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SUN TROPES

Sun City and (Post-)Apartheid Culture in South Africa

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Perhaps malls are neither only palaces of desire funneling identity through distinction nor symbols of dystopian urbanism. In particular times and places, they can be ordinary spaces where people meet. We need research that moves beyond our own fascination and horror with the cultural forms of consumption to explore people's everyday experiences in these spaces of stark inequality.

XIII. SUN CITY AS A FORM OF LIFE: IMAGES OF THE GOLF ESTATE DAINFERN

Aljoscha Weskott

After Sun City. Sun City has become an anachronism. As a prototype, though, it has multiplied. Sun City isn't the exception anymore, the dubious entertainment zone in the middle of nowhere, which has always been compared to Las Vegas. It has become a 'normal' way of living. For a moment, let's count the golf courses—all designed by Gary Player—that are located between Sun City and Dainfern in order to construct a course of history. If we understand this course as a catwalk of history, then the proximity of the "Valley of the Waves," Sun City's artificial beach, to the "Valley of the Dreams" in Dainfern can be seen as a tangent. There we find ourselves in front of the "House of Dreams"—an image, of course, which looks back at us and with its caption tells us: *"A magnificent home leading onto the greenbelt with uninterrupted views overlooking the river. Luxuriously appointed with extra features including a full home theatre room with 12 reclining chairs, full snooker room and entertainment bars. A very special home on a double stand in the exclusive suburb of Dainfern Valley."* Dainfern is directly linked to the paradigm of Sun City, which drifts through the globalized world

¹ Cf. advertisement text on www.pangolding.co.za, download August 29, 2009.

like a cipher and a multilayered icon. Sun City is the sunny city *par excellence*, manageable and yet gigantic. In the United States it is a paradise for senior citizens, in Japan a certain design form, in Germany a tanning salon at the edge of the city; everywhere Sun City has a different connotation, at the same time it stands for an eternal promise. After all it is the "good life" itself, the "life as a zone of comfort" that Sun City invokes. It also mutates into a paradigm of space, which intrinsically features a restoration of the citadel societies of the Middle Ages, now presenting their politics as coming from this world and almost godless. The golf estate Dainfern is more than a safety zone for the self, it is a claim for a constructed world in a specific way of life, which doesn't deny reality, but instead changes and remodels it, revealing at its core a neurotic structure: a prototyped community that aligns itself with a universal liberalism, a life that marks the illusion (of the Other) and materialises its own illusionary world. The messages from the advertisements are blatantly obvious: "*Here at Dainfern, you'll become part of a community of people, who like you prefer country-style living in a secure, natural environment where you fall asleep to the call of the Plover, and you wake up to the gentle flow of the Jukskei River. So choose your quality built home now and look forward to a special lifestyle in a gold estate environment at Dainfern.*"²

Let's take a look at the lives of the images, at their status as objects. Nobody can escape from Dainfern's

images, they present their own desire; aligning oneself to them contains a promise. They modulate between temporary feelings of security and a never satisfied desire for more new images; there is only a short time frame until the formal glamour and the particular haptic quality has been used up. Immediately, new tableaux of images are accumulating, though not only in the real estate section of the newspapers. The haunted presence in Johannesburg, the unfinished movie, gets invested with a pictorial materiality, as if one could drag the images along like a trace. The advertisement signs for new estates along the highway provide orientation in the labyrinth of streets. In this context one would like to agree automatically with Mitchell's philosophy of the image—with the project to understand the boom of images of the new paradises in the age after Sun City without resorting to the jargon of iconoclasm.³

The images really seem to lead an independent existence. The glow of the multiple estates, mediated by the images, has generated desires among everyone, outside class structures. The glow is always a peculiar or limiting case of the reflection. How can we understand the desire for these images and places without reviving the notion of alienation?⁴ If this form of crit-

² See Mitchell, W.J.T. *What do pictures want?*, London 2006, p. 8.

⁴ The category of 'disgust', which is often used by critics in this context, is problematic because it appeals to a morally condemning, emotional form of criticism. This presents in the end a normative mode of criticism which subconsciously reveals a normative way of living. This mode of criticism operates with the category of complete alienation, especially in the case when even protagonists leading precarious lives have a desire for and affirm living in the gated community.

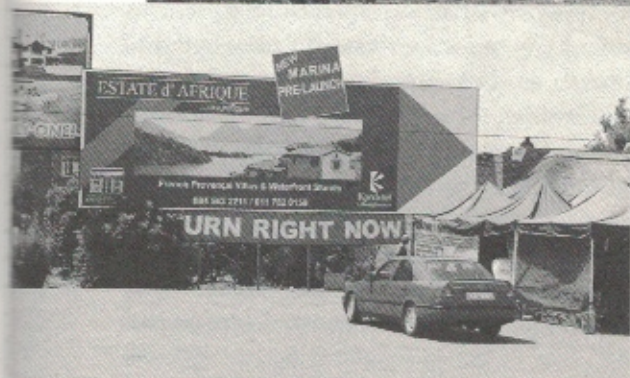
³ Cf. Dainfern Advertisement Brochure 2007.

icism mutates to iconoclasm, meaning the attempt to distinguish the 'true' from the 'false' images, then it becomes dubious. At the level of the image, Dainfern and its many imitations document something else. Images have become ways of life and media presents spaces in which the images are alive.⁵ At the same time we see how life is being differentiated and put into hierarchical structures: "Choose your lifestyle," the advertisement boards beg us.

Whether it is possible to decipher ways of subjectivity by looking at visual surfaces has to remain an open question. In one paradigm of cultural criticism, the subject becomes identical with the media-induced pictorial iconographies. It seems natural to give in to this temptation, since the materials—this conglomeration of images, discourses, and architectures—speak in an unambiguous language of power. Following Mitchell it is possible to think at the same time of an autonomy of images, which of course doesn't mean that we have stopped to think "of beholding pictures as a phenomenon depending on [the] context."⁶ Breathless, we stand in front of the artefacts of post-colonialism without being able to distinguish what is 'real'.

⁵ Cf. Mitchell, *What do pictures want?*

⁶ Mitchell's project is certainly important in this context, but it is also limiting, as Sabeth Buchmann has criticized. Cf. Buchman, Sabeth. "Response to W.J.T. Mitchell", in: Birnbaum, Daniel & Gray, Isabelle. *Under Pressure: Pictures, Subjects and New Spirit of Capitalism*, Berlin and New York 2008, pp. 25-29. : "It surely is not false to think about the power of visual media in relation to questions of life-form; but you let your meta-theoretical reflections on the self-reflexivity of pictures culminate in the claim that pictures are "living creatures," desiring like subjects and asking to be worshipped like gods. ...you are no longer thinking of the process of beholding picture as phenomenon depending on its context."



Advertisement signs in the conurbation Johannesburg
Photos by Marietta Kesting and Aljoscha Weskott

Urban Image Spaces: Still/Life/Moving

First of all we encounter in Dainfern the phenomenon of global islands. In the case of Dainfern a time-space is created outside of the Afropolis,⁷ which interprets the always already disparate Athenian ideal of democracy in a particular way. It's all about exclusivity, about wanting to escape from the 'disaster' and define a terrain, about occupying a tableau of life that promises belonging. There are multiple movements of exclusion and inclusion within the region of Johannesburg. So despite the obvious changes there are continuities between the colonial model and the urban separation. In *The Wretched of the Earth* Fanon describes the sharp dissociation, "separating the bright, well-fed settler's town from the hungry, crouching casbah: This world ... cut in two is inhabited by two different species."⁸ In the postcolonial times of today's Johannesburg, the divisions are further differentiated, they are iridescent and equivocal. In the process of globalization other post-national collectives and set-ups are coming into existence. It is not surprising that a certain discourse in South Africa leads into paradox: "everybody, each in his or her way, lives in a township."⁹ The metropolis is the contemporary of our disasters of progress, writes Paul Virilio in his essay "City of Panic". It's evident that Johannesburg is one of the

global cities that fall under this category. However, the architectures that refer to apartheid structures reveal something specific that dissolves the boundaries of the universal discourse on mega cities. It's the peculiar politics of paradises within the city of panic itself and the constantly changing image of the catastrophe in the 'unclear' urban space of Johannesburg. According to Virilio, 'cities of panic' elucidate better than any urbanist chaos-theory that the city is the biggest catastrophe of the twentieth century.¹⁰ If we follow this attribution, rife with cultural pessimism, the ungovernability of mega cities seems to be an eternal, never-ending catastrophe and the fragmentation of the city in the state of exception, the status of catastrophe *per se*.

Let's take a look at what is happening in the sphere of images beyond the discourse of the catastrophe. Images in particular occupy a problematic transmitter function. Homi Bhabha has written about the particular image quality of human identity, concurring with Richard Rorty that it "is part of the West's obsession that our primary relation to objects and ourselves is analogous to visual perception."¹¹ I would like to question the strong dichotomy between the 'West' and the 'other' countries of the world, though, and instead argue that the obsession with images has caught on worldwide. Let's therefore take a look at the production of images

⁷ For the concept of an 'Afropolis' see Nuttal & Mbembe (eds.), *Johannesburg. The Elusive Metropolis*.

⁸ Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*, London 1967, p. 30.

⁹ Hope, Christopher. "Now everyone lives in the townships", Mail and Guardian, February 28, 2005.

¹⁰ Cf. Virilio, Paul. *City of Panic*, Oxford 2007.

¹¹ Bhabha, Homi.K. *The Location of Culture*, London 1994, p. 49.

and transferral at places like Dainfern, at the total image space (*Bildraum*) of Dainfern, in which we act even if we are not there. We can then note that the aesthetic self-portrayal of micro-city-states like Dainfern has become a topos of the visual politics of Johannesburg. Of course this can't be separated from the phenomenon of fear. After 1994 a web of violence has been superimposed over the city of Johannesburg, which is different from the apartheid violence and seemingly more opaque.¹³

Already in 1986, during apartheid, the first newly constructed buildings in "Fourways Garden" in the north of Johannesburg were surrounded by a wall, which gave it the character of a gated community. Meanwhile other gated communities emerged, which are an architectural answer to the economy of fear, which spread out as if by magic and which doesn't only determine the mindset, but also establishes new ways of dwelling and living. Dainfern is a paramount example; it is formally a life at the golf course, a self-chosen exile and libidinous inner emigration. Yet, the uncumventable embeddedness in being exposed to the pulsating city is what is revoked by living in places like Dainfern, in this oasis of 'good fortune' and this biotope of natural life. The Afropolitanism is filtered, as if the African-modern were a threat in the post-apartheid age. Across from the gated community of Dainfern, a combination of former township, infor-

¹³ Cf. Lindsay Bremner, *Die Neuerschaffung Johannesburgs*, in: Becker, Jochen et al. (eds.) *Learning from * Städte von Welt, Phantasmen der Zivilgesellschaft, informelle Organisation*, Berlin 2003, pp. 227.

mal settlement, and slum is located—Diepsloot.¹⁴ The politics of paradises acts at this precarious intersection, which at the same time circulates as a spectacular news icon. There are permanent projections from one place to the other—mediated by images, which are chasing through the media pipelines and crossing the borders. A particular melodramatic logic gets invigorated in the processing of the history of reception, which refers to the melodrama of black and white.¹⁴ On the one hand it is a melodrama of revolt, on the other a melodrama of power. The relationship of belonging and non-belonging gets staged, in effect, in the images and is continually re-staged. In the same way the criticism is held up in the melodramatic mode, which is based on circulating dichotomous patterns, especially in the European context. This resounds in the score of dramatization, seemingly coming from the matrix of emotions, which always feeds the same serial images in endless repetitions: "In the mega cities of the Southern hemisphere the rich escape into their luxurious dwellings. The citadels stand for security, clean air, and a lot of greenery for the kids. But they don't offer peace of mind. Along with the walls, the fear is growing."¹⁵

¹⁴ Cf. Davis, Mike. *Planet of Slums*, Berlin 2003. Davis also reconstructs the development of slums in South Africa. The Zewenfontein squatter camp is also close to Dainfern. See photograph of David Goldblatt in this book.

¹⁴ Cf. Williams, Linda. *Playing the Race Card: Melodramas of Black and White from Uncle Tom to O.J. Simpson*, Princeton 2002.

¹⁵ Grill, Bartholomäus. "Paranoia im Paradies", in: DIE ZEIT, 21/2000.

There is a lot of sadness around, isn't there?

No conventional psychic profile can illuminate this space completely, instead a film topos after and outside of the cinema provides a possible trace. In Dainfern the relationship of post-colonialism and melodrama appears in a strange way; it is not a potentiality of the melancholic as Douglas Crimp has described,¹⁶ but an experience reminiscent of the paradigm "life is a melo" and promoted to a form of life without mourning—in a Freudian sense the loss of the privileged past.¹⁷

So let's stage the melodramatic mode for a moment. The desired constellation of the voyeur and of the filmmaker also entails watching without being seen. Life develops as if by magic like a movie set, sometimes reminiscent of the backstage of David Lynch's *Lost Highway*, sometimes of the interior of a 1950s melodrama. In the villas and dream chateaus the will for dramatization is inscribed. In general, the post-colonial design of subjectivity and the cinematic spaces of Johannesburg can't be separated. After the era of Sun City, places like Dainfern have become the new movie locations, where the stage is set up already and doesn't have to be painstakingly created. Post-

¹⁶ Cf. Crimp, Douglas. "Mourning and Militancy", in: *ibid. Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics*, Cambridge 2004, pp. 129–150.

¹⁷ If we think in terms of mourning for a moment, someone could say that there is a certain "Unfähigkeit zu trauern" as the Mitscherlichs said. There is loss of objects that reveals itself in spaces like Dainfern. Cf. Freud, Sigmund. *Mourning and Melancholia. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914–1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, pp. 237–258.



Dainfern view
Photo by Marietta Kesting and Aljoscha Weskott

modern playfulness has created a delusion of creativity; the will for artificiality equals the categorical imperative. There are interior designers specifically for customers living in Dainfern. A whole design economy depends on places like Dainfern. The interior of the melancholia shimmers here like a multilayered topos. It can be such enclosures, in which images and fictions show their embodiments of melancholia. This is also an important motif in Benjamin's reading of Baudelaire, when he takes up Baudelaire's 'Spleen' poems in the role of the flâneur. The topos becomes less shimmering in the monotony of suburban architecture. Spleen takes on a different drive.

Dainfern produces particular images and at the same time images that, in the end, represent non-spaces. At the same time the solidification of perception becomes visible, as if Dainfern were composing its own realism

to naturalize the seemingly sterile plastic world. There is a certain playfulness indeed, because kitsch is a prop in this process of becoming the actor of one's own life. We come across zones of indistinction. Does Dainfern equal a British or a German village? Or is Dainfern the European holiday idyll in Africa? In any case these are artificial worlds, which produce their own films as self-descriptions: "*Round the clock security and patrolling guards ensure that residents can relax and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere within the estate. The Pavilion allows residents to fully appreciate the setting with its two braai's, entertainment area, change rooms and pool. The tennis court is also situated nearby for the residents' enjoyment.*"⁸

This peaceful image always connects to the primordial melodramatic scene, which could take place anywhere, but whose motives are at home in the global village. The entrapments, the loneliness, the fear in the paradisaical atmosphere. We are confronted with the border, which still accounts for the genre. The wishes of the residents seek to be reconciled with outside reality, to pacify all schisms. This is an irresolvable contradiction, of course. But let's not only look from the outside, let's take a walk through Dainfern in the mode of participant observation, where films with multiple layers are screened. What gets called the politics of tears is always connected to a concrete event, for example this one: Rainy Dainfern on a

morning in spring 2007. It is like a missing scene from Todd Haynes's melodrama *Safe*. The image of a woman stopping her SUV in the middle of the small lanes of the Dainfern village and weeping, tears flowing down her cheeks. Then she lets down the window, by remote of course, and turns to the vehicle next to her. It is also a dark SUV whose driver remains invisible. I am stuck in place because the tears are turning into a stream, nobody notices us. We are waiting, mesmerized. Then she wipes the tears from her face and drives on. Dainfern in the rain was a pure melodramatic experience, just like a movie without being in a movie. Then I turned to the camera, looking for more tableaux of life and its soundtracks.

"Especially for you"

(Kylie Minogue & Jason Donovan)

Virilio asks whether we are subjected to a collective hallucination by the means of a sole image, pointing to 9/11 and its aftermath. Maybe so. The image of the catastrophe is absent in Dainfern, it transmutes into the image of a peaceful bird on the golf course, adorning the high gloss brochure of the Dainfern Nature Trust, which we can't trust any longer. What might be the reason? Is it the typical neurotic format of repression, which stimulates Dainfern and which is no less violent? Is it guilt and its economy, the psychic disposition in the crafted paradise, does it take on a paranoid drive? No system of this kind can be imagined without the neurotic energy, even management is subject to it. The actual melodrama is staged within the

⁸ Advertisement text for houses in Dainfern: <http://www.gcr.co.za/dainfern-estate-info.aspx>, download April 1, 2007.

estate, it shows suburban life acted out like in a Hollywood melodrama. The notion of borders gets staged here. We meet M. from Dainfern's management. She controls the discourse and image politics of Dainfern. We talk about everyday rituals. After a long workday she leaves Dainfern by car, passing by the secured entrance with her chip card. This has become routine. She knows that she will be back the next morning, back to this artificial place, which has to be managed and administered. But even after all these years, a feeling of discomfort persists. She is scared of being mugged. It is a vague feeling, she says, so many of her friends have already become victims. "Touch wood!" she says. In Dainfern we are confronted with the melodramatic ghost, which regulates access to the world and becomes a ritual of imitation. Is this solely 'white melancholia'?¹⁹ The politics beyond and along the colour line have become more complex. It would be shortsighted merely to talk about the phenomenon of 'white melancholia' and to proceed from a Woody Allen-like alienated 'form of being.'²⁰ On the surface, skin colour doesn't seem to be an issue any longer. This can be deduced from the development of the post-apartheid society.

¹⁹ Cf. Mbembe, Achille. "Black Nativism, White Melancholia", in: Wits Institute for social and economic research (WISER). *Facing up to Race*. Newsletter Vol. 5, No. 1, May 2007.

²⁰ Dainfern could be seen as the prototype for research in terms of critical whiteness studies. Problematic in its approach is that even though it takes into account Fanon's thought of 'Black Skin/White Masks' and the concept of self-colonisation, it leads to a new essentialism in dichotomous categories even in the guise of being anti-essentialist.

Cinematic Life: Into the images of Dainfern.

Even if there might be nothing 'behind' the images, Dainfern shows us a precarious life in the sway of images. We come across hidden zones commuting between death and life. According to Mitchell we not only have to account for the power of the images, but also for their powerlessness, their impotence, their abjection. "We need, in other words, to grasp both sides of the paradox of the image, that it is alive—but also dead; powerful—but also weak; meaningful—but also meaningless."²¹

The only video of Dainfern on YouTube seems dead, painstakingly searching for a way out. Sometimes the colours are faded, the images draped in a grey veil, recording the space without its laboriously composed glossiness. The different types of images of this place compete with each other. The debunking mode of documentary film succumbs most of the time. But beyond the question of the format it's all about the setting. Filming while driving towards Dainfern's entrance is not only eye-catching but is also asking for trouble. Just like in Sun City, filming here is not allowed.

Not only the advertisements from Dainfern's management lead a strange life of their own. There are the multiple images of the estates, which have become a virtual real estate market to live in. The psychic visual space of Dainfern is on the one hand an unreal, yet material space of the image, which makes the access to the world concrete. It also shows architectures out of joint – architectures that cannot continue to exist

²¹ See Mitchell, *What do pictures want?*, p. 10.

in the new South Africa. But is it hopelessly anachronistic? Reality shows that it isn't; rather, one could say that Sun City is anachronistic, while Dainfern seems to be the life form of the present and the future. Dainfern works energetically on its own visual politics. It is wrong only to talk about transferred pictures of universal advertisement iconographies. The particular mode of images in Dainfern is linked to a global phenomenon. Sometimes the images attain multiple layers, highlighting a composed artificiality, as if Jeff Wall had wanted to turn the visual space of Dainfern into reality. The staging of the images in this highly controlled environment is not self-explanatory. In the Dainfern series of David Goldblatt, the documentary approach seems falsified. A girl is standing in front of a home with a hose in her hand framed by the pipeline in the background; it almost looks like a film still, it is a cinematic photograph. "*The way we live here is somewhat unreal and artificial,*" says a resident of Dainfern in a newspaper article.²²

Let's go back to our "House of Dreams". Occasionally the strange arty appeal of the glossy advertising images has a non-intended ghostly effect. On Pam Golding's webpage an architectural photographer presents 15 images of the "House of Dreams", which can be bought for 10 million rands. The milky hue of the image possesses the computer-generated second life character. The magic pool is embedded in concrete, eight bathrooms are distributed throughout the

²² Cf. Grill, Bartholomäus. "Paranoia im Paradies".

house. The "House of Dreams" in an individualized entertainment centre. The private cinema of the house stands out, as if the cinematic qualities of the place have to double as a home movie theatre in order to come to life. Ten comfortable, beige-coloured reclining plush chairs with built-in cup holders are arranged in cinema style rows. Larger than life filmstrips with Hollywood stills are hanging wave-like along the walls of the private cinema. The screen of the cinema space is not a boundary because it is no longer the frame of the cinematic image, instead it is a mask which uncovers the reality impact of the illusory space. In this specific case of a cinema space, the armoury of images of Dainfern points to the relationship of image, framing, and subject.²³ Dainfern is the source of a specific image production that coincides with the film formats of the entertainment industry. This space is a film studio of life, it stages something, translates it into images, obsessively updates an artificiality, constructing its own visual regime. Dainfern presents an artificiality without being able to process it on a psychological and political level. There always remains a vague remainder, marking the intrusion of the real. In the background of the images a film is screened subconsciously, which is also always a role model for a melodramatic mode of culture, mostly on the verge of 'desperate housewife' motifs and gestures of breakdown, yet it always remains fashionable and ready to be con-

²³ Cf. Holert, Tom. *Regieren im Bildraum*, Berlin 2008, pp. 23–26. Holert has established a classification of images, which I want to transfer rudimentarily to Dainfern.

sumed. Cinema conjures also other films from this background. "An Afrikanerdom—a Dainfern of the mind", sees the critic of the South African teenager comedy "Bakgat!"; "It's suburban, pastel-hued, bleached of any real cultural specificity. An Afrikaans Hollywood-Dainfern." Between the doll-like life and the haptic images, a certain "becoming worldwide of the world [mondialisation]"²⁴ with its "wears and tears" becomes a formative self-reference by marking off "time out of joint" as it has always been and continues to be. What's interesting is the relationship between the interior and subjectivity, the fetishistic setting of the space Dainfern as seen in the totality of its images. The absence of inhabitants in the images, only architecture, which determines thinking and living. The factors of the comfort exhibited mark universal standards, and at the same time the certainty that there can't be any absolute security. "Is it safe?" remains an unanswered question in Dainfern's universe. The melodrama clings compulsively to a crisis. Fear is the essential element of the *Schauerromantik*, but also of the melodrama, and fear has returned and not only entered public urban administration, but even more the management of places like Dainfern. In the cinematic life the imagined panorama of the violence of Johannesburg kidnaps the audience. The images of chaos rushing in have to be tamed. The interior of a technical, air-conditioned world is also visible, which is couched

²⁴ Cf. Derrida, Jacques. "Wears and Tears (tableau of an ageless world)" in: *ibid.* *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, & the New International*, London 1994, pp. 77–78.

on sensitive *Sawgrass Areas*. Next to the aseptic quality of the images, a dwelling form of sadness is subconsciously sketched in the heat of the overstageness, as if the correlation were insisting on the question "What is wrong in/with Dainfern?"

Of course that is only a speculative trace. We don't know if the inhabitants of Dainfern lead 'alienated' and sad lives. We can only read their pictorial dreams. In *One-Way Street* Benjamin emphasises something that dissolves the boundaries of the discourse of the space of melancholia. It is the mad collective images of cinematic figures, as well as the advertisements that, according to Benjamin, call to us and stimulate us.²⁵ Therefore we are witnesses of a double movement. In a certain regard the images of Dainfern reflect the loss of perspective and prospects, a dwelling in closed-off rooms, in which time only seems to dwindle; in another regard Dainfern stimulates a desire which can't be called vital, but calls upon the cult of fetishism. This leads us back to the entertainment zone Sun City and beyond.

Dainfern between form of life, politics, and economy

Sun City crafted the myth of a perished city—"The Lost City"²⁶—and introduced after the end of apartheid the so-called cultural village: "*Situated in the Sun City*

²⁵ Cf. Benjamin, Walter. "One-Way Street", in: *ibid.* *Selected Writings, Volume 1: 1913–1926*, pp. 444–488.

²⁶ Gates, Louis Henry. *Wonders of the African World*, episode "Lost Cities of the South", 1999.

Resort, within walking distances from the hotels is the *Motseng Cultural Village*; a visual experience of true African cultures and customs that concentrates on the eight main tribes of South Africa with reflections of cultures, traditions, architecture, dress and regalia.²⁷ Dainfern on the other hand doesn't need a certain mythical *Africanness* as a membrane. It is the post-modern, almost delayed upper class dream, whose texture is made from global iconography. The multiplication of a secured Sun City lifestyle creates forms of subjectivization that hint at a universal variant of the liberal bourgeois way of life. It is a liberal, humanistic kind of politics of charity an attitude which disposes of the welfare state and is also at the forefront in Europe and the USA. The residents of Dainfern donate money for the informal settlement Diepsloot, building 'bridges' only in order to keep the status. Dainfern signifies a normalizing bio-politics, which passes for 'bio-moral' as a self-image of the 'good person'. This action becomes visible when Dainfern itself starts playing with the minoritarian, struggling for the recognition that it is not getting in the critical media coverage. The transnational make-up of the estate, which is constantly noted, is easily debunked as an enclave of cosmopolitanism fighting for territories in the fragmented urban space of Johannesburg and seeking to obtain legitimate proof of being a socially responsible humanist life form.

²⁷ See www.tourismnorthwest.co.za/heritage/motseng_cultural_village.html, download July 1st 2009.

Back to the World Wide Web, short refuelling on YouTube with fragments, filmed via cell phone, of a business conference 'Women4Women,' which took place in Dainfern in October 2007; the somewhat indistinct voices of the persons being interviewed convey anti-aging speech acts. Even if the world has aged and the model of gated community living has already existed worldwide for 40 years, this form of residence and life in Johannesburg is marked by a particular artificiality. The themed suburb of the City of Gold is a new coding of that "landscape of power" that the apartheid regime constructed and which continues to have an effect.²⁸ California lifestyle, Italian and French *savoir-vivre*, and a tidy African nature create eternal mixtures of estate words. Dainfern seeks to connect the mode of tourism and local colour with global village fantasies. The space was established in 1992 during the transition period. One genealogical thread points to the conception of Dainfern as an immaculate golf course. This is the founding myth. The golf course is now the space of politics, in the Greek sense: the clubhouse—the golf headquarters—serves as the political centre. Here the demands of the residents must be coordinated and reconciled with the demands of the management. It is all about noise level regulation, speed limits, and maintaining and improving the status quo. All in all, politics that are supposed to keep everybody happy. The estate is a popular abode for

²⁸ Cf. Judin, Hilton & Vladislavić, Ivan (eds.) *Blank --: architecture, apartheid and after*, Rotterdam 1998.

diplomats from overseas, as well as wealthy black and white South Africans. Most of the domestic workers come from the neighbouring informal settlements, like from Diepsloot. Every day they pass the borders of Dainfern after showing their ID. There is a certain loneliness in this paradise, which is secured with barbed wire fences. There is also a peculiar silence on the facility, the streets often devoid of people. Therefore management tries to organize social events, like a public viewing during the rugby world cup (2007). Entertainment is seen as a task of governing. The different nationalities and their holidays should be celebrated, like for example the Oranje-Day of the Dutch.

Yet, the politics of safety zones in these paradises are fragile and are always just before break down, the obsession to permanently redefine and position oneself can be compared to post-modern corporate culture, with the exception that Dainfern acts as 'Corporate Life'. The real estate has become a post-modern city-state. There are arrangements with local city administration, but at the same time the privatization of the police is attempted by means of the estate security service with its many allocated competences. Dainfern combines the promise of risk reduction under the primacy of a private security politics. At the same time Dainfern wants to safeguard itself against possible liability claims.

Dainfern's main attraction is its promise of a 'secure' environment, yet, in front of the estate there is a large disclaimer, stating: "*Any person wishing to enter the estate and use its facilities may do so only at their own risk.*

The Dainfern Homeowners Association (DHA), the registered owners, their agents and employees shall not be liable for any injury, loss or damage to any person.... While every effort is made to secure and monitor the estate, the DHA ... shall not be deemed to warrant the safety of a person or property (whether movable or immovable) on the estate. ... Warning, the estate is surrounded by electric fencing, which could cause death or injury if touched." The warning in the end puts all the advertisement and self-portrayals of Dainfern into perspective. There is the contradiction that Dainfern promises a "premiere secure lifestyle", while at the same time not being able and not wanting to guarantee it in legal terms. As we know Dainfern produces and needs images that portray the world outside the gated community as 'dangerous' whereas within Dainfern it is supposedly 'safe'. Similar paradoxes also dominate societal discourses on 'security'. Dainfern benefits from the politics of fear and it needs fear as the basis of its existence. "*We have a saying here*", M. from the management tells us. "*Don't emigrate, just come to Dainfern.*"

Even though there is a lot of competition between the different estates, an association of quasi-autonomous city-states can be imagined in the future. They could mark the farewell of South Africa within South Africa. The competition among the micro-city-states for residents in a fragmented urban space is the main focus of the management. How to meet the contradictory goals of gaining residents and at the same time selling stately homes in line with their own "constitution"? It is a movement in between regulation and deregula-

tion, between promises of freedom and secured entertainment, taxes and rules, between autonomy, sought-after autarchy, and the invocation of the state. One flaw in paradise is the high fluctuation of residents; many use Dainfern as a temporary zone to do business in South Africa, then moving on.²⁹ The latent disidentification of the global players with the location Dainfern undermines the idea of cocooning, which is targeted towards 'identity-building.'

And the images radiate...

Life next to the futuristic pipeline, in which the faeces of Johannesburg peacefully swim through the valley, the championship golf course designed by Gary Player, surrounded by small streets and stately houses is a virulent tableau: a magnificent obsession, if you like. A politics of harmony glimmers in an almost hallucinatory way. As it is stated in the brochure of the Dainfern Nature Trust, "*The Nature Trust believes that it is most important that it works in harmony with management and golf for the good of all.*"³⁰ The post-political citizen of places like Dainfern strolls through these pictorial spaces; he/she needs a lot of mobility passing the urban zones, and at the same time his/her acceleration is stripped of the Afropolitan time of Jo'burg. Then night falls in Dainfern. The film set remains: people project movies in their homes. The country

club glistens in white as a timeless, living thing, while the golf course is sleeping.

²⁹ Although, the infrastructure within the grounds of Dainfern is increasing. There is a shopping centre right next to the gated community, Dainfern's own college. The children can ride to school by golf cart.

³⁰ Cf. Nature Trust Brochure Dainfern, 2007.