

The Place of the Poor in the Central City

The Relocation of the 'Ark' Shelter as a Case Study of Citizenship Issues in a Mutating Durban (South Africa)¹

Résumé

Le déménagement, d'une zone à l'autre de la ville-centre, d'un refuge pour indigents (l'Ark Christian Ministries), est une initiative très controversée et émotive. Quelle sorte de passions ce déménagement relâche-t-il? Comment l'expliquer et quelles en sont les implications en termes de citoyenneté et de gouvernance?

Ce changement est vite devenu plus qu'un problème administratif : une affaire publique faite d'affaires dans l'affaire, incluant des faits, des actes et des acteurs douteux, une institution très particulière, des poursuites en justice pour agressions sexuelles envers mineure, des allégations de racisme, et impliquant la responsabilité des autorités publiques au niveau local, provincial et national. Le papier explore les différentes définitions des 'problèmes' que cette affaire soulève selon ses protagonistes, c'est-à-dire : 1) les représentations sociales en jeu dans la controverse, pour commencer de ceux qui sont supposés 'venir avec l'Ark', et ensuite du quartier et de la communauté d'Albert Park ; 2) la politique que le transfert de l'Ark est supposée représenter, en relation avec les autres politiques de la ville, en particulier le renouveau du centre-ville et la politique de logement ou face aux sans-abri ; 3) la méthode de gouvernance impliquée dans la gestion politico-administrative de l'affaire, à l'égard de l'Ark et de ses « clients » comme de la communauté d'Albert Park.

Enfin, le papier élabore plus avant les principales questions émergeant de l'analyse : les contradictions entre les politiques dont le cas relève ; la place des pauvres dans la ville ; la place des citoyens et le sort des valeurs de la citoyenneté tel qu'il se trouve engagé dans l'affaire.

Abstract

The relocation of the 'Ark', a Christian shelter for destitute people, from one area of Durban to another, appears to be a very emotional and controversial issue. What sorts of passions is this move unleashing? How can we explain this fact and what are its implications in terms of *citizenship* and *governance*?

The relocation of the Ark Ministries has quickly become much more than an 'administrative problem', a real public 'affair', made of a series of smaller 'affairs in the affair', involving dubious facts, acts and actors. There is a very particular kind of institution, a sexual attack court case and allegations of racism. The responsibilities and roles of public authorities are also at stake in such a matter at local, provincial and national levels, etc. This paper explores the 'problems' that this 'affair' is raising: 1) the social representations involved in the controversy, especially of the destitute people supposed to 'come with the Ark' as well as of residents of the Albert Park community, 2) the policy that the relocation in Albert Park is said to represent and its relations with other Metro Council policies, in particular the CBD's 'renewal' policy and the homeless/housing policy and 3) the methodology for governance applied in managing the problem. Finally the paper examines some of the main issues emerging from this analysis: the actual contradictions between the Council policies to which the case pertains; the place of the poor in the city and the way it is managed ; the place of the citizen and the fate of citizenship's values as engaged by this case.

‘Lo! how I wish for
Ten Rand-a-month shelter
A room to hide my soul in
This splendid territory...’

Valentine
‘Cry of a destitute’²

Why is the relocation of the Ark shelter – whose case is still pending at the time I’m writing this paper – such an ‘emotional issue’, as its actors are keen to acknowledge – and demonstrate? What sort of *passions* is this move of a shelter (which is also a church) from one area of Durban central city³ to another unleashing? Certainly it means that the move is rousing intense positive or negative feelings – of love, hate, fear, shame... – and that the stakes are considered to be high. But which are they, and what are the implications of the whole matter, if any, in terms of local *citizenship* and local *governance*?

In a way, this will remain our main question : trivial as it seems, it connects for a start the question of governance to the one of politics, the normative ideal of “rationality” supposed to underpin a modern and democratic administration, to the question of emotions and passions (and by way of consequence of physical and symbolic violence⁴), the formal, supposedly “rational” and “moral” discourse of public action, to social representations in use in the broader society.

The relocation of the Ark Ministries from the Point to Albert Park is, indeed, much more than a “problem”, it is a public “affair” made of a series of “affairs in the affair” : there is a sexual attack court case, there are millions of Rands of public money involved, there are allegations of racism, public expressions of fear and repulsion toward certain categories of people, etc. The affair of the “Ark” is in fact a bag of problems of different sorts with, on top of it, the problem that it is not easy to know what exactly the problem is. As in all public controversies, the conflict is structured around differing and antagonistic interpretations of the substance of the matter – of which we have to try and identify the different rationales. To which imagined configuration of social class interests, group memberships, spatial locations, institutional systems and organisational positions, are they referring? To what extent are these interpretations, as expressed and/or enacted in the process, challenging democratic and citizenship values?

I shall first tell the story in short, and explore the different definitions of the problems that the Ark “affair” is raising according to its protagonists, where key *social representations* seem to be at work, in particular self- and other-ascription of identities, first of all, of the destitute people “coming with the Ark”, and of the area and “community” of Albert Park within which they are supposed to relocate. Then, we shall examine which policy problems the relocation is considered to represent in relation with other Metro Council policies, namely : the CBD’s revitalisation, housing and welfare policies. Eventually, we shall see how the affair is also a case of *governance policy* for its protagonists, given their perception of, and reaction to, the politico-administrative management of the case. In the last section, we will examine some of the main issues that we see emerging from this study:: the actual contradictions between Metro policies to which the case pertains ; the dubious partnership between public and private concerns implied by city welfare practices ; the place of the citizen as represented in the governance policies of the case. We’ll conclude by drawing together some remarks about the place of the citizen and the fate of the poor in the city of Durban today.

The Move

The root of the affair is the decision of provincial and local authorities to help a shelter for destitute people called “The Ark Ministries”, to move from the Point area – the peninsula leading southward from the beach front and the city centre to the harbour’s mouth, where a high profile re-development is to take off – to Albert Park – a busy area located further west along the harbour bay and abutting the former white CBD (Central Business District).

Since the area started to decline in the middle of the last century, there has been much talk of re-development of the Point. In the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, “virtually all activity – residence, recreation, workplace and urban development” (Grant & Scott 96: 131) were concentrated in the Point area

together with the Harbour Bay : The Point “emerged as an area of mixed land use and was characterised by the combined presence of a larger, predominantly non-permanent working-class population and a smaller, permanently employed, middle-income group.” (idem.) But with the increasing industrialisation of the Bay, the focus shifted in the following decades to the sea frontage, where leisure and residence amenities were developed : ‘The changes in leisure and work patterns led to the Point’s decline and current state of semi-disuse, social and physical deterioration, large open spaces or wastelands and, very recently, incremental rejuvenation.’ (idem.)

“The Point area was initially”, write Brij Maharaj and Kem Ramballi (1998: 137), “part of the port which had subsequently been excluded from redevelopment for many decades. The state owned the land and refused to release it for revitalisation. This caused the Point area to become decayed and dilapidated, and it was well known as a red-light district.” The actual land owners of the area concerned by re-development were first the State company, Transnet (Propnet), who owned three-quarters of it, the Durban City Council, who owned more or less 15% and the central State, who owned more or less 10% (details in Maharaj & Ramballi 1998: 138). In the early 1990s, a major local economic development initiative was launched on the basis of an alliance between the Durban City Council and the private sector called “Operation Jumpstart”. Among the projects of this coalition was the re-development of the Point as a “Waterfront”. A workshop was convened in August 1991 and from there the negotiations between the DCC, Propnet (subsidiary of the national public transport company, Transnet), the Chamber of Commerce, the Consultative Business Forum (a “progressive” organisation of businessmen) and the major political forces, NP, ANC, IFP, the Congress of Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the National Civic Organisation (Sanco), resulted in a consensus on the re-development of the area : A Point Development Protocol was signed on 20 January 1993, which included Rules of Behaviour aiming at including the re-development of the Point in the framework of the national Reconstruction and Development Programme that was being finalised at that time. Different structures were set up to provide for the transfer of the land and other necessities but the process suffered a lot from indecision (especially relating to the enlargement of the harbour mouth) and protracted discussions. In 1995-6, a Malaysian Company, Renong, showed interest in investing in the project and a joint venture company was formed, Rocpoint (Pty) Ltd (Renong: 51%, Vulindlela Investments (Pty) Ltd: 49%), which bought part of the land and leased the rest, taking charge of the Point re-development project on 26 June 1997.

Since that time, the company has requested the Ark Ministries to move from its Browns Street premises in the area – the former railways workers’ hostel it occupies since the early eighties and which it has transformed into a church, flanked by an assistance centre for destitute people. Given its former identity, the place makes it possible to accommodate almost a thousand people in a rescue centre (30 people) and in single rooms (900 inmates), as well as to store food, to cook and distribute some 5 000 meals a day, to store and donate clothing, to provide health care (in a clinic of 60 beds), alcohol and drug rehabilitation, child care and pre-primary education, serving poor, destitute, jobless and homeless people, orphans, refugees, people in dire straits, originating from all over the place – the continent, the world. There they can also benefit from a range of other services, including counsel and support for job seekers, for abused women, street children programmes, craft making workshops, etc. All of that in addition to a church and a bible school.

Rocpoint wants to demolish the building together with the stevedores’ hostel nearby. The latter was, says Rocpoint’s chief planner, Roger Wootton⁵, “attracting certain services around the building, people selling things, prostitutes, etc, that don’t give a good image to the area” and it has now been bulldozed . The former – still standing at the time I’m writing (November 2000-March 2001) – and still accommodating the church and shelter, caters, according to him, for “the unemployed who are, probably unfairly, blamed for petty crimes, etc.” As a whole, these two structures were, and the Ark remains today, responsible for “the negativity of the feeling toward the (Point) area”.

Asked to move out, the institution approached the Metro Council for help. At that time, the Point re-development process was the subject of a series of Council inter-departmental meetings where the issue was debated and it was decided to ask the Metro Housing Department to help the Ark to access provincial funding and alternative premises. In April 1998, the rumour spread that some buildings in Albert Park were indeed targeted for the relocation. The NP (PR⁶) councillor, Mrs Desire Sansom, and the Association of Victoria Embankment Residents (AVER) – an association of individual owners of this small but privileged section of the town fronting the Bay just in front of Albert Park – led by a businessman, Mr Bruce Soutar – immediately raised their concerns and launched a petition.

The Provincial Housing Department Board (PHDB) will eventually give its approval for the subsidy in January 1999, but it was not before 13 August 1999, once a lengthy technical investigation had been conducted, that the

Ark and the PHDB entered into a formal agreement for the financing of the purchase and the refurbishment of the four buildings identified. With the "affair" going public at the time the Albert Park revitalisation initiative was launched, the opponents found in the newly set up Albert Park Working Group an "outlet" for voicing their frustration. And the fact is that they soon could invoke a quasi-unanimous opposition to the move.

The 'Problems'

Social Ascriptions and Stigmatisations

The move, said the protesters, could only "hamper development, negatively affect property prices and contribute to the decay of the city centre" (*Sunday Times*, 12.04.98). And the petition went on saying: "We the undersigned as residents of the area defined as Ward 5A vehemently oppose the proposed move of the Ark to the Albert Park/Victoria Embankment area, and urgently demand an immediate halt to the relocation and a meeting to discuss alternatives." Approached by AVER, the Durban Chamber of Commerce also used its influence with the Metro administration.

"Will the Ark contribute to the value of the property or detract from the value of the property? Will it add to urban renewal, as everyone is fighting for? They talk about urban renewal and they move a thousand tramps into the inner city, at a cost of twelve million!" exclaims Bruce Soutar, the Chairman of AVER (Interview, 9.09.99). "I'm probably a socialist by nature. And long before the ANC was unbanned, I was a member of it. I have a very socialistic approach to life but from a capitalist perspective, be there such thing. I have my own business and it makes me very much a capitalist, but I'm not unaware of the suffering that poorer classes go through and of the need for the state to provide. But they can't provide to the expenses of other people, and they can't take short-term solutions, and they can't make solutions that have not involved consultation, at any level, with the people on whom they're wasting them.

The Ark is very comfortable in the central Point area. My argument was that with these multi-millions of money destined to go to that area, never in their lifetime has a place ever had such an opportunity to uplift a thousand people really successfully by leaving those people there, keeping them close to work – they've got a labour source – and developing them and uplifting them. As they get skills, they would naturally resign and get better jobs. But why move them away from an area that needs them, why then move them to an area where the soil, where the infrastructure is so stretched? – I have to stereotype because I don't have the political correctness to talk long and verbosely to get to a point: where the stereotypical Indian businessman has made an awful lot of money by buying properties as whites moved out, and buying them at rock bottom prices, loading them with fifteen people a room, made much more than you can possibly make if you maintain the building properly and only have the legally limited number of people in that? And the infrastructure is so stretched, because it's got three times the population living there, they've tripled them, and the conditions have become unsanitary. So I'm saying that, and that association that supports me says, that you can't just move a thousand people from an area when you sell the ground to the Malaysians (...)

I went out to see Pastor De Nysschen [founder and leader of the Ark Ministries Church], I said: Yes, those people have a place in life. But not where they are going. I said the decision to move them to Albert Park is not in their best interest. It is in their best short-term interest, but it isn't in their best long-term interest. He claims that car-guards need to be near the city centre. I said I would serve on your organisation as a trustee, I will help you, but let's find a way to make the right decision and make the last decision, not a temporary decision. Let's buy buses with the twelve million you're getting and transport them to the country, get them open space, give them vegetable gardens, not all of them can be car-guards, some of them are going to have to look after the children. I don't know if you have been into that building, it's really, it's a horror of a building. Have you been to the proposed Ark building? If you go down the little passageway, it's a narrow building, each office as wide as this. It isn't very big. And where do the kids play? Where do the people go and sit? And the Ark has a policy of throwing people out at seven in the morning and only letting them in at five in the afternoon. They've got to get out of it. So where do they go? A thousand people move onto the Victoria Embankment, onto the grass, you know, we're trying to attract tourists, and we're talking about urban city renewal, and straight away you've got a thousand people dumped into that area!

When they put that Point Development to tender, they should have said: Part of the tender is to accept the fact that you've got a resident population of a thousand people and to accommodate them in the tender

price. So if you want to buy, you've got these people here, you've got to upgrade their place, turn it into a visitors' point. Show the world what you can do as part of the development rather than crossing more people and making someone else's problem, deal with the issue, be aware of the fact that you're going to make multi-billions out of this deal, and part of that – well it turns out it's only ten million, what's ten million as a percentage of a couple of billion, you know? This is your social responsibility, integrate these people, employ them, employ social work to make sure that you're getting onto delivery...

You have to realise that I'm talking to you with one hat on; I'm talking to you as chairman of the Victoria Embankment Residents Association, anxious to maintain the full value of their property, prime property. I'm speaking on behalf of those people, so I'm wearing a hat of a capitalist and of a person protecting my residents and my rate base interests. The residents on the Victoria Embankment, the 'Golden Mile' of the Victoria Embankment, pay much more in rates to the city of Durban than that 'Golden Mile' of the sea. And the reason for it is that the city council owns all that ground, 90% of it, and the ground is rented to the hotels and to all those blocks of flats on a shared block basis⁷. Whereas on the Victoria Embankment, 90% is owned by sectional title. So that people physically own that ground for which they are paying rates. Yes, most of them are white, long-time owners, rightwing and politically conservative. I fit into an entirely different perspective, and my argument is substantially different although we agree at the end point – a lot of them are old colonials and they are not prepared to accept change, but I'm saying this is not change. (...)

From a Christian point of view, and a socialistic point of view, there is an entirely different approach to the problem of these homeless people. We tend to, I'm speaking broadly, say that it is a problem of government and yes, I'm using it partially as an argument now and I say : the government should never, and the Metro Council, should never allow the relocation of those thousand people in an area which is already overburdened. At least, there (in the Point), it's not overburdened. There is a chance, a golden opportunity, to integrate that population and seriously turn them around and show the world what you can do with a homeless population."

As appears clearly from these arguments, the relocation of the Ark has first been opposed, right from the beginning of the "affair", by property owners of the Victoria Embankment section, fearing its negative impact on their property value – for which they pay higher rates than residents of the other prime area of the beachfront "Golden Mile"; they also denounced the move as flying straight in the face of the much-vaunted renewal of the city centre by adding to the load of an already overstretched and over-burdened area – a way to deflect the criticism that they oppose the move solely on the selfish basis of their own class interests. On top of this, they denounced the absence of any consultation with the people affected by the move.

Thus those who voiced the most "vehement" opposition and led the resistance to the move, at first on their own and thereafter within the Albert Park Working Group (APWG), were established owners of the Victoria Embankment area speaking on behalf of all residents of Albert Park. And it is in fact on the basis of this opposition, between "residents" on the one side, often portrayed as "law-abiding citizens", and "tramps" or "street people" on the other side, often portrayed as criminals, and in any case as belonging to the "other world" of poverty, informality and illegality, which strives on the margins of society, that the owners have been able to enlarge their legitimacy, so much was this antithesis widely accepted as a way to define the nature of problem. This becomes very clear in the description of the problem by the ward councillor for Central Durban, Trevor Prince, representative of the New National Party (Interview, 20.4.00)⁸.

"...At the end of 1998, before we created this Albert Park Upgrade Working Group, we were invited by Sarah Charlton and Julian Baskin of Metro Housing. They explained to us 'Look, this is the situation, the management of the Ark has applied to the KwaZulu Natal Provincial Housing Board for funding, in order for them to be able to move to another premises'. So they said, Julian Baskin and Sarah Charlton, that they have been mandated by Metro Council to administer the whole process. Now they are asking us to speak on the issue. So you can expect that our meeting was totally problematic, because we were all vehemently opposed to the Ark coming into that area. We made it clear to them, as Albert Park is a densely populated area already, which has really got social problems of its own – crime, prostitution, drugs, alcohol abuse, all sorts of things, the one thousand two hundred people that live in the Ark are people of that calibre, you know what I'm saying, by forcefully integrating them now into what is already a very populated area, it's something that can make matters worse... But I was to tell you first, that in the month of my campaigning, at that time the Ark was destined to come to Albert Park, there was rumour in the local newspapers. So I set out print articles because I was inundated with calls by the public in the area, to say that they don't want the Ark here in Albert Park. Most of them invested their life savings purchasing those flats out of those hundred of buildings in Albert Park. So the Ark to come into that area, with the loitering of those people from the Ark, they are robbing and

stealing and crime and prostitution, the property values are going to deteriorate, you understand? So I made the story in the paper. Anyway the whole issue was quiet from the time of my election until the end of 1998, now they called this meeting, you see? Anyway, once we had that meeting, I then wrote a letter to Metro South Central Council, and I'm going to read that letter for you now, so that you will have got an idea :

This letter was addressed to our Chief Executive Officer. Dated : 16th of March 1999.

"Dear Madam,

Relocation of the Ark

As the Ward Councillor for the Albert Park area, I have been inundated with calls to oppose the relocation of the Ark to the area. It must be noted that the majority of the residents of the area are opposing the relocation as no consultation has taken place to the residents and role players from the area, as well as no social impact study having been undertaken in this regard." *So no social impact study and no consultation with the community on the ground.*

"I am informed that several petitions had been submitted objecting to the relocation of the Ark to the area. And it seems that the council is not foreseeing the problems that will re-emerge if this relocation takes place. Albert Park is already a densely populated area and has its own social problems." *Right? I read again : "Albert Park is already a densely populated area and has its own social problems. The introduction of a further one thousand two hundred people from a social background that prevails at the Ark would certainly exacerbate the situation and create further social problems, and undoubtedly an increasing drug peddling, prostitution, break-in's and other unseemly behaviour" This is what prevails at the Ark. There is no question.*

"The council must look at the impact this will have on the revitalization of the Albert Park and CBD, as the proposed redevelopment of the Victoria Embankment'..."

The People Coming with the Ark

"When we first saw them, we thought : no, it cannot work. Because these are high-rise buildings, and the area is in the centre of the town. It is a residential area and residents are afraid of people on the streets. We understand them..." In a few words, Pasteur Hermann de Beer, member of the direction of the Ark involved at that stage in the relocation process, sums up what appears to be the overwhelming definition of the problem : the relocation of the Ark in Albert Park is said to be highly problematic because it would draw together "residents" and "people on the streets", with the implied meaning that these two social categories are antagonistic. (Interview, 6.10.99) Thus the definition of the problem relies on the *simultaneous and opposite construction of Ark and Albert Park identities* as opposite and conflicting social groupings, of "street people" on the one side and "residents" on the other.

"All of us we are against the coming of the Ark": Bill, the (white) shop owner who has been operating in Albert Park for twenty-one years, and whose shop is part of the buildings targeted for the relocation, doesn't hide his resentment : "Yesterday I told them [i.e., AVER, of which he was a member but from which he says he resigned on the eve of the interview)] I can say that they chased me out of the area. They will take not only the four buildings but all the shops around them" and he is to move out and resettle in another part of the town ('It'll be better there, I will have water, I don't have it here.') The arrival of the Ark means, he says, the influx of 1100 people : "15000 people plus 1100 people, it will make 16000 people⁹. The satellite police station on Broad Street is being upgraded but they will not be able to control the area... It's like for the fencing of the park, they can fence the park, if they don't put barbed wire, it won't change anything, they just jump over it."

"We petitioned the council, but we collected only 1200 signatures, not even 10%. All members of families should have signed and not only one per family." To whom the petition was addressed and what has happened to it, he doesn't know. "They said it is a slum, let's put the Ark there!... They should have done a survey... It is a residential area. Most of the people they own their flat here. Their value will decrease..."

"We have no objections to the Ark, we have objections to the people coming with the Ark. These people of the Ark they stay about three months. After three months, they go out. Where? They go back to where they

come from : the street! They go out, they do car guards, they get the money, they buy booze, later they go back to the Ark. (...) When they are punished, they put them out for two or three days. Where do they go? We asked them, a friend of mine has been to see them and ask, but they don't answer... They should send them to work on the farms, because there they could be self-supporting."

As I insist, mentioning the increasing number of people made redundant and pushed onto the street, Bill tells me : "We have now a black government. They apply affirmative action. So you have to have a certain amount of Africans in your workforce. But we all know that they are backward. They are not ready. They'll be later, but they are not now... If they are not qualified, how can they do the job?" I insist : what to do about the increasing number of jobless and destitute people? 'The solution? Export yourself overseas, or export them overseas! "n fact, they have found a solution : they kill themselves in two ways, they shoot themselves and they get Aids..." (Interview, 29.09.99)

Bill's talk exhibits a number of characteristic ambiguities built up on a resentment that extends much beyond the specified problem at stake : "the people coming with the Ark" are not only assimilated to criminals but – in the context of an interview drawing together the two "white" people that we are – to black poor people altogether ; the local council and the black national government form a single actor as well, in relation to which the issue of the Ark's relocation is not foreign to the national and official policy of affirmative action. Apart these typical features of a disgruntled white citizen of the "new" South Africa, his talk exemplifies how the relocation is said to be highly problematic on the basis of an antagonism between "these people of the Ark", who belong to "the street", "from" which they come and to which they "go back", and the Albert Park area populated as it is by "residents", "most of them" owners of their flat. Such is the antagonism that there is no other solution than the definitive "export" of these people outside of the city, to farms where they will be constrained to be self-supporting. Accordingly, the proposed move is said to pertain to a gesture of contempt toward an area considered as "a slum"...

"We do believe the Ark does a good work, rehabilitates, helps people to get employment, operates a creche, etc. But why dump it in a residential area without having done any social impact study and without any consultation with the people?" Shehana Gaibie, who presents herself as a committed member of the ANC and co-founder of the newly formed Albert Park Residents Association, is also very disgruntled and critical (Interview, 17.10.99). She is involved, she says, because she lives here with her family since they came down from Johannesburg, and she is very concerned by the situation in their area of adoption. They have acquired the Victoria Embankment flat in which she very simply and openly receives me, and, in addition to her husband's job, she runs a corner shop nearby. Together with another active member of the ANC, they have identified the need for a local residents' association, since the people of the area are "victims of unacceptable negligence from the owners, who exploit their tenants but are not themselves paying their levies". After having described at length the ensuing problems, she comes to the Ark's relocation : "The entire community is up against it. We have people of many political persuasions, of the NNP, of the DP, of the ANC : everybody is united : we do not want it! (...) What will happen with the people whom, each day, the ARK cannot accommodate? They will spill onto the streets. We have just cleaned up the Park : they will end up there. In an area surrounded by bottle stores! (...) These are homeless people. They should build for them a place on the outskirts of the city" and to exemplify her point, she gives the example of a mentally disabled self-help scheme here she taught herself. "There are already a number of people attracted to the area, because of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. But their entrance is on Smith Street, so this doesn't interfere with us at all in fact. Still, can we take 1200 people more in a 15000 people area? Also, there is already a high rate of unemployment. How are we to solve this problem?"

"Some people have the NIMBY reaction – 'not in my backyard' – some say : elsewhere, wherever it is, there will be the same outcry. So find a place which could be suitable for them! They say : these people, they will come to town anyway, so we say : provide them with transport! You can't just take it and dump it somewhere. The security guard of this building told me the other day : 'Please, stop them!' Recently, some people had come to sleep down here, just near the entrance of the building, and residents asked me to chase them away. I couldn't do it. I told them : it is very difficult to do that! We are sitting comfortably in our warm homes, we're having warm food – and they... Someone has been selling his flat as soon as he knew of it, there are stories like that, people go around talking and the news has spread..."

If we are obliged to put up with them, then a number of problems will have to be solved : the appearance of the place, the behaviour of people, like, excuse me to say, people urinating in the streets, drinking, etc. What are the plans for the people who'll be left outside each evening and will end up sleeping on the pavement

or in the park? People are very proud of their park. Recently, we heard that there has been a 4000 protesters demonstration there. What is going on? We want to keep it for leisure... All of that is happening, and you want to bring the Ark here! (...)

Yes, we've got to keep Albert Park clean. But you can't avoid the fact that there are destitute people. Public powers should find a way to organize shelters for these people. They must be put in a situation where they are to make things by themselves. The government does accept refugees, etc., but isn't their responsibility to see for their own destitute people? The government is not doing enough..."

What distinguishes this talk from the preceding is quite clear : no racist overtone, no condemnation of the black government and its policies, no expeditious and insensitive "export" solution: a clump of dire concerns. The same can be said of Bruce Soutar's talk. At the same time, one cannot but remark that these four different discourses that we have quoted share a common minimum definition of the nature of the problem and its solution : for all these interlocutors, the problem is not so much the Ark institution itself and what it does than the very "street people" it caters for. To "waste" or "dump" them in Albert Park can only compound the already heavy problems of neglect, alcohol abuse, crime and the like experienced by residents in the area. There is no better solution than to find for them a place "on the outskirts of the city", where they will be sheltered and re-educated in order to become self-reliant and "do things by themselves"

Naming the Problem

If beyond these few individuals' talks, we look at the ways in which the problem is more generally characterised, we find that it is located in the same way by the "Arkies" themselves, 'the people of the Ark' or "the people coming with the Ark", that is to say, those who patronize the Ark institution. According to the designations collected in interviews and documents (press, reports, minutes, etc.), they are 'the people on the streets' or, with stronger connotations of "belonging", "the street people" or, as Bill says, "the people from the streets", who originate from it and return to it because they belong to it. These are the "tramps", "vagrants and hawkers", "beggars", "informal users", "homeless", the "destitute", those "ho have dropped out of society" . They are "the people who cannot afford, who can barely survive", the "unemployed", the "poor" or the "poorer classes", "who are sitting outside and eating and messing"... They willingly call themselves "the outies" but they don't hesitate to use the widely used designation of 'hobos' as well. And they are also called all sorts of other derogative names : "disadvantaged Ark types", "broken people", social "misfits", "drunkards", "drug addicts", "unruly elements", "won't works", "pigs" and the like.

One can see that these qualifications are of different character : "vagrants", "tramps" and "hobos" are part of an international language providing urbanites with "ready-made" social categories to designate these well-known figures of their landscape. One can also associate with them standard social categories such as "drunkards", "drug addicts", "prostitutes", "criminals", "misfits", "won't work", etc.

"Homeless", and "destitute" could be also ranked in this group, at first sight. Nevertheless, they need to be distinguished from the previous ones to the extent that they refer to concrete social and economic conditions, and that, accordingly, they don't have the same moralistic or picturesque connotations. Expressions like "broken people" add a moral and condescending connotation typifying people as passive victims. According to the local PR councillor, Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, the homeless and destitute are part of the broader grouping of "migrant" and "informal traders", "unemployed" and "self-employed" people (Interview, 2.10.99).

All the other denominations appear to pertain to a different grouping, more context-specific and with built-in behavioural criteria : those "who eat and drink", "urinate", "sleep", "defecate", "abuse", "loiter" and "mess" in the streets... Contrary to what one could expect, this register can, in the South African context, refer to a wider population than the first one, because of its implied "racial" dimension inherited from the past : actually, it can be qualified as being made, except for a number of "disgraced" white people, mainly of black people, because these are those who are "new" to the town and who show "no respect" for it because it remains for them a "white man's" sort of thing. This is what the national Minister of Police himself stated quite clearly in Durban in 1999, when, lashing out at street traders for "turning pavements into 'slums'", he said according to the press reports that "many township people still viewed Durban as a 'white man's town' and therefore did not treat the city with respect" (*Daily News*, 1.10.99). Thus, social ascription of 'underclass' identity is particularly ambiguous as far as racial qualifications are concerned : most of the Arkies are known to be white; still the underclass is *typically* identified as black in the socio-historical context of South Africa 2000.

In spontaneous social exchanges, contrary to more formal circumstances (meetings, reports, letters), the first and the third categories clearly dominate. The second one is used in official policy documents as well as by the prominent actors I have been able to interview, whose discourse was characterised by clear attempts at objectivity. Ordinary people and casual talk don't relate to the "homeless" or "destitute" but easily to "tramps", "vagrants", "hobos", "dunkards" and more behaviour-based stigmatisations. The prominence of the derogatory labels over the more "objective" designations is not innocent as any moral condemnation of bad behaviour calls upon some form of *correction* (repression and rectification) while denotative denomination of the "homeless" type call upon *provision* of amenities and services. Thus, it permits the rejection of the people concerned, since these terms put them in a *supposedly straightforward antagonism* with all residents.

"Street People" versus "Residents"

The fact is that, as all participants in the process observe, the move has evoked unanimous opposition: "All of us we are against the coming of the Ark", says Bill. "The entire community is up against it", says Shehana Gaibie. "We have people of many political persuasions, of the NNP, of the DP, of the ANC, everybody is united : we do not want it" " At a community meeting, the Ark was opposed vehemently by all sectors of the community (black, white, young and old). There was agreement at this meeting that the Ark did not have the support of the Community", one can read in the APWG archives. (APWG, meeting, minutes, 28.04.99) . "It is a catalyst", says the PR councillor, Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, director of the Organisation of Civic Rights (OCR), whose prominent involvement in central city residents's struggles dates back to the formation of the Durban Central Residents' Association to fight Group Areas Act evictions in 1984, Interview, 2.11.99). "This is one of the first issues I know where, across the board, political and otherwise, even across social stratification, the working class and the bourgeoisie are coming together to say : 'We cannot have the Ark here!' It has actually drawn in different social groups together. (...) Albert Park is a mixture of people, social backgrounds, so you have the working class, you even have the poorest of the poor, and then you have the upper, or the middle, upper-middle class... But they have united, against another sector of society, and perhaps they don't want to see that the Ark could play and has played a meaningful role." The councillor cannot but lament the extent to which the issue of the Ark has systematically occupied the front stage at the expenses of other pressing issues and how it has authorized emotions and feelings of exclusivity to "bog down" the revitalisation initiative.

The high level of sensitivity and emotion involved in the whole conflicting process about the relocation have certainly something to do with the sheer defense of individual property interests that the move is seen to threaten. But public mobilisation against the move has been based on a potentially much larger grouping of interests and has succeeded, if not actively to involve large parts of the local community (there has been no large public meeting, no public march nor demonstration), at least to define hegemonically the terms of the problem according to a deep and powerful paradigmatic antagonism between street people and residents. How should we understand it? In one of their first meeting (May 1999), the APWG members mentioned as major problems of their area, "*incivility*" and "*break down of civic pride*", to be followed by "urban decay", "lack of education", "social problems" (drugs, loitering, prostitution, vagrancy) and "lack of business opportunities". Accordingly, the emphasis is, in the "vision" that they elaborated at that time, on the restoration of the sense of "civic pride" and "dignity" : they declare themselves to be "collectively committed to re-establish a sense of civic pride, dignity, safety and security in (their) endeavours to revitalise the area" (APWG, meeting, minutes, 26.05.99. Original emphasis.) 'The Albert Park area shall be a clean and safe environment, with its residents living in well serviced residential accommodation, and with a high quality of life that is sustainable (social, economic and environmental). Democracy and tolerance will be an established way of life in a unified Albert Park area, with a high level of service and development orientation and civic pride.'¹⁰ For example, it is said that a "sense of pride" has to be "instilled in the people" to "motivate them to take care of their buildings", and diverse sorts of "education programmes" are said to be needed "to make residents aware of the importance of having a beautiful clean area" or to make visitors and tourists behave : in substance, to encourage people to *respect* themselves and the city alike. Then, is it not that street people are problematic because they are seen to exist in conflict by definition with the "pride" and "dignity" of "residents"?

Looking beyond our case at the broader public discourse, we will see that this sense of pride is currently associated with the senses of "ownership" and "belonging" in a configuration that associates them with *residents* – that is to say those who possess a house or reside in proper "formal" housing – in opposition to *street people* associated, with a supposed *lack* of all those senses, meaning *disgrace* and *indignity*.¹¹ In a quite

ridiculous illustration of this ideo-logic, a certain Ms Szlovak writes to the local *Daily News* that for those “many who have a sense of dignity and pride” but are “forced to skirt damaged pavements, vendors, litter, jay-walkers and spitters”, the obvious question is : “Why have the heroes of the struggle for democracy destroyed all that was once clean and beautiful about our city and others like it?” (20.4..00)! According to this dichotomy, the problem that *some* people urinate in the streets tends to become the problem that the streets are full of urinaters, and spitters and litterers and loiterers as well, that is to say, full of people who are so unqualified for city life that they do such unseemly things.

The link between *pride* and *ownership* is emphasised in the multi-form official discourse about housing. When the press reports on a housing scheme, invariably ministers, officials and journalists refer to the sense of pride and belonging that the new owners are meant to feel. Indeed, this vision seems to be backed at first sight by human rights values. The Constitutional Court recently stated, in support of its decision on the so-called Grootboom case (the first respondent of a displaced squatters’ community who instituted proceedings against their removal), that “there can be no doubt that human dignity, freedom and equality, the fundamental values of our society, are denied to those who have no food, clothing or shelter”. (Sunday *Tribune*, 8.10.00). Nevertheless, it has to be seen that the “dignity” that the Court associates with food, clothing and shelter, is linked with “freedom” and “equality”, implying that those who have no food, clothing or shelter are denied their inherent *freedom* and *equality* together with their constituent *human dignity*, and *not* with any sense of “pride”, “belonging” or “ownership” that destitute people would be said to be lacking.

Actually, it took some time before I realised myself that when I was told that the spectacle of hobos and other “broken people” on the streets of the city is a “shame”, it was not so much an indictment of the way the city is taking care of its people than an accusing finger pointed at the very people themselves said to be a disgrace (“You are a disgrace to the nation” said this [white] lady to Ann, a [white] woman in her forties begging on Aliwal Street)¹². The way “ownership” comes to designate metaphorically a sense of civic responsibility and care for the common good, when residents are exhorted “to take ownership and responsibility” as they are “to take pride”¹³, is therefore not immune against class interpretations, according to which those who are left on the streets are by definition abdicating any sense of self-respect and ownership in the absence of any proper ties or connections with the place.

This indignity is threatening. Summing up the relocation problem, Pastor Hermann de Beer of the Ark said, “Albert Park is a residential area. Residents are afraid of people on the street. We understand them.” (Interview, 6.10.99) Complaining about his recent visit to Durban, a reader writes in a local weekly: “we felt intimidated by the beggars at robots – at just about every street corner – and there were plenty on the beachfront.” (Sunday *Tribune*, 8.10.2000.) Why such a fear? Asked this question, quite invariably local people will start speaking of the unbearable level of crime, with the implied, if not explicit, meaning that “street people” are “unruly elements” As Councillor Trevor Prince asks in a local community paper (*Berea Mail*, 25.06 1999), who is responsible for what the Social Impact Report for the proposed relocation of the Ark calls “anti-social activities” (*Environment Interface* 2000:8) or what he calls himself “drug peddling, prostitution, break-ins and other unseemly behaviour”? Are they not, “these people, social misfits, that have to steal, have to grab, have to kill, have to beg, in order to survive for their next plate of food or that next bus fare or taxi fare”? (Cllr. Trevor Prince, interview, 20 04.00) This link between street people and crime is not just an extrinsic one that could be empirically deduced from experience. The lack of dignity and self-respect makes of “non-residents” per se, those who inhabit the street instead of a home, a constant potential source of abuse, a threat to residents’ safety and way of life.¹⁴ Consequently, it is quite enough to see street people to feel intimidated and embarrassed, as their physical appearance bears testimony to their potential *immorality*. :“There is a great deal of incorrect information being filtered right to grass-root level”, notes councillor Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, “which goes saying : ‘We cannot have the Ark, these are a bunch of criminals, hobos, this and that...’ So people who don’t even know what the Ark does have that kind of impression. I have been in many meetings and some people have been diplomatic and they said : ‘No, the Ark is doing a good work but...’ and a whole barrage of attack starts, that they are going to increase the crime level in the area and so on”. (Interview, 22.05.00.) According to the interviews conducted by the authors of the Social Impact Report on the relocation of the Ark, Albert Park’s residents, business and institutions alike consider that “residents of the Ark engage in criminal activities” even if, as the report notes, no evidence is to be found of such a “fact”.

It is impossible not to link these features of the local discourse to the moralistic and paternalistic history of social welfare issues, practices and policies in urbanizing and industrializing Europe, analysed by Michel Foucault, Jacques Donzelot and others. Quoting D. Horn, Susan Brin Hyatt writes about Great Britain today

that what worries people is not that much that poverty compels families to live in 'conditions unfit for human habitation' but that poor housing conditions pose a *moral* threat to the overall well-being of the populace". Consequently, it is to be tackled "not in the interest of social justice but towards minimizing the risks of criminality and disorder perceived to emanate from poor communities." (Hyatt, 1997,220)

Such is the widely accepted definition of the problem. There are those who may oppose that vision, insisting, like Maurice Makhathini, Durban Metro Housing director, Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, ANC (PR) Councillor, Stuart Talbot, director of the YMCA student hostel on St Andrews Street and others, on the human rights and dignity of the so-called broken people, on the fact that most of them are not "criminals" but "law-abiding people" but the moral *stigma* appears to be pervasive. All the signs are there that it is shared by those who are, like the foreign migrants and refugees, among the involuntary users of the institution. Despite the fact that most of the refugees who arrived in Durban in 1994, 1995 and 1996, did use the Ark for different lengths of time in the first period of their stay, and that many will do in the future, all our interviewees first attempted to hide this fact, and it is only through the trust built up through sustained contact that they eventually "confessed" The experience can indeed be traumatic, as the Ark caters for victims of all sorts of ills : street children, prostitutes, alcohol abusers, drug abusers, sick persons, etc. Robert from Burundi, who stayed there with his wife, assimilates them with mentally sick people : "Living with mentally deficient people is difficult", he says, as he recalls their experience. When a couple of white "street people" open a shelter on Smith Street, they call it "the Upperclass Shelter" because, they say, "It is not like the Ark, it is not for the destitute".

Be it with "street people" or the "destitute", "tramps" or "drunkards", "misfits", "broken people" or "criminals", the opposition serves to draw together the widest social grouping possible, actually what is meant to be *the whole of established society*, in opposition to those who would have "dropped out" of it. But as they are said to have fallen out of it, they are still *in* it, occupying its public spaces and creating problems of cohabitation¹⁵.

As the interviews quoted above have already allowed us to notice, the threat is materialised by the vision of all these street people wandering around the area as they are not only expected to flock to the institution and gather in numbers in its vicinity but are likely to be pushed back as well onto the streets because they have to spend most of the day outside looking for a job or actually working (a general rule of Durban shelters), or because they come too late to be let in, or they are drunk and refused entry, or because they are "thrown out" for breaking the rules, etc. Then they will "spill onto the streets". "When these people drink or do the things they shouldn't do", says the ward councillor, Trevor Prince, "they are thrown out of the Ark for a few days as punishment. They end up staying on the streets...." (*Berea Mail*, 25.06.99) One resident is quoted in the same article saying : "...if these guys are not inside the Ark, they will be on the streets... Would you buy a flat next to the Ark?" (*ibid.*). This is tantamount to making the Ark responsible for the very homelessness and destitution it is striving to address in its unique way. On the contrary, says the Ark's leader, its institution is helping people who "have fallen out of the bath" of the modern economy, "trying to get them back into society, to make them competent so that to be a worthy citizen of that particular place, Durban or that country for instance. (...) But you still have your social structure that is not in agreement; they want cushy lives, they don't want any sort of vagrant or hobo to come into the city; they want to arrest them because it's for tourism. Tourism trade is the most important as far as Durban city is concerned. So now, we have a situation where the residents of the city would rather see a hobo or a person that is destitute running around the city without orderly discipline, without having them in the Ark in a disciplined organisation! To me, that doesn't make sense! (...) The area in which we work becomes a feasible area to live in, there is no vagrants running around, they might be standing twenty-five at the door waiting, but that is where they wait, not running around in the streets with drugs." (Interview, Derrick de Nysschen, 22.04.00).

Whatever the case, beyond the Ark or through the Ark, the problem appears to be indeed the people who would come with and come to it, since they will physically "patronize" the public and semi-public spaces of the area. The problem is not that they will be there, but that they will be there *with us*, cohabiting in full light with residents and visitors alike who will then have to rub shoulders with them, a perspective that there is no need to make explicit as an unthinkable implication. Already the problem is that those "undesirable" people sell goods at "our" doorsteps, sleep on the pavement in front of our building, lie on the lawns of our park, in a way that we, the 'legitimate' residents, feel deprive us of our *privacy*¹⁶. The fact is that the negative conclusion of the Social Impact Report is based on the same assumptions : that "the attraction of vagrants into the area is a real issue" and that the coming of the Ark will "result in large numbers of inmates congregating on the street", which in turn will fuel the "negative perceptions that are held by the community. (*Environmental Interface*: 2000: 17, 38) As with urban 'decay', negative perceptions of "hobos" and the homeless are thus

taken for granted and serve, as if they were univocal and definitive, as a legitimate basis for policy formulation. Yet, as we quoted Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, “there is a great deal of incorrect information being filtered right to grass-root level” and a great deal of labelling.

Clean Up

As a matter of fact, before being a problem of physical co-habitation and commerce between antagonistic social categories, the problem is first a question of *sight* and *perception* of a physical and moral *disorder* or *impurity* being made visible and requiring to be swept away in order to *restore* physical and moral cleanliness. By and large, the local public seems unanimously to converge on a common concern for *cleaning up* the city, controlling/containing and for the rest repressing informal trading¹⁷, curbing vagrancy, homelessness and criminality, prostitution and drug trafficking altogether – in order to “re-establish civic pride” together with physical *cleanliness*, moral *purity*, functional and social *homogeneity*¹⁸. This is how citizens, officials and leaders alike advocate “clean up” initiatives as a solution not only to the litter problem¹⁹ but to the “vagrants” and “street people” problems as well. It is simply impossible to account here for the number of occasions when this wording is used, all across the social spectrum, in official, political, press, public and private discourses, which assimilates, explicitly or implicitly, homeless people, hawkers and other informal or “illegal” users of the city, with litter, rubbish or filth²⁰. Thus, clean up policies symbolically combine scapegoat and expurgation if not exorcism strategies. In an extreme formulation (similar to the former State Security Council directive against prominent opponents), a local press reader states that the “thieves” “must be removed from society” and given corporal punishment, whereas the beggars will be eliminated by all of us making their business unprofitable : “If we all refuse to give, the beggars will find something better to do”. In conclusion : “Let us clear Durban’s streets of undesirables and restore our city’s pride”. (*Sunday Tribune*, 2811. 99). More clearly, even, another reader asks a few months later his fellow “law-abiding, concerned citizens of this beautiful land”, to “...starve them out : we need to take a conscious and united stand not to feed the beggars and vagrants, not to give the beggars any money and maybe this, and any other advice that may be provoked by this letter will drive them out”. (*Berea Mail* 23.2.01). What these formulations show is that, with the visibility of street people, it is a breakdown of the social order that is made visible, with its anti-aesthetic, unhygienic and immoral consequences. The simultaneity and contiguity of the street people and the residents is perceived, felt and interpreted as a form of *chaos*, a challenge to the (segregative) socio-spatial urban order embodied by the street people : They are a scandal per se in residents’ or visitors’ eyes. Consequently, the normal way of correcting such a disorder is to clear the space concerned, by physically eliminating the intrusive, conflicting and anarchic element : thus citizens call upon “clean up” operations to *restore* an original order. The fact that it is most often that cleanliness, purity and homogeneity have to be re-established that makes it obvious how much clean up strategies amount to gestures of physical, moral and social purification.

The Ark institution itself, contrary to biased points of view, shares the same criteria. Like every shelter, it sees itself as taking the homeless and destitute off the street in order to rehabilitate them. It sees itself as implementing a clean up policy, although it is linked to a rehabilitation policy – “We place people back into society, affirms Pastor Derrick De Nysschen. “They refuse us [the chance] to be in Albert Park, there are all kinds of petitions drawn up, the excuse was the property will lose its value, and yet they are fully aware of the credibility of the Ark in the Point area, what the impact was on this area. And the impact was phenomenal. I mean the crime rate according to the local police station, was broken down by forty six percent since the Ark’s inception here, since we started here, because we drew all people off the streets. And the socio-environmental impact that it has on this area is almost nil as far as the negative is concerned. The only problem we have is that the Ark is a very small place. I would love to have five, six Arks, in various suburbs, to accommodate destitute people, because there they are in a transitional process from destitution back into the mainstream of society.” (Interview, Pastors Danie Pedersen and Derrick De Nysschen, 22.04.00). Criticizing another shelter, Pastor Danie Pedersen of the Ark Board of Trustees, says that it cannot work because, according to him, in that place ‘...there is no input, there are no rules, regulations or order. Everybody just does what he wants to. And once you’ve got such a situation, you destroy everything. Once you have order and cleanliness and neatness, and you’ve got a program in operation for the upliftment of people, you’ve got teachings and that sort of things. That is going to work. People have to got to have time to eat, time to sleep, time to do this, time to do that, everything has got to be done in an orderly fashion and in orderly manner. Otherwise things go wild. (...) My solution? It is to have the same type of situation like this. [he means the Ark] : to put them in buildings where they can go at night and stay, and keep them under strict surveillance

and rules. And if I say surveillance, strict surveillance, I mean that they don't become smugglers or that kind of things, you understand what I am saying? That they don't become an eyesore to the public. You understand what I am saying? This is what they should have done..." (idem.)

Pastor Pedersen's insistence on order and discipline conforms absolutely to the Ark leader's point of view, sounding like the "old school" of thought, including, through its very denial, the basic racist mould of a "them and us" type : "If you don't like the rules, you don't have to accept them, but you cannot disrupt the functioning of this place, so if you don't like to be here, you go somewhere else. Because the rules here are based on Christianity. And this is not racism. If you discipline a black guy here, because he hits somebody else or he spills the food on the floor, somebody is going to clean and, generally speaking, it's a white person that I have to tell to go and clean there, not a black person, they don't want to clean anything. You understand? And that is not racism. So discipline to the black person in this country is racism! But you can't run a place like this with nine hundred people with different ideas. They are destitute and unsuccessful individuals in this life. You cannot run them without discipline." (idem.) There is no question that the Ark is in favour of cleanliness, discipline and order, and that the solution it represents is consonant with the segregative use of space implied by cleaning up policies.

But of course, it can only be critical of the way clean-up policies are understood and applied, either daily, when the Police "dump" people at their doorstep, or regularly, on the occasion of international conferences, for example, when the standard practice described by quite a number of my interlocutors, including one foreign African refugee who has been a direct victim of it, is to clear the streets of the central city of street children and vagrants, to put them in trucks and move them out of the city, nobody knows where ("your guess is as good as mine", pastor Danie Pedersen tells me!). Street children and vagrants will then have "disappeared" and they'll come back when the conference is over. ²¹ "There is another law that is to be passed through the Province very soon", mentions Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed : "Anyone caught urinating in the street will be dealt with. My question to Metro Council was what happens to the people who are sleeping on the street. Are you going to arrest and lock them up because they have a problem?" The lack of public toilets being publicly acknowledged by the City²², the authorities can only treat that issue "very sensitively", as he was then promised. "We are not going to allow that to happen", he concludes. "We cannot suddenly expect through legislation to clear out our cities."²³ (Interview, 22.05.00) Street trading is in the same way considered as a break in the normal functioning of the city. As Alan Lipman writes, informal trading policies show how much administrators and business people are convinced that such "...trade is disorderly, unhygienic, unsightly, threatening, a civic menace which must be uprooted or banished to controlled off-street venues." (in the *Sunday Independent*, 30.04.00).

Some acknowledge that the widely appealing clean-up solution is only a short-term one, like Shehana Gaibie, a concerned businesswoman talking of the situation in Dalton Road, a street in the nearby area of Congella abutting Maydon Wharf, who concedes that "it's a social problem" and that one needs "to find a long-term solution. To find a place for these people to go and put them back on track in life". "As a short-term solution", writes the journalist, "the residents and employees suggested proper clean-up from both ends of Dalton Road and patrols on a regular basis" (*Berea Mail*, 3.12.99). "Frequent clean-ups are planned for the future" says the police captain quoted some time later. "They need to happen at least once every two weeks but this is obviously only a short-term solution." (*Berea Mail*, 17.12.99) Deploring the decline of the beachfront area, a businesswoman of the area complains about the fact that "to get to the Beachfront from West Street, one must pass the prostitutes and so forth. One tries and clean it up from time to time, but it is not sufficient". (personal communication, 2.00). Nevertheless, whatever these reservations, and as temporary as it may be, the "clean up" solution remains, in such a perspective, the proper one.

When, like the Minister of Police, one stigmatizes such issues as "a lack of respect" for a town still treated as "a white man's thing", this might effectively puts one's finger on a feeling of uprootedness and displacement of poor black people in the city. But moralistic admonishments and repression will not solve but worsen what is said to be at the root of the problem : clean up policies make the message of exclusion crystal clear ; in such conditions, people's rejection of a city that rejects them will make sense. These discriminatory policies are rendered acceptable by the noble, and indeed critical, cause of the fight against crime but it does not detract from their way of condoning social exclusion practices. As Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed says, concerning the rejection of Ark people : "I think the point that is missing, is that you cannot take people who are down and out for social-economic reasons, put them on the outskirts of the city and then expect them to be part of society. Because the message that is clear to people in the Ark is: society does not want you."²⁴

“We Want Them Out of Town”

So dominant is this way of thinking that this type of “solution” is almost unanimously advocated in our case by community representatives, be they NNP or ANC councillors or residents’ representatives, claiming that, instead of moving the street people from one area of the city to another, the authorities shall move them out of the town altogether : “We want them out of the town”, “find a place suitable for them”, “move them where the infrastructure is not strained”, “build them a place on the outskirts of the city”, “send them to work on farms”, “let’s buy buses and transport them to the country, get them open space, give them vegetable gardens”, “these people should be taken out of the city and taught skills to earn a living”²⁵, “give them a private piece of land, a remote piece of land somewhere a little bit out of the city”, “organize a kibbutz”, relocate them “to a kibbutz-like location outside the CBD where residents could be properly rehabilitated back into society”²⁶... The technicalities can differ, the basic solution is the same : to get them out of town, to withdraw them from sight and, by so doing, cleanse the streets. In addition to this, the solution most often involves a form of constraint by which they will be made to work in order to become self-sufficient : a way not only to devise a definitive long-term solution, by which the collectivity will not have to keep on sustaining them at tax-payers’ cost, but to provide these “anti-social” elements with a form of punishment and re-education at the same time. Thus Trevor Prince suggests that “these people” should be given “a proper home and facilities, with their own cattle farming, their own food, fruit and vegetables farming, their own facilities. At least we know that the majority will be housed, the majority will be kept off the streets. So they will have no reason to go and steal. They could be monitored, they could be entered into a data system, and they could be dealt with accordingly. At the moment it’s just a free for all” (Interview, 20.4.00)

These additional dimensions are particularly exemplified by the reference to a kind of kibbutz scheme. Pastor Danie Pedersen advocates a kibbutz system “as in Israel” despite his own insistence on the very impossibility of preventing people to come into the inner city. “If I had my choice, I’ll have Albert Park, but I will have a farm not far out, on the outskirts of Durban, like a kibbutz system in Israel. Outside of the city, there you’ve got a ground, there you can become self-sufficient. (...) There they can plant, you take them from the inner city and you bring them, because people are going to flock to the inner city. You can do whatever you like, you will not get them away from the city, city life. You will not get them away, so they are always going to flock to the inner city, to see if they can get something there. So you will never get them away, but you’ve got a place like that, outside, where you can take them to Albert Park and house them for a couple of days and shift them out there”...(Interview, 22.4.00).

When journalist, Mark Gaylord Dube sums up for the *Sunday Tribune* ‘the solutions’ to the homeless problem, he mentions :

- the repressive one, by the adoption of “a law forbidding people, be they street children or the homeless, from sleeping rough in the street. They would then have no alternative but to turn to one of the city’s shelters” ;
- the welfare one, through the mediation of the very families concerned, by “assistance in the form of grants for families who take in their homeless and jobless relatives” ;
- the self-reliance one, under the guise of “a kibbutz system...where people who do not have jobs can work on collective farms”. (*Sunday Tribune* 5.12.99)

Isolated are the voices of those who acknowledge the necessity for poor people to come to town, and specifically for the Ark people to stay in close proximity to the central city, since it is where they can find menial jobs. “The people from the Ark need to be in the inner city because some of them have part-time jobs. Relocating them to the outskirts like we have done in the apartheid days would mean escalating, abandoning people with travelling costs and a lot of other problems, which is not practical. (...) The reality internationally is urban movement. And people move to urban areas for one simple reason, I mean overall, there might be exceptions but through the world, really : to seek a living.” (Interview, 22.05.00)

“My position has always been that they need to be housed, they need to be looked after”, argues Stuart Talbot.” I don’t take the same position as the rest of some of the working group and that’s known from the beginning. I questioned the ability to house a thousand people in those buildings but I’m not too sure... Where else will you put them? I’m not saying that this is the best place for them but where else will you put them? And if you don’t put them somewhere, what are you going to do with a thousand people that are there already?” As for pushing them out of town, “You can put a thousand, but another thousand will come...” As I raised the question of social prejudices, the YMCA representative, who manages a youth (student) hostel on

St. Andrews Street, confirms this point: " Yes... "Not in my backyard They are in a sense 'social outcasts' of society. But then, who's going to look after them? What do you say? Do you say that there is no space in society for people that you define as social outcasts?"

"Most of the residents of any suburb of any city, not only here but overseas too", says Pastor Derrick de Nysschen, "would like the Arkies, the hobos, the destitute, the vagrants, to be taken out of the city to the periphery, which is an ancient program and process that they had in the past. If you look at the affluent cities in the past history of the churches for instance, the poor people always moved out. They built their shacks on top of each other, under the eye of the affluent elite. But this is an urban inner city problem, this is not a rural problem. They can build a massive operation outside of the city, but it would be empty in three months, it would be a white elephant because those people would stay there for two, three weeks and they'll be back on the beachfront. Because that's where the lights are, that's where the pleasure and leisure is. That's where they get their jobs. That's where they can get their money from the public, from the tourists and all kinds of things to get money from people. They would not stay there. I have had myself a farm in the middle of the country, in the Free State, and I can tell you something : I used to come to Durban, pick up Arkies here, on the beachfront, like twenty, twenty-five in a bus, and take them back to the Free State and have them there for six weeks, then back here. They just walked away! Because they can't live without money, nobody is going to supply them with finances and they've got to eat and they are not interested in a disciplinary orderly function of human beings in community living, because they are individuals" (Interview, Derrick De Nysschen, 22.04.00).

Deprived of its repressive and educative elements, the best solution advocated by a number of actors, including the authors of the Social Impact study, is to maintain them in a non-residential area close to the city centre ; in other words, to "remove" them from society, but only partially, as far as accommodation and a number of services are concerned, by putting them in a semi-industrial area (similar to the Point), far from the sight of ordinary citizens and visitors. The people concerned will not necessarily oppose it, as what matters first is for them to access the CBD, be it to beg, to trade or to work²⁷.

Policy Issues

If the relocation of the Ark in Albert Park has first and foremost brought to the fore the problem of the people themselves who will be "coming with the Ark" in the area and of what to do with them, it has simultaneously raised a number of policy issues in relation to the choice of Albert Park for the relocation and to the Ark itself.

Socio-spatial Discrimination

The election of Albert Park is said not only to be contradictory with the policy of "urban renewal" for the CBD but to pertain to an unjust and discriminatory socio-spatial policy, whereby Albert Park is meant to bear the brunt of the relocation while more privileged areas of the city remain unduly protected. We have already seen how the choice of Albert Park, the more so since it has been done without any consultation of its residents, has been interpreted as a sign of "contempt" for the area. If they think fit to put it there, it is that the area has something to do with their stigma : "They said 'it's a slum, let's put the Ark there!'" [Bill]. "It's a form of social engineering just to say : 'Well, where can we dump these people?' That's what they are looking for. They are looking for a dumping ground and it does not say much for their view about Albert Park that they chose this area. It is not because they like Albert Park. It is because they view Albert Park as part of urban decay, that's why they want to put them here", says Paddy Kearney, Director of Diakonia, (Interview, 22.05.00).

One has seen how the chairman of AVER first recommended retaining the Ark in the Point area, because it is, in his view, "comfortably" settled to the benefit of the population there, as the Point is not overstrained, while being close to work opportunities at the same time. To withdraw the shelter from the Point does amount in these conditions to straight discrimination in favour of the beachfront, of which the re-developed Point area will be part, and which already benefits from an unjust lower taxation. This reasoning is shared by the APWG who declared : "Albert Park should not be used as a place to dump the beachfront's problems" (APWG, meeting, minutes, 29.09.99) But Bruce Soutar's arguments include comparisons with a few other selected areas of the city :

"I've phoned Dan Smit, I don't know if you know Dr Dan Smit [former head of Cato Manor's Development, Director of Metro Housing at that time]. I phoned him and I said to him : 'You would never do this in Cato Manor. You regard Cato Manor as one of your successful areas, of your success stories.' I get invited to all

the Cato Manor functions, I know all of them and I was recently there, when Vice-President Jacob Zuma opened that community centre at the top of the hill. I said : 'You would never in a thousand years move a thousand people into Cato Manor and expect the community not to complain. You would never do it, you would consult that community and you'd persuade them. You wouldn't just do that, but you're doing it to us'. And I said : 'Secondly, you wouldn't remove a thousand people from Cato Manor because you wanted to develop the area. You'd integrate that population, and what is good for everyone is good also for all South Africans, whether an urban dweller, white, black, Chinese, is good for everyone else. Play the rules fair!'

Another argument I made to the mayor, was : 'Why don't you move the Ark to La Lucia, or to Durban North, where the infrastructure is not strained?' Do you think it is reasonable to expect La Lucia and Durban North to carry on as little islands of colonial tranquillity? Or whether they should too shoulder a bit of the burden? Is it fair to dump the poor on the poorest? We're not, we face the harbour, but the high class is not the right place to put it, is not right for the Ark, and it is certainly not there for the Albert Park residents. And yes, its negative impact on us is minimal, it's not really an issue that I have to worry about too much, me personally, as my flat is well positioned, directly above the Yacht Club. It might have an unsavoury effect. It's not going to affect me too much if they are sitting downstairs on the pavement. At certain places it might have an effect but not as much as it is going to do to a place that has no infrastructure. Albert Park is broken. There are people that walk up the stairs because the city of Durban switched off the lifts because they haven't paid their rates. They walk up nine floors and they are sixty, seventy years old. So now, I'm saying : move that, everyone must shoulder that. But put that in an area like La Lucia. They've got so much money and they can appoint advocates. They don't have to have people like me who have to impact on their own personal income to fight it." (Interview, 9.11.99)

Through this denunciation of what he sees as a city's double standard policy, the identity of the Albert Park area is constructed in opposition to other specified areas of the town : Cato Manor, the "darling" of the city re-development policy (the area, at a few kilometers only from the city centre, benefits from a high profile development project meant to represent a post-apartheid watershed in urban planning), is used as a counter-example of a place to which the authorities would never do what they dare to do to Albert Park ; La Lucia and Durban North, as affluent suburbs that could stand without much stress the added influx of a thousand people and must share the burden of social responsibility towards the destitute. Yes, Victoria Embankment owners are also "high class" but, as inhabitants of a high-density central city area, they have not been allowed to "carry on as little islands of colonial tranquillity" and in fact they won't suffer that much themselves. It is the already overloaded Albert Park that will suffer.

The resentment towards the affluent northern suburbs of Durban North, La Lucia and others, as well as against those closer to the city centre like Berea, whose names have become synonymous with white privilege, appears to be a structural feature of the political and emotional geography of the city when one notes how the same areas were already targeted by disgruntled city dwellers at the time of the "greying" of Albert Park. A press survey conducted in the area in March 1989 disclosed that "an estimated 1000 people of colour were living in streets such as Russell Street, Broad Street, Park Street, St. Andrews Street and Smith Street" and an application was made for Albert Park to be declared a "free settlement" area. The then NP councillor, Cliff Matthee, fulminated : "I don't believe this should be done in the high density areas. The government should be looking at upper-class areas such as Durban North, Glenashley, and certain parts of Berea as free settlement areas" (*Mercury*, 29.03.89)

Albert Park 'ID'

In a report drawn from the APWG proceedings and supporting the re-examination of the issue, the Development and Planning Unit portrays Albert Park as a "predominantly residential precinct" of the "inner city" (still often qualified as a "*suburb*"), inhabited by middle class and bourgeois people owning their flats in sectional title and forming together a community "characterised by families with children". (Report for Committee. Relocation of the Ark/Upgrading of Albert Park', 17.12.99) Unfortunately, for a host of reasons – of which we cannot here examine the different versions (influx of black people versus absentee landlords and non-payment of levies) – the area is more than often described as being in an advanced state of "decay", characterised by derelict buildings and high levels of incivility and crime, the reason for the "upgrade" or "renewal" project in the first place. "Buildings are neglected, some residents live in squalid conditions, child prostitutes walk the streets, drug trafficking is rife, shops are burgled daily, pensioners and women are unable to walk on the streets without fear of being attacked, and residents live behind locked gates", write, for example, Councillors Trevor

Prince and Desiree Sansom to the Minister of Provincial Housing in an open letter dated 18 October 1999 entitled in bold characters : Have they abandoned Albert Park? "Once an elegant upmarket area, Albert Park is degenerating into an urban ghetto inhabited by hobos, criminals and prostitutes".²⁸ Such interpretation appears to be a distorted reflection of, and a refusal to face at the same time, the actual transitional and equivocal identity of the place. This denial is based on the promotion of its lost identity as a residential suburb of the CBD characterised by private individual ownership and "families with children", a picture that cannot stand the test of the different surveys that have been made of the area.

- The image of Albert Park as a suburb where most inhabitants own their flats is contradicted by the picture emerging from a survey made in May-June 1993 : "...the area at present consists largely of apartment blocks most of which are rented rather than privately owned". (Hindson & Byerley 1993: 37) Not only 97% of the coloured residents, 92% of the Indian residents and 82% of the African residents were at that time renting their flats, but two thirds of the white residents themselves were tenants (Ibid., 11).

- The same must be said of the picture of Albert Park as a suburb "characterised by families with children" : the survey revealed that 43% of the Albert Park population as a whole were not married, as against 35% married people. The proportion of single people was highest in the case of Africans (57%). If 28% of Indians, 22% of coloureds and 23% of white people were not married, the Indians were the only group with a majority of married people (52%): the number of divorced coloureds (16%) and of divorced and widowed whites (13% and 19% respectively) reduced the proportion of married people in their groups to only a plurality (47% of coloureds, 42% of whites). "A feature of the area, conclude the authors, is the number of people living as singles, namely the never married and those who are widowed, divorced, deserted or separated." (Ibid., 18)

Both these features are congruent with the high proportion of students among the African residents (49% primary, secondary or tertiary students) and of retired people or pensioners among whites (33/30%). If other surveys have given lower proportions of students among African residents of the area, they are still quite high (37% or 38%) in 1993 and 1999. In any case both were based on very limited samples²⁹. The survey conducted by the authors of the Social Impact assessment has given a much lower proportion of students (16%), but the lack of details prevent us from interpreting these discrepancies. Whatever the case, all surveys point to a population being largely made up of active people (clerks, professionals and technicians) and students, and the most recent incomers among them, a majority made up of African people, professionals and students in particular. Both characteristics nowadays are apparent to anyone visiting the area.

- Not even the idea that Albert Park is a 'residential' suburb can remain unchallenged : not only are slightly more than half of the 165 buildings of the area meant for business or non-residential purposes, but nearly half of the remaining residential buildings (36/80) have their ground floor dedicated to commercial use. As Shivesh Singh says, the place appears to be "a hive of activity with many businesses" including "takeaways, retail outlets, shebeens, liquor stores and hotels that offer cheap accommodation" (Singh 1999: 36). Over the years, bigger chain stores have been replaced by smaller retail shops.

Some observers are putting forward an alternative and certainly more relevant identification. Albert Park, as Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed says, is "a mixture of social backgrounds", with upper-class and upper-middle class people together with working class people and poorer people." "There's an interesting thing that we found out when we first arrived here", explains Stuart Talbot, "It is that the people who have moved into the area are of a higher education and economic status, although it was originally inhabited by low income railway workers, state pensioners, etc, who bought the flats with their state pensions, and that's why they were all living here. Whereas newer people that came in the seventies or eighties were the professionals, the lawyers, the doctors, the teachers, from the townships who want to live closer to town. So, although the perception of the area was that it is a terrible place and that 'blacks are moving in here', the perception was wrong because actually they were economically and educationally better, more affluent people. But the perception was that they were not as good as the established residents. And I think that continues to be the case. Even now people have started to talk about 'the refugees that are coming into the area and that's why the area has changed'. That is not whites talking about blacks. That's xenophobia, in terms of the people that are taking up places in here. And there are lots of them because of the nature of the place. It offers accommodation, places to do market, transport..." (Interview, 28.9.00)

But this should not obscure the fact that a clear spatial differentiation separates the Victoria Embankment and St Andrews Street area, where "mostly white elderly residents occupy apartments" they own, "mostly in good condition", and the Park and McArthur Street area where one will find "buildings in poor condition"

inhabited by “mostly black tenants and transients” (Singh, 1999, 39, 43). This explains why the very same Albert Park area is said to be a residential suburb populated by owners and families, and a “location” or “a township, basically” populated by “Africans and lots of migrants”. As Maurice Makhatini, at the time acting executive director of Durban Metro Housing said :

“Albert Park became a township, basically. There is a majority of Africans, plus sprinkling of Indians, a few whites and coloureds. African migrants make a significant proportion. Mozambicans and Zimbabweans have virtually taken control of entire blocks of flats.” Enumerating its different population segments, Makhatini mentioned young and single professionals, who have been for one, two or three years in a job, students, younger couples from the township of middle and low income brackets, half-way ‘en route’ to a better flat or a house, average Indian working class, younger couples and small families, also “en route to somewhere” , “very old white ladies and gentlemen, the residual community of Albert Park, located mostly along the Esplanade, who are still there because they have no choice, semi-skilled criminals, not the bloody ones but the thieves, expert in fraudulent cheques and ‘clean crime’ basically.” Makhatini distinguishes, in addition to the Victoria Embankment flats owned by old white pensioners, black and Indian upper-middle class people, “flats owned by people out of town who let them to students related to them; flats where one member of a township family lives, who use it as a ‘pied-à-terre’ in the city ; and blocks of overnight facility, where prostitutes pay their daily rentals, the other people fleeing then to other blocks.” (Interview, 11.11.99)

Confronting such a mixed reality, it does appear clearly that the previous identifications are obtained by way of a unilateral *standardization*, constituting the “Albert Park community” on the basis of the exclusion of poorer and transient population to the benefit of owners and established families, and of the exclusion of commercial and business activities to the benefit of residents only. It is certainly not surprising that these characterisations are actually proposed by members of the owners’ section of the community and that, accordingly, the representativity of those who speak on behalf of the community, including within the APWG, of their feelings and representations, can be questioned. “Let’s say in the working group, a majority is against”, says Stuart Talbot, YMCA representative. “Whether that majority in the working group represents a majority within the community is another question. And whether the community even worries about it, is another question. I know who does worry about it: property owners, people who own flats on the Embankment, people who own flats in town. But if you went to the Ritz, if you went to one of these overnight shelters, I don’t think that they would be opposed to the Ark coming into the area. They don’t have an investment to lose and then that the people who stay there would be necessarily interested. I mean I would be amazed if a large percentage of Albert Park residents even knew what the Ark was about”. (Interview, 28.9.00)

“A problem which is emerging very clearly”, says Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, “is that these are owners who are now participating in powerful structures that are looking at the redevelopment of the area. I’m not saying that because they are owners, they don’t have a right. But it seems that when you look at what has been discussed and so on, it is more their personal interest that comes out. I believe it is okay to a certain extent. But the redevelopment of the area means that you are not looking at your own interest but at the interests of the entire area, the residents, the business, the informal traders, and so on.” (Interview, 29.11.99)

A different identification is provided by Diakonia’s Paddy Kearney when he identifies the relocation problem as being “to bring an old group of predominantly white men who have many problems into a neighbourhood which consists largely of young black people in their twenties and thirties. It’s not an ideal combination” (Interview, 22.5.00)³⁰

Indeed this mixed composition of Albert Park’s population certainly explains why the perception of the “vagrants” problem appears to be much more ambivalent than it is presumed in the conflict between the community and the local government : when people were asked, in the 1993 survey, what they “don’t like about Albert Park”, ‘loitering and vagrants’ come second after “noise” but at a much lower rate (23% against 52%) ; and when they are asked “what they would like to see happening in Albert Park”, just one of all the respondents suggests that s/he would like vagrants to be removed (Hindson & Byerley, 1993, 32-33).

Establishing the facts about crime is a very sensitive matter everywhere, all the more so in today’s South Africa. Facts appear to be linked to their degree of visibility/invisibility and perceptions, their recording and classification, in a way that can be itself politically acknowledged and used (as the debate around the present moratorium on crime statistics illustrates). But even the perceptions themselves might not be what they are said to be: according to the same 1993 survey, crime perception was then much more limited than was generally conceded, including by the authors themselves³¹ : only 2,2% of residents on average said that they

didn't like the "crime rate" of the area, and if 42% of Albert Park whites would have liked to see "tighter security" and "removal of criminals" to happen, this preoccupation was shared by only 10% of Africans and by no one from the other racial groups (ibid... 33). Of the 40% or so of people who had thought of leaving this area, only 13% on average – not even a third of whites (31%), 22% of coloureds, only 8% of Indians and a mere 3% of Africans – mentioned crime as a reason for such a move (ibid. 28).

The overall feeling of residents over time is quite positive about the area: 80% of the Africans interviewed in 1993 and 75% of Indians, 74% of whites and 72% of coloureds stated that they "like living in Albert Park" (ibid. 31). And Shivesh Singh acknowledges in 1999 that his study indicated, contrary to his expectations, "no major problem with the area as a whole" and that in fact "the majority of people are happy with the area" (Singh 1999:69-70). His research will have also "defied the popular perception that the area is totally decayed", since "only a small portion of buildings are in poor condition" (ibid. 48)³². As Stuart Talbot says, and as observation can easily prove, "decay" is only happening "by pockets". "Albert Park has not deteriorated as people think it has. It is much more limited, it happened by pockets", alongside the CBD "being sucked out of the town to the North". (Interview, 28.9.00)

Coming back to the city's policy toward the area, as it may be understood from the decision to make it the new haven of the Ark, one can see that the way the Albert Park area is perceived and interpreted is ambiguous: it is said that the authorities, instead of seeing it as the residential and family-centred suburb it is still for the owners' community, treat it as the derelict and decaying slum it is said to have become during the last decade, thereby compromising its proclaimed "revitalisation".

A Dubious Institution

The second policy problem identified by the protesters concerns the Ark institution itself. Even if the actors in the process have refrained from publicly exploiting the case of sexual abuse that has drawn to court the founder and leader of the church³³, this unfortunate affair could only provide, be it implicitly as a matter of common knowledge, powerful ammunition to question the official support given to the institution by way of a provincial government subsidy. As a matter of fact, even if the founder were to be ultimately cleared, the harm has been done.

"He (Pastor De Nysschen) says : "It is my wife who creates me problems because she wants to take over the Ark", Bill remarks. But there has been the same problem of children being molested in Cape Town where he has another Ark. They have not arrested him." "Why?", I ask : "Because you don't arrest a pastor!" And as I remark that, "Yes, maybe there is a problem with him, as an individual" he replies: "For him, we know; for the others, we just don't know!" (Interview, 29.09.99)

"He has a criminal charge against him. How can you possibly be a director and accept twelve million Rands when you've got a track record like that? How can a government and citizens allow something like that to go ahead?" says Bruce Soutar (Interview, 09.09.99).

Even if one disregards the criminal case, the governing structure of the institution and its word can be questioned, underlining the fact that the Board of Trustees is made of the De Nysschen couple plus "a couple of individuals" (in fact, three persons). Bruce Soutar exclaims : "And it's calling itself a non-profit and transparent organisation!". "Taking care of destitute and other 'misfits'", says the ward councillor Trevor Prince, "shouldn't be left in the hands of self-proclaimed 'pastors' nominating a number of other 'pastors'. And you know that there are accusations of corruption, of rape of an under-age girl, etc...". (Interview, 20.40.00) "You might have seen the press", notes Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, "He was convicted of raping a child and so on. So that has created a problem – I'm not saying, I mean, the court has found him guilty, it may not be the case, it might have been, like he said, a conflict with his wife and so on, whatever it is, but that's another issue. But what we discovered two weeks ago, a 21 section company was formed, and all the members of the company are members of the Ark : Derrick, his wife, another Denysschen from Cape Town, and so on, although, when we had been discussing the issue previously, they had said : 'Yes, we form a section 21 company, and there will be one person from the Metro, one from the Kwazulu-Natal Government'. Unfortunately that didn't happen..." (Interview, 22.02.99).

"We have asked to have representatives in the Board of the Section 21 company, with non-executive status and to have two representatives on the Board of Trustees. The people of the Ark have promised to do it but we haven't heard of anything since that," Shehana Gaibie confirms. "They said that they work with the

police and help it in the Point, but the Police itself has not confirmed it. They said that they will not buy the buildings if the community is against it but they bought it!" (Interview, 17.11.99). In sum, the APWG says in October 1999, "there is little knowledge of the membership, capacity and morality of the Ark Section 21 company" (APWG, minutes, 27.10.99.). As a result, even those who had not been "vehemently opposed" to the relocation but had questioned its feasibility, have also questioned the "Ark commitment" to the area. "They say : 'We are going to make a major contribution to this area but if they were going and make a major contribution to the area they might have started before they've got here, to show their good faith and their investment, investing here, rather than say 'when we'll arrive, we'll do'! It's a church, a significant church – I mean : for the type of people that they look after, they have a particular role. The city council knows that lots of people are referred there by the police, by the social workers... I mean if we didn't have that in Durban, I don't know where they would send their people to. From that perspective, they are making a contribution to the city but they now need to think about how they can do it in a different way. I have never been vehemently opposed to them coming but I have raised questions about their influence and also questioned their commitment to the area. You know they make statements like 'We'll clean up Albert Park of all the beggars, of all the vagrants' but they never told how they are going to do it. If you want to say that, you say : 'Well, we've got this program.' But their approach seems to be waiting to be here, and then 'We'll show you our good will'. It is a bit...it is quite similar to the business : 'Wait until, you know, when you've seen we're going to make a contribution', and once the building is up and once the people are there, by then it's too late, it doesn't work, it's a disaster." (Interview, Stuart Talbot, 28.09.00)

On top of it, the Ark is suspected of being a racist institution: "Is De Nysschen representing the homeless?" asks Bruce Soutar. "He doesn't represent South African homeless. He has thrown blacks out of there. He would not let them go in. I'll be keen to see what their percentage of black is to white homeless and whether they are anywhere near approximate demographics of the country. They don't. He goes for white homeless only." This reputation appears to be widespread but Pastor De Nysschen strongly denies such an accusation : "The ratio has not changed, it stayed the same from the beginning in 1986 : around 40%, between 35 to 45%, blacks ; 10% Indians : 15-20% coloureds ; the rest, 20-25% whites. (...) There are two black and one coloured pastors in the management. (Interview, 22.04.00)" But despite this affirmation, if I am to believe my own personal and repeated observations through several visits to the shelter in the Point³⁴, the majority of inmates are clearly white and coloured – with sprinklings of Indian and African people, a fact that has its roots in the historical legacy of an institution created under apartheid in 1982. Although Pastor De Nysschen affirms that they "broke all apartheid barriers in 1986" (*idem.*), the Ark doesn't appear to be used that much by black people, and by African people especially. Many Indian and African Muslims will not use its services anyway because of its proclaimed Christian character. As for the three black and coloured members of the management, it is difficult not to conclude that, of a total staff number of 87 people and for an institution that deals on a daily basis with thousands of people in need, a total of three non-white people is definitively quite small! Were it not the case, why is the pastor so at pains to explain that the Ark is a church – "...free to adapt its own organisation according to its faith" – and a specialised institution at the same time – "It's a question of skills, of training, to run such a place!" (Interview, 22.04.00)³⁵?

Whatever the truth, the fact remains that the institution of the Ark has a dubious reputation, entertained by its peculiar nature and structure, and that the support given to it by the city's and province's authorities is criticized accordingly.

Governance Issues

Soon after the launching of the renewal process (March 1999), the Albert Park Working Group became, in the absence of any other structure, straight from its inception, the vehicle for the worries and frustrations of opponents to the relocation³⁶. At its second meeting (28 April, 1999), the participants emphasize how much "all sectors" of the community are "*vehemently opposed*" to the move and at its third meeting (26 May 1999) that "*the question of vagrants or 'broken people' has become a talking point and has been a problem for the SAPS and City Police as the Justice System cannot cope with the volume of people*" (original emphasis). The next month, the Mayor's Parlour lets it be known that it considers the matter closed since 1) it is the provincial government which is responsible for having approved the financial application of the Ark ; 2) it is a private deal and a regular and conforms to private purchase of property ; 3) it complies with the existing zoning of the

area ; 4) the Northern and Central Councils are not involved. In July, it is said that the Ark will be moving in shortly and it is resolved to seek a meeting with it for clarification. In the following months, expressing their "frustration at the lack of clarity on how the Ark process has come about" (27 October, 1999), the participants for a meeting with the Provincial MEC for Housing, which will be eventually scheduled for November. The meeting will not bring the answers they are looking for, as the three following explanations, whatever their differences, express quite clearly :

"We do believe they do good work, they run a crèche, they rehabilitate, they help people to find jobs, etc. But why dump it in a residential area, without having done any social impact study, and without any consultation with the people? The entire community is up against it. We have people of many political persuasions, of the NNP, of the DP, of the ANC: everybody is united. We do not want it! Then there is the question of the manner in which the matter has been handled. The Provincial Housing Board says : We are only the bankers she describes how the official who received them was apparently ignorant about the whole affair]. Talk to the Metro! And the Metro Housing is saying we are only the agent! The 10 million for the Ark, this is public money. They keep saying it is a private deal between a willing seller and a willing buyer, it is just normal, there is nothing they can do. But if the Ark has bought it with a financial public grant, this is public money". (Interview with Shehana Gaibie, 17.11.99)

"Dumisani Makhaye (the Provincial MEC for Housing) had no idea that it had gone ahead. He didn't even know about it, didn't know at all, and frankly didn't care. And they were quite put out; He tried to blame it on Metro Housing, which is Dr Smit. Dan Smit blamed the Provincial Housing, and Provincial Housing blamed it on Metro Housing. And what happens is that they don't send the same people to the meeting each time, so you can't narrow it down to who is ultimately responsible and who has made the decision. (...) There is no discussion, they're pretending and probably that's all. There is no discussion. They're going to meet with Metro and National Housing, I know they are not going to achieve anything. (...) They must not do anything that the people who are most affected do not support. They've to agree that there's got to be some bottom lines, because what they'll do, they'll talk and talk and talk and talk and talk and talk and do what they want. The only thing that this transparency, and this 'consultation with the people', and 'the people shall be represented', all that does, is to delay the process. It doesn't achieve anything, because at the end of the day, they still do what they want." (Interview, Bruce Soutar, 9.11.99)

'...the sad part to all of this is that there might be what is called 'bureaucracy' in it, because who is responsible for really getting the funding for the Ark? We have a Metro Housing Department and it has said to me, Desiree Samson and others, that they're acting as an agent for the Provincial Housing Board, that it is the Province that technically traced the footsteps. The Ark was asked to move out of the Point because at that stage, the Malaysians and others were talking about redeveloping the area. They had then approached the Provincial Housing Board to assist them. The Province in turn approached Metro Housing, saying : 'Look, we have an application from the Ark. Could you now act as our agent? Find a place for them? We'll not give funding to them directly, perhaps you can facilitate', all these things... Just two weeks ago, I wasn't part of the delegation, but other members of the APWG met with the Provincial Minister of Housing, and he said : 'Hold on! We were not approached by the Ark. We were approached by Metro housing!' So someone somewhere is lying, between all this confusion. So that has created serious problems as well" (Interview, Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, 02.11.99)

Summarizing the criticism, the APWG's coordinator stated in November 1999, that the "process undermined the community of Albert Park by not involving them to comment on the proposal" and "overlooked the importance of a social impact study that is necessary" and that "the comments made by Town Planning focused on the zoning aspect and overlooked the social impact of the institution". Then the Northern and Central Councils are criticized for having "underplayed their role of being a developmental government when they made a decision of not getting involved in this matter". In conclusion, it is recommended that "the Council takes full responsibility for the development of Albert Park", and that the area "be given a status of a residential area with a community committed to its development".³⁷ In a following report to the administration, the APWG recommends that "the Council re-opens the issues of Ark relocation", "stops the transaction", "takes full responsibility of the development of Albert Park including commissioning the undertaking of Social Impact Study of the Ark relocation in any neighbourhood within the Council boundaries" and "be committed to the vision and development goals of Albert Park by not allowing any development that will be contradictory to the work done by the Albert Park Working Group" (.Development And Planning Service Unit. Committee report. Relocation of the Ark/Upgrading of Albert Park, 17.11.99)

In sum, there are three main criticisms : lack of transparency and clarity, lack of community involvement, 'undermining' the community ; lack of concern for the social impact of the move to the benefit of bureaucratic conformity. But the 'community' will have to wait for a full year before being granted the social impact study they asked for repeatedly...

In what the YMCA representative, Stuart Talbot, calls a "mismanagement" process, the "community" itself must share the blame to a certain extent. According to a long-standing inner city community struggle leader, Councillor Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed : "Unfortunately, there hasn't been the groundswell of protest that one would have expected from the residents. I mean, they told me the other day : 'We want to demonstrate' and I said 'You can. I'm a councillor, I cannot tell you to do that, but you have the right to do that. You haven't done it for these two years'. And that's the problem; there was not any kind of leadership in that area, with all respect to Victoria Embankment Residents' Association and so on. While they had petitions and so on, to me that should have been the first round of getting people together and there should have demonstrated, but it didn't happen. Any amount of demonstration now, I believe, is not going to stop it, because I believe you are wrong legally, everything seems to have been done with. And one person is passing the accusation to the others". (Interview, 02 11.99)

If one tries to reconstitute the process by which this "mismanagement" occurred³⁸, it is possible to establish that at first the decision to help the Ark to relocate was taken in the context of the increasing necessity for the City to allow the Point re-development process to kick off, since it had been stalled for so many years and was still blocked after the land was sold to the Malaysian investors. In such a context, the protests of the lobby of the Victoria Embankment flats' owners were played down as irrelevant, all the more so since, for the black majority of the Council, the whole affair, between the Ark management and "patrons" and the Victoria Embankment property owners, looked as a white-on-white quarrel. Presented with the choice between declaring the process valid or further delaying the solution by opening a social impact assessment procedure, both councils concerned and the Metro Council itself decided to ignore the complaints and go ahead. The fact is that the identified buildings fall under a general business zoning allowing for their anticipated new use and the Council agreed to help the Ark to access a provincial government subsidy in the framework of the new transitional housing policy³⁹.

The context changed dramatically with the launching of the "renewal" project and the Albert Park Working Group. Beyond the Victoria Embankment owners' lobby, the future of the whole area of Albert Park was now at issue and thereby the whole of the inner city, in a council-initiated and council-run initiative. Charged with the bulk of the technical work required by the relocation, the Housing Department protested that it was only acting on orders, as the agent of the provincial government while the provincial government could say that it was not acting on its own but at the request of the City. Thus the affair gave way to an internal low-key but sustained conflict between City departments, the Housing Department "championing" the cause of the relocation to Albert Park – for which it worked on the technicalities for about a year – while the Planning Department and its Development Facilitation Department in charge of the CBD's revitalisation project, were critical and pushed for a re-assessment of the whole project. They had the legal ground to do it, as the Town Planning Ordinance 27 of 1949 (§67 et seq) and the following town planning regulations created an obligation to assess social needs, tensions and dynamics on the ground before authorizing a project (Interview with Amanda Nair, Development and Planning Unit, Director, Development Management Department, 17.10.00) .

The actual contradiction between a relocation process started as a top-down administrative procedure and the supposedly participative process of the inner city revitalisation gave way eventually to a reversal of the original decision and the tardy launch of a social impact assessment (June-July 2000), a process which is still uncompleted today. If the Albert Park hypothesis has been assessed negatively, its conclusions have yet to be endorsed by the Council, and, last but not least, in that event other options would have to be considered. As one of the official concerned says, "there will still be hard decisions to be taken". Meanwhile, consultants have been contracted to help reconstitute the APWG on a more representative basis and a new Working Group inaugurated in the year 2001.

Overall Policy and Governance Issues

If we now take some distance from the actual perceptions of the issues as expressed by the people concerned and look back at the process, in the broader context of metropolitan policy and governance issues, in my understanding there are three main critical issues emerging from these acts, events and discourses:

Conflicting Policies Regarding the Central City

The local government's initial decision to help the Ark to relocate in Albert Park has been taken in the context of the economic development policy stemming from the Best Practice Commission's recommendations⁴⁰, the Point Redevelopment being one of the prestigious lead projects (the International Conference Centre, the harbour extension and new airport) meant to structure and drive metropolitan economic development. Through the planning instrument, these policies are dedicated to the maintenance, *i.e.* the increase, of rateable city land values, in particular through the 're-development' of a number of key areas for affluent international tourists' consumption. (see Maharaj & Ramballi: 1998) The residents of Albert Park may think that the process was in a way directed against them – according to the perception that "they" perceive the area as a "slum" or as a "township" – from the point of the view of the Point redevelopment process and actors, the actual choice for the relocation of the Ark, whatever it was or is, is not even a point for discussion!

But the central city's revitalisation policy is partly based on other premises, since it implies, among other things, dealing with the actual residents and users of the place, and accordingly with the sensitivity and specificity of each particular area – all the more since it is today supposed to be part and parcel of a locally implemented participatory democracy. Indeed, the Constitution of 1996, the White Paper on Local Government of 1998, the new Municipal Structures System Bill, all give local governments a key role in the democratic dispensation⁴¹. Thus the Ark conflict is in a way a clash between the two main components of today city's planning strategy: old top-down and discriminatory planning policies of space, and new participatory urban renewal policies.

But this contradiction appears in fact to be only theoretical, since the renewal policy, as it is envisaged for Albert Park, is largely inspired by middle class values of ownership, cleanliness and order, that are congruent with those that inspire the "high class" or "world class" Point Redevelopment process. Thus the Albert Park vision: 'The Albert Park area shall be a clean and safe environment, with its residents living in well serviced residential accommodation, and with a high quality of life that is sustainable (social, economic and environmental. Democracy and tolerance will be an established way of life in a unified Albert Park area, with a high level of service and development orientation and civic pride" (Albert Park Upgrade Project, Progress Report, August, 1999).

It can be compared to the Point Re-development vision, which states : "Fulfil the potential of the city's most unique asset; Project a new life and image for Durban as a modern African waterfront city of international standing, excellence and innovation ; Provide a vibrant mixed-use development that will enhance Durban's standing as a centre for trade and commerce, leisure, culture and tourism – a place of diversity ; Create key landmark sites with exciting opportunities for design and development, providing 'the destination' and 'the experience' ; Secure the role and vitality of the adjacent city centre ; Forge links with and improve adjacent areas ; Stimulate and attract further investments ; Allow previously disadvantaged groups to have a stakeholding in the city centre through a development meeting people's highest aspirations and applying best practices ; Create employment opportunities and wider socio-economic benefit spin-offs ; Make the Point the safest place in Durban ; and Ensure project viability."

Taking in account the differences between these two projects based on the spatial and social particularities of both areas, one can see that the values of safety, of highest standards and excellence, and of diversity and unity, are common to both projects. Cleanliness linked with a renewal inner city project on the one side, Africanity and values inspiring a leading development project on the other, are the main differences. As for the way in which "previously disadvantaged groups" can be made "to have a stakeholding in the city centre through a development meeting people's highest aspirations and applying best practices", it is, in the absence of any mechanism whatsoever to constitute this "stakeholding", just a way of rhetorically maintaining the link to the 1993 RDP era Point Redevelopment Protocol.

So the conflict is not between the two projects: it stems from what appears to be, from the point of view of both projects at the same time, a contradictory choice of Albert Park for the relocation of the Ark, as if one area should be redeveloped to the expenses of the other and Albert Park excluded from the re-development of the Point and central city altogether. The considerable imbalance that is at work between the two areas, given what is considered as the huge potential of the Point compared to the incomparably more limited, more lacklustre and much less profitable revitalisation process of Albert Park, certainly explains the casual way in which the Albert Park community has been treated in the process.

But the contradiction pertains also at the same time to a conflict between Metro's redevelopment and housing policies; not that housing policies would have resorted to participation policies in contradiction with planning top-down ways of doing – as a matter of fact, the Housing Department has been criticized precisely for its top-down methodology indifferent to people's feelings on the ground – but because the choice of Albert Park was congruent with the official acknowledgement of the accommodation needs of a growing inner city transient population and the decision to conceive and implement a “transitional housing” policy.

From the point of view of this transitional housing policy in the making, the choice of the mixed and vibrant area of Albert Park, patronized by a black, young and mobile community together with a poorer transient population, does make sense, even if it is probably more the result of the sheer physical capacity constraints imposed by a huge structure such as the Ark. But the choice of a symbolically and economically valuable and sensitive area still populated by a number of wealthy white owners and targeted by new owners from previously disadvantaged sections of the population, allowed for a public conflict to emerge between the Metro administration on the one side and the “community” on the other. Beyond the political implications of its technical involvement in the process, Metro Housing was and is involved in a particular position in the conflict on such a political basis.

Such a transitional housing policy militates against a policy based on a “local community” involvement pattern that makes space, through the dominance of corporatist representations and the ideo-logic of organic speakers⁴², to the “symbolic violence” caused by the monopolisation of representation by established interests inclined to ignore or to play down the interests of the other components of the larger metropolitan community, and to disguise the elusive variety of transient city dwellers and users of all kinds.

It is interesting to see that other city policies yield a similar “schizophrenic” pattern : in apparent contradiction with a declared strategy to build up the city's redevelopment on projects targeting foreign investors and tourists, a number of measures are taken to support the development of a popular mass “beach” tourism that has become Durban's most appealing image. Such initiatives made the Beachfront Business Committee protest that its “target market will not coexist with areas that cater for markets made up of sectors of the community with no disposable income” (*Daily News*, 12.06.99).

To a certain extent, in as far as city public policy is the quasi-unique initiator of these contrary initiatives, both cases pertain to a public/private sector conflict – which in the present South African context takes on, as the two cases indicate, the characteristics of a “black on white” conflict. Likewise, central city renewal policies appear to be highly impeded by the red-lining policies of the banking sector that are likely to authorize only pockets of up-market inner city development in those spaces that will adopt an “Urban Improvement Precinct” strategy⁴³ (so far concentrated in the former white CBD and the areas adjoining the International Conference Centre and the beachfront). But this would be too simplistic a vision as it appears that the contradiction inhabits City policies generally, on the one hand, a macro-economic development policy turning its back to the local population, supposedly to better meet its needs later through “trickle-down” benefits, and, on the other hand, micro area-based redevelopment policies that are at pains to reconcile the objective of middle class and upmarket developments supposed to draw back people to the city and the less and less avoidable reality of its increasing use by poorer and transient people whom it has never been conceived to accommodate. (as, among other things, the lack of public toilets, or of a reticulated public transport system, indeed epitomise)

While local politics make it necessary today to open access to everyone, and especially to those coming from the previously disenfranchised and disadvantaged sectors or the society, these “development” policies together with the local economy dynamics combine to extract or distract some areas from the common metropolitan territory, to encapsulate and isolate them, be it as cluster house estates, as “Urban Improvement Precincts”, as suburban business and residential districts, as enclosed leisure areas for rich people only : that is to say in as many “extra-territorial” entities of their own that want to have little to do, if anything at all, with the rest of the city. It remains to be seen how, in such conditions, these projects could support step by step, as they are meant to do in the longer term, any meaningful re-appropriation of the city's spaces by upper middle class segments.

Thus this policy conflict reflects the dubious and ambiguous place of the city in the social symbolism and imaginary as coming from the historical legacy of urban segregation that reserved the city for white people only, and the formally contradictory but substantially complementary major trends affecting the central city: the outflow of established business to the benefit of distant suburbs, especially the new industrial and residential development pole 25 kilometers north of the city, the inflow of upcoming poorer middle class and working

class people, and the growth of the “informal city” almost unanimously equated with filthiness, grime and crime. Thus, if black people flock to the city and have integrated it in their practices, they “don’t want to live in the city” for all that, “because it means that you are lower class”, as Thembakazi Mnyaka, director of the Albert Park revitalisation project in Council’s Development and Planning Unit, sums it up. (Interview, 28.09.00) Irrespective of racial differences, the common mobility pattern involves residence in the city as a halfway staging point in *an idealised social trajectory from townships to city and from city to suburbs*. As a mediating place in social configuration and trajectories, the city is eminently ambivalent, attractive and repulsive, on different respects depending on the point of view, from the townships or from the suburbs. But this ambivalence does not detract from the hegemonic axiology ordering socio-spatial representations. These configurations and dynamics are not without repercussions on the way Metro’s residents and users are able to relate to citizenship issues⁴⁴.

In another respect, the conflict of policies may be linked with the particular pattern of organisation of the city’s administration in as far as there is a vacuum in terms of local welfare policies between the economic development strategy and its macro-economic spatial planning projects on the one side and the housing policy on the other. In such a context, Metro Housing stands for a multifaceted economic and social development policy (beside the informal trading unit newly placed under Development Facilitation) more than just standard welfare policy. If people are flocking to town, it is not necessarily that they want to live in town or that they come to town to find a place to stay, but for straight economic survival reasons. This explains the restrictive and inadequate conflation whereby housing problems requiring housing solutions are made to stand for all that should concur in a social and economic upliftment strategy. In such a context, one can only appreciate the extent to which Metro transitional housing policies are, albeit marginally and in a fragile manner, trying to exceed the standard vision of development as the building of socio-economically homogeneous housing estates on the periphery.

Questionable Public / Private Relationships

The absence of a local public welfare policy, supposed to be left entirely to provincial and national government responsibility⁴⁵, means, among other things that the local administration relies, as far as welfare practices are concerned, on relevant national state bureaucracies and private charity initiatives such as the Ark. Managers of the Ark and other shelters can testify how it is local routine for the police to “dump” people at their doorsteps, often without notification. As a matter of fact, one wonders what else they could do in the absence of any public structure to cater for the destitute. “The South African Police they come and they drop them here, right at our gate”, explains Pastor Danie Pedersen. “The Welfare Department does that. The Addington Hospital does that. Drop them here, yes, right at our gate! The City Police, they do it. We have that every night, every night. We look after, we can’t. They came and they don’t know, I say this with all respect for every person but I don’t think that the city council in Durban does know what to do with these people. They haven’t got a clue what to do with these people”. “The city has got hospitals to treat people, but they bring them to this little clinic that I’ve registered with the government”, says Pastor De Nysschen, “where we deal with something like a hundred and twenty assault cases per month”

Such practices demonstrate how these private structures are playing a public function and practically incorporated in the local public policing and welfare policies. The local administration is aware of the fact that the Ark provides a wide range of people in need with accommodation, health care and support in a way that makes it a partner in public action. Indebted in such a way to the Ark, it cannot but be responsive to its needs, all the more since the institution is being forced to move because of a redevelopment project based on a local state partnership with the business sector. This does explain why public provincial and local authorities in their respective capacities didn’t apparently hesitate to consider giving financial and technical support to the Ark’s relocation at taxpayers’ expenses. “Would you say that you play a substitution role”? I ask Pastor De Nysschen. “Absolutely “! he replies. “They recognize the work of the Ark, they accept it, they know that it is a good work that is being done here” and, to give an example of this recognition, he explains how... “the provincial government has given the Ark a sum of money to buy buildings in Albert Park since they have to move to make place for a ‘millionaires’ paradise”!

The problem may be that, in so doing, public material support and moral “blessing” is given to individual organisations which are inevitably biased by their particular origin, ideologies and values, that might alienate them from certain sections of the society. This is specifically the case with the Ark, which, as a Christian

church, and a Christian church of a distinctive type⁴⁶, that emerged from within, and for the benefit of, the then exclusively white central city population, is not adequately addressing the needs of the population concerned as it is, all the more since it uses and confuses welfare action and proselytism⁴⁷. It is a fact that (except for alcoholics) one cannot benefit from the Ark's hospitality more than once, if one is not prepared to attend daily Bible lectures for fifty consecutive days⁴⁸...

The situation is such because the Ark is... "not a shelter" – since it is a church : "We are not a rehabilitation centre, a care centre or an overnight shelter. However, we make available accommodation facilities for destitute members of the church. This accommodation facility is the Church", says the Constitution of the Ark Christian Ministries Church. ("This is not a rehabilitation centre, this is not a care centre, this is not an institution, the Ark is nothing else but a church", confirms Pastor de Nysschen in his interview.) The "Preacher and Teacher of the Ark" and "his helpmeet" have for their goal to "keep the Ark facility available to all people who wouldn't mind to receive teaching on the basic principles of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is the basis of this Church" (Ark's Constitution ('AC'), 3, 9). The unity and indissolubility of this church of which the congregation "lives in the streets" (AC 4) is all the more strongly asserted since it has to reduce and if possible cover over the structural ambiguity of an institution which is a church with its followers and a welfare centre with its "customers" at the same time. The whole structure of the Ark is then based on the denied transformation of a captive market into devotees as exemplified in the following : "The destitute person who seeks refuge at the Ark and who does so by choice" – which means that anyone knocking at its gate is by definition supposed to have chosen to do so – has then accepted – clearly a *fait accompli* – "...that the Ark cannot only provide accommodation, but that he/she will receive as a matter of course all the information pertaining to the Spirit, Soul and Body and not only the body." (AC 15-16)

By insisting on this inseparability of the body and the spirit as the spiritual foundation of this ambiguity, what the leaders of the Ark do not say is that it is practically based on the physical and other needs of the supposed catechumens. (Pastor De Nysschen himself describes "his" people, those who are working there, as volunteers who "...live in here because there is no other prospect for them in life, they can't change their qualification, they can't change their record of service because it is useless"...) As far as spiritual necessity is concerned, it might be taken for granted that from the time that the inmate makes his/her entrance, s/he will have actually to be taught and trained to acknowledge it and act accordingly. In such conditions, it is certainly not superfluous to state that this teaching must ensure "maximum security" for the inmates' "private ideas and opinions", "which means that they have the same privacy as is found in voting operations". (AC 15)

The twist in the reasoning becomes quite clear when one sees that the welfare side of the institution, said to be the church itself, is elsewhere presented as functioning "for the purpose of the state" and treated accordingly : "The Ark undertakes to comply with legislation concerning the housing of such members as per City Health" and it "has separated the Church account from the Welfare account to satisfy the authorities in this regard" (AC 4, 20). Thus the welfare function is acknowledged as pertaining to the public realm but at the same time conceived and presented as part and parcel of the church.

Public and private functions are not simply confused in such a vision since their difference is thoroughly absorbed on the private side of the dichotomy. The spiritual necessity that we have seen involved in the choice of the Ark first exists in the mind of its founder, given his spiritual calling ("*anointing*") – As a matter of fact, so peculiar is the institution that "most people do not understand or find it hard to comprehend how accommodation and physical needs can be part and parcel of the Church" – and it is so private a matter that the Church is called to disappear with its founder : "The Ark Christian Ministries Church has two senior pastors who are the SERVANTS of the Church. They are Derich and Lizie de Nysschen. In 1982 HE convened a Board of Trustees to process all the finances of the Church. (...) In the case of the founder terminating involvement in The Ark Church, which is highly unlikely, a curator is appointed to execute the dissolution clause of the Constitution (...) Therefore, in the event of the founder of this Ministry leaving or dying, this Ministry will be wound up. Remember, anointing cannot be borrowed." (AC 8, original emphasis and spelling)

The division of the institution is conceded at the end of the constitution "to satisfy the Authorities" for purposes of accounting. But instead of giving back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God, the spiritual side of the Church is endowed with a physical reality – not to be confused with the welfare side's physical reality (which has no spiritual dimension). Spirituality is not only spiritual, it is material too. But the finances "earned by the Church" as opposed to the donations going to the welfare centre, are "earnings", "tithes"⁴⁹ and "offerings", which are completely different from donations, "...in the

sense that they are not public finances which fall under the Fund Raising Act. Therefore earnings by the Church are not governed by the same rules as donations from the public. In The Ark Church, the spiritual activity and all relevant operations, including the receiving and application of finances, are distinguished from the physical and relevant activities, by two systems of income and expense accounts. The reason for this is two-fold. Freedom of religion and its income is not subject to State control, whilst public funds are subject to audit." (AC. 19)

Thus, according to this very private understanding of the public and the private, overlapping the difference between the physical and the spiritual, the church falls both on the spiritual and physical sides: as a spiritual reality, it is an extremely private matter that no state would dare to interfere with; as a physical reality, it is a public function falling under public control and a private function not subject to state control at the same time. The double movement consisting in associating/dissociating the public/physical from the private/spiritual serves to establish a double accounting and, at another level, to withdraw from public control the whole reality of the institution for the benefit of its over-private owners. Then, it is easy for Pastor de Nysschen to protest against what he sees as abusive questions coming from the Council about its racial ratio. "I asked them 'Are you going to see the Muslims' institutions and ask them about their raceratio?' They forget that we are a church, that a church is free to adopt its own organisation according to its faith and that you cannot deal with it as if it were some sort of public institution." (Interview, 22.04.00) Legally and formally speaking, the Ark leader is probably right; technically and substantially, it is another matter. As soon as meaningful support comes from the whole community as such, which should be "paid back" through open support to people of all faiths, without any imposition of specific religious duties.

The fact is that the private character of such welfare sector institutions is not only of a socio-cultural character, since they happen to be also private enterprises, even if defined as non-profit organisations, with their particular ways of financing themselves.⁵⁰ Systematic governmental recourse to private welfare institutions and services weakens democratic transparency and accountability, in so far as public means become entangled with private interests. The result is an elusive but irreducible ambiguity that confuses welfare as a public function and private business interests. Apart the very new and recently opened "Strollers Overnight Facility" for informal traders near Durban Station, all the town's shelters are religious or private individual initiatives whose authors are at pains to repudiate the ever-threatening accusation of making money on the back of the very people they are pretending to help for religious or more secular but still "pure" motivations⁵¹. This confusion clearly has its roots in the lack of acknowledgement of local government's responsibilities towards the destitute and in the ensuing lack of local public policies and projects catering for those living in precarious conditions. Questioning that situation, Councillor Trevor Prince considers that "the local council, the provincial parliament and the national parliament have got a moral obligation to its citizens, in creating institutions like the Ark to be run by council officials, by people subsidized by council officials, where the public at large, will be homeless, will be destitute, will be sickly, there is a place you can go to, not by individual people who have now created a mafia orientated system with what I call their 'inner circle' where you've got your twenty people that you ordain pastors and ministers that do all your underhand work, can you understand? (...) I could go for hours, I do not want to. I want you as a learned person that is doing investigation and survey, to bring to the notice of our government and our city council that they need to resume the responsibility. We've got a moral obligation like other first world and third world cities have got. The city officials have got a moral obligation of grabbing the bull by the horns and creating facilities to keep these people off the street." (Cllr. Trevor Prince, 20.04.00)

Such a picture gives probably a more acute vision of the problematic implications of public reliance on private institutions as peculiar and jealous of their originality and independence as the Ark.

Community as a Means of Governance

Planning and housing policies are the two main city policies directly affecting its citizens, residents and consumers, and, as our case is showing, the way they relate with the people concerned and the citizenry as a whole is quite different when one is referring to big development projects of mostly public owned and largely depopulated territories like the Point Waterfront than when one refers to the revitalisation projects of densely populated areas of the central city like Albert Park or Warwick Junction. Transitional housing and planning policies have thus clashed with a "renewal" policy itself renovated through the implementation of a methodology using "community as a means of governance" (Rose 1996).

As far as standard planning and housing policies (articulated as they are around re/location to housing estates on the periphery) are concerned, they all deal with physical space and only secondarily – as a matter of “consultation” – with the people concerned. The citizen is not involved as such since, beyond the destitute themselves who are dealt with as pure subjects of manipulative policies, all citizens are to be involved only as passive subjects of physical and social engineering policies devised and applied ultimately in their name.

The revitalisation of inner city areas – and in fact all the area-based management policies for that matter – are to implement new participative strategies and procedures that are supposed to become the norm of the new local dispensation. But the citizen does not appear to more involved as such by these policies either, s/he is only supposed to be concerned through the “community” of which s/he is a member. But, as far as any community is concerned, only organised sector-based or corporatist interests – of ratepayers, informal traders, business associations and the like – emerge to represent it although it is made up, as far as the central city is concerned, of a more and more diverse and transient population.

Neglecting the citizen as such in order to focus the qualified members of some particular territorial and/or “sectorial” collective, community policies appear to be limited to mobilization against “crime and grime”, making community assertion and corporatist/communitarian exclusion strategies to coincide if not to fuse. Community is called upon to exist as the union of law-abiding citizens against the “criminals”, the “illegal” and the informal. Indeed, the role of the community in the said revitalisation tends to be confined to a multifaceted fight against “grime and crime”, allowing the values of cleanliness and order to dominate at the expense of other dimensions of citizenship. The way in which the overwhelmingly dominant theme of the fight against crime and criminals is publicly celebrated as the “cornerstone” of state, business and community partnerships, appears to be questionable from the point of view of the civic values of equality, solidarity, and what, as a good French citizen, I would call “fraternity” (according to French national motto) but will refer here to as *ubuntu*. “There is positive feedback from the side of the community. People are reporting criminals/criminal activity in the area”, the report on safety and security heard in one of the APWG meeting summarizes in one sentence (APWG, meeting, minutes, 29.09.99). In her address to the Albert Park Workshop held on 10 March 1999, the Northern Central Council Mayor, Theresa Mthembu, emphasized “that crime was a national problem and that there was no quick fix solution to resolve crime but communities need to participate in identifying suitable solutions. Today marked the birth of a commitment from the Council to the residents of Albert Park. There needs to be a partnership between communities, traders, city police, etc., to fight crime”. (Albert Park Workshop, minutes, 10.03.99).

Exclusivist values are given free rein by the dominance of the *clean up* leitmotiv that is, renewal or not, the most regular feature of public reaction to changes in city’s population and practices. In congruence with the national cause of the fight against crime, local neighbourhoods’ preoccupations are with public space lighting, policing, control of liquor outlets and the like. But amongst anti-crime related tactics, there are also, as we saw, harassment policies of informal users of public space (beggars, street kids, informal traders), raids against informal traders here and there at regular intervals, calls for spying and informing, all of them contributing to the assertion of citizenship on the basis of the exclusion of certain categories of fellow citizens.

Between the subjects of standard planning and housing policies and the communities of anti-crime policies, is there room for a citizen?

Conclusions

The Place of the Citizen

This essay suggests that the place of the citizen envisaged on the basis of his/her individual right, capacity and responsibility as defined and enacted by democratic and republican citizenship visions and practices⁵², appears to be missing in governmental policies. The question is then to know whether the imagined entities defined as local communities and their sectional or corporatist components can be the unique vehicle of citizens’ participation?

In addition to the procedural weakness of city policies, citizenship values can be questioned more largely by policies that compromise people’s equal rights as a result of the way the local state forfeits its neutrality (secularity, ‘laïcité’) by relying on private individual and sectional interests’ welfare initiatives, and by dominant socio-economic exclusion and segregation policies. Those implied by exclusive upmarket tourist areas and socio-economically homogeneous housing estates, and by city renewal, anti-crime and anti-informal clean-up and containment strategies, are tantamount to straight exclusion, based on poverty versus respectability.

Altogether, such policies fly in the face of officially stated intentions to create "...a viable CBD with a mix of incomes and activities reflecting all South Africa's racial and income groups".⁵³ Again, only the transitional housing policy in the making has today, as far as accommodation in the central city is concerned, the potential to militate against these trends towards segregation. Meanwhile, the building of new housing estates extending the townships (Reconstruction and Development Programme projects, based on the national housing subsidy scheme) or the suburbs (private estate developments) on the periphery, articulated with clean-up revitalisation/redevelopment strategies in the central city, conspire to create a situation whereby the effects of former apartheid planning are further developed and extended, in contrast to the proclaimed post-apartheid principles of *compaction* and *integration* (Mabin, 1995).

Although we have not developed this point here⁵⁴, it is worth mentioning the additional factor of policies that tend to "instrumentalize" local communities owing to urban governance strategies that envisage revitalisation projects as implementation processes of 'council-driven' initiatives. Simply on the basis of their indirect but traceable democratic legitimacy – in contrast with the lack of representativity that one can always oppose to civil society sectional interests – and on the basis of their practical, financial and technical capacity (co-ordinators, ad hoc expertise, etc.), participative policies cannot be guaranteed as proof against non-transparent and manipulative strategies and tactics emanating from the local state. Participation fora are, from the community side point of view, arenas for intensive lobbying and tentative forms of control.

But what is the relationship between citizenship and other dominant social categories at work? In a South African context, it cannot be a surprise to find 'racial' categories pervading the story in many respects. Socio-political realities are read through rose-coloured spectacles by all actors at some point, in close correspondence with average South African social practices. Observation reveals the extent to which people tend to congregate in pubs, night clubs and in social leisure spaces in general according to "community" or "race" affiliations. The interest – or the lack of it – shown by the councillors towards the move in question and the first round of protests that it raised, can itself be read through rose-coloured spectacles as a kind of black indifference towards a "white-on-white" scuffle. This reading is not only widespread owing to a political stage dominated democratically, for the first time in its history, by representatives of the demographic majority, it is said to be correct by people speaking from experience ("The ANC people were not interested in the matter because the Ark is for white people").⁵⁵ The fact is that the matter changed, albeit with difficulty, complicated as it was by administrative wrangles, when the Albert Park "community" entered the stage, and this can hardly be dissociated from the area's undeniably dominant "black" character. And the fact that the community was represented on the official Working Group mainly by white people, with only one or two Indian and African persons, could only further exacerbate the problem in 'racial' terms. Accordingly, the perception that the Ark is "for white people" becomes a problem and enquiries were made to assess the situation in this regard. Race considerations have also been played out in the rather strange argument that the community of Albert Park, being a successful "rainbow" mix, should not have its success compromised by interference upsetting its racial balance... One wonders what would be said if the area was in a state of conflict!

On a perhaps more fundamental respect, the race dimension appears to be at play in a conflict that is largely about who is and who is not qualified, or entitled, to reside in town. Exclusion from the city having been historically based on racial criteria, how do those social categories that we have seen at work in the exclusion process relate to those criteria?

Connexions are constantly established in popular discourse to the colour of the category or group of people, in such a way that, as Bill's talk shows, the discourse can be oblivious to otherwise patent realities – that most of the "people coming with the Ark" are "white" – and assimilates them with the black majority that has 'invaded' the area and the government of the country. In his discourse, one can see how the racial character of the people or phenomenon concerned, whatever it is, is in a way a focal point, without which certain assertions would not make any sense. But more generally speaking, if connexions are established, they are not necessarily expressed overtly or covertly – it is all a matter of social context – nor are they indispensable to the conveyed meaning as they are in discourses that refer to racially focused horizons of meaning.

Thus social significations and practices appear to be largely over-determined by racial connotations. But the class dimension appears to be more critical than race in the social symbolism involved in our case. The symbolic structure taking the case and its meanings in charge appears to be loaded with class-based social categories of meaning, always potentially connected to racial imagined entities but not dependent on them. If there is in our case what could be considered as a typically "white" kind of discourse on the matter, there is

nevertheless no discourse exclusively identifiable as a white discourse in opposition to a black vision : “race” barriers are blurred and race assumptions are conveniently left aside to the benefit of a symbolic and imaginary community of self-respecting residents constituted on the basis of commonly shared, and supposedly basic, values that derive directly from the symbolism that has structured the former white urban exclusivity. The racial meanings of yesterday tend to fade under a supposedly universal meaning of what it is to be a “decent” citizen, in the name of which certain categories of people, whatever their colour, are condemnable, the rest being, whatever its colours, acceptable. It is impossible to deny how much these categories articulate class meanings based on traditional European values relating to social distinction, with a distinctive British character, but their class character tends to be masked by a hegemonic assumption about norms of respectability. One group is set against the rest of the society, in a gesture of constituent exclusion so that, reciprocally, society is set against a group of people, according to an articulation that is conceptualised as fundamental to the very essence of the social.

At the end, racial meanings cannot be avoided, mainly for two reasons: first, because of the absolute historical continuity (from apartheid to post-apartheid era) of social belief in substantial race differences – if indeed, race exists, and race groups are substantially different, there is no way the society could become non-racial apart through the painful, interminable and unsatisfactory process of race accounting ; second, because of the social macro-realities inherited from the recent past, white exclusivity is implanted on the urban modern order and its solidly entrenched correlations between urban space, races and classes. The legacy being as it is, the social socio-economic hierarchy still reflects massively the colonial racial hierarchy. Thus ideas about citizenship maintain implicit but quite often denied references to race, either directly or indirectly, through the ways racial categories are at work in colouring class criteria.

But race, class and space connections appear to be reversible, and social interpretation is thus constantly connecting collective identities imagined in terms of race, class and space, to the detriment of citizens’ individualities. Many casual conversations will show, provided that one looks at them more closely, how social actors skip implicitly from one to another and “criminals” become “black” and/or “poor” people. But unlike yesterday, when race was providing the basic understanding of the social, the values that are today at stake, while not eluding race over-determinations, stand on their own as basic criteria of life in society: linked to the spectre of crime – experienced as a frontal attack against the very possibility of any society – they are considered as constituent elements of any ‘civilised’ social life. In the absence of any alternative “African” model of urbanity and modernity, the appropriation of city life and uses “from below” appears to be read by many city residents, black or white, upper or middle class, as its in-formalisation, its de-naturalisation, its ‘immoralisation’ : in other words its potential destruction. Is not the question simply to “save” the city centre?

The Place of the Poor

All in all, the Ark relocation is just one element among many others of the penetration in all areas of the central city by street traders and “informal” residents. Faced with such a phenomenon, it is thought, said, advocated and, as far as possible translated into action, that these “street people” have fallen “out of society” and that their rightful place is therefore out of the town. The poor and undesirable must stay outside society or be sent back beyond its borders. Concretely, it means that they must be out of the city landscape, reserved for proper residents (and assimilated visitors). Which means that their citizenship will remain purely theoretical, only called up at election times to be exercised as a voting right – which, in such conditions, people tend precisely to forfeit. For the rest, they will be non-citizens.

The street people / residents’ divide is indeed turned into two different kinds of legitimacy in the city for two opposite kinds of people. Poverty is not the issue, but rather the poor; they are not fit for city life.

The problem is, as Georg Simmel emphasized (Simmel 1998 (1908)⁵⁶), that while the poor may be placed outside the symbolic circle of society, they are still within its broader, “external”, borders. We cannot here enter the complexities of Simmel’s reflections on what he calls himself the “strange complications” (“*les complications étranges*”) of rights and duties (“*droits et obligations*”) in relation to the poor. But we can at least reflect on his idea that “...if one can say that the State or society has a duty to assist the poor, it is possible to say as well – as history demonstrates – that the poor have as such no rights to this assistance. On the one side the obligation toward the poor is a moral matter for individuals – to the extent that the poor can become only a means in the self-sanctifying gesture of charity. On the other side, the poor have to be catered for as members of the society as a whole. But this latter obligation is not an obligation towards them but only

towards the community of citizens, as far as only citizens have rights and duties towards the State and conversely, and it corresponds to the cruder necessity of the society to maintain itself. The aim of assistance is precisely to mitigate some extreme expressions of social differentiation, in order for the social structure to be able to maintain itself on the basis of this differentiation." (Simmel 1998: 50).

"...The poor are in a way situated outside the group; but this is nothing more than a particular way of interaction that unites them to the whole within a larger entity.' (Simmel 1998: 56). This "sociological antinomy of the poor" (ibid.) related to rights and duties means that "the poor have a right to assistance; and there is an obligation to assist them" but that this obligation, "as a right, does not concern the poor but society". In consequence, they can be assigned to different sorts of (physical and symbolical) locations into the society. South Africa, in that respect, appears to be quite close to the pattern of a society leaving the poor to the care of private charity initiatives, on behalf of the community to which they belong. "But modern mobility, inter-local exchanges of all forces have eliminated this limitation; thus, the whole State must be considered as the terminus a quo and ad quem of all benefits. If the law allows everyone to settle in a community of his/her choice, then the community loses its integrated relationship with its inhabitants. (...) It is only for practical reasons and as an organ of the State (...) that municipalities have the duty to assist the poor." (Simmel, 1998, 62)

So, the way the poor are included is through their exclusion and assignation to the category of those who fall "outside" society and need its assistance: in the process they are transformed into pure *objects* of community actions, and social assistance to the poor has, in "legal teleology, the same status as the protection of animals" (op. cit. p. 51). Urban schemes require people being given dignity and self-respect rather than dealt with as rubbish, or they can rightly resent the way they are treated, as they say themselves, "like animals" – "The government treats us like animals simply because we are poor".⁵⁷ Indeed, in our case, the complete silence of any mention of the democratic rights of destitute people to participate in the policy that concerns them is deafening.

The Fate of the Poor

The fate of the poor obviously depends on the evolution of the range of policies that affect them, either directly or indirectly. As we have seen, welfare policies are left to national and provincial bureaucracies, whereas they tend to be translated, at local level, in policing and housing policy terms. Exclusion and "relocation" policies dominate the show, based on the assumption that poor people are not fit to live in the town and cause its "decay". But closer observation shows that there is more of a shifting ground than any process of decay, ritualistically denounced since the penetration of black people in central urban areas began⁵⁸.

The following general process described by Richard Tomlinson, urban economist from the University of Witwatersrand, seems indeed to apply, with qualifications, to Durban: "A 'marginal mass' emerges as a permanent feature, never to be employed in the formal sector, not even during periods of economic growth. People are pushed to the urban periphery. Because they lack skills, do not know about possible jobs and are distant from employment centres, they become cut off. Worse still, because they are irrelevant to a country's economic success, governments often see little reason to provide them with adequate municipal and social services. [This cannot be said of Durban Metro and its extensive development projects in the periphery.] ...High land prices and rents, well-orchestrated opposition from potential black and white neighbours and social stigmatisation drive low-income housing projects to the urban periphery. ...But if things are to be different, we need to reshape the way in which cities are being built, how government grants are delivered and the way the property market works. In particular, we need to link the location of low-income households with the location of jobs, education and health facilities. "How to Make Our Cities Work", *Mail & Guardian*, 05.05.00.)

But what we observe is more complex than that : despite the obstacles, people still manage to stay in the city for varying time periods, in a way intimately related to their sharpened sense of mobility owing to the need to move on to survive and their search for upward social mobility. High land prices and rents, social stigmatisation and indeed "redevelopment", "renewal" and "clean-up" strategies, push low-income projects to the periphery. But at the same time, the way big capital and former residents are fleeing the former Central Business District leaves an ever-growing number of central city amenities emptied and ready for new kinds of use. Together with the "push" effect described by Tomlinson, there is an attraction sucking into the core-city individuals and community segments from the black periphery. The actual process is described by some local researchers as the city "changing to a third world scenario" rather than deteriorating, since its actual

occupancy rate demonstrate that new services are substituting for former ones, even if serving poorer consumers⁵⁹.

Eventually, poor people's fate will depend on the trade-off that will be enacted between, on the one hand, "redevelopment" and "renewal" projects, "clean-up" policies, social stigmatisation and repudiation of non 'self-respecting' citizens, pushed back onto the edge of the central city and, on the other hand, accommodation and other projects aiming at meeting the needs of an ever-growing in-migrant and poor population that manages to stay in the city despite all the financial, socio-ideological, legal and other obstacles, for survival purposes. If the latter forces are much less numerous and much more fragile at this stage, the former projects imply that the poor are barred, through economic barrier devices, from areas reserved for middle and upper class local and foreign people – a solution that works perfectly for shopping and "shopertainment" malls only accessible by cars, but which has the disadvantage, when applied to central city areas, of 'shrinking' the reserved area to the semi-private/semi-public spaces of consumption (the reason why business interests keep on pushing for cordoning off the beachfront while introducing an entry fee⁶⁰).

Given the ideological environment, it is highly unlikely that the local government will play its official role to the full, whereas big capital is not prepared to invest in projects that the majority of the population could afford⁶¹. Politically, the question remains for those in charge of how far they can ignore and abandon to their fate people who are more and more representative of the majority of their fellow citizens, struggling more than ever to survive. The outcome depends also on the extent to which the informal economic sector will be allowed to grow in the city – that is to say where it tends to grow by its own dynamic – on the basis of the recognition of its role in economic survival strategies.

Central city revitalisation projects are supposed to be led and supported by bigger projects like the Point Waterfront. But before this can happen, the presence of the poor will probably be a fait accompli in all residential sections of the central city except those from which they can be barred thanks to the Urban Improvement Precincts initiatives (based, as we have seen, on residents' financial contributions coming on the top of standard municipal taxes). A key factor will be the evolution of the so far relatively tiny and fragile black middle class, which, all in all, given the limited space for affirmative action, the shrinking of the formal economy, the time needed to raise the skill levels, not to speak of the impact of Aids, is not likely to grow appreciably. One can foresee long years of battle around highly contested spaces along the moving fronts of redevelopment on one side (along the sea and harbour bay front) and containment on the other (exercised today along the western and northern edges of the former white CBD).

In such a context, only the transitional housing policy in the making seems to carry the hopes of the underprivileged to be recognised by the city as legitimate citizens and denizens, and for the local society to generate more social linkage and solidarity than entitlement and segregation. In that respect, while the Albert Park "community" may think that the relocation of the Ark in its territory is a sign of contempt by the authorities, it doesn't detract from the value of trying to make of the central city, Albert Park included, a more inclusive city, based on working compromises between established residents and poorer inhabitants and users. Is poorer people's presence to be always and by way of necessity considered as contrary to property values? Is there no other way than to encapsulate "world class" developments and consciously generate class-based exclusive estates? Is segregation condemnable when it is racially based but condonable when it is based on class?

"I'm not a town planner at all", Paddy Kearney tells me, "but I would see the solution as not to have concentrations of people – like in those apartment buildings that were built in the 50s, those huge concentrations of very poor working class people and all sorts of social problems had arisen wherever that was done, all of them have been a complete disaster. Now, there is an element of that in the Ark solution: Put them all together in two or three big buildings, and that's it. So I would wonder whether they shouldn't be looking for a number of places to try to keep more the kind of mixed area where people of different economic status can mix, not where you have like all poor people there, then all the rich people together somewhere else. That would seem to me to have more value." Provided that one moves from building to area level, Paddy Kearney's criticism of an Ark-type solution can be seen as supportive of the local state's decision to locate it in Albert Park, since it is likely to increase its heterogeneity in accordance with the increasing heterogeneity of the whole city. In that sense, the solution advocated by Stuart Talbot wrong foots the "solution" of segregation that is advocated so generally: "The Ark has increased systematically over the years. It started of, I think, with five hundred people staying down, and now you are looking at eight hundred, possibly a thousand, a thousand two hundred...There is no outflow, but there is certainly an inflow. But that again, they need to

address. They should be able to get people to places where they can move out and be stabilised within society. It may be partnership or something like that, with some kind of reduced rentals, but not in big blocks. It would be interesting if one could do it across the city, where people would stay in a building and at subsidized rental. That would integrate them in the society in a much better way. This could be managed by an institution or an organisation." (Interview, 28.09.00)

Maybe part of the problem is that social and planning visions as well tend to consider sectors and groups of the population through the exclusive lens of spatial criteria, as territorially defined and stabilized "communities", and by so doing, they miss the point of increased social mobility and play into the hands of exclusive community politics. Can the redevelopment of the central city be exclusively focused on its "sitting residents"? Must it not be responsive to the needs of the vast majority of its users? Must a city be rich, neatly ordered and clean, to be a city for its citizens? If so, how could it fulfil its role towards the vast majority?

End Notes

- 1 I want here to express my gratitude to all the people, officials, politicians, community leaders, street people, etc., for their welcome and open-minded collaboration that made such a humanly rewarding exercise of this study.
- 2 *Homeless Talk 8* :2, Feb 01.
- 3 'Central city' is nowadays the official term to substitute outdated designations such as the 'Central Business District (CBD)' : it denotes the previously white-only town, composed of the CBD and its surrounding suburbs (minus the former white-only suburbs that were its 'green-fields' extensions but are today increasingly disconnected from it). The former immediate 'suburbs', not only of Albert Park but also of Berea, Glenwood, Mayville, Morningside, etc., are increasingly incorporated in the multi-functional city life, with more and more tertiary businesses operating from former residences within these areas, and more and more informal businesses as well, hawkers, informal traders and users ('scavenging' garbage bags, begging on corners, sleeping in public parks, etc)...
- 4 On this concept, see Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1970) ; Robert Castel (1976).
- 5 Interview 15 September 1999. In this article, we have systematically applied pseudonyms apart for people speaking in their official capacity (as in this first case) or their public capacity as elected representatives or community leaders.
- 6 The 'PR' ('proportional representation') councillors are elected according to party lists of candidates unlike the ward councillors, namely and directly elected by their constituents.
- 7 On the beachfront, ownership is by way of leasehold title from the City, with fixed annual leasehold rentals. Today, the City encourages owners to take up freehold rights.
- 8 Trevor Prince has since defected from the NNP and won the last local elections (5 December 2000) on an IFP ticket. Here, the electoral campaign to which Trevor Prince is referring is the campaign for the 8 July 1998 elections which has coincided with the first public noises about the relocation of the Ark in Albert Park and the mobilization against it (the petition of April 1998).
- 9 According to the 1996 census, the population of Albert Park is 19.600.
- 10 Progress report: Albert Park upgrade project, August 1999. Words emphasized as in the original.
- 11 The objective is to try and outline the configuration of meanings that are available and mobilized in the strategic interpretations of society. In addition to kind of static and paradigmatic representation, we try and identify a number of recurrent syntagmatic ways of connecting, associating and opposing these meanings or values, of organizing and re-organizing them ('ideo-logics'), in order to make sense of the situations and issues related to our case.
- 12 Maybe this is what means this community leader commenting another relocation project : "The department's interest in moving the people had nothing to do with whether or not they had a roof over their heads and everything to do with getting rid of people who were becoming an embarrassment for the city." Westridge Trust Vice-Chairman, Dumisani Zama, on the relocation of Brooke street squatters in Newlands West, *Independent on Saturday*, 10.04. 00.
- 13 A good illustration of this ideo-logic is given about Grey Street by the leader of the Operations Team who drove a clean up operation in the area (following a similar one in Warwick Junction called the "Big Blitz") :

'Businesses and residents in the area now need to take ownership and responsibility to ensure that this standard is not allowed to deteriorate to the levels that it had fallen to previously. Community participation is vital in ensuring that our city remains a clean, beautiful one to live in. No matter where your home might be, people need to take pride, be aware of their environment, and especially ensure that litter is disposed of in a responsible fashion.' Hoosen Moola, *MetroBeat*, 15.11.00, p. 9.

- 14 'Dalton Road in *disgrace* – hawkers and vagrants on the side of the road brewing and selling alcohol', read the front page headline of *The Berea Mail* of 3 December 1999. "In the last year, the number of vagrants and illegal hawkers on the side of the road have increased. Aside from sleeping, arguing and defecating on the side of the road and pavement, hawkers brew and sell alcohol to passers by, other hawkers and vagrants in the area. Consuming the alcohol, they become rowdy and disruptive, causing many problems for business owners in Dalton Road. Residents and employees are up in arms over the situation. Disgusted by some of the vagrants who lie around and indecently expose themselves to visitors to the road, they also live in constant fear of being assaulted... We feel sorry they are people living like this but it's not that they don't have homes to go to' says one businessman."
- 15 As Georg Simmel emphasized in his essay on the Poor (Simmel: 1998 (1908)), the poor may be placed outside the symbolic circle of society, they are still *within* its broader, 'external', border. Sociologically speaking, they have, no particular rights, as such but only those of each and every citizen. We'll come back on that in our last section.
- 16 Cf. the debate about the practice of these hundreds of families who are making a living out of domestic garbage bags in the city's 'leafy suburbs' and whether or not it can legitimately be considered as an unbearable 'invasion of privacy' (to the extent, for example, that it would excuse if not legitimate the spraying of chemical mixtures into the faces of the 'culprits', as it did happen). See August, October and November 2000 issues of *Metro Beat* ; also Megan Power, "The Trash Trawlers", *Sunday Tribune*, 28.01/01.
- 17 As a matter of fact, it is a sort of tradition for South African authorities and citizens alike to castigate the 'informal traders' as the prime culprits for the 'filth' and 'mess' disfiguring the city and transforming its streets into 'slums'. Consequently, they have to be pushed out and/or framed into 'formal' and properly distanced stalls, etc. To be fair, Durban Metro has to be credited with the search for an informal trading policy away from the repressive policies of the Traffic Department to the development policies of the Development Facilitation Unit, and which actually involves negotiations with traders' representatives. It is all the more remarkable that, if it is no longer seen as its cause, informal trading appears to be still considered as 'a symptom of CBD degeneration' (Prof. Francie Lund, Natal University, interviewed by Shirley Jones, *Business Report on Sunday*, 28.05.00) or as 'a sign of economic instability' ('Street trading is a sign of the economic instability of the turbulent time that we live in', D. G. Botha, Informal Trade Department, *Metro Beat* 15.8.00), the question being then, and by definition, to tolerate, regulate and contain it rather than to promote and develop it. Consequently, the mass of informal traders is only tolerated on the margins of the inner city, around the rail, taxi and bus transport nodes, *i.e.* in areas of little interest for tourists and high-revenue consumers.
- 18 Beyond this Ark/Albert Park case, one will find many examples of this ideal of functional and social homogeneity in 'traditional' and current land use planning – for example, the new land use pattern for the neighbourhood of Berea, presented in January 2001, is said to 'encourage clustering of restaurants, within commercial areas to prevent the potentially disruptive development of such facilities in primarily residential areas' (*Berea Mail*, 19.01.01) – and in housing policy as well : justifying the proposal to relocate indigent people in 'starter-homes', the acting Director of Housing explains that the objective or the rule is to create socially homogeneous neighbourhoods : "Apartheid was about grouping races. This proposal is about grouping classes. Those in the same economic bracket will obviously stay together. It is racially blind.' (Farhana Ismail, 'Pack up and move'" *Sunday Tribune*, 21.5.00, p. 12.
- 19 To 'create civic pride', a project "close to the Mayor's heart" is "to clean up the entire metro area, from the parks to the streets and the rivers" (KZN High Road, *Mercury*, (2.05.00).
- 20 As it appears in the following enumerations (listing the issues addressed by the 'Operation Grey Street') : "everything from general crime, traffic enforcement, illegal hawkers, public health nuisances, street lighting, refuse removal blocked drains and general upliftment of the area." (*Metro Beat*, 15.11.00). When mosquitoes started to infect the drive-in area on the edge of the central city, some will not hesitate to first envisage as

- their likely source the presence of squatters in the vicinity (*Berea Mail*, 19.01.01)! Street vendors in particular are said to “infect the city with an air of stagnation” : after their “daily ritual of clogging and contaminating the Durban metropolis, writes this resident in the local press, they usually leave a trail of rubbish which spoils the dignity which befits a city such as ours” (*Sunday Tribune* 25 February 2001). “How can one justify the extremely high prices paid by unsuspecting purchasers, writes this other one about Musgrave Road in Berea, when, on the doorsteps to these million-Rand mansions, lie these vagrants, beggars and drunks?” (*Berea Mail*, 23. 02.2001).
- 21 “What is good for tourism is the International Convention Centre and having big conferences; and when the big conferences come, clear up all the street children and vagrants, put them in trucks and move them somewhere else, God knows where they go to. They all disappear and they can come back after the conference is over. I mean that is an image of a type of thinking that I think is prevalent” (Interview, Paddy Kearney, Diakonia Council of Churches Director 22.05.00).
- 22 “The lack of public toilets is also acknowledged. Two pilot projects (...) are currently under way’, K.J.G. Bennet, Chairman, Operations Committee, Warwick Junction project, *Metro Beat*, 15.09.00).
- 23 In the same vein, a young journalist, Seema Diahnaa, protests in the local press : ‘It is irritating, boring and too convenient an excuse to blame homeless and destitute people as the offenders.’ Even if she confesses that she doesn’t ‘believe that making more toilets accessible to the public is the solution, for I’ve seen people who have access to amenities opt for the great outdoors instead’, she quite wisely concludes that ‘this is an issue that doesn’t require the army’s intervention, but just concerted initiative from the municipality and the public’. *Daily News* 01.06.00.
- 24 He adds “In Albert Park in the late 80s, I saw the same problem emerging. The problem was “we cannot allow blacks to move in, values would drop”. The same thing happens, except that now it is on a class basis rather than an ethnic or race basis. It is rather sad, because we haven’t really transformed, in the city and in this country. I mean that it is a clear indication that we are a long way from genuine transformation and recognizing the dynamics of social stratification” (Interview 22 May 2000).
- 25 Mr. Oliphant, Principal of Zimele High School, 19.05.98.
- 26 Open letter of Cllrs. Desire Sansom and Trevor Prince to the Provincial Minister of Housing, 18.10.99.
- 27 Interview with Ralph and Jeff, former ‘outies’ and shelter founders and managers, 11.05.00.
- 28 In smaller characters the source is credited as an article, which “appeared in the *Sunday Tribune* of May 14, 1998, written by Farhana Ismail and Paddy Harper”).
- 29 Coming respectively from a survey of African residents by B. Maharaj and J. Mpungose, based on an 80 person sample plus 30 respondents (Maharaj & Mpungose 1994:21) and from a “Rental survey and profile of buildings of Albert Park” conducted by Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed in 1999 based on 197 respondents (*Environmental Interface* 2000: 22).
- 30 We will see later that Paddy Kearney nevertheless advocates more social heterogeneity in urban policies.
- 31 “While whites appear to have a more exaggerated perception of the extent of crime and related problems in the area, all groups shared a concern about this as well as about such problems as noise and security.” (*op. cit.* p. 34)
- 32 It is interesting to note, be it only as an indication, given its very limited size (20 people), that the opinion poll conducted by Shivesh Singh unexpectedly revealed a *relative majority* of people (8/20, 40%) *in favour* of the Ark’s relocation in Albert Park, with only 3/20 (15%) people *opposed* to it. In addition to that, 5/20 people (25%) saw both advantages and disadvantages in the move, 4/20 (20%) being unsure. Only two of the 20 are owners, and it is likely that these two owners are among the three people opposed to the relocation, which consequently would mean that only one tenant of 18 has indicated opposition to the move, and that nearly half of them are in favour of it. An official of the City Council interviewed by S. Singh gives us another way to put it straight : ‘It is his view’, writes the author, “that the owners of apartments don’t want the Ark” (Laurence Gudazi, Building Inspectorate, interview 18.11.99, *op. cit.* p. 76).
- 33 Convicted at the end of August 1999 by a Durban Regional Court of the rape and two counts of indecent assault of a nine year old girl, in 1996-1997, the founder of the Ark said that he would appeal to the High Court against his conviction, on the basis of the evidence he brought forward that “his wife had put the child up to making the accusations against him, because she wanted to take over the Ark” (Keith Ross, “Ark founder vows the truth will prevail”, *Daily News*, 30.08.99).

- 34 Notes from my first visit on 27 April 1999 around noon :” ‘I don’t believe my eyes : hundreds of people, adult most of them, many look to me to be ‘white’, there are all sorts of colours but blacks seem to be clearly in minority, all marked by the signs of dereliction (poor clothing, faces, hair and body members in a bad state. 800 meals are just to be served and they are queueing at diverse places in the whole huge building. Every day they prepare and serve 3000 to 3500 meals, S. tells me. ‘Between 5000 and 6000’ adds one of the guys working at the store-room” Subsequent visits in 1999 and 2000 have confirmed my first impressions. I want to use this opportunity to express my admiration for the impressive amount of work done by the Ark institution, and to thank its director and all the people who have welcomed me at different times for their open-arms reception.
- 35 Pastor De Nysschen claims also that the Ark has ‘satellite branches’ in the townships. I have not yet been able myself to check that claim, but if one is to believe the authors of the Social impact study, “research has shown that all satellite branches are independent organisations who may benefit from donations from the Ark” (*op. cit.* p. 13).
- 36 For the historical record, it must be noted that the first initiative has been taken by the Council of Churches, in close contact with the PR ANC Councillor, Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, in July 1998. “Once we decided that we were going to own this building, explains Paddy Kearney, we realised that we were really stakeholders and we must be concerned (...) We brought a number of stakeholders together to talk about the development of Albert Park. On the basis of that, we sent a memorandum to the City Council to say : Isn’t it time that the city does something about this area, make some money available for its development? Should it not be better policed and should not landlords obey the by-laws of the city and look after their property? (...) The Mayor wrote back and said that he referred our memorandum to a whole lot of different departments for them to follow up ...” (Interview, 22.05.00).
- 37 Report for the meeting to be held on the 12 November 1999.
- 38 This reconstitution is based on the declarations made by the City officials concerned whom I have been able to interview and the documents I have been able to collect. The matter being sensitive as it is, no conversation about the controversial aspects will be specifically attributed.
- 39 The ‘institutional subsidy’ framework was not really adapted, as it is meant for fixed family accommodation, with the usual administrative requirements – the applicant has to be married or to have dependants, etc. On the contrary, the ‘transitional housing’ policy was precisely started to try and meet the growing accommodation needs of the city’s transient population : “The Provincial Housing Board is encouraging the ‘Strollers Overnight Facility’ (new and recently opened shelter for informal traders in the vicinity of Durban railways and buses stations) and that sort of things. The need for transient accommodation has been acknowledged.” Interview, Maurice Makhatini, Metro Housing acting director, 11.11.99 “The Strollers Project has been instrumental in the setting-up of the transitional housing policy, in 1998” Sarah Charlton, Metro Housing, former Director of the Relocation of the Ark Project, interview 17.10.00.
- 40 The Best Practice City Commission’s report, compiled in 1999 after five months of research by a private sector-led group, is meant to help “turn Durban into an investor-friendly city” (*Mercury*, 10.10.00).
- 41 The Constitution of 1996, stipulates among ‘the objects of local government’, ‘to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government’. The 1998 White Paper on Local Government stressed that ‘municipal councils play a central role in promoting local democracy. In addition to representing community interests within the Council, municipal councillors should promote the involvement of citizens and community groups in the design and delivery of municipal programmes. (...) Municipalities must adopt inclusive approaches to fostering community participation, including strategies aimed at removing obstacles to, and actively encouraging, the participation of marginalized groups in the local community.’ (§1.3.) The new Municipal Structures Systems Bill devotes an entire section on participation, exhorting municipalities to put in place sets of mechanisms for receiving complaints, conducting public hearings, surveying peoples’ views, etc. Specifically, metropolitan council may set up ‘sub-structure’ and ‘ward committees’ around elected councillors, with voluntary participation for that purpose.
- 42 On the ideo-logic of organic “community speakers” (*porte-parole*) see Bouillon 1981 and 1995.
- 43 The Council and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry have agreed upon the UIP policy in 2000. Based on policies pioneered in the USA and modelled on Johannesburg’s Business Improvement Districts, Durban’s Urban Improvement Precincts are areas in which property owners agree to pay for services that

- are supplementary to those provided by the local authority, through a rebate reduction mechanism and the setting-up of a non-profit organisation responsible for financial and operational management.
- 44 I develop these points in a forthcoming article for *Transformation*, "Citizenship and the City. The Case of Durban Centre-city in 2 000".
 - 45 The tradition of a local government discharged of welfare responsibilities might be questioned in the light of Georg Simmel's remark about the inevitably 'local character' of the presence of poor people and of the moral duty to assist them. The fact that assistance is delegated to local municipalities is useful he says, because each case has to be individually treated and 'if the municipality has to assist, it must provide the money for it in order to avoid a too liberal distribution of the State funds' (my translation) (Simmel 1998 (1908): 67-68).
 - 46 The relationship between the Ark Ministries and the local ecumenical grouping, Diakonia Council of Churches, is quasi nil. Pastor De Nysschen has responded to a few of Diakonia's invitations for discussions between church representatives but quickly left the matter there (interview with Pastor De Nysschen, 22.04.00). The Council took the initiative of an Albert Park stake-holders' meeting, three years ago, as they were at that time buying their Albert Park premises. In May 2000, they have been sending members of their staff visit the Ark in the Point and meet with its managers and people. Theologically speaking, the Ark is 'clinging towards the fundamentalist side' and follows Christian charismatic Pentecostal trends (Interview with Paddy Kearney, Diakonia Council of Churches, 22.05.00). All of this doesn't prevent Paddy Kearney from praising their hard work and commitment to assist the most deprived members of the community.
 - 47 "They would also have the view that if you are helping people, you must use that as an opportunity for proselytisation – which we do not believe, we do not (...) they have got a big stake in getting some Christian mileage out of running a project like that ; we come from very different positions." (Interview, Paddy Kearney, 22.05.00).
 - 48 According to the Ark's constitution, except for a 'ten days' pass' during which they are introduced to the rules of the place, new intakes must sign in and go for a fifty-day Bible course. Inebriated people can access an overnight shelter, the "choice room" from which they can move out and to which they can come back for weeks and even months until they chose to change their lives. Then, they access the second "miracle room" that has, to the difference of the "choice room", "proper beds, mattresses, sheets and pillows". They stay there for three days after which they are allowed in the "Resurrection room" for five days. From there, they might be placed in the general accommodation section.
 - 49 "...the Christian faith has a tithing, which means roughly ten percent of your salary you give to the church." Interview with Pastor De Nysschen, 20.04.00.
 - 50 Apart from donations, the Ark has made it compulsory for any inmate working in town to hand over 30% of his/her daily earnings as a boarding rate.
 - 51 Based on interviews with managers of six central city shelters for adults.
 - 52 Cf. A. Bouillon, "Why citizenship?", Working paper. Three Cities project. Seminar paper, 15.09.00.
 - 53 Roger Sishi, Chairman of the Council's Economic Development Committee, quoted by Margie Inggs, 'Durban's Renewal Drive Puts People First', *Business Report on Sunday*, 16.1.00, p. 3.
 - 54 I intend to develop these aspects in a forthcoming paper written in cooperation with Jeremy Grest, comparing the Warwick Junction Redevelopment Project and the Albert Park Revitalisation Project.
 - 55 The fact is that the ANC never took a formal position on the matter (Interview, Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, 22.05.00) and by so doing gave free rein to interpretations.
 - 56 Quotes translated by myself from a French translation. Simmel, 1998, 7.
 - 57 People forcibly removed from Alexandra quoted by *Mail & Guardian*, 16.2.01.
 - 58 So "ritualistically" that in Vasantha Angamuthu's caricature of the new black and white "SA-speak" which says also a lot about the symbolic and imaginary place of Albert Park itself, 'urban degeneration' becomes in white SA-speak, "what happened to Albert Park after THEY moved in", and in black speech : "when landlords stopped taking care of their buildings after we moved in to Albert Park" (*Daily News* 01.09.00). Stop stereotyping me "and my race", a reader protested a few days later (*Daily News*, 05.0.900).
 - 59 Claire Gatony, University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) researcher, quoted in *The Mercury*, 27.11.00.

- 60 The Durban Beachfront Business Committee has denounced a holiday events policy "geared to a market with no disposable income" and 'consistently asked that access be controlled to the main beaches and paddling pool". They also proposed the organisation of some events based on admission fee (*Daily News* 06.12.99).
- 61 According to the chief executive officer of Trafalgar Property and Financial services, Neville Shaefer, "rentals were currently not high enough to make it economically viable for developers to build large complexes geared towards the rental market" at a time when average flat rentals are R1200 for a bachelor flat, R1607 for a two-bedroom and R2037 for a three-bedroom flat, and when many tenants ask for short leases of six months, "due to factors like emigration and job insecurity", according to the director of Wakefields Property Management (*Sunday Tribune*,17.09.00).

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Bouillon Antoine (2002)

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