



Between the Urban and the Natural: Green Marketing of Istanbul's Gated Community Projects

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Abstract

The increasing concern towards environmental issues across the globe led to the production and the marketing of goods with ecological features or connotations. In this regard, green marketing emerged as an effort, which promotes environmental consciousness in the consumption of nature-friendly commodities and the pursuit of greener lifestyles. On the other hand, neoliberal ideology of urbanism has been considered as a phenomenon, which performs destructive effects on nature. As one of the significant sites of this neoliberal logic, gated communities occupy a significant position in the housing market, promoting lifestyles with security, prestige and happiness. Based on a research of branded gated communities constructed in Istanbul in recent years, this article points out that green marketing serves as an important effort for the promotion of gated communities. As a brand identity element, the emphasis on green provides a distinctive status to these gated communities and differentiate them from other projects. Furthermore, green marketing discourses also reveal new ways by which green-gated communities offer an anti-city lifestyle by providing green alternatives, but not an anti-urban one since they continue their ties with the urban life. With the analysis of 19 different green-gated communities constructed in Istanbul recently, this article aims to point out the ways in which green marketing narratives communicate the brand promises of gated communities and serve as a strategy for neoliberal urbanism to expand its market with the green discourse.

Keywords: Branding, Green Marketing, Gated Communities, Istanbul, Nature, Urbanism.



Kentsel ile Doğal Arasında: İstanbul'da Kapalı Site Projelerinin Yeşil Pazarlaması

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Öz

İçinde bulunduğumuz çağda çevresel problemlere yönelik farkındalık küresel ölçekte ivme kazanırken, bu durum ürünlerin ekolojik niteliklerini ön plana çıkaracak şekilde pazarlanması sonucunu beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu bağlamda yeşil pazarlama, daha yeşil yaşam tarzlarının tercihi ve doğa dostu ürünlerin tüketimi noktasında çevresel bir duyarlılığı ön plana çıkarmıştır. Diğer yandan, kentleşmenin neoliberal ideolojisi, doğa üzerinde yıkıcı etkilere neden olan bir olgu olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Söz konusu neoliberal mantığın önemli bir uygulama alanı olan kapalı siteler (gated communities), konut pazarının önemli bir bileşenini oluşturmakta ve güvenlik, prestij ve mutluluk gibi duygular üzerinden yeni yaşam tarzlarını vaat etmektedir. İstanbul'da son yıllarda inşa edilen markalı kapalı siteleri inceleyen bu çalışma, yeşil pazarlamanın kapalı sitelerin tanıtımında önemli bir araç olarak işlev gördüğünü ortaya koymaktadır. Bir marka kimliği unsuru olarak yeşil vaadinin, inşa edilen kapalı sitelere ayrıcalıklı bir statü sağladığı ve bu siteleri diğerlerinden ayırt edici bir noktada konumlandığı gözlenmektedir. Ayrıca, yeşil pazarlamanın söylemi, kapalı sitelerin, kentin kaotik ve bireyi insanlığından uzaklaştıran olumsuz etkilerine karşı kendilerini konumlandırma biçimlerini de ortaya çıkarmakta, bu açıdan kente bir alternatif sunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte kapalı sitelerin kentsel alan ile olan bağlantısını vurgulayan yeşil pazarlama söylemi, kentsel alanın gereksinimlerinden kopmadan bir anti-kent hayatı deneyimi önermektedir. İstanbul'da son yıllarda inşa edilen 19 farklı yeşil kapalı site projesinin incelemesiyle bu çalışma, yeşil pazarlama anlatılarının kapalı sitelerin marka vaatlerini iletme biçimlerini çözümlerken; bu anlatıların, kapalı sitelerin kentsel ile doğal arasında dönüşen sınırlar ekseninde kendilerini anlamlandırma biçimlerini ortaya çıkarmayı hedeflemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Doğa, İstanbul, Kapalı Siteler, Marka, Yeşil Pazarlama.

1. Introduction

At times we wish to stop time under the shadow of a tree just to catch our breath... Sometimes we dream of places that would make us feel secure... We always wish the very best for our family and loved ones... We imagine moments when we attain our dreams without giving up our hopes... Life, at this moment in time, is when everything we pictured to be lacking has come together. It is starting again at Resim Istanbul... Are you ready to take your place in this picture? *A new RESIM in Istanbul: The heart of the Anatolian Side is at Sancaktepe, and moreover at the center of Sancaktepe...*¹

Urbanization is usually considered as a threat against the preservation of nature and environmental resources. The more human beings invest in and enlarge the urban space, the less remains of green areas. Nevertheless, what happens when environmentalism becomes a public discourse and leads to the emergence of demands that favor environmentally adapt urban spaces? How does capitalism, particularly marketing, respond to this demand and turn nature into one of its commodities? The website of "Resim İstanbul", a gated community project in one of Istanbul's peripheral provinces Sancaktepe, welcomes its visitors with a view inside the forest where the sun rises above behind the trees as the camera moves through a trail. The moving image introduces the viewer with the experience of nature; raw, inhabited and far away from the chaos of the metropolitan life. The project is named "Resim" (Picture), as the moving image almost provides a picturesque representation of how it feels to participate in nature. The project calls for the viewers to take part in the picture by provoking their hopes and desires, which are filled by a dream place of ultimate peace. The website further includes views from Aydos Forest, one of Istanbul's largest forests that survived and surrounded by densely populated urban areas of Pendik, Sultanbeyli, Kartal and Sancaktepe, offering a "dream-like life with cherry trees" and promises a wake up in the midst of nature by the view of Aydos Pond in "a painting like atmosphere". "Resim İstanbul" has been described as "A Project Within Nature", further accompanied by other brand elements such as a logo consisting of a green typography of the project's name and a tagline of "Nefes", in Turkish "Breath".

¹ Resim Istanbul Website, <https://www.resimistanbul.com/en/a-new-resim-in-istanbul/>, accessed on 31.01.2017

In today's world, the neoliberal logic of urbanism urges its residents to compete and contribute to the production of wealth and capital in most efficient way. It is almost impossible for metropolitan residents to leave the urban space and continue a secluded life in a remote village surrounded by nature. However, there is an increasing disillusionment from the dehumanizing chaos of urban life. *Resim Istanbul* is one of the gated community projects with a marketing effort showing how nature becomes part of a neoliberal discourse in contemporary society. These communities offer a grey zone within city limits that does not altogether abandon the facilities provided by urban life, most especially the business opportunities, while providing its residents with the chance to enjoy nature by resisting the chaos of the city. The emergence of these communities makes possible an "anti-city" position, rather than an "anti-urban" one.² This article investigates the kinds of green marketing discourses that facilitate this position Istanbul's several gated community projects.

With countless references and representations in marketing, popular culture and the media, the emphasis on "green" became a major discourse in contemporary society. Destinations and places particularly in urban settings have been one of the most significant areas where green discourse has been applied and communicated to the public (Walker & Hanson, 1998). The rapid growth of urban centers with the effect of global neo-liberal economy led to the enlargement of the cities, which resulted in certain socio-economic and environmental problems. The segregation between central and peripheral regions of urban spaces along class lines due to neoliberal urbanism led to the increasing social and economic divisions among residents. Problems of urban spaces were furthered by environmental issues with an increasing concern towards preserving ecological balance and natural resources for the good and the future of human life. Eventually, the city has been a conflictual setting characterized by a continuous dynamism, which tends to generate solutions for the problems that it encounters and reproduces.

² For a discussion of anti-city vs. anti-urban distinction, see (Genis, 2007, p. 773). In her analysis, Genis suggests that gated communities offer alternative life settings for Istanbulites with a certain isolation from the city that provides their residents with peace, prestige and status. According to her, this makes urban communities anti-city, rather than anti-urban, since they continue their close ties with the urban center. In this article, I aim to build on Genis' analysis by suggesting that the anti-city positing has been turned into a brand promise by gated communities in their green marketing efforts.

In this regard, green marketing of Istanbul's gated community projects perfectly illustrates the ways in which an anti-city position is established within a neoliberal discourse that does not challenge neoliberal urbanism. With a population of 14 million residents,³ Istanbul is one of the largest cities in the world and the largest city in Europe. With only 2.2% of its urban area classified as public green space,⁴ the degree of urbanization leads Istanbulites to pursue lives away from green areas, mostly in single apartments, residential complexes and especially gated communities, which were began to be constructed after the 1980s and received an ever-increasing popularity by the 2000s (Akgün & Baycan, 2012). Different from the waves of urbanization that have already transformed Istanbul's urban landscape, the discourse of green has been a new phenomenon that is employed by the branded gated community projects especially after 2010. Growing attention towards environmental issues across the globe has also penetrated to Turkey's public debates as citizens, particularly Istanbulites, began to demonstrate their anxieties with regard to the decay of green areas in urban space and their wish for a greener city. In this respect, green marketing, which is an attempt to satisfy the customers' needs for environmentally safe goods and services, emerged as a viable option for real estate companies to offer alternative solutions for the demands of customers who are eager to hold purchasing decisions oriented towards an ecological agenda.

There have already been numerous residential compound projects in Istanbul, which provide their customers with the feeling of security, safety, isolation from the chaos of urban center, prestige or social status. These projects have been marketed in various ways to sell "a new prestigious life" for its residents. What this article observes is that recently in Istanbul, there emerged a distinct way of presenting gated communities with an emphasis on green. By highlighting the greenness and the naturalness of their residences, Istanbul's gated community projects set up a distinctive space for the socialization of middle and upper-middle classes, distinguished from the chaotic urban center, as well as from other gated communities. Green, in this regard, is employed as a discursive metaphor

³ "Nüfus ve Demografik Yapı" (Population and Demographics) Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality website http://www.ibb.gov.tr/sites/ks/tr-TR/0-Istanbul-Tanitim/konum/Pages/Nufus_ve_Demografik_Yapi.aspx accessed on 31.01.2017.

⁴ World Cities Culture Forum % of public green space (parks and gardens), <http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/data/of-public-green-space-parks-and-gardens> accessed on 31.01.2017.

to meet the environmental concerns of the new type of real estate customers. By the analysis of projects' websites, this article investigates the kind of green marketing discourses disseminated by the companies. It argues that, apart from the existing gated communities and the central urban areas, green projects offer an alternative lifestyle that counters the city and mediates between the urban and natural. Green marketing efforts of Istanbul's gated communities point out the discursive strategies by which neoliberal urbanism adjusts itself to the newly emerging consumer concerns with regard to the decay of the nature, by providing alternative spaces of life that forge an anti-city position with continuing ties to the requirements of urban life.

2. Branding of Gated Communities in Istanbul

Gated communities are defined as residential structures which are isolated from the rest of the city and which promise their residents with physical and symbolic attachments such as social status, prestige and security (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Davis, 1992; Low, 2003). Gated communities are characterized as spaces with restricted access for outsiders as they inhabit a homogeneous group of residents with same or similar social, cultural or economic capital (Roitman, 2010). First appeared in United States during the 1980s, gated communities increased mainly in California and were later dispersed through other regions such as Europe, Latin America, Asia, Middle East and Africa (Kurtuluş, 2011, p. 51). Istanbul was one of the cities where the construction of gated communities took place during the mid-1980s and was widespread in the late-1990s (Candan & Kolluoğlu, 2008, p. 6). Mainly based in Istanbul's peripheral areas, the construction of gated communities was closely related to the flows of immigration and the reshaping of urban space along cultural and economic lines. As the city became more complex in terms of class segregation, there emerged the need for middle and upper-middle classes to separate themselves with the rest of the population to reproduce particular socio-economic distinctions and privileges (Bali, 2002; Daniş & Perouse, 2005; Kurtuluş, 2016; Öncü, 1997). The flows of migration due to job opportunities in industries led to the embodiment of *gecekondu* (squatter) type of illegal housing. During the late-1990s and the early 2000s, the replacement of these settlements by TOKİ (mass housing administration) was one of the ambitions of the government (Candan & Kolluoğlu, 2008, p. 7). Meanwhile, the increasing housing demand by middle and upper-middle classes paved the way for

the enlargement of real estate industry, with companies offering gated communities to residents in order for them to stay isolated from lower classes in pursuit of safety, security and prestige. Thus, the construction of gated communities segregated the urban space along class lines, an outcome that has been conceptualized as a feature of “neoliberal urbanism” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Davis, 2006; Hackworth, 2007). Housing is a fundamental necessity for human beings to survive and pursue a life in modern industrialized societies. However, the ideology of neoliberal urbanism treats housing merely as a marketing phenomenon and aims to generate capital by inviting companies for a competition over housing services (Genis, 2007, p. 772). As an outcome of this process that took place in Istanbul starting with the late 1990s, the urban space was adjusted to the logic of marketing and was even more segregated along class status consisting of homogeneous groups of residents occupying different gated communities. As this article problematizes with regard to the construction efforts after the 2010s in Istanbul, green-gated communities emerged as distinctive residential compounds that utilized nature as a core element in the reproduction of the neoliberal discourse.

Istanbul is experiencing a process in which housing projects by large companies, mostly in the form of gated communities, are subject to branding practices. Historically, branding appeared as an application, which helps one to distinguish his/her possessions from another (Blackett, 2003, p. 13). In modern marketing, branding has been instrumental in marking the differentiation of products by highlighting their rational, emotional or symbolic advantages (Aaker, 1991; Ries & Trout, 2001). Branding has been a type of communication between producers and consumers, aiming to inform or persuade consumers about the benefits of the product. Branding of gated community projects in Istanbul points at an important threshold in the history of gated communities in this urban setting. Such that, the increase in the supply of gated communities inevitably necessitate the communication of these projects to the public in distinctive ways. In order to differentiate themselves in the market, real estate companies have increasingly been engaged to brand their projects and advertise them in different formats. The research shows that in 2015, there were 1242 branded real estate projects in Istanbul, which showed a 23% increase compared to the previous year. Under these projects, the number of flats has risen to

500.000, whereas the number was 430.000 in 2014.⁵ The emphasis on branded real estate projects further led to the emergence of real estate companies to become brands themselves such as NEF, Soyak, Ağaoğlu, DKY or Sinpaş GYO. According to a research in 2016, 50 strongest real estate company brands produced 83.237 flats in 204 different construction sites in Istanbul's different neighborhoods such as Başakşehir, Esenyurt, Kartal, Bağdat Caddesi, Seyrantepe, Maslak, Merter, Zeytinburnu and Ataköy (Gökmen, 2016). Although branded real estate projects include single apartments, most of these projects generate gated communities, secluded from the rest of the urban space with their own security, supplies and services; somehow maintaining their relationships to the urban center particularly with regard to schooling, business and health facilities.

3. Green Marketing of Gated Communities

The expansion of housing market due to neoliberal urbanism in Istanbul led to the increase in marketing communication activities. Since there were little or few differences in terms of the rational function of housing compounds, projects were branded and marketed with a certain emphasis on symbolic, emotional or cultural meanings. The promise of "a new life" has been one of the most prevalent discourses in the promotion of gated communities. Providing a certain amount of isolation from the chaotic urban center, gated communities offered security, prestige and social status; most importantly, a space of distinction, which reproduces a different kind of cultural and social capital accumulated by individuals belonging to the same habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). Apart from the discourses of a new life, recent gated community projects in Istanbul add "green" to their promises. A new life, but a green one, becomes a way for real estate companies to promise Istanbulites something that has been absent within the chaotic atmosphere of city life. As an attempt to turn back to the natural without necessarily giving up the facilities of urban center, real estate companies are marketing gated communities for a greener, more natural and environmental way of life and distinguish their housing efforts from previously constructed gated communities.

⁵ "Markalı konut 500 bine ulaştı" (Branded Housing Exceeded to 500.000) <http://www.sozcu.com.tr/2016/emlak/markali-konut-500-bine-ulasti-1056563/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

The emphasis on green has been a prominent discourse in contemporary society. Ecological decay and environmental problems led human beings to think deeper about and monitor closely the problems of nature. Industrial mode of production and capitalism as its economic and social systematization have been accused of ecological destruction (Shrivastava, 1994; Shrivastava, 1995). Furthermore, as the culture of capitalism, consumerism was criticized for the reproduction of the relations of production by constantly investing meaning and desire in commodities; making them indispensable elements of individual lives without any attention reserved for environmental outcomes of production and consumption processes (Prothero & Fitchett, 2000, p. 47). Paradoxically, consumerism also hosted a reaction to environmental problems as greener markets gain more visibility following the consumer demand for environmentally adapt products, especially with green marketing (Ottman, 1998; Peattie, 1992). In this regard, green marketing emerged as a separate marketing phenomenon, which “involves identifying, anticipating and satisfying the requirements of consumers and society in a profitable and sustainable way” (Merilainen, Moisander & Pesonen, 2000, p. 153). First theorized as “ecological marketing” in the early 1970s, green marketing refers to the endeavor to reduce the negative ecological impact of consumer items without abandoning consumers’ needs (Wymer & Polonsky, 2015, p. 241). Although green marketing has been the part of corporate social responsibility during the late 1990s, it currently holds a separate logic of marketing on its own, including the products for green type of consumerism demanding environmentally sustainable products and greener businesses offering ecological goods and services.

From a macromarketing perspective, the societal impact of green marketing has been evaluated in two distinct ways. On the one hand, green marketing was associated to the increase in environmental consciousness by consumers and brands, which tends to transform the processes of production and consumption into nature-friendly procedures (Kilbourne, 1998, p. 642). On the other hand, sceptics argue that green marketing does not necessarily make a long-term contribution to the solution of environmental problems as it rather sells the signs of environmentalism by commodifying them (Goldman & Papson, 1996, p. 194). Rather than taking part in one of these positions, I prefer to point out the discursive ways in which green marketing mediates between promoting a nature-friendly lifestyle and the commodification of the environment. On the one hand, green marketing of Istanbul’s gated communities promises a more natural

and environmentally rich life for its residents. On the other hand, these marketing efforts does not reject neoliberal urbanism. They rather offer green-gated communities so that their residents can better participate to the requirements of urban life; hence they instrumentalize nature as the core promise in their commodification of residential compounds. This particular relation points out the ways in which neoliberal urbanism extends its presence to Istanbul's remote areas and create a marketing effort characterized with a brand promise revealing an anti-city position.

4. Overview of Green-Gated Community Projects

Construction has been one of the largest industries in Turkey with several companies undertaking huge projects particularly in Istanbul. According to a 2016 report, Turkey ranked in second place after China in terms of the number of contracting companies building the largest volume of projects with 40 companies among world's "top 250 contractors".⁶ Housing market is one of the major subfields of construction industry. World Bank Data shows that housing construction industry in Turkey builds nearly 800,000 units per year.⁷ With the development of the market, housing prices in Turkey doubled over the last five years as Turkey topped Knight Frank's global house price index in 2015 (Finkel & Ersoy, 2016). Throughout the 2010s, Istanbul has been one of the most attractive real estate markets in Europe. Istanbul ranked first in terms of new investments in real estate market consecutively in 2011 and 2012 and occupied second and fourth positions in 2013 and 2014. As of 2016, Istanbul also ranks among Europe's top ten cities in terms of real estate market's development prospects (Gökçe & Çamlıbel, 2016, p. 12). By 2016, top five firms in Turkey's real estate construction sector is in process of producing over 25.000 houses, an industry worth 15 billion liras (Gökmen, 2016). The significance of these companies is that they produce branded real estates. Top three companies in terms of the number of housing production, Nef, Dağ Engineering and Soyak construct 16 branded real estate projects in Istanbul, whereas the

⁶ "Turkish contractors rank second in world for ninth straight year" August 26, 2016. Hurriyet Daily News. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-contractors-rank-second-in-world-for-ninth-straight-year.aspx?PageID=238&NID=103260&NewsCatID=345> accessed on 31.01.2017.

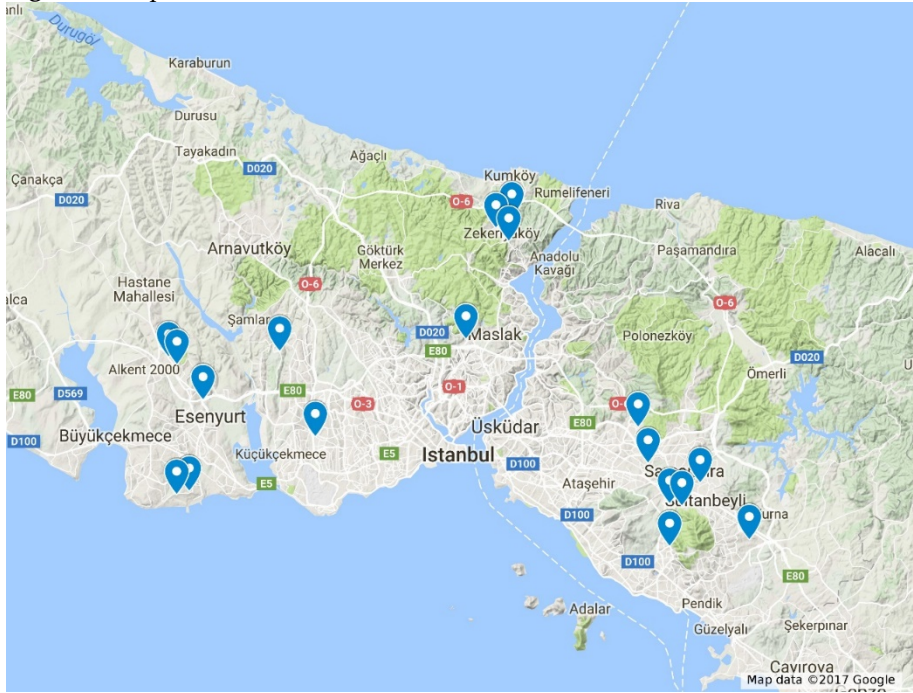
⁷ "Challenges Ahead: Turkey's Housing Market" October 11, 2016. World Bank. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/09/23/challenges-ahead-of-turkeys-housing-market> accessed on 31.01.2017.

remaining two projects are underway in the Anatolian city of Konya. Among 16 projects, three projects by Dağ Engineering are specifically branded with reference to green, with “Tual Adalar”⁸ in Kartal with 471 housing capacity, “Tual Bahçekent” in Başakşehir with 1739 housing capacity and “Bahçekent Flora” in Başakşehir with 875 housing capacity (Gökmen, 2016). These are some of the largest scale housing projects in Istanbul marketed with specific references to green discourse.

Apart from these projects, various other green-gated communities have been located in Istanbul for the purposes of this research. It is a difficult task to sample green-gated communities as it requires distinguishing them from thousands of other construction projects. Therefore, attempting to limit the sample with most efficiency, I focused on branded real estate projects. Branded projects are easier to access online since they are being marketed to potential customers. Secondly, through an online surveying of the websites of housing construction companies accompanied by a random search on the web, the research sample was reduced to 19 real estate projects. Since it is very complicated to survey thousands of housing projects in details, the sample was reduced in accordance with the brand names of the projects that connote greenness, naturalness and the environment. Considering that these housing projects are parts of green marketing endeavor, brand names are significant to express a distinctive feature of these branded green-gated communities from the other brands. In this regard, a common characteristic of these real estate projects is that they are all constructed or under the process of construction as gated communities, isolated from the rest of urban space with security and involving varying degrees of amenities that provide partial autonomy from the urban centers. Moreover, the narratives that aim to introduce these gated communities to potential customers focus on the greenness, naturalness or environmentally-friendliness of their locations in varying ways. Accordingly, the narrations are taken from the project websites, as guiding spaces of information online and is accessible by everyone. It is observed that after a few online searches with keywords such as “green housing” or “natural housing” in Turkish, the advertisements of these projects pop up in different other websites during internet surfing via Google Ads. Online advertisement provides an important feature for these gated communities to communicate to specific audiences who have particular green housing interests.

⁸ “Tual” derives from Turkish word “Tuval” which is the English equivalent of a “canvas”.

Figure 1. Map of Green-Gated Communities⁹



Research shows that there are 19 gated communities specifically marketed with green emphasis. All of these gated communities are located at the city's peripheral regions (Figure 1). These gated communities contain 13.226 housing capacity (Table 1). They offer various amenities and services; with all of them have 24-hours security, sports facilities, recreational and green areas. Most of them have access to health and education facilities, certain proximities to the city's strategic transportation axis such as TEM and the airport. Several of these gated communities have direct access or offer proximities to forests, public parks, beaches or the sea. Seven green-gated communities are located in Istanbul's Anatolian side, two in Çekmeköy, two in Sancaktepe, one in Sultanbeyli, one in Kartal and one in Pendik. These five districts are working class suburbs that forge the peripheral regions of Istanbul's metropolitan area. Çekmeköy, Sultanbeyli and Sancaktepe are located in Istanbul's TEM (Transit European Motorway) axis on the East. Sultanbeyli was granted with municipality status in 1992; while Çekmeköy and Sancaktepe are more recent residential areas

⁹ "Köy" and "Terrace Bahçe" projects are located side by side at Zekeriyaköy, therefore their markers on the map overlap.

that became municipalities in 2008. Over the last decade, these municipalities attracted various gated community settlements, which led Çekmeköy to have a population around 200.000, Sultanbeyli 320.000 and Sancaktepe 370.000.¹⁰ On the other hand, Kartal and Pendik are Istanbul's two of oldest districts occupying the southeastern part of the city. While these districts have coastal access to the Sea of Marmara, their settlements spread to the north by Aydos Mountain (Kartal) and Sabiha Gökçen Airport (Pendik), which led to the emergence of several mass housing projects and gated communities.

Twelve green-gated community projects are located in Istanbul's European side, four in Zekeriyaköy neighborhood of Sarıyer district, one in Ayazağa neighborhood of Sarıyer district, three in Başakşehir, two in Beylikdüzü, one in Bahçelievler and one in Avcılar. The outer northern part of Istanbul's European side, including Sarıyer's Zekeriyaköy neighborhood, has been one of the most significant spaces where gated communities emerged in the last decade particularly for upper-middle class housing (Akgün & Baycan, 2012, p. 94), which now hosts four of Istanbul's green-gated communities. Three green-gated communities are located at Başakşehir district, a peripheral region in western Istanbul. Başakşehir emerged as a neighborhood with the construction of mass housing installations in 1995 and was granted with the status of a municipality under the metropolitan administration in 2008. Since its foundation, Başakşehir has gained significance for hosting mass housing projects with countless gated communities, a district that currently holds around 350.000 population.¹¹ Two of the green-gated communities are located in Beylikdüzü district in southwest Istanbul, which is another district of mass housing production since the 1990s and earned the status of a municipality in 2008 with approximately 280.000 population.¹² Bahçelievler and Avcılar are two other districts hosting green-gated community projects, also situated in the western periphery of Istanbul. Lastly, one project is located at the southern part of Sarıyer district, adjacent to Istanbul's central business hub, Maslak.

¹⁰ Sancaktepe Municipality website <http://www.sancaktepe.istanbul.tr/kategori/129/0/nufusu.aspx> Accessed 31.01.2017 & Sultanbeyli Municipality website <http://www.sultanbeyli.istanbul/> & Çekmeköy Municipality website <https://www.cekmekoy.bel.tr/tr/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

¹¹ "Nüfus Yapısı" (Population Structure) Başakşehir Municipality website <http://www.basaksehir.bel.tr/icerik/57/nufus-yapisi?open=6> accessed on 31.01.2017.

¹² "Beylikdüzü Hakkında" (About Beylikdüzü) Beylikdüzü Municipality website <http://www.beylikduzu.bel.tr/Pdf/beylikduzu-hakkinda/#/32> accessed on 31.01.2017.

This gated community is situated in a relatively remote part of the district neighboring the Belgrad Forest at its north. The projects are constructed around the city's remaining natural and green landscapes, such as Aydos Forest, Zekeriyaköy province and a number of other green areas and copice forests. Although located in the peripheral regions of the metropolitan area, districts such as Kartal, Pendik, Çekmeköy, Beylikdüzü, Başakşehir, Sultanbeyli and Sarıyer have access to industrial facilities nearby, maintaining close ties of transportation to business centers, airports and highways, which integrate these communities to neoliberal urban governmentality. Marketing of these gated community projects in accordance with their brand promises involve the constitution of brand elements such as logos, slogans, taglines and other narrations that apply a green marketing perspective to these projects.

Table 1. List of Green-Gated Communities

Project	Company	Status	Location	Housing Capacity	Amenities
Adapark	Suryapı	Completed	Sancaktepe	826	24 hours security, 75% green and recreational areas, sports facilities, metro access, proximity to TEM
Aydos Country	Sinpaş GYO	Ongoing	Sancaktepe	914	24 hours security, proximity to Aydos Forest and lake, flower gardens, large apartment balconies, sport facilities, cafes, proximity to health, education facilities and TEM
Bahçekent Flora	İzka & Dağ & Sitar	Ongoing	Başakşehir	875	24 hours security, access to regional park, 80% green areas, sports facilities, Turkish bath, proximity to TEM
Bahçetepe İstanbul	Makro & Akyapı	Completed	Başakşehir	1476	24 hours security, sustainable energy with wind turbines, gardens, sports facilities, proximity to "health city" and TEM
Dekar Asmalı Hayat	Dekar	Completed	Beylikdüzü	244	24 hours security, sports facilities, private gardens, partial sea view, markets, shopping, proximity to TEM
Deniz İstanbul	Keleşoğlu	Completed	Beylikdüzü	342	24 hours security, access to Marina beach, riding club, water sports club, cafes, restaurants, sports facilities, proximity to health and education facilities, 5-star hotel
Gardenplanet	Şenkaya	Completed	Pendik	370	24 hours security, market, cafes, childrens' workshops, gardens, sports facilities, proximity to airport and TEM
Gölbahçe	Suryapı	Ongoing	Sultanbeyli	227	24 hours security, large gardens, sports facilities, proximity to TEM
Göl Panorama	Be-Ma & Emlak Konut	Ongoing	Avclar	1431	24 hours security, access to lake, 83% green and recreational areas, shopping street, proximity to airport and TEM
Greenist	Saray	Completed	Bahşelievler	174	24 hours security, metro access, shopping mall access, energy saving architecture, soundproof architecture, sports facilities, green areas, proximity to airport and TEM
Greenium	Suryapı	Completed	Çekmeköy	94	24 hours security, sports facilities, single villas, market, cafes, recreational areas, proximity to TEM and forest
Köy	Siyahkalem	Ongoing	Zekeriyaköy	1167	24 hours security, health center, sports facilities, cinema hall, cafes and restaurants, veterinary clinic, animal playgrounds, organic bazaar, proximity to airport and TEM
Merkez	Ortadoğu	Completed	Zekeriyaköy	106	24 hours security, proximity to Kilyos beach, private gardens, sports facilities, riding club, cafes, market, fruit gardens, proximity to airport and TEM
Ormanada	Eczacıbaşı	Completed	Zekeriyaköy	273	24 hours security, market, fitness center, beauty center, Starbucks, vegetable gardens area, organic bazaar, proximity to airport and TEM
Resim İstanbul	Ortadoğu	Completed	Sancaktepe	1310	24 hours security, access to Aydos Forest, fitness center, sports facilities, proximity to airport, health and education facilities, TEM
Terrace Bahçe	İnanlar	Completed	Zekeriyaköy	76	24 hours security, sports facilities, proximity to forest, airport, TEM, health and education facilities
Tual Adalar	Dağ	Ongoing	Kartal	471	24 hours security, proximity to Aydos Forest, sea view, sports facilities, proximity to health, educational facilities, metro and the airport
Tual Bahçekent	Dağ	Ongoing	Başakşehir	1739	24 hours security, access to regional park, educational facilities, private hospital, mosque, proximity to airport and TEM
Vadi İstanbul Terrace	Artaş & Invest	Completed	Sarıyer	1111	24 hours security, sports facilities, access to TEM and to Vadi İstanbul project with elevated rail that includes shopping mall, street shopping, 5-star hotel, offices, proximity to Belgrad Forest
				13226	

5. Brand Identity Elements

Brand identity is considered as the essence of the brand, which is the primary source that conveys brand's core promise to its customers (Aaker, 1996, p. 85). There are various ways to construct an identity for a brand. These include the construction of symbolic elements for the brand, such

as the brand's name, logo, slogan or story (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2006, pp. 95-96). A brand's symbolic elements pave the way for a brand to be perceived by customers in a desired way by attributing certain connotations to the brand image. Forming the brand identity for a brand is a very important step for companies to take part in marketing communication. It is an effort that provides a competitive advantage for a company over others in the market towards a specific target audience.

Green marketing is a specific form of marketing effort that targets customers with environmental preferences. Positioning of a brand necessitates specific kind of messages to be conveyed to target audience. Companies create their gated communities as brands so that they can promise a distinctive and a privileged lifestyle to their potential customers. In this regard, green-gated communities promote "greenness" as a distinctive element of their brand identities. A common element of these brand identities includes the formation of their brand names and logos. Brand name is the first trope of the whole branding process that initiates the encounter between the brand and the customer. Brand names are at the same time the project names, which are carefully adopted in order to connote greenness. The research shows that 18 of 19 gated communities are assigned with brand names that connote naturalness or greenness in various respects. The brand names include references to natural landscapes such as "Adapark" (Island Park), "Bahçekent" (Gardencity), "Bahçetepe" (Gardenhill), "Asmalı Hayat" (Vine Life), "Deniz İstanbul" (Sea Istanbul), "Göl Panorama" (Lake Panorama), "Gölbahçe" (Lakegarden), "Köy" (the Village), "Ormanada" (Forestisland), "Terrace Bahçe" (Terrace Garden) and "Vadi İstanbul Terrace" (Valley Istanbul Terrace). Under this category, several brand names are assigned in English, such as "Aydos Country", "Gardenplanet", "Greenist" and "Greenium", which position these brands for international customers. The brand name "Aydos Country" undertakes a specific reference to Aydos Mountain and transfers the reputation of the mountain to the brand's image. Other brand names include indirect references to nature and greenness, though they are closely linked to landscapes, artistic imagination or alternative comprehensions of the urban space. These brand names include "Resim İstanbul" (Painting Istanbul), "Tual Adalar" (Canvas Princes Islands) and "Tual Bahçekent" (Canvas Bahçekent). These brand names refer to the distinctive promises of gated communities in the sense that they offer a particular distance to the urban center by a different way of seeing the city from outside. The brand names

“painting” and “canvas” position the gated community distant and isolated from the urban center, which makes it possible to experience Istanbul in a more pleasant and imaginative way. The only brand name that does not specifically refer to greenness or naturalness is “Merkez” (Center) project in Zekeriyaköy, which nevertheless include other brand elements such as logo and narratives that convey a green discourse in a powerful way by positioning the green at the center of human life. The creative design of logos accompanies the connotations provided by brand names. Most of the project logos are designed with the emphasis of green color and figures that connote naturalness (Figure 2). The brand names and logos aim to establish a first impression in the audience towards natural and green attributes that gated communities offer as their brand promises. They play a significant role in the communication of the anti-city brand promise of these gated communities.

Figure 2. Logos of Gated Communities¹³



¹³ Logos are retrieved from project websites.

Table 2. Overview of Project Slogans and Main Narratives

Project	Slogan	Main Narrative
Adapark	"Discover Adapark"	Discover the pleasure of nature
Aydos Country	"Turnkey Forest"	The most natural project of Anatolian Side
Bahçekent Flora	"The New Flora of the City"	Life where you can find the opportunities of the city and nature together
Bahçetepe İstanbul	"Welcome to Your future"	Istanbul's most beautiful garden
Dekar Asmalı Hayat	"Welcome to a Unique Life"	One side is the sea, the other side is the garden, this is life
Deniz İstanbul	None	A life neighboring the sea
Gardenplanet	None	A happy life project
Gölbahçe	"A Privileged Life in Green and Blue"	A nature where you will be inside everyday
Göl Panorama	None	Your home will be the center of your life
Greenist	"Life Began"	Ready to meet a life with nature, prestige and happiness?
Greenium	"New Life with Increased Quality of Life and Time"	A peaceful place with traditional family life
Köy	"Invest in Your Home Live in Nature"	Unique lifestyle outside the city
Merkez	"Are You Ready to Discover Merkez?"	Suitable for the nature of the human beings
Ormanada	"İstanbul's Best Days Begin Here Every Morning"	Four seasons of green nature
Resim İstanbul	"A New Resim in İstanbul"	At the center of everything
Terrace Bahçe	"A Boutique Concept, Distinguished Life"	Quality, confort, security
Tual Adalar	"Imagine a Point"	Accessible to everywhere with high oxygen
Tual Bahçekent	"Good Life is an Art"	A new life project at the crossroads
Vadi İstanbul Terrace	"İstanbul Ever Green"	Each property offers a unique and utterly different İstanbul experience!

In addition to brand names and logos, slogans and narratives attributed to brands are symbolic elements that contribute to the forming of brand identity. These elements are also discourses that actualize green marketing efforts with the ways in which they promise natural and greener lifestyles in line with an anti-city brand promise. In this respect, slogans and narratives point at the main promises of gated communities and represent nature in different ways (Table 2). The projects' proximity to natural resources such as forest, lake and sea, together with their recreational areas landscaped in green with trees and gardens constitute a common narrative. However, in terms of the architecture, only two projects openly claim that their buildings were designed in accordance with ecological preferences. One of these projects is Bahçetepe İstanbul, with 1476 housing capacity, which declares that the project includes the installation of wind turbines that will provide sustainable energy.¹⁴ The other gated community, Greenist, states that it offers energy saving and soundproof architecture to sustain the most natural and environmental way of living.¹⁵ The total housing capacity of these two projects is 1650, which counts for the 12.4% of total housing capacity that is green marketed. Although the remaining of the projects do perform an environmentalist position in terms of the discourse of green that they attribute to their projects, they do not explain that their buildings are constructed in a way which would do less harm on nature. Avoiding such remarks, the narratives rather focus on the ways in which gated communities positively contribute to the lives of its residents in a greener way. At this point, gated communities are

¹⁴ "Bahçetepe İstanbul" <http://www.bahcetepeistanbul.com.tr/index2.html> accessed on 31.01.2017.

¹⁵ "Greenist" <http://www.greenist.com.tr/index.php#proje> accessed on 31.01.2017.

defined in relation to the benefits they provide for their potential residents, rather than their benefits for the nature.

Several narratives illustrate the ways in which gated communities are defined merely in relation to their benefits for human beings. The narrations point out that nature is a form of a commodity that is exchanged for the well-being of the residents. The elaborations of nature is important in terms of the kinds of discourses emerging from it. Project descriptions show that all gated communities include varying degrees of green areas, from 50% to 80%, most of which are artificially produced by landscaping. As opposed to the life at urban center where apartment blocks are positioned side by side that does not allow any green areas around the buildings, one of the main arguments of these green-gated communities is that the amount of space that buildings cover is less than the amount of green areas. This is a charming attribute that is foregrounded by the narratives, which challenge the chaotic atmosphere of life at urban center. However, the very reason why projects can reserve more green areas is closely related to neoliberal urbanism. Green-gated community projects are located in the peripheral regions of the city, which allows companies to construct on larger lands with less amounts of investment. It is clear that companies can reserve more green areas since the land prices are cheaper in the periphery. Eventually, although posed as a policy for the nature, the amount of green areas is related to the neoliberal urban logic, which deems these green-gated community projects an extension of neoliberal urbanism, together with an anti-city brand promise. The anti-city brand promise is further conveyed to potential consumers by the project narratives that point out the green aspects of an alternative life. The following two sections will first show how the green discourse is established to forge an anti-city brand promise and then point out the ways in which neoliberal urbanism is uttered in these narratives, which take nature as an essential part of the neoliberal urban ideology by means of the green marketing effort.

6. Narrating the Anti-City with Green Discourse

Websites of gated community projects offer various narratives that put emphasis on the benefits of natural life as opposed to the chaotic atmosphere of the life at the urban center. Located at the peripheral regions of the city, these gated communities propose themselves as alternatives for individuals who feel disillusioned with the dehumanizing aspects of city life. The project website of Bahçetepe Istanbul announces the following:

Some of us have families who migrated to Istanbul, some of us came here for jobs or education. Some of us chose to live in Istanbul just because we loved it. We all lived joyfully in this city. But there were moments, when we got bored of Istanbul's metropolitan life, and wished that it was possible to live in a place where we breath comfortably, hear the sounds of birds by lying down the ground, our children can play in safe and joy, a peaceful life made up of green and soil... Now there is a project which can find a solution to your wishes...¹⁶

Located in Başakşehir with 1476 housing capacity, Bahçetepe Istanbul constructs a narrative that is directed to the urban middle-class; particularly families who migrated from Anatolian cities to Istanbul for education or job opportunities. The particular social class that it addresses, namely the migrants from Anatolian cities, are individuals whose previous lives were more interacted with nature due to the lesser degrees of urbanization. Therefore, the longing for the green and natural homeland is a common motive among migrants in Istanbul. The narrative is significant in the sense that it makes a clear distinction between Istanbul's metropolitan life and the alternative that it promises in nature. The narrative focusses on the lack of the natural that metropolitan life fails to supply and offers its potential residents to fulfill their desires of the green.

Disillusionment from the chaotic life at the urban center is further stressed by the project website of Köy project at Zekeriyaköy neighborhood. The word "Köy" means "village" in Turkish and is often associated to the alternative of urban life, which Istanbulites long for. The project describes the gated community as "Very different from traditional city life... Simple through its unique life style, yet fully equipped to respond to your requirements..." In this sense, the project explicitly promises an anti-city life setting and integrates this promise into its brand identity. Besides, by promising its residents with the opportunity of "Living outside the city is as beautiful as being in the city", the project attributes "life in Köy" with "high standards" that are "well blended within the nature". Different that Bahçetepe Istanbul project, Köy communicates to the upper-middle class Istanbulites rather than migrants. Köy includes a shopping area called "ÇarşıKöy" (ShopVillage), which offers a space "where the residents will be for their daily shopping needs, where

¹⁶ "Bahçetepe İstanbul" <http://www.bahcetepeistanbul.com.tr/page.php?f=hakkinda1> accessed on 31.01.2017.

children would spend quality time, close to open spaces". Moreover, the narrative further stresses that "all sorts of requirements are to be met at ÇarşıKÖY at a serene pace, breathing fresh air, and without the mess and turmoil of the city." The emphasis on "requirements" differentiate the gated community life from a simple village life and indicates that the necessities with regard to the urban life of individuals are supplied within the community itself. Therefore, the project maintains its anti-city promise by at the same time not isolating itself from the requirements of urbanism. Köy project discursively establishes itself in contradistinction with the city, which is associated with "mess and turmoil", instead offering "nature" and "peace". It also points at the damages done on individuals by the city life and stresses the importance of health by offering cycling, trekking and running tracks that are "surrounded by trees, imbued with plenty of oxygen, would create moments of total solitude while improving your health".¹⁷ Similar to Bahçetepe Istanbul, Köy offers an alternative lifestyle with an emphasis on nature directed towards different social classes. Green marketing discourses show that the lives provided by gated communities do not fully abandon its ties with the urban life, but openly performs an anti-city position.

As another gated community at Zekeriyaköy communicated particularly to upper-middle class Istanbulites, Merkez Zekeriyaköy philosophizes its foundational motives by constituting its anti-city brand promise as follows:

Human beings have always built their homes within the green in the nature as they had switched over to the settled life with fewer floors and at places near the water. This is because, this form of living was the closest living concept to the nature of the human being. The green has diminished as buildings with lesser storeys had been transformed into multi-storey buildings and people have also moved away from the water. While Istanbul, which is one of the world metropolises, is consuming the energy of all of ours every day during the business life, isn't there a place within this city, which is near the sea, which is within the greens, which is orderly and modern and with low rise buildings and which is very near to the city indeed?¹⁸

The narrative forefronts the fundamental necessities of human beings and thus undertakes a historical evaluation of transformations that settlements went through. Challenging the life at urban center with multi-storey buildings with the lack of green spaces, the project promises an alternative life that is more humane. The idea of the "center" is associated to green areas that are friendlier to the fundamental needs of humankind as opposed to the city life.

¹⁷ "Köy" http://www.koy.com.tr/en/koyde_hayat.php accessed on 31.01.2017.

¹⁸ "Merkez Zekeriyaköy" <http://merkezzekeriyakoy.com/en/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

Furthermore, the project also makes advantage of Zekeriyaköy's brand image by posing it as "the most important living center that is suitable for the nature of the human being" in Istanbul. While the narrative points out the disillusionment of urban life by philosophizing it with historical references, it also negotiates its position to the urban setting by drawing attention to its proximity to urban center. Bahçetepe Istanbul, Köy and Merkez gated communities all bear proximities to the city's main transportation axis such as TEM, which provides its residence with the opportunity to enjoy a natural life without engaging in the tiring pace of life at the city. In this sense, their narratives of green marketing focus more on disillusionment of city life and the benefits of life that has access to nature in varying degrees. The anti-city position is furthered and integrated into a more explicit statement reproducing neoliberal urbanism in the narratives of other green-gated communities.

Figure 3. Location indicators of Aydos Country (left) and Greenist (right) gated communities¹⁹



¹⁹ Pictures are retrieved from project websites.

7. The Urban in Green-Gated Communities

In addition to the narratives that promote a green and a natural life as a solution for the disillusionment from city life, there are several other gated communities branded with references to the ideology of neoliberal urbanism. Although the natural attributes of gated communities are still provided as the strengths of these projects, the narratives tend to underscore the ways in which residents of these communities will be empowered to better engage with the requirements of urban center. In this regard, one of the taglines of Aydos Country project is “turnkey forest”, which offers potential customers that the project will provide a life with access to Aydos Forest with all amenities included.²⁰ The expression “turnkey forest” treats nature as a commodity, which will transform the residents’ lives once it is consumed. Claiming itself as “the Anatolian Side’s most natural project”, Aydos country reveals its location and maintains an anti-city position by asserting that, “Istanbul is looking for the most natural, it finds that natural in Sancaktepe.” The narrative draws attention to the proximity and efficiency of the green-gated community in its relation to urban center, as it shows the number of minutes that various facilities are away from Aydos Country, such as collages in five minutes, hospital in twelve minutes, and university in twenty minutes (Figure 3). The narrative continues to explain that the project is located at the center of “future Istanbul” and approximate to relevant facilities. Aydos Country promises an alternative life that is openly anti-city; yet this promise is further integrated into a neoliberal urban vision as the project defines itself in “future Istanbul”, an alternative-utopian city of the future, which is not anti-urban. Contrarily, it suggests that it will replace the city with a better one by means of its urbanizing mission. Eventually, what Aydos Country offers is a way of empowering, strengthening and mobilizing the urban resident so that he/she can be better prepared to compete at neoliberal relations within the urban life. Nature is presented as an empowering agent and it is valuable as long as it contributes to the empowerment of the residents. This is the crucial point where neoliberal urbanism utilizes the green discourse to expand the market to the city’s peripheral and natural spaces.

²⁰ “Aydos Country” <http://www.aydoscountry.com/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

In a similar vein, Bahçekent Flora offers the slogan “The New Flora of the City”, which points at a life space where “you can find all the necessities of the city and can be together with nature at the same time”.²¹ Gölbağçe project emphasizes the togetherness of nature and urban efficiency by suggesting, “Sultanbeyli has important fresh water resources which improves the quality of life”, and at the same time “is located very close to main transportation channels”.²² Providing a moving picture captured in nature, the website of Resim İstanbul suggests that the project is located “at the center of everything”, only minutes away from hospitals, collages, the airport and other facilities.²³ Tual Adalar makes a similar brand promise regarding its proximity to urban life when it calls for the audience on the entrance of its website, “imagine a point ... Sabiha Gökçen Airport is 9 minutes, Kartal metro station 3 minutes, Kartal pier 6 minutes, TEM 12 minutes.”²⁴ Another Tual brand, Tual Bahçekent reminds that it is located at the crossroads of “new İstanbul of the future” and narrates that families will a gated community filled in green landscape at the center of new İstanbul accessible to all main roads and services.²⁵

In another green marketing effort, Greenist asks the following question to its potential customers: “Are you ready to meet a life that hosts nature, prestige and happiness?”²⁶ The discourse of new life is a common motive in the marketing of gated communities. In this case, the discourse includes nature as a counterpart of a new life to be achieved. The narration further suggests that Greenist is a perfect option for those who seek “to live İstanbul without getting too much away from it... to be in nature without going too far away.” Besides, the narrative informs about the location of the project in details, “only 6.5 km to the airport, 6 km to E-5, 5.5 km to TEM, 250 meters walking distance to metro station and access to nearby shopping malls without going into traffic” (Figure 3). The narrative shows that the gated community provides efficient access to the urban amenities including transportation axis and shopping malls, which helps individual to experience these amenities by bypassing the turmoil of the city. At this point, what the branded gated communities do is to integrate the individual better to the practices of neoliberal urbanism, rather than sustaining a break

²¹ “Bahçekent Flora” <http://www.bahcekentflora.com/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

²² “Gölbağçe Evleri” <http://www.golbahceevleri.com.tr/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

²³ “Resim İstanbul” <https://www.resimistanbul.com/en/home-page/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

²⁴ “Tual Adalar” <http://www.tualadalar.com/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

²⁵ “Tual Bahçekent” <http://www.tualbahcekent.com/> accessed on 31.01.2017.

²⁶ “Greenist” <http://www.greenist.com.tr/index.php#proje> accessed on 31.01.2017.

from this ideology by means of nature. The narratives promise a new life for their residents that is distinct from the city yet interconnected with urban life. The narratives suggest that the green-gated communities offer an anti-city life setting, but reminds that it is not an anti-urban one and is linked to the urban area in all respects. Furthermore, green-gated communities promise its residents an empowered way to connect with the urban life by consuming nature and the green. Green-gated community projects incorporate nature as an element of neoliberal urbanism and offer an anti-city brand promise as an alternative to deal with the negative consequences of urban life.

7. Conclusion

This article aimed to draw attention to a recently emerged phenomenon in Istanbul's gated community projects, namely, green-gated communities. In Istanbul, the greening of gated communities has been relatively a new phenomenon that took place throughout the 2010s. The increasing concern towards global environmental issues paved the way for a public interest in the sounding of Istanbul's urban problems particularly with the loss of green areas. It is obvious that construction companies took interest in sustaining the demand for greener lifestyles. Consequently, a green discourse was attached to the marketing efforts regarding Istanbul's gated communities. These gated communities were branded with particular motives that include brand names, logos, slogans and accompanying narratives that convey the brand promise to audiences. With the discussion of brand identity elements, this aim of this article was to argue that the green marketing is utilized as a strategy for neoliberal urbanism to utilize an anti-city position as a brand promise, rather than an anti-urban one.

Istanbul's green-gated communities do not call for residents to leave urban life behind to begin a new life in solely ecological spaces isolated from the city. The narratives suggest a new life alternative to the chaos of the city, which is characterized by nature and green in Istanbul's less populated peripheral areas. The green-gated communities further draw attention to their proximities to urban life and offer a life setting where residents can enjoy the green by at the same time not abandoning the urban life altogether; which is the founding motive for the anti-city position that reproduces and even strengthens its ties with urban center. Brand promise of these projects offers green as an asset by which the residents of gated communities can be empowered and refreshed so that they can better

adapt themselves to the requirements of urban life. Eventually, a green marketing discourse is incorporated by neoliberal urbanism to expand the market towards the city's peripheral areas urbanizing with a green nuance; as one of the projects declare, towards the "future Istanbul". The future of the city in terms of the increase in green-gated communities is also important to observe the transformation in Istanbul's social landscape. Green marketing provides consumers with a chance to enjoy nature without losing ties with the urban life; yet it at the same time provides a certain amount of symbolic capital to its residents by prestige and status for middle and upper-middle classes. In this regard, undertaking fieldworks to analyze how the residents relate themselves to these communities can provide useful analyses in future studies that can address the segregation of urban space along class lines initiated by green marketing efforts.

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