



AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

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TITLE: LIVING GOOD NATION.

EXPLORING THE IDEA OF “BEING GOOD” FROM AN ELITE PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT:

New socio-spatial formations are being experienced in South Africa as expression of the new democratic country. One such expression, over which a great controversy arises, is that of an increasingly widespread private governance epitomized by its most luxurious form, that of the golf estate. Starting from Lamont's suggestion that morals and values are crucial in understanding what makes people feel different, the paper will unfold how behaviours, ways of living and what is associated to being good and having good values, thus being entitled to an efficient and comfortable lifestyle, is made explicit and allowed by a corporate type of organization. Looking at two areas of the city of Johannesburg, a gated golf estate and an open suburb, the paper will explore which institutions determine and define being a good and “worthy person” and how this is linked to and shaped by the organization of the lived space. The residents of the two areas see themselves as the prototype of the “just and ideal city” in the context of elite South Africa: the paper explores how elite groups living in two different areas of the city think of being entitled to live comfortably in a newly democratic society.

AUTHOR'S ACADEMIC PROFILE:

Federica Duca is a PhD candidate at University of Trento, Italy. She is currently conducting research in Roodepoort, on the social consequences of daily life in gated communities. She is trained in Sociology and did her BA research on gangsterism and her MA research on residential segregation in an Italian coastal town. She has previously conducted research in South Africa on gangsterism and fear of crime in Soshanguve, near Pretoria. Her research interests include urban studies, representation of space, social construction of urban forms and means of its transformation.