‘A TALE OF TWO CITIES? AN EXAMINATION OF THE RE-IMAGINING OF GOLD MINING HISTORY AT GOLD REEF CITY AND IN JOHANNESBURG’S MAIN STREET PRECINCT.’

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Abstract

This research report attempts to examine how the story of gold, and gold mining, is told, and is being retold, at both the Victorian-themed Gold Reef City theme park and in within the Main Street mining precinct in the Johannesburg Central Business District (CBD). The report will therefore look at how imbued ideologies have resulted in a particular formation of the mining heritage shown in both themed spaces. Works by de Certeau (1988) and Eco (1990), for example, form a framework for academic discourse around practiced space within the ‘city’, and the nature of hyperreality. Overall, and including results from participant observation at the theme park, and sample surveys undertaken in the Main Street precinct, one is able to better attempt an understanding of how the story of gold at both sites has been created by certain ideologies, and examine them in light Johannesburg’s changing persona in light of global influences.

Keywords: theme park, ‘city’, ideology, agency, ‘world-class African city’, urban renewal/regeneration, hyperreality, visuality, mining.
Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (Heritage) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

____________________________

Name of candidate

_____ of _____________, 20 ___.
Dedication

To my family, and Nico- much love and respect always.
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Abstract ii
Declaration iii
Dedication iv
Acknowledgments v
Contents vi-vii

1. Chapter 1- Orientation to the report
1.1 Aim p. 1
1.2 Rationale p. 2
1.3 Literature Review p. 3
1.4 Theoretical orientation and framework p.11
1.5 Methodology p.14
1.6 Chapter outline p. 25

2. Chapter 2- An orientation to the two cities
2.1 The idea of the ‘city’ p.27
2.2 Built environments and meaning- making p. 32
2.3 Rush to the Rand- the beginnings of a ‘city’ p. 35
2.4 Rollercoasters and randlords- the creation of the Gold Reef City Theme Park and Casino p. 38
2.5 Johannesburg’s changing persona- from ‘City of Gold’ to ‘World-class African city’ p. 41

3.1 Theme parks and themed spaces p. 48
3.2 Eco’s hyperreality p. 53
3.3 The Gold Reef City tour narrative p.54
   3.3.1 The ‘Rich Beginnings’ introduction p.55
   3.3.2 The Underground Mine Tour p. 60
   3.3.3 The House Museums p. 64
   3.3.4 The Gold Pour p. 66
3.4. The GRC ‘museum’ p. 67
3.5 An imagined Johannesburg as mining town p. 78
   3.5.1 GRC imagery- ‘tribal’ dancers and headgear p. 84
3.6 Issues and events affecting the mining industry p. 87
4. Chapter 4- Main Street- a re-imagining of a mining past
4.1 Urban re-newal and the framing of Johannesburg ‘city’ space p.95
4.2 Greenblatt’s resonance and wonder p.100
4.3 Identity and space- the ‘discovery’ of gold? p.104
4.4 Views on Main Street, and its ideological implications p.109

5. Chapter 5- Conclusions p. 121

6. Appendices
6.1 Transcriptions of Gold Reef City heritage tour material p. 123
6.2 Consent form and transcribed survey results p. 127

References p. 139
Bibliography p. 146

List of maps viii
List of charts ix
List of illustrations x
List of photographs (all taken by researcher) xi
List of interviews xii
Please note: All visual elements within the report are referred to as ‘Figures’, for ease of cross-reference here. Full references for these figures are given in the References section.

List of maps

Figure 43– Street map, showing mining precinct area discussed in this report _p. 97
List of charts

Figure 1- Methodology matrix ______________________________________ p.19
List of illustrations

Figure 2- Cartoon from *The Guardian* newspaper ________________________p. 40
List of photographs (all taken by researcher)

Figure 3- The ‘Rich Beginnings Theatre’  
Figure 4- Posters at the underground safety stations  
Figure 5- ‘Philemon the Miner’  
Figure 6- Digging in a new direction, setting up the framework  
Figure 7,8,9- Interiors of the mining houses on the Gold Reef City tour  
Figure 10,11,12- Signboards outside the three mining family houses  
Figure 13- Participants are given a chance to see gold being poured  
Figures 14 and 15- Views of the interior of the ‘museum’  
Figure 16- ‘Mine boys’  
Figure 17- ‘Mine boys leaving the Rand…’  
Figure 18-‘Natives in the Witwatersrand Labour Association…’  
Figure 19- ‘Johannesburg street life…’  
Figure 20-‘The roll call…’  
Figure 21- ‘Chinese coolies(sic) at work underground’  
Figure 22- Life on the compounds  
Figures 23, 24- Back wall with Chinese tapestry  
Figures 25,26,27- Mining safety display  
Figure 28 - A man stands overlooking restaurants  
Figure 29 - The ‘Kenyan Tumblers’  
Figure 30 - Performers in red European – inspired costumes  
Figure 31 - A parade of Gold Reef City staff in ‘tribal’ dress  
Figures 32, 33 - Gum boot dancers and staff in ‘tribal’ uniforms  
Figure 34 - Fire performers  
Figure 35 - Minstrels  
Figure 36 - Rickshaw operators  
Figure 37 - Ladies in traditional costume  
Figures 38, 39- The mine shaft headgear and the Victorian fun fair  
Figure 40 - The ‘Lost Reef’  
Figure 41, 42- European ideals and the ‘future city’  
Figures 44, 45 - The Mapungubwe gold rhino as seen in Main Street  
Figures 46, 47, 48, 49 - A sample of the information boards  
Figures 50 (inset), 51, 52- A section of the Main Street mining precinct  
Figures 53,54,55- Some of the mining- themed exhibits  
Figure 56- A close-up of the ‘Jo’burg Man’
List of interviews

Graeme Reid. Ex-Johannesburg Development Agency
7 December 2007- Rosebank, Johannesburg.

John Dewar. Director of the Johannesburg Land Company.
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Surveys undertaken in Main Street mining precinct, January and February 2008.