Community and neighborhood relations in Ankara: An urban–suburban contrast

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on community and neighbourhood relations of two high-income districts in Ankara. A suburban and a more traditional urban community are contrasted via a field survey that focuses on attitudes toward certain community values and toward other citizens. The findings indicate that residents in both settings express similar values towards community and neighbourhood relations. Their attitude toward other districts of the city is also similar, indicating an increasing and widespread exclusion of the poor. The varied implications of this investigation, including the nature of the gated community, are explored.

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Introduction

In Turkish cities, as elsewhere, the traditional urban neighbourhood is increasingly obsolete. Residents who can afford to do so are attracted by walled and gated developments built to echo international design standards. These offer the promise of a different form of governance and a stronger investment. Critics have asserted that these changes, coupled with a loosening of traditional patterns of employment and social relations—especially related to gender—have contributed to the loss of social support networks and have, in consequence, lowered residents' sense of community (e.g. Brown and Cropper, 2001; Glavac et al., 2009). Accordingly, this study provides an exploratory analysis of whether residents in lower-density suburbs do engage in activities that offer social support between neighbours. The study was undertaken in Ankara, which offers a setting in which all the complexities of Turkish urban development are on display.

A good deal of research in Western urban societies has focused on the physical structure of the suburbs—manifested most visibly by gated communities—and contrasted them with more traditional neighbourhoods. Yet for all of the commentary that has been produced on this relatively new dimension of socio-spatial segregation, relatively little work has been undertaken on the social implications of gated communities (e.g. Wilson-Doenges, 2000), and assessed how relations between residents are manifested. The same is true in Turkey and the results presented here are innovative in that regard. This is especially the case in the context of the complex social changes, many associated with globalization, that press against the fabric of civil society in Turkey. The latter is a complex nation, that demonstrates many of the trappings of a highly urbanized society, yet which contains clearer connections to an urban past that might be found in many European countries or the US. In this context, the country represents a useful opportunity to clearly contrast the communal values that are displayed in a traditional urban core and a nascent suburban setting.

Social and community relations in the Turkish city

To study communal values in Turkey, one should first look at the meaning that relations with relatives and neighbours have for Turkish citizens. This is no simple task in a heterogeneous society with varied cultural and religious influences, but there are basic aspects that can be identified. Despite income differences among citizens, a survey on happiness undertaken in 2004 at the national level (TURKSTAT, 2007) indicated that many people considered themselves to be happy: 54.6% of males and 61.5% of females. Only 13.4% of males and 10.9% of females reported that they were unhappy. Apparently, the degree of happiness is directly related to income level, with more unhappy people in the lower income levels. More interestingly, money and power did not have an important role in the definition of happiness; only 9.3% of males and 5.1% of females saw these aspects as sources of happiness. Most people were satisfied with their marriages; with their relations in the workplace; and with their families, relatives, friends, and neighbours; the percentages varied from 80% to 95%.

Regardless of the reliability of the figures, they indicate the importance given to social and family relations among Turkish people, despite the claims that traditional relations have been disappearing in modern urban life. Rose and Ozcan (2007) support this finding, showing that Turkish people receive the highest satisfaction from family life, in contrast to a lower satisfaction from their standard of living, education, and health. Another study of Ankara's residential areas, with varying demographic and socio-economic characteristics, indicated that relations with family, relatives, and

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neighbours were still important for most urban inhabitants. Interestingly, this research also showed that relations with neighbours were lasting; even when the neighbours moved to another district, they were still considered "neighbours". People complained more about administrative and management problems than neighbourhood relations, and were less willing to participate in collective action to solve those problems in all types of settlements (Ayata and Gunes-Ayata, 1996). Although people complained about their neighbours on issues like noise and environmental carelessness, they do not see these as reasons to move (Pulat, 1995).

When people choose a dwelling, economic factors such as price and rent are dominant, followed by the physical qualities of the dwelling and the neighbourhood. However, satisfaction with the dwelling was found to be related to the quality of the neighbours, and it was defined by harmony rather than by the frequency of interaction. Low-income groups have more interactions with their neighbours in general (Imamoglu, 1995). These findings are consistent with those of Ayata and Gunes-Ayata (1996), indicating a higher amount of interaction with relatives and neighbours among low-income and less educated groups. In this respect, neighbourhood relations in squatter settlements (gecekondu) are closer to traditional community values (see also Ayata (1989), for different types of squatters and inhabitants of apartment blocks). It seems that these relations serve as a community support for those with limited access to urban life and services. However, there is also evidence that the search for privacy could be a reason to move outside the neighbourhood, which is an indication of breaking from traditional community values. This is more valid for Turkish women who do not work outside the home, and who might be under the strict surveillance of neighbours (Mills, 2007). Mills' research on a traditional neighbourhood in Istanbul also suggests that close neighbourhood relations exist only between long-time inhabitants, excluding the newcomers.

It seems that neighbourhood relations have been changing in metropolitan areas (Mills, 2007; Ayata and Gunes-Ayata, 1996). Squatter settlements provide strong relations among their inhabitants through more traditional spaces, such as coffeehouses, mosques, and schools. New urban areas require different relations and spaces. Ayata and Gunes-Ayata (1996) also claim that the lack of such spaces in new urban areas is a restricting factor in forming community relations. In Turkey, there is a reluctance to participate in formal community organizations, mostly stemming from historical reasons; the state powers have always discouraged citizen organizations by imposing strict surveillance. Analysis of this political oppression goes beyond the scope of this research, but such oppression definitely has much to do with the lack of voluntary participation in communal affairs. Similar to the Chinese case (see Pow (2008), for details), Turkish people seek privacy and anonymity 'behind the gates', away from the strict control of their neighbours, and, to a lesser degree, of the state powers. Thus, modern urban inhabitants live in harmony with people of similar social class, but they are not willing to take part in community organizations.

In the following section, these aspects are analyzed in the context of two high-income communities in Ankara. One is gated and suburban, the other is traditional and urban, and they are contrasted in an effort to explore their differences and similarities in terms of communal values. The introduction of gated enclaves into the discussion broadens the complexity of the analysis as they are, to say the least, controversial—as for examples, manifestations of global design standards. Yet a review of the literature reveals that research comparing social attitudes of the residents of gated enclaves with traditional neighbourhoods displaying the same social class is scarce, if not lacking. Research exists on the mutual attitudes of rich residents of gated enclaves and their poorer neighbours (Lemanski, 2006; Salcedo and Torres, 2004), on how gated communities are perceived by other citizens (Manzi and Smith-Bowers, 2005), on the comparison of differ-

ent cultures (see for instance, Caldeira (1996), comparing Sao Paulo and Los Angeles in developing fortified enclaves), and on gated communities with traditional neighbourhoods (Pow, 2007; Wilson-Doenges, 2000). However, no studies can be found that compare gated and traditional communities with similar incomes and class positions with respect to their tolerance for the residents of poorer settlements. This comparison might shed light on the much-debated influence of gated enclaves on broader issues of social and spatial segregation.

Field survey

A field survey was carried out in two different settings within Ankara, one urban, the other suburban. The former consists of several high-income neighbourhoods in Cankaya, whereas the suburban setting is the Bilkent Settlement, a recently developed and popular gated community targeting high-income people. It was built in different phases, and construction is ongoing (see Fig. 1 for the location of these two districts).

The Bilkent Housing Settlement is located approximately 15 km from the city center. It was named after the first private university of Turkey and was developed by the same investors. Construction of the first phase began in 1993 on land that was almost empty, and the fourth phase continues. Currently, there are three different settlements within the project, with a variety of dwellings.[1] From the beginning, demand has been high, and all types of houses were sold at higher prices than similar dwellings in other areas of the city. All the houses in the fourth phase were sold in a price range between US $350,000 and $1 million, before initial construction was completed (Sozeri, 2008). This is partly because of the lifestyle that is provided—a shopping mall, an international sports center, a university, high schools, elementary schools, and kindergartens in the neighbourhood. A group of university students from rich families is among the inhabitants. There is no mix of social groups behind the gates, yet the nearby facilities attract a wide range of citizens. For this reason, there is tension between the users of the semi-public facilities (such as the mall, sports center, and schools) and the inhabitants of the gated community (Sozeri, 2005). "One of the earlier slogans of the advertisements for the neighbourhood was 'let the city miss you'. However, even the developers did not foresee the eagerness of people for visiting such consumption sites and entertainment spaces, and the traffic and transportation problems they caused" (Erkip, 2003). There is a severe parking problem all around the neighbourhood (Sozeri, 2008).

To make a meaningful comparison, traditional dwellings in the urban core of the district of Cankaya were selected to represent comparable high-income residents. This is one of the oldest districts of Ankara, with a spatial mix of high- and middle-income neighbourhoods and squatter settlements. All state offices and foreign embassies are located within the boundaries of this district, which historically represents both the elite and the modern identity of the Turkish Republic. In certain areas of this district, prices and rents of dwellings compete with those in the Bilkent settlement. Although few in number, there are some luxurious dwellings here, as early examples of the extravagant urban lifestyle. Many such dwellings were torn down to build apartment blocks; but there are still dwellings in good condition, although some are quite old. Within the last two decades, this district has also attracted high-end business offices, a process that is supported by newly emerging shopping malls, hotels, hospitals, and other commercial

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[1] In Bilkent I, there are 912 housing units in six types of dwellings, which cover over an area of 125,000 sq m, whereas Bilkent II with 1082 housing units in nine different dwelling types covers 170,115 sq m. Bilkent III has 865 units in six types. The size of flats varies between 74 and 303 sq m, whereas the size of single detached houses ranges from 252 to 355 sq m (Akcal, 2004).
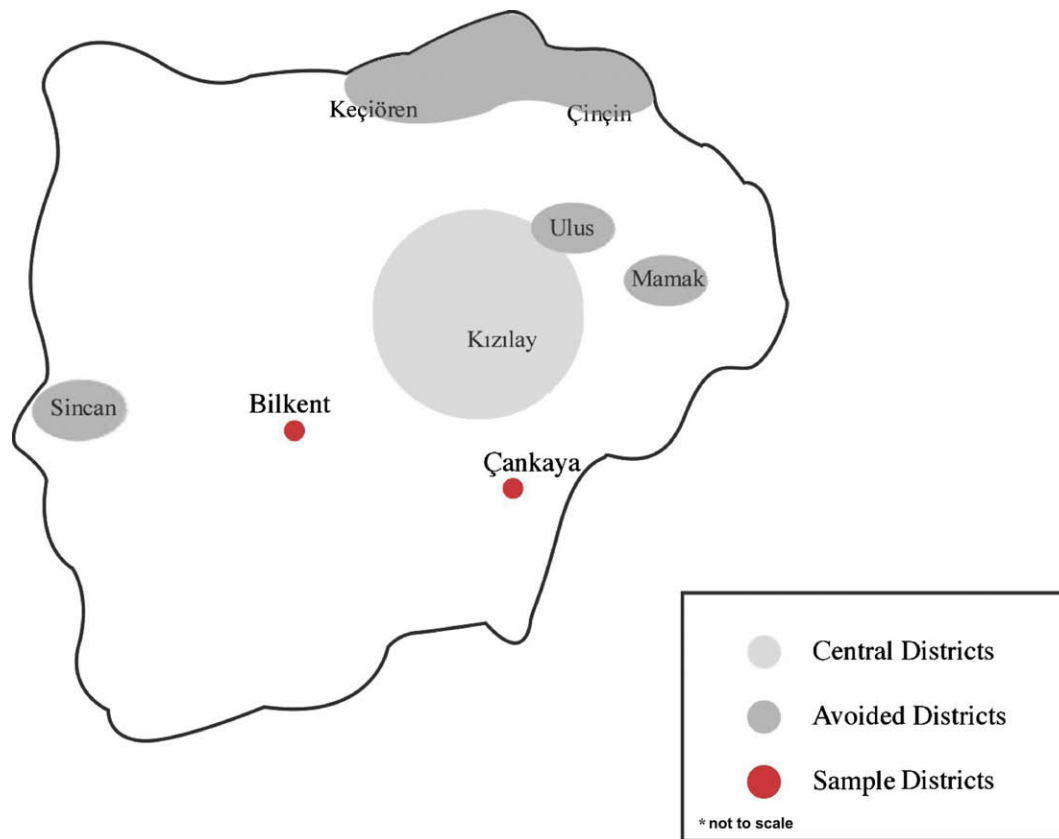
Fig. 1. The sample and the districts to be avoided in Ankara.

developments. Despite its heterogeneous character, this district is still popular among high-income citizens, business people, and foreign visitors to the city. In this district, like all the others in the city, all services are provided publicly by local and central governments; despite being a high-income neighbourhood, Cankaya also suffers from the low quality of such services.

Relying on the information given by real estate agents in the Cankaya district, the areas that attract the highest income citizens in the city were selected for the field survey. This covered nine streets in this district. Thus, the income levels of the two settlements were expected to be similar, as the prices and rents of dwellings were both high and comparable. Prices and rents were checked with the information given by real estate agencies (Sahin, 2005; Yalcin, 2005).[2] Before the interviews, building characteristics were recorded: especially those that help to control unwanted intrusion, such as locked entrance doors, surveillance cameras, audio control devices, and private guards. Random sampling of streets and apartments was supported with snowball sampling, because some people were reluctant to invite interviewers into their homes without any reference.[3] The interviews,

lasting about an hour, were done by appointment, and all responses were written up by the interviewer during and after the interview; these were done without a tape recorder, in order not to intimidate the interviewee. Interviews were held with 35 people from Cankaya and 30 from Bilkent, as well as real estate agents, managers at Bilkent, and the municipal representatives (*muhtar*).[4] Only apartment blocks were sampled to prevent possible bias related to the type of dwelling. The socio-demographic characteristics of the sample group are given in Table 1.

Findings

Urban residents in slightly older dwellings showed similar tendencies in many respects to those living in newly developed suburban settings. Chi-square analysis was applied to see the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and values about home and home ownership, neighbourhood, and community; segregation tendencies; and relations to other neighbourhoods in the city. T-tests were applied to observe the differences between these two settings in terms of attachment and community values. Data from all 65 interviews were evaluated by chi-square analysis to study the relationship between socio-demographic factors and the attachment to home and neighbourhood, as suggested by Pan Ke Shon (2007). Several possible relationships were measured in this context: age versus being satisfied with the dwelling and neighbourhood, sex versus security

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[2] The respondents themselves also stated that they belong to middle- and high-income groups. Interestingly, the proportion of residents perceiving themselves as high-income was higher in Cankaya with 69%, compared to 47% in Bilkent.

[3] After selecting the streets and apartments in both settlements, the first adult responding from each dwelling was interviewed by random selection. No more than one participant was selected from any apartment block. The number of people who did not open the door at all was not recorded, as it was not possible to know the reason – not being at home or not responding. The rate of opening the door to a stranger is low in both settlements; we approached 93 dwellings in Cankaya and 68 in Bilkent to achieve the 35, and 30 respondents respectively, thus the response rate was 38% in Cankaya and 44% in Bilkent. The suggestions of the interviewed persons were used to reach other people within the sample group for four cases in Cankaya (14%) and for three in Bilkent (10%). All but one in Bilkent accepted to participate in the snowball group. We sought assurance that all the participants – selected randomly or by snowballing – lived in the target areas in both settlements. To prevent bias in snowballing, neighbours from the same and adjacent buildings were not covered.

[4] In Turkey, urban infrastructure services and maintenance are the responsibility of local governments, and the private supply of such services is not common. The local or central government traditionally oversees the provision of roads, water, and electricity; the maintenance of infrastructure; and garbage collection. In each neighbourhood, a representative of the local government—called a "muhtar"—negotiates between the community and the local authorities responsible for service provision.

Table 1
Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample group.

	Bilkent ('suburb')		Cankaya ('core')	
	#	%	#	%
Sex				
Female	19	63	22	63
Male	11	37	13	37
Age				
18–30	10	33	11	31
31–45	5	17	9	26
46–60	11	37	6	17
61+	4	13	9	26
Income				
Middle	16	53	11	31
High	14	47	24	69
Homeownership				
Owner	21	70	29	83
Tenant	9	30	6	17
Total	30	100	35	100

and relations with neighbours, duration of living in the same dwelling versus satisfaction with the dwelling and the neighbourhood, duration versus attachment, duration versus neighbourhood relations, and ownership versus satisfaction and attachment. However, no significant relationships were found to indicate the role of age, sex differences, ownership, and duration of residence on the values stated above.

Second, *t*-tests were run to determine any differences between the two settings (see Table 2 for the comparison of frequencies of prominent responses). The most important difference appeared in residents' perceptions of the security of their home and neighbourhood. In both cases, the Bilkent Settlement was perceived as more secure ($t = -2.626$, $df = 63$, $p = .011$ for dwelling security, and $t = -4.145$, $df = 63$, $p = .000$ for neighbourhood security). Security was the only issue for which Bilkent appeared to be superior. All 30 of the Bilkent group, and 22 in Cankaya found their neighbourhood to be more secure than other parts of the city; the numbers were 27 and 22 for the security of dwellings in Bilkent and Cankaya, respectively. Although most of the dwellings in the city had surveillance devices (24 had audio only, and seven had audio–visual control with locked entrances, whereas only four had unlocked doors although two of these had an audio system), they believed that a gated community was a more secure choice for living. Twenty-four of the Bilkent dwellings had locked doors with audio devices, and six had audio–visual devices. However, an earlier study indicated that only about 10% of residents mentioned security as the reason for moving to Bilkent (Akcal, 2004). Genis (2007) also claims that the search for security is not a prime motive for choosing to live in a gated community in Turkey. It is not possible to obtain data on crime rates in particular districts, yet the overall rates do not indicate an urge to move away from the city for that reason.

The other significant difference was in the perception of the economic value of their dwelling, which was expected to increase over the years ($t = -2.029$, $df = 63$, $p = .047$). Bilkent inhabitants seemed to be more aware of the value of their dwellings compared to Cankaya dwellers (27 of 30 inhabitants in Bilkent and 20 of 35 in Cankaya believed that the value of their dwelling had increased; 11 of 35 in Cankaya did not know the value, whereas only three of 30 in Bilkent did not know). Inhabitants of both settlements claimed that economic value was not important in their decision to stay in the dwelling. Conversely, the price and size of the dwelling appeared to be the main reasons for choosing particular dwellings in Bilkent (Akcal, 2004). Our interviews with real estate agents and *muhtar*s in both settlements indicate that people are aware of, and keep close track of, the value of their dwellings.

There was no difference in the evaluation of residents' dwellings in terms of appropriateness to their lifestyle. Furthermore, no significant difference was found in the perception of the development and physical quality of the neighbourhood, of relations to neighbours, of community organization, of the social level of neighbours, of other people as threats, or of places in the city that they did not like to visit and would never live.[5] These findings seem to match with those of Akcal (2004), suggesting that only one third of Bilkent's residents believed that their social environment changed after moving there.

The lack of significant difference in the values of the two settlements indicates the dominant role of income level on Turkish urban life and attitudes toward neighbours and other citizens. In both settlements, people were happy with their dwellings (22 in Bilkent and 28 in Cankaya) and their neighbourhood (28 in Bilkent and 31 in Cankaya), and they did not wish to move. The Cankaya results supported the findings of an earlier study in that respect (Ayata and Gunes-Ayata, 1996). Inhabitants of both settlements found their neighbourhood to be in accordance with their lifestyle and expectations (see the Appendix A for examples of residents' comments). Both groups believed that they were at a similar social level to their neighbours (26 in Bilkent and 28 in Cankaya), and 20 people in Bilkent and 23 in Cankaya believed that their neighbours were positively different from other citizens elsewhere in Ankara.

For both communities, people's expectations of their neighbours are similar and quite limited. The relationships are minimal and stable over the years. Half of the respondents in both settlements claimed that they visited their neighbours; the other half only greeted them. Similarly, half claimed that their relations with neighbours had increased over the years; the other half evaluated their relations as 'stable'. They asked for help from neighbours when needed, in both settings. However, most did not plan to get to know new people moving to the neighbourhood (20 in Bilkent and 22 in Cankaya) and did not have a meeting place and community organization. Twelve in Bilkent and seven in Cankaya mentioned a meeting place and activities, and only three in Bilkent and two in Cankaya mentioned a community organization. It is interesting that some people in Cankaya gave the names of private cafes as meeting places, whereas in Bilkent, they named the administrative office, although they did not use it to meet with neighbours. As stated earlier, Turkish people are not eager to participate in formal organizations; it seems that for this particular subset, there is only a weak need for informal relations.

Both groups had complaints about their dwelling (19 from Bilkent and 24 from Cankaya), reporting that their homes do not live

Table 2
Perception of prominent issues in two settlements.

	Bilkent		Cankaya	
	#	%	#	%
Neighbourhood security	30	100	22	63
Increase in the property value	27	90	20	57
Neighbourhood homogeneity	26	87	28	80
Neighbourhood satisfaction	28	93	31	89
Dwelling satisfaction	22	73	28	80
Positive social image of neighbours	20	67	23	66
Exclusive tendencies	23	77	29	83
Community organization	3	10	2	6
Avoided parts of the city	25	83	29	83
Total	30	100.0	35	100.0

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[5] Although the field survey was not planned with an ethnographic focus, some narratives by the respondents are given in the Appendix A to enhance our observations and analyses.

up to their expectations. They felt the same way about the neighbourhood (24 from Bilkent and 30 from Cankaya had complaints). It is particularly interesting that as a newly built, residential environment, Bilkent does not completely satisfy its residents. Major complaints were similar in both settlements—traffic, noise, insufficient parking and crowding—although they seemed to be more specific to Bilkent as a suburban and gated settlement. In contrast, Cankaya inhabitants complained more about street maintenance, cleanliness, and lack of greenery. Yet despite these complaints, attachment to home and neighbourhood had increased over the years in both neighbourhoods; the higher number of positive responses in Cankaya was probably due to this settlement being older than Bilkent.

Both groups had a desire for segregation and to exclude others from their neighbourhoods, although this exclusionary tendency was no higher in Bilkent, as might have been expected. Twenty-three of the Bilkent and 29 of the Cankaya inhabitants believed that there should be no places in their neighbourhood open to everybody. However, more than half in both settlements approved of their neighbourhood being used by outsiders (18 and 19 for Bilkent and Cankaya, respectively). The interesting point was that only a few of the city dwellers found the idea of excluding people undemocratic and unfair; none of the Bilkent inhabitants thought in that way. Their only concern seemed to be functionality, as some of the intruders were service people and were considered necessary. The groups that they tolerated in their neighbourhoods were visitors, friends, street vendors, and service providers (such as repair and maintenance workers, postmen, and domestic helpers). These groups were also tolerated more in the city. However, the city dwellers believed that they could only control their apartments and exclude other people from the building, not from the neighbourhood itself. Interestingly, both groups defined commercial firms as unwanted intruders; most people mentioned offices in Cankaya and the shopping mall in Bilkent as places that invited people from outside the settlement.

The residents' relation to other districts is also quite similar. Two-thirds of the Bilkent and half of the Cankaya inhabitants stated that there were places that they avoided, and most (25 of the Bilkent and 29 of the Cankaya inhabitants) stated that there were places in which they would never live. They mentioned the same districts—mostly low-income—among the places that they had never visited and would never live (Fig. 1 indicates these districts). However, some urban dwellers also mentioned middle- and high-income suburbs because of their distance from the center. None rated Bilkent negatively, however, as it seemed to be the most recent and prestigious settlement. Some Cankaya respondents were even willing to live in Bilkent; whereas a few of the Bilkent inhabitants rated Cankaya negatively, although it was the most prestigious central district. These findings seem to indicate that the tendency to avoid different social groups that began in the 1990s has continued; it perhaps reflects a search for identity for high-income and educated groups (Ayata and Gunes-Ayata, 1996). The districts to be avoided are the same as before; most of these districts overlap with those that have never been visited. This may indicate that societal values make some districts notorious for the same social groups, through the years. This may be a threatening development supporting social segregation independent of personal experience with certain areas of the city, and one that goes beyond spatial boundaries.

Discussion

The findings of this study are that people living in a traditional neighbourhood in the urban core, and in a gated community in a suburban setting, share similar values on community and neighbourhood relations. More explicitly, we can see that both groups have relatively distant relationships with neighbours, and have no active involvement in community issues. Both groups tend to exclude other citizens from the residential space, primarily on the basis of income and social status.

Living with similar people is increasingly important for both groups. The only difference between them is the perceived security of the gated community. This is compatible with previous research (Blakely and Synder, 1997a,b; Kirby et al., 2005; Low, 2003). Despite the lack of sufficient data on crime rates for these particular settlements, unofficial data on the increasing number of small crimes—robbery in particular—in the gated community may indicate a false sense of security (Sozeri, 2005; Perouse and Danis, 2005). With gates and guards but no real control, these types of settlements might even provoke robbery. This is just the opposite of the "displacement of crime" in other areas of the city (Atkinson and Blandy, 2005), as these areas attract crime to themselves. The Turkish case does not seem to produce negative effects on outsiders for the time being, but it may sharpen social differences in the long-run, considering the general and increasing tendency for social polarization and segregation. However, this aspect needs to be documented with further evidence on the security issues in gated communities.

House ownership has always been a profitable investment in Turkey. After a downturn from 2001 to 2004, housing had regained its prestigious investment position in the country by 2005–2007 when this research was conducted. Economic indicators show that people buy dwellings according to their potential as commodities; some buy second and even third homes if they can afford them. Prominent construction companies try to attract buyers using the expected future values of the dwellings and settlements that they build, as the following advertisement indicates:

> Maybe your previous well-protected house or site was making you feel secure and peaceful; however, what you feel in My World is your self-confidence rather than a feeling of external security. Looking at My World, you will see the investment you made for the present and the future of yourself, your family and your beloved (Agaoglu Web site, 2006, **bold mine**).

The new lifestyle offered by a gated community was the main selling point for only a brief period, starting in the 1980s. Now, investment potential has once again become the dominant motive.

Affluent residents find gated communities to be a good investment as services and facilities provided in the vicinity contribute to the market prices of dwellings in such settings (Onder, 2000). This is important historically because of inflation. It seems that gated communities are also preferred by those with high disposable incomes for speculative reasons, as the price and rent of dwellings are twice the values in the city. The rate of increase in the price for such dwellings supports this claim (Yilmaz, 2006). The main advantage of gated communities is that they are built to high standards, with modern facilities; but given the lack of legal and organizational support, it remains to be seen how long they will provide good maintenance. Mostly, they rely upon their rich and powerful inhabitants, who use their political influence on local authorities to bend the rules and to resist state power, in cases of conflict.

Inhabitants of gated communities pay high fees to maintain good services in their settlements, yet they expect these services from local governments. In this respect, one may even claim that they create positive externalities, as services that they pay for may be distributed to poorer areas of the city because local author-

ities are reluctant to serve them.[6] Living in a modern environment with compatible people seems to be the main reason for preferring life in a gated community. Thus, the desire of urban Turkish citizens to be "modern" makes gated communities an appropriate goal for those who can afford them.

The existing situation indicates that the current legal structure in Turkey does not provide the tools to organize a different community life in gated communities. This situation makes the gated community an unplanned market solution for powerful groups (see also de Duren (2006), for the similarities between planning solutions for gated communities in Argentina and Turkey).

The act of avoiding other residential spaces by both types of communities (urban and suburban) builds upon a long tradition of spatial segregation. High-income people living in the city center and in the gated community tend to avoid the same areas of Ankara, all of which are low-income districts. Spatial segregation in the Turkish city has long been present with invisible boundaries; gates and guards simply make them more visible. Thanks to economic restructuring, transforming the social structure created gated communities as a new form of spatial segregation for high-income people. Segregation within the gated community on the basis of cultural capital is another interesting issue that needs to be addressed further.

Conclusion

In the first instance, this paper is designed to indicate the extent to which Turkey may be considered a meaningful and even a useful point of comparison with urban studies undertaken in other evolving economies and of contrast with other urban societies. As we have attempted to show here, the country, with its complex social development, its powerful state apparatus and strong class antagonisms, constitutes a vibrant setting in which to understand the broad contours of urban development.

Second, in its focus upon social relations in the traditional urban core and an evolving suburbia, the paper is a contribution to the existing literature that contrasts these two types of communities, and supports the findings of Salcedo and Torres (2004) and Talen (1999), who provide evidence on the complex nature of community relations. Indeed, the Turkish case is particularly interesting, as its familiar constructs—urban, suburban—mask the complexities that are built into urban politics and the housing market. With a legal basis to land title and squatter settlements that dominate in some suburban areas, nothing can be taken for granted in terms of social and economic relations, as is sometimes the case in North American and European studies. To take a single example, the search for privacy 'behind the gates' can be entirely different in motivation than is discussed in other settings (e.g. Low, 2003). The retreat can be particularly marked with regard to state control, in the case of avoiding military service or possessing relations to organized crime (Sozeri, 2008). This is a finding similar to the Chinese case (Pow, 2008), indicating a much different trend from the gated community literature in Western societies, albeit with perhaps superficially similar outcomes.

The third aspect of the paper worth commentary is in relation to design features and especially the evolution of gated enclaves. In line with a number of other empirical investigations, this study has approached 'gating' sceptically, and has questioned the extent to which its physical design features really constitute any kind of significant break with previous urban traditions of providing housing in a segregated society. This is not to suggest that a lack of sig-

nificant differences between the behaviors of the affluent who live in urban and suburban settings means that enclaves are unimportant—but it does suggest that the negative evaluations of many commentators are based upon factors unconnected to empirical research. Indeed, all these issues necessitate a thorough analysis of gated communities in Turkey, with more empirical substance. The impact of gated communities on community and neighbourhood values and segregation should be better understood so that these social and cultural aspects can be incorporated into planning and policy.

Appendix A

Sample interviews from the two communities[7]

A.1. Bilkent residents

- A 44-year-old female estate manager states that she likes the location and facilities as her "house is close to the sports center and shopping. However, people living here are high-income, snobbish and distant. I only greet some, not all because they make me anxious. I avoid Sincan and Ulus; these districts are crowded, dirty and dangerous".
- A 54-year-old male civil engineer feels happy with the house and facilities stating that he can find "everything in the neighbourhood, sports center, shopping mall and movie theaters". He expresses his feelings about neighbours as follows: "I do not like close relations with neighbours, we only greet each other. We are all high-income people and prefer to be outside the city for this reason—I mean not to be too close to other people. However, this does not mean that I avoid any district in the city, I just do not like it".
- A 23-year-old female student believes that Bilkent is an elite social environment with all the necessary facilities. "My lifestyle matches with my neighbours, I chat with them when I meet them in public areas. I never go to Sincan, Mamak and Kecioren because I do not feel safe in those places. They are crowded, mixed and dangerous".
- A 66-year-old housewife complains about the lack of neighbourhood relations stating that "everybody is working nowadays, it used to be different in the past. I only greet my neighbours when I meet them in the apartment building. I do not know many people but I can tell that Bilkent is different. People look and dress better than in other parts of the city. I have never been to Sincan and I do not want to go either. I have just seen Mamak and feel alienated though it looks nice, I cannot live there".

A.2. Cankaya residents

- A 24-year-old male university graduate has been living in the same apartment flat in the city since he was born and is happy with the building and its location. However, he has complaints about newcomers because "due to increasing number of work places in the district, new people began to come more fre-

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[6] The fees are usually paid for the services such as security, landscaping and upkeep of public and green areas. Residents of gated communities complain about the lack or insufficiency of public services as the local government is reluctant to serve them (Sozeri, 2008).

[7] Translated from Turkish by the author.

quently, I feel less attached to my neighbourhood although I like people living in this area because of their cultural level which is higher than other people in the city. I think that social facilities and commercial places like pubs, bars, patisseries should be open to everybody, I mean to people from outside our neighbourhood. I can only live in Bilkent other than this place; I believe that it is more secure. I have never gone to Kecioren, Mamak, Cincin because everybody says that these are dangerous places".

- A 42-year-old female teacher states that she is happy with the location of her house, but "after Akparti (the party which currently governs) the number of women with headscarves increased, this neighbourhood used to be more elite earlier. However, neighbours are generally of the same class and similar to other elite parts of the city. Ulus and Mamak should be avoided because they are less secure and low level".

- A 71-year-old retired female has neighbourhood relations with a few people as she has been living in the neighbourhood for more than 40 years. However, she says, "I only greet new people because they are much younger. People in this area are well educated and have proper manners. I avoid Ulus, it is mixed and low quality".

- A 49-year-old retired female notes that her "neighbours are of high culture and income. Cincin, Ulus and other squatter districts are dangerous. Demetevler is also known as a bad place to live. However, green areas in every district should be open to everybody, they are public and it is a citizen right to use such places".

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