

Master's Thesis Review

Student's name and surname:

Mehmet Yiğitcan Uçar

Title of the thesis:

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY GATED COMMUNITIES IN ISTANBUL

Reviewer's name and surname:

Ing. arch. Eva Špačková, Ph.D.

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- 1. Heuristic** (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

1.1 Evaluation of the selection of literature and sources	2
1.2 Complexity of utilized sources from the perspective of state of the art systems	2

Short evaluation:

A relatively broad selection of sources on the subject, including local ones, focused on the Turkish context. From the fundamental listed sources, I am missing the reference to the work of Jane Jacobs, who has been dealing with the issue of the feelings of safety and neighbourhoods in American cities since the early 1960s.

Other recommended fundamental publications on the topic include Ellin, N. (ed.): *Architecture of Fear*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997 and Glasze, G. – Webster, Ch. – Frantz, K. (eds.): *Private Cities: Global and Local Perspectives*. London: Routledge, 2006.

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- 2. The research problem and its solution** (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

2.1 Choice of the formulation of the research issue respects the task given to the student	1
2.2 The relevance of the goal from the perspective of research area methodology	1

Short evaluation:

The selected topic is highly topical and responds to the current situation in numerous cities around the world affected by the global trends of urban transformation. The procedure from the general information gained from literature research toward the qualitative research of one selected locality is adequate and allows for the formulation of conclusions that bring new insights and findings into gated communities in Istanbul.

3. Thesis' structure evaluation (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

3.1 Is the structure of the thesis logical?	1
3.2 Does the thesis' structure work along the methodology and methods declared in the introduction?	1

Short evaluation:

The structure of the thesis corresponds to the objectives defined in the assignment.

4. Quality of analysis and interpretation (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

4.1 Analysis of sources and literature	2
4.2 Interpretation of sources and literature in their interaction	2

Short evaluation:

I consider the historical analysis of the sources from which the current type of gated communities has developed to be rather brief and limited. The role of the fortified space as a place of safety and social control has accompanied men since time immemorial. A more detailed and accurate evaluation of the forms of physical and social separation in the history of the physical and social structure of urbanized areas is one of the prerequisites for understanding current developments.

5. Quality of the text (please, evaluate by grade 1, 2, 3, 4 – in case of grading 3 and 4 the reviewer is obliged to formulate critical points)

5.1 Style and grammar	1
5.2 Use of terminology	2

Short evaluation:

The thesis is generally well arranged and understandable without any major deficiencies. The fluency of reading is at times disturbed by the number of abbreviations used. In this type of work, I lack the functional use of the system of notes. When it comes to the citation of literature, it is not always traceable, for instance what it specifically refers to (e.g. reference to the page). In terms of the utilized terminology, I have identified minor inaccuracies, e.g. mass flat construction is not the same as mass housing. In the questionnaire, a group of people listed as "unemployed" is actually a group of economically inactive people, that is not those who are unemployed, i.e. those who have lost and are looking for work/employment again.

6. Synthetic evaluation (500 signs):

The topic of the thesis is very interesting. Elaboration of the topic, including a case study – qualitative research, directly in one of the "gated communities" *Evimiz Beylikdüzü* brings new insights into the perception of this type of housing by residents who freely chose to live in such developments. Obviously, this type of housing meets some of the needs that Istanbul residents lacked in their original homes in the centre of the historical city. One idea is repeated throughout the text many times, and that is that residents have fled to the reserved and fortified locality from the noise, dirt and danger that have, in their opinion, recently increased in Istanbul to such an extent that the city itself is no longer attractive to its own residents. In contrast to such opinion by the locals, however, is the fact that the intensive urbanization of the growing city is supported by the development vision of the "Global City of Istanbul," which has attracted foreign investment, huge construction projects and the associated multiculturalism of immigration. All these consequences are directly related to intensive economic development. The presented thesis indirectly implies that fulfilling the objectives of the vision (e.g. significant investment growth and population growth) does not contribute to the quality of life of the residents in this beautiful historical city and forces them to escape into the reserved areas. The question remains as to what extent the city strategy can be modified so that the city does not stagnate, and in the long-term can sustainably foster favourable conditions for the life of its inhabitants. This experience can also become an inspiration to many other cities that also long for a "Global City Image."

7. Questions and comments which the candidate should answer and discuss during the defense:

- There are no detailed references to other housing options that residents of Istanbul can choose from. Can you briefly describe the other forms of housing that are currently available in Istanbul and characterize the differences between the ways of living in these localities compared to the "gated communities"?
- Can you describe how community administration works in the community that lives in these gated premises? Did you find out about the rules residents have to follow? Is

there something in the researched premises that could be defined as self-government of the residents, or are the rules established in advance and by entering the community the residents must accept them? How are common daily conflicts (noise, dirt, children's behaviour, pets, etc.) resolved?

Suggested grade:

Apart from some small imperfections, the master thesis by Mehmet Yiğitcan Uçar is an interesting contribution to the study of gated communities and their impact towards to its residents.

I recommend it for the defense with the grade **"excellent" (1)** and I hope that Mehmet will continue his research on this topic.

I wish Mehmet success and happiness in both professional and personal life.

Date: 5. 6. 2017

Signature:

