

# Enclosed Democracy

What role do gated communities play in the  
democratization process in Brazil?

# Abstract

This thesis looks into the question of what role gated communities have played in the process of democratization in Brazil. To answer the question primary data collected during field work in São Paulo in Brazil has been analyzed. Material from in total ten semi-structured interviews with residents in the gated communities Alphaville 1 in Barueri and Condominio da Sucupira in Carapicuíba, two semi-structured interviews with two journalists whereof one on O Estado de São Paulo and one on Folha de São Paulo and one semi-structured interview with a developer of gated communities have been used. Theories by Robert D. Putnam on social capital, theories by Samuel P. Huntington and Robert A. Dahl on democratization, and a theoretical framework by Edward J. Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder on gated communities was used. An interesting finding is that gated communities affects social capital and market economy.

*Key words:* gated communities, social capital, democratization, São Paulo, Brazil

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The end result however is completely on me, with whatever errors and such that might exist.

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# 1 Introduction

I am writing these words while a historic moment takes place in Brazil. After a decision in the Brazilian deputy chamber, the Brazilian Senate has decided to formally open the process of impeachment against president Dilma Rousseff. She is accused of reducing budget deficits by taking state bank loans (BBC, 2016). Even though Dilma Rousseff won the last presidential election in 2014 against the opposition leader Aécio Neves, the Petrobras scandal has emerged and other cover ups have led to a strong public opinion against corruption that hasn't played in president Rousseff's favour (Economist, 2016). And people aren't too fond of politicians. The middle class has gone to the streets and made their voices heard by joining manifestations against political corruption, impunity and the stealing of taxpayer's money for own purposes (Flynn & Soto, 2016). Historically the middle class has been important when it comes to larger political changes in Brazil and when the middle class set's their foot down, politicians tend to listen and react (Huntington, 1997).

Brazil is a young democracy. There was an early democratic period between the years 1946 and 1964. A military dictatorship regime took over between the years 1964 and 1985. This stalled the process of democratization somewhat which however was taken up again with a transition period from the first half of the 1970s and was taken up formally from 1985 until this very day.

Gated communities emerged in Brazil in the first half of the 1970s inspired by the ones in the United States of America. Alphaville was a pioneer, which was built in 1973 in the municipal Barueri in the north western outskirts of the metropolitan area of São Paulo (Marques, 2015). In the beginning gated communities were built for and populated by upper middle and higher income groups (Blakely & Snyder, 1997). The rise and spreading of gated communities in Brazil happens to coincide within a particular time frame, a period when Brazil has gone through a process of democratization (Huntington, 1997). Since the 1970s gated communities have been further developed into different shapes and sizes. And nowadays gated communities aren't a luxury only for the chosen few in metropolitan areas, they are spreading throughout the country and even to lower income groups.

People move to gated communities out of various reasons, for example economic, social and security reasons. Living in gated communities segregates and separates people. But how does gated communities affect the world outside? Questions like that have triggered me and made me want to look further into it.

Marko Huttunen  
Lund, in May 2016

## 2

# Purpose & Research Question

This thesis looks into if and how gated communities might have made an impact on the democratization process in Brazil. Gated communities emerged in São Paulo in Brazil in the beginning of the 1970s (Marques, 2015). São Paulo is the financial capital not only of Brazil but of Latin America. During the military dictatorship before the democratization, during the process of democratization and until this very day Brazil's economy has grown exponentially (Huntington, 1993; World Bank, 2015). In this period of development of democracy and market economy São Paulo plays an important role. But all is not sunshine and rainbows. During the process of metropolization of São Paulo in the 1970s and the 1980s Brazil and São Paulo was hit hard by social and economic crisis which lead to an increase of violence and crime (Huttunen, 2016). The crisis acted as a push factor which made people in higher middle income groups and higher income groups seek refuge in gated communities which offered a more secure and calm housing environment.

Another way of handling the fear of violence and crime could have been for the upper middle and higher income groups to have fled São Paulo and moved to other places in Brazil or to other countries. Instead these groups moved to gated communities and decided to stay in the metropolitan area of São Paulo and thereby contributing to the development (Ibid.).

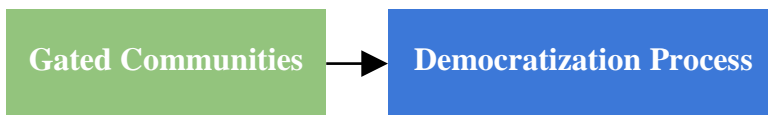
When the state fails to uphold its responsibilities and what people expect of it, people's trust, confidence and hope for the state decreases (Dahl, 1998). Some turn to other actors for solutions. The gated way of living is a segregated way of living (Blakely & Snyder, 1997). Gates, walls and fences separate people from one another even more than just by living in separate neighborhoods without physical barriers as gates, walls and fences. With gated communities segregation and differences increases between those that live inside of gated communities and those that live outside.

### 2.1 Research Question

The research question is: *What role do gated communities play in the democratization process in Brazil?*

# 3 Theory

To be able to answer the research question: *What role do gated communities play in the democratization process in Brazil?* some definitions are required. What does gated community mean and what is the democratization process? Are the two somehow connected and can gated communities affect the democratization process? Is it possible to answer the research question with a causal model that looks the following way (see Figure 3.1):



**Figure 3.1** Causal Model: From Gated Communities to Democratization

The model would imply that there not only exists a connection between gated communities and the democratization process, but by applying the arrow between them there is an immediate causality. Action in the box of *Gated communities* on the left leads to reaction in the box of *Democratization Process* on the right (Esaiasson et al., 2003). Cause and effect!

## 3.1 Social Capital

Robert D. Putnam has studied the concept of social capital for quite some time. During the 1970s and 1980s he studied civic societies in Italy. He has presented his findings in his book *Making Democracy Work* from 1993. Then he studied the civic society in the US. In his book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* which was published 2000, Putnam writes about the declining social capital in the United States since the 1950s.

In *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam shows that civic societies differed between the southern and the northern regions of the country. Putnam found an explanation in that the civic society affected social capital which in turn affected political institutions and their level of performance. The southern parts of Italy had weaker civic societies which lead to lower levels of social capital which caused lower level of performance from political institutions, and on the contrary stronger civic societies in the northern parts of Italy would lead to higher levels of social capital which would result in lower levels of performance from political institutions. It is a bottom-up perspective that

Putnam provides, which means that social capital is produced amongst the citizens and not the opposite.

In *Bowling Alone*, Putnam shows how the engagement in civic society has declined in the US since the 1950s which also happens to coincide with the fact that less people vote, attend meetings and are engaged politically. Putnam means that the level of social capital is important for a strong democracy.

But what is social capital? Starting with game theory and the tragedy of the commons in *Making Democracy Work* Putnam explains the concept of social capital as being produced, or built on trust to and cooperation with other people. And through this interaction and cooperation in civic society, a higher level of trust between people and even for political institutions and politicians is created. In the long run it applies for democracy as well.

Putnam emphasizes cooperation as something good, all involved parties benefit from it and amongst other examples the following is mentioned: “A *public good*, such as clean air or safe neighborhoods, can be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of whether he contributes to its provision. Under ordinary circumstances, therefore, no one has an incentive to contribute to providing the public good, and too little is produced, causing all to suffer.” (Putnam, 1992:180)

But all don't suffer. With market economy, products and services not only can but also has replaced parts of what earlier could be accomplished by a stronger civic society. Gated communities can be seen as such a product which can be supplied on a market in a society with low levels of social capital (Blakely & Snyder, 1997). In a market economy basically any product or service can be supplied, but if the supply isn't met with demand, the supplier will eventually cease supplying the product or service. That basically means that in a market economy in a society with a higher level of social capital people would have a higher level of trust in each other and for the institutions chosen to take care of what they are chosen to take care of. In case of institution failure, people would eventually turn to other solutions for solutions for their problems.

If social capital is added to the causal model presented above (see Figure 3.1), it could look as presented below (see Figure 3.2).



**Figure 3.2** Causal Model: Social Capital to Gated communities to Social Capital to Democratization Process.

This model would imply that low levels of social capital causes people to move into gated communities. The gated communities in turn causes change in people living there which has the effect of an alteration of social capital, negatively. Finally the social capital causes effect in the democratization process.



## 3.2 Gated Communities

Gated communities are residential areas that have restricted access. The residential areas have perimeters, usually gates and walls and/or fences. The access is usually maintained by guards or doormen and residents decide who shall be given access to the area. Gated communities were originally developed in the United States as a luxury for the chosen few, that is people from upper middle income groups and even higher income groups (Blakely & Snyder, 1997). Today gated communities come in different shapes and sizes, even for lower income groups which is a phenomenon that is spreading in the metropolitan area of São Paulo (Huttunen 2016).

People have lived inside of gates and walls for centuries. Historically the gates and walls have offered protection from the outside world. In the second half of the 1900s gated communities started emerging in the United States. More precisely in the 1960s and 1970s (Blakely & Snyder, 1997). The name gated *community* could imply that the residential areas are made to be a sort of social institution, a form of community. Blakely and Snyder write: "Gated communities have their antecedents in modern utopias, but they have been transformed into a totally new product, organized and marketed as a solution to contemporary problems rather than as a search for a better communal system" (Blakely & Snyder, 1997:15).

Alphaville 1 was built in 1973 in Barueri by Renato de Albuquerque and Yojiro Takaoka (Marques, 2015). But the pioneer is no longer the sole gated community in Barueri, there are 12 other residential areas that go under the trademark of Alphaville in Barueri and its neighboring municipal Santana de Parnaíba. And there are more gated residential areas that have been built since, such as Tamboré, Aldeia da Serra and Genesis. Building Alphaville 1 attracted the US information technology company Hewlett-Packard that established in Barueri and contributed to attract more companies to establish in Barueri (Ibid.).

## 3.3 The Democratization Process

Democratization is in short explained as the process of transitioning a country's authoritarian system of governance to a democratic one instead and consolidating that process (Huntington, 1991). Democratization has been and still is different in each country, but applying a broad perspective, similarities can be extracted from each particular country, generalized and grouped. Because democratization is a process it is, until the process has been consolidated, to be considered a work in progress.

Samuel P. Huntington has in his book *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, presented studies on the process of democratization in general, but the last step of the democratization process in particular. As the title gives away, Huntington does not look into democratization processes after the late twentieth century, or to be more precise after 1991. Huntington problematizes the concept of democratization and categorizes the development of governmental systems in countries into different stages in the democratization process, something he calls *waves*.

Even though Huntington claims that “history is messy and political changes do not sort themselves into neat historical boxes” (1991:15), that “it is often arbitrary to attempt to specify precisely when a regime transition occurs” (1991:15) and that “it is also arbitrary to attempt to specify precisely the dates of democratization waves and reverse waves” he however does admit that “it is, nonetheless, often useful to be arbitrary” (1991:16) and dates the waves of the regime changes accordingly:

**Table 3.1** Democratization Waves

Type of regime change	Years	Years (Brazil)
First, long wave of democratization	1828-1926	
First reverse wave	1922-1942	
Second, short wave of democratization	1943-1962	1946-1964
Second reverse wave	1958-1975	1964-1985
Third wave of democratization	1974-	1985-

Source: Huntington, 1991:14-15

### 3.3.1 The Importance of the Middle Class

The second reverse wave in Brazil saw its birth with a military coup in 1964 that overthrew the civilian government and replaced it with a military dictatorship, which Huntington classifies as a bureaucratic authoritarianism. The creation of the authoritarian regime was supported by “the business community” (Huntington, 1991:68) and the coup was “overwhelmingly supported” by the middle class (Huntington, 1991: 67). During the military dictatorship Brazil had some years of economic growth labeled as the years of the economic miracle. Between the years 1968 and 1973 “its GNP grew at an average rate of close to 10 percent a year” (Huntington, 1991:70). The GDP was \$33,8759 billion in 1968 and more than doubled to \$79,2791 billion in 1973 (World Bank, 20165).

The ones that benefitted the most during the prosperous years was the business community, the middle class and the population of large and developed cities. And it was these groups that benefitted the most that started supporting change to a more democratic system and they “played crucial roles in promoting the transitions to democracy”, that is the third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991:68).

It was a democratization process that was determined by the president Ernesto Geisel to be a slow, gradual and sure process. He carried out the process until 1978 when president João Figueiredo took over and continued the democratization process. He broadened it and it went under the name *abertura*, which is Portuguese and translates to *opening* (Huntington, 1991).

Even though the different waves in Brazil have been categorized, Huntington writes: "It is customary to date the arrival of democracy in Brazil in January 1985, when the electoral college chose a civilian president. In fact, however, there was no clear break; the genius of the Brazilian transformation is that it is virtually impossible to say at what point Brazil stopped being a dictatorship and became a democracy." (1991:126). It started sometime after the extreme economic progress in 1968-1973, and went on as Geisel determined, slowly, gradually and surely.

### 3.3.2 Conditions for Democracy

The transitioning from authoritarian systems to democratic systems has been widely studied, even by the Supreme Court in the US (Huntington, 1997). Some theories have better than other been able to pinpoint variables that are relevant for explaining why the transitioning occurs.

Robert A. Dahl makes a distinction between essential and favorable conditions for democracy (Dahl, 1998). He claims that there might be more conditions, but he lists the following (1998:147):

#### **Essential**

1. Control of military and police by elected officials
2. Democratic beliefs and political culture
3. No strong foreign control hostile to democracy

#### **Favorable**

1. A modern market economy and society
2. Weak subcultural pluralism

It is however important to remember that conditions for democracy doesn't *create* democracy! (Dahl, 1998)

### 3.3.3 The Tension Between Democracy and Market Economy

Dahl emphasizes the association between democracy and market economy. They are often seen together and they each support the existence of the other and prosper from it, but they are not requirements for one another to exist. The relationship between the two conceals a paradox, which is that in the market economy people are unequal and have different access to assets, whilst the same people in the democratic system are at least normatively to be seen as equals, but in practice the differences created by market economy lead to inequality in the political realm. This paradox is described to cause permanent tension, and apart

from the tension Dahl concludes that “we cannot escape the conclusion that a market capitalist economy, the society it produces, and the economic growth it typically engenders are all highly favorable conditions for developing and maintaining democratic political institutions” (1998:159).

## 4

# Methods

In this thesis primary data is used, material from interviews that were conducted during field work in São Paulo in Brazil between the end of November 2015 until the end of January 2016. That field trip was made possible financially by SIDA through a scholarship for minor field studies which I was granted by the Department of Human Geography in Lund. The purpose of the field trip was to collect material for a bachelor thesis in human geography. The research question of that bachelor thesis is: *Why are gated communities spreading to lower income groups in São Paulo?* (Huttunen, 2016). All collected material wasn't used in the bachelor thesis. Therefor previously unused material will be presented and analyzed, due to its relevance to answer to the research question: *What role do gated communities play in the democratization process in Brazil?* The material is interviews that have been conducted with people because they provide different perspectives.

Five semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents of the gated community Alphaville 1 for higher income groups in the municipal Barueri in the north western outskirts of the metropolitan area of São Paulo. Another five semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents of the gated community Condominio da Sucupira for lower income groups in the neighboring municipal Carapicuíba. The respondents were chosen out of in total 51 respondents that first answered questions in a structured interview. The reason that these ten respondents also answered questions in semi-structured interviews is because they showed interest in discussing the questions during the structured interviews and when asked they agreed to be interviewed in a semi-structured interview as well. When choosing whom out of the 51 to interview it wasn't done randomly. I have attempted to accomplish diversity regarding gender and age. It is risky to chose respondents that show particular interest in discussing certain topics. The ones not showing interest won't get interviewed. The aim with the interviews was to get a notion of opinions, values and thoughts that exists among the residents in gated communities.

The two journalists and the developer of gated communities for lower income groups were chosen as key people to conduct semi-structured interviews with. The journalists work with housing issues on a daily basis on the newspapers that they work for. And the developer of gated communities was chosen because he works more practically, hands on so to speak, with gated communities.

The interviews with residents were conducted in their homes. The questions were asked verbally and they responded the same way. I got in touch with the respondents by using the door-to-door method, that is by knocking on people's doors or by being recommended by someone in their gated community to interview them (Flowerdew & Martin, 2005). Access to the gated communities

was gained by a so called gatekeeper who granted me access (Ibid.). In Alphaville it was my godmother Kim Östrand Rosén and in Condomínio da Sucupira it was the gardener of my godmother, Jones Leonel.

All residents have been made anonymous except for age ranges and genders, which can be found in the references.

The interviews with the journalists were conducted verbally in their respective offices. I got in touch with them by calling the newspapers, asking for journalists that work with housing issues and finally by booking an interview.

The interview with the developer of gated communities was conducted in his car, verbally, while riding the streets of Carapicuíba between meetings that he had to attend. I got in touch with him by personally visiting his office and setting up a meeting with him. I was recommended to interview him by a friend of mine that has worked with him in a charity project of planting trees in lower income neighbourhoods.

As a method semi-structured interviews has its advantages, for example to gain more understanding because broad and open questions can be asked which allows the respondent to choose in which direction they want to take the interview (Esaiasson et al., 2003). The method of semi-structured interviews also opens up for the possibility to ask questions in a way that fit the situation, more in form of a conversation or discussion (Flowerdew & Martin, 2005). Semi-structured interviews can be used to collect material that can be qualitatively analyzed. Qualitative material produces subjective opinions, an individual person's values and thoughts. It is not to be considered as objective truths. Qualitative material has strengths but it also has weaknesses and limits the results.

All interviews were conducted in Portuguese by me and recorded in two copies, one with a dictaphone and the other with a cell phone (iPhone 4). The material has been transcribed in Portuguese by me after getting home from Brazil. All translation from Portuguese into English has been made by me so errors, misunderstandings or issues that have been lost in translation is completely my fault and not the respondents or anyone else's.

Digital copies of the recorded material can be arranged for research purpose and so on. Please contact me for further information.

# 5 Empirical Analysis

## 5.1 Corruption in Relation to Social Capital

The foundation Transparency International yearly presents reports about the level of corruption in the world. In short: “Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It can be classified as grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs.” (Transparency International, 2016). The level of corruption in a country and people's perception of corruption has an impact on the confidence and trust that people have for political institutions, politicians and in the long run for the democratic system (Dahl, 1998). In other words, the level of corruption is a way of measuring social capital in a country (Putnam, 1991). In the Corruption Perception Index the perception of corruption in countries is rated on a scale from 0 to 100 where 100 is the maximum, which is positive, possible rating and 0 is the minimum, which is negative, possible rating. The Corruption Perception Index was first made in 1995, but the way that it has been done has changed over the years. In the Corruption Perception Index Brazil scored 43 points in 2012, 42 points in 2013, 43 in 2014, and 38 in 2015. The other countries that scored 38 points along with Brazil in 2015 were Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, India, Thailand, Tunisia and Zambia (Transparency International, 2015).

The development for the perception of corruption is negative for Brazil during these last couple of years, but it unfortunately doesn't give a desirable historic overview, although it reveals that Brazil doesn't score that well at the moment. For the process of democratization to evolve in a positive direction, it is important that the level of corruption is kept low for higher levels of social capital.

## 5.2 Interviews With Residents

To get a notion of how the level of social capital is amongst the residents in gated communities I interviewed residents in Alphaville 1 and Condominio da Sucupira. One of the questions that I asked during the interviews was if they have trust in politicians, in the political system and in the democratic system to be able to make necessary changes for a better world.

## 5.2.1 Interviews in Alphaville 1

**Resident #1** responded “Well, the system, we can say that a system exists that has possibilities to be improved, but the politicians that are there don’t serve for anything. Each election we simply don’t have anyone to vote for. If there at least would be some good choices, but there are only a few if any at all” (2016-01-12). It didn’t seem that he had much confidence in the politicians, so I asked him if he did and he replied “Yeah... No!”.

**Resident #2** started by saying that she doesn’t think that this question can be made in Brazil today, and she said: “Because things are really bad. There is no... Nowadays there is no confidence, no... In this government that we have currently, no.” (2016-01-12). I mentioned that there are other politicians as well, besides the government and she replied: “Yes, but where are the good politicians? I don’t know where they are. Out of all the politicians that are in Brasilia, there are only a few good. But where are they?” she asked rhetorically (Ibid.).

**Resident #3** did not hesitate to answer. She didn’t even let me finish the question before she answered: “None!” (2016-01-12). So I finished the question and she replied: “I think that, I think that it’s like this. More than the system, if talking about parliamentarism, democracy, we are facing dictatorship from a far. That is what they want to implement here in Latin America. These Chavistic models.” (Ibid.) referring to the former president Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, and continued: “I’m talking of my reality, of our reality in Brazil. I have zero hope for change, because there is a system which is completely corrupt, corruption is so profound, that if there is one single good person that wants to change anything, many times that person succumbs. So no, I’m going to tell you that I’m feeling very hopeless with the future of Brazil” (Ibid.). But she doesn’t stop there, she elaborates on it: “Even if Dilma leaves and PT leaves” (Ibid.), referring to president Dilma Rousseff and her party, PT, the workers party (Partido dos Trabalhadores), she continues: “but it’s not only them. In all of this there is not much that is the opposite, I think that they have sunk so much and are completing the sinking of this country. We know that corruption isn’t something new” (Ibid.). She sounds dejected, I can almost see the hopelessness in her voice and with experience from situations like this before, she says: “But these are the guys that never had access to power before. Here in Brazil we have a saying: *Quem nunca comeu melado, quando come lambuza*” (Ibid.), which basically means that if a person is given an undeserving advantage, that person will misuse it. An English equivalent would be the proverb: *Set a beggar on a horseback and he will ride to hell*. And she continues: “So, as they’ve never had access before, when they got it they said: “I’m going to steal eeeeeverything”. Do you understand? And the stealing is enormously gigantic. Without any previous counterpart. The level of it. The size of it.” (Ibid.). She’s referring to the Petrobras scandals and other cover ups and explains that the methods that have been used for the stealing have been used before, but not on this scale. And she finishes answering the question with apparent resignation by saying: “They milked! They simply killed the cow. They gave a barbeque. And that’s just not possible, it’s just not possible!” (Ibid.).

**Resident #4** let the question sink in before she prudently answered: “Well. We are kind of non-believers in politicians, right. Let’s say even outside of Brazil as well. In reality I think that, I don’t know which one it would be, I say too much, I’m very Italian.” (2016-01-16), referring to her heritage and continues: “I don’t know how much you think I



should answer, but let's say, well, let's make it short. In the current politicians, none. I don't think that there is any political will for change. I think that the country is really bad taken care of" (Ibid.). I got the feeling that she wanted to say much more, but simply put it elegantly: "They are only looking at their own belly buttons, they don't see the country as a country" (Ibid.).

**Resident #5** answered: "None at all. I have confidence in democracy, but not in these politicians that are currently in government. I think that the country still has much left to advance and needs to improve much. To know what to do to improve public policy for a country to advance, for a state to advance, I think that Brazil moves for a politics of government, where people who is in government are those that are friends of this government and the politics is not for a country that wants to grow, that wants to be different in 30 years from now, everything is very blablabla" (2016-01-18) and she elaborates: "It's very little action, very little planning, very few investments in real public policy that improves the quality of life of the common population at large, that integrates the rich and the poor as a whole, as all are citizens and they should all be respected, not only make politics for misfortunates, politics for everyone and I don't see that in Brazil" (Ibid.). So I asked her if she has seen that before, if there have been governments like that in Brazil before and she answered: "Never, never" (Ibid.). So I asked if it wasn't only the ones in power now and she replied: "No, no, no, in general. But what was believed about the ones in power now was that these new ones would come to make something different, but on the contrary. They are so corrupt, as was the previous ones. They are equal or even worse. Because they preach one thing and then they do something else." (Ibid).

## 5.2.2 Interviews in Condominio da Sucupira

**Resident #1** that was interviewed answered quite shortly: "I have. We always have" (2016-01-13). And she didn't elaborate on that answer. While answering another question about which incentives politicians might have for solving problems with violence and crimes, she didn't address the politicians, but instead she placed the responsibility on the people and said that violence and crime starts at home.

**Resident #2** opened up her answer by saying: "Only a miracle" (2016-01-13) and she continued: "It's difficult. It's difficult because we have lived through situations, and seen people that should have been in favour of the population, who in reality in a real subtle way actually are against" (Ibid.) and she elaborates: "Because when you don't help you end up messing up, and that is being against, against the individual. And the politicians, unfortunately in this, thinks more about themselves and end up forgetting that they were put there to defend the people, defend the nation. And this they don't see, the world" (Ibid.). Connecting to her opening line "Only a miracle" she continues saying: "In the times that we are living, only Jesus Christ to come and change these people, because things are really difficult. If you look at it, it gives the impression of... if you look in the eyes of anyone of them, you are thinking that there is not going to be a single one of them in your favour, in favour of the neediest" (Ibid.). And even though the respondent lives in a gated community for lower income groups, by neediest she says that it's independently of the financial situation. The needy, she says, is whomever they may be. And she continues: "The political system aims more for their pockets, their structure, right, the structure of living well, living comfortably, and really

forgetting about why they really were called to do. Unfortunately it's hard to have a positive vision, very hard" (Ibid.).

**Resident #3** answered short, but clearly: "I don't think that. Not really. Zero. Haha, I think zero" (2016-01-13). I asked if he doesn't have any confidence at all and he answered "No!" (Ibid.) and just shook his head.

**Resident #4** answered "Look, I don't know, because in the beginning they promise so much, they promise, promise and right at the end when they are needed, they disappear. Nobody finds him when they need them, that's the truth" (2016-01-15). Earlier in the interview Resident #4 told me that she doesn't like politicians and has never liked them. She said that she doesn't think that people in her gated community has any favourite political candidates with kind of an adoration for their candidate, that they support and fight for until they win. In her gated community, she doesn't see that and she thinks that the poor candidates suffer, and then she laughs and continues explaining that she thinks that people in gated communities for lower income groups vote because they have to vote and refers to Brazil implementing a system of compulsory voting, which means that people are obliged to vote on election day, at least those between 18 och 70 years. She doesn't think that her fellow residents have confidence in politicians. She says that it hasn't got to do with her living in a gated community, and it's not because she's rich because she says she isn't, no, she doesn't feel rich, she has never been rich. And she has never had a favourite candidate. Earlier in life, when she lived more on the countryside her father used to force her and her siblings to vote for a particular candidate which he chose. Today she explains that she has been liberated from voting because she has passed the maximum age and she only votes if she wants to.

**Resident #5** answered and elaborated on the matter by saying: "I have 50% confidence only, because 50% work correctly and 50% don't. So 50% want to improve the world and the country and 50% are not even there. 50% don't care, they steal, they steal. They divert the budget of the country, don't think of the poor that are in need, they don't think of the weaker ones. So I only have confidence in 50%, in 50% I trust" (2016-01-15).

### 5.2.3 What was said – in and between the lines

The overall impression that I get is that there is a widespread lack of confidence for politicians in both gated communities, except for one resident in the gated community for lower income groups, that has 50% confidence, and another one that answers the question asked by saying that she has confidence in the politicians and thinks that others have too. In relation to Dahl's conditions for democracy and in particular the first essential condition "Control of military and police by elected officials" (Dahl, 1998:147), that control comes with a responsibility. If and when the obligations of military and police isn't fulfilled as security becomes a widespread problem in society, then that leads to the lack of confidence and trust in the responsible, which are the politicians. And in turn that leads to a lower level of social capital which affects the democratization process negatively.

The Corruption Perception Index reveals a perception of high levels of corruption in the country (Transparency International, 2015). Corruption causes lack of

confidence. In several answers corruption is mentioned, directly or indirectly. One resident even mentions the “enormous gigantic” (Resident #3, 2016-01-12) size of the corruption as she refers to the Petrobras scandal and other cover ups. In relation to Dahl’s second essential condition for democracy, “Democratic beliefs and political culture” (Dahl, 1998:147), corruption in general but amongst politicians in particular is counterproductive.

In spite of the lack of confidence in the politicians and in part the political system, I do however get the broad impression that the residents have confidence for and trust in the democratic system. The only politician mentioned by name in the answers is the president Dilma Rousseff. She’s simply called Dilma by the public. And the only political party mentioned is her party, the workers party, PT. Resident’s in the gated community for higher income group mention a lack of good politicians, someone they can trust in. And in the gated community for lower income groups they lack politicians that look after the neediest, people in the same income group as themselves. In spite of the respondents lack of confidence and trust, none of the respondents mentioned neither a politician by name nor a political party that could turn their confidence or the situation of Brazil around. My interpretation is that the politicians and the political system have really reached rock bottom when it comes to trust and confidence. The risk with this situation in the long run, in relation to Putnam’s ideas of social capital, is that if the level of it decreases and in relation to Dahl’s second essential condition for democracy, is that it might hurt the democratic beliefs.

### 5.3 Freedom in Relation to Social Capital

In the report Freedom in the World by the foundation Freedom House political rights and civil liberties in countries are ranked yearly on a scale from 0 to 100 where 0 is the lowest, that is negative, possible rating and 100 the maximum, that is positive, possible rating. In the 2016 report Brazil scores a total of 81 and is given the freedom rating of 2 (Freedom House, 2016a). Brazil scores slightly higher than Hungary (79) and Bulgaria (80) which also score a freedom rating of 2, but they are the two countries that score the lowest among the member nations in the European Union. Brazil's development during the last 21 years has been positive according to the report Freedom in the World and Brazil has moved from a 3 to a 2 (Freedom House, 2015a; 2016a).

In the report Freedom of the Press, the level of press freedom in the world is ranked on a scale from 0 to 100 where 0 is the best, that is positive possible rating and 100 is the worst, which is negative, possible rating. In the 2016 report Brazil scores a total of 46 and thereby considered as partly free (Freedom House, 2016b). Brazil scores worse than Greece (48) which is the lowest ranked country of the members of the European Union, followed by Hungary (40) and Bulgaria (40). Brazil's development during the last 21 years has been negative according to the report Freedom of the Press and Brazil has moved from scoring 30 in 1995 to 46 in 2016 (Freedom House, 2015b; 2016b).

The reports by Freedom House show that Brazil is developing in the right direction when it comes to political rights and civil liberties, but the development of press freedom is of the worrying kind. The press has the important task of critically examining and investigating the ones in power in the country, be it the politicians, political institutions, companies, NGOs or powerful individuals. If the press only is

considered as partly free, they don't have the full possibility to examine and investigate the ones in power, it might not get reported and that might affect the process of democratization.

## 5.4 Interviews with Journalists

To understand more about the connection between on the one hand contradictory development of freedom and on the other an increase of gated communities I interviewed two journalists. On Brazil's fourth largest paid for newspaper in print and third largest digitally O Estado de São Paulo (Associação Nacional de Jornais, 2015) I interviewed Claudio Marques, editor of the real estate pages. And on Brazil's third largest paid for newspaper in print and largest digitally Folha de São Paulo (Ibid.) I interviewed Deise de Oliveira, deputy editor of the real estate pages. I asked them if the development the last 20 years of freedom that Freedom House has reported about might have influenced or even significantly influenced the development of gated communities in São Paulo.

### 5.4.1 Claudio Marques

Claudio Marques answered that the development might have an importance, yes, but he emphasizes the importance of social movements (Marques, 2015-12-15). For example in the Reservoir Billings in the southern parts of São Paulo and in places like Guarapiranga, areas that are planned for preservation and not for construction, people of lower income groups have squatted parts of the areas and moved there. As years go by these squatted areas grow and the situation becomes critical so the state, the municipal and unions are pressured to construct houses and plumbing and so on. In this sense Marques means that there is some kind of liberty that has increased for people without economic conditions, because since the 1980s people have been able to squat, organize themselves into social movements and as groups to work for their rights to housing. Normally the kind of housing that eventually is built is part of social housing projects, so called *popular houses* (*casas populares* in Portuguese). Marques has seen photos of houses built within the social housing project *My House, My Life* (*Minha casa, minha vida* in Portuguese) which was launched in 2009 by the former president Lula da Silva's administration and has been prolonged by president Dilma Rousseff's administration. The houses that Marques are referring to are simple and modest constructions. People don't have big demands and requirements for the houses being built within social housing projects, no demands of gates and walls and security measurements like that. At least not the ones that he has seen on the countryside and in other states. He doesn't even think that there has been a debate or discussion regarding whether the houses should be gated or not but then the developers of the real estate construction get involved and to some extent they contribute to the standard of construction. But the people usually just want a home to live in. And in that perspective, he repeats, that for

groups that have the power to organize and mobilize and force the state and such actors to react, yes, liberty has increased.

Regarding the press freedom Marques says that they (the press) were used to a government that enacted censorship during the dictatorship. But he says that this kind of censorship doesn't exist anymore. But the diversity of the Brazilian cities also leads to different conditions in different parts of the cities. It's one thing in larger cities like São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro but a completely different thing on the countryside. There the power is closer. Advertisement is important and there pressure is made through advertisements. Institutional pressure. It can be on state levels, some individual politicians and so on. And there are incidents with dead journalists, but it's not carried out by the government anymore.

#### 5.4.2 Deise de Oliveira

Deise the Oliveira does think that the development has influenced the development of gated communities (2015-12-21). She talks about gated communities being reflections of what people want and people's demands. That people search for security which gated communities are much associated with, even though she says that "it is illusory" (Ibid.). She speaks of people seeking the dream of being able to live more comfortably and freely in their homes that are more open inside of the gated communities. In a more reserved environment and with more structure. She says; "So, people go after that illusion. Some people even go after gated communities on the countryside, where there isn't as much violence, but in reality violence is there as well" (Ibid.). de Oliveira emphasizes the false idea of security with gated communities. She says: "This is associated with the fact that in Brazil people that can live enclosed, you've had the opportunity so you've isolated yourself, trying to protect yourself. It's a compensation for the politics." (Ibid.). And she refers to the "insufficient political actions against the violence in the streets and the crimes being committed." (Ibid.). And she explains "People will try to get out of it all, it's because of disbelief, this lack of confidence, it ends up taking away people, taking them aside even from living together and from the socialization. Dragging them away to kind of a a reclusion. And this goes mainly for the monied guys" (Ibid.), referring to people of higher income groups. But she says: "Let them go to their stronghold, their fiefdom. They want to stay far away from the mess, this mishmash. I think that yes, there is a connection between the development and the increase of gated communities" (Ibid.).

And regarding the freedom of press she says that: "there has been a decrease of horrors, yes leftist governments are controllers, they want control and leftist governments live in an idea of "persecution", that everyone else acts against them. So they end up adopting some control mechanisms" (Ibid.). She says that it's typical for leftist governments and that she has seen it in PT governments and administrations in Porto Alegre, a city in southern Brazil, she has seen it in São Paulo and she says that it exist throughout the world.

And then she speaks of changes that Brazil has gone through, since the times of the military dictatorship. That Brazil has evolved very much, she says: "People are demanding a more modern country. She speaks of the judiciary system that has evolved and other institutions that are evolving, much because people are reacting to things they consider as being wrong in society" (Ibid.). The interview was conducted in January

2016 and the process of impeachment against the president Dilma Rousseff had surfaced. But, with some prosperity in her voice de Oliveira says that: “they still stumble on some typical things that they have to live through day by day” (Ibid.).

### 5.4.3 What was said – in and between the lines

Although Marques says that the development of freedom might have had an importance for the development of gated communities, he instead focuses his answer on social movements among lower income groups and how civil rights and liberties have contributed to their lives. In his answer I read in the importance of cooperation, or collaboration, of people organizing in groups. This is not directly connected to gated communities, and doesn't answer the research question directly, but it does reveal a contrast to gated communities which in a way helps to enframe gated communities and the understanding of their roles better.

Putnam shows in his work the importance of collaboration and cooperation in civic society and the connection between a strong civic society and better working political institutions, and higher levels of social capital. When people organize and work together, for example for their rights to housing, and when they see the results, that can pave the way for higher levels of social capital.

I do however interpret his answer about the freedom of press still being challenged, by politicians on the countryside and in smaller cities, and I probably by financially strong actors in metropolitan areas. The existence of gated communities has never been debated publicly in Brazil and the press do not contribute to that debate either.

Deise de Oliveira links the development of gated communities to "insufficient political action against the violence in the streets and crimes being committed". People demand security and when politicians can't provide it, they find solutions on the market. In her answer she doesn't indicate that there is a strong civic society for the people to turn to and she doesn't speak of social movements, but instead she sees a connection to the market and that people go after those market solutions. Dahl ranks "A modern market economy and society" (1998:147) as favorable, though not essential, for democracy. And in this sense a market in which actors supply what is being demanded, probably will be prosperous.

de Oliveira does however mention that the leftist government feels persecuted, that "everyone is against them". If that really is the case, then that is a major problem. If the political leadership feels persecuted and acts thereupon, it might harm democratic beliefs and the democratic culture that Dahl points out as essential conditions for democracy (1998). The press has to be able to examine politics. There is some light in the darkness though and de Oliveira mentions that the judiciary system is getting stronger and institutions are moving in the right direction.

## 5.5 Interview with a Gated Communities Developer

To get a different perspective I interviewed Jairo Zabballa, president for the company Cooperativa in Carapicuíba. Zabballa and his company constructs gated communities for lower income groups. His perspective is interesting, because he represents one of the actors on the market on which gated communities are demanded and supplied.

### 5.5.1 Jairo Zabballa

Jairo Zabballa was very outspoken during the interview but when I asked him if he has confidence in the politicians, in the political system, in the democratic system to be able to do necessary changes for a better world his answer was quite short. Zabballa said that he has confidence in the democratic system, yes. In the politicians however he said “Now that is too much” (Zabballa, 2016-01-20). He says that “it has to be graded somehow” (Ibid.) and he continues “but the politician, the politician in general, he sees to his own interests” (Ibid.), and he elaborated on this speaking of the groups and fraction’s that the politician belongs to in politics. He says: “But the collective interests, the interests for the public good, those interests end up being very distant to wish for” (Ibid.).

I asked Zabballa about what kind of a future that is being given to coming generations with gates, walls and fences. He answered that unfortunately this model of living, segregates. It is a segregationist model because society already is stratified and then you re-stratify inside of gated communities with those measures, with those proceedings and so on. And “to the detriment of the aspect of socialization that a city has, with a pulsating life with residents and commerce, with recreation and entertainment, it intersects and is always in contact with all segments of that society, that community. Life in gated communities, besides the aspect of security and safety, destroys the other elements, because you’re already feeling so safe and secure, that you start thinking that only the one living next to you is like you are” (Ibid.). And he elaborates by saying “The one that is more distant is already different, the one that lives one street from your doesn’t interest you. So it becomes a false life in gated communities” (Ibid.). And he explains what he means by a gated community which isn’t quite a community: “Gated communities presupposes the unity of the people, the interrelationship, the discussion of issues that is common to all, and so on. And there is even an ideological alignment, the millennium plan, which is that society in an open city, it kind of assimilates” (Ibid.). He continues explaining that he is “pro life in the cities. Cities grow, but this thing about enclosing, to feudalize living together between different communities, between different levels of social classes, it raises the death decree of the city, of this life as we know it” (Ibid.). He elaborates further and says “Those that have lived in small cities and towns or those that live in neighborhoods, have a wider range of living possibilities, to see what happens, and even to organize politically, so, people have to persist this multiplication of living in gated communities, otherwise we are always going to create generations that live segregated” (Ibid.). And finally he says: “It is an expanding model” (Ibid.), but which, he says that he has “condemned from the start” (Ibid.), even though he himself commercially works with gated communities.

### 5.5.2 What was said – in and between the lines

Zabballa contributes with more lack of confidence and trust in politicians. In the single politician in particular, for acting in his own self-interests and not working for the public good. A phenomenon which is widespread. That adds to the lower level of social capital which as in the case with the residents, harms essential conditions for democracy.

However contradictory Zabballa's opinions and values may be when being against gated communities, while at the same time working professionally developing gated communities, he does however point out some interesting things in his answer. He explains how the segregated person's life lacks diversity that is found in the life of the person that lives in the city, or outside of gated communities. He goes as far as to point out gated communities as a threat to cities. He points at the lack of community, of togetherness in the gated community and that does lead to lower, rather than higher levels of social capital. That lack of feeling of community is what Putnam speaks of, and it is mentioned by Blakely & Snyder as well.

## 5.6 Finishing the analysis

“Because the people of lower income also suffer the same violence, everybody suffers violence because there is no security in the state, there is no security in the municipals, so people have to protect themselves. The American, what does he do? He buys a weapon. The Brazilian doesn't have weapons, so what does he do? He lives in a place that is more protected than the street, because you are abandoned on the street. So the social class doesn't matter. What matters is that you get to feel a little more protected. So that's when groups are getting organized and paying for security. Because all the security that we have here is paid by us, they aren't paid by the state” (Huttunen, 2016:48).

The quotation is by one of the respondents in Alphaville 1. The respondent was answering the question of why gated communities are spreading to lower income groups. The relevant part of that quotation is the last part. That the residents pay for security themselves, not the state. That is an obvious indicator of lack of confidence and trust in politicians. The answer reveals that there are people in gated communities that no longer confides in politicians for solving an important part of a democratic society, security. Lack of confidence and trust in politicians leads to lower levels of social capital, which would affect the process of democratization.

During the interviews it has been revealed that lower levels of social capital cause people to move to the next box, Gated Communities (see Figure 6.1). The segregation, the distancing from society and the extreme contrasts of security (albeit false security) on the inside and a world with more crime and violence outside affects people living there. Paying for security reinforces the residents views on society and



security. Gated communities are signal to politicians that people are paying for security themselves. But the problems persist outside.



**Figure 6.1** Causal model: Social Capital to Gated Communities to Social Capital to Democratization Process.

Gated communities haven't been publicly debated in Brazil, they have been accepted from the start, almost as a necessary evil. But in this process of democratization that Brazil has gone through and still is going through to some extent, the inequality between citizens is enforced. The tension between market economy and democracy increases when being materialized by gated communities. Living inside of gated communities alters the people living there, which leads to the second Social Capital box in the causal model. And this box the lower Social Capital is more cemented, which affects the last box, the Democratization Process. Before solving problems for everyone, people try to solve problems for themselves. Not by cooperating, but by securing their own perimeters first. At least those parts of the problem solving which they can solve by themselves. By not feeling as connected to other parts of society also decreases the demands on the politicians and the political institutions for solving problems for everyone.

One reflection that I make personally is that even though there is a great portion of accumulated levels of education, financial power, social relations and political connections, the residents of gated communities aren't taking enough responsibility for society at large, and using that power to put pressure on the politicians and the political institutions for solving the problems that exist with crime and violence, with corruption and with other major problems that exist in Brazil that cause lower levels of social capital, which affects the process of democratization negatively. It is my opinion that those *who are given more* have the possibilities to contribute more. Those that have more understanding can use that understanding in the development of the process of democratization.

The middle class has played an important role in large changes that have occurred in the process of democratization, but the residents of gated communities haven't played that important role which they have the possibilities to play. Individually they might have contributed, but not as a group, collaborating and cooperating. Their contributions to the market economy shouldn't been taken for granted, absolutely not, on the contrary it has played an important role. In São Paulo in particular, which is as earlier mentioned the financial capital of Latin America. But it hasn't been charity work, many have made profits. And market economy is important for democracy, at least according to Dahl. It might not be mentioned as essential, but absolutely as favorable.

## 6

# Conclusion

In this thesis I have tried answering the research question: *What role do gated communities play in the process of democratization in Brazil?* I have done so by doing a case study on Brazil in general and using collected material from interviews in São Paulo in particular. Applying theories about the democratization process by Samuel P. Huntington and Robert A Dahl, theories about social capital by Robert Putnam and a theoretical framework concerning gated communities by Edward J. Blakely & Mary Gail Snyder I have attempted to make some understanding of the historical development of democratization in Brazil and of gated communities in this context.

The results of my interviews with residents show low levels of social capital amongst residents of gated communities, both for higher income as well as for lower income groups. This low level of social capital is of the worrying kind for the democratization process.

Interviews with journalists show that an increase of freedom, that is civil liberties and political rights while at the same time having decreasing freedom of the press, might have contributed to the spreading of gated communities. The development of market economy and the demand for security solutions have contributed to the spreading of gated communities. They might have had a positive impact for the development of market economy but negative impacts on the democratization process.

Interviews with a developer of gated communities shows that even though people might be against gated communities in private, they might actually work counterproductively by developing gated communities professionally. The interview also reveals that a fear exists that gated communities, in the long run, might be the beginning of the end for cities, as democratic institutions that contribute positively to the process of democratization.

### **Further research**

Further studies about gated communities in Brazil could explain more about how gated communities affects social capital and the democratization process. Maybe comparative studies of gated community residents and people living outside. Similar studies made in other South American countries, and other places that have gated communities would be interesting to see.

Recently I spoke to a psychology student in Lund about my study and findings. We both agreed that it would be interesting to see psychological studies on residents of gated communities, both on the inside of the walls as outside. Perhaps interdisciplinary studies could shed more light on issues that we haven't thought of before in political science and other social science fields.

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**Alphaville 1, Barueri, São Paulo, Brazil**

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Resident #2; Female. 60-70 years. 2016. Interview January 12.

Resident #3; Female. 50-60 years. 2016. Interview January 12.

Resident #4; Female. 30-40 years. 2016. Interview January 16.

Resident #5; Female. 60-70 years. 2016. Interview January 18.

**Condominio da Sucupira, Carapicuíba, São Paulo, Brazil**

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Resident #2; Female. 40-50 years. 2016. Interview January 13.

Resident #3; Male. 30-40 years. 2016. Interview January 13.

Resident #4; Female. 70-80 years. 2016. Interview January 15.

Resident #5; Male. 50-60 years. 2016. Interview January 15.