purchasers' abilities for success, notoriety, uniqueness, identity or a sense of self, privileged social status, and personal power. (Corrigan,1997).

There is no end to the prolific creativity of marketing. Marketing firms keep on inventing new strategies to create spectacles during the launch of new developments. They invite celebrities for concerts (Figure 8) and give them free apartments, give free SUVs to homebuyers and aim to demonstrate that these celebrities do share the lifestyle that you buy with your home.



Figure 8: Sinpaş Bosphorus City was launched by Julio Iglesias's concert, and the campaign was kept alive with the concerts of Ferhat Göçer & Michael Bolton, and Gloria Estefan that followed Iglesias (Source: From the website of Sinpaş GYO, www.sinpasgyo.com, July 2009).

THE 'MARKETING OF SOCIAL SEGREGATION'?

The increasing concentration of gated communities inside or in the peripheries of urban centers is not a new phenomenon. Scholars in the fields of sociology, urban planning, and architecture as well as developers themselves have discussed the spatial characteristics, architectural similarities, and social divisions they create in several metropolises of the world. However, the relationship of marketing to these housing developments have remained largely untouched. Particularly aiming to fill this void, we analyzed the relations between marketing media and housing production;

especially focusing on how high-end housing has been marketed in 8 case studies constructed or to be constructed after the year 2000 in Istanbul. The study showed that marketing activities of construction firms have a built-in social categorization. Going back to Bourdieu and Baudrillard; we should remember that even the 'images and signs' of products may play a crucial role in the social judgement of individuals (Bourdieu, 1984).

In Turkey migration from rural to urban areas has been the main driving force behind rapid urban growth. One of the fundamental results of this transformation as it has taken place elsewhere has been social segregation and its complicated reflections on urban space. The 1980s has been a crucial turning point in the urbanization practices and process of the country. (Bilgin, 1998). The change in Istanbul's economic and urban structure has led to growing socioeconomic inequalities and concentration of wealth among high-income groups (Aksoy, 1996). This new wealth and increasing socioeconomic polarisation are among the main reasons that account for the emergence of gated communities in Istanbul (Aksoy & Robins, 1994; Aksoy, 1996). These sharp inequalities, however, do not automatically translate into a particular urban form or residential segregation. They are mediated through certain actors, institutions and processes, as well as discourses. Therefore changes in the housing habits of social groups do not only reflect a transformation in social status and cultural values, but demonstrate the results of how the real estate sector is manipulated by means of state intervention and private actors. (Harvey, 1985; Knox, 1993; Zukin, 1991).

Urban residential communities have been affected by two ongoing and interwoven trends: first, a more self-conscious, clearly defined segmenting of spatial communities in the form of gentrified and gated communities; and second, a greater use of life-style and what might be called consumer identity as the basis for the formation of a community. In both cases, capital plays the major role. Households are defined by what they buy in order to create their lifestyles; specialized spaces have then been constructed to serve these new consumer groupings.

Housing choices in Turkey today are deeply embedded in the larger socio-cultural and spatial reconfiguration of Turkish society. The new urban middle class developed specific ideas about their living environment and life-style. They aspire to have green space, better air quality and spaciousness among other physical characteristics, but also privacy and exclusivity in their new places of residence. Studies show that residential compounds have become the basis for identity and lifestyle formation, crucial in the process of social differentiation, which in turn underline and reinforce growing disparities in Turkish society. Over and above the outcome of economic restructuring and political decision making, residential differentiation in Turkey today is a social practice that marks urbanite social status and supports their new identities.

Marketing has become a major player in the construction of consumer society. The marketing activities of the construction firms of these proposed environments mobilize a repertoire of symbols, values and rhetoric of the good life. Besides, marketing styles pre-empt both the 'house's architectural features and its position in the city. Most of the time, if not found valuable enough to be incorporated into the marketing process, project architects are not even mentioned. What is more emphasized is the building complex which supports the carefully chosen marketing slogan, in addition to being socially homogenous and serving an elite reserve of customers granting a certain social status. Hygiene, comfort and technology stand in the forefront with services that range from recreational areas to supermarket, fitness halls, swimming pools, coiffeur, dry cleaning, hi-speed internet and cafés to reinforce this image.

What this study aims to contribute to the burgeoning literature on gated communities by examining the territorial effects and cultural politics of exclusion in contemporary Istanbul is the implicit role of marketing in this process. We argue that the territoriality of gated communities is not only maintained through the construction of physical barriers, but also operates at a more subtle and ideological level through the mobilization of a repertoire of symbols, values and rhetoric of the good life. Social segregation and its territorial consequences are embedded into the marketing process at the very start of housing development. Reinforced by this process Istanbul's gated

communities, serve as important repositories of group symbols, social practices and the vehicle through which privileged groups mark their territory via practices of exclusion.

Another significant issue is the role of actors that shape and strengthen residential demand across the country during Turkey's recent economic growth and rising consumer affluence. The role of TOKİ is quite controversial in this process. As a major player in the housing market and in encouraging the development of high-end housing projects TOKİ, inadvertently or not, reinforces social barriers by diverting surplus value created by high-end housing to low income housing disregarding mixed-income options altogether.

In the planning process of gated communities in Istanbul, generally samples of gated communities from the United States receive attention for both their architectural contents and administrative styles. These high-end housing settlements are given semi-Turkish, semi-English, Latin, or Italian names. 8 of the 8 firms preferred to base their designs on American precedents and 6 of them preferred names like, 'Mashattan, Pelican Hill, Uphill Court, Trend, Plus, Minimal, Trump Towers, Novus Residence, Bosphorus City, Lagun, Marenegro, Avangarden, Selenium Twins, etc. (Figure 9).

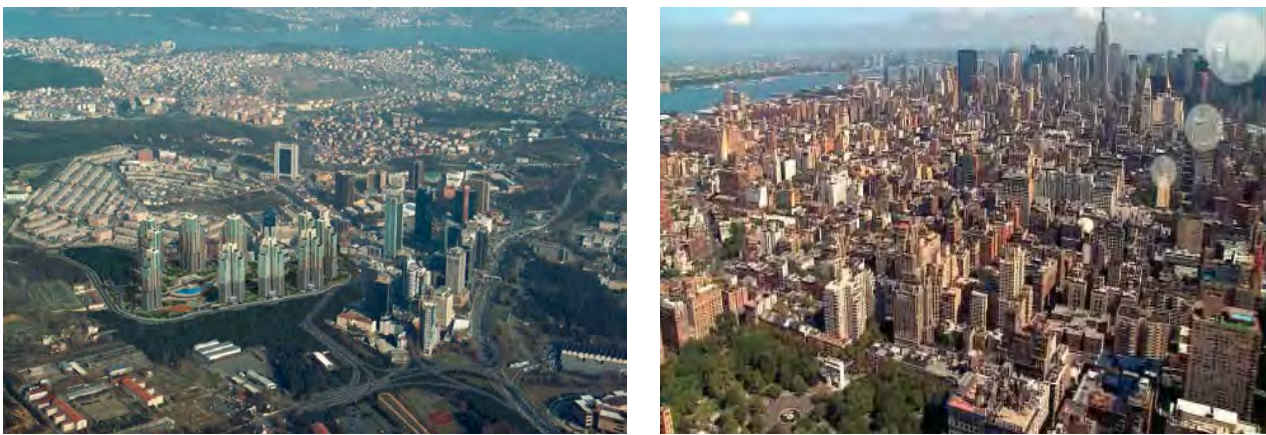


Figure 9: Mashattan, Istanbul vs Manhattan, New York
(Source: www.tasyapi.com, 2007; www.google.com, 2007).

8 of the 8 firms have released prestige and lifestyle as their primary concern in the marketing of their development projects. Therefore the outcomes of the case study, clearly illustrate that compared to the so-called chaos of the inner city, a more socially and economically homogeneous community in a safe and sterile suburban environment is the main driving force of marketing campaigns.

Home appliance brand selections play a major role in marketing. For instance, Selenium Twins are sold with imported white goods and construction material (Villeroy Boch ceramics, Gaggenau, Grohe etc). When companies target a lower grade customer profile they prefer national brands in contrast to imported goods. Such preferences also reinforce stereotypes such as the unreliability of national products and the elite's preference for higher quality available within a global selection.

Big scale construction firms prefer professional public relations and marketing agencies to collaborate with their own departments. This preference is conditioned by the amount of investment involved and the expected returns of the firm. Smaller firms use their own departments.

8 of the 8 firms have constantly expanding client databases- which they activate in order to inform prospective buyers about their campaigns. This database usually includes a number of celebrities which are invited or paid to be actively involved in marketing.

Instead of phone marketing via cellular or home phones, especially big-scaled firms prefer magazines of high circulation numbers, daily newspapers and real estate inserts. 8 of the 8 firms mentioned the same newspaper in their preferences of marketing.

Interestingly, the owner of the construction firm occupies the top of the hierarchy in developing the marketing slogan. The idea usually takes shape by the active involvement of the owner. The marketing theme almost always revolves around the generation of a distinguished 'lifestyle'.

Almost in all of these campaigns production relations are either abstracted or totally erased where the disconnection of the resident from his/her 'real' daily surroundings come to fore. For instance, it is almost always young couples with one or two children that are depicted, while aging and its related problems are absent (Figure 10).



Figure 10: Images of 'happy, ideal family with single child' from Eston
 (Source: www.eston.com.tr, 2007).

Many firms prefer to market their projects in English, which implies that a clientele of global tastes and abilities are targeted. Having a good command of English distinguishes the customer from the very moment that he/she is introduced these ads. The feeling of distinction is maintained via access to not only a foreign language, but to one of global currency.

CONCLUSION

Unanimously, the marketing campaigns aim to create the illusion of easy reach to cultural and social capital. In trying to enhance their social status middle and high-income groups incline to accumulate and consume luxury goods. In so doing, they strive to collect, borrowing Pierre Bourdieu's phrase, 'symbolic capital' which functions via the codes and symbols of social distinction (Harvey, 1987/1994; Chaney, 1996; Bourdieu, 1984). The presence of the desired symbolic capital in marketing media guarantees its availability via the production of the built environment. Marketing has enormous impact on people whose worlds are more and more dominated by visual and textual media circulated by diverse forms of information gadgetry. Not only does it address a need, it creates the feeling of a need. The association of symbolic values with social status gives the advertisement industry the power to create different desires in the individual consumer. The production of desire is the dynamo of consumer culture. Individuals search for difference in the consumption object as the advertisement industry responds to the desire of diversification through creating collective identity samples, a vicious circle (Figure 11).

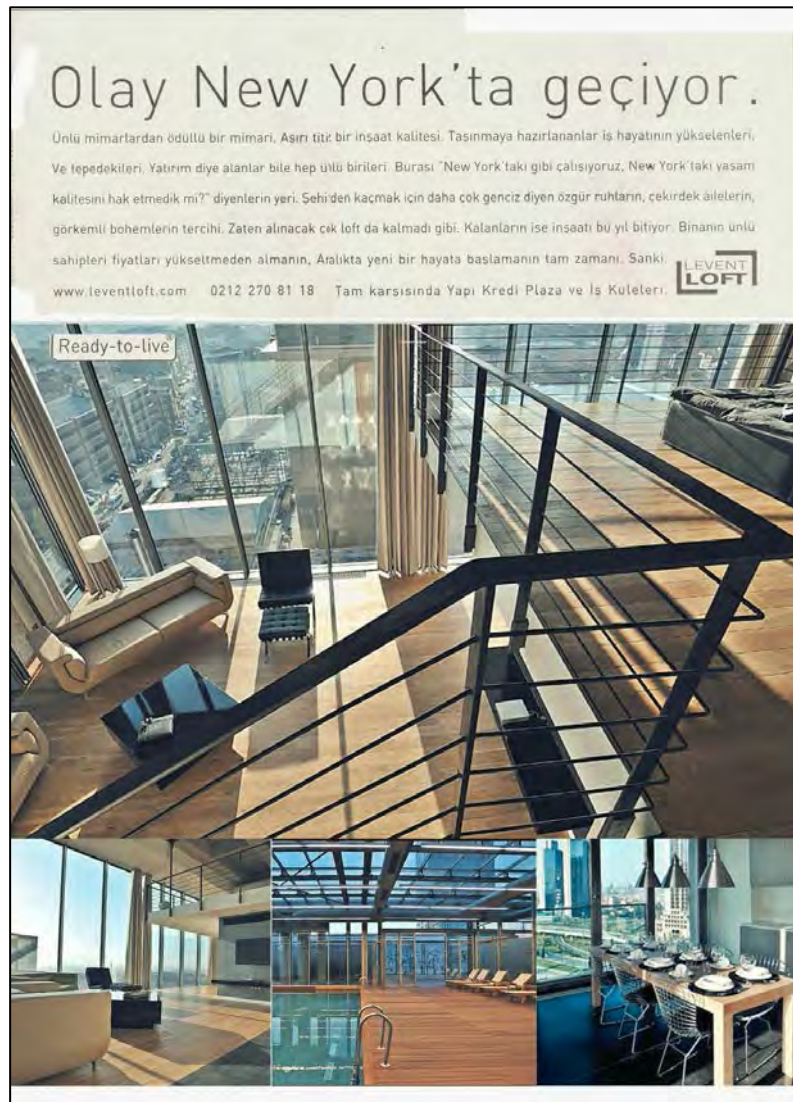


Figure 11: A newspaper ad from Levent Loft Project. *'It happens in New York'*
(Source: Hurriyet (Turkish daily), 22 November 2009).

Finally, what about architecture? According to the interviews conducted with the marketing agencies and departments of the selected firms, there is an enormous difference between the marketing budget and the architectural design budget and the fundamental conclusion is that marketing stands far above in the hierarchy in comparison to architecture.

In terms of their consumption patterns, as David Chaney mentions, the selected projects are the perfect physical forms for citizens of mass consumerism. (Chaney,1996). Living in villas, investing into decoration and luxury cars, a high level of spending in recreational and leisure activities are major upper middle class preferences for a life-style of distinction, as this is how they display their economic, cultural and social capital according to Pierre Bourdieu. Therefore marketing is the first level that this display starts. Marketing is display before possession, or the illusion that the desired display will be possible after marketing achieves its objectives.

This study can open a niche for future studies about the relationship between architectural offices and marketing firms. In order to understand the relationship that exists between these two important actors researchers can explore how the architectural design process is affected in due course. The analysis of marketing media in this context provides an interesting glimpse at the process by which similar architectural imagery are localized. Despite the claim for originality,

imagery that circulates in other markets might easily make a stop in your neighbourhood in the name of high-flying lifestyles, sometimes shamelessly copied and remarketed (Figure 12). What is of value for the marketer is the quick translation of the image into currency, as 'originality' is a simple, powerful but ephemeral catalyst in marketing. In this dazzling speed of global image circulation, originality expires the fastest, while the upper middle classes consume one 'distinct' lifestyle after another.

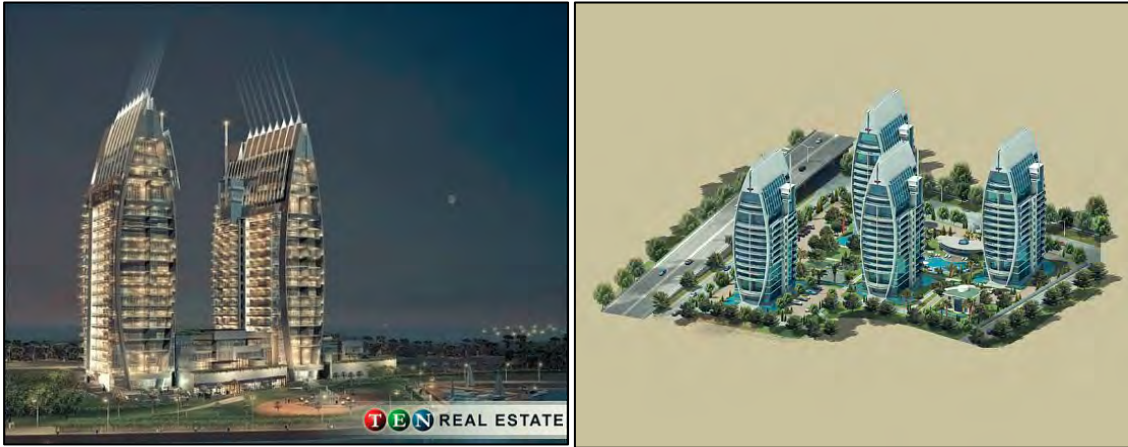


Figure 12: The picture on the left is-The Jewels from Dubai Marina, RMJM Group. The picture on the right is Royal Towers by Dumankaya depicting a life in Dragos, Istanbul (Source:From the website of Arkitera Forum, www.arkitera.com, 2009).

Marketing does not only create the pretence of a full representation of the architecture (housing units, landscaping, comfort etc.), simultaneously reflecting the classificatory process that lurks behind. The a priori classification of the possible body of clients is integral to the formulation of the built environment. It consequently affects the architectural design of the high-end housing settlements. Therefore we argue that social segregation is built into marketing, which is seemingly an indirect component and result of the economics of this process. In other words social segregation does not only emerge from the walls, gates or fences of these communities, and is not something that is post-facto and physical. The walls are already built in the beginning of the marketing process.

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