

Title	Looking backward: Lisbon, 2007 – California, 1970's – Manchester, 1837 – London, 1726; or a cultural historical analysis of gated communities
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Looking backward: Lisbon, 2007 – California, 1970's – Manchester, 1837 – London, 1726; or a cultural historical analysis of gated communities

Abstract:

In the first part of this paper we will discuss the origins of gated communities. We will address both the topic of the historical antecedents of contemporary gated communities, i.e., the similar socio-spatial forms that preceded them in time, and the question of the potential role (inspiration or influence) that some particular 'visions', 'ideal plans' or 'authoritative representations' of space and society may have had on the formation and actual form of gated communities. In the second part, we will look in more detail to the main cases that, according to our interpretation, constitute the essential history of gated communities and also to the contemporary case of Lisbon Metropolitan Area (LMA). We envisage this latter case as just one among many other contemporary occurrences of the phenomenon that arose almost all around the world since the 1970's (most probably from the United States of America and especially from California). Insofar, it is as particular or unique as any other contemporary one. Looking simultaneously to the past and to the contemporary case of Lisbon we will search for possible cultural continuities.

The perspective we take here is a cultural analytical one. We will be searching for the main meanings and values repertoires that gated communities have enduringly 'exhibited' along this time, namely for what they reveal and suggest about the way the people that promoted them or chose to live in them may 'think' (the contemporary case

of Lisbon metropolitan area) or 'thought' about the ideal of space and society, i.e., about ideal social and spatial orders. This demarche will stick to the scarce available information on the past editions of gated communities (basically the data and analysis provided by the works of a few urban historians and scholars) and, in the case of Lisbon Metropolitan Area, to the results of several methodological procedures applied to the study of the phenomenon in the area. Besides presenting some general data on the present expression and characteristics of LMA gated communities, we will essentially resort to the analysis of the developments' built form and publicity.

Looking backward: Lisbon, 2007 – California, 1970's – Manchester, 1837 – London, 1726; or a cultural historical analysis of gated communities*

Introduction

In the first part of this paper we will discuss the origins of gated communities. We will address both the topic of the historical antecedents of contemporary gated communities, i.e., the similar socio-spatial forms that preceded them in time, and the question of the potential role (inspiration or influence) that some particular 'visions', 'ideal plans' or 'authoritative representations' of *space* and *society* may have had on the formation and actual form of gated communities. In the second part, we will look in more detail to the main cases that, according to our interpretation, constitute the essential history of gated communities and also to the contemporary case of Lisbon Metropolitan Area (LMA). We envisage this latter case as just one among many other contemporary occurrences of the phenomenon that arose almost all around the world since the 1970's (most probably from the United States of America and especially from California). Insofar, it is as particular or unique as any other contemporary one. Looking simultaneously to the past and to the contemporary case of Lisbon we will search for possible cultural continuities.

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present expression and characteristics of LMA gated communities, we will essentially resort to the analysis of the developments' built form and publicity.

1 The discussion of gated communities' origins

In the search for the origins of the gated communities phenomenon two frequently enmeshed roads have been taken: one leading to the identification of the historical antecedents of contemporary gated communities, i.e., similar socio-spatial forms that preceded them in time; another conducing to the identification of some particularly 'authoritative visions' of *space* and *society* that supposedly had some 'responsibility' on the formation and/or the actual form of the phenomenon. While not incompatible, these two different quests need to be clearly distinguished as they correspond to very distinct issues. The first quest is about the history of gated communities; the second one is about the possible influence that some particular ideological constructs of *space* and *society* may have had in that history. This distinction is valuable when attempting a cultural historical analysis of the phenomenon. It is particularly important in order to clarify the distinct nature of two frequent arguments or theses about the origins of gated communities that we aim to discuss and criticize, before proceeding to the analysis of the different editions that compose the more probable history of the phenomenon.

The first of those two theses claims that the *Garden City* model of Ebenezer Howard corresponds to one of the main origins of the gated communities' phenomenon (see for instances Caldeira, 2000, and her reference to the "lineage of the fortified enclave"). Clearly, and following the distinction we have made above, this argument refers to the ideological genealogy of gated communities, not to its actual history. The second thesis on the phenomenon's origins, also frequently invoked, points out the case of the European pre-modern fortified cities as the true historical origin of gated communities. While different in nature both these theses need to be discussed in the context of a cultural historical analysis of gated communities. Let us start with the case of the *Garden City* model. Even if there are some formal similarities between gated communities and Howard's *Garden City* model, we think the differences are greater and deeper. The only elements they have roughly in common are the private property of the overall land, the self-contained (not walled or gated in Howard's ideal) and planned form

and a technocratic government. But even these general features can give rise to very different interpretations and conduce to differing practical developments.

One should remember with Evan McKenzie (1994) how the American experience of Radburn, initially conceived as the inaugural translation of Ebenezer Howard's model in the United States of America, ended up as just one more "monument to privatism"; as the original ideal collided against the very nature and spirit of American capitalism. In Howard's model, even if all the land of the city was to be private, it was not intended to be individually appropriated; land property should be kept to the community as individuals would just rent houses or lots, not own them. Evan McKenzie reported how that seemed impossible to adapt to the American privatist spirit, and how the Radburn founders' attempt to control the worse anticipated consequences of individual private property led to the elaboration of very restrictive covenants, which in turn perversely made them even farther away from Ebenezer Howard' ideal. Furthermore, the frequently assumed correspondence of *Garden City*' technocratic government and the gated communities governance by homeowners' associations has its limits, if not practical surely ideological.

Howard's vision of *Garden City*' government is much more indebted to a scientist progressive reformist imagination of modern society. Like many other modern thinkers, Howard deeply believed in Reason and in its ability to reform society and even end social conflict, power and politics. His conception of *Garden City*'s government clearly echoes that famous thought from Saint-Simon which stated that in a near future the government of men would give place to the administration of things. The tendency to misleadingly identify the *Garden City* with other socio-spatial forms and experiences is not new. The English *Garden Suburbs* of the beginning of the XX century were the first subjected to that interpretation. Howard himself claimed that one of those exemplars (the London suburb of Hampstead) was the opposite of its own model of the *Garden City*. He argued that while its own model of the *Garden City* "aims to become, a complete, and, so to say, self-contained town, with its own industries etc, and its own full, corporate life", the *Garden Suburbs* "are rather dormitory districts with little or no provision for work, except, indeed, for work in the garden..." (cit. by Beevers, 1988: 133-134).

Lewis Mumford, an admirer of Howard's work, also underlined that difference: "the *Garden City*, in Howard's view, was first of all, a city... it was in its urbanity, not in its horticulture that the *Garden City* made a bold departure from the established method of building and planning" (cit. by Richert and Lapping, 1998: 127). Moreover, Tuan (1990)

made clear that the Garden City model, and namely its materialization at Letchworth, was designed as a city, besides having urban aspirations, including a socially diversified population, multiple uses of the land and a high residential density. These same arguments could be used today to mark the differences between *Garden City* and gated communities. More recently Paul Knox (1992:207) stressed the difference between the Garden City ideal and (master-planned) gated communities. He argues that the origin of the latter “is almost entirely from within the private sector, their objectives being less concerned with planning and urban design as solutions to problems of urbanisation than as solutions to the problem of securing profitable new niches within the urban development industry”. These words particularly illuminate the very nature of gated communities and how distant they are from the Garden City ideal.

We now come to the discussion of the second thesis on the origins of gated communities above introduced, namely the one invoking the case of the European pre-modern fortified cities as the first historical antecedent of the phenomenon. This argument usually takes on a very loose form, merely evoking the gates and walls that used to protect the populations of those cities from outside threats. In our opinion, this perspective misses a decisive element: the difference between walls and gates that enclose an entire population while in disregard of its internal social inequalities and the case where the same devices serve the physical separation of different social groups or classes within the same city, as it happens in the case of gated communities. In this sense, that position fails to acknowledge the fact that gated communities are a genuine modern socio-spatial form, one that corresponds to a specific facet of modern *space* and *society* and to a variant of the overall history of the segregated European modern city. In fact, it misses one of the most important differences between the traditional and the modern European city – segregation – and fails to see that segregation is precisely one of the most relevant traits of gated communities.

In fact, the traditional European city was not socially segregated (Fishman, 1987; Tuan, 1990), with a few exceptions relating to some ethnic and religious divisions – the Venetian Jewish Ghetto of the XVI century is an exemplary case¹. The social order of European traditional society did not truly need *space* to enforce their clear-cut social boundaries. People from different social ranks could rub shoulders on the same physical spaces without ever forgetting to which social spaces they belonged to. Only modernity and capitalist social order brought that ‘need’ about, sometimes under very extreme and

¹ For a detailed account of this case, see Sennett (1994).

dramatic conditions, as it happened at cities like Manchester, Liverpool, London, and, later on, at New York and other North-American cities, which are precisely the locations where some of the first gated housing estates were born. Gated communities in their first edition were a genuine creation of Modernity, and of a capitalist-bourgeois economic, spatial and moral order, one that was specifically connected to the Anglo-American context. As we will see the main repertoires of meaning and values 'exhibited' by the first gated communities were clearly forged by and belong to that order. Additionally, at least some of them seem to have endured until the present day.

We have proposed (Raposo, 2003 and 2006) both an operational definition of gated communities (strictly based on some of their formal characteristics) and a sociological interpretation of the phenomenon. These elements were decisive to the analysis of the history of gated communities, especially to the association between gated communities and segregation and commodification phenomena and to the consideration of some social and spatial contextual aspects. It allowed for the connection, in a systematic way, between contemporary gated communities and some specific antecedents, establishing a case of historical continuity. They consist of two different but sequenced and socially connected socio-spatial residential forms, corresponding to small but important episodes of the overall history of the segregated European modern city, that compose what we termed as the first edition of the gated communities phenomenon (Raposo, 2003 and 2006). Evan McKenzie (1994) and Don Luymes (1997) have already referenced examples of both forms as antecedents of the contemporary gated communities.

The more pristine of those two forms is the *British residential square* or, more exactly, its enclosed and gated version developed in London in the 18th century (St. James's Square, 1726, was the first to be the subject of a Parliamentary enclosure act), and ended up exported to the USA a few decades later (Lawrence, 1993). The second of those forms is represented by the planned Anglo-American romantic suburb, one of the first suburban experiences. Their first examples, which were built in urban areas, arose during the 1830's in England (Victoria Park, Manchester, 1837, was the more emblematic of all and one of the two first cases of the kind) and arrived just a few years later in the USA (Fishman, 1987; Archer, 1988). These two forms corresponded to the first edition of the phenomenon and were restricted to the Anglo-American world. The second edition of this phenomenon or its contemporary form, can be found in various and very different countries and regions all over the world. Furthermore, it is very likely,

according to several references (Blakely & Snyder 1997; Luymes 1997, etc.) that it once again started in a similar geographical location, namely the USA around 1970, before expanding worldwide in the following decades.

2 The cultural repertoires of gated communities

2.1 The *British residential square* and the *Anglo-American planned romantic suburb*

To begin the cultural analysis of the closed version of the British residential square we start by quoting Henry W. Lawrence (1993: 90) and his fundamental paper on that socio-spatial form, the text we will mainly resort to. According to Lawrence, it “represented some of the first expressions of the desire for class segregation, domestic isolation, and privatized open space that later were to form the basis of suburban living”. This author traced the path the residential squares of London took and the transformations they suffered from their outset in the XVII century before reaching in the subsequent century other cities of the British Islands and of the USA. His analysis, which we in essence pursue, is a socio-cultural one. The form of those London’s residential squares “derived initially from continental models, especially the *piazzi* of Italy and the *places* of France in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries” (idem: 92). The first London residential square was Convent Garden that began to be built in 1630. Several others would follow in the ensuing decades, especially after the great London fire of 1666, when “the residential square became one of the major forms used to establish new districts for the wealthier classes” (idem: 95). Following the description of Henry W. Lawrence (idem):

A residential square was the centerpiece of a larger development that sometimes included a separate market square, shops, a parish church, and housing for servants, artisans, and other lesser folk in addition to housing for the major tenants on the square. The land in most cases belonged to a large landowner who leased it to speculators or directly to the tenants, usually on very long leases, up to 99 years (...). Often the landowners (or more rarely, the developers) had control over the design of the buildings surrounding the square and most strove for some sort of unified facades (...). Most had restrictive covenants that limited the tenants in their modification of the premises and were usually

applied to their use of the open space as well, prohibiting such activities as dumping of refuse, building of sheds, or planting private gardens.

The residential squares suffered two decisive transformations from their very origin. Both of them are relevant to the cultural analysis of gated communities' history. Originally, the center of those squares was completely open to the public and only paved with stone or gravel. By the end of the seventeenth century some squares already presented some sort of garden in their center. But the great changes reported and analyzed by Lawrence (1993) would only arrive in the following century. The first one places the British residential square in the history of gated communities. According to Henry Lawrence, although the residential squares of London were not initially projected to be public but rather more as amenities to be appropriated by the residents of the houses lining the sides of the squares in order to increase property values, they in fact remained public for many years. This author (*idem*: 94, 97) stresses that, from the beginning, there was a "tension between private and public use of squares" and that "the seventeenth century squares were socially ambiguous landscapes". That tension and ambiguity put two different conceptions of land value and property relations in confrontation: one traditional and feudal in nature; another modern and capitalist.

The land on which they lay was, in most cases, the property of aristocratic landowners, as were the surrounding houses that were leased to tenants. The whole arrangement derived from feudal relations of property: neither the land of the square, that under the houses, nor the houses themselves could be bought and sold except by the landlord. Residents leased a right to use the land and the houses. Some of the squares were in fact commons to which prior residents had old rights of access for productive activities like drying and bleaching of cloth and for nonproductive activities such as military training and recreation. They were not entirely private places under the control of the landlord or of the estate tenants who resided around them. Exclusion of the public was difficult and, until the 1720s, not clearly legal (*idem*: 97).

That ambiguity would be solved by the beginning of the eighteenth century. In trying to exclude the general public from using the squares, some of them started to present fencing gardens in their center as a way "of expressing control over socially contested space" (*idem*: 97). After that, came the appeal for their closing and locking (only the square' residents would have access to it): "Square residents developed a new legal arrangement to accomplish their ends of controlling the use of the squares: Parliamentary enclosure acts similar to those used at the same time on rural estates"

(idem, 97). St. James' Square was just the first, in 1726. During the subsequent years many other squares would get the Parliament agreement to close and, as such, "the urban common-field tradition quietly died" (idem). The parallel between the extinction of commons rights both in the city and in the country is stressed by Lawrence and is worthy of mention. Capitalism was imposing its values over feudal ones in both worlds. In the particular case of the residential squares, their closure immediately meant that "their value changed significantly as they became amenities with a definable monetary value in the real estate market of building leases and property development" (idem: 99).

But the closure of the squares and the exclusion of the "populace" from it was not the only important transformation went through by that socio-spatial form during the eighteenth century: "by the third quarter of the century, there was a noticeable trend toward increasing density of vegetation" (idem: 101). The now closed gardens of the residential squares began by then "to look like more little parks whose spaces were increasingly internal within a screen of plantings" (idem: 104). That is the second major change worthy of indication, one that has interesting connections to the closing of the squares and to the exclusion of the general public from it. Its cultural meaning is complex and powerfully clarifies what was changing in English culture and society. Firstly, it refers to the emergence of a distinctively English conception of landscape that would have a dominant and enduring influence on garden design, especially in Britain and the USA.

In the early eighteenth century a new ideal of landscape arose in England based on the idea of nature as *variety*. The straight lines and right angles of the old gardens would be replaced by gentle curves, the symmetries replaced by carefully planned irregularities. Trees, shrubs, and flowers would be allowed to 'be themselves', to grow in their natural shape and to be planted in scatterings which sought to imitate the unaided work of nature. Instead of the strictly-delimited world of the Renaissance garden, the ideal was of an encompassing world of greenery and variety that extended into the most distant prospect. To be sure, this new aesthetics had rules almost as rigid as the old. Its name the 'picturesque' betrays its origins not in the direct appreciation of 'nature' but in the imitation in real gardens and parks of the landscapes found in certain painters of the seventeenth century, most notably Claude Lorrain. Claude did not work 'from nature' but from an idealized view of the classical age, which he sought to captures on his canvases (...). This vision certainly enchanted and consoled the English upper classes. With the encouragement of cultural leaders like Pope and Lord Burlington and the genius of such landscape architects as William Kent, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, and Humphry Repton, the great landowners set out to create 'parks' around their country houses that matched the ideal. All the resources of advanced agriculture were called into play to produce the appearance of unspoiled nature (Fishman, 1987: 47-48).

The adoption and perfection of this new landscape ideal first started in the country estates of England. The parallel between the country and the city was again at work and Henry Lawrence (1993) did not leave it unnoticed. The development of this new landscape ideal is associated, in both worlds, to the removal of the members from lower ranks or classes from sight and close physical contact and, as such, to the desires and valuation of segregation and family privacy and to other values that belong to the same axiological spectrum. The advance of capitalism and the corresponding changing social structure were bringing new values into place. Values which were more aligned with a modern bourgeois ethos. Even if in the case of England, where agrarian capitalism first irrupted, some of those values were originally deployed in the country. Several authors have contributed to the analysis of the relationship between that 'English Landscape' and the simultaneous changing of English economy, culture and society. Among them we find Lawrence Stone (1991), who dedicated his attention to the evolution (towards increasing separation) of the interactions between the public and the private (internal and external) spaces of the so called 'stately homes'² of England. In the next quotation he describes what happened to their external space from that century on.

The most striking evidence of this trend, which reached its peak in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was twofold: first, the expansion in the eighteenth century of the surrounding park to a considerable size; the total concealment of the house from all outsiders by the planting of a solid barrier of trees around the circumference; and the erection of an extensive park wall, with park gates guarded by gatekeepers. The second development was the removal of all human beings except for members of the household from within this enclosed area. In the seventeenth century, there had usually been a home farm adjacent to the great house; in the eighteenth century it was relocated elsewhere, outside the park. Moreover, any public roads within the park were now diverted round it, and in a number of cases whole villages were razed to the ground and rebuilt outside the park, often leaving the parish church standing alone next to the great house, now several miles from its parishioners. Kedleston provides a good example of this not uncommon procedure, as a result of which the parish church for all intents and purposes became the private chapel for the family (Stone, 1991: 247-248).

² Lawrence Stone (1991: 230) called into attention that the idea of 'home' is something that really belongs to the bourgeois nineteenth century: "It is surely very difficult to regard a building containing over a hundred rooms as 'home'" (229-230). Also John Hollander (1991: 41) had stressed about the adoption of the word 'home' in selling houses during that century that: "as early as 1835 the celebrated versifier Felicia Hemans' s immediately and subsequent famous lines about 'The stately homes of England! How beautiful they stand' still referred to ancestral houses, but easily shifted its ambience to bourgeois aspirations".

Still connected to this transformation of the landscape in the country estates of England and its association to the simultaneous changing of English economy, culture and society the excellent analyses of Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City* (1993 [1973]) and John Barrell in *The Dark Side of the Landscape* (1980) are worth mentioning. Both stressed that the rural poor and everything that was connected to economic activity were thrown out. Not only from the scenic parks of landlords but also from the literary and pictorial representations of rural land and landscape. John Barrell (1980: 22) observed how the same logic of physical and visual segregation of classes in the country estates of England and the corresponding class relations were reproduced and naturalized in the English landscape paintings of the period 1730-1840. In his work Raymond Williams resorted essentially to literary texts of the time but also to the analysis of the cultural logic of the “pleasing prospects” that the landlords were carving in their parks. His following words (1993: 124-125) are especially illuminating about that logic:

It was that kind of confidence, to make Nature move to an arranged design that was the real invention of the landlords. And we cannot then separate their decorative from their productive arts; this new self-conscious observer was very specifically the self-conscious owner. The clearing of parks as ‘Arcadian’ prospects depended on the completed system of exploitation of the agricultural and genuine pastoral lands beyond the park boundaries. There, too, an order was being imposed: social and economic but also physical. The mathematical grids of the enclosure awards, with their straight hedges and straight roads, are contemporary with the natural curves and scatterings of the park scenery. And yet they are related parts of the same process – superficially opposed in taste but only because in the one case the land is being organised for production, where tenants and labourers will work, while in the other case it is being organised for consumption – the view, the ordered proprietary repose, the prospect. Indeed it can be said of these eighteenth-century arranged landscapes not only, as is just, that this was the high point of agrarian bourgeois art, but that succeeded in creating in the land below their windows and terraces... a rural landscape emptied of labourers; a sylvan and watery prospect, with a hundred analogies in neo-pastoral painting and poetry, from which the facts of production had been banished (...); and this landscape seen from above, from the new elevated sites; the large windows, the terraces, the lawns; the cleared lines of vision; the expression of control and command (Williams, 1993: 124-125).

The transformations of the English country estates and the residential squares of London basically reflect the same economic, social and cultural changes. They signal the route from a feudal, traditional and aristocratic society to a capitalist, modern and bourgeois new world. In the case of the urban residential squares, that transition can be

seen in both the movement of their closure (and the consequent extinction of the traditional urban commons rights, the exclusion or the segregation of the general public from it, and the clear commodification of the center of the squares) and in the adoption of the English landscape ideal. This second transformation is also illuminating about those changes. In their original form those squares, with no vegetation at all in their center, were essentially intended as places for public display where one could see and could be seen by people of the same social 'quality'. They were "a social setting as much an aesthetic achievement" (Lawrence, 1993: 101) and, as such, were in conformity with an aristocratic ethos. On the contrary, the landscaping of the squares revealed new values, bourgeois in essence, such as family privacy and domestic isolation and other related values of "«decency and good order»" (idem: 106). Moreover, it revealed and fulfilled the bourgeois ambition of emulating the status of the traditional aristocratic classes associated with the possession of rural land and the control of nature.

The gardens in the squares responded to these changes in rural landscape aesthetics in large part because they were also undergoing a change in use at the same time. The residents were spending more time in the city as the century progressed. While the first squares were inhabited by rural aristocrats using their town houses for the winter social season, by the second half of the century, many more of the residents were town-dwellers, both aristocrats and wealthy commoners. The squares were their major residence and the gardens in the squares became more important to them than they had been to the temporary rural aristocrats. The square gardens became their landscape prospect and borrowed the same aristocratic aesthetics to create an 'imitation of the country', with its symbolism of possession of the land through the control of nature (idem: 104).

Only in the mid-nineteenth century would the model of the residential square lose its prominence in London (in the meantime it was exported to other British cities, the USA and to some parts of the British Empire) (Lawrence, 1993). For more than two centuries it reflected the evolution of the English economy, social structure and culture. It had served as home for aristocrats and bourgeois. But while the importance of the residential square was fading away in London, due in great part to the continuous expansion of the city, to its engulfing by the urban fabric and to the 'attack' of demographic crowding (especially after 1750), another socio-spatial form was getting ever more important to the wealthier social classes – the Anglo-American suburb. By the end of the eighteenth century this new form seemed to have a significant expression around many cities of England and the USA already (Fishman, 1987). The Anglo-

American suburb would show to have many variants. Among these was the *planned romantic suburb*, the second socio-spatial residential form that composes the history of gated communities.

This specific version of the Anglo-American suburb probably corresponded to the more mature suburban form in the sense that they were nothing but experiences before (Fishman, 1987). Between 1830 e 1860, both England and the USA registered the arising of this specific form of suburb. Along with other Anglo-American suburban versions, the *planned romantic suburb* is bourgeois at heart. It was one of the more perfect expressions of what one could term as the 'bourgeois habitat'. It took the deployment of the bourgeois values and culture already insinuated in the residential square model much further. It is of no importance that the symbolism of aristocracy is again present in the architecture and landscaping. In fact, it is just one more sign of the social ascension of bourgeoisie and of its need to legitimate its still recent and possibly instable social status. According to Robert Fishman (1987), there was a specific case that would work as model and set the main features of the *planned romantic suburb*. It was *Park Village*, built in London during the 1820s. Designed by the architect John Nash and master-planned all-around, this suburb would consecrate a specific formula.

In Park Village Nash brought together all of the varied elements of the suburban style that had existed only in scattered form and turned them into a convincing unity. He thus created a basic formula that could be followed to turn any piece of empty land around a city into a middle-class residential community. He transformed suburbia into a commodity, a product that could be reproduced indefinitely" (Fishman, 1987: 70).

According to Fishman (1987), that formula put together the English picturesque and the liberation of architectonic styles from the Palladian rule (classical and formal) that had been much used in the design of suburban villas before that, and the adoption of diversity and *Historicism*.

Historicism in this sense was to prove triumphant in all areas of nineteenth century architecture, but it has a peculiar relevance to suburbia. When the country house or villa was still an emblem of its owner's culture and standing, the restrained and patrician Palladian style held sway. But when the new suburban house became a specialized home for the emotional life of the family and the self-conscious retreat from the world of power and economics, architects and clients turned inevitably to those historical styles which most forcibly suggested those emotions. In this picturesque world of associationism the old criteria of formal unity and consistency no longer applied. Gothic,

Italianate, or Old English all signified the much the same emotional message of retreat, contentment, and duration over time; hence there was no real inconsistency in mixing them together on the same street or in the same house (...). Thus Park Village not only foreshadows, in Pevsner's phrase, that «fancy dress ball of architecture» which would soon be under way throughout suburbia but it points to the deeper links between suburbia and both picturesque landscape and historicism design that still define the suburb" (Fishman, 1987: 70).

According to Fishman (1987), the *Park Village*' formula would inspire the planning and design of several new suburbs that were to be built in the outskirts of cities northern of England since the 1830s and, since the 1850s, of USA. These were to become some of the first *planned romantic suburbs*. Compared to *Park Village* they showed to have only one difference, albeit one with particular relevance – they were walled and gated. It is not surprising that the first occurrences of it were located in Manchester and Liverpool. It was in 1837 that *Victoria Park* and *Rock Park* started to be built. These developments were to be followed, in 1842, by *Prince's Park* in Liverpool and *Ladbroke Grove* in London. In the case of the USA, during the 1850s several similar "private, comprehensively planned suburban communities" arose (Archer, 1988). Some of the first examples were Evergreen Hamlet, Pensilvânia (1851), Glendale, Ohio (1851) Llewellyn Park, New Jersey (1856) and Lake Forest, Illinois (1857). John Archer (1988) that dedicated his attention to this kind of suburb describes in the following excerpt some of their main features:

The design incorporates a variety of features that specifically enhance both individual privacy and neighbourhood homogeneity: Houses are sited to achieve a low overall density; housing types are restricted to detached or semidetached villas, thus ensuring an economically homogeneous class of resident; community privacy is ensured by attended gates at all entrances; individual privacy is enhanced by landscaping and planting to screen houses from one another; and open "natural area" within the confines of the estate is reserved for the enjoyment of the residents; market and service facilities are carefully segregated away from the residential area; stable and mews are in part eliminated, and in part relegated to a distant corner of the estate; and finally, by no means least of all, the entire building estate was controlled by one owner according to a single plan. Some of these features enhance feelings of community, to an extent overcoming the antisocial, atomizing effects of individualism. But all these features serve as well to isolate families and individuals, and so foster a spirit of individualism (idem: 224-225)³.

³ In this particular excerpt John Archer describes a specific example of a *planned romantic suburb*. Anyway, he extends its main features, and the corresponding analysis, to the rest of its occurrences.

It was in Manchester and Liverpool, the industrial cities of the north of England, that this kind of suburb first saw light. Fishman (1987) recalls that London remained poorly industrialized until the end of the nineteenth century. It was in the cities of the north that industrialization first began. So it was inside these cities that class tensions and struggles were first created, along with the “class fears” (idem), that would explain the rigid segregation of the bourgeois habitat from the squalor or working class places. Manchester or ‘Cottonopolis’ was emblematic in this respect. After the vivid and famous description of the profound social inequalities that marked that city in the mid-nineteenth century, made by Friedrich Engels in 1844, many other authors pointed Manchester as the main example of the Industrial City. Among them, is Robert Fishman (1987) that, equally referencing Engels’ work, evokes, in the following excerpts, the spatial and social relations set between the suburban “Edens” of bourgeoisie (Victoria Park is the main example) and the world of working class and its extreme poverty.

Suburbia was one solution to the problem that Saintsbury had identified in Manchester of the relations between rich and poor. Where an aristocracy had surrounded themselves with the lower orders as a sign of their privilege and status, the keynote of the bourgeois city was to be separation and willful blindness. Suburbia accomplished both. In one of Engels’s most celebrated observations he shows that the streets that the middle class took from their suburban homes into the center concealed rather than revealed the true nature of the factory zone: for these main streets were, naturally, lined with shops and others structures which their owners kept clean and neat. The real squalor was concealed behind these relatively well kept fronts. Thus, the middle class could traverse the distance from their suburban “Edens” to the now beautiful urban core without having to be confronted by the true nature of the urban society in which they lived (Fishman, 1987: 84).

Yet, if Victoria Park had become a kind of symbol of Manchester – recommended for visit by the tourist guides – another 1840s development less than a half mile away was also receiving visitors of another kind. This area was Little Ireland, one of the worst slums of the district (...). Little Ireland might seem remote from a history of suburbia, but Victoria Park cannot be properly understood without considering its opposite. Little Ireland was part of the world that the bourgeoisie did not want to see, but its presence can be felt in every shady corner of Victoria Park (Fishman, 1987: 92-93).

Victoria Park is just one of the first two but the more emblematic *planned romantic suburb* of them all. Many other would be built during the next decades both in England and the USA. Anyway, other kinds of suburbs, making no use of walls or gates, would take their place during the XX century within the Anglo-American world. Maybe during this last century the buffer of distance was large enough to last for several decades, i.e.,

until circa the 1970s, in securing the Anglo-American suburbs from any kind of (subjective or objective) ‘threats’. Otherwise, maybe the size of those ‘threats’ was not so hardly felt during that last period as in the context of the residential squares and the *planned romantic suburb*. As we have argued before (Raposo, 2003 and 2006), it is very likely that the social context was decisive in this respect. The pace and the scale of social change and, in particular, the radical transformation of social structure, were surely decisive to the resorting to walls and gates in preserving and securing a specific social and economic status and lifestyle, which is in essence as culturally bourgeois today as it was two centuries ago. This means that gated communities in all their forms are maybe essentially associated to severe convulsions and transitions of social order (modern, post-modern or of any other kind) and to the absence of state action in controlling and regulating it. It does not matter much whether this is a result of ideology (and as such of culture) or practical incapacity of the state.

2.2 The case of Lisbon Metropolitan Area’ gated communities

In this part we present some general data on the current expression and characteristics of LMA’s gated communities. Afterwards we will resort to the cultural analysis of developments’ built form and publicity. Concerning the current expression and characteristics of LMA gated communities, we present new data (including the information on promotional texts), updating the information already analyzed in other papers (Raposo, 2003 and 2006; Wehrhahn and Raposo, 2006). That information was obtained through an area-wide survey of the phenomenon, covering the period 1985–2004. This survey was carried in two stages: 1) covering the period 1985-1999 (15 years); 2) an extension of the survey for the years 2000-2004 (thus completing 20 years of observation) – it was through this last demarche that the information on the LMA case now analyzed was updated. The total survey included a census of the existing cases and the construction and completion of a database covering several types of variables. For the analysis of all information contained in the database (including the content analysis of promotional texts), we used the *SPAD* programme (Système Pour l’Analyse des Données).

The LMA has 19 municipalities, 3,122 km², and approximately 2.5 million inhabitants. Throughout the aforementioned period a total of 198 gated communities in LMA were identified: they are distributed across 14 municipalities only (before 2000, 10 municipalities were home for 97 GCs). Around 1998/1999 the phenomenon was clearly reaching great popularity and, helped by a very favourable economic conjuncture, was about to expand considerably. The Portuguese real estate market experienced a very positive cycle between 1998 and 2001 and *condomínios fechados* or *condomínios privados* (gated communities) became a quite a common and fashionable real estate product in Portugal. From 1998 onwards, an important and growing part of the new housing stock targeting middle and upper middle segments of the market has been gated. Furthermore, while the metropolitan areas of Lisbon and Porto and the tourist region of the Algarve have, for a long time, been the almost exclusive locations of gated communities in Portugal, they may now also be found in various locations across the country, including small towns and different kinds of tourist destinations. Not even the economic and real estate market crisis that is taking place since 2002 has stopped the expansion of gated communities.

The surveyed universe of 198 gated communities presents highly contrasting formal characteristics. Besides the fact that only 16 are over 5 hectares, the differences the presented by the this universe in terms of number of housing units, type of amenities and type of security used are clearly noticeable. Through multiple correspondence statistical analyses, three distinct classes of gated communities were identified in the LMA. The first class (134 cases) is characteristically composed of apartment complexes (one or more buildings). These cover an area of less than 5 hectares and lack amenities of the sort of golf courses, tennis courts, or clubhouses. In the Lisbon municipal area only developments of this type can be found. The second class, corresponding to 55 cases, is characteristically composed of developments with detached or semidetached houses having fewer than 50 units. Finally, the third class includes 9 cases (ranging from 30 to 475 hectares and from 200 to 2,599 housing units) encompassing almost every medium and major master-planned gated community in the LMA. Characteristically, developments of this class distinguish them selves by their range of amenities (all those that negatively characterize the first and second classes), their number of housing units, their area and their mix of housing options.

Developments of the second and third classes are typically found in suburban municipalities, even though developments of the first class can also be found there. A

few cases of pseudo-gated gated communities are found in all three 'morphological' classes, but the great majority is strictly gated. Looking more closely at the organization of space and to settlement patterns of the areas that are home to gated communities, we detect that small scale gated communities are located in "areas of dense and continuous occupation" (Salgueiro, 2001: 118) and that the large and medium scale developments are located outside the urbanised perimeter of suburban localities, that is, in areas that may be described as "areas of intercalate urbanisation" (idem). Furthermore, it is worth noting that the municipalities of Cascais, Oeiras and Lisbon, forming a continuum along the northern bank of the river Tagus, are home to 138 developments (thereby representing 70% of all cases). The Lisbon-Oeiras-Cascais axis, usually referred to as the *Linha de Cascais*, corresponds to the most affluent and most socially favoured LMA area according to several socioeconomic indicators and studies (INE, 1999; Salgueiro, 1997). This axis retains its traditional prestige, derived from both its landscape qualities and its image of affluence, cosmopolitanism and social distinctiveness.

Following the same logic, gated communities within Lisbon are located either in old, consolidated and prestigious areas of the city, or in its new or expanding areas where social images are still under construction without any 'negative' symbolical connotations such as "working class", "mass market" or "decaying and derelict". Clearly, gated communities both across the LMA and inside Lisbon are preferentially located in more affluent, expensive and prestigious sites consistent with their targeting of the middle and upper middle classes (in Portugal, and specifically regarding first home gated communities, residents are typically middle and upper middle class as members of the upper class seem generally to prefer more 'individualistic' housing solutions). As such, gated communities seem to enforce pre-existing segregation patterns. However, it should be noted that Lisbon, like other Mediterranean metropolises, has comparatively lower levels of socio-ethnic segregation and functional differentiation than northern European metropolises (Salgueiro, 1997) "due to the late development of industrial capitalism, and of a formal urban planning culture" (Malheiros, 2002: 115). Simultaneously, "the relative exceptionalism of urban regulations" results in the "cities of the South and their suburban extensions displaying more "disorganised" patterns, in both urban and social terms" (idem). As such, gated communities seem to provide an additional barrier against a territory that may be experienced as not sufficiently socially clustered and separated.

The most part of these observations have already been made (Raposo, 2003 and 2006; Wehrhahn and Raposo, 2006) after the analysis of the data from the first census (for the period 1985-1999). It is worth stressing that while the second stage of the census relating to the period 2000-2004 showed that the effective number of gated communities in LMA more than doubled during this last five years period (in comparison to the previous censused period of 15 years), the main characteristics of the phenomenon did not change significantly. It means that the structure of the phenomenon in Lisbon seems to be quite stable. This consideration applies not only to the physical and formal characteristics of gated communities (and their distribution into three main and typical classes) but also to their location patterns and to the main symbolic contents of their promotional texts. To perform the cultural analysis of the main repertoires of meaning associated to gated communities in LMA we essentially resort to the analytical presentation of the results of the content analysis of their publicity (the universe is constituted by the 198 cases censused for the whole period 1985-2004).

Through content analysis of LMA's gated community advertising (covering a total of 198 developments, 31 of which have no promotional text other than basic information regarding their physical and price characteristics)⁴ and by observing their on-site semantics (mostly master-planned gated communities) conveyed through general built form, some general conclusions can be drawn. In general, Lisbon gated communities are promoted as 'places' where *space*, *time* and *society* are completely different and apart from (and superior to) the 'normal' or outside world. Basically, *space* is presented as separated, controlled, ordered and beautified, as a *landscape* expurgated from its *dark side* (Barrell, 1980) or, as Mitchell (1994) will put it, a *real estate* that became *ideal estate*. 'Nature', while tamed and rationalised (and in practice, usually reduced to greenery), is all-important to Lisbon gated communities advertising (69% of the developments mention it), deployed in different symbolic versions (*primordial*, *wild*, *picturesque*, and, keeping with contemporary tastes, *ecological*). The very idea of *landscape*, and so of the aesthetic visual qualities of the place, is mentioned in 35% of the developments. Curiously, the reference to the *city* is equally quite significant (36% of the developments mentioned it in their advertisements).

In fact, as will immediately be seen, the promotional texts of Lisbon gated communities seem to play with contrasting symbolical categories in trying to convey the idea that, in general, one will find a balance between the best of different worlds. The

⁴ In this point, we have updated the data and slightly changed the analysis presented in Raposo (2006).

same happens with the representation of *society*. This one is also usually presented as reuniting the best of two possible but different social worlds: 1) social relations and social life inside gated communities are depicted as warm, authentic and moral, as is idealistically conjured up by the very idea of *community* or *gemeinschaft* (Tönnies, 1979); 2), those same relationships are simultaneously presented as civilised, respectful of (modern) individual and family privacy and rational, convivial and 'clubby', corresponding to the very logic of *gesellschaft* (idem) or the contractual *association* of mutually interested and socially-alike but independent individuals. In fact, while there is much 'community talk' related to gated communities in the USA, particularly, in Portugal it does not seem to be a very central issue. Although we found general references to some aspects conventionally identified with community (morality, authenticity and warm social relations), the content analysis' results demonstrate that community is not really presented as a central theme.

Only 13% of cases explicitly mention the *community* idea. The mention of family (22%) is comparatively much more significant. In fact, all analyses (quantitative and qualitative) of gated community advertisements indicate that, while not discarding the general image of the 'best of two worlds', they tend to privilege a 'modern' ('clean', rational and individualistic) and 'private' (privacy is mentioned in 41% of cases) vision of *society*. We found the same strategy of resorting to the best of two possible worlds in the representation of *time*. In general, gated community's advertisements promise a bright and new future and a possibility to start over (modernity and newness are mentioned in 27% of cases), while, at the same time, appealing to some nostalgic past (mentions of the past are present in 31% of cases). Moreover, this past is frequently identified with ancient aristocratic times in order to give gated communities and their clients a venerable and distinct historical 'density'. Furthermore, 57% of cases mention 'distinction' (which includes 'nobility', 'prestige', 'privilege' and 'refinement'), with images of the past conveyed through publicity and built form that plainly refer to a particular *time*, clearly surpassing mentions to other significant categories such as 'security' (mentioned in 40% of cases)

In fact, an impressive proportion of gated communities in the LMA have embodied in their design and extol in their publicity explicit references to old noble, distinct and aristocratic worlds, by using an equally old and 'exhausted' symbolic repertoire. The same commercial aestheticization strategy is also present at least in the USA, where gated communities are frequently invested with similar aristocratic overtones. Moudon

(1990:12) states that for master-planned gated communities “developers provide their market with the next-best thing to a country estate”. Knox (1992: 215), referring to Washington DC master-planned gated communities, notes that they both correspond to “a collage of private worlds, each entered through substantial portals in the manner of an English landed estate, and each announcing itself on large and expensively sculpted and gilded signs with names that draw freely on historic and aristocratic themes”. Historicism, ‘invention of tradition’, and ‘aristocraticism’ are old themes in the analysis of social distinction, especially when focusing on the behaviour of members of upwardly mobile social groups. This feature is one of the more interesting aspects of contemporary gated community aestheticization and one which makes it very similar to its older versions.

Final remarks

Albeit the comparison between the main repertoires of meaning embodied in the built form of gated communities’ older versions and the ones implied in the built form and publicity of LMA’s gateds is difficult, a few aspects are worth mentioning. Firstly, one should realize that the nature of the sources of information in both cases does not allow the production of definitive assertions about residents’ thoughts in what concerns issues of ideal social and spatial orders. As it is easily understood, all conclusions resulting from the cultural historical analysis of gated communities must be general in nature, applying only to social collectives or groups and not to individuals. This is what happens in the analysis of the LMA’s case as well, particularly because the only information we were able to resort to was obtained by the observation of developments’ built form and through publicity examination. In this sense, the presented perspective comes exclusively from the supply side. Even though, in a certain sense, the same problem transpires in the historical analysis of gated communities, both the distance in time and the multiple studies already produced seem to allow deeper reflections. Nevertheless, with these limitations in mind, some comparative elements deserve to be highlighted; a number of them assuming more the form of hypothesis than proper conclusions. The enduring reference to aristocratic symbols conveyed through built form and other elements such as development’s titles is the first aspect to be signaled. As we saw, the case of Lisbon also relies heavily in mentions to the ‘past’ and to social ‘distinction’

(including references to 'nobility', 'prestige', 'privilege' and 'refinement'). This also seems to take place in the case of the US, as was cited. Although one can not ascertain how strongly those symbols appeal to the demand side or to the actual residents of gated communities, past and present, one can at least remark that developers have been enduringly resorting to them for more than two centuries already. The most reasonable explanation for this must be the targeting of new and upwardly middle classes. Apparently the aged imagery of an old social group such as aristocracy seems to facilitate the selling of houses even today. Possibly, bourgeoisie which for the most part is typically identified with the 'middle classes' never developed symbolical identity and imagery sufficiently positive and distinct.

The second aspect worthy of notice is 'privacy'. This value seems to be central ever since the first gated communities. In fact, it should be considered that privacy as a value reaches beyond gated communities, as it was always bourgeois and modern in nature, therefore probably appealing for most people living in modern societies. Given their built form, gated communities are frequently able to provide their residents with a greater level of privacy than other sorts of developments (especially master-planned gated communities). In what concerns the Lisbon situation, it is also interesting to consider that, since Portugal experienced a late modernization, that value may have an increasing, and in a certain sense novel, importance to its people. If we look to the relative importance of 'modernity' as a reference in publicity one can, at least, suggest that both references are associated in alluring people to live a modern lifestyle. We think that this probably makes sense in the case of Portugal. The third aspect to be considered refers to the importance of imageries of 'nature' and also, to a less extent, 'landscape' both in the past and present of gated communities. We saw the profound expression of it in publicity. For the past experiences the analysis was more than illuminating. The control of nature, space and landscape seem to be main factors in attracting residents. A few points are worth making about these aspects. While in the case of the British residential square and, especially, in the case of the *planned romantic suburb*, following several references (Lawrence, 1993; Fishman, 1987), there seems to be a kind of anti-urban feeling and a clear preference for 'rural' places present, the same cannot be said for the case of Lisbon. Not only because the references to the 'city' are significant in publicity, but also due to the pattern of location of many gated communities in LMA. Moreover, the reference to nature and landscape is frequently associated to the idea of a beautified (green) and ordered open space that people can use safely. One

should equally stress that the scarcity of quality open spaces (see paper 82 in this conference) may also be an important magnet to people. The relationship of Portuguese residents with nature may be much more complex. We stress again that the relatively recent Portuguese modernity, its relation to rural life (and traditional urban life) and other experiences, such as living in former Portuguese colonies, can give place to many diversified ideals of nature.

Finally, we would like to focus on another element. It concerns social relationships, namely the idea of community. What we have learned from the historical analysis we resorted to, 'community' in the very sense of *Gemeinschaft* as elaborated by Tönnies (1979) is not much present in the past of gated communities. One would rather say with John Archer (1988), who dedicated his attention to the *planned romantic suburb*, that there are two more important traits, which combined, help to ideologically describe this kind of suburb: "individualism" and "association". Let us just remember that one of the more frequent translations of Tönnies' *Gesellschaft* (the exactly opposite concept of *Gemeinschaft*) is precisely 'association'. This concept gets very well along with individualism. Association is not about friendship or emotional relationships; it is about contract, convenience, emotional distance and the existence of common interests. If this is the main cultural 'script' that urban historians have given us about past gated communities, there are a few similarities to signal concerning the case of Lisbon. By merely resorting to the publicity, the insignificance of references to 'community' is quite noticeable. As we have stated before, the reference to family (frequently in a nuclear family version) is much more frequent. As such the appeal is more directed to 'domestic isolation' and 'family privacy' than to a sense of neighbourhood, friendship, etc. Additionally, we would like to add that, although this is consistent with the references to older cases of gated communities, the recent modernization of Portuguese society may again help explain why the appeal to 'community' is not as frequent as has been reported to the US (see for instances the work of Blakely and Snyder, 1997). One should remember the idea of 'community' is frequently veiled by or accompanied by some nostalgic feelings of "times gone by". In the case of Portugal and Lisbon, in particular, let us just remember, in conclusion, that those times weren't gone that long ago.

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