THE FUTURE OF THE EXISTING GATED COMMUNITIES IN GREATER CAIRO AFTER JANUARY 2011

Case study (Dream Land)

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Abstract:

The concept of Gated Communities (residential compounds) appeared in Egypt from the beginning of 90s of the 20th century as a seek for better quality of life by the rising social and financial classes, especially around the Greater Cairo. This concept developed in the next 20 years till the end of the first decade of the 21st century.

By January 2011, Egypt had passed through social disturbance that caused alterations in the plans of the real estate developers and investors and also affected the image taken by the clients looking to the gated communities as a safe investment and a secure place to survive in.

The paper discusses the development of the design, location and clients of the gated communities from the beginning of 90s of the 20th century till January 2011, identifying the ascending and descending curves that passes through this kind of real estate investment and its social, financial and political reasons.

Then the paper clarifies the main social, economical and political alterations that occurred in the Egyptian society during January 2011 and 30 June 2013 till now as a trial to identify the main factors that will control the real estate market in Egypt especially the gated communities in new cities.

Dream land will be chosen as the case study since it can be considered as one of the major residential gated compounds in Egypt (total area 10 km²) that was established at the early 90s and passed through a serious of construction phases, passing through the main social, economic and political changes that occurred in the Egyptian society in the last twenty five years, despite that almost fifty percent of the original master plan is not constructed yet.

Key words: Gated Communities, Greater Cairo, Social changes, New cities, Dreamland city.
1. Introduction and Research problem

This research discusses the application of concept of the gated communities in Egypt and the effect of their construction on the new cities flourishing around the Egyptian capital.

In a trial to expect the future of the gated communities in Egypt, the research discusses the changing curves that passed through this kind of real estate development from the early nineties till January 2011. From a documentary point of view, more than 450 gated communities were constructed in the last 20 years especially in the new cities constructed in the eastern and western borders of the greater Cairo.

Fig(1): Rehab city- east of Greater Cairo
Source: Researcher, Oct 2016

Fig(2): DreamLand-west of great Cairo
Source: Researcher, Oct 2016
2. Methodology

To achieve the prediction of the future of the gated communities in Egypt especially in Great Cairo, the research will identify theoretically the meaning and properties of “the gated communities” expression. Then analyzing the reasons of the existence and flourishing of this type of real estate developments, ending by taking Dream Land as an applicational case study to identify the factors affecting the gated communities in Egypt and its influences on the new established cities.

![Map showing the distribution of gated communities around Great Cairo in the new cities](source: Ghonimi et al., 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Total Area (Ft)</th>
<th>GC with residential uses</th>
<th>GC Area (Per m²)</th>
<th>GC Area (per (Ft/dan))</th>
<th>GC are per total area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Cairo</td>
<td>643000</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>197038399.99</td>
<td>47000 Ft</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Shorouk</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6614007.9</td>
<td>1575 Ft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Obour</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2351657.76</td>
<td>500 Ft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Sheikh Zayed</td>
<td>9200 Ft</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>18111495.11</td>
<td>4312 Ft</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six October</td>
<td>67000 Ft</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>81732320.22</td>
<td>19460 Ft</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>466</td>
<td>612418800</td>
<td>72000 Ft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig (3) The distribution of the gated communities around Great Cairo in the new cities

Source: Ghonimi et al., 2010
3. The definition of the Gated Communities

There is a lot of definitions of the term gated communities that identify the physical, social and urban properties:

a group of houses or flats in an area surrounded by a fence or wall that can be entered only by people who live there and their guests [1]

but most are agreed on that:

A gated community is any residential zone that physically restricts the entrance of non-residents.[2]

Some other definition explains the main elements and facilities that should exist in the gated communities such as:

The Gated Community is an urban settlement protected by fences with secured entrances. These entrances are controlled by gates and they are guarded by security agents. Sometimes these gates are under video recording. The access of the residents and their visitors to these settlements is completely restricted and secured. These settlements usually contain shopping nodes, cinemas, recreational facilities, parks, swimming pools, beaches, artificial lakes, etc. [3]

All around the world, Gated communities have spread as an urban development in the new cities. They have been defined as “walled urban developments, restricting the non residents from entry, controlling the residents by a common code of conduct, collective responsibility for management and legal agreements”

3.1. Characteristics

The withdrawal of the generally affluent into gated communities opens an array of issues such as a loss of social diversity in the neighbourhoods that they have left,
thus reinforcing tendencies to social and economic segregation. Gated communities also represent a spatial withdrawal of elite groups

3.2. Motives

In general, it has been well observed that these new forms of residential projects are natural responses to high rates of fear and crime, so people’s preferences for living in such communities might be directed primarily by the seek for security.

The socio-spatial segregation is exacerbated by gated communities both in their inner and outer spaces, especially in societies where social and territorial inequalities are problematic. [4]

4. The types of the Gated communities

We have two different criteria to classify Gated Communities:

4.1. The Location

4.1.1. The Gated Communities inside the existing old cities

And this type did not flourish in Egypt due to several reasons, such as the lack of the area needed for this type of projects inside the old cities, the high land value and the need of the residents to escape the old cities environmental, social and economical problems.

4.1.2. The Gated Communities inside the new cities

This type flourishes in Egypt especially in the new cities around the Greater Cairo as:

- A refuge from the polluted environment and deteriorated services.

4.2. The government policy that sold large land parcels to developers

The Residents Occupation

Another kind of classification maybe based on the occupation chronology [5]

4.2.1. Gated Communities where houses are considered as permanent residences.
The Future of The Existing Gated Communities in Greater CAIRO after January 2011

Usually they are located within city limits or in the near country side such as the gated communities settled all around the Greater Cairo.

But, for the time being, they are facing a major problem: The number of these luxurious units exceeds the need meanwhile the lower social class could afford the prices. These lead to the destruction of the homogeneous social tissue boasted by the previous owners.

4.2.2. Gated Communities as secondary residences.

Two sub categories come under this type:

a-Weekly Occupied Gated Communities, (week-end vacations’ gated communities). This type must not be located beyond a 100 Kilometers radius around big cities.

b- Long Vacation Gated Communities occupied during seasons. This type is usually situated farther than the previous type, of the cities. This type is represented, in Egypt, by a long chain of Gated Communities on the north coast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Subtypes</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>These projects emphasize common amenities and cater to a leisure class with shared interests; may reflect small-town nostalgia; may be urban villages, luxury villages, or resort villages.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>age-related complexes with suite of amenities and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Golf and leisure</td>
<td>shared access to amenities for an active lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suburban new town</td>
<td>master-planned project with suite of amenities and facilities; often in the Sunbelt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>These projects reflect desire for image, privacy, and control; they focus on exclusivity over community; few shared facilities and amenities.</td>
<td>Enclaves of rich and famous</td>
<td>secured and guarded privacy to restrict access for celebrities and very wealthy; attractive locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Top-fifth developments</td>
<td>secured access for the nouveau riche; often have guards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Executive middle class</td>
<td>restricted access; usually without guards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security zone</td>
<td>These projects reflect fear; involve retrofitting fences and gates on public streets; controlling access</td>
<td>City perch</td>
<td>restricted public access in inner city area to limit crime or traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suburban perch</td>
<td>restricted public access in inner city area to limit crime or traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Barricade perch</td>
<td>closed access to some streets to limit through traffic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (1) General typology of gated communities.(related to a western life style)

Source : Blakely and Snyder's (1997)
The Future of The Existing Gated Communities in Greater CAIRO after January 2011

Table (2) Checklist of features identifying gated communities. (main properties of the gated communities)
Source: L. Grant (2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function of enclosure</th>
<th>physical</th>
<th>economic</th>
<th>social</th>
<th>symbolic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>secure people and property</td>
<td>enhance</td>
<td>protect club amenities</td>
<td>give visual or spatial privacy</td>
<td>display status and power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create identity for project</td>
<td>property values</td>
<td>control those inside</td>
<td>control those outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security features</td>
<td>nature of boundary</td>
<td>physical</td>
<td>symbolic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wall</td>
<td>fence opaque</td>
<td>fence visually open</td>
<td>fence electric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low fence, chain, or bollard</td>
<td>fence barbed</td>
<td>speed bumps or chicanes</td>
<td>pavement texture or colour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faux guard station</td>
<td>mirrored glass</td>
<td>'private property' signs</td>
<td>'no parking' signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hedge or vegetation</td>
<td>topographic feature</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>desert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swing-arm gate</td>
<td>lift-arm gate</td>
<td>slide gate</td>
<td>swing gate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nature of security</td>
<td>guards at all times</td>
<td>devices in road bed</td>
<td>guards at designated times</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>auto opener entry</td>
<td>card entry</td>
<td>code entry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities and facilities</td>
<td>private roads</td>
<td>meeting place</td>
<td>activity centre</td>
<td>recreational facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>open space</td>
<td>landscape maintenance</td>
<td>quality design</td>
<td>commercial facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>institutional facilities</td>
<td>guards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of resident</td>
<td>homogeneous by age</td>
<td>homogeneous by class</td>
<td>homogeneous by ethnicity, race, status</td>
<td>shared activity (for example, golf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>principal residence</td>
<td>secondary residence</td>
<td>seasonal residence</td>
<td>public housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fee simple ownership</td>
<td>condominium ownership</td>
<td>land lease</td>
<td>rental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>suburban</td>
<td>exurban</td>
<td>rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>infill</td>
<td>greenfield</td>
<td>resort destination</td>
<td>inner-city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>cul-de-sac pod</td>
<td>neighbourhood (tens to hundreds of units)</td>
<td>village (hundreds of units, some commercial)</td>
<td>town (thousands of units and mix of uses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy context</td>
<td>restricts gating</td>
<td>enables gating</td>
<td>growing area</td>
<td>stable or declining area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. The existence of the gated communities in the new cities round greater Cairo

A desire to establish a buffer between the individual and society has developed as people search for means to protect and distinguish themselves
This may be achieved by living in gated communities – residential developments which focus on physical security measures that restrict access to non-residents [6].

Motivations vary for moving into a gated living communities in the new cities existing on the borders of Greater Cairo and may be summarized as follows: A desire for security and fear of crime especially after 2011, although the security mechanisms are intended to do more than just deter crime. The developers and residents vision for security is not just crime-free community, but also annoyances-free from strangers of any kind. The gates provide a fenced common space that excludes strangers. The protection from crime are as important as the privacy and the controlled access.

![Fig (5) The main fence and gate of Beverly hills compound - (Cairo Alex road)](image)


5.1. Search for community, Identity, and social homogeneity [7]

Gated communities could be seen as a combination of both legal frameworks and social conventions regarding segregation. A gated community is a controlled neighborhood, inhabited by residents with common social backgrounds and values, but not necessarily identical in ethnicity or religion. Gated communities could be considered as an urban tool of distinction and separation, and therefore superiority from those who do not live with the gates community.
The social factors in marketing affecting the different types of the gated communities (affordable, Moderate and High end) includes:
Friendly, sense of community, community activities. Meeting places, homogeneity

Fig (6) Social factors in marketing: percentage of each type of GC

Source: Tawfik R, Sep. 2013

5.2. A desire to live with a people of a similar social and economic positions. Gated communities, which are walled and gates secured residential neighborhoods, represent a part of the new construction market, especially in the new cities. The governments encourage this kind of urban development because infrastructure costs are paid by the private developers and the end users, this form of governments-investors partnership in the provision of urban infrastructure encourages the social segregation. Significant social and economic dissimilarities are found to be associated with the gated communities, inspite of the creation very homogeneous communities, in financial and social criteria.

Fig (7) Mab’otheen gated community for Cairo University Staff could be considered as one of the first gated communities constructed in Egypt

Source: Researcher, Nov. 2016
5.3. A desire for a high-quality living environment with recreational and luxurious facilities
Lifestyle communities focus on luxurious activities with recreational areas, and common services at their core. This Lifestyle is very well represented in golf course communities and suburban new towns. The urban developers hope to attract residents searching for identity, security, and a shared luxurious lifestyle with their neighbors. They seek to create a sense of community through common interests and activities.

Fig (8) Gold’s Gym– Zayed city

Fig (9) Alrehab sporting club
5.4. Retreat from failing public government Gated communities Residents seeks for an urban designed community with a high class level of infrastructure including roads, pedestrian ways, high speed internet, landscape, water features, electrotechnical systems and firefighting systems.

For the above reasons the concept of the gated communities spread all over the new cities around the great Cairo in the last two decades to reach around 50 different community.

**Fig (10) urban context around mab’otheen gated community**

*Source: Researcher, Oct. 2016*

**Fig (11) the distribution of the gated communities around the Great Cairo**

*Source: Tawfik R, Sep. 2013*
6. The impact of the gated communities on the new cities around Great Cairo

Cairo is surrounded by eight new cities (satellite and settlements), including:

East of Greater Cairo

1. New Cairo
2. Shorouk
3. 10th Ramadan,
4. El Obour
5. Badr,
6. 15th May

West of Greater Cairo

7. 6th. October
8. ElSheikh Zayed

The main aim of the new cities around the GCR is to divert the population growth away from the over populated areas towards the desert to the east and south-west [8]

6.1. The effect on the social fabric

Gated Communities have a serious effect on the social act of the residents. The segregation leads to the feeling of exclusion and being rootless leading to the ghetto effect. The Gated Communities are characterized with homogeneity in social and economic class in addition they tend to locate within a consistent social environment which occurs in the same kind of middle and upper-class neighborhoods.
6.2. **The effect on the urban tissue fabric** [9] The urban fabric is the physical constructed image of towns and cities. By zooming in many neighborhoods and their existing road network and spatial structure, it is obvious that the gated Communities creates brockets inside urban fabric, that destructs the continuity and connectivity of urban fabric. A new macro pattern appeared on macro level known as divided city, or city of walls. These divided cities are created due to hidden barriers of social and financial classes, and due to unequal distribution of culture capital and social capital, for excluding unwanted groups.

![Diagram of divided city](https://www.google.com.eg/maps/@30.0710814,30.9854026,6315m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en)

**Fig (12) rabwa-shiekh zayed**

Source:
https://www.google.com.eg/maps/@30.0710814,30.9854026,6315m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en
Fig (13) mina gardens – 6 oct. city

Source:
https://www.google.com.eg/maps/@29.9922211,30.9746309,2139m/data=!3m1!1e3?
    hl=en

Fig (14) katamyia heights-new cairo

Source:
https://www.google.com.eg/maps/@29.9925268,31.4036943,3296m/data=!3m1!1e3?
    hl=en
Fig (15) golf city – alobour city

Source:
https://www.google.com.eg/maps/@30.1886289,31.4825006,8148m/data=!3m1!1e3?
hl=en
7. Case Study – Dreamland Compound

7.1. The reasons of choosing dreamland as a case study:

Dreamland could be considered one of the most distinguished gated communities in Egypt due to the following reasons:

- One of the first gated communities constructed in Egypt (1995)
- The construction is continued during the last 3 decades which makes it a suitable example to document the changes occurring on the Egyptian society and its reflection on that type of projects
- Could be considered the first gated community that provides all the luxurious services
- Provides different residential areas starting from one room studio to huge palaces
- Implement the concept of the golf courses over 1.000.000 m2

Fig (16) Dreamland masterplan

7.2. Location:

Dreamland is located on the outskirts of Cairo, just 8km away from the majestic Pyramids of Giza and El-Remaya square, Giza before the entrance of 6th of October City.

Dreamland is located 180m above sea level providing an atmosphere that is 3-4 degrees cooler than Cairo.

The total area of the compound is about 10,000,000 m² with a length of 5000 m on Al-Wahat road and a depth of 2000 m, with a total population of 4000 person in 2013 according to the statistics of dreamland resident union

7.3. Site Accessibility:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>26 july axis</th>
<th>The ring road</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fayoum road</td>
<td>Alwahat road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig (17) Dreamland accessibility

Source: researcher
7.4. Facilities [10]

• Dream Mall:

Dreamland includes Dream Mall, which spans 36000 square meters and provides all the shopping needs required by residents of Dreamland and neighboring areas. Individual shop areas vary from 150m² to 4000m².

• Neighborhood centers

Due to the huge size of Dreamland, 2 main neighborhood centers have been established within the residential area. Each center contains number of shops that serves the basic needs of the compound’s residents.

• Hotels

Due to its importance as a touristic destination, a number of international hotel chains have selected Dreamland to construct new branches. These hotels include:

  o Hilton Dreamland Hotel:
  o Dream park Sheraton Hotel:
  o Swiss Inn Pyramids Golf Resort:
  o Holiday Inn hotel

• Education

Some of the region’s finest schools have found a place in Dreamland

  o The International School of Choueifat,
  o Dream International Language School
  o The Egyptian-Canadian school (special needs school)

• Dreampark

Dreamland includes one of the largest theme parks in the middle east. Dream Park is constructed over 150 feddans.

• Cinemas

Dream Mall includes a 4-screen Cineplex. Each cinema accommodates 192 viewers.
• Sporting Club

Fully featured sports club constructed over 35 feddan & providing a wide range of sports from swimming, soccer, handball, basketball, tennis, etc.

Dreamland Sports Academy contains 27-hole golf course and is ready to accommodate international tournaments all year rounds.

• Dreamland Hospital

Dreamland provides a hospital containing 30 beds and 3 operating rooms for emergencies & one-day operations.

7.5. The urban development of dream land

7.5.1. Dream land in 2000

The economic growth in Egypt in the second half of the 90’s reflected on the construction and sales of Dreamland. By the year 2000, Dream Park, main golf course, elforsan and the emarald zone was nearly established.

![Fig (18) Dreamland in 2000](image)

Source: Researcher
7.5.2. Dream land in 2004

Egypt suffered from an economic crisis in the beginning of the 2000’s which leaded to a retardation in the real estate investment field. The focus in dream land was on finalizing the finishing of the units already constructed.

![Fig (19) Dreamland in 2004](image)

Source: Researcher

7.5.3. Dream land in 2008

The ascending of the economy in Egypt restarted after the Iraq war and the escape of wealthy Iraqi families to Egypt. The was reflected in constructing new phases in dream land (family, flower resort and studios).

![Fig (20) Dreamland in 2008](image)

Source: Researcher
7.5.4. Dream land in 2011

Despite the global economic crisis in 2008 but this crisis had a minor effect on the real estate development in Egypt and the rate of construction remained constant in the majority of the gated communities including dream land till 2011.

Fig (21) Dreamland in 2011
Source : Researcher

7.5.5. Dream land in 2013

Egypt suffered from an economic collapse after january 2011 which of course cause a total stop for the real estate investment. This was obvious in dreamland that suffered from the delay of the delivery date of the new phases for more than 4 years.

Fig (22) Dreamland in 2013
Source : Researcher
Fig (23) uncompleted road in flower resort
Source: Researcher, July 2013

Fig (24) uncompleted zone (lake view)
Source: Researcher, April 2013
7.6. The effect of the gated community (dream land) on the surrounding urban tissue of the new city (6 October city)

After more than 20 years of starting the construction of Dreamland, there was no effect on the urban context around its boundaries. The real estate development around dreamland was represented in the following gated communities:

- New Giza
- Palm Hills
- Princess
- Alfardous
- Alashgar
- Hadayek Alahram

These gated communities were not influenced by the urban fabric or the functional zones located in dream land, as it could be obvious that each gated community has its own and unique urban characteristics.
8. Conclusions:

- The real estate development for the gated communities is highly effected by the local economic situation
- The increase of the violence and crimes rate encourages the spreading of the gated communities as a result for the need for private security
- The type of the services provided by the gated community is one of the major factors identifying the social level of the residents
- Although, the gated communities are one of the major ways to encourage the population movement to the new cities, they have no impact on the social and urban fabric of the adjacent neighbourhoods

9. References

journal of Al Azhar University engineering sector, JAUES.