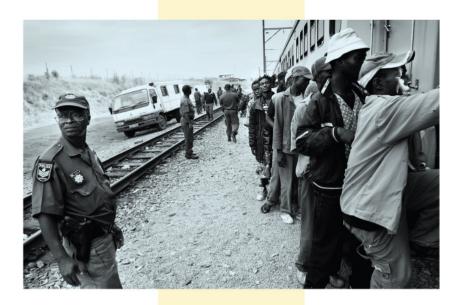Francis B Nyamnjoh

INSIDERS & OUTSIDERS

Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa

About this book

This book is an incisive commentary on an unevenly globalising world, and on the new politics of insiders and outsiders that it has produced. Focusing on two of sub-Saharan Africa's most economically successful nations, Botswana and South Africa, the eminent sociologist Francis Nyamnjoh demonstrates the processes through which new hierarchies of citizenship and rights are being constructed. He gives subalterns their voice and highlights the increasing xenophobia that both exploits and excludes them.

Nyamnjoh concentrates on the intersection of two aspects of contemporary modernity: the flow of people, capital and goods, propelled across national boundaries at ever greater pace by the forces of globalisation; and the growing crisis of citizenship in so many countries. He meticulously documents the fate of immigrants in these Southern African societies through a focus on the situation of 'illegal' maids who cross borders in flight from economic hardship in their own countries. In doing so he delivers a telling critique of the global rhetoric of open societies in an era of increasing closures.

This work is an original and perceptive study of issues that resonate in countries across Africa and the globe. As globalisation becomes a palpable reality in the bodies of people in transit, citizenship, sociality and belonging are subjected to stresses to which few societies have devised a civil response beyond yet more controls – measures which in turn are subverted and nullified, so that, as in Botswana and South Africa, conflict and flux underlie a superficial global progress.

About the author

Francis B. Nyamnjoh is Associate Professor and Head of Publications and Dissemination with the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). He has taught sociology, anthropology and communications studies at universities in Cameroon, Botswana and South Africa, and has researched and written extensively on Cameroon and Botswana, where he was awarded the Senior Arts Researcher of the Year prize for 2003. His most recent books include *Negotiating an Anglophone Identity* (Brill, 2003), *Rights and the Politics of Recognition in Africa* (Zed Books, 2004), *Africa's Media, Democracy and the Politics of Belonging* (Zed Books, 2005). Dr Nyamnjoh has published widely on globalisation, citizenship, media and the politics of identity in Africa. He has also published two novels, *Mind Searching* (1991) and *The Disillusioned African* (1995), and a play, *The Convert* (2003). Additionally, he served as Vice-President of the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE) from 1996 to 2003.

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Insiders and Outsiders

Citizenship and Xenophobia in
Contemporary Southern Africa

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Francis B. Nyamnjoh

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Acknowledgements

Doing research is an exercise in indebtedness to sponsors, informants, colleagues, peers and others that is hard ever to acknowledge fully, let alone repay. Neither the space allowed me nor my poor memory can do justice to everyone who has contributed in the making of this book. Symbolically, I would like to thank all those who, in one way or another, have assisted directly or indirectly, in the research and scholarship of which this book is a fruit. In particular, I am very grateful to CODESRIA for funding the Comparative Research Network on 'Globalisation, Migration, Citizenship and Xenophobia in South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe', which I coordinated for two years from Gaborone, and of which this book is only a tiny part of many more reflections to come. The opportunity this gave me to exchange ideas with other members of the network – Rekopantswe Mate, Mike Neocosmos and Victor Muzvidziwa – was most enriching.

Two of my graduate students at the University of Botswana, Divine Fuh and Malizani Jimu, deserve special mention. Divine Fuh contributed immensely to transcription of taped interviews, to questionnaire design and generation of results by SPSS, and to archival research. Malizani Jimu assisted regularly with surfing the net and combing the library for relevant literature. To them and my other research assistants – Bigan Setume, Salphy Tachinyunyi, Rosinah T.

Globalisation, Mobility, Citizenship and Xenophobia in Southern Africa

Paradoxes of Globalisation

Intensified globalisation is the order of the day in Africa as elsewhere. It is a process marked by accelerated flows and, paradoxically, accelerated closures. The rhetoric of free flows and dissolving boundaries is countered by the intensifying reality of borders, divisions and violent strategies of exclusion. As the possibility of free and unregulated movement provokes a ready response by disadvantaged labour in search of greener pastures, the neoliberal doctrine of globalisation becomes more shadow than substance for most – with the exception of global capital, which is altogether unfettered in comparison to global labour. This glorification of multinational capital is having untold consequences, especially in marginal sites of accumulation such as Africa where devalued labour is far in excess of cautious capital. The accelerated flows of capital, goods, electronic information and migration induced or enhanced by globalisation have only exacerbated the insecurities and anxieties of locals and foreigners alike, bringing about an even greater obsession with citizenship and belonging. One stark result is the building or re-actualisation of boundaries and differences through xenophobia and related intolerances. The response in many places is for states to tighten immigration regulations, and for local attitudes to harden towards foreigners and outsiders. Where

migrants are welcome, interest in having them tends to be limited to those with skills or capital to invest. When unskilled migrants are reluctantly accepted, they are expected to fill the menial jobs which even the most destitute nationals reject. In situations like post-apartheid South Africa, where the majority of nationals are yet to graduate into meaningful citizenship, the competition with migrants for the lowest-level jobs is keen. Claims of belonging are aggressive, and feelings of hostility to migrants excessive. The tendency is for migrants, skilled or unskilled, to be exploited and treated as 'slave labour', 'sleepwalkers' or labour zombies by employers eager to 'take advantage of their precarious state to drive down wages and circumvent labour laws' (Dieux 2002; Grandea and Kerr 1998; Anderson 2000; Anthias and Lazaridis 2000: 5–6). In general, when 'cheap' foreign workers are readily available from countries desperate to alleviate unemployment and generate foreign income, 'the dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs' become racialised, as they are associated with foreign workers to such a degree that nationals of host countries 'refuse to undertake them, despite high levels of poverty and unemployment' (Jureidini 2003: 3). This situation is as true of Africa as it is of the rest of the world, and invites scholarly attention to the growing importance of boundaries in a world pregnant with rhetoric on free flows and boundless opportunities. Such accelerated closures are creating manifold problems in Africa, where flexible mobility has been part and parcel of life and livelihood since pre-colonial times, affording both individuals and communities survival, the maintenance of social relations, the exploration of opportunities, and the fulfilment of hopes (de Bruijn et al. 2001).

The global character and ramifications of consumer capitalism notwithstanding, people's responses to it are far from homogenous, simple or predictable. Various factors inform how different peoples and regions relate to the globalisation of uncertainties and insecurities: the commonalities and particularities of regional and local histories, politics, cultural and material realities, as well as the social configurations developed within and among individuals, groups and communities as subsystems of the global consumer order. Very broadly, this study of globalisation, mobility, citizenship and xenophobia in South Africa and Botswana discusses how Africans of different social categories grapple with increasing uncertainties and insecurities,

and contributes towards the search for more predicament-oriented ways of theorising and researching contemporary peoples and their communities.

Today in Africa, as elsewhere, there is a growing preoccupation with belonging, bringing with it the questioning of previous assumptions about nationality and citizenship. This is as true of how nationals and citizens perceive and behave towards one another as it is of how they behave towards immigrants, migrants and/or foreigners. The crisis of citizenship and subjection in Rwanda that resulted in the genocidal bloodbath of 1994 (Mamdani 2001; Melvern 2000), and the current conflict in Côte d'Ivoire fuelled by competing and exclusionary claims of *Ivoireté* (Fanon 1967a: 125; Akindès 2003, 2004; Vidal 2003; Zongo 2003; ICG 2004), are sufficiently indicative of how increasingly difficult it is to be sanguine about belonging in Africa under liberal democracy and global consumer capitalism (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000; Bayart et al. 2001; Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004; Nyamnjoh 2005). Even countries like Botswana, where ethnic citizenship and belonging had almost disappeared in favour of a single political and legal citizenship and of nation-building, there has, in recent years, been a resurgence of identity politics. Tensions over belonging have mounted, as various groups seek equity, better representation and more access to national resources and opportunities (Werbner and Gaitskell 2002; Werbner 2004). In such situations, while every national can assert their legal citizenship, some see themselves or are seen by others to be less authentic claimants.

The growing importance of identity politics and more exclusionary ideas of citizenship is matched by the urge to detect difference and to distinguish between 'locals', 'nationals', 'citizens', 'autochthons' or 'insiders', on the one hand, and 'foreigners', 'immigrants', 'strangers' or 'outsiders', on the other, with the focus on opportunities, economic entitlements, cultural recognition and political representation (Nyamnjoh and Rowlands 1998; Nnoli 1998; Geschiere and Gugler 1998; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000; Werbner 2002a 2002b, 2004; Nyati-Ramahobo 2002; Harnischfeger 2004; ICG 2004; Nyamnjoh 2005). Customary African values (for example, the widely shared philosophy of life, and conceptions of agency and responsibility that assert interdependence over autonomy) and policies of inclusion are under pressure from the politics of entitlement in an era of sharp

downturns and accelerated flows of opportunity-seeking capital and migrants.

This study of globalisation, mobility, citizenship and xenophobia in South Africa and Botswana takes a closer look at the paradoxes of globalisation as a process of flows and closures, empowerment and enslavement, hope and disappointment. It argues that the neoliberal rhetoric and euphoria on globalisation must be countered with the reality of exclusion for all but an elite few (Bond 2001; Nyamnjoh 2004). Although 'the basic split is not between nation-states, but between the rich and the poor', which often cuts across national boundaries (McChesney 1998: 6, 2001: 13), the fact remains that the investors, advertisers and affluent consumers whose interests global capitalism represent are more concentrated in and comprise a significant proportion of the populations of the developed world than is the case in Africa, where only an elite minority are involved and hardly any local consumer products are competitive globally. Africa, with the exception of South Africa, attracts an insignificant amount of the less than 2 per cent of global investment capital that the continent as a whole is said to command. Thus, already seriously excluded, ordinary Africans feel even more disillusioned with the 'new' South Africa. It presents the only meaningful pocket of opportunity on the continent, but polices its borders ever more tightly, and does little to curb xenophobia against black African migrants (Chapter 1). Yet, although structurally excluded, the bulk of ordinary people in Africa refuse to yield easily to despair. Thanks to their ability to manoeuvre and manipulate, and thanks to the sociality and conviviality of their cultural communities, Africans have refused to surrender to marginalisation by states weakened by the profit motives of global capital. Thus the study also explores some of the creative strategies employed by African migrants to appropriate, gatecrash, cushion, subvert or resist the effects of their exclusion by the global structures of inequality (Chapters 4 and 5). The study is therefore in tune with the growing need to understand the processes and prospects of globalising Africa and Africanising globalisation (Zeleza 2003).

Although most of the empirical evidence used in this study is drawn from fieldwork in Botswana, an overview of next-door South Africa as the most attractive destination for migrants from the rest of Africa was thought necessary not only for comparative purposes

but also for a better understanding of the situation in Botswana. In addition, South Africa is the continent's leading economy, the most industrialised, but with a very skewed distribution of wealth. It has opted for the liberal economic and politics model, which implies a constitution that guarantees individual rights of private ownership and control even of what was obtained through dispossessing collectivities of those designated racial inferiors during apartheid. The option of equality without justice has made the post-apartheid context very tense, as ordinary underprivileged South Africans realise that their constitutional rights are slow at delivering the material benefits of citizenship. Claims of wealth in a buoyant economy sound like a cruel joke to them, and increasingly they realise they have to compete with foreigners who choose to flee from home, rather than staying on to sort out their own domestic messes (Peberdy 2001: 24–6). In such contexts of compounding frustrations and uncertainties, it is easy to turn migrants and other minorities into scapegoats. This is basically the case in the 'new' South Africa, where African immigrants and the Asian minority are scapegoated (Chapter 1). It is also the case elsewhere, hence the rising xenophobia globally, as immigrants increasingly become synonymous with 'unwanted' (Brochmann 1999a: 20), even if their cheap, reliable labour and debaseable humanity are impossible to resist (Anderson 2000; Anthias and Lazaridis 2000; Ehrenreich 2001; Jureidini 2003).

Xenophobia – the intense dislike, hatred or fear of others per-ceived to be strangers – has intensified with globalisation (Bihr 1992: 14; Hollifield 1999: 73; Stalker 2000: 117; Jureidini 2003). In a world fresh with the wounds of slavery, colonialism, apartheid, genocide and terrorism, xenophobia often explains, as much as it is explained by, poverty, underdevelopment, economic disparities, and assumptions of social and cultural superiority. The intensification of migration occasioned by accelerated flows of information regard-ing opportunities, images of desires and uncertainties has in turn engendered or exacerbated a global pattern of protected inclusion and rampant practices of exclusion. So preoccupying has the issue become that in 2001 a world conference was organised in Durban, South Africa, on 'Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance', to invigorate global political commitment against them. That such discrimination persists is not for want of international

and national legislation against intolerance. Various international charters (for instance, the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and national constitutions are unequivocal about their commitment to equality in rights and dignity for all human beings. The inalienable and indivisible character of human rights is emphasised in principle, but in reality few countries develop practices that accommodate migration and provide for flexible citizenship (Bowling et al. 2004).

The increased economic disparity between rich and poor countries has contributed to international migration and a resultant xenophobia against migrants (Castles and Miller 1998; Jureidini 2003; Basok 2004). An estimated 35 million people have migrated to the richer North from the poorer South since the 1960s. Nearly one-third of skilled workers, including 60,000 middle and senior managers, migrated to Europe and North America between 1985 and 1990. Migrant workers from developing countries have contributed to the industrial and agricultural development of the West over many decades. Lately it has become increasingly difficult to gain entry to Europe as many states are amending their laws to curb the influx of immigrants, including asylum-seekers. Their invaluable contributions notwithstanding, immigrants continue to be the victims of physical assaults, racial abuse, exploitation and extortion. Restrictive immigration laws are increasingly set in place to curb economic migrancy and discourage refugees, even though the indications are that migrants can and do foster positive economic development, give rise to democratic and inclusive societies, and promote peaceful relations between peoples, civilisations and states (Castles and Miller 1998; Cohen 1997; Castles and Davidson 2000; Papastergiadis 2000). Europeans, as historically the most voluntarily transcontinental and cultural migrants, should know this best.

The heightened xenophobia within a year of the World Conference on Racism, and shortly after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York, demonstrates the enormity of the problem globally. It also indicates that political pronouncements and policies do not necessarily translate into a progressive consciousness. Neglected voter concerns also boost the appeal of right-wing parties, with dire consequences for international migration, foreign relations and the possibility of human rights for all (Bihr

1992; Castles and Miller 1998: 4–10; Hollifield 1999: 73; Brochmann 1999a, 1999b; Stalker 2000: 117; Castles and Davidson 2000: 157). In Europe, right-wing voices have increased their support by exploiting local anxieties over immigration in the era of globalisation. Through what has been termed 'Euro-racism' (Mac an Ghaill 1999: 74–7), levels of state surveillance and exclusion of immigrants have increased. So too has violence, especially against Muslims ('Islamophobia') in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001. Increasingly, populist forces exploit voter anxieties to harness support for their exclusionary discourses against ethnic minorities and immigrants. In other instances, it suffices to be perceived as different and foreign to run the risk of aggression from 'bona fide' citizens. In general, attacks on perceived foreigners are on the increase, and the victims are far from ordinary and always predictably foreign; nor are the perpetrators always from the lower and uninformed ranks of the host communities.

In Russia, Africans are repeatedly attacked. A former South African ambassador to Moscow, the wife of another ambassador, and a minister counsellor were reportedly assaulted by groups of young men in separate incidents. The ambassador's wife was burnt with cigarettes on the chest and verbally abused. Even a Russian of Ghanaian origin, married and settled in Moscow, was viciously attacked by young men, who called him names and asked what a nigger was doing in Russia. In other cases, only timely intervention by the police has saved blacks from violent attacks. Such surges in attacks by ordinary Russians struggling to fulfil their consumer dreams are provoked by incomprehension on their part as to why blacks – supposedly 'the wretched of the earth' (thanks to the enigma of darkness that has fired many a creative fantasy among Europeans over the centuries – cf. Schipper 1990a, 1990b; February 1991; Bernal 1995; Magubane 2004) – should be much better off consumer-wise than whites in post-Communist Russia. Such attacks have caused concern among African and Commonwealth ambassadors in Moscow, who have raised the issue of the protection of diplomats with the Russian authorities. Russian President Vladimir Putin has noted the 'seriousness of the problem' and instructed his chief prosecutor to enact legislation that bans organisations seen to promote xenophobia, racism and fascism. Security services have also been instructed to be more visible in certain public places, and to act against perpetrators. The need to

police xenophobia and related intolerances among the police has also been raised (Bowling et al. 2004).

If xenophobia among Russian youth is partly explained by expectations of consumerism, elsewhere in Western Europe it is inflamed by anxieties that the hard-earned financial security of citizens could be eroded or endangered by invading immigrants from backward societies where extended families and undisciplined solidarities have always posed as liabilities to individuation and accumulation. Thus in France, the 2003 presidential elections witnessed how the ultra-rightwing Front National party and candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen defeated the incumbent socialist opposition leader Lionel Jospin, using virulent anti-immigration rhetoric. Only a tactical political alliance in the second round denied Le Pen and his reactionary agenda a presidential victory. President Jacques Chirac, who won the elections, promised 'strong' and 'resolute' action to resolve neglected problems, fight intolerance and roll back xenophobia, only in turn to incense French Muslims by passing a law that banned the overt display of religious symbols (headscarves, crucifixes, etc.) in public schools. By compelling Muslims to conform, Chirac was, in a way, stressing that although equally citizens in a cosmopolitan and tolerant France, Muslims are not exactly entitled to the same degree of cultural citizenship as the supposedly more indigenous French – the pure and uncontaminated breed, which Le Pen and the Front National claim to want to preserve by rejecting the traditional colonial rhetoric of *mission civilisatrice* and *assimilation culturelle* (Bihr 1992: 107–32; Bresson and Lionet 1994). The fact that in France and many other European states Muslims form the largest non-European minority is seen as worrisome, especially in the context of rising fundamentalisms and terrorisms. In the hierarchy of citizenship, non-white communities of citizens are required to harken to and follow decisions made by whites on matters of controversy or where white interests are challenged. A French citizenship narrowly confined to the Eurocentric illusion of the culturally homogeneous 'nation-state' has assumed the stature of a giant compressor of cultural differences (Bihr 1992: 107–32).

Whether in France, Britain or elsewhere in Europe, such illusions have thrived on hierarchies that can only reluctantly accommodate the sort of flexible mobility that accelerated globalisation implies.

Such hierarchies have been enshrined thanks to eighteenth-century European intellectual options celebrating progress as a dominant historical theme. In addition, the revival of Christianity and the rise of a virulent racism have provided the ideological force needed in playing down the achievements of other civilisations while glorifying that of Europe (Bernal 1995: 991–1008). At best cultural diversity is destroyed through assimilation; at worst, it is rejected outright through the rigid policing of nationality, citizenship and mobility (Bihr 1992: 123–30; Mac an Ghaill 1999: 82–100; Wood 2003a; Cairns 2003: 501–6). The extent to which the European idea of a 'nation-state' is feasible anywhere in the world is increasingly in question (Abdel-Malek 1967: 250–64; Seton-Watson 1977: 353; Smith 1986; Amin 1985; Cohen 1997: ix-x; Castles and Miller 1998: 4–10; Castles and Davidson 2000: 157; Wood 2003a: 376–7; Cairns 2003: 498–9). It is all the more so with globalisation, flexible mobility and the multiplication and cross-fertilisation of diasporas of various kinds (imperial, victim, labour, trading and cultural) (Cohen 1997: 1–29). Smith has termed the nation-state 'a Western mirage', which barely 10 per cent of so-called nation-states could boast of having effectively attained. As an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983), the nation-state has turned out to be a fictitious contrivance that marginalises its hetereogeneous fragments (Chatterjee 1993: 3–13).

Yet this mirage of nineteenth-century Europe is seen as the only political unit 'recognized and permitted' in 'the modern world' (Smith 1986: 230), despite the fact that it has tended to excel at breeding ultra-nationalism, chauvinism and racism (Fanon 1967a: 119–65). In reality, the majority (90 per cent) of so-called nation-states are fragmented – multinational and culturally heterogeneous. In certain cases, like Japan, where an ethnically homogeneous nation-state was assumed, ethnic minorities have raised their voices seeking recognition and representation (Siddle 2003). Others, like Somalia, have simply imploded from differences that the apparent unity assumed from a common language had led scholars of the nation-state to underestimate. Faced with the stubborn rigidity of the nation-state, many more supposedly homogenous unions have been breaking apart since the end of the bipolar world. This is indicative of the growing contestation of the Western monopoly over 'freedom of imagination', and the determination by the once colonised to think

of 'new forms of the modern community' and 'new forms of the modern state' (Chatterjee 1993: 13).

Thus, in Europe and elsewhere, mounting tensions fuelled by difference attest to the crises of the nation-state under sustained challenge by the flexible mobility of multinational labour (Bihr 1992: 107–32; Papastergiadis 2000). The European Union, which in May 2004 increased its membership to twenty-five, could be seen as a model for future integration. But the conviviality of inclusion remains to be negotiated with citizens of existing member states, whose mood is 'more of gloom' than 'one of elation', given the fact that the ten new members 'are much poorer'. The recent 'No' vote that carried the day against the European Union constitution in France and the Netherlands evidences the reticence of opportunity and privilege in the expanded EU. The citizens of the existing fifteen are thus concerned at the prospect of having to give more or receive less, because of their less prosperous and more demanding counterparts of central and eastern Europe. They worry about 'the threat of being swamped by immigrants from central and eastern Europe, who will either steal workers' jobs or leech tax-payer-financed benefits (or, confusingly, do both)' (*The Economist* 2004: 26–7).

Already, reactionary forces have been cashing in on migration as a whole, politically and ideologically, by posing as the legitimate champions of the interests of their unsettled or contaminated nationals, as we have seen in the case of the Front National of France. In the Netherlands, the List Pim Fortuyn Party has championed a similar xenophobic cause to that of France. Its assassinated leader, Pim Fortuyn, is best remembered for labelling Islam, and by implication Muslims, as 'backward'. His assertion that ' the Netherlands is full!' found favour with voters, who catapulted his party to second place in parliament, in addition to an outright majority in the Rotterdam municipality, noted for harbouring the greatest number of immigrants in the country. Right-wing parties with a xenophobic character enjoy a parliamentary presence in at least thirteen European Union states. In Britain, long before the war against terrorism was launched, Muslims had already 'emerged as a major target of official racial discourses and increased levels of popular violence', 'demonized as the main "enemy within", threatening the "British way of life"', especially following the controversy over Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*' (Mac

an Ghaill 1999: 76–7). This situation was only compounded by the 7 July 2005 bombing of the London Underground, which claimed more than fifty lives and injured over seven hundred, and which was blamed on four 'home-grown' Muslim terrorists. In the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the USA, 'Arabophobia' and 'Islamophobia' have increased, making the racial–religious–cultural identity of Arabs and Muslims grounds for abuse and attacks. In many states, victims of physical attacks have filed charges, but hostility remains strong, dangerous and surging. The attacks on foreigners in Russia, the growing influence of right-wing parties in Europe, and the physical attacks on Arabs/Muslims in the United States mark a growing shift to the right in politics, and an emphasis on the purity of belonging that can only heighten a worrying impatience with the very difference that the ongoing rhetoric of globalisation celebrates.

Immigration remains a contentious political issue. It is compounded by its perceived link with crime, and increasingly with terrorism since 11 September 2001. But these xenophobic manifestations ignore historical immigration patterns and their benefits for recipient states. Europe and North America have been destinations for migrants for centuries. The Atlantic slave trade, with its devastating effects on Africa, was beneficial to the industrialisation, economic development and prosperity of these continents. In later years, slave labour had been inimical to industrialisation, and was replaced with a system that favoured the free flow of labour and policies that encouraged migration. Under different conditions, but with the same economic benefits to recipient states, immigrants continued to populate these continents. The reconstruction of Western Europe in the aftermath of World War II required an enormous amount of labour. Temporary international migration within Europe itself, and over shorter distances, increased during this time. Labour recruitment by European states peaked during the 1960s, but this pattern was reversed during the next decade as the oil crisis brought recession in its wake. The Cold War added to international migration as thousands of uprooted Africans, Asians and Latinos sought refuge in the West. People displaced by proxy wars were additional to the refugees generated by national liberation struggles during the preceding decades, and later products of civil wars in Africa and Asia, and the conflagrations in

the Balkans and the Caucasus. Students from developing countries educated abroad who for one reason or another could not return to their home countries were encouraged to stay and work in the West. The education and skills of many refugees have boosted economic development, apart from diversifying the social and cultural character of recipient states (Cohen 1997; Mac an Ghaill 1999).

Unfortunately for the gendarmes of control, economic migrancy and refugee-specific movements have become intertwined, and many states are torn between compliance with international covenants regarding migrants and refugees, on the one hand, and citizen demands for stricter immigration and anti-crime measures, on the other. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the Eastern bloc have further lifted the barriers to free movement of people, with migration as an option reinforced by the economic restructuring and privatisation processes. One consequence has been an increase in claims of recognition and representation along ethnic lines. In times of economic decline, immigrants become the easiest and most obvious target for resentment, and are often projected by citizens and the authorities as the cause of social ills (Gunes-Ayata 1987: 243). Citizens of Western countries today are increasingly hostile to migration, especially as migrants are using various indirections to outstay their welcome. Linking migration to crime and terrorism is making certain types of mobility by certain kinds of people from certain kinds of places a most contentious political issue within many states.

Increasingly, while capital is enabled to 'seek competitive advantage and the most secure and largest returns by roaming the globe for cheap but efficient production locations' (Thompson 1999: 40), labour is denied the same privilege. According to Ted Fishman, 'Capital has traveled more freely across more borders over the last twenty years than it has at any time since the first wave of modern globalization, in 1870' (Fishman 2002: 34). The predicament of migrants and refugees in a world where globalisation seems to generate an obsession with boundaries and belonging is all too obvious. As Tanya Basok demonstrates in a study of Mexican seasonal workers in Canada, even when legal rights are extended to non-citizens, they are often unable to claim them because the social membership in local and national communities on which they depend to claim these rights is denied them (Basok

2004). In EU countries where 'the dominant accent and concern is the protection *from* rather than the protection of refugees and asylum seekers' (Thomas and Lee 1998: 2), no amount of integration appears sufficient to qualify immigrants for citizenship or to limit the powers of individual states as critical players in this area (Bhabha 1998). In the words of an immigrant in Germany, 'It doesn't matter if you've read Goethe, wear lederhosen and do a Bavarian dance, they'll still treat you as an immigrant' (cited in Thomas and Lee 1998: 2).

In Britain, India and lusophone Africa, for example, similar essentialist notions of culture, identity and belonging imply that not even encounters and marriage shall bring together what cultural and social geographies have put asunder. Persons who cultivate relationships across race, class and caste are treated with condescension; and so are their offspring, whose worlds are 'half-and-half' and who are not credited with more than 'half a life'. They feel like pawns in someone else's game, as if they were forced to live the lives of others and to bear identities imposed by heedless authorities. As 'half-and-halfs' they live in constant fear of catastrophe. They are not sure what this disaster is going to be, whether it is going to be local or worldwide, but the result is pervasive insecurity. This makes them overly sensitive to the need to prove themselves, often with an arrogance that attracts the envy of the 'full lives' (Naipaul 2001). Insecurity for those who do not quite belong is increasingly the case in Europe with the growing popularity of the extreme right and of anti-immigration and racial purity policies. Such threats of insecurity push the 'half-and-halfs' to look for a mythical essence in a 'homeland' elsewhere. In a world where frozen identities and notions of belonging are imposed upon even the most cosmopolitan of immigrants, one is bound to question the feasibility of the accelerated integration, interconnectedness and interdependence that the globalisation rhetoric promises.

Citizenship and Mobility in South Africa

As demonstrated throughout this book, in South Africa and Botswana, where the economies are relatively more prosperous than elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, xenophobia is rife against migrants from other African countries suffering economic downturns. In South Africa, anti-

immigrant sentiment is both strong and extremely widespread, cutting across virtually every socio-economic and demographic group. Black African foreigners – with whom very few South African nationals have any real direct contact or relationships – are particularly disliked by all South Africans, most of whom associate them with all sorts of ills (Danso and McDonald 2001: 115–17; Landau 2004a). The very inadequacy of direct contact makes it possible for the reality and humanity of African immigrants to be imagined and re-imagined to suit the negative images conjured up by their reluctant South African hosts. Black Africans are the most likely to be considered 'illegal' immigrants or aliens, even before they have crossed the borders (Peberdy 2001: 23–4), as 'South Africans are considerably less concerned with ridding the country of fairer skinned migrants' (Landau 2004a: 6). That this obsession with policing the borders of perceived opportunities is shared by government authorities, immigration officials, the media and general public indicates the extent to which black African migrants are collectively unwelcome.

As evidenced in Chapter 1, where the term *Makwerekwere* is discussed, black African immigrants are denied a name of their choice in South Africa, especially by South African blacks. This option to deny black African immigrants a name of their choice and dignity permits South African blacks to ensure continuity for the apartheid logic, whose preference was clearly for caricature and affirming a reluctance to share a common humanity and citizenship with strange creatures from beyond the borders of civilisation. Thus denied a name, and by extension humanity, it is little surprising that the most virulent prejudice is targeted at black African immigrants, despite their relatively small numbers. Labelled as a catalogue of negativities, they provide perfect justification for the state and citizens big and small to flex their muscle of control by keeping the barbarians at the fringes of opportunity, power and privilege.

However, the xenophobia or obsession with belonging currently evident in South Africa is a global phenomenon; and, much as it coincides with the end of apartheid and adoption of liberal democracy, it also coincides with the increasing celebration of global consumer capitalism. Under the current intensified globalisation far more are invited to the neoliberal consumer banquet than there are places available. This imposes the need for prioritisation in accordance with

global and local hierarchies informed by geography, races, cultures, classes and gender. The narrow regime of citizenship inspired by these hierarchies creates more dependent than it does independent citizens, but the ability of its rhetoric to co-opt even its greatest victims is phenomenal.

Thus, in the case of South Africa, even nationals fresh from the ghettoes, townships and Bantustans of the former apartheid dispensation, who are yet to graduate from subjection into citizenship in real terms, have been co-opted by the rhetoric of abundance and success under threat from unregulated immigration. Polarisations and tensions are exacerbated by the racialised lexicon, categorisation and registers of the apartheid era that have fed into the 'new' South Africa, which even progressive academics and the media are in no hurry to deconstruct and reconstruct (Pityana 2000; Hendricks 2004). One consequence, but by no means the only one, is that in May 2002 South Africans of Indian descent came under a scathing attack in a pop song by Mbongeni Ngema, a popular Zulu musician. Titled 'AmaNdiya', the controversial song, discussed at length below, claims to 'begin a constructive discussion that would lead to a true reconciliation between Indians and Africans', and accuses South African Indians of opportunism and of enriching themselves to the detriment of blacks. If the Indians are to be taken seriously as belonging to South Africa, they must display greater patriotism and stop straddling continents.

Again, the whites are treated as an exception, free to penetrate and harness the rest with traditional impunity, and thus the only truly global citizens. In other words, unbounded migration and inclusive cosmopolitanism are the sole prerogative of whiteness, with or without hard passports. In this way, elite capitalism becomes less of the problem, as black South Africans, for whom socio-economic citizenship remains an illusion, scapegoat black African immigrants and Indians in the face of relative white invulnerability. This raises questions about the meaning of the juridical-political citizenship guaranteed by the constitution of the new South Africa, where the social-economic and cultural cleavages of the apartheid era are yet to be undone in ways that are beneficial to the majority of the victims of apartheid.

The tightening of immigration conditions in the West, South Africa, Botswana and other vibrant centres of accumulation is clear evidence

that multinational labour is not given the same opportunity to globalise as multinational capital (Cohen 1997: 162–5). Although it must be added that not all labour gets confined in the same way, with the overwhelming black poor suffering the greatest discrimination from Western politicians and the authorities and citizens of the new South Africa. Thus, while even mediocre labour from the North usually finds its way to the South at Western salary rates, labour from the South is both devalued and confined by stiff immigration policies in the North, except for the most skilled, moneyed and privileged. Even in the South, governments are more accommodating to labour from the North. Current policies by African governments are to detect, detain and deport fellow Africans whose skills are found to be redundant in their host countries. South Africa and Botswana, whose policies and practices are the object of this study, are good cases in point (Akokpari 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Morris and Bouillon 2001; Crush 2001; Crush and McDonald 2001a, 2001b; Landau 2004a). Africans, the educated and skilled elite included, face stiff financial and bureaucratic hurdles in procuring visas to travel to other African countries. But the same visas are made readily available, at little or no cost, to Europeans and North Americans, who often deplete more than enhance the economies of the states they visit. Only the cream of the elite few, white and black, armed with additional hard passports from Western countries, can penetrate Africa with the privilege and ease of outsiders, much to the envy of colleagues and friends with only soft passports to show, and hardly any ill-gotten wealth to invest or launder. South Africa is far from interested in the free movement of black Africans, even when from the same Southern African Development Community of which it is a leading member (Oucho and Crush 2001). In this connection, it is difficult to take President Thabo Mbeki's rhetoric of inclusive cosmopolitanism ('I am an African', 'African Renaissance', 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it') seriously when his African National Congress (ANC) government is yet to give black Africans reason to believe in a new South Africa (Landau 2004a). It is equally difficult to take the initiative for an African Union seriously when African governments have not made genuine attempts to facilitate relations of interconnectedness and conviviality. These, and other factors discussed below, make globalisation only marginally beneficial to Africans, black Africans in particular.

Globalisation and the power it brings to its disciples at the periphery, it must be echoed, are limited to a minority. While global capitalism caters to the needs of the affluent and the investors, their counterparts in the underdeveloped South are few in number (McChesney 1998, 2001; Chomsky 1999; Bond 2001; Bello 2003; Kabeer 2005). Hence Amin's argument that, unlike in the industrialised West, where there is a good chance that globalisation could accelerate homogenisation of some kind – even if of consumer instincts only (Amin 1980: 31–2) – it is not the case in underdeveloped and heavily plundered Africa. Here, it is only by marginalising the masses that the power elite is able to afford the 'growing income' that encourages it to adopt Western models of consumption, the extension of which 'guarantees the profitability of the luxury production sector and strengthens the social, cultural, ideological and political integration of the privileged classes' (Amin 1980: 138). The argument is echoed by Sharp (1998), Jean and John Comaroff (1999b, 2000) and Peberdy (2001) in relation to post-apartheid South Africa, where the structural inequalities of apartheid are yet to be resolved in a way that benefits more than just a black, Indian or coloured elite by a state that has opted to play according to the diktats of global capitalism. Jean and John Comaroff see 'widespread evidence of an uneasy fusion of enfranchisement and exclusion, hope and hopelessness; of a radically widening chasm between rich and poor; of the effort to realize modern utopias by decidedly postmodern means'. The ANC government has toned down the rhetoric 'of an egalitarian socialist future, of work-for-all, of the welfare state envisioned in the Freedom Charter' of the days of anti-apartheid struggles, in favour of the free market and 'the perceived reality of global economic forces' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b: 19).

Thus, while a small but bustling black elite can today wallow in the conspicuous consumption of prized commodities such as fancy houses and cars, televisions, multimedia Internet connectivity, cellphones, jacuzzis, money-laundering partnerships, sumptuous deals and frequent-flyer privileges, most ordinary South Africans are still trapped in shacks, shanty towns, joblessness, poverty, uncertainty and the illusion of citizenship, and have to struggle even with black African immigrants for consumer crumbs. They can only marvel at the 'indecent speed and ... little visible exertion' with which the

black elite have come by their riches and prosperity. These inequities have given rise to the belief 'that it is only by magical means, by consuming others, that people may enrich themselves in these perplexing times'. One consequence is a resurgence in accusations of witchcraft and zombification, and the scapegoating of immigrants whose readiness, like zombies, to provide devalued labour is seen as compounding the disenchantment of the autochthonous populations in the face of growing uncertainties and insecurities in South Africa (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b: 22–6).

From further discussion below (Chapter 1), it is evident that South Africa needs do more than detect, detain and deport migrants to tackle crime, disease and joblessness. It needs to provide for greater equality and justice, so that ordinary South Africans can articulate citizenship more meaningfully without the need to scapegoat 'outsiders', however defined (Peberdy 2001; Landau 2004a). The South African state does not appear to have seriously problematised its liberal democratic and free-market options in a context where past injustices, still fresh in the minds of victims and perpetrators, are yearning for reparation through a democracy that protects the rights of the independent few without turning a blind eye to the rights of the historically dependent majority. This calls for a negotiated and participatory citizenship where individual interests are not celebrated to the point of greed and to the detriment of those who believe strongly in success as a collective pursuit, and in relationships of interconnectedness and conviviality with one another, regardless of race, nationality, class, culture or gender.

Citizenship and Mobility in Botswana

In neighbouring Botswana, where liberal democracy has been practised since independence in 1966, individuals and collectivities, while appreciating its merits, are also increasingly aware of its limitations, especially on matters of citizenship and mobility. Like South Africa, Botswana is an island of prosperity in an ocean of downturns and uncertainties. There, as well, attitudes are equally hardening towards foreigners, and, even among nationals, citizenship in the liberal democratic sense is no longer to be taken for granted. Chapter 2 examines rights

and entitlements in Botswana, and argues that while the rhetoric clearly emphasises democracy as an individual right, the reality is one that seeks to bridge individual and group rights, thereby making Botswana democracy far more complex than is often acknowledged by simplistic distinctions between ascribed and achieved forms of power (Comaroff and Roberts 1981). While legal provisions might promise citizenship to all in principle, the practice is one of inequality in citizenship among individuals and groups. There is a hierarchy of citizenship fostered by political, economic, social and cultural inequalities, such that it makes some individuals and groups much more able to articulate their rights than others. In addition, like South Africa, the tendency is for competing Botswana nationals to label and scapegoat foreigners, among whom similar hierarchies exist. Black African immigrants, denied a name of their choice just as in South Africa, are given the same *Makwerekwere* by Botswana nationals. Again, these hierarchies demonstrate not only the paradoxes of the globalisation process but also the limits of bounded notions of citizenship and belonging informed by the 'nation-state' and its hierarchies.

Gender, Domesticity, Citizenship and Mobility in Southern Africa

These hierarchies of citizenship and mobility in South Africa, Botswana and indeed the world are illustrated by a detailed overview of local and global trends in gender and domesticity, on the one hand (Chapter 3), and an account of the reality of citizen and non-citizen maids in Botswana, on the other (Chapters 4 and 5). The study demonstrates not only the reality of ultra-exploitation and dehumanisation of maids but also the coping strategies adopted by them. It is ironic that in countries or among races and classes where wealth is purportedly more abundant, maids are the most subjected to ruthless exploitation, regardless of whether they are citizens or migrants. Not even the fact of sharing intimate spaces seems to encourage more humane attitudes to maids among employers.

Much as employers and receiving states want to consume the whole person of the migrant worker as a commodity in a bizarre Dracula-like, blood-dripping sense of relish, they are rather reluctant

to invest the barest minimum in rights to ensure service in dignity.
There are thus legitimate grounds for being critical of immigration
legislation and employers that see migrant workers only as disem-
bedded units of labour, whose reproduction costs matter neither to
employers nor to the state (Anderson 2000: 108). Yet it is evident
that both state and employers in South Africa and Botswana profit
more from migrant workers than do migrant workers from them.
For one thing, the labour power of the migrant workers has been
produced without any outlay from the host state. Second, the fact
that domestic workers do not bring their children with them saves
their employers and the host state associated health and education
costs. Third, the fact that almost all of these workers regularly return
home and have no plans for settling permanently in Botswana or
South Africa means that they are unlikely to be long enough in
these host countries to qualify to be a drain on the economy in
their old age. Fourth, the fact that immigrants in South Africa and
Botswana are actively discouraged through hostile legislation and
attitudes from drawing on social provisions entails that they hardly
benefit from any taxes they may pay. In addition, migrant domestic
workers are often 'illegal' in both countries, making it a lot easier
for employers to underpay and exploit them with impunity. This is
now even more evident in South Africa, where a 2003 law requires
all employers of domestic workers to register them and pay a
minimum wage, as well as contribute to social security. Dissatisfied
with the law, South African employers are increasingly turning to
undocumented Zimbabweans, who are not entitled to a minimum
wage or to social security in South Africa (Mate 2005).

Following the distinction between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' as
informed by various hierarchies, Batswana or South African maids
as citizens may in general be more entitled than their Zimbabwean
counterparts; yet, even as citizens, they do not all feel the same
degree of citizenship, entitlement or belonging among themselves.
As discussed below, Batswana maids of Tswana origin identify more
strongly as citizens and feel more entitled than maids from the ethnic
minority groups, and are therefore more likely to find it belittling
and difficult working for fellow Batswana in general, and Batswana
from the ethnic minority groups in particular. It is in this context
that the hierarchy of maids, in which Batswana are labelled lazy and

the least hardworking compared to Zimbabwean maids and to maids from ethnic minority groups, should be understood.

Equally, if maids in general are vulnerable, Zimbabwean maids, by virtue of being total outsiders, often illegal and from a country of sharp downturns and political turmoil, are particularly so. Even when human rights NGOs are interested in the plight of maids, their mandates are often too narrowly nation-state bound, such that only national citizens in the narrow sense of the term qualify for whatever salvation or mitigation they bring. Immigrant Zimbabwean maids are invariably at the margins of such privileges targeting the normally underprivileged. While Batswana maids are most likely to be running to the police and related institutions to highlight their plight, Zimbabweans are most likely to be running away from them. As in South Africa, employers know this only too well, which might in part explain why they tend to prefer Zimbabweans to Batswana maids, and to use and abuse them with impunity. It is a lot easier to exploit someone whose rights and humanity have been quarantined than to exploit a fellow citizen, no matter how subjected economically, socially and culturally they happen to be. For some employers, illegal Zimbabwean maids, the risks of recruiting them notwithstanding, are much more attractive since they are more flexible and unlikely to complain too much if asked to combine the services of a maid with those of a childcare provider, at more or less the same pay.

As discussed in Chapter 5, their predicaments and structural confines notwithstanding, maids often display fascinating agency that makes it inadequate simply to see them as passive victims. Thus, far from invariably losing or winning, maids juggle structures and agency in a delicate mixture of frustration and mitigated gratification to ensure personal survival and sustenance for relatives, friends and communities. This is by no means to suggest that the power of structures of exclusion may be ignored or minimised, but rather to emphasise the need to investigate such power and how those subjected by structures seek to cope or even to resist them.

Whether in Botswana or South Africa, the Zimbawean maids discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 are an integral part of what one could term the *Makwerekwere* diaspora, which both countries perceive essentially as a problem and liability for their real or imagined suc-

cess story. As 'mobile Africa[ns]' (de Bruijn et al. 2001), black African immigrants are mass-produced by the collapsing economies of most African states. Some of them, like Nigeria's, Côte d'Ivoire's, Cameroon's, Zimbabwe's and Zambia's, were once vibrant, as Frantz Fanon notes of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Senegal in the early 1960s. But even then they incited nationals to violence against foreigners while calling for opportunities to be confined to citizens (Fanon 1967a: 125–6). Today, with changed fortunes, the need to keep hope alive sends nationals of these countries out to more successful and better organised sites of accumulation, ready to devalue their labour and even their humanity in order to support families, friends and communities back home.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC – formerly Zaire) is a good case in point. Despite its legendary reserves of natural resources and its having produced one of the richest men in the world – President Mobutu – the DRC has not had governments responsible enough to harness the resources and keep its citizens at home and happy (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 141–252). Under Mobutu, corruption and exploitation were so rife that getting involved in the *dollarised* diamond economy as an alternative to collapsed state structures seemed to create more problems than it solved among villagers who had come to believe in the power of money in determining who was who in the country. Some went even further in their dismissal of the illusion of citizenship with claims that 'God only recognizes the rich' (De Boeck 1998: 793). Fired by the ambition of recognition by state and God and driven by desperation to tame the wild, unpredictable and ambivalent diamonds and dollars, the young Zairean males at the heart of this economy were ready to sacrifice (by means of sorcery and otherwise) their work power and productivity, their youth, strength and beauty, their fertility and sexual prowess, and their friends or family members. But the more sacrifices they made, the poorer they seemed to become. They were thus thrown back on a state crippled by corruption, dysfunction and impunity (De Boeck 1998: 789–99). The war to oust Mobutu and the factional fighting that followed Kabila's presidency and death, have only worsened the situation, further pushing young men and women to migrate in quest of greener pastures (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 171–252). Also seeking safe havens for ill-gotten wealth were the well-off, well-connected elite of fallen or threatened regimes, mostly welcomed as investment opportunities by South Africa. Similar situations

in other francophone African countries had similar outcomes, with South Africa increasingly viewed as an eldorado of opportunity that offered education, employment and other activities comparable to the developed industrial countries (Bouillon 2001a: 39–59). The outflow of people armed similarly with hope from anglophone (Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Kenya) and lusophone (Angola, Mozambique) Africa, heading in the direction of South Africa and Botswana, is just as strong.

While being a very restricted club in reality, global capitalism is attracting its fair share of opportunists and gatecrashers from among the sidestepped, not least in Africa. Today 'the Nigerian-based letter scam' and the Cameroonian 'feymenia' are wreaking havoc all over the business world, making as many victims as there are men and women hungry enough for 'a quick buck' (Elliot 1999: 23; Apter 1999; Malaquais 2001). The majority of Africans who would dearly love to seek greener pastures through flexible mobility, if given the opportunity (de Bruijn et al. 2001), are not as smart or as unethical as the Nigerian '4–1–9' or the Cameroonian 'feymen', who offer host countries in the West and Southern Africa reason to scapegoat migrants and tighten immigration laws. This majority seldom come close to escaping the misery imposed on them by the entrenchment of boundaries, except of course through stubborn and risky oscillating cross-border trading of the type increasingly undertaken by women in Southern Africa (Dodson 1998; Mate 2005). Thus immobilised by draconian laws and by hostility from citizens of prospering economies, most Africans have been reduced to being a dumping ground for obsolete Western technologies and consumer products. Misery reduces them to second- or third-rate consumers of what the rest of the world is dying to dump. Such leftovers include outdated consumer items, toxic chemicals, small arms, infected beef, poisoned chicken and genetically modified foods. Devalued in their citizenship and humanity as they are, they often have little choice but to poison and devalue themselves further.

Through the stringent control on the mobility of labour, high-lighted above and detailed in the chapters that follow, the book argues that globalisation is intensifying the divisions between 'citizens' and 'subjects' in consumption and entitlements. First, this is the case between the North and the South, and then within different countries of the North and the South, along lines of race, geography, class and gender. The overall effect is that nothing is too old or too

worthless to be consumed or to be the object of fierce claims of entitlement, and that everyone is deluded into thinking that they do not need to enter the consumer market or the hierarchy of citizenship at the same level to qualify as bona fide consumers and citizens. Hence, even the most subjected of nationals, with hardly any citizenship in real terms, are just as keen to keep out even the most skilled of immigrants, with rationalisations of all kinds, which range from curbing crime to protecting jobs. To protect the illusion of citizenship and belonging, global capitalism creates markets and opportunities for rejects even among the dead and the forgotten. Slum dwellers may not afford first- or second-rate consumption, but they can scavenge the rubbish heaps of rich residential areas for leftovers, disposable tins, plastic containers, dumped household effects, and other rejected consumer items, which they recycle to keep hope alive. And they are ready to go to war against intruding and undeserving others, to protect their refuse dumps. Similarly, villagers wait for urban-based relatives to hand down to them what they have tired of consuming in the cities, battered or intact, and would challenge anybody seeking to endanger such a supply line. Nothing is too old or too used to be utilised, just as no illusion of citizenship is too trivial to provoke a war over entitlements. Globalisation thus provides for the endless recycling of consumer products and sterile notions of citizenship, and consequently of the poverty, misery and voicelessness of the majorities of the world, North and South. While actively producing citizens and subjects, globalisation succeeds in entrenching boundaries through the anxieties and uncertainties it creates in citizens and subjects, nationals and migrants. Citizens are made to believe that their best chance in life rests with reinforcing the distinction between them and the subjected, while subjects are made to blame migrants for their failures. This scenario is illustrated in this book on how mobility and citizenship play themselves out in South Africa and Botswana in a context of flows and closures.

Beyond Boundaries

The reality of closures makes boundaries part and parcel of our globalised world. We are born into borders, and struggle for or against them our entire lives. These boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are

political, social, cultural and, above all, material. How well we succeed in claiming and realising citizenship – global, regional, national or otherwise – and in what form depends very much on how we are able to negotiate away the boundaries of exclusion of which we are victims. But, given our basic tendency towards sterile accumulation, claiming rights often entails denying rights. However, the degree to which we enjoy the rights we claim (if and when we achieve them) very much depends on how successfully we are able to keep firm the boundaries we create or inherit. Sometimes we renegotiate inclusion and exclusion in order to maintain or increase the privileges of citizenship. In other words, no boundaries, no matter how taken for granted, are permanent. This is a source of both constant hope and constant worry, as it keeps alive the tensions of inclusion and exclusion, from the most local to the most global levels. Because it is impossible for everyone to belong everywhere to the same degree as everyone else, ideologies of containment and contestation are the order of the day, even as we continue to propagate the virtues of globalisation and a global citizenry (Mayo 2004).

In the face of these struggles, most would agree, not always for the same reasons, on the need to guarantee, enshrine, institutionalise or provide juridico–political provisions and protection for our perceived fundamental rights as human beings. In this connection, the rule of law becomes essential for every society and for inter-community and international relations. In other words, political freedom and citizenship are part of what makes up our modern humanity. In certain settings and circumstances, a human is immediately defined and perceived as an 'autonomous' individual with rights enshrined in the constitution and protected, in principle, by the state and its institutions. If these rights are threatened by the state in such settings, individuals at different levels of society are expected, again in principle, to be able to mobilise themselves 'as individuals linked by common interests', to defend their freedoms.

In those settings, few would argue, in principle, against the claims of rights by all and sundry as individuals. But, as hinted above and developed below, not everyone who claims political rights is likely to have them, even when these are clearly articulated and legally guaranteed. Nor do political rights necessarily imply cultural, social and economic rights as well. And even if they did, these other rights

would still have to earn value in real terms, as within the realm of neoliberalism availability is hardly synonymous with affordability. The American liberal democratic system, which champions the dominant model in the current global order, offers some interesting examples of how human beings, assumed to be autonomous individuals by law, find themselves bargaining away their political, cultural and economic freedoms in all sorts of ways under pressure from the neoliberal emphasis on 'profit over people' (Chomsky 1999).

This reality makes the process of being an autonomous individual more than a simple matter of providing for citizenship and rights in the constitution. We are born human, but how we defend and enhance our personhood depends very much on the enabling process of individuation, and the concessions individuation is able to negotiate for itself from mitigating factors such as society, politics, economics and culture. But to be totally autonomous individuals is impossible even for the privileged few, although the elusive pursuit of self-fulfilment can occasion various attempts by some to diminish the humanity of others, as evidenced in this book. This makes of life in all its translations and interpretations a bazaar to which many are drawn but few rewarded because of boundaries of various kinds. Those attracted by the rhetoric of rights and values informed by various ideologies and philosophies have found themselves confronted by myriad ways in which the rights and values are bargained away, leaving them with only the illusion of individuality and citizenship most of the time.

To go beyond this reality of boundaries, we need a democracy that is not only sensitive to the rights of individuals and collectivities but that desists from the blind pursuit of independence to the exclusion of interdependence. It should be a democracy where citizenship is defined and realised by inclusion not exclusion. It is in this connection that former US President Bill Clinton has urged 'all of us … to develop a truly global consciousness about what our responsibilities to each other are and what our relationships are to be'. Only in this way, he argues, can the rich and poor 'spread the benefits and shrink the burdens' of globalisation (Clinton 2001). A world in which boundaries are minimised and creativity and diversity celebrated requires a crusade against the arrogance and ignorance that insensitive power, privilege or comfort display vis-à-vis

the predicaments of those at the margins. There is the need, at local, regional and global levels, for enforceable corrective measures informed by the predicaments of the marginalised 'others', such as the *Makwerekwere*, whose experiences of exclusion in South Africa and Botswana are the subject matter of this book.

Mobility, Citizenship and Xenophobia in South Africa

Combing the world for opportunities has historically been the privilege of whites, who have been encouraged by their imperial governments to settle foreign territories, and who have always benefited from fellow whites on the ground, from colonial officers to missionaries through businessmen, journalists and scholars (Cohen 1997: 66–81). Without necessarily being a homogeneous collectivity, whites have always managed to tame their differences in the interest of the economic, cultural and political hegemonies of the West vis-à-vis the rest (Chinweizu 1987). Thus, in South Africa for example, the Dutch who first landed in the Cape in 1652 actively encouraged immigration by whites from Europe and practically allowed them free access to the territory. The price for European domestication was the systematic insulation and subjection of the indigenous populations by freezing migration from elsewhere, except for slaves or labour zombies, and on terms defined exclusively by the interests of the settler whites (February 1991: 12–39; Cohen 1997: 59–62; Elbourne 2003: 380–88). While 'virtually anyone with a white skin was welcome', non-whites, particularly from Africa, 'were unwelcome', and, when it suited 'apartheid's pernicious "homelands" strategy of co-optation', the state allowed entry to selected black skilled immigrants and 'honorary whites' from Asia (Crush and McDonald 2001a: 2).

Even when the need for devalued labour imposed upon whiteness the necessity of immigration by non-Europeans, migrant labour was heavily confined to life in the mines and hostels for men, and to the whims and caprices of farm and domestic service for women. None was allowed to feel at home by bringing their family with them (Crush and McDonald 2001a: 7–8). This was particularly difficult for foreign migrant labourers in the mines, as they were 'encapsulated in massive single-sex barracks and forced to work in degrading and inhumane conditions' (Crush and Tshitereke 2001: 50). 'Not one of the thousands of migrant workers from neighbouring countries who spent (and often lost) their lives on South Africa's mines and farms ever qualified for permanent residence in the country', as the system of contract labour compelled migrants to 'return home at the end of each contract and at the end of their working days' (Crush and McDonald 2001a: 3). Often they returned home 'physically maimed or crippled with lung disease' (Crush and Tshitereke 2001: 50). Recruited as labour zombies, they slaved away in ultra-subjection under the shadow of segregation, unable to claim belonging in South Africa, and often with little power to articulate meaningful citizenship back home.

The fact that employers in other sectors were and still are denied the right to migrant labour from neighbouring countries enjoyed by the South African mines 'has led, perhaps inevitably, to greatly increased usage of undocumented or "illegal" foreign labor' by these other employers (Crush and Tshitereke 2001: 49–52), as well as to some of the excesses of citizenship catalogued below. Policies of selective migration have not changed much with the end of apartheid and the advent of an African National Congress (ANC) black majority liberal democratic government in 1994. Indeed, some would argue that attitudes to migration have stayed the same or worsened. The country's history of selective immigration has affected the way even South African blacks have tended to perceive migration as the natural right of whites, and to expect non-whites, blacks in particular, to stay in their own countries (Morris 2001a: 9–17, 2001b; Bouillon 2001a: 21–39; Landau 2004a: 5–7). As depicted in Zola Maseko's short film *The Foreigner*, blacks from the rest of Africa are desperately seeking economic freedom, a struggle against hunger that respects no borders, at the risk of ignorance and xenophobic attacks by citizens who are pleased to declare: 'I got the dog's wallet. He is dead.' Even when

allowed in, migrants from Africa have been treated as autonomous units of production without ties of kinship. Discrimination against gender and households remains a feature of immigration policy that at best masks substantive and systematic inequalities with superficial gender-neutral language (Dodson 2001: 74–5).

The accelerated flow of information, images of availability, people and goods facilitated by globalization has inevitably accelerated the desire of those at the margins to migrate while bolstering the instinct to police the borders of opportunity (de Bruijn et al. 2001; Cohen 1997: 155–76). 'In the mid-1990s Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 35 to 40 million of the 80 to 120 million estimated immigrants globally', and also 'for the largest number of refugees in the world' (Bouillon 2001a: 22), a clear testament of ferment in the continent's Eurocentric heritage of exclusionary citizenship. Far from articulating inclusion, narrow policies of nation-building have pushed Southern African governments to see in cross-border movements a critical challenge, and to seek ways of taming the flow of large and growing numbers of both legal (documented) and illegal (undocumented) migrants. Although statistics on the magnitude of migration are elusive – especially given the fact that most migrants are illegal, and given that in certain cases statistics are dramatically inflated for reasons of political expediency – governments are increasingly worried about the migration of people between and within states (Akokpari 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Crush and McDonald 2001b; Bouillon 2001a; Morris 2001b; Landau 2004a).

The end of apartheid coincided with intensified globalization to open up new opportunities for migration to South Africa, especially by Africans north of the Limpopo, long excluded or confined to migration to serve as labour zombies in the mines. It is estimated that between April 1994, when the first liberal democratic elections brought the ANC to power, and December 1996, at least 5 million mostly illegal immigrants entered South Africa from other African countries far and near (Akokpari 1999b: 79; Bouillon 2001a: 23–6). 'Other estimates put the number of foreign migrants (legal and illegal) between 500,000–850,000' (Landau 2004a: 5). These estimates, however, are 'extremely arbitrary' and often dramatically inflated by authorities (and in some instances research institutions) for political expediency. One consequence is that they inflame xenophobic tendencies among South Africans persuaded into feeling swamped

by foreigners (Bouillon 2001a: 26; Landau 2004a: 5–15; Gotz and Landau 2004: 14). According to Crush and McDonald (2000), legal migration from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – comprising countries that served South African mines as 'labour reserves' under apartheid – has grown almost tenfold since 1990. South Africa records over 4 million visitors yearly from the SADC countries alone, a trend that influences both attitudes and policies (see McDonald and Crush 2000; Landau 2004a).

The formal re-entry of South Africa into the world economy in the 1990s brought about the increased migration of people from outside the SADC region, most without legal documents. As Robin Cohen has noted, 'In the age of globalisation, unexpected people turn up in the most unexpected places' (Cohen 1997: 162), which in the case of post-apartheid South Africa has brought about 'new ethnic constellations' of migrant communities from all over Africa (Crush and McDonald 2000). In certain cases, whole parts of cities (e.g. Hillbrow in Johannesburg) have been appropriated by black African migrants – derogatorily referred to as *Makwerekwere* (Mpe 2001; Sichone 2001; Bouillon 2001a; Morris 2001b). The new migrants largely come in as long-distance traders, asylum-seekers, students, professionals, entrepreneurs, traditional healers and pastors of mostly Pentecostal churches.

That the new and ever surging waves of migration are linked to the accelerated globalization of consumer capitalism is all too obvious (Papastergiadis 2000; Castles and Miller 1998; Castles and Davidson 2000). Although formal unemployment rates in South Africa are staggeringly high – 'statistics … range from just over 30% to as high as 42% (although actual unemployment is considered higher)'[1] – they do not appear to act as a deterrent to foreign workers, who are frequently more educated and better qualified than their South African black counterparts, in whom apartheid invested too little to be useful beyond service and servitude. The new emigrants are often ready to settle for less than their market value and for more exploitation than their 'liberated' South African counterparts can stomach (Akokpari 2000: 78–86; Bouillon 2001a; Morris 2001b). This is made possible by employers' preferences for cheaper non-South African labour in almost all economic fields, including the construction and agricultural sectors. Migrants appear to work less in sectors commensurate with their skills and qualifications, and are more willing to take up short

contracts with few benefits (if any), limited security and meagre pay. They are also more helpless in the face of the residual racism of whites reluctant to let go of the good old days of the impunity of abuse.

The population of female oscillating migrants from neighbouring countries is on the rise, and appears to be taking over from male migrants (Dodson 1998, 2001: 80; Mate 2005), creating, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, an even greater devaluation of labour in the domestic service economy of South Africa and Botswana. Also common are refugees fleeing cultural or political persecution from other African countries, or economic refugees seeking better opportunities. In the 1980s about 350,000 refugees from Mozambique alone entered South Africa, and few have returned even with a more stable situation back home (Crush and McDonald 2000; Akokpari 1999a, 1999b, 2000). This reality, together with relentless campaigning by human rights advocacy groups, has forced post-apartheid South Africa to abandon the state's initial indifference to refugees, albeit reluctantly (Handmaker 2001; Gotz and Landau 2004; Gotz 2004).

Under apartheid, international migration in Southern Africa was strictly disciplined and dominated by the whims and caprice of racialised capitalism. It largely involved the harvesting of labour by South Africa from 'labour reserves' such as Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and Mozambique to work in South African mines (Wilson 1972; Sachikonye 1998; Manghezi 1998; Crush and Tshitereke 2001; Maloka 2004). In the post-apartheid era, the government of South Africa, threatened by the prospect of large numbers of migrants beginning to feel at home in their host country, has adopted draconian immigration policies. Severe as they may seem, such policies are not peculiar to the South African state, even if the ANC government should have more reason than most others to be compassionate with fellow Africans, who were supportive during the years of struggle during exile, and especially given President Mbeki's rhetoric of Africanness and African renaissance (Landau 2004a: 6).

> Most African states do not generally promote immigration and though they may invite tourists and foreign investors, they do not generally welcome immigrants. Indeed roadblocks and checkpoints constantly remind citizens that even mobility within national borders, which is their constitutional right, is only grudgingly tolerated by the postcolonial state. (Sichone 2001: 2)

Stiff visa regulations for fellow Africans are readily dropped for Westerners by African states that behave as though every mobile African is a political subversive or economic refugee. In the case of South Africa, mass arrests and deportations increased from 44,225 in 1988 to 180,713 in 1996, with over 700,000, mostly Mozambicans and Zimbabweans, deported (Bouillon 2001a: 30–32). Home Affairs Department statistics indicate that 41,207 Zimbabweans alone were repatriated in the first nine months of 2003, up from 17,000 for all of 2001, and in 2002 a total of 151,653 non-citizens were deported, numbers which are unlikely to decrease in the near future despite protests from human rights groups (Landau 2004a: 13–14). Migrants are precluded from accessing low-cost housing subsidies, although a recent high court case has ruled that permanent residents are now eligible for social grants that are the entitlement of citizens. From panhandlers to professors, migrants are feeling the verbal and sometimes physical disadvantages of flexible mobility as labour (Crush and McDonald 2000; Morris and Bouillon 2001; Landau 2004a).

Academics and students are not spared the humiliation of stiff and often impossible controls, and many have lost out on vital conferences, teaching engagements and research meetings, just because of the reluctance by states to recognise and facilitate mobility for their own scholars. In South Africa, international students encounter stringent visa and study permit regulations. According to Ramphele, writing as vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, the situation is made worse by the fact that all foreigners are increasingly being perceived as actual or potential 'illegal immigrants'. In this climate, immigration policies affecting international students are indiscriminately and unnecessarily punitive. Application for a study permit may only be made from outside South Africa, and prospective students are not allowed to enter the country without a valid permit. The failure of universities to negotiate better immigration deals for their international students is perceived by foreign students in South African universities as collusion with the Department of Home Affairs (Ramphele 1999: 11–12). Apart from stringent immigration controls, the subsidisation of fees for international students by the South African government has become a critical issue now that the government has embarked on 'massification', the opening up of higher education opportunities to a wider section of the South

African population. At issue is the extent to which the government should continue to subsidise students from other Southern African countries when some of its own citizens cannot afford to pay full fees because of grinding poverty (see Hendricks 2004).

Given the magnitude of flow of migrant labour to its borders, South Africa has opted to puncture a 1995 draft protocol on free movement of persons in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region (Oucho and Crush 2001: 142–55), preferring instead to conclude separate agreements with individual SADC member countries to regulate migration (cf. Crush and Tshitereke 2001: 53–8). As a case in point, the Mozambican and South African labour ministers, Mario Sevene and Mebatsisi Mdadlana respectively, signed a memorandum of cooperation in Maputo covering such areas as migrant labour, job creation, professional training and social security. The agreement also laid the institutional framework for shared studies and research into labour matters, and employment statistics. After the signing ceremony, Sevene declared: 'with this agreement the conditions have been established for better performance by our institutions, particularly the two labour ministries, in solving the problems that affect Mozambican workers in South Africa, particularly those in the mining industry and in the agricultural sector.' Sevene stressed that the current agreement did not replace any of the previous labour agreements between the two countries, such as the 1964 agreement on the recruitment of mine labour, and the agreement between Rand Mutual Insurance of South Africa and the Mozambican National Social Security Institute on the payment of pensions. He described the new agreement as 'a working instrument' which would contribute effectively to solving workers' problems, taking into account the socio-economic conjuncture in the two countries. He said it reflected the concern of both governments to protect the rights of Mozambican workers, particularly in the fields of training and social security, and responded to the desire of South African companies to recruit more Mozambicans.

According to official statistics, over 75,000 Mozambicans currently work in South Africa legally, around 60,000 of them in the mines; yet Mozambicans working illegally in South Africa, mostly on farms, vastly outnumber those who are legally employed. Talking to reporters, Snuki Zikalala of the South African Department of Labour

said the memorandum was intended to try to find a solution to the employment of illegal immigrants, as well as to the abuse and repatriation of Mozambicans. Among concerns were allegations that South African employers force Mozambicans to undergo compulsory HIV/AIDS testing as a prerequisite for obtaining employment. The head of the Refugee Research Programme at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg, Herman de Valle, estimated that there are about 220,000 Mozambicans working (legally and illegally) in Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces alone.[2] A more historically grounded analysis of policies and the impact of labour migration from Mozambique demonstrates how South Africa has traditionally favoured racialised capitalism to the detriment of rural communities, especially in Southern Mozambique (Manghezi 1998).

The Aliens Control Act 1991 (amended in 1995 and 1996), which currently governs all aspects of immigration in South Africa, has been described as an archaic piece of apartheid legislation, at odds with international human rights norms and the new South African constitution (Peberdy 2001: 17; Dodson 2001: 73; Klaaren and Ramji 2001).[3] To some, the immigration policy is a mere piece of legislation from the dark ages of segregation and apartheid, and deeply racist and anti-Semitic in character with roots in the 1937 Act intended to exclude German Jews fleeing Nazi persecution from coming to South Africa (Crush 1997; Crush and McDonald 2001a). Part of the reluctance to welcome Jews to South Africa and the neighbouring British Protectorate of Bechuanaland, for example, was the fear that once naturalised they were likely to leave the territory again for Europe, and, as stated in a telegram from the British secretary of state to the High Commissioner in Cape Town on 18 September 1920, experience had shown that the 'presence of colonially naturalized persons in Europe or elsewhere gives rise to considerable anomalies and inconvenience'.[4] As Crush observes, 'the subsequent amendments of the act were almost always designed to erect higher boundaries, to place greater controls on people's mobility, to give the police greater powers, to circumscribe the legal rights of "aliens" and extend the range of people to which the act applied' (Crush 1997; see also Klaaren and Ramji 2001: 36–45; Crush and Tshitereke 2001: 52–6).

Not only has the government declared its lack of interest in receiving unskilled or semi-skilled immigrants, it also expects employers

wishing to recruit immigrants 'to justify why the position cannot be filled by South African citizens or permanent residents'. Even skilled foreigners are only welcome temporarily, and must apply for immigration or work permits from outside South Africa. Tougher entry procedures (e.g. higher visa application fees, restriction of multiple entry visas, requirements to show bank statements and other forms of documentation) are sometimes introduced for citizens of certain countries, Mozambique and Zimbabwe for example. Such restrictions may result instead in more 'border jumpers' among those denied formal entry (Peberdy 2001: 17–22), in more employers securing the cheap labour of such undocumented or illegal 'border jumpers' (Crush and Tshitereke 2001: 52–8), and in greater exploitation and impunity by employers.

That the emphasis is likely to remain on control and exclusion of non-white immigration was evidenced in April 2004 when the minister of home affairs, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, proceeded to publish in the *Government Gazette* a highly repressive set of immigration regulations, further tightening conditions for Chinese, Indians and Africans. And that government responses would continue to contradict and conflict at different levels was also revealed by the fact that President Thabo Mbeki took Buthelezi to court for not consulting the cabinet prior to publication. However, the fact that Buthelezi remained home affairs minister from 1994 to April 2004, despite his 'exclusivist and draconian approach' to immigration and migration, can only mean complacency on the part of the ANC government, even if his views on immigration were 'never … officially endorsed by the ANC government'. As Crush and McDonald note, 'progressive immigration reform' was ultimately 'held hostage to the broader politics of … appeasement' for Buthelezi and his conservative Inkatha Freedom Party (Crush and McDonald 2001a: 9). The ANC has not done enough to show that it does not share Buthelezi's unapologetically protectionist and restrictive discourses on immigration (Crush and Tshitereke 2001: 64–6). On the other hand, given that the ANC has an interest in keeping the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) happy, it is highly unlikely that Buthelezi acted single-handedly for ten years or that his ANC deputies Chales Nqakula and Nosiviwe Mapisa are less hardline. It remains to be seen how sympathetic the ANC becomes to immigrants

following President Mbeki's decision to drop Buthelezi from his cabinet, following the ANC's impressive victory at the April 2004 general elections, a victory that gives it a free hand to rewrite the constitution.

Accordingly, the 'South Africa First' policy is taking centre stage in migration discourses. Already weakened by too many concessions to neoliberalism, and faced with growing expectations that it will 'redistribute the cake to newly enfranchised citizens, not allow others in to take an undeserved slice', the ANC government has demonstrated 'little appetite for immigration at all', especially for black Africans most likely to compete for the pieces or crumbs of cake that come the way of the majority black population (Crush and McDonald 2001: 4). Despite the ANC's talk of multiculturalism through diversity, inclusivity and 'African Renaissance', official attitudes have stayed faithful to the logic of containment and exclusion. They often resort to 'a series of conceptual conflations and unsubstantiated assertions' to 'caricature migrants and immigrants' (Peberdy 2001: 16–26). Official and popular discourses in South Africa are dominated by the question of how many undocumented migrants there are in the country, and the pressing need to be rid of them (Landau 2004a; Gotz and Landau 2004). The idea has become embedded in the press and official discourses that there are between 4 and 11 million 'illegals' in South Africa, a figure which some researchers dismiss as having absolutely no basis in fact, mainly because of the obvious point that counting undocumented immigrants is a futile enterprise. As some argue, the danger is that in the absence of reliable statistics, officials, politicians and the general public exaggerate the numbers to bolster anti-immigration sentiments.[5] There are widespread myths that 'illegals' take jobs, commit crimes, depress wages, consume resources, spread AIDS, and smuggle arms and drugs (Landau 2004a; Gotz and Landau 2004).

In these discourses, only certain voices are heard, and immigrants have limited channels by which to articulate their grievances or contest their treatment in the country. Noteworthy exceptions are the Human Rights Commission and NGOs, who provide migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees a voice to present counter-arguments as to why they think they should be allowed to live and work in South Africa, and in certain cases such interventions have resulted

in high court rulings in favour of immigrants (Gotz and Landau 2004). A number of questions merit consideration. Why do 'aliens' go to South Africa? What do they want? How are they treated? Do they intend to stay? What do they think they contribute to the new South Africa? Would they stay if offered the chance? Crush suggests the need to differentiate the migrants according to age, gender, skill level, resources, economic activity, length of residence, intended length of stay, place of residence, motivations, perceptions, and so on, to develop new definitions and policies consistent with a human rights approach to migration, to recognise the internal complexity of the community of migrants, and to give due recognition and reward to long-term so-called 'illegal' residents (Crush 1997: 4).[6]

Attitudes towards *Makwerekwere* in South Africa

Although xenophobia and its ills seem to infect just about all societies experiencing rapid social change, not every foreigner, outsider or stranger is a target. Instead, nationals, citizens or locals are very careful in choosing who qualifies to be treated as the inferior and undeserving 'Other', and such choices depend on the hierarchies of humanity informed by race, nationality, culture, class and gender. In South Africa, where the national population is estimated at 44.8 million (79 per cent black, 9.6 per cent white, 9.4 per cent mixed and around 2 per cent of Indian origin), 'anti-immigrant sentiment is not only strong ... it is extremely widespread', and cuts across virtually every socioeconomic and demographic group. Surveyed in 1997 and 1998, only 6 and 2 per cent respectively were tolerant towards immigration of any kind. Black African foreigners – with whom very few South African nationals have a 'great deal of contact' (4 per cent in 1997 and 6 per cent in 1998) – are negatively perceived by nearly all South Africans, 75 per cent of whom associate them with all sorts of ills (Danso and McDonald 2001: 115–17). They are the most likely to be considered 'illegal' immigrants or aliens, even before they have crossed the borders.

The use of the term 'alien' is unfortunate, as it suggests that migrants do not belong, that they 'are extraterrestrial – not of this earth (let alone this country) – but [it] also implies difference,

strangeness, and otherness' (Peberdy 2001: 23–4). The rhetoric of closure shared by government authorities, immigration officials, the media and general public suggests that black African migrants are collectively unwelcome. Even though research has repeatedly demonstrated 'a pervasively high and deepening level of hostility and intolerance toward outsiders, and particularly Africans from elsewhere', the former minister of home affairs still felt the current Aliens Control Act, which emphasises control and exclusion, is 'too soft' (Crush and McDonald 2001a: 6–7) on the '[a]pproximately 90% of foreign persons who are in RSA with fraudulent documents' and 'are involved in other crimes as well' (Landau 2004a: 13). To demonstrate that these 'illegals' clearly have little to offer, South African blacks, perhaps reminiscent of the Boers who named the local black communities 'hottentots' to denote 'stutterers', deny black African migrants an intelligible language. All they claim to hear is 'gibberish' – a 'barbaric' form of 'stuttering' – hence the tendency to classify them as *Makwerekwere*, among other onomatopoeic references to the strange ways they speak (Bouillon 2001b: 113–22).

Makwerekwere means different things in different contexts, but as used in South Africa it means not only a black person who cannot demonstrate mastery of local South African languages but also one who hails from a country assumed to be economically and culturally backward in relation to South Africa. With reference to civilisation, the *Makwerekwere* would qualify as the 'homo caudatus', 'tail-men', 'cavemen', 'primitives', 'savages', 'barbarians' or 'hottentots' of modern times, those who inspired these nomenclatures in southern Africa attempting to graduate from naked savagery into the realm of citizenship. In terms of skin pigmentation, the racial hierarchy of humanity under apartheid comes into play, as *Makwerekwere* are usually believed to be the darkest of the dark-skinned, and to be less enlightened even when more educated than the lighter-skinned South African blacks. *Makwerekwere* are also thought to come from distant locations in the remotest corners of the 'Heart of Darkness' north of the Limpopo, about which South Africans in their modernity know little, and are generally not interested to discover, except to continue the 'civilising mission' of harkening to 'The Call of the Dark Continent' (Walker 1911) begun by European missionaries and colonialists in Southern Africa in the seventeenth century (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997).

It is hardly surprising therefore that, 'despite their small numbers, some of the most virulent prejudice has been directed against black Africans' from countries north of the Limpopo by mostly South African blacks (Morris 2001b: 70; Landau 2004a). According to surveys, only 25–30 per cent of black South Africans are consistently more generous in attitude and approach to *Makwerekwere* (Peberdy 2001: 30). Once in a while, a *Makwerekwere* country might distinguish itself positively through its football prowess – a game South African blacks adore – but, in general, news of them is about the darker side of humanity: civil wars, genocides, AIDS, dictatorships, corruption, crime and other forms of savagery, which do not become a civilised state with civilised nationals. *Makwerekwere* hail from the sorts of places no South African in his or her right mind would want to penetrate without being fortified with bottles of mineral water, mosquito repellant creams and extra-thick condoms. In short, *Makwerekwere* and modernisation are like a clash of night and day. Suddenly having to face an influx of primitive darkness in the urban spaces of the new South Africa could be quite disturbing, indeed a nightmare from the past, for South African blacks eager to prove their modernity and harvest the benefits of full citizenship for long mystified by whiteness. These dangers posed by the darkness of unharnessed Africa – that is, Africa devoid of a history of settler European modernity – demonstrate the need to police the borders of South Africa, and keep the 'barbarians' or 'stutterers' at bay with tough immigration policies and even tougher attitudes, just as under apartheid.

The fact that the new, purportedly liberal, South African constitution has little room for the rights of migrants and immigrants is most telling. Citizenship has been defined narrowly around the rights, entitlement and interests of nationals, and although it might be celebrated by those who have traditionally benefited since the days of apartheid, it is a disappointment to most *Makwerekwere* from beyond the borders whose labour reserves were exploited with impunity and ingratitude by the architects of apartheid in their quest for racialised citizenship and modernity. Few *Makwerekwere* who slaved away in the apartheid mines as undocumented migrants have been granted citizenship in the new South Africa, where 'only nationals matter'. The current xenophobic tendencies targeting *Makwerekwere* are clearly an outcome of a narrowly nation-state-based citizenship.

With the exception of the occasional intervention of the Human Rights Commission, the failure of the South African constitution and authorities to protect the rights of non-citizens is clearly at variance with all claims that South Africa is building a 'culture of human rights'. By limiting entitlements only to national citizens, the South African state has shifted the emphasis 'to keeping out those who do not belong and preventing anyone else from joining, especially those who have the "wrong citizenship"' (Peperdy 2001: 28–9) and the 'wrong gender' (Dodson 2001; Mate 2005). With their 'wrong citizenship' and 'wrong gender' from the wastelands of the 'Heart of Darkness', the *Makwerekwere* are more likely to pass for non-citizens in South Africa than whites or Asians. Harris (2001) summarises the reasons for such negative perceptions towards black Africans to include the fact that they compete for scarce resources and public services such as schools and medical care, infrastructure and land, housing and informal trading opportunities, and with citizens who are already living in poverty and below the breadline. Furthermore, they compete with residents and citizens for insufficient job opportunities, and offer their labour at conditions below those prescribed by law or the applicable bargaining agreements. Sichone (2001: 10) argues that the desperate economic position of most *Makwerekwere* means that they accept lower wages and undo the bitter struggles of South African trade unions, by working as scab labour. In this respect, COSATU presented memoranda demanding the government 'be more strict on foreigners coming into our border', taking away 'our jobs', and 'hampering our economy'. They called on the minister of home affairs to 'repatriate all foreigners!', by whom they meant *Makwerekwere* (Bhengu 2002: 20).

Accusing *Makwerekwere* of stealing economic opportunities is not confined to the formal economy. In every major South African city, the informal sector is increasingly dichotomized and polarized between 'local' and 'foreign' hawkers, with the former organizing campaigns, marches and boycotts against the operations of the latter. The general feeling, as portrayed in articles and reports in the press, is that 'illegal immigrants/aliens' are trespassing on the informal sector and are therefore trampling on the livelihoods of huge numbers of unemployed black South African citizens (Danso and McDonald 2001; Bouillon 2001a: 25–6; Morris 2001b: 85). In

Cape Town, protests and marches against migrant traders have on several occasions ended in violent looting, mugging and vandalism of stalls owned and operated by *Makwerekwere*. Local hawkers accuse their *Makwerekwere* counterparts of stealing not just their customers but their economic viability, as captured by Zola Maseko in *The Foreigner*. The blame is extended to the government for allegedly not doing enough to regulate the 'influx' of foreigners into the country, and the informal sector in particular. *Makwerekwere* hawkers, however, contend they are the pioneers of the informal trade in South Africa, claiming that very little of the sort existed before their arrival. They, the *Makwerekwere*, introduced informal trade as an alternative to lucrative business. Such claims hardly do them any good, and only result in further senseless attitudes and attacks (Simone 2001: 165–8). Ethiopian refugee Haille Shamebo was a victim of the increasing xenophobic attacks in Pretoria. He was chased down the street, punched in the face and kicked in the ribs by a South African man, who hurled verbal abuse at him as well. Comparatively speaking, his experience was 'mild'. The previous week a Sudanese refugee, Adan Akot, was admitted to the Pretoria Academic Hospital, paralysed and suffering memory loss, having been thrown from a taxi and assaulted by fellow passengers. Prior to the attack, Akot had been beaten with an iron bar on a train to Johannesburg (Bhengu 2002; see also Morris 2001a: 10–11, 2001b). In Johannesburg – the elusive metropolis (Mbembe and Nuttall 2004) with the ambition to become a 'world class, African City' (Simone 2001, 2004; Landau 2004a) – the plight of the *Makwerekwere* has attracted the attention of researchers, some of whom have suggested in a recent publication how local government ought to respond (Landau 2004b).

The fact that some *Makwerekwere* are sometimes involved in criminal activities has only compounded the negative attitudes and stereotypes circulating about African immigrants as a whole. *Makwerekwere* are blamed for weakening the state by corrupting officials, fraudulently acquiring documents and undeserved rights, and tarnishing the image of their host country locally and abroad. One of the critical issues in cross-border migration is that of transnational crime. In South Africa, criminal activities such as drug dealing and banking fraud have been linked to the arrival of Nigerians and other *Makwerekwere* (Sichone 2001: 2; Bouillon 2001a: 57–8; Morris 2001b: 75–8; Simone

2004). Stories like the following are a common feature in the South African press. A Nigerian man Walter Onubugu (42), together with his wife Linda (27), allegedly used the infamous '4–1–9' scam to con a Middle Eastern businessman out of thousands of US dollars.[7] Onugubu allegedly posed as a bank manager, and offered his victim a fake cheque as part-payment for a non-existent investment deal. During the arrest police seized R12,000 in cash, false bank business cards, a false South African passport, a fax machine, a computer and documents related to the alleged scam. (The 4–1–9 scams are named after the section of the Nigerian criminal code dealing with fraud.) In such scams, fraudsters generally circulate faxes or emails, offering investors high returns on non-existent schemes. Often the fraudsters pose as bank officials, or as wives, sons or daughters of fallen dictators who are widely known to have enriched themselves fraudulently, and ask their victims to provide bank details so that huge sums of money can be transferred into their accounts (Apter 1999).[8] In these accusations regarding criminal *Makwerekwere*, the South African state, institutions and people are presented as passive victims of invading and often undeserving barbarians from north of the Limpopo (Morris 2001b; Landau 2004a, 2004b; Simone 2004). If only these invaders could be contained, all would be well for authentic citizens of the new South Africa to fulfil their expectations of modernity (cf. Mbembe and Nuttall 2004). Few citizens are ready to accommodate studies highlighting the significant contributions being made by *Makwerekwere* to the South African economy and entrepreneurial culture (Kadima 2001: 98–108; Simone 2001, 2004; Landau 2004b).

Makwerekwere as Fiction

The construction of the *Makwerekwere* and of the boundaries between South Africans as 'deserving citizens' and *Makwerekwere* as 'undeserving outsiders' have been skilfully articulated by the late Phaswane Mpe, a black South African who used to lecture at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in his novel *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*. The novel is basically written in two voices. The first celebrates the official rhetoric, internalised by ordinary black South Africans, of having graduated into citizenship, only for this to be endangered by

the influx of *Makwerekwere* with little but trouble to offer. The second voice is more measured, and constantly tries to mitigate the tendency to scapegoat and stereotype *Makwerekwere*, who most of the time are not as guilty as they are painted. This novel is very well informed, and often more subtle and nuanced than some of the surveys which have sought to capture the relationship between South Africans and *Makwerekwere*. We gather from it that negative attitudes are not towards foreigners as a homogenous entity but, rather, towards black Africa in general, and certain countries in particular. The hierarchy of humanity inherited from apartheid South Africa is replayed, with white South Africans at the helm as superiors, black South Africans in the middle as superior inferiors, and the *Makwerekwere* as the inferior scum of humanity. The coloureds and Indians are not part of the picture in a big way, as this seems a clash between those who have learnt to stutter no more, and those still embedded in stuttering and therefore a challenge to the black's ability to harness modernity. Black South Africans thus come across as having basically two attitudes towards foreigners: they either look up to them as articulate and accomplished or look down on them as stuttering and depleting. The articulate and accomplished white migrants are presumed to bring opportunities, the stuttering and depleting *Makwerekwere* compound the insecurities and uncertainties in South African lives.

According to Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*, the first thing held against *Makwerekwere* in Johannesburg is to have turned Hillbrow into 'a menacing monster, so threatening to its neighbours like Berea and downtown Johannesburg, that big, forward-looking companies were beginning to desert the inner city, heading for the northern suburbs such as Sandton' (Mpe 2001: 3). Equally, the *Makwerekwere* have come along to poison South Africa with strange diseases such as AIDS. Their women readily hang on to the arms of impressionable South African men, whom they dazzle with 'sugar-coated kisses that … [are] sure to destroy any man' (Mpe 2001: 3). In Hillbrow,

> AIDS, according to popular understanding, was caused by foreign germs that travelled down from the central and western parts of Africa. More specifically, certain newspaper articles attributed the source of the virus that caused AIDS to a species called the Green Monkey, which people in some parts of West Africa were said to eat as meat, thereby contracting the disease.

South Africans who had migrated from the provinces to Hillbrow 'deduced from such media reports that AIDS' travel route into Johannesburg was through *Makwerekwere*; and Hillbrow was the sanctuary in which *Makwerekwere* basked' (Mpe 2001: 3–4).

There are black South Africans who feel strongly that *Makwerekwere* 'should remain in their own countries and try to sort out the problems of these respective countries, rather than fleeing them', since South Africa has 'too many problems of its own', and in any case 'cannot be expected to solve all the problems of Africa'. Others would agree, but argue that this is 'no excuse for ostracising the innocent' (Mpe 2001: 20). Negative views about African migrants are particularly dangerous when held by the police. We gather from the novel how policemen arrest *Makwerekwere*, '[d]rive them around Hillbrow for infinite periods of time', saying: 'See it for the last time, bastards' (Mpe 2001: 21).

> When the poor souls pleaded, the uniformed men would ask if they could make their pleas more visible. They did. Cousin and his colleagues received oceans of rands and cents from these unfortunates, who found very little to motivate them to agree to be sent back home. Some womenfolk bought their temporary freedom to roam the Hillbrow streets by dispensing under-waist bliss. They preferred to eke out a living here. Yes, they were ostracised, they agreed; but when the police left them in peace, they could gather a thing or two to send back to their families at home. The foreign exchange rate really did favour them.…
>
> The *Makwerekwere* had also learned a trick or two of their own. Get a member of the police, or a sympathetic South African companion, to help you organise a false identity document – for a nominal fee. Or, set up a love relationship of sorts with someone from the city. It was better, so the word went around, to be so related to one who worked in the kitchens, as white suburbs are often referred to – the reason being that most black people eking out a living there were women doing kitchen and other household work (if, that is, one discounted the lovers and prostitutes engaged in bedroom work with the wealthy masters and madams). Police bothered you less often in the suburbs, because those were not regarded as high crime zones. And the security personnel who guarded those kitchens were often more preoccupied with chasing real criminals than people who simply came there to visit their friends and loved ones. (Mpe 2001: 21–2)

As we gather from the novel, it is outright dishonest to blame the woes of post-apartheid South Africa entirely on *Makwerekwere*, who are often 'too much in need of sanctuary ... to risk attracting the attention of police and security services'. Unlike South African blacks, *Makwerekwere* are only too aware of how limited their recourse to legal defence is if they are caught. 'The police could detain or deport them without allowing them any trial at all. Even the Department of Home Affairs ... [is] not sympathetic to their cause' and few seem to care that the treatment of *Makwerekwere* by the police, and the lack of sympathy from the influential Department of Home Affairs, run 'contrary to the human rights clauses detailed in the new constitution of the country' (Mpe 2001: 23). For these reasons, as citizens, South Africans commit gruesome crimes that few *Makwerekwere* would ever contemplate. And there are 'chilling stories' of

> white madams raped and gagged by their South African garden boys – that is, black men to whom they could not afford to show any respect; of white men found hanging like washing waiting to dry, because they refused their so-called boys and girls permission to go home to bury a close relative; of whites killed simply because they were wealthy and tried to protect their wealth when robbers came to redistribute it; of whites hacked to death simply because they were white, an embodiment of racial segregation and black impoverishment, irrespective of their political allegiances and economic affiliations. (Mpe 2001: 22–3)

And white criminals who sell drugs are just as 'happy to see *Makwerekwere* serving as the butt of the vicious criticism and hostility' from those who insist that *they* are the only legitimate children of South Africa. Meanwhile, there are whites who sell liquor and glue to street children, who mostly own the shops in Hillbrow that specialise in such commodities, and who take attention away from themselves through *Makwerekwere* as a 'convenient scapegoat for everything that goes wrong in people's lives' (Mpe 2001: 102–18).

If South Africa is overflowing with *Makwerekwere* seeking greener pastures, it is partly in response to the welcoming gestures of the first president of the new South Africa, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, 'unlike his predecessors who erected deadly electric wire fences around the boundaries of South Africa trying to keep out the

barbarians from Mozambique Zaire Nigeria Congo Ivory Coast Zimbabwe Angola Zambia from all over Africa fleeing their war-torn countries populated with starvation like Ethiopia flashing across' (Mpe 2001: 26). But, once in South Africa, the *Makwerekwere* are seldom welcome to stay, as South African media, television especially, drum up xenophobic sentiments with images of *Makwerekwere* 'every now and then ... stretching their legs and spreading like pumpkin plants filling every corner of our city and turning each patch into a Hillbrow coming to take our jobs in the new democratic rainbowism of African Renaissance that threatened the future of the locals Bafana Bafana fans' (Mpe 2001: 26–7). While they may show vocal support for black non-South African football teams, whenever they played against European clubs, some local Bafana Bafana fans demonstrate 'glaringly ... prejudice towards black foreigners the rest of the time', snatching every opportunity 'to complain about the crime and grime in Hillbrow', for which they hold such foreigners responsible – 'not just for the physical decay of the place, but the moral decay' as well. Black and white South Africans tend to be agreed that 'Hillbrow had been just fine until those Nigerians came in here with all their drug dealing' (Mpe 2001: 17, 118).

It is ironic, as Mpe notes through one of his characters, that South Africans from rural villages, who have come to the cities 'in search of education and work', should join the bandwagon of those scapegoating the *Makwerekwere*, when they are little different themselves:

> Many of the *Makwerekwere* you accuse of this and that are no dif-
> ferent to us – sojourners, here in search of green pastures. They are
> lecturers and students of Wits, Rand Afrikaans University and Tech-
> nikons around Jo'burg; professionals taking up posts that locals are
> hardly qualified to fill. A number of them can be found selling fruit
> and vegetables in the streets, along with many locals – so how can
> they take our jobs? Of course there are some who do drug traffick-
> ing. But when the locals are prepared to lap at them like starved
> dogs, what do you expect the struggling immigrants will do? …
>
> And while we're so busy blaming them for all our sins, hadn't we
> better also admit that quite a large percentage of our home relatives
> who get killed in Hillbrow, are in fact killed by other relatives and
> friends – people who bring their home grudges with them to
> Jo'burg. That's what makes Hillbrow so corrupt....

You would want to add that some *Makwerekwere* were fleeing their war-torn countries to seek sanctuary here in our country, in the same way that many South Africans were forced into exile in Zambia, Zaire, Nigeria and other African and Non-African countries during the Apartheid era. You would be reminded of the many writers, politicians, social workers and lecturers, and the endless sting of South Africans hanging and jumping form their ninth floor prison cells because the agents of the Apartheid government wanted them to do so. The latter was called learning to fly. You would also remember the grisly details, draped in tears, from the testimonies of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, of South African policemen enjoying their beer and braai while black dissenters roasted alongside their roasted meat in the heat of a summer day – stuff that would be called surrealism or magic realism or some other strange realism were it simply told or written as a piece of fiction. And of course you could not forget all those black agents of the Apartheid State, playing their various roles with a mastery that confounded the minds of even the State itself. Black police officers contorting bribes from fellow blacks accused of political and other dissents. Black police and security forces hitting fellow blacks mercilessly for crimes that were often not committed... *Teaching the kaffir a lesson or two*, as they said. (Mpe 2001: 18–19)

Most of the issues captured by Phaswane Mpe in *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* have also been raised in surveys and studies. Social scientists and novelists alike find that South Africa's public culture has become increasingly xenophobic (Mattes et al. 1999; Morris and Bouillon 2001; Landau 2004a, 2004b). Politicians often make unsubstantiated and inflammatory statements that the 'deluge' of *Makwerekwere* is responsible for the current crime wave, rising unemployment, or even the spread of diseases (Crush 1997; Morris 2001b). Seen as hailing from 'an impoverished and unhealthy wasteland where health measures have ceased to be operative', *Makwerekwere* are considered a threat to the physical and moral health of the nation, and 'should therefore be kept out of South Africa' (Peberdy 2001: 24). As the unfounded perception that migrants are responsible for a variety of social ills grows, *Makwerekwere* have increasingly become the target of abuse by South African citizens, the police, the army, the Department of Home Affairs and even the media. Dark-skinned refugees and asylum-seekers with distinctive features from far-away countries are especially targeted for abuse (Bouillon 2001a, 2001b;

Morris 2001b; Sichone 2001; Landau 2004b). According to Sichone (2001: 1), migrants are subject to more state regulation and open to victimization by 'other owners of the means of violence'. Xenophobia is not just an attitude of dislike but is often accompanied by violence (Kollapen 1999). Xenophobia is racist in its application; victims are predominantly black and are targeted for their very blackness by a society where skin colour has always served as an excuse for whole catalogues of discriminatory policies and practices. You are repeatedly made to 'Mind Your Colour' (February 1991), until you are entirely minded by colour. Individuals are often assumed to be '*Makwerekwere*' on the basis that they 'look foreign' or are 'too dark' to be entitled to South Africa, and 'Police are supposedly able to identify foreign Africans by their accents, hairstyles or dressing styles, or, in the case of Mozambicans, vaccination scars on the left front arm' (Bouillon 2001a: 38). In the frenzy to root out foreigners, they also victimize and arrest their own citizens.

Since the beginnings of the Portuguese, Dutch and English transatlantic slave trade in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, blackness has been a curse (Bernal 1995: 999), even in the 'Heart of Darkness', where the darker one is the less qualified for citizenship one is assumed to be (Mamdani 1996; Elbourne 2003). The tendency has been to see 'the best qualified black ... as worse than the worst white', thereby justifying black dehumanisation and inhumane treatment (Bernal 1995: 999–1000). Curiously, even in post-apartheid South Africa, salvation for blacks seems eternally linked to how successfully they are able to 'try for white', 'play white' or 'pass for white', in the manner of the coloureds under apartheid. Lightening one's darkness with chemicals and enlightenment might help in aspirations for 'honorary whiteness' (Fanon 1967a: 166–99, 1967b; Fonlon 1967: 20), but it cannot guarantee against mistakes being made by fussy policemen and authorities with a cultured nose for appearances. This would explain why black South African citizens are sometimes mistaken for the dark, invading barbarians or stutterers who must be confined to the fringes. To the police and authorities, South African modernity, like its identities, is all about appearances. The fact of being unable to afford even the tokenism of abstract citizenship makes the *Makwerekwere* all too vulnerable to 'excessive criminalisation' and 'primitivisation'. Not only can they not vote or

benefit from social services, *Makwerekwere* are particularly vulnerable to mistreatment by the police, who know that non-citizens 'are less likely to lay a complaint, and, if they do, they are not likely to be given a fair hearing' (Morris 2001b: 86; Landau 2004a: 10–13), especially as blacks, who are largely seen as deportable criminals even by the minister of home affairs and the forces of law and order (Landau 2004a: 13–14).

Makwerekwere and the Excesses of Citizenship

With inspiration from the apartheid years, South Africans sometimes subject *Makwerekwere* to the excesses of abuse, exploitation and dehumanising treatment on the basis that they have the 'wrong colour' to invest in citizenship, and no 'passes'/'documents' to be bona fide subjects. Sometimes their passports are simply too soft to be granted visas or permits, because South African authorities see them more as liabilities than as assets. The rights of undocumented *Makwerekwere* are particularly severely circumscribed, as they are reduced to living clandestinely and being exploited with virtual impunity by locals enjoying the prerogatives of citizenship (Bouillon 2001a: 38–9; Peberdy 2001: 19–23; Landau 2004a: 11–13). The South African economy, especially its farming, mining, security and construction sectors, relies heavily on the cheap and easily exploitable labour of undocumented migrants, mostly from Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland. Undocumented labourers on farms work for a pittance, on average about R5 per day. Because of the illegal immigrant status of these workers, farmers exercise tremendous power over them, much like – or even worse than – under apartheid. Human Rights Watch has reported interviews with a number of child labourers, some as young as 14, who claim physical abuse by farmers is commonplace. Police rarely investigate or prosecute farmers for such abuses, and in some instances contribute instead to the exploitation of farm workers by deporting them without pay on the request of the farmers. In one instance, three young farm labourers described how they had been kept on a white-owned farm against their will, without accommodation, and were regularly beaten as an inducement to work harder. After two weeks, they were

finally paid at the rate of R5 (then US $1) per day, only to have their money stolen by the foreman, who then called the police to have them deported.[9]

South Africa has been deporting an increasing number of *Makwerekwere* each year since the ANC came to power in 1994, reaching close to 200,000 people in 1997, 1998 and 1999 (Klaaren and Ramji 2001: 40). It is ironic that the worst nightmares of the *Makwerekwere* should come at the dawn of democracy, as South Africa celebrates the end of racial segregation and the beginning of an alleged citizenship for all (Peberdy 2001; Klaaren and Ramji 2001). It is equally unfortunate that authorities resort to unreliable criteria like skin complexion, accent or inoculation marks to identify suspected undocumented migrants (Sichone 2001: 4; Bouillon 2001a: 38; Peberdy 2001: 21), when past experiences with apartheid should have informed them better. The privileging of appearance is carried to ridiculous proportions. People are arrested for being 'too black', having a 'foreign name' or, in one case, walking 'like a Mozambican', humiliations which illegal white migrants are unlikely to suffer, since it is assumed that illegality is the stock-in-trade of the dark-skinned of the dark continent. The darker one is, the more accursed by criminality one is perceived to be! Ironically, many of those arrested, up to 20 per cent of the total in some areas, are actually South African citizens or lawful residents, who often have to spend several days in detention attempting to convince officials of their legitimate status as 'black' citizens. In certain cases, 'Even South Africans have sometimes been detained or even deported because they spoke Zulu and the arresting officer was Sotho' (Sichone 2001: 3; see also Akokpari 1999a, 1999b, 2000).

Assault and theft by officials during the arrest process seem disturbingly common, and people have reportedly been beaten up and robbed of valuables by members of the army or police, who in urban areas like Johannesburg often suggest a 'fine' or a bribe as an alternative to arrest and deportation (Klaaren and Ramji 2001: 36–7; Landau 2004a).[10] In one instance, the police volunteered to drive a *Makwerekwere* to a bank automated teller machine (ATM) to withdraw the money for a bribe, while two others were forced to pay for a beer-drinking party and to give the arresting officers additional 'beer money' before being released.[11] The 'often-tenuous legal status

and/or inadequate identity documents' of *Makwerekwere*, 'coupled with a need to carry cash', has led a significant number of inner-city police officers to see them as 'mobile-ATMs' (Landau 2004a: 10). Such networks of corruption and extortion 'are doing little to make cities safer for South Africans', largely because the *Makwerekwere* they target 'are disproportionately the victims, not the perpetrators, of crimes', and 'those intent on staying in South Africa can capitalize on opportunities to buy their way out of police stations, detention facilities, and the trains meant to be taking them "home"' (Landau 2004a: 14). It would appear that although the corrupt officials are 'citizens' in principle and by law, they still somehow feel inadequate in reality, to the point of having to depend materially on 'illegal' and subjected *Makwerekwere*, even if some would see it merely as taking advantage of the misery of illegal and detested immigrants.

After arrest, suspected undocumented *Makwerekwere* are brought to a place of detention where they often wait for long periods before being deported. In certain cases, 'the speedy expulsion of immigrants' has prevented individuals from establishing their lawful status and violated their rights to due process of law. In March 2000, during 'Operation Crackdown', the police not only disallowed arrested persons from going home to collect their valid immigration documents, but ripped up the valid documents of others, apparently on instructions from above (Klaaren and Ramji 2001: 36–7). Some *Makwerekwere* have reportedly been unlawfully detained for more than four months, and in a particular instant for more than a year. Migrants awaiting deportation are held at a private detention facil-ity called Lindela, as well as at prisons, police stations and army bases. Conditions of detention are usually far below internationally accepted minimum standards. Places of detention are often severely overcrowded, meals are insufficient, bedding dirty and vermin-ridden, and detainees lack regular access to washing facilities. At Pollsmoor prison, migrants in detention often share cells with criminal suspects, who frequently rob them of their possessions and clothes. Rapes have also been reported (Klaaren and Ramji 2001: 36–45).[12]

Numerous human rights abuses of detained migrants have been reported at the private Lindela facility near Johannesburg, operated on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs by the Dyambu Trust (Landau 2004a: 13–14). Most troubling, ten people claimed to have

been beaten up by security personnel in three separate incidents in
the week prior to the visit, and had medical reports documenting
their injuries. A young man from Lesotho had been brutally beaten
over a period of several hours after complaining to security guards
about the theft of his music tapes by security personnel. Although
the Lindela management was aware of some of these incidents, no
internal investigation appeared to have been instituted. The number
of beds at Lindela was significantly lower than the average number
of persons detained there. Detainees also described many instances
of corruption involving officials of the Department of Home Affairs
at the facility, and complained about the quality of the food, the
lack of phone access, and rude and violent behaviour by the guards
(Akokpari 1999a: 8; Klaaren and Ramji 2001: 36–45).

Repatriation to their home country is the final chapter in the
journey of humiliation for most arrested *Makwerekwere*. This is done to
make their stay uncomfortable, thereby facilitating their retreat home
and discouraging other potential 'illegal' immigrants (Akokpari 1999a,
2000: 85–8; Klaaren and Ramji 2001). In some areas, deportees are
not allowed to gather what often are substantial belongings before
deportation, thus virtually guaranteeing that they will either seek
to return or curse South Africa forever. Several deportees have bad
memories of the twelve-hour train ride to Mozambique, ranging
from verbal and physical abuse by police guards to payment of a
substantial bribe to escape deportation by being allowed to jump
from the moving train (Landau 2004a: 11–14).[13]

Over the years, Human Rights Watch has occasionally interviewed
refugees and asylum-seekers assaulted by the South African police. In
one case, a Ugandan refugee had been arrested in Cape Town and
violently thrown into a police van, then subjected to abusive language
and rough handling as she was transferred from one police station to
another. A Nigerian refugee hawker in Cape Town was injured in
scuffles with the police, in which he was manhandled and verbally
abused for insisting that a police officer should first identify himself.
An asylum-seeker – Jean-Pierre Kanyangwa of Burundi – was arrested
in Cape Town on 2 June 1997, and died from a ruptured spleen on
his way to the hospital after being beaten by police officers.[14]

Makwerekwere hawkers, often asylum applicants with temporary
residence permits, have repeatedly been the targets of violent protests

and other forms of intimidation as local hawkers attempt to 'clean the streets of foreigners'. The African Chamber of Hawkers and Independent Businessmen, for instance, reportedly conducts campaigns against foreigners (Harris 2001). And during violent protests in Johannesburg, black South African traders and ordinary criminals routinely brutalise *Makwerekwere* hawkers and steal their goods. The police have been criticised by human rights advocates for doing little to respond to the complaints of hawkers targeted for abuse (Landau 2004a, 2004b). In many areas around Johannesburg – Kempton Park and Germiston, for example – *Makwerekwere* hawkers have had to abandon their trade after repeated attacks and looting incidents in which the police failed in their duty under both international and domestic law to protect all persons. In the face of police indifference, a large community of Somali asylum-seekers were forced to abandon their trade and confined themselves to their overcrowded and impoverished compound, only coming out in a large group, in order to protect themselves from attacks by hostile citizens.[15]

Makwerekwere repeatedly interviewed in the various studies quoted here (Morris and Bouillon 2001) describe how they have been verbally abused by South Africans, whose first question upon meeting them is, 'When are you going back?', making some feel insulted to be black and foreign (Bouillon 2001b: 124). In some cases, verbal abuse gives way to physical attacks. In the township of Alexandra near Johannesburg, for example, Malawian, Zimbabwean and Mozambican immigrants were physically assaulted over a period of several weeks in January 1995, as armed gangs identified suspected undocumented *Makwerekwere* and marched them to the police station in an attempt to 'clean' the township of foreigners. Similar but less extensive incidents continue to occur regularly, and *Makwerekwere* receive little protection from the police and other institutions. The xenophobic climate and aversion to blackness have only exacerbated their harassment.[16]

To explain xenophobia in South Africa, Harris (2001) has sought to answer a number of questions, among which are the following. How can xenophobia be understood? Why, in post-apartheid South Africa, has xenophobia flourished? What social forces render foreigners, particularly black foreigners, vulnerable to discrimination and violence? According to Harris, a plausible explanation can be found in the historical experiences of racism under apartheid. He

adds that an important explanation for xenophobia also rests in the relative 'newness' of the phenomenon. Harris states that xenophobia corresponds closely to the emergence of the 'new' South Africa in 1994 and runs parallel to the country's process of transition from apartheid to democracy. He offers arguments to the effect that the end of apartheid has generated heightened expectations, only to disappoint ordinary South Africans with the slow pace of delivery, which has bred discontent, indignation and a propensity to scapegoat (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b; Tshitereke 1999). It is in this context that foreign black Africans are portrayed as a major threat to the successful crystallisation of black citizenship in the new South Africa (Morris 1998: 1117; 2001b: 70). Like Peberdy (2001), Harris (2001) suggests that while patriotism and pride are the positive attributes of the new political order of nation-building, xenophobia and chauvin-ism are the unacceptable dimensions, as South Africans struggle to define the legitimacy of citizenship and belonging.

While Harris might have a point about the role of the hierarchies of humanity inherited from apartheid and the high expectations after-wards, no account of xenophobia can be complete without placing South Africa in a global context. The xenophobia or obsession with belonging currently evident in South Africa is a global phenomenon, and, much as it coincides with the end of apartheid and adoption of liberal democracy, it also accompanies the increasing celebration of global consumer capitalism (Mac an Ghaill 1999: 82–100; Cohen 1997: 155–76; Comaroff and Comaroff 2000; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000). Under the current intensified globalisation, far more are invited to the neoliberal consumer banquet than there are places to accommodate them. The need for prioritisation thus imposes itself, demanding that the interests of a global elite shall first be satisfied, then those of citizens in accordance with the hierarchies of nations, races, classes and gender. Nationals whose citizenship is mitigated by race, class or gender shall also be given priority access to consumer crumbs, and since crumbs are not infinite in supply and non-citizens seeking greener pastures are often more qualified, more competitive and more prone to exploitation, it is in the interest of such underprivileged nationals to defend rigidly the policing of their borders. In this way they seek, through xenophobia and intolerance, to ensure that no crumbs, to which they believe they are rightly

entitled, shall nourish the ambitions of the 'undeserving' subjects streaming in from beyond the frontiers.

If only the subjected others could confine themselves and their problems within their own borders, there wouldn't be any need for hard moral and political choices vis-à-vis the rights and dignities of 'the migrating other'. It could thus be argued that the end of apartheid in the absence of justice and restitution in South Africa has, in conjunction with globalisation, intensified the distinction between citizen and subject more than ever before. Just like under apartheid when black Africans from the Bantustans and 'labour reserves' were the most exploited and dehumanised, under globalisation blacks from north of the Limpopo – where 'the mosquito … had discouraged white settlement' (Cohen 1997: 67), and by implication the fulfilment of the white civilising mission – are hardest hit. How odd it is that the Africans who currently face exclusionary rhetoric hail from the same nations that harboured and nurtured the liberation struggles by providing sanctuary, education and sustenance to the fleeing comrades and cadres of the ANC who are today's gatekeepers.

'AmaNdiya': Indians as *Makwerekwere* with Citizenship

That blaming and stereotyping the *Makwerekwere* serve a useful purpose in diverting attention from the substantive and urgent issue of crafting a meaningful citizenship for South Africans under the new dispensation is further evidenced by the controversy around a May 2002 song which is the work of yet another black South African artist, who, incidentally, shares the same ethnic Zulu origins as the former minister of home affairs, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. The song shows that disillusioned South African blacks are not only ready to join their minister of home affairs in questioning the place of *Makwerekwere* in the new South Africa, they are keen to chal-lenge even the assumptions of citizenship by fellow South Africans whom they perceive as not quite deserving this privilege. Mbongeni Ngema's song 'AmaNdiya' ('The Indians'), which is about the relations between black South Africans and Indian South Africans, has been praised by some but also largely criticised by a cross section of South African society for breeding racial hostilities rather than stimulating

constructive dialogue the way Ngema purportedly intended ('First and foremost I wish to state that the song is intended to begin a public debate on the issue and not to cause racial hatred'[17]). Ngema's lyrics, however, attack Indians, reducing them to *Makwerekwere* with citizenship and warning them to assume their national responsibilities or risk losing their citizenship – as the following excerpts from the song suggest:

> Indians don't want to change. Even Mandela has failed to convince them. It was better with whites, we knew it was a racial conflict…

> We struggle so much here in Durban, as we have been dispossessed by Indians…

> I have never seen Dlamini emigrating to Bombay, India. Yet, Indians arrive everyday in Durban – they are packing the airport full.[18]

> We are poor because all things have been taken by Indians, they are oppressing us.[19]

The song reiterates: 'The situation is very difficult. Indians do not want to change, whites were far better than Indians.'[20] These sentiments, modest in comparison to sentiments against *Makwerekwere*, have been interpreted by some as demeaning and even hateful towards Indians. Far more people and media have come out in defence of the Indians than they have in defence of *Makwerekwere*, even though the rhetoric and violence deployed against the latter have been more virulent. Many political parties, including the ANC, the Democratic Alliance, the Minority Front, as well as former president Nelson Mandela, called for Mbongeni Ngema to apologise for inciting racial intolerance.[21] Others have simply kept quiet. The interventions, however, have tended to inflame further the stereotyping of and xenophobia expressed against *Makwerekwere*. Mandela said, 'I think he can do nothing better than to apologise if he has offended anyone with racist lyrics.'[22] ANC MP Alfred Maphalala reiterated that Ngema should apologise to the South African nation for what he termed 'destructive and racist sentiments promoted in the lyrics of this song'.[23]

While acknowledging that the song might mistakenly rouse some negative sentiments, Mbongeni Ngema insisted that it represents the strong feelings expressed by black South African people who gather at

taxi and bus ranks, at shebeens, soccer matches and many other places. These are the type of South African blacks, it should be said, who are most likely openly to stereotype, attack and ask the *Makwerekwere* to 'go back home', with the active support of the Ministry of Home Affairs. As Ngema put it, 'I believe it is my role as an artist to mirror the society and highlight the plight of the people on the ground. The leadership relies on us artists to voice issues where there is perceived oversight.'[24] Ngema stood by his position that the song was aimed at raising a dialogue to address the fundamental problems between the two groups, rather than at creating confrontation.[25]

However, the uproar provoked by the song suggests that race relations in South Africa are as sensitive as ever, even if not for the same reasons as in the past. Under apartheid Indians were much more visible socially, economically and politically, and thus it is only in order that this hierarchy should be reversed in the new South Africa where the majority blacks can afford the illusion of being in charge. The uproar also shows that until substantive issues of rights and entitlements are addressed, attitudes towards race as a facilitator for some and a hindrance for others will remain a blot on the landscape of intercommunal relations in the liberal democratic South Africa. Granted the sensitivities around race, while Ngema might have a point, he, like any poet, playwright or musician, is exhorted to know better. According to Richard Pillay, spokesperson for the Democratic Alliance, 'Mr Ngema could surely not be surprised by the furore ignited by his song. Mr Ngema should apologise to the Indian community in South Africa.'[26] The South African Human Rights Commission's (SAHRC) Jody Kollapen acknowledged that while there is a need for social dialogue because of deep divisions in race and ethnicity in South Africa, the song's lyrics did not contribute to such a dialogue: 'They serve to polarise people even more and I don't think they are conducive to nation-building in our country.'[27] As a consequence, the SAHRC launched a complaint with the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, saying 'AmaNdiya' constituted hate rhetoric.[28]

From the debate around Mbongeni Ngema's song, serious issues come to the fore: race relations; citizenship and xenophobia; the role of the state, artists and the media in nation-building in South Africa. By choosing largely to ignore the plight of the *Makwerekwere*, while

condemning Mbongeni Ngema virtually across the board for his song that was critical of Indians, South Africans have demonstrated a rather narrow and arbitrary idea of citizenship that celebrates the humanity of some, while sacrificing the rights and dignities of those they believe do not belong.

While failing to draw parallels between Ngema's 'AmaNdiya' and the hate rhetoric collectively directed at the *Makwerekwere*, some have argued that Ngema's song could in no way be interpreted as an objective representation of race relations in South Africa; nor do they see it as an appropriate medium for initiating negotiations among the different races. To them, the song expresses the views of disgruntled blacks, who in many ways are not objective in their judgement of the prevailing socio-economic milieu. Black perceptions are said to be based in the main on prejudice and a parochial appreciation of the multiple causes of poverty and other problems in their midst. Just like the hate rhetoric against the *Makwerekwere*, the racial hatred expressed in 'AmaNdiya' appeals to a wide audience, especially in KwaZulu-Natal, where people expressed their support for Ngema's portrayal of Indians as a true reflection of their tutelage under Indian capitalists with little or no commitment to their responsibilities under South African citizenship.[29] The support for Ngema's song could be gauged from the creation of a grouping of Zulus known as Ngobakhosi, named after a historically trusted regiment of King Cetshwayo, which led the Zulu army in the famous battle of Isandlwana, in which the British army was defeated in 1879. Wonder Hlongwa reported sporadic Indian–African violence following the release of Ngema's 'AmaNdiya', raising fears of a repeat of the 1949 Durban confrontation between Indian and black South Africans, which left more than ten people dead and scores injured.[30] Robin Cohen observes that under apartheid, Indians were

> unwillingly thrust into a 'V', not of their own making. Turn right, towards the white regime, and they were rejecting their fellow victims of apartheid; turn left, in the direction of black solidarity, and they became frightened of losing what status, rights and property they had acquired. Perhaps, not surprisingly, many remained uneasily where they were, like rabbits trapped before the headlights of an oncoming car. (Cohen 1997: 66)

This attitude probably explains what Mbongeni Ngema has translated into opportunism in 'AmaNdiya'.

Xolani Shange is of the view that race relations in South Africa reflect much of the apartheid regime, which created real and im-agined race problems and inequalities. Under apartheid, the Indian community, taken together, did not suffer to the same extent as the black Africans, who lacked citizenship completely, qualifying at best as 'temporary sojourners' in the cities of 'white South Africa'. Indian and coloured townships were better resourced with slightly better infrastructure, schools and services. In other words, although both black Africans and Indians were oppressed under apartheid, a hierarchy of humanity arose that accorded Indians greater recognition and representation. Indians had more status and were less invisible socially than blacks in the eyes of the reigning whites. In the 1980s, Indians were represented in the Tri-cameral Parliament, when blacks were not. However, Xolani argues that blacks continue to suffer not so much because of the racist tendencies among the Indians but because of the failure of the ANC government to improve the lot of black South Africans, who constitute the bulk of the ANC's constituents. As Xolani puts it, the ANC is the political vehicle of a black capitalist class. The capitalist class maximises profit, and workers' interests are put right at the end, even though they are the ones who create wealth. Xolani's argument is that Ngema's song ignores the cleavages among black South Africans, one of the growing gaps between the majority hovering in poverty and the emerging black capitalist class enriching itself through corruption under the guise of its programme of self-enrichment, the 'black economic empowerment' policy, which has created the likes of the Sexwales, Ngemas and Ramaphosas.[31] Mamelang Memela suggests the need for self-love among Africans, 'to get a life', instead of blaming Indians for their woes. Indian success comes as a result of business zeal, cohesive group identity and making the best of what is available. Indians in South Africa have come a long way from the days when they were serfs brought to do work that Africans felt was beneath them. In the 1970s and 1980s, common histories of oppression and denigration of Africans and Indians had served as a springboard for empathy and principled alliances. But since the 1990s Indo-black South African relations have deteriorated,[32] like relations with the *Makwerekwere*

who in another time had offered refuge to ANC comrades fleeing persecution in South Africa.

'AmaNdiya' also represents a conflict of perspectives on the role of the state in the pursuit of the 'nation-state' ideal. According to Soma, Ngema's song roused antagonism between Indian and black South Africans, between the masses and the government, between Mandela and parliament. Soma asks, when Ngema speaks about the 'ordinary African view about Indians', who is an African? Were Indians also not part of the 'struggle'?[33] Despite widespread condemnation by the Indian community, a group of Indian business people felt Mbongeni Ngema was right. Among such voices were Vivian Reddy, who acknowledged that 'Ngema has raised the Indian–African problem in an unexpected manner. He is talking about issues that should have been raised years ago. Maybe those who are denying this problem are just pretenders, or they don't belong to this society.' Reddy added: 'We want Indian business owners to understand that black people and Indians worked very hard to build this country, but because of the apartheid system blacks did not rise economically.'[34]

In this Mbongeni Ngema controversy, what Indians have in common with *Makwerekwere* is collective victimisation by frozen attitudes or stereotypes. If Ngema is to be believed, ordinary South African blacks, in KwaZulu-Natal at least, increasingly see Indians as opportunistic to the detriment of blacks, who are presented as the most indigenous yet most exploited of the constituent colours – black, coloured, Indian, white – of the rainbow nation. The logic is simple: in the hierarchy of races, blacks may lose out to Indians and coloureds who are better educated, lighter-skinned and whose features generally come closest to the whites', but in terms of origins and ancestry they are (contestedly) more indigenous to the land, and therefore deserve pride of place as second to whites, in their capacity as legitimate sons and daughters of the newly liberated South African soil. Unlike the whites, Indians and *Makwerekwere*, the South African blacks have no first or second home elsewhere, or at least so they think, having been immobilised and insulated by apartheid and subjection since 1652. This qualifies them in particular as landlords in the new South Africa, who must decide who stays where, how and for what rent. While the coloureds are simply treated as a community without an essence – half-lives belonging neither

here nor there – the Indians are made to understand that to be taken seriously as truly belonging to South Africa, they must display greater patriotism and less commitment to India as the ultimate place of origin. It is only by renouncing their threatening tendency to straddle continents that the Indians can claim to belong truly to South Africa as citizens, and thus join in the fight to keep the real barbarians at the margins of the empire.

Black South Africans may not be the 'superior' race or boast any real power beyond the tokenism of citizenship, but they demonstrate power through relationships of superiority vis-à-vis Indians and *Makwerekwere*. Again, the whites are treated as the group to aspire to be like – a feasible mission indeed, if only those who do not truly belong could be made to leave, just as has been observed of other postcolonial nationalisms (Fanon 1967a: 119–65). Exceptionally, whites are free to penetrate and harness the rest with traditional impunity, and thus are the only truly global citizens. In other words, unbounded mobility is the sole prerogative of the white, with or without the 'right' passport, the 'right' class or the 'right' gender. In this way, narrow nationalism and elite capitalism become less of the problem, as black South Africans, for whom socio-economic citizenship remains an illusion, scapegoat *Makwerekwere* and Indians in the face of relative white invulnerability.

This raises questions about the meaning of the juridical–political citizenship guaranteed by the constitution (often touted as the most liberal in the world) of the new South Africa, where the social-economic and cultural cleavages of the apartheid era are yet to be undone in ways that are beneficial to the majority. There is simply no empirical basis in South Africa or anywhere else to 'assume all stakeholders are in a condition of full citizenship, able to negotiate and participate as they choose' (Wood 2003a: 373), politically, economically and culturally at national and global levels. As demonstrated in the study of aboriginal/indigenous citizenship in Australia (Mercer 2003), South Africa (Elbourne 2003), Botswana (Saugestad 2001), Brazil (Ramos 2003), Canada and the USA (Christie 2003; Wood 2003b), Japan (Siddle 2003) and elsewhere, it is possible for legal citizenship to be denied socially through various unwritten hierarchies, thereby making supposedly democratic constitutions sound like 'empty vessels' for those without rights and entitlements

in reality (Mercer 2003: 421–2). In the case of the Ainu and their struggles for ethnic recognition in Japan, it has not been easy to move from 'second-class subjects to second-class citizens', given the state's reluctance to 'abandon the myth of homogeneity and embrace multiculturalism' (Siddle 2003: 450–56). Everywhere, the cost of the coercive illusion of 'nation-state' has been equality in humanity, as the arrogant obsession to assimilate and inferiorise difference has enshrined a hierarchy of humanity used to justify a hierarchy of citizenship that legitimizes social inequalities and the selective distribution of rights and entitlements.

South African Media and the Narrow Focus on *Makwerekwere*

In South Africa, the conventional media have until recently been in the service of black disempowerment and dehumanisation. The media have been a preponderantly white-controlled business, and, although the end of apartheid has led to some degree of black ownership and partnership, this has not necessarily 'made the newspapers more representative of South African society'. As van Kessel observes, 'it is unmistakably true that South Africa's print media are of little relevance to the majority of its population', and that the 'presence of more black faces in board rooms and news rooms' has not resulted in more or better coverage of black reality. The fact that newspapers are yet 'to develop a more comprehensive news formula' that takes into account black interests has occasioned a decline in overall penetration among blacks, who, unlike whites, coloureds and Indians, tend to rely on radio and television for news coverage (van Kessel 1998: 4–10; see also Tomaselli 2002). Tensions occasioned by ANC government concerns about, and the Human Rights Commission's inquiry into, 'racism in the media' and the 'racialized and stereotypical portrayal of blacks' (Pityana 2000; Glaser 2000; Berger 2001), are indicative of how much bridge-building remains to be done. As Jane Duncan puts it, although much has changed within an extremely short space of time in South African media and society, much seems to have stayed the same. The rhetoric of transformation does not seem to match the realities and expectations, as the media continue to 'talk left, act right' (Duncan 2000).

Whites in South Africa may not be a unified bloc, but the edification of biological and cultural racism under apartheid made it possible for their collective interests to be privileged, regardless of class, gender, status or the resistance some may have put up against the structures in place. This makes it extremely difficult for non-white South Africans not to equate whiteness with power and privilege, as they seek to situate themselves in the racialised hierarchy of humanity imposed upon them since 1652. That the media in post-apartheid South Africa are still dominated by white interests in ownership, control and content is a good case in point that talking or scripting change is different from living change. If the media in general, and the print media in particular, still mainly serve elite white interests and the economy is largely still under elite white control, it means that how the media cover immigration and migrants is likely to be indicative of the dominant elite white views on these issues. And if, in the face of negative coverage, black South Africans were to reinforce their hostility towards *Makwerekwere*, they would be acting in tune with dominant elite white interests, even as they may claim to be defending their own interests as emerging citizens. The media thus play a critical role in the production, circulation and/or reproduction of prevalent attitudes and perceptions on foreigners by South Africans, who are reified as a homogeneous entity with common interests to be collectively defended against undeserving 'others'. In other words, the media are part of a national obsession with the production of a fixed, essential, stable, unified and exclusive South Africa where the subjected of the apartheid era are included only to the extent that they are able uncritically to internalise, reproduce and aggressively defend the apartheid rhetoric of biological and cultural purity.

In this way the media offer a platform for the South African public to comment on 'foreigners' through letters to the editor, talk shows and television debates, and, as we have seen in relation to 'AmaNdiya' and *Makwerekwere*, not only what shall be discussed in public but also how and by whom. While the *Makwerekwere* are very absent in public discussions of them and their purported ills, the Indians were very present in the debate around Mbongeni Ngema's critical 'AmaNdiya'. The former is a case of the *Makwerekwere* as an absent presence, to be acted upon but not expected to act or react. Being perceived essentially as a negation to civilisation, they can

be talked at, talked on and sometimes talked to or for, but rarely talked with. As a collective menace to citizenship and opportunity, the *Makwerekwere* are denied the legitimacy of a voice by the media as the voice of civilisation and legitimacy. In this way, the media do not simply carry information to the public as a neutral vehicle reflecting the workings of society. They produce and/or reproduce certain ideologies and discourses that support specific relations of power in accordance with hierarchies of race, nationality, culture, class or gender (Nyamnjoh 2005). Racism – in both its biological and cultural forms (Mac an Ghaill 1999: 61–80) – is constantly produced and/or reproduced in South African print media (Pityana 2000; Glaser 2000), thereby making what is reported and how it is reported essential for a fair appreciation of the place of the media in creating or reinforcing particular perceptions of *Makwerekwere* as the constructed 'Other' (Harris 2001; Danso and McDonald 2001).

Representations of *Makwerekwere* by the print media in South Africa are largely negative and 'extremely unanalytical in nature', as the majority of the press has tended to reproduce 'problematic research and anti-immigrant terminology uncritically' (Danso and McDonald 2001: 115–17). The mainly white-controlled media have thus been instrumental in the creation, reproduction and circulation of the frozen imagery of black immigrants as a threat to an equally frozen or homogeneous South African society. In both cases, the media have failed to accommodate the overwhelming diversity of cultural identities, social experiences and subjective realities of the individuals and communities involved, preferring instead to caricature. *Makwerekwere* are regularly connected with crime, poverty, unemployment, disease and large social costs by the media and the authorities, whose declarations the media reproduce uncritically (Harris 2001; Morris 2001b: 77–8; Shindondola 2002; Danso and McDonald 2001; Landau 2004a, 2004b). *Makwerekwere* are uncritically portrayed by the bulk of the print media as constituting a social problem and a threat to the locals, first through their coming to the country, and then through their illegalities (Danso and McDonald 2001).

Such harsh treatment has in turn pushed the *Makwerekwere* to view South African blacks, with whom they interact the most, as the inferior 'Other'. Nigerians and Congolese, for example, perceive black

South African men as 'extremely violent', 'brutal', 'lazy', 'adulterous and not nurturing of their partners', 'shackled by colonial attitudes and ... feelings of inferiority [to whites]', and South Africans in general as 'poorly educated and ignorant', 'narrow-minded', 'hostile', 'indifferent', 'unpredictable' and 'unenterprising and wasteful' (Morris 2001b: 78–80; Bouillon 2001b: 122–40). But these counter-perceptions and stereotypes by the *Makwerekwere* seldom make their way into the dominant media, nor into the conventional research sponsored by and conducted in the interest of the status quo. By replying with stereotypes of their own, *Makwerekwere* only attract further hatred from black South African men, in particular, who are incensed by their perceived popularity with local women (Morris 2001b: 74–80),[35] and by their success in the informal sector (Simone 2001, 2004; Morris 2001b). In this way, the media, in conjunction with other institutions of social control, succeed (with or without conspiring) in diverting the attention of blacks seeking a meaningful integration into the South African economy, as citizens and as migrants, skilled and unskilled. The black authorities, by opting for neoliberalism without justice or restitution, are thus co-opted by a white-dominated economic system that can conveniently deny accusations of racism without affecting the racial outcome of its policies and practices (Glaser 2000; Pityana 2000; Hendricks 2004).

For over two decades following independence in 1980, Zimbabwe experienced serious outflows of its white and black populations to South Africa and Botswana, among other destinations (Tevera and Crush 2003). However, while black Zimbabweans are castigated and sterereotyped for transgressing South African borders (Mate 2005), curiously, white Zimbabweans fleeing into South Africa because of Mugabe's land redistribution policies are uncritically made welcome. Any noise in the local media is raised to criticise president Thabo Mbeki for his 'quiet diplomacy' towards Mugabe's 'diabolical' land redistribution policies while whites suffer the loss of 'legitimately' acquired land. African migrants receive negative coverage, while more serious crimes by other nationalities are rarely reported. Little is said about Thai, Romanian and Bulgarian women involved in prostitution, or about Taiwanese and Chinese 'illegals' responsible for the smuggling of poached contraband. There is also an 'almost complete lack of references to crime and illegality on the part of

Western Europeans and North Americans in South Africa, despite the fact that nationals from these regions also commit crimes and many are in the country "illegally"'. The hierarchy of races and cultures dictates a kind of newsworthiness that bears no relation to the real impact of different categories of immigrants on the South African economy (Danso and McDonald 2000: 127). Visibly irritated, Babacar, a francophone *Makwerekwere* and street vendor, cannot understand the double standards:

> Why don't they talk about the Chinese or the Yugoslavs? There are so many foreigners, other nationalities in South Africa. The Chinese are here. They sell in the streets! I know Yugoslavs. They sell. But they are not mentioned. They use South Africans to sell in the streets. There are other nationalities which sell here, but they don't have black skins like us. (Bouillon 2001b: 132)

Not only has crime been Africanised and racialised, the print media have also tended to nationalise crime attributed to *Makwerekwere*. Criminal syndicates, smuggling and drug trafficking are usually associated with particular groups of foreign nationals, with *Makwerekwere* being portrayed either as perpetual criminals or as more prone to commit serious crime than non-black immigrants from Africa or elsewhere. Nigerians are associated with controlling the drug trade (cocaine), while Congolese are identified with passport racketeering and diamond smuggling; Lesotho nationals with the smuggling of gold dust and copper wire; and Mozambican and Zimbabwean women as indulging in prostitution (Danso and McDonald 2001: 126–7; Mate 2005). The media have also sensationalised immigration with screaming alarmist headlines such as: 'Illegals in SA add to decay of cities', '6 million migrants headed our way'; 'Africa floods into Cape Town'; and 'Francophone invasion'. 'Aquatic or mob metaphors such as "hordes", "floods", "flocking", and "streaming"' are quite common. Also frequent are derogatory and unsubstantiated references to the rest of Africa (e.g. 'Strife-torn Central Africa', 'Africa's flood of misery'), and comments that see them essentially as real or potential economic refugees (e.g. 'as long as South Africa remains the wealthiest and strongest country on a continent littered with economically unstable and dysfunctional nations, it will continue to attract large numbers [of migrants]'). The tendency is to report on *Makwerekwere* in South

African cities as turning the clock of civilisation back to the primitive realities of their home cities (e.g. 'Johannesburg's inner city is now assuming the appearance of a typical sub-Saharan African city'), which predicts doom for South African urbanites if not contained. The alleged primitiveness of the *Makwerekwere* informs the belief that they are unable to thrive in a modern 'world class city' like Johannesburg (Landau 2004a, 2004b; Gotz and Landau 2004), where only whites or those long directly subjected by settler whites can cope. This 'criminalization and Africanization of migration is just as true of black-oriented newspapers as it is of white' (Danso and McDonald 2001: 127–9). In view of such sensational and uncritical reporting, hostile attitudes towards *Makwerekwere* can be perceived as being partly driven not by experience but by mass-mediated stereotypes and myths of the dangerous, depleting and encroaching 'Other' from the 'Heart of Darkness' north of South Africa (Crush 2001: 28; Morris and Bouillon 2001).

The South African media and nationals thus give the impression that black African migration is the problem, not migration as a whole (Landau 2004a: 6). Whites from everywhere are free to come and go, and are hardly represented as a burden to the economy or society. Negative attitudes and hostility towards *Makwerekwere* are actively promoted and sustained by the draconian immigration policy of detention and deportation (Landau 2004a, 2004b). As Morris argues, 'even though progressive legislation and positive reporting can alter perceptions over time', 'there has been little endeavour by the authorities or the media to construct narratives that would counter xenophobia' targeted at African immigrants. It is hardly surprising that public opinion towards *Makwerekwere* 'is shaped by the attitude of the media and the authorities' (Morris 1998: 1126), and that in turn the media and authorities are influenced by the interests of the elite whites and blacks who, in partnership with multinationals, control the South African economy. It is neither in the interest of the elite whites who constitute the dominant interest in the free-market economy, nor in the interest of the crystallising young and old upwardly mobile black elite in power and business, to encourage balanced media reporting, when stereotyping and scapegoating of black African migrants can serve a useful diversionary purpose in the face of the rising expectations of ordinary black and white citizens. In

South Africa we see how race, culture, class and citizenship intersect in the interest of global consumer capitalism, and to the detriment of those of the wrong race, the wrong culture, the wrong class, the wrong gender or the wrong citizenship.

Mobile Africa: Brain Drains and Brain Gains

The fact that, like everyone else (Hoffmann-Nowotny 1981: 64; Brochmann 1999a: 1), Africans are and have always been mobile is well documented, even if studies have tended to focus narrowly on certain forms of mobility, and to assume that migration necessarily produces ruptures and anomalies. Such limited and limiting accounts of 'mobile Africa' are increasingly challenged (de Bruijn et al. 2001) by studies which demonstrate that brain drain could yield brain gain (Arhinful 2001; Buggenhagen 2003), and that migrants are not always a drain to their host communities (Miller et al. 1999; Mattes et al. 2000; Landau 2004b).

In South Africa the stereotypes and xenophobia propagated against *Makwerekwere* have had several casualties. First, talented *Makwerekwere* with 'a choice are choosing not to come to South Africa'. Those already in South Africa 'are leaving or planning to leave' (Morris 2001a: 11). And many white professionals, some of whom were already uncomfortable with the end of apartheid and believed their security would be threatened in a liberal democratic South Africa, have in turn been fleeing the country and continent. Hence, while other African countries are losing skilled and unskilled brains to a reluctant South Africa, the country is losing some of its traditionally privileged white brains to a welcoming New Zealand, Australia, North America and Europe (Brown et al. 2000; Mattes and Richmond 2000; Dodson 2002). The emigrating white middle-class professionals are usually more competitive because of the dual nationality status they enjoy, with both South African passports and even more desirable passports granted them by Western countries. The *Makwerekwere*, on the other hand, are lucky to have soft passports from their home countries, less desirable though these are compared to the South African and Western passports of their emigrating white counterparts.

How international migration affects the distribution of 'brains', 'drains' and 'gains' around Africa and globally deserves a closer look, as it is at the very heart of the hierarchies of citizenship and humanity explored in this study. Migration, even when by coercion or externally induced, is a selective process (Cohen 1997). The educated, the skilled and those with networks have a greater propensity to migrate voluntarily. The loss of professionals from sub-Saharan Africa to developed countries raises major concerns, as it has become one of the greatest threats to economic development in the region.

Emigration of skilled labour, especially academics from African universities, is most worrying, and was one of the central issues discussed during the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in South Africa in 2002. The meeting heard that in less than two decades sub-Saharan Africa had lost a third of its skilled professionals, only to replace them with over 100,000 expatriates from the West at a cost of US$4 billion a year. According to Chris Buckley of the University of Natal, between 1985 and 1990 Africa lost over 60,000 middle-level and high-level managers to Western economies. Some 23,000 lecturers from African universities emigrate each year, with the biggest migratory flows coming from Egypt, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana, in that order, according to the United Nations Commission for Africa. But, despite the large number of academics leaving African universities, rarely do many of them find university teaching or research positions in their host countries. The Institute of International Education, a professional body that keeps track of the mobility of students and staff from and to the United States, reports that in 2001 there were only 2,256 African scholars teaching in American universities, compared to 35,620 from Asia, 26,668 from Europe and 4,676 from Latin America. Most of the 80,000 foreign scholars in American universities are engaged in high-profile scientific research, with 26 per cent of the foreign academics conducting research in health sciences and 14.7 per cent in biological sciences. Another cohort of 14.7 per cent is involved with research in physical and engineering sciences. Only a small minority are involved in teaching. Of the 2,256 African academics working in United States universities in 2001, Egypt had the largest share of 671, a drop from 773 the previous year. South Africa came a distant second with 327, while Nigeria emerged third with 176. Although Kenya was placed

fourth with 136 academics, the country had the highest number of scholars in United States universities among twenty-one countries in Eastern and Central Africa. Zimbabwe was second to Kenya in the region with 67 scholars and Cameroon third with 56 and Ethiopia with 53. However, a major surprise drop was in Mauritius, which had 12 scholars in the USA in 2004, as compared to 90 in the previous year. However, assuming that a large number of African scholars are economic migrants, one cannot rule out the significance of the drop among Mauritian scholars. To date Mauritius textile exports are larger than from the rest of the sub-Saharan African countries put together. Considering the large number of African academics who leave the continent each year in search of career and economic opportunities abroad, it is quite evident that most of them are getting employment outside academia. According to the late Thomas Odhiambo, a reputed Kenyan scientist and the founder of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology, highly qualified African scholars end up as teaching and research assistants abroad after failing to secure high-profile teaching and research fellowships. Nevertheless, this scenario has not discouraged African scholars among other skilled African workers from going abroad in search of jobs that are scarce at home. Over 60 per cent of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa have tertiary education. 'Migration of Africans with only a primary education is almost nil', says William Carrington, a labour economist at the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. But, as the debate on the brain drain takes centre stage, the question is bound to arise as to the extent to which African scholars abroad are simply used as cheap labour, and often in areas not commensurate with their training and professional status. There is also the question of the expatriates that sub-Saharan African countries employ as substitutes for their migratory scholars and skilled workers at enormous cost: to what extent does this represent the proverbial adage of trading a golden vessel for a polished calabash? (Odhiambo 2004).[36]

In South Africa, instead of seeking to synergise with the immigrating professionals from Africa north of the Limpopo, thousands of white South African professionals are hitting the runways to New Zealand, Australia, North America and Europe, with mounting crime in the new South Africa as their major excuse (Brown et al. 2000; Mattes and Richmond 2000; Dodson 2002). Statistics South Africa,

the government's data agency, revealed that in the first ten months of 2002, 9,337 people emigrated. The top five preferred destinations were the United Kingdom (3,087), the United States (948), New Zealand (837), Australia (1,409) and Canada (298). Broken down by continent, 3,167 South Africans went to Europe, 867 to Australasia and 990 to North America. This compares to 3,623 documented immigrants accepted into South Africa in the first six months of 2002. A staggering 2,956 were considered economically inactive. In 2001, 12,260 South Africans emigrated. The top five destinations were the UK (2,491), Australia (1,177), the USA (757), New Zealand (688) and Namibia (261). A Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) study, commissioned as part of the government's Human Resources Development Strategy, estimates that in 2000, 2,852 South Africans from a total of 10,262 emigrated to the UK, one of the most popular destinations for South Africans. This compares to 2,316 in 1999 out of 8,487, and 2,880 in 1994 out of 10,234. The highest emigration was in 1977, when 9,753 South Africans emigrated to the UK out of 26,000. Similar figures followed in 1978 and 1985, dispelling the belief that emigration was accelerated with the change of government in 1994. However, Tracy Bailey, author of the HSRC study and a senior researcher at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Stellenbosch, has said these official statistics are a serious undercount. The unofficial figures might be as much as three times higher because of irregularities in tracking emigrants. Statistics South Africa obtains its figures from the Department of Home Affairs, which are collated from airport departure forms at Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban international airports. According to the deputy director-general of Statistics SA, Dr Ros Hirschowigz, the departure forms are not compulsory, and when people do complete them they are not always honest. 'The forms give us an idea of people leaving, but not an accurate picture of emigration', Hirschowigz said. Nick Sheppard, a spokesperson at the British High Commission, said approximately 300,000 South Africans live in the UK at present, but that this estimate is 'based on anecdotal evidence', for reasons cited above. To compound these inaccuracies, some 800,000 South Africans hold British passports and do not need assistance to enter the UK and work. Another loophole can extend their stay in the UK on the strength of British ancestry. After four

years they gain residency, and after another two the emigrant can claim a British passport.

Bailey's research reveals that although the traditional 'push and pull' factors – such as crime, low salaries, the AIDS pandemic, unemployment and declining standards of health care and education, versus opportunities extended by South Africa's reintegration into international business after apartheid-era isolation – remain major factors influencing emigration, the offset of globalisation during the 1990s is playing an even bigger role. Globalisation marks the emergence of the 'knowledge society', where factors such as patents, research and development have superseded older means of competitiveness, such as labour costs, resource endowments and infrastructure. 'Information and knowledge are now the core features in the world, especially around scientific research. This means that anyone who is educated or highly skilled is also mobile', said Bailey, who also confirmed that emigration is predominantly skills-based, rather than race-based. Her study shows that 24 per cent of highly skilled professionals who emigrated in 2000 went to the UK. The loss is felt most acutely in engineering, medicine, accounting and financial services.

A recent World Bank study shows that 35 per cent of doctors who graduated from the University of Witwatersrand's medical school in the 1990s have since emigrated. A study of emigration to the UK, the USA, New Zealand, Canada and Australia by the Paris-based Institute for Development Research estimates that skilled workers emigrating from South Africa cost the country R67.8 billion between 1997 and 2000. The loss of each skilled professional is considered to destroy as many as ten unskilled jobs. This flow has serious repercussions for the country's effort to rise above a 3 per cent economic growth rate, because the country is losing its best human capital while spending money on educating replacements. Former president Nelson Mandela made emigration an issue of patriotism, but the government has not matched this with efforts to attract skills to the country. In 2000, 2,439 skilled workers emigrated, but only 331 immigrated, resulting in a net loss of 2,108.

As seen above, there is an argument that immigrants will deprive locals of jobs. However, a study by the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) shows that skilled immigrants will create enterprises and jobs for locals, enhance the productivity of existing enterprises,

and pass on valuable skills. Director of SAMP and co-author of the study Vincent Williams asked why South Africa should not also gain from an immigration policy that attracts the brightest and best from other countries. 'Why should South Africa be that different? It is important to attract immigrants to build the South African economy', he said. A new immigration Bill, which was rushed through parliament in May 2002 in order to meet the 2 June 2002 Constitutional Court deadline for its enactment, is likely to keep skilled immigrants out of the country. President Thabo Mbeki himself admitted that the bill was flawed and that it is insufficient to attract skilled labour to a country where the skills shortage is estimated to be between 200,000 and 300,000. However, according to Bailey, emerging trends are challenging the phenomenon of human capital flight. 'Apart from the brain drain, we have some evidence of what we call the brain circulation. This is the return of people to the country after about five years. They go overseas to pay off debts or on a gap year and then come back.' This is also known as the brain exchange, where some countries like Australia and New Zealand are feeling no loss because 'people are coming in as fast as they are leaving'.[37] Bailey said this is a growing trend, which will eventually benefit South Africa.

Other African states are just as keen to transform brain drain into brain gain. Senegal, for example, is a leader in this regard (Buggenhagen 2003). The government of current President Wade has created a ministry for Senegalese Abroad, with the purpose of making them feel part and parcel of his national project, and encouraging them to harness their opportunities and achievements for the development of their homeland. Already, the Western Union electronic money transfer system tells the story of how much migrants are helping African states with remittances to families and friends, who would otherwise be on the streets questioning their governments for failure to deliver. More African governments realise that far from depleting the host country, as is often thought, migration is generally felt to have negative socio-economic effects on the countries of origin. One notable effect is the loss of valuable taxable revenues. Countries and governments spend money on labour development, only to lose this labour to receiving countries, for little or no compensation.

Even the *Makwerekwere* Think of Home

To Africans migration seldom entails the severing of links with one's home country or village. The town, city or host country is of interest to migrants to the extent that it can contribute to nourishing relationships and conviviality with kin and community back in the village or country of origin. In this way, migrants are mostly concerned with host cities and countries as hunting grounds where one can slave in pursuit of game, while their home villages or countries remain the places where they are most likely to return to celebrate their good fortune or to seek sympathy for failure. Even those who never return have seldom decided from the outset against returning. Whether or not migrants return, most of their time is spent trying to domesticate the host city or country (Simone 2001, 2004; Odhiambo 2004), and migrants are often successful in creating and maintaining interconnections between their new hosts and their home communities. In this way, migrants serve as bridges of conviviality between communities, civilisations and cultures, thus making it possible for the village to be in the city and the city in the village, or for Africa to be in the world and the world in Africa (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 1998; Ferguson 1999; Nyamnjoh 2001, 2002; Englund 2002). In this flexible mobility and belonging are the seeds of a more flexible citizenship informed less by rigid geographies of apartheid than by histories of relationships, interconnectedness, networks and conviviality. A territorially bounded idea of citizenship in a world of flexible mobility can only result in policies and practices of confrontation that deny individuals and communities their reality as melting pots of multiple and dynamic identities.

Thus, contrary to what host governments and nationals may think, few migrants are interested in permanent migration or in being assimilated into the dominant cultures of their host communities. Among black Africans who obtained South African nationality in the early euphoric days of post–apartheid South Africa are a significant number who have since grown disillusioned and moved to the United States, elsewhere or back home. Migrants remain in high-intensity exchanges with their home country in all sorts of ways, even more so today with the possibilities offered by new information and

communications technologies. Ghanaian immigrants in Amsterdam are proud to say 'we think of them', pertaining to extended families and friends back in Ghana, to whom they regularly send remittances for personal projects such as retirement homes, and also to assist with sickness, old age, education, funerals and village development initiatives (Arhinful 2001: 58–95). In Johannesburg, a Senegalese *Mouride*, who migrated without his family, proudly announced:

> We came to take risks here. We know it's dangerous. We want to work. We want to work to support our children. It hurts us to leave them behind. I have five kids and I always think of them. But we have to bear the whole situation. We hang in there, and we stay here. (Bouillon 2001a: 53)

These examples speak more of flexible mobility than of permanent dislocations and relocations. The fact of being able to live their lives across international borders involving migration and settlement in a country of destination and the cultivation of strong backward linkages makes it possible for transnational migrants to be simultaneously embedded in more than one society (Cohen 1997: 155–76; Glick-Schiller 1999). Intensified globalisation makes this phenomenon an ever present and pervasive form of migration. With improved communication systems, no job opportunity is too localised to be competed for by labour from elsewhere in a global economy increasingly dependent on 'a "migration industry" comprising private lawyers, travel agents, recruiters, organizers, fixers and brokers who sustain links with origin and destination countries' (Cohen 1997: 163; see also Rogerson and Rogerson 2000).

Makwerekwere who are well networked and connected with relatives, friends and contacts in the developed world or other privileged zones of accumulation like South Africa and Botswana regularly learn about jobs in these societies. With support from the same relatives or friends, they are able to travel to compete for those jobs, thanks to accelerated mobility. For them and for other transnational migrants, 'success does not depend so much on abandoning their culture and language to embrace another society as on preserving their original cultural endowment, while adapting instrumentally to the second' (Portes et al. 1999: 229). This is demonstrated repeatedly by ethnographic accounts of *Makwerekwere* in South Africa (Sichone

2001; Morris 2001b; Simone 2004). Thus East Africans in Cape Town, who are serious about getting on with the job of making money, make an effort to learn Xhosa quickly, through immersing themselves in the township community in order to learn the language and other survival tactics. Learning Xhosa saves them from harassment by policemen, who use language to detect, detain and deport aliens (Sichone 2001: 9).

In most host countries, migrants settle side by side with citizens, who in the case of Johannesburg are themselves recent migrants from the former Bantustans of apartheid South Africa (Mpe 2001; Landau 2004a: 5–6; Mbembe and Nuttall 2004). In this regard, Crush and McDonald (2000) suggest a shift of focus from 'migrant communities' to 'migrant spaces', in order to emphasise the demographic, social and cultural contents of those spaces and their economic and political linkages with the source regions, the host society, and citizens and institutions. In apartheid South Africa, the quintessential migrant spaces were the hostels, which promoted the idea of impermanence in discourses about migration and prevented the emergence of transnational migrants. However, the growth of slums or informal settlements in post-apartheid South Africa, as more South Africans moved to the cities, provided new migrant spaces. Foreign migrants have ended up living outside the hostels with South African citizens and in a way as creative agents. Apartheid rural slums are now home to *Makwerekwere*; Johannesburg's formerly whites-only settlements of Yeoville, Joubert Park and Hillbrow are being actively transnationalised by *Makwerekwere* from East, Central and West Africa (Simone 2001, 2004; Bouillon 2001a: 34–5). These settlements are the interface between waves of migrants, one domestic and the other transnational, with similar behaviours and expectations, contrasting access to rights and resources and different illusions of belonging (Crush and McDonald 2000; Mpe 2001).

The central question is how the common experience of migrancy shapes the patterns of interaction between local and transnational migrants. The pervasive differential access to resources, for example, is manifested in the allocation of low-cost housing, where access is defined by and dependent on one's nationality. In areas where nationals and foreigners had lived harmoniously during apartheid, the end of apartheid has resuscitated the dormant insider–outsider tensions

with respect to secure livelihoods, with South African identities becoming the key criterion for access to livelihoods and resources. The minister of home affairs is quoted as having called on govern-ment departments to '"request the identity documents or passports of all foreigners requesting services subsidized by the government" to "ensure that they do not gain access to services in short supply to our own people"' (Peberdy 2001: 22), while acting speedily to deport the 'approximately 90%' of them with 'false documentation' (Landau 2004a: 13). The South African government is getting tougher on migrants, threatening increasing deportation. *Makwerekwere* are the hardest hit by legislation and authorities that have little patience with perceived economic migrants (Crush and McDonald 2001b; Morris and Bouillon 2001; Landau 2004a, 2004b).

Consequently, the 1999 White Paper on International Migration, conceived to curb the process of transnationalism, is likely to be tightened even further by the Ministry of Home Affairs, whose former minister, Chief Buthelezi, was determined to extend the current hostility towards *Makwerekwere* to Chinese, Indians and others from Asia. The central proposal is that the 'policing' (identification and expulsion) of undocumented migrants should be devolved to the local or community level. The question thus arises: is the government trying to turn ordinary South Africans into snoops and informers about their neighbours? Would this approach not represent state-sanctioned xenophobia? To what extent would such actions lead to the death of mutual 'tolerance' and 'interaction' between newcomers and South Africans?

As Abdoulmaliq Simone notes, foreign African companies 'have helped turn Johannesburg into a regional and commercial centre', and highly skilled Africans continue to help out with shortages in fields such as medicine and higher education, as qualified white professionals are pushed by an intensifying feeling of uncertainty to migrate. Unable to stomach the hostility of their black ANC and IFP 'brothers' and 'sisters' in power, *Makwerekwere* entrepreneurs 'prefer dealing with white South Africans', who 'still control most of the economy' and many of whom 'are aware of the advantages of creating a foothold in the market of other African countries' (Simone 2001: 165). It is yet to dawn on South Africans and their authorities that for many *Makwerekwere* Johannesburg, for example,

is simply 'there', on air-routes connecting it with a large number of African cities. It is not viewed as a permanent home but rather as a temporary place of opportunity as it becomes an increasingly important player in a broad range of commercial and financial networks. As the core countries and global systems find new ways to tighten their borders, Johannesburg will remain for most African migrants only a rough approximation of the really desired destination. (Simone 2001: 165)

This is despite its 'ambition to become a "world class, African City"' (Landau 2004a: 4; Mbembe and Nuttall 2004).

It is evident that the answer to crime, disease and joblessness in South Africa lies not in detecting, detaining and deporting migrants, but in cultivating a South Africa of greater equality and justice, so that ordinary South Africans can access their citizenship in more meaningful ways without having to scapegoat migrants who are making a significant contribution to the South African economy (Peberdy 2001; Landau 2004a; Gotz and Landau 2004). The 'nation-state' that post-apartheid South Africa is so keen on realising is a 'Western mirage', which hardly more than 10 per cent of so-called 'nation-states' in the world (the USA and the UK included) have ever achieved (Smith 1986: 230; Cobban 1969: 129; Abdel-Malek 1967: 250–64; Seton-Watson 1977: 353; Amin 1985; Cohen 1997: ix–x). As Cohen rightly remarks, leaders or ideologues of 'nation-states have sought to have it all their own way', by 'demanding exclusive citizenship, border control, linguistic conformity and political obedience' as a way of coping with ethnic or cultural diversities. In addition, they have presented the 'nation-state' as 'an object of devotion', enjoining its citizens 'to love their country, to revere its institutions, to salute its flag, to support its sporting teams, and to fight and die for it in war'. Such 'powerfully defended nationalist sentiments' have emphasised coercion over volition, and made it extremely 'difficult for diasporic groups to express their true attitudes to the nation-states in which they found themselves', not always as a matter of choice (Cohen 1997: 194). The result, as Frantz Fanon perceptively predicted in the nascent years of postcolonial nationalisms in Africa, is that citizenship, 'instead of being the all-embracing crystallization of the innermost hopes of the whole people, instead of being the immediate and most obvious result of the mobilization of the people', has turned

out to be 'only an empty shell, a crude and fragile travesty of what it might have been' with a greater sense of flexible inclusion (Fanon 1967a: 119). Under the coercive illusion of the 'nation-state', citizenship, far from celebrating a common humanity, has merely served to justify the trivialisation and debasement of some and the glorification of others.

South Africa is therefore pursuing a mirage that has tended to exclude rather than celebrate difference, and that has conferred limited meaningful citizenship only to the few assimilated by the high cultures of the privileged races, geographies, classes and gender (Mac an Ghaill 1999: 97–100; Wood 2003a; Cairns 2003: 501–6; Mercer 2003; Kabeer 2005). Hence the question: if the current configuration of the South African 'nation-state' is already a patchwork of different racial and cultural collectivities, what reason is there that it cannot be even more of a patchwork, especially as difference, in reality, has been noted to enrich a lot more than it depletes? As products of mobility or migration, is there any reason why the current occupants of any given territory should assume that migration starts and ends with them or their forebears? Exclusive claims of indigenity, belonging and citizenship are often dependent on historical amnesia. In the case of Johannesburg, it would be particularly myopic and contradictory to continue policing certain kinds of mobility with current levels of hostility, especially given its reality as a patchwork of immigrant identities, its emerging status as a global city, and its pan-African and regional ambitions as an economic, political and cultural leader on the continent (Simone 2001, 2004; Landau 2004a, 2004b). As Abdoulmaliq Simone has argued,

> It is clear that the Johannesburg urban economy is increasingly centred around the provision of region-wide infrastructure, services and consumables. It sees itself as the regional centre for banking, telecommunications, engineering, financial management, investment deals and so forth. It thus penetrates the territories and econo-mies of African nations everywhere – thereby instituting particular architectures of articulation. A by-product then of such an urban economy is the very production of emigration – that is, in order to instantiate itself in other territories, deals and institutional ar-rangements are made that themselves necessitate opening up South African space to increased migratory flows. In the process, more invisible and parallel forms of 'regional integration' also take place

– through medium scale cross-border trade and circulations. Migration confirms South Africa's relative economic transformation.[38]

The answer to flexible mobility lies in flexible citizenship unbounded by the mirage of the 'nation-state' and its expectations of an impossible congruence between culture, race and polity (Fanon 1967a: 119–65; Wood 2003a; Cairns 2003; Kabeer 2005). The ever surging communities of immigrants and diasporas globally mean that the 'nation-state' would have to reckon with a growing number of people who 'want not only the security and opportunities available in their countries of settlement, but also a continuing relationship with their country of origin and co-ethnic members [cultural kin] in other countries' (Cohen 1997: 196). This is ever more compelling, given that immigrants and diasporas are the vehicles of choice for articulating the globalisation of difference, and for crushing the nineteenth-century European illusion of a place for each race and a territory for each social identity. The fate of the 'nation-state' is and has always been in the hands of immigrants and diasporas, which explains why it has never really been more than an illusion that justifies coercive and arbitary conferment or denial of citizenship along racial, cultural, geographical, class or gender lines. The future of citizenship depends on how immigrants and diasporas are able to see the 'nation-state' for what it truly is – a coercive illusion – and to mobilise themselves and negotiate for the recognition of a common universal humanity that is entitled to equal political, cultural and economic representation *in real terms*.

CHAPTER 2

Citizenship, Mobility and Xenophobia
in Botswana

In Botswana, where ethnicity and belonging had almost become masked issues as the state sought nationhood and consensus through dominant Tswana values and liberal democratic institutions, there has, since the mid-1980s, been a resurgence of identity politics and overt tensions over belonging. Minority ethnic groups have sought equity, better representation and more access to national resources and opportunities. While every Botswana national can claim to be a citizen legally within the framework of the modern nation-state, some are perceived by others – among the majority Tswana groups especially – as less authentic nationals or citizens. Without the right to paramount chiefs of their own and to representation in the national House of Chiefs as ethnic groups (or 'tribes') in their own right, these minorities increasingly see themselves more as subjects than as citizens. Identity politics and more exclusion-ary ideas of nationality and citizenship have become increasingly significant. Minority claims for greater cultural recognition and plurality are countered by majoritarian efforts to maintain the status quo of an inherited colonial hierarchy of ethnic groupings. In other words, minority clamours for recognition and representation are countered by greater and sometimes aggressive reaffirmation of age-old exclusions informed by colonial registers of inequalities among the subjected.

This development is paralleled by increased awareness and distinction between 'locals' and 'foreigners', with the emphasis on opportunities and economic entitlements. Apart from official measures to restrict further access to citizenship by foreigners (through lengthening the naturalisation time to ten years and discouraging dual or multiple nationalities), public attitudes towards foreigners are generally hardening. The customary Tswana policy of inclusion – opening up to minorities and foreigners – is being reconfigured by those managing entitlements to the fruit of economic growth in an era of accelerated flows of capital and migrants. Romantic though it might sound, accounts of Tswana attitudes to foreigners and minorities in precolonial and colonial times were full of praise for Tswana generosity and hospitality. Although liberal democracy is essentially about the promotion of individual rights and autonomy, it is evidently sympathetic, though in a limited way, to concerns for group rights as well. However, where and when liberal democracy has acknowledged and provided for group rights, it has tended either to see groups as a mere composite of individuals seeking to maximise their individual interests (Young 1995: 162–6), or to emphasise minority cultural rights (Kymlicka 1995; Mercer 2003). It is as if promoting group rights of majority cultures were beyond contemplation or a fait accompli (Mac an Ghaill 1999). In issues of democracy as a group right (minority and majority groups alike), popular philosophies of personhood and agency in Botswana and Africa might have a valuable contribution to make (Nyamnjoh 2002, 2003). Contrary to caricatures in accounts insensitive to alternative philosophies of rights in Africa, Tswana customs in democracy not only acknowledge the individual's rights to participate in communal affairs (*mafoko a kgotla a mantle otlhe* – 'all opinions aired in the *kgotla* are precious'), but provide against a *kgosi* abusing his authority through constant reminders that a king only attains that position through his followers (*kgosi ke kgosi ka batho*) or 'by grace of his tribe' (*kgosi ke kgosi ka morafe*) (Schapera 1994: 53–88; Comaroff 1978; Comaroff and Roberts 1981). The *Kgotla* (king's/chief's court and public forum) in particular has been credited with a tradition of checks on the power of the chief and a system of relative tolerance of competing opinions and divergent views, even from strangers or immigrants (Schapera 1994: 80–88; Comaroff and Roberts 1981; Holm and Molutsi 1989;

Kerr 2000). A significant measure of resilience to these beliefs, institutions and other customs documented by Schapera (1994), despite colonialism and the postcolonial pursuit of liberal democracy with a primary focus on individual rights, demonstrates not only the fact and force of a competing idea of personhood and agency but also the profundity of the ways of life that draw inspiration from such an outlook (Comaroff and Roberts 1981; Nyamnjoh 2003).

This chapter examines local attitudes towards foreigners as represented in newspapers. It documents ongoing tensions over entitlements among majority and minority ethnic groups in Botswana as the background for understanding changing and hardening attitudes towards foreigners in general, and certain categories of foreigners in particular. The print mediascape of Botswana is not complicated. For almost fifteen years after independence in 1966, the state media in Botswana operated virtually without challenge or competition. The only brief competition came from *Linchwe*, *Mmegi wa Dikgang* and *Puisanyo*, created in 1967, 1968 and 1972, respectively, but which did not last beyond 1973. Their brief existence might have offered competition to the state media, but hardly any challenge to government. Although supposedly commercial and politically independent, 'all three exhibited loyalty and sympathy towards the government of the day as well as the absence of crystal clear, stable and easily discernible editorial policies' (Rantao 1996: 8). Five weeklies – *Mmegi*, the *Botswana Guardian*, the *Botswana Gazette*, the *Midweek Sun* and the *Voice* – appeared in the 1980s and 1990s to compete with the state radio and the *Daily News* (the only daily the government prints and distributes free of charge) for audiences. The latest newspapers to start circulation include the *Sunday Tribune*, which was launched in April 2000, and *Mmegi Monitor*. The latter's maiden edition was published on 29 February 2000, promising a weekly Tuesday menu of 'human interest news and lighthearted stories ... [with] an extended lifestyle/leisure section and sports' that could be shared by all family members regardless of age, gender, level of education or religion.[1]

This private press in Botswana has been thought of as offering a noteworthy African exception, notwithstanding its observed inadequacies pertaining to alertness, up-to-date-ness, reliability and performance in public policy debate. The press enjoys a degree of tolerance from government that is rare in Southern Africa, and has

earned credibility for its critical and investigative journalism over the
years. This does not imply the absence of legislation and practices by
government aimed at curbing press freedom. The Botswana chapter
of the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA) recently published
a 62-page inventory of media-unfriendly laws and practices in the
country (Balule and Maripe 2000). The *Botswana Guardian* and the
Midweek Sun have taken the government to court for suspending
advertising with them by government departments and parastatals.
In a ruling in favour of these two newspapers, the presiding judge
said: 'those who hold power should be more tolerant of criticism but
where they feel the press has gone beyond bounds of freedom of
expression, they are entitled, as everyone else, to approach the courts
for protection'.[2] All it says is that the Botswana state is relatively
more tolerant of the press than are its counterparts in the Southern
African Development Community (SADC). Compared with fellow
SADC countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, and
even South Africa, fewer alerts respecting the infringement of press
freedom were issued by MISA on Botswana for the years 2000 and
2001, for example. How far the Botswana government maintains
its relative tolerance of the press will depend in part on how
responsibly it perceives the press to be acting, even as government
and journalists do not always agree on what constitutes socially
responsible journalism.

Citizenship and Belonging in Botswana

By way of background for understanding press representations of
foreigners, it is worth examining the question of individual rights
in Botswana closely, noting the gap between rhetoric and reality.
While the rhetoric clearly emphasises democracy as an individual
right, the reality is one that seeks to bridge individual and group
rights, thereby making Botswana democracy far more complex than is
often acknowledged. While legal provisions might promise citizenship
to all in principle, the practice is one of inequality in citizenship
among individuals and groups. As in South Africa (Chapter 1), in
Botswana there is a hierarchy of citizenship fostered by political,
economic, social and cultural inequalities, such that it makes some

individuals and groups much more able to claim and articulate their rights than others. Being a rights-bearing Motswana is a matter of degree and power relations, and some are less Batswana than others, even as they are armed with the same *Omang* (identity card) and inspired or protected by the same constitution. In the past (and still very much today in certain circles), Tswana, for example, have to various degrees claimed for themselves the status of landlords, making others (ethnic minorities) tenants, who, for one reason or another, have earned recognition and entitlements over time.[3] However, in times of crisis, when survival or comfort could imply sacrificing the interests of some, there is a transformation in the politics of belonging, one that helps to determine whose interests are to be sacrificed first and whose protected.

Parallel to this hierarchy among Batswana is another hierarchy among foreigners or immigrants. Increasingly not all outsiders are welcome, and not all who are welcome are accorded the same respect, privileges or rights by the Batswana. Some are more likely to lose privileges or have their rights violated than others. Again, it is all a matter of degree, subject to renegotiation and the caprice of changed circumstances. Nothing is fixed, not even the rhetoric of rights, which is appropriated and articulated differently by individuals and groups, depending on the context and issues at stake.

A cursory look at Botswana would leave observers in little doubt that liberal democracy has succeeded the most here, compared with all other African countries since independence. Using multiparty elections and other relevant standard indicators, one could make a convincing case for the successful institutionalisation of liberal democracy and bureaucratic modernism in Botswana. Those familiar with the literature on this country would have become used to the idea of its exceptionalities. Politically, Botswana is known to be a rare example of a functioning liberal multiparty democracy in Africa (Holm and Molutsi 1989, 1992), even though its ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) is yet to experience a break in its monopoly of power since independence in 1966 (Molomo 2000). There is little doubt that liberal democracy in Botswana has contributed greatly to the questioning of the customary Tswana patriarchy that has tended to allow for recognition of descent exclusively through the male line by disqualifying the integration that comes with intermarriage.

Nor is there doubt about how much the position of women in Botswana has been enhanced by women's movements inspired by liberal democracy, such as Emang Basadi and the 1992 landmark Supreme Court victory by Unity Dow in her struggle to gain Botswana citizenship for children of women married to non-citizen men (Emang Basadi 1994; Dow 1995; Selolwane 1997, 1998). The women's movement in Botswana has scored significant victories in contesting and seeking to broaden what Franceschet and Macdonald (2004), in reference to Chile and Mexico, have termed 'the state's more narrow vision' of and 'profoundly conservative rhetoric' about 'democratic citizenship' and 'social rights'. Ethnic differences and overt conflicts were largely masked or rechannelled until the 1980s, as the state sought to negotiate conviviality by emphasising consensus and unity. On the economic front, not only has it sustained one of the fastest growing economies in the world, Botswana is the only country in Africa where diamonds have not yet attracted warlords, and one of a few where corruption and mismanagement of the national economy are yet to assume the endemic proportions we know they have attained elsewhere (Fombad 1999).

Concerning the media, Botswana is also a curious exception. For almost fifteen years following independence in 1966, the state media in Botswana virtually operated without competition. Within the fifteen years of conformist media, the dominant thrust was towards the emergence of a national consensus around dominant Tswana ethnic groups, culture and language. The state media played a major role in promoting and enforcing this trend, with which many ethnic groups seemed to have complied, however half-heartedly, until the resurgence of the politics of primary patriotism and belonging that culminated in the Balopi Commission (Zaffiro 1993, 2000; Fako and Nyamnjoh 2000). This commission was appointed in July 2000 by President Festus Mogae to investigate and report on discriminatory articles within the constitution. Since then, dissenting voices, dramatic headlines and sensational allegations of tribalism have featured regularly in the newspapers and on popular radio programmes like GABZ FM's *Hot Potato*.

The timing of the upsurge in tension and competing claims is significant. Selolwane (2000) links this development to the fact that Botswana 'has matured enough to deal with sectional interests and

problems of group discrimination without fear of destroying national unity and stability'. She also sees it as reflecting Botswana as part of a global village, with citizens who are in tune with happenings elsewhere, thanks to the revolution in information technology. Batswana are aware of the fact that the end of the Cold War has 'unshackled democracy across the globe, putting more pressure on states to widen the boundaries of participatory politics and more accountable forms of governance'. Much closer to home, the 'demise of apartheid in South Africa and Namibia, and the replacement of their racist constitutions by new democratic constitutions offering greater, more inclusive human rights', have set new regional standards and 'rendered Botswana's own democracy wanting, in comparison' (Selolwane 2000: 14–15). In addition, members of the Batswana elite are able to monitor and draw from ongoing debates and events in Africa and elsewhere on identity politics and issues such as citizenship, the rights of marginalised minorities or majorities, globalisation and immigration (Halisi et al. 1998; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999b, 2000; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000; Bayart et al. 2001; Crush and McDonald 2001b; Werbner and Gaitskell 2002; Werbner 2004; Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004).

However, a closer look at Botswana reveals a liberal democracy less uncontested and free of hurdles than is often claimed. It has been noted for many parts of Africa that patterned democracy in the form of institutional structures has not necessarily given rise to participatory politics, nor to the enhancement of human rights beyond token legalisms and the proliferation of associations and NGOs of various kinds (Ibrahim 2003; Arrous 2003). Kenneth Good argues that this is also the case in Botswana, where over thirty-five years of multiparty politics have resulted in little more than 'elite democracy' (1999a, 2002), and where a booming economy has not necessarily yielded better opportunities and higher standards of living for the masses in general, and the destitute Basarwa minority in particular (1999b). It is obvious that structures alone cannot provide the economic well-being and strategic mobilisation needed for effective participation and the formation of long-term civil society organisations with a minimum measure of stability. Basic material security is needed to take attention and time away from the struggle for bare survival, towards the construction of a vibrant civil society that guarantees

human rights beyond rhetoric. This makes of democracy an unending project, an aspiration that is subject to renegotiation with changing circumstances and growing claims by individuals and groups for recognition and representation (Nyamnjoh 2005: 1–39).

Whether or not in the past Botswana actually enjoyed a national consensus, free of ethnic tension, that is not the case now. Long-standing assumptions of citizenship and nationhood are being questioned in ways very similar to what has been observed elsewhere in Africa during this era of globalisation (Halisi et al. 1998; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 1998, 2000; Bayart et al. 2001; Mamdani 2001; Akindès 2003, 2004; ICG 2004; Harnischfeger 2004; Alubo 2004). As Solway notes, minorities in Botswana are employing a variety of methods (which include the formation of cultural organizations, support for political opposition parties that have demonstrated greater sympathy with minority interests, and direct challenge to the constitution and government policies) to seek better 'political representation, material entitlements, and cultural recognition' for themselves as groups (2002). However, President Mogae has urged such cultural organisations to demonstrate that their activities contribute to nation-building and the enrichment of national culture, by taking seriously and dispelling 'public perceptions that some of these associations are para-political with a hidden agenda and masquerading as cultural organisations'.[4]

Recently the focus has been the provisions of sections 77, 78 and 79 of Botswana's constitution, which have been criticised by minority 'tribes' for mentioning only the eight Setswana-speaking 'tribes'. The constitution thereby relegates all other tribes to a minority status, and provides a basis for discrimination along ethnic lines. Evidence of such discrimination include: inequalities of access to tribal land and administration; an educational and administrative policy that privileges the use of Setswana to the detriment of twenty minority languages, thereby denying the latter the opportunity to develop and enrich Botswana culturally; and unequal representation of cultural interests in the House of Chiefs, which is responsible for advising government on matters of tradition, custom and culture. Critics of the constitution have argued that such discrimination is contrary to the spirit of democracy and equality of citizenship (Selolwane 2000: 13; Mazonde 2002; Werbner 2002a, 2002b, 2004).

The Balopi Commission, appointed in July 2000 by President
Festus Mogae to investigate and report on discriminatory articles of
the constitution, made public its report in March 2001 (Republic
of Botswana 2000: 93–110). The commission was both radical and
conservative in its findings, but endorsement of any of its more radical
recommendations was more likely to be hailed by minority groups
than by Tswana with their vested interests in the status quo.

It is therefore not surprising that an initial government draft
White Paper informed by the Balopi Commission Report met with
approbation from the minority tribes and resistance from the Tswana
majority. The situation pushed President Mogae, who is himself from
a minority tribe, Batalaote, to embark on a nationwide explanation
tour of different *kgotla*. The initial White Paper was criticised by the
major tribes, who saw it as aimed at eroding chieftaincy in Botswana,
by emphasising territoriality over birthright, and viewed it as dividing
the nation by 'placating minority tribes to the detriment of the
rights of tribes that are mentioned in the Botswana Constitution'.[5]
Particularly distasteful to the major tribes was the amendment of
certain sections of the constitution, and membership of the House
of Chiefs. On the latter, the draft White Paper had argued that 'it
makes sense to remove the ex-officio status in the membership of
the House and subject each member of the House to a process of
designation by *morafe*. The same individual may be redesignated for
another term if *morafe* so wishes.' In drafting the White Paper, a
central concern was to ensure that 'territoriality rather than actual
or perceived membership of a tribal or ethnic group should form
the fundamental basis for representation in the House of Chiefs.' The
discriminatory sections 77, 78 and 79 of the constitution were to be
replaced with new sections 'cast in terms calculated to ensure that no
– "reasonable" – interpretation can be made that they discriminate
against any citizen or tribe in Botswana'. The draft White Paper
also endorsed the creation of new regional constituencies, 'which
are neutral and bear no tribal or ethnic sounding names'. Regions
were to have electoral colleges of 'Headmen of Record' up to head
of tribal administration to designated members, and each region was
to be entitled to one member of the House. The president would
appoint three special members, 'for the purpose of injecting special
skills and obtaining a balance in representation'.

However, under pressure from the major tribes, President Mogae reportedly backtracked on some key aspects of the draft White Paper, such as more equal representation in the House of Chiefs and change of names of some regions. He appointed a panel to redraft the relevant sections in time for submission to parliament. In a 'war of words' meeting with Bangwato in Serowe, the president was told:

> It is of course fair that some [minor] tribes should be represented at the House of Chiefs, but their chiefs should still take orders from Sediegeng Kgamane [acting paramount chief of Bangwato]. We do not want chiefs who will disobey the paramount chief and even oppose him while there [in the House of Chiefs].[6]

In his retraction statement, President Mogae stressed that as the country was a democracy, it was only proper for his government to draft 'the white paper in good faith with the intention of telling the nation what we as government thought was the best way to implement the motion passed by parliament'.[7] The revised White Paper, which reintroduced ex officio status as 'permanent' membership and raised the number from eight to twelve, increasing the total membership of the House to thirty-five, was finally adopted by parliament in May 2002. The four additional ex officio members will be chiefs from the districts of Chobe, Gantsi, North East and Kgalagadi, elevated to paramount status, while the traditional eight from the Tswana tribes will be maintained.[8]

The adopted revised White Paper was rejected by most minority tribes, some of whom, acting as a coalition of elites from different minorities, petitioned President Mogae, claiming that the changes were 'cosmetic', and accusing the government of having succumbed to pressure from Tswana tribes. The authors of the petition, mostly prominent academics in Gaborone, argued:

> As a general issue, we are rather unhappy with the fact that while the Tswana-speaking tribes were consulted and indeed some modification made on the basis of their inputs before the paper was adopted by Parliament, the non-Tswana were consulted after the paper was adopted. This served as a psychological oppression to disillusion these tribes. It reflected on the ethnic imbalance, as to who gets listened to in this country and who does not.

They argued that the revised and adopted White Paper had merely
entrenched Tswana domination over other tribes by simply translating
from English into Setswana terms such as 'House of Chiefs' (*Ntlo
Ya Dikgosi*) and 'Chief' (*Kgosi*), oblivious of the fact that minority
tribes have different appelations for the same realities (e.g. 'Chief':
She for Bakalanga, *Shikati* for Bayei).

The petition accused the government of having betrayed its
original intention to move from ethnicity to territoriality as a basis
for representation, by yielding to Tswana pressure to maintain their
tribal identities and to be represented by chiefs who assume office
by virtue of birth. 'While the Tswana chiefs will participate on the
basis of their birth right as chiefs of their tribes, the non-Tswana
groups will be elected to the House as subchiefs, that is, of an
inferior status.' On the contrary, 'territoriality as a basis of representa-
tion is only applicable to the non-Tswana-speaking tribes' as 'their
dominant ethnicities remain unrecognised', even for the four regions,
which will henceforth have the option to elect representatives or
paramount chiefs. And, what is worse, non-Tswana tribes will not
even participate in the election of their chiefs to the *Ntlo Ya Dikgosi*,
since the chiefs 'will be elected by government employees serving as
subchiefs and chiefs and by the Minister'. They considered this process
'undemocratic as it takes away the people's rights to participate in
the selection of those who should represent them in the House of
Chiefs'. Also, while it is possible for homogenous Tswana-speaking
regions to have more than one paramount chief (e.g. Balete and
Batlokwa for the south-east district, and Barolong and Bangwaketse
for the southern district), this was not possible for other regions
shared by Tswana and other tribes (e.g. Tawana and Bayei of the
north-west district).

The petition also called for 'the repeal of tribalistic names of land
boards, which promote the entrenchment of Tswana domination over
the rest of the tribes', and insisted that the so-called 'lack of land'
of the minorities must not 'stand in the way of the recognition of
our paramount chiefs, as we the tribes have and live on our own
land'.[9] It was clear, they argued, that 'the discrimination complained
of has not been addressed', as 'The White Paper fails to make a
constitutional commitment to the liberty and recognition of, and the
development and preservation of, the languages and cultures of the

non-Tswana speaking tribes in the country, other than the ethnic Tswana.' Instead, it has entrenched Tswanadom; but 'the Tswana speakers will not enjoy their superiority at the expense of our justice under discriminatory laws.'[10] Other voices critical of the revised White Paper claimed it had left unresolved the fundamental issue of tribal inequality, and had actually brought things 'back to square one'. The ruling Botswana Democratic Party and government had demonstrated that they were for the interests of the eight principal tribes and the chosen few, making it difficult for the minority tribes to 'trust a government like this one'.[11] Werbner (2002c, 2004: 86–108) situates the significance of this petition not only in its content, but also as a landmark in alliance politics, arising from the political learning which the debate itself generates.

While every Botswana national (sing. *Motswana*, pl. *Batswana*) can legally claim to be a citizen or a 'local', some, such as BaKalanga, are perceived in certain Tswana circles as less authentic citizens or locals. Indeed, they are presented as having more in common with *Makwerekwere*[12] from Zimbabwe and further north than with the other Batswana. The fact that they are generally more industrious and relatively more successful in education and business, and in creating cosmopolitan links with foreigners (Werbner 2002a, 2004: 63–85; Selolwane 2000), only makes their citizenship and belonging more problematic to their Tswana 'hosts'. BaSarwa, or, according to their own designation, San, for their part, although the most local in terms of longevity in the territory, are dismissed as less rightful owners of the country because of their inability to harness the land through agriculture and permanent settlements. By giving priority to agro-pastoral and residential usages of land as key determinants of the definition of land rights, policymakers have denied BaSarwa the right to land where they have hunted, gathered and kept livestock for centuries if not millennia (Wilmsen 1989: 158–94; Madzwamuse 1998). This effectively denies the BaSarwa the right to determine who they are, where they are, how they are and why they are, thereby stunting both their indigenous and their national citizenships (Saugestad 2001). The fact that the name of the country and its citizens derives directly from the dominant Tswana tribes speaks for whom Botswana primarily belongs in political and cultural terms.[13] This explains, in part, why elite members of some minority ethnic groups like BaKalanga

opted for an ethnic submission to the Balopi Commission, with some arguing for a change of name from 'Botswana' to 'Kgalagadi' to honour the very first occupants of the territory.[14] As Andrew Murray notes, the definition of the 'nation' has been 'manipulated to provide Tswana culture with a monopoly of political legitimacy in Tswanadom's new guise, the Republic of Botswana' (1990: 35). While all may be Batswana in relation to immigrants and to the outside world, not everyone is a Motswana in terms of ethnic identity and national politics. Some have maintained advantages and privileges inherited from the colonial era, and even greatly magnified in the postcolonial politics of nation-building (Parsons et al. 1995; Ramsay et al. 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997; Volz 2003). Others are yet to enjoy the recognition and representation they think they deserve in a democracy. Citizenship and belonging, even for nationals of the same country, are a matter of degree.

Press and Ethnicity:
BaKalanga as *Makwerekwere* with Citizenship

The upsurge in accusations and counter-accusations on issues of ethnic belonging and access to power and resources in Botswana, noticeable in the press and highlighted in the Balopi Commission on the constitution, speaks for the continuous attractions of group and cultural solidarities in the face of the insecurities (real, imagined or induced) and uncertainties of neoliberal possibilities. Ethnic or 'tribal' identities that were constructed or appropriated by the colonial state are being drawn upon by citizens of the postcolonial state either to fight against inherited discrimination or to protect a heritage of privileges. Batswana, even the most modernised of them, seem reluctant to be identified only as national citizens. They would like to be ethnic citizens as well, and to straddle the world of cultural or ethnic solidarities with the world of the autonomous rights-bearing individual emphasised by liberal democracy. Few of them, it seems, are too cosmopolitan to be local as well, and it is fascinating to watch elites distribute their time between their modern workplaces in Gaborone and Francistown, on the one hand, and their home villages and cattle posts in the lands, on the other (Werbner 2002a, 2004: 63–85).

However, the prevalent rhetoric on democracy has not been too keen to acknowledge and provide adequately for such group dimensions in the reality of Batswana and fellow Africans. Yet in parts of Africa struggles for cultural rights include cases of disenfranchised majorities seeking redress against a state controlled by a minority, as was and still largely remains the case in South Africa, where the white minority effectively controls virtually all cultural industries and institutions of cultural reproduction. The fact is that liberal democracy promises political, economic and cultural enrichment for all, but is able to provide only for a few, and in uncertain ways. Its rhetoric of opening up, and of abundance, is sharply contradicted by the reality of closures and of want for most of its disciples within and between states.

Newspaper representations offer a window on the questioning of certain aspects of liberal democracy by Batswana, even if mostly elite and privileged urban-centred voices are articulated in their pages. To this end and for what they are worth, I have collected relevant newspaper articles, and interviewed newspaper editors, on issues of ethnicity and identity. Concerning newspaper presentations, a few examples will suffice to illustrate their level and angle of involvement with ongoing debates on rights and entitlements. The private press has consistently challenged President Festus Mogae's attitude to the poor, and his uncompromising stance against bulldozer-threatened squatters in Mogoditshane, a suburb of Gaborone. Busisiwe Mosiiemang of *Mmegi* was devastated to listen to the minister of lands declare on Botswana Television (BTV) that he had ordered the Kweneng Land Board 'to demolish more than 5,000 houses in Mogoditshane because Kweneng Land-Board had not allocated the land to the owners', whom it regards as 'illegal occupants, squatters or "maipaafela".… But even squatters have human rights. A more humane way of carrying out this exercise would have been to aim at a negotiated settlement and to avoid the use of force and violence.'[15] The *Botswana Guardian* accused the president and his government of displaying a 'casual approach to poverty eradication', and criticised him for claiming that Botswana's poverty was overstated.[16] On the other hand, the president is portrayed as 'shrinking' to the whims and caprices of his vice-president and *Kgosi* (chief), Ian Khama, even if this implies breaking the law.[17] The paper has also been at

the forefront of dramatic reports on the upsurge in tribalism and overt tensions among the constituent majority and minority ethnic groups of Botswana.[18] The reality of insecurities and uncertainties has occasioned anxieties among the poor, who feel that only an elite few are benefiting from advantages and privileges. In times of abundance and certainty, it may not really matter who truly belongs in Botswana, but as economic prosperity and opportunities become uncertain, even in the heart of assumed or real prosperity, people are extra-critical about entitlements to citizenship and the advantages or privileges that come with it.

As Deborah Durham remarked among the Herero, an ethnic minority group in Mahalapye, citizenship has tended to be articulated 'around access to the resources of the state and the country'. Her fieldwork, which began between 1988 and 1989, coincided with the government's decision to issue national identity cards to all citizens, in order, according to those she interviewed, to 'prevent non-citizens from taking away resources from Batswana. Non-citizens ... were passing themselves off as Batswana – this was especially likely for South African Tswana ... – and taking land, jobs, and (scarce) places in schools' (Durham 1993: 116–19). With the intensification of globalisation and a heightened sense of belonging, Batswana have become even more critical towards one another's citizenship. As the following paragraphs show, belonging in Botswana is neither to be taken for granted nor a permanent reality even for those who would legally be considered Batswana, but a privilege requiring constant renegotiation with changing economic and political circumstances.

In a case analogous to Mbongeni Ngema's 'AmaNdiya' in South Africa (see Chapter 1), in July 2000 *Mmegi Monitor*[19] published an open letter by a 'Concerned Motswana Citizen' accusing 'Makalaka' (BaKalanga) of being from Zimbabwe, of using their tribalism to monopolise economic opportunities and public-service jobs, and of being hungry for power over 'real Batswana'. While this letter pointed to evidence of cracks in the national consensus, which supposedly had kept Botswana in one piece for thirty-four years, *Mmegi Monitor*'s publication of it was criticised in certain circles as repugnant. Two months later, another opinion piece was featured in the *Mmegi*, accusing BaKalanga of hypocrisy by screaming oppression and constitutional discrimination, while 'in things that matter most

to individuals' daily lives they are the most intolerable, tribalistic and frustrating group of people'. BaKalanga, according to this opinion, were frustrating the ambitions of the very Tswana whom they accused of dominance, by monopolising positions in the state bureaucracy, and organising clandestine nocturnal meetings to frustrate them even further.

These concerns in the media were preceded by the conference on 'Challenging Minorities, Difference and Tribal Citizenship in Botswana' in May 2000, at which BaKalanga were the most prominent and the most vocal minority. The keynote address by Richard Werbner dwelled on *cosmopolitan ethnicity*[20] as a coping mechanism used by the BaKalanga elite to foster inter-ethnic partnerships without sacrificing difference entirely (Werbner 2002a, 2004: 63–85). The conference was reported to have 'raised a storm' in Tswana circles, and newspapers singled out a paper by Anderson Chebanne (a Kalanga who is a University of Botswana senior lecturer and vice-dean), which pointed out that language rights were human rights, and lamented the fact that in a country of at least twenty minority languages, 'only one language, Setswana, has a status which has made it to benefit from the developments of the last three decades' (Chebanne 2002: 47).[21] In this regard and for being very vociferous, BaKalanga, Selolwane notes, while not 'the only ethnic group who could claim to have sacrificed their language and culture for the greater ideal of nation-building', have been singled out in particular for attacks by others who perceive them to have benefited disproportionately in material and economic terms (Selolwane 2000: 17–18).

This is a point shared by Methaetsile Leepile (former editor of *Mmegi* and a staunch Tswana critic of 'doublespeak among Bakalanga intellectual spokespersons'), who considers the BaKalanga elite as not only having the lion's share of opportunities, but of being dishonest about their power and influence. This elite, contrary to what they claim, 'are not working for national unity, peace and development'. To him, 'they are in fact in a position to dictate the tempo and direction of change and to make strategic interventions when it suits their peculiar interests'. In this regard, while 'the Kalanga elite has always been resentful of other people', of late 'they have attempted to embrace other ethnic groups in their fight against what they perceive to be majoritarian over-rule'. BaKalanga rhetoric of marginalisation, he

argues, conceals the fact of their dominance and elite status in various spheres of life in Botswana. He singles out the ethnic composition of the public service and uses the judiciary (where allegedly seven of the thirteen Batswana judges are Kalanga and only two come from 'the so-called principal eight *merafhe* [tribes]') to show how dominant BaKalanga really are. The BaKalanga struggle, like that of the Bayei spearheaded by Lydia Nyati-Ramahobo (Nyati-Ramahobo 2002),[22] is not so much 'for linguistic and cultural recognition, but the quest for power and control of the resources of this country by those people who already possess or have a measure of control of these things'.[23] In general he argues that 'the Bakalanga are very well placed in positions of power and influence' and that 'It is the Bakalanga who are marginalizing other ethnic groups not the other way round' (Leepile 2001).

Leepile's paper was initially submitted to *Mmegi* for publication. But *Mmegi* editor Sechele Sechele[24] was reluctant to publish it, considering it reminiscent of Rwanda- and Burundi-type rhetoric, and that socially responsible journalism had to prevail. He felt that members of the general public, who did not have the discipline of his journalistic training, might 'overflow their emotions' with devastating effect for national unity and survival. This is a view in tune with a statement by President Mogae at a fundraising dinner for the Society for the Promotion of Ikalanga Language (SPIL): that while it is important for groups to assert their cultural identities, it is worth noting that 'Elsewhere in the world, affirmations of different-ness and a feeling of apartness made it extremely difficult to hold nation states together, often with tragic consequences.'[25] Excerpts of a leaked copy of Leepile's paper were eventually published by *The Voice* with the front-page caption: 'Tribalism: Bakalanga Accused of Corruption and Nepotism'.[26] According to the editor of *The Voice*, Beata Kasale,[27] it was about time the Batswana press and people ceased sweeping under the carpet issues of tribalism.

> There is a lot of tribalism … and nepotism. But people don't want to talk about it. This is a common trend in the country for people to be afraid to talk about issues, which is why *The Voice* has always led on very sensitive issues.

According to Kasale,

in the past, there was reason for the Tswana to think they were kings and the Kalanga servants. But the situation has changed. The Kalanga are now more powerful. They are the kings and the Batswana have become servants and they don't want to admit that.

Mike Mothibi, editor of the *Midweek Sun*,[28] agrees that the press cannot afford to stay indifferent to tribalism and identity politics, or to behave as if Botswana were an exception in Africa. He believes that the press has tended to react rather than to set the agenda that seeks to inform and direct debate on issues of ethnicity and belonging. In his view, this could, in part, be explained by inadequate training for journalists, and the fact that Batswana academics have regrettably been disappointing in their contributions to the debates. This, however, does not mean that academics have been absent from this controversy. Academics are indeed big players in the ethnicity debate, and the University of Botswana a hotbed on these issues. But academics may not have offered newspapers the intellectual vision, direction, guidance and dispassionate analysis the editors would like to promote. To Mike Mothibi, if BaKalanga are at the forefront of those raising the issue of minority rights in Botswana, it is because they are the most educated, and the most in tune with global trends. 'Enlightenment helps people see things in a different way.'

Batshani Ndaba[29] is editor of the *Sunday Tribune*, a paper he started publishing on 16 April 2000. He is Kalanga and was president of the Society for the Promotion of Ikalanga Language (SPIL). He was a signatory both to a BaKalanga submission to the Balopi Commission, and to another document to President Mogae by some BaKalanga challenging the conclusions of the Balopi Commission.[30] Ndaba agrees with the editors who initially turned down Leepile's paper: 'They were responsible enough not to publish such a divisive and problematic piece.' He believes that Leepile is not the sole author of the paper, that he might actually be 'only an exhaust pipe' for 'an engine that is running elsewhere'. 'Very well-known anti-Kalanga people are with him and they are just using him as a person who has been in the media.' The creation, shortly afterwards, of *Pitso ya Batswana*, an elite association that defines itself principally in opposition to SPIL even as it claims a mission of protecting and defending Tswana cultural values, could be seen as a vindication of Ndaba's claims that Leepile was only the mouthpiece of a much larger

majoritarian backlash. In March 2002 Leepile resigned as CEO of the Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF) to start the first Setswana paper since independence, *Mokgosi* (The Echo).

Asked to situate growing anti-Kalanga sentiments in certain circles, Ndaba pointed to several factors, which include 'a long-standing war between BaKalanga and Setswana speaking stock'. According to him, Bakalanga have never forgotten or forgiven the humiliation of a *She* (chief) of theirs, John Madawo Nswazwi, by chief Tshekedi Khama of the BaNgwato, 'because he had refused to be made a second-class citizen in his country of birth'.[31] A second factor is that 'BaKalanga are hardworking'. According to Ndaba, BaKalanga have invested a lot in schooling, which explains much of their achievement under the postcolonial state. For him, unlike their Tswana counterparts who had land and cattle to tend, BaKalanga 'are people who have had no land, no opportunity to have tribal land of their own, where you could look after your father's cattle as a heritage; and the only way you could survive in future was to get an education and get a job'. Having invested in education, it is hardly surprising, Ndaba argues, that BaKalanga should qualify for various levels of expertise in present-day Botswana. 'A lot of BaKalanga are now occupying fairly influential positions, not because they are BaKalanga but because of merit, qualification, experience and those are some of the basis for appointing people to positions of responsibility.' A final factor, according to Ndaba, is that 'BaKalanga, unlike other so-called minority groups, have refused to be ruled over and subjugated to inferiority status by another so-called majority, and therefore that is why we are hated.… We have refused.'

Changing Attitudes towards Foreigners in Botswana

The 2001 census put the population of Botswana at 1,680,863, with slightly over a tenth (186,007) resident in Gaborone, the administrative and economic capital. Francistown, the second largest city and economic centre, has a population of 83,023. The census put the number of documented foreigners in Botswana at 32,506 (17,930 males, 14,576 females), with most of them resident in Gaborone and Francistown. Of this number, 98.1 per cent originate from SADC states, 1.2 per

cent from other African states, 0.4 per cent from Asia, 0.2 per cent from Europe, and 0.1 per cent from America/Oceania. Geographical proximity, socio-economic and political integration, socio-cultural affinities, economic downturns and political repression account for the heavy presence of nationals from SADC countries, mostly from South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia. Although poorly represented among documented immigrants, Zimbabweans are very heavily present in the informal sector, and thousands of them circulate to and from Zimbabwe and Botswana on a daily, weekly or monthly basis (Bulatao 2003; Gwebu 2003). The number of undocumented migrants from Zimbabwe and elsewhere is difficult to establish, but the rising xenophobia is a clear indication that their presence is significant and considered a threat by citizens and documented immigrants.

The surge in the politics of difference and claims to recognition and representation among Batswana as individuals and groups has coincided with an increased awareness of the distinction between 'locals' and 'foreigners'. This awareness is deeply informed by concerns regarding the opportunities and economic entitlements under the diamond boom that has, since the 1970s, attracted an impressive number of immigrants, 'particularly skilled immigrants' (Oucho 2000; Campbell and Oucho 2003; Van Dijk 2003). But just as Motswana are far from a single, certain, homogeneous category, so those who are foreign are a mixed bag of expatriates (mostly whites characterised by high salaries and gratuities), whites or *Makgowa* (who may or may not be expatriates, but who are mostly from the UK and South Africa and involved in businesses of various kinds),[32] Asians (Indians and Chinese in the main, and mostly businessmen and women), and *Makwerekwere* (blacks from other African countries, some of whom are expatriates, and most of whom are perceived as illegal immigrants).

Like the citizenship of ethnic minorities such as Bakalanga and BaSarwa, the residence and immigrant status of *Makwerekwere* are most vulnerable to question and revision by the locals, compared to those of Asians or whites, in that order. And among *Makwerekwere*, Zimbabweans are those whose presence is most contested and most devalued by locals, who perceive them 'as monsters taking over Batswana jobs and depriving them of the right of enjoying the comfort of their wealth', even if they are appreciated by employers

for their 'hard work, competence and commitment',[33] and for their willingness 'to do manual [odd] jobs that Batswana shun'.[34] According to the chief immigration officer at Ramokgwebana border post, in 1999 the number of Zimbabweans crossing into Botswana ranged from 6,000 to 7,000 daily during the first and the last week of every month, and from 3,000 to 4,000 per day during the second and third week of the month.[35] In 2000, it was reported that about 1,000 illegal immigrants, mostly from Zimbabwe, were repatriated every month, and the police were said to have apprehended and deported over 19,330 illegal immigrants by September 2001.[36] The government was said to have decided to build a P43 million (US$8.6 million[37]) separate holding prison for illegal immigrants because prisons were overcrowded. The minister of labour and home affairs reportedly appealed to Batswana to help government fight the influx of illegal immigrants, which was unhealthy as locals were disadvantaged, and the illegal immigrants prone to crime.

> The price of hosting the influx of Zimbabwean economic refugees is no doubt too high to pay as it comes in the form of rising imported crime that manifests itself in robberies, illegal working and trading, border jumping, prostitution, overcrowding, forging of work and resident permits, you name it.[38]

In March 2001, a Botswana government lorry transporting illegal Zimbabwean immigrants for deportation was involved in an accident and fifteen of its fifty passengers died. The reports in the press were more critical of illegal immigration than concerned with the tragedy, the loss of human life, or the reasons why thousands of Zimbabweans are emigrating to Botswana, South Africa and elsewhere.[39]

Makwerekwere – Zimbabweans especially – are more commonly looked down upon as economic migrants than the rest, and they are the most likely victims of police harassment,[40] public prejudice, stereotyping and debasement. However, victimised and discriminated against though they may be, Zimbabweans are reportedly 'not deterred, believing that nothing, not even death, could be worse than the poverty and harassment they experience back home, where the economy is at its lowest ebb and political violence and intimidation are the order of the day'.[41] Often pictured as coming from countries experiencing sharp economic downturns, *Makwerekwere* are perceived

among Batswana as having nothing to contribute but crime, scams and unemployment, even if they often see themselves as having much more to offer than their 'lazy Batswana' hosts (Campbell and Oucho 2003; Van Dijk 2003).[42]

In this connection, it is common to read about calls by locals for government to 'scrap expatriate allowances' for 'foreign' Africans. 'They need not be enticed because ... for them coming here is like going to the moon', given the 'very weak' economies of their home countries. Even Asians need not be given such allowances. On the contrary, 'We only need to give an expatriate allowance to people from countries with sound economies like the USA and Britain whom we have to beg to come here and show us how some of the things are done.'[43] Batswana need the space to be their own bosses (*makgowa*, the same word for whites), when they would have acquired enough of the modern technologies and sophistication of the ultimate bosses, whites (*dilo tsa makgowa, makgowa ba itse dilo*).[44] In other words, while Batswana stand to gain modernity (*se lo sa makgowa*) through association with the West, they stand to lose it through links with the rest. Some locals thus perceive a relatively thriving economy as an opportunity for strengthening their citizenship, and not something to be wasted away on migrants, least of all on those who have failed to prove themselves adequately in their home countries. Even the University of Botswana must be saved from the 'expatriates and scavengers' who have appropriated it to the detriment of Batswana, whose forefathers toiled very hard to build the institution.[45] According to this perception, if the government had reason for an open-door policy in the past because of scarce human resources and given the imperatives of national development, there was hardly any reason to continue in the same vein more than thirty-four years into independence when nationals have had the occasion to acquire competency and capabilities enough to take over their economy.

Newspapers are full of accounts by parliamentarians, members of the House of Chiefs, and Batswana from various walks of life about unscrupulous foreigners. The list seems endless: investors taking advantage of Botswana's generosity and favourable investment environment; Chinese traders flooding markets with *di-fong kong*[46] or absconding with wages of their employees after benefiting from

bribed to process passports of immigrants and issue residence permits at entry points.'[58] Sometimes feeling runs so high that people as well-placed as Chief Tawana Moremi, speaker of the House of Chiefs, are reportedly open and frank about their distaste for foreigners in public: 'I have every reason to hate foreigners, especially whites'; 'If I had the power many foreigners in Maun would go'; '[Chinese are] probably the most racist people in the world'. Reacting to a motion condemning 'expression of hatred tending to show that foreigners are unwelcome in Botswana', Chief Tawana argued that there is no reason to be welcoming to 'people who are inherently racist and who treat us like dogs with a motion like this one'.[59]

The press has regularly featured stories of shabby and racist treatment of Batswana by whites (especially *Maburu*) and Asians. In September 2000 the press widely reported with indignation the case of two census workers who were detained by a white farmer in the South East District, calling them Kaffirs working for a Kaffir government, and unleashing her dogs on them. A similar incident occurred to a Motswana and his friend, who were said to have gone to the home of a certain Desmond van Rooyen on a business appointment, but who instead were attacked by wild dogs and threatened with a gun by their swearing host. Employees on the Molepolole–Lephephe road project were said to complain 'of intimidation and assault by racist South African bosses [who] … used bad language' to them. In an editorial on the issue, *The Voice* wrote: 'This is a free country with free citizens given inalienable rights to happiness. Anyone who disrupts this happiness, be it by crime, corruption, racial hatred or any other misdeed belongs in a cage where they are no longer a threat to society.'[60] The press has also featured stories on racism in Botswana tourism, inspired by the experiences of Precious Williams, a black British journalist, who visited the Okavango Delta, and was surprised to discover that 'the Botswana tourism industry is run by racist whites with deep-seated prejudices'.[61] Some parliamentarians have called on the police to take such allegations more seriously and protect Batswana from racism. The government must sound 'a loud and clear warning that racism will not be tolerated in Botswana and that all the bad elements should be deported'.[62]

Attitudes towards foreigners are increasingly hardening, and government has promised to toughen immigration conditions and

'introduce machine-readable passports because the current ones are susceptible to forgery and photographs can be easily substituted'.[63] And, to demonstrate that Botswana is 'not a haven for criminals',[64] the government has stressed that law must be applied strictly against all those who dare to break it (regardless of race, creed, gender, nationality or international pressure), as was evidenced in the hanging of a white South African woman, Marietta Bosch, found guilty of murdering her lover's wife. Some parliamentarians have called for 'a campaign to cleanse Botswana of undesirable expatriates',[65] and even President Mogae has promised to 'get tough with aliens', especially illegal immigrants seeking greener pastures.[66] In the press, Botswana is said to be 'pulling the red carpet from under the feet of foreigners'. The focus has shifted from investment incentives that target foreigners to citizen empowerment schemes for Batswana. The 2001 'citizen empowerment' budget, described by the minister of finance and development planning as 'an effort to empower Batswana to participate meaningfully in the mainstream of the economy', was hailed by many nationals and considered by others as not going far enough, while some foreign investors believed it bad news for the economy. The government has created a Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), to take over the operations of financial assistance policy, and Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises programmes, which have cost more than they have benefited the state, increasing suspicion of government's plan 'to sideline foreign investors'.

While supporting these initiatives, some have also warned against them being 'used to prop up a small elite of unsuccessful business people who seem to be the beneficiaries of every scheme aimed at promoting Batswana', or to assist 'chancers who are most likely fronting for foreign interests'.[67] Hence the strong feeling that the new measures selectively favour rich Batswana and ignore the poor. *Mmegi* calls for protection of poor citizens against 'foreign land-grabbers' who 'have invaded low cost areas in Gaborone' and attacks government's naive belief that Botswana 'is an open economy and investors of any nature must have a culture of responsibility'. Government's attitude, *Mmegi* argued, accounted for the view that CEDA was 'a device or manipulation by the rich to use state funds to "protect"' their interests at a time when thousands of Batswana 'merely desire to have shelter over their heads'.[68]

Two years later, on 31 January 2003, the Association of Citizen
Development Consultants (ACDC), frustrated by the lack of a firm
foothold in the economy, published 'The Racism of Poverty' in
the *Botswana Guardian*, a statement castigating the government for
promoting a racist economy in the interest of whites and Indians, to
the detriment of black Batswana, who had made serious sacrifices in
the interest of national development. Here are some excerpts:

> There is a popular story of creation involving a white man, an
> Indian and a black man. When God asked each one of these what
> they wanted the white man responded that he wanted to be smart,
> the Indian that he wanted to have money. The black man responded
> that he was only accompanying the others.
>
> Botswana's economy is founded on diamonds; it is black tribes
> who gave up their mineral rights for the benefit of this country and
> its inhabitants. It is whites and Indians who control the economy
> founded on what black people gave up. It is black people who
> constitute the poorest of the poor, not whites or Indians. It is whites
> and Indians who are economically empowered. Every time black
> citizens call for economic empowerment schemes with benchmarks
> and a body to monitor implementation of these schemes, they are
> told by black leaders that it is not entitlement. Entitlement is when
> one or two race groups dominate an economy founded on what
> another race group gave up for the sake of the country. What have
> whites and Indians got that entitles them to a bigger share in an
> economy founded on what black people donated?
>
> It is black Batswana who constitute the 40% of our people that
> live below the poverty datum line, not Batswana of Indian or white
> origin. Poverty in Botswana is race-based just like economic disem-
> powerment. It is black Batswana-owned companies which are mar-
> ginalised in terms of award of works, not Indian- or white-owned
> companies.
>
> In order to get black Batswana out of poverty our black leaders
> must embrace the concept of empowerment, fully, without reser-
> vation, and stop qualifying it by saying it is not entitlement. No
> black citizen ever asked for a handout from government. What we
> want and are entitled to is a stake in an economy founded on what
> belongs to us....
>
> Our black leaders lack the courage to be equals with their white
> and Indian counterparts. If our leaders do not have this courage,
> how do they expect an ordinary black citizen to believe in himself
> or herself?

…Our black leaders should stop indulging in pointless arguments
about empowerment and establish quotas, targets and benchmarks
for black citizen participation in the economy of this country.

The statutory framework enabling our black leaders to establish
targets and benchmarks has been in place since July 2002. Why do
they not want to use this framework? A motion calling for establish-
ment of a statutory body to monitor implementation of citizen eco-
nomic empowerment policies has long been passed by parliament. If
the public service on which the political leaders rely cannot or does
not have the capacity to establish these, then such capacity can be
outsourced. ACDC is willing and able to assist for free.[69]

Such frustration is understandable, given how long it seems to be
taking government to fulfil its pledges, some of which were made
shortly after independence in 1966. In 1967, for instance, the govern-
ment had, upon observing that the economy was mostly dominated
by a handful of whites on 'expatriate' salaries, even when 'performing
tasks for which any exceptional qualifications or experience were
not required', adopted a policy aimed at 'the elimination of racial
discrimination and the furtherance of localisation in statutory corpora-
tions and private enterprise'.[70] In 1971 the government stipulated that
the employment of non-citizens was purely a temporary measure,
since 'no further permits will be issued for non-citizen occupants of
… [any] post' for which a citizen was suitably qualified. In general,
employers were warned to 'refrain from requesting renewal of first
grant of entry permits to non-citizens' when 'it is obvious that vacant
posts can be filled effectively by promotion or direct appointment of
competent citizens'.[71] Although localisation 'meant the replacement of
expatriates by citizens of Botswana, irrespective of their race',[72] not
only have expatriates continued to dominate the economy since 1967,
localisation has tended to favour better-qualified naturalised whites
and Indians, on the one hand, and the generally better-educated and
more cosmopolitan BaKalanga minority among black Batswana, on
the other. The concerned citizen above, like Methaetsile Leepile, *Pitso
ya Batswana* and others who complain against BaKalanga domination,
belongs to the Tswana majority ethnic grouping. An unpredicted
setback to government's localisation policy has been the HIV/AIDS
scourge, of which Botswana and South Africa are among the most
affected countries globally. The fact that the greatest victims of
the pandemic are young and often better educated than the older

generation has meant that expatriates have stayed on in posts even when Batswana have been trained to replace them.

The resurgence of citizen economic empowerment measures coincides with steps aimed at curbing the perceived advantages enjoyed by foreigners in other domains. The introduction of school fees for foreign students in state schools, the scrapping of certain expatriate benefits, the introduction of a tax on gratuities, and the decision to make foreigners pay for medical treatment at state hospitals and health centres from April 2002[73] are among the foreigner-disempowerment measures enacted of late. All these measures have reportedly 'set off alarm bells among the expatriate community, who feel the line between citizen empowerment and xenophobia has been blurred'.[74] Assaults against expatriates are also on the increase,[75] raising doubts regarding the reputation of Botswana as 'a safe place to invest in'.[76] Sometimes the negative stories in the press are too much, and a foreigner decides to sacrifice the 'silence is golden' approach, by responding to newspapers or programmes such as GABZ FM's *Hot Potato*. This was the case when the Ministry of Education issued a circular on 14 June 2001, claiming that Botswana had achieved self-sufficiency in primary- and secondary-school teachers, and would no longer recruit or renew the contracts of expatriate teachers. One such expatriate teacher, known simply as A. Gari, reposted in an article published in the *Midweek Sun*, from which the following excerpts are drawn:

> You benefited a lot from us through our coming here. So, it is uncivilised and ungrateful to belittle us through the media. Suddenly ministry officials have also joined in this expatriate bashing. We are fully aware that we are on contract and that it would expire one day and certainly it would be renewed only if you cannot get a citizen for replacement.... The ministry could have simply written to us directly rather than through the media. Now, it appears that we are refusing to leave....
>
> Remember, Botswana has nothing to boast of as its own except 'natural' diamonds.... God gave it this natural gift to buy 'brains' from other countries.[77]

Concerned by the rising xenophobia, the human rights NGO Ditshwanelo organised a one-day workshop on 6 April 2001 for

stakeholders on 'Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Other Related Intolerances in Botswana'. All local newspaper editors interviewed acknowledge the problem as real, and seek to link it with growing joblessness among Batswana and perceptions among 'locals' that 'foreigners' are having it easy, siphoning off the sweat of their labour, as it were. Some, however, feel that growing references to and concern with xenophobia are partly informed by similar concerns in South Africa (see Chapter 1). Given the level of dependence of South African electronic and print media, Batswana are literally at the mercy of the media fodder and agenda setters of South Africa. This notwithstanding, a growing number of foreigners are concerned with the level of xenophobia in the press, and especially worried by the fact that parliamentarians and members of the House of Chiefs have added their voice to the scapegoating of foreigners rather than seeking to temper such attitudes. A noteworthy exception to the growing intolerance is the foreign minister, Mompati Merafhe, who has warned his colleagues to be measured and responsible in their utterances. Reacting to calls in parliament to cleanse Botswana of undesirable foreigners, he had this to say:

> It would be pretentious for me not to recognise that there are indeed a few unscrupulous foreign individuals who have abused our hospitality and this should not be tolerated. However, this does not mean we should tar all foreign nationals in Botswana with the same brush. The overwhelming majority of foreign nationals who live and work in this country are highly committed and are making a major contribution to our national life in terms of economic, technical, social and even cultural development.
>
> Xenophobia should have no place in our nation. Our tolerance and hospitality have long captured the world's imagination and we are proud of this record and we should do everything we can to uphold it. I therefore appeal to Honourable Members, as leaders should not be the ones fanning the flames of nationalism lest we risk making our foreign guests feel unwelcome in our midst.[78]

Implications for Democracy and Citizenship

What the Botswana example shows is that democracy and citizenship are processes subject to renegotiation with rising expectations by individuals and groups. It also demonstrates the complexity of

citizenship and rights in an African context, where individual and group entitlements are both a reality and an aspiration. For one thing, political, cultural, historical and, above all, economic realities determine what form and meaning the articulation of citizenship and rights assume in any given context. The possession of rights is something individuals and groups may be entitled to, but who actually enjoys rights does not merely depend on what individuals and groups wish, or are entitled to under the law, by birth, or in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Globalisation and the accelerated flow of capital, goods, electronic information and migration it occasions have only exacerbated insecurities, uncertainties and anxieties in locals and foreigners alike, bringing about an even greater obsession with citizenship, belonging and the building or restoration of fences.

The Botswana case demonstrates that the resolution of uncertainties and anxieties is hardly to be found in a narrow and abstract definition of rights and citizenship, nor in a preoccupation with the politics of exclusion and difference within and between groups, local or foreign. The answer is not simply to shift from a state-based to a more individual-based universal conception of citizenship, as some scholars have suggested (Basok 2004), since this fails to provide for the rights of collectivities. The answer to the impermanence of present-day achievements, as suggested by Werbner in his study of *cosmopolitan ethnicity* in Botswana, lies in the incorporation of strangers without stifling difference, and in the building of new partnerships across those differences (Werbner 2002a, 2004: 63–85). The answer, to draw from Waldron (1995), is in a cosmopolitan life informed by allegiances to cultural meanings drawn from different sources in the rich repertoire of multiple encounters by individuals and groups alike. Englund talks of a cosmopolitanism informed by relationships that stress 'a deterritorialized mode of belonging' that makes it possible to feel at home away from home (Englund 2004a). President Mogae of Botswana shares this vision, as he declared in 2001: 'I expect all people – men and women – of tribally or regionally or racially mixed parentage to be the glue that holds this nation together.'[79] '[I]ncorporating and adapting foreign ideas and institutions, as well as … foreigners themselves' has largely accounted for Botswana's political success in the past (Murray 1990: 34). This is indeed a common trait

of African communities, where the emphasis has tended to be on inclusion, because of a mainstream philosophy of life, agency and responsibility that privileges wealth-in-people over wealth-in-things (Guyer 1993). Individuals and groups alike, national and foreign, must be allowed the creative interdependence to explore various possibilities for maximising their rights and responsibilities within the confines of the economic, cultural and political opportunities at their disposal. Inclusion, not exclusion, is the best insurance policy in the face of the uncertainties to which individuals and collectivities are subjected under global consumer capitalism. The media can find in this philosophy the inspiration needed for a vision and coverage in tune with the predicaments of their audiences, be these individuals or groups, minority or majority ethnic communities, citizens/nationals or immigrants. The challenge for the media is to capture the spirit of tolerance, negotiation and conviviality beneath every display of difference and marginalisation, encouraging acceptance as the way forward for an increasingly interconnected world of individuals and groups longing for recognition and representation.

Gender, Domesticity, Mobility and Citizenship

This chapter takes further the analysis of the complex intersections of race, geography, class, mobility and citizenship examined in Chapters 1 and 2. In order to do so, the further concepts of gender and domesticity are introduced. The hierarchies of humanity informed by race, geography, class and mobility generally serve to produce and reproduce institutions and citizenship configured around manhood. Yet similar hierarchies exist among women; these ensure that a collective and homogeneous sense of deprivation, disempowerment and devaluation will not necessarily prevail. The present chapter assesses the situation of maids globally and in South Africa, as a background against which to understand maids, mobility and citizenship in Botswana, from which the empirical analysis of gender, domesticity and citizenship is drawn.

Theorising Domesticity in Africa

To understand African encounters with elements of Western-derived domesticity (Hansen 1992a; Mama 1999), with 'harem domesticity' informed by the marriage of Islam and indigenous socio-religious values (Mack 1992), or indeed to comprehend the universal subjection of certain kinds of labour to the domestic whims and caprice of the elite few, it is important to consider encounters with capitalism,

slavery, colonialism and globalisation. Underlying these encounters are
assumptions about gender, race, class, citizenship and entitlements that
have fuelled and fed them (Romero 1988; Palmer 1989; Anderson
2000; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, 1997: 274–322; Schmidt 1992;
Anthias 2000; Horn 2001). While the contents and meanings of the
concept might vary according to culture and history (Comaroff and
Comaroff 1992, 1997: 274–322), domesticity is broadly 'concerned
with gender, space, work and power': space as a home, work as
home-keeping or preoccupation with domestic affairs, worker as
household servant or maid, and power as ability to control and
organise household affairs. Understanding this reality requires an
understanding of the 'changing and potentially contradictory mean-
ings about actors and agency, dependency and power, and about
the home as both an enclosed space and a political economy'.
But, as Hansen warns, there is nothing simple about this interplay,
given changing historical circumstances, economic shifts, and varying
socio-cultural realities. Hence the need for scholarship not only on
how Western notions of domesticity have shaped Africans but also,
and more importantly, on how, in their encounters with the West,
Africans have reformulated and appropriated aspects of Western
domesticity by mingling them with indigenous alternatives (Hansen
1992b: 2–14). This makes of domesticity in Africa a reality that is
subject to renegotiation by Africans as creative agents – even when
confronted with formidable structural constraints.

    This study of Botswana, which belongs to a region where the
dialectic of domesticity has played itself out in various ways with
various outcomes since the period of colonial encounters (Comaroff
and Comaroff 1992), situates itself with ongoing attempts at under-
standing maids and their dynamic reality both in Africa and elsewhere.
Known by a variety of appellations that may be pregnant with
'ambiguities and euphemisms' (Shah 2002: 90–92) – maids, nannies,
babysitters, domestics, domestic servants or workers, house girls,
house boys or house helps – those who seek employment within the
domestic sphere are predominantly female, and much of the focus
by scholars in this area has been on women (Romero 1988; Palmer
1989; Sweetman 1998; Anderson 2000; Anthias and Lazaridis 2000;
Wilson and Wilson 2000; Ehrenreich and Russell 2002). The current
study follows this pattern, even though domesticity is not and has

never been exclusively a women's issue (Miescher and Lindsay 2003: 4). As Janet Bujra's study of domestic service in Tanzania shows, there is clearly much to be learnt about male servants and garden boys in the domestic sphere (Bujra 1992, 2000). She observes that in Tanzania men (seen to be quicker to learn domestic skills on the job) are the preferred workforce by most employers. That they constitute the majority of formally employed servants (Bujra 1992: 244) is instructive, and should be pursued in studies of other countries and regions, in view of better situating the stereotypes that have tended to define domestic work primarily as 'women's work', and to assume a certain type of gender and ideological socialisation that goes with it. What women do as domestic workers is not simply an extension of their domestic role. In Tanzania, where most domestic workers come from rural areas, she argues, 'domestic service does not build automatically on pre-existing gender-related socialization', and 'women, far from having an advantage over men in the knowledge of appropriate domestic skills, would in fact have to unlearn familiar domestic habits, whereas men have no such conflicting socialization to break with' (Bujra 1992: 248–58). Similar studies, especially in west and central African regions, point to the same general tendency where 'men' from rural villages dominate urban domestic work as 'boys' (Deniel 1991), or as femininity without women (Miescher and Lindsay 2003: 12–16; Miescher 2003; Shear 2003; Brown 2003).

The Botswana study also focuses on maids who receive a wage, although it is noteworthy that, as in Victorian and Edwardian England (Davidoff 1974) and in Nepal (Shah 2002), African (and indeed some Batswana) employers resort to various culturally informed forms of compensating their domestic servants, ranging from payments in kind to education, informal training and patronage. In Liberia, for example, where a premium is placed on 'civilised households', a clear distinction exists between wage-earning 'house boys' and 'house girls', as a category, and 'servants', who enjoy a relationship of fosterage with civilised households that are not necessarily kin, but that have taken up the responsibility of training the servants in 'civilised practices' in exchange for services (Moran 1992). It is common practice in certain parts of Africa for urban dwellers to go back to their home villages or region for young girls, who are usually close or distant relations, to serve as maids and help with childcare. They are often not much

older than the children of the house, whom they are expected to take care of. They are more like elder sisters to the children. They are either compensated directly with cash, through learning a trade, by going to school, or whatever has been agreed upon between their employers and their parents. The idea is that they should be able to look back in the long term and recognise that they helped out with the children and received something substantial in return. Often, however, the anticipated benefits do not materialise for the girls in question (Busia 1991). As Bujra's work in Tanzania demonstrates, 'At best this relationship can be one of mutuality, at worst one of exploitative degradation' (Bujra 1992: 243). Although the emphasis is clearly on girls and women, boys and men are equally sought after, and in certain cases are viewed by employers as better and more suitable domestic workers, even if ideologies of masculinity often stop men from using their superior suitability to lighten the servitude of the women in their own domestic situations. 'A cook tells you that at home his wife cooks all the food, and most men are offended at the suggestion that they might assist with housework', even if they are ready to wash and iron their personal (best) clothes, since women are unlikely to know better (Bujra 1992: 242–7, 2000: 73–88). A Zambian man with experience as a cook for colonial whites claimed he was out of work because there were too few expatriates and too few jobs, yet he wouldn't cook for a Zambian household because 'I can't cook Zambian food.' In his own household, 'cooking was a woman's task', and his job as a cook was a skill 'that ceased on the threshold of his own household'. In any case, European cuisine would have been too expensive for him (Hansen 1992c: 274–6).

Initially, in much of colonial Africa, domestic work was done by men and women, and in certain cases men were construed (and sometimes construed themselves) as better suited for paid household work than women (Bujra 1992, 2000; Hansen 1992b: 18, 1992c). However, in light of the 'masculinist ethos of the colonisers' that tended to represent Africa metaphorically as one big female body which the white man sought to 'unveil, penetrate and despoil' (Mama 1999: 67), the question should be posed about the extent to which white employers actually believed there was any real difference between African men and women. 'There was an element of feminine meaning to making men domestics and calling them "boys" – tamed

sexuality – and this meaning was useful' for the project of, literally, engendering racial difference between the domesticated savage and the coloniser (Hunt 1992: 163). The term 'boys' was systematically used to refer to African 'men' at the workplace, even when they were employed in industry outside the domestic sphere (Brown 2003). This infantilisation and feminisation of African manhood and masculinity was also perceptible in the attire employers preferred. Tswana male servants, for example, 'at the insistence of their employers, [had] to don shorts and aprons, a form of dress that they found at once feminizing, infantilizing, and humiliating' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997: 249). As Whisson and Weil (1971: 37–38) observed in their study of domestic servants in Cape Town under apartheid, not only were 'children … reared to believe in the superiority of lighter people over darker people'; domestic workers were subject to a hierarchy of dress in which their inferior status was marked by old and second-hand clothes (possibly with an overall or apron), or a uniform.

This perceived devaluation and feminisation of African manhood has attracted much literary commentary, especially among male writers (Bujra 2000: 1–2; Schipper 1990a), whose treatment of the compulsion of African men to gratify whiteness could be likened to the zombie-like pursuit of Western education, which Okot p'Bitek denounces. In this literature, domestic service, like Western education, is seen to smash the testicles of the African man, leading to a loss of dignity and authority in the eyes of the African woman. He becomes 'like a dog of the white man', lying by the door to 'keep guard while waiting for left-overs' from the master's table. The man loses his 'fire' and bull-like prowess, preferring instead to live on borrowed food, wear borrowed clothes, use his ideas, actions and behaviour 'to please somebody else'. The shame brought by such domesticity is a rootless or sterile sense of cosmopolitanism, where the values the men have internalised command little authority within their families and communities. By yielding to supreme irrelevance, these men have sacrificed their legitimate claim to productive and reproductive manhood, and may as well be castrated (p'Bitek 1989: 91–6).

If African men could be made to do 'women's work' for white men and white women alike, generally passing for 'boys', it is no surprise that, initially, young women were not interested in such work. For the girls to sacrifice the productive and reproductive

capacity of their families and communities doubly meant the death of a people and their way of life. Hence they resisted as much as they could. Only the eventual creation and proliferation of (often mission-run) domestic science training centres targeting young girls (together with homecraft clubs in certain cases) softened African girls up to such imported 'Victorian notions of domesticity and wifely propriety'. They were then 'liberated' from the assumed inequalities of indigenous social structures only to to be subjected afresh to the diktats of capitalism steeped in race and class (Ranchod-Nilsson 1992; Denzer 1992; Musisi 1992).

In British settler colonies, for example, the fear of black male servants raping or molesting white women, and of white men making children with black maids (known respectively as 'black peril' and 'yellow peril') meant that Europeans were divided on whether African men or women were best suited as domestic servants (Schmidt 1992: 224; O'Donnell 1999). O'Donnell finds parallels between the 'black peril' that occasioned a number of rape scares in Southern Africa, which eventually 'resulted in colonial officials' suppression of male domestic workers', and the poison scares in German colonial Namibia that 'warned against the perceived treachery of African servants in settlers' homes', and resulted in the 'assault and murder of African subjects'. To O'Donnell, both had 'common origins in colonists' racial and patriarchal anxieties', though in the case of the Germans it was the African women, the Herero maids, who were identified as 'chief conspirators', and their 'sexuality and reproduction as sources of danger and disruption'. Hence, while 'the black peril hysteria provoked the castration and lynching of Africans', 'the German colonial poisoning scare was most influential in justifying specific forms of settler violence against female domestics' (O'Donnell 1999: 32–7). Curiously, in west and central Africa, where settler colonies did not exist, and white women were not that numerous, there was hardly the same obsession with 'black peril'. Affairs were more likely either between white women and white men, or between white men and black women, than between white women and their black servants. The fact also that the missionaries were mainly celibate Catholic priests kept the function of the servant largely confined to the African male as 'boy'. Regardless of colonial context, it is ironic that such obsessive and abusive display of power was often

by women who in Europe would have been too ordinary to afford domestic service (Schipper 1990a: 46–50).

In settler Southern Africa, however, it took the intermittent panics regarding the 'black peril' for African girls to be forced into domestic service in white households. Initially, even when the state became convinced, as in colonial Zimbabwe, that 'the employment of African women and girls in domestic labor would free African men for more productive work on European farms, in the mines, and in other primary industries of the territory', African women were usually unable or reluctant to assume domestic work for Europeans. This was partly because of the critical role they played in their own household economies, and partly because the Europeans tended to perceive them as more backward, incompetent and demanding than their African brothers. Threats of black and yellow perils notwithstanding, it was out of the question to employ European girls as domestic servants, since 'European women could not be seen performing the same menial tasks as their social inferiors' – Africans, who were generally perceived to be more suited to household chores. If today Africans share in divisions between men as breadwinners and women as reproducers of labour, and if domestic work has become mainly the affair of women, this was not the case during the colonial period, and hardly the order in precolonial Africa (Schmidt 1992: 221–37; O'Donnell 1999: 37; see also Mama 1999: 68–71). For example, 'the Yoruba expected women to take an active part in household production, in marketing surplus foodstuffs and other commodities, and in family and community decision making', in ways quite unfamiliar to their contemporary British counterparts. Women did not expect their husbands to provide full support for their households either, and women could use their earnings any way they liked (Denzer 1992: 117). Precolonial Africa and, to a lesser extent, colonial Africa were far more egalitarian and undifferentiated along gender and socio-economic lines than today's purportedly less patriarchal societies. As Ifi Amadiume has argued, far from all being subordinates to men, as is often erroneously claimed in studies informed by Western-inspired orthodoxies, women in precolonial Africa were structurally allowed to play roles usually monopolised by men, even if that meant becoming classified as 'men' in the process. Sex and gender did not necessarily coincide, as the dualistic thinking

in dominant Western orthodoxies suggests, where roles tend to be rigidly, narrowly and blindly masculinised or feminised in abstraction (Amadiume 1987). This made of precolonial Africa a place where 'masculinity' was possible without men – 'female masculinity', as women assumed 'positions or characteristics usually regarded as the preserve of men' (Miescher and Lindsay 2003: 4–5).

That the world of domestic work is today dominated by women derives from globalised Western assumptions about gender and power, which have tended to prescribe and legitimate the public sphere for men, while domesticating women (Anderson 2000: 162–6; Hansen 1992b: 3–4). The implications are that while men are free to seek employment and pursue possibilities outside of the home, women are generally tamed and contained by domestic chores. They can only graduate fully or temporarily from this situation by compounding the subjection of fellow (socially, politically or economically less well-placed) women. Maids and madams may both be subordinate to men, but they are not equal in terms of power, dignity and entitlement. While madams may sometimes feel treated as maids by the men in their lives, it is not often that maids feel treated as madams. The price of women's freedom to work outside the home, or to claim real or symbolic equality to men, is often the debasement of their humanity as women and internalisation of conflicts generated among them as a social category. Race, class and socio-economic status largely determine which women qualify to be co-opted by men into the public sphere to further the debasement of fellow women (Anthias 2000: 27). Hence, it is not only the high status of men and their economies of masculinity that are premised on the domestication or 'housewifisation' of women (Mama 1999: 68–71; Ranchod-Nilsson 1992: 200–204); status-seekers among women can only claim their space in the limelight of the public sphere through compounding the domestication, trivialisation or debasement of other women.

Madams and Maids as Citizens and Subjects in Apartheid South Africa

This hierarchy of humanity among women as 'madams' and as 'maids' finds excellent illustration in Jacklyn Cock's classic study of power relations between maids and their employers in the Eastern Cape

of apartheid South Africa (Cock 1980, 1981). In that study, Cock argued that maids and madams, although both 'victims of discrimination' that made them 'subordinate and dependent', experienced their dependence in very different ways. While the employment of maids was liberating to the madams – freeing them in various ways to pursue their leisure, undertake paid employment, engage in community issues, and even pursue some academic ambitions of their own – it was 'ultra-exploitation' for the mostly black women who serviced the domestic domain with their 'ultra-cheap' labour, to the detriment of their own families in the ghettoes or villages. Not only did Cock's study afford a space for the maids to voice their predicaments; it also drew attention to the social structures and historical processes that had silenced maids in the interest of unequal racial, gender and class relations. Domestic service, Cock argued, was 'the crudest, and most hidden, expression of inequality', as it exposed the double standards of white women seeking equality with white men, 'only to deny the human needs and feelings of African servants' through 'ultra-exploitation' and attitudes of racial superiority and condescension (Cock 1980: 1–2; see also Whisson and Weil 1971: 35–47).

By 'ultra-exploitation' Cock meant that maids were 'deprived of a negotiated wage, of reasonable working hours and of family and social life', and 'denied favourable working conditions, respectable treatment and any acknowledgement of the dignity of their labour, as well as specific legal protection, membership in an effective worker organisation and effective bargaining power'. As black women and as maids, their 'powerlessness, vulnerability or ultra-exploitability' was a direct consequence of the discrimination to which both blacks and women were subjected in apartheid South Africa. In other words, in addition to sharing a common sense of victimhood to 'sexual domination' with their white counterparts, black women were also victims of the 'racial domination' that provided white women with important mechanisms for mitigating the effects of structural exclusion informed by male gender biases (Cock 1980: 6–8, 240–41). Such insensitivity to black humanity is captured well in the following excerpt from a detailed catalogue of complaints by maids: 'The worst thing about my work is that everything is white. The walls are white. The two bathrooms are white. The beds are white. Even

the stoop is white. Only people who never clean a house will have everything white' (Randall and Becker 1987: 18).

Though united by the common experience of their femininity, white madams and black maids were divided by their respective realities of citizenship and subjection. While the madams could at least claim some political rights as 'citizens', the maids could only dream and hope for the day the burdens of ultra-exploitation would be lightened for them as 'subjects'. Under apartheid South Africa this was an extravagant dream with little prospect of fulfilment. For, as Cock observed, domestic workers played a significant role in the reproduction of labour power, not only through physical maintenance of the capacity to work, but also through maintenance of the dominant ideological order. She remarked that many white South African children learnt the attitudes of racial domination from domestic relationships with maids, but many blacks acquired the attitudes of submission and subservience desired by apartheid, and also the resentment it generated, through domestic service (Cock 1980: 8–9). Hence, while white children learnt to reproduce or challenge strategies 'of how to have cheap labour available when required, whilst eliminating the human element with its recreational and other social needs' (Whisson and Weil 1971: 2), black children learnt to cope with or resist their stunted, devalued and zombified humanity.

In most cases the black children were lucky to survive, let alone harbour hopes of citizenship. If they were sent to the homelands to stay with relatives because the madam did not want a maid with children, they risked dying of starvation or disease, since the homelands were poorer, jobless and less endowed with medical facilities. 'We are hungry here in the city, but in the homelands many people are starving', because 'the food is double the price' and people 'have no money'.

If the police did not raid at random for illegal migrants without passes, it was very difficult as a maid to have your family with you in the city. 'Nobody will give a job to a pregnant woman. And nobody will give a job to a woman with a small baby.' Moreover, 'it is too much to keep a baby when you are a caretaker. You have too many problems. You must keep the child quiet all the time. He has no place to play. You are scared he might break something and then you must pay.'

The decision to send one's children back to the homeland was never an easy one, and left the maids grieving most of the time. 'It is such a terrible thing for a mother to send her child away. It is such a terrible thing for a child to lose her mother.'

After a while, the child no longer knows them as their mother. 'My firstborn, Sipho, was just eleven months when the Inspectors came. They gave me 24 hours to take him to my sister. I can still hear him crying. He didn't understand. A month later it was Christmas. I went home to see him. But he didn't know me. This child who was in my thoughts by day and by night didn't know me.'

These regrets left permanent scars. 'For me the saddest thing in my life was to take my children on the train and come back without them' (Randall and Becker 1987: 13–72).

In rare situations when a madam allowed a live-in maid to have her baby with her, the baby could still be repatriated to the homeland if discovered by the inspectors. 'When Lindiwe was born I was so happy. I thought this time I can be a mother to my child. My madam said I can keep her with me. But it is not enough that my madam says I can keep my child. If the inspectors come, she can do nothing.'

There was also the risk that the baby would die of neglect, as the maid was expected to pay undivided attention to her work. 'My madam came into the kitchen. She told me what I must cook for supper. Lindiwe started to cry. I tried to tell my madam she was hungry. But she wasn't listening to me. She wasn't thinking about me or Lindiwe. She didn't even look at us. She was thinking only of the supper I was cooking.'

The result was often a devastating feeling of bitterness about the ingratitude and insensitivities of white madams: 'I have looked after many white babies. I never let them go hungry. It makes me like a mad person. My child is hungry. I have food to give her. But I cannot feed her when she is hungry. Every white child I looked after was happy. I looked after them so nicely. But with my own children it is different.'

In certain cases the madams were uncompromisingly clear: the maid must choose to keep her job or her child. Maids were deprived of the personal feeling of motherhood, even when with their own children. Invariably, the privileged white child was jealous, even when

he or she was much bigger than the maid's own child. The parents of the privileged white child usually sided with him or her, and complained that the happiness of their child had been compromised since the maid had her own baby. 'Lindiwe is now four months old.… Daniel is big but he wants me to carry him on my back. This morning he got very cross. I took Lindiwe off my back. I put her on the sofa. Daniel hit her on the head with a toy.' Such jealousy left the maid with little choice but to lock her own baby up in her dark little room, while she worked in the 'big house … full of toys and nice things for children'.

Nothing about the maid's child was an emergency, as service and servitude took pride of place. 'Lindiwe is sick. She has been sick for three days now. The madam says she will take her to the doctor tomorrow. But my child is sick tonight.… I said I will walk with her to the hospital tonight. The madam said she is sorry but she must go out tonight. She said she needs me to look after Daniel and Amanda.' There were moments when such frustrations simply went overboard: 'If Lindiwe dies, I will die too. How can a mother go on living when her child dies of hunger?'

The entire family of the maid was usually scattered all over, serving and servicing whiteness or being denied the opportunity to be of service and servitude. Even when in the same city, the husband was forced to stay at hostels, where he faced racial hostility, while his wife lived in with the madam. Often, the husband was working elsewhere, the elder children at the homeland with the grandmother, and the family only able to see one another briefly at Christmas, in the homeland (Randall and Becker 1987: 34–87).

The extent to which the citizen–subject dichotomy between madams and maids has changed with the official demise of apartheid is debatable. How one appraises the situation of maids in present-day South Africa depends on what distinction one makes between 'rights in principle' and 'rights in reality'. While in principle most maids in the new South Africa have become 'citizens' just like their madams, their miserable educational and economic backgrounds mitigate their effective graduation from subjection. While some maids continue to be subjected by their traditional white madams and their counterparts in the rapidly crystallising black middle class, others in the township are even more subjected and exploited in ways that remain largely

invisible in the public domain. As in Botswana (see Chapter 4), most maids in the new South Africa would rather work for whites, who are more likely to pay better and mitigate the arrogance of impunity than black employers, especially those in the townships. Past deprivations and injustices have continued to work against maids and in favour of their madams, even as both, in principle, may now be citizens whose rights are guaranteed by what is boasted of as the world's most liberal constitution. The merits of the constitution are in the promotion and protection of the rights of 'independent citizens'; its demerits are in its silences over the rights of 'dependent citizens' as victims of an unjust past of collective exclusion.

Although much appears to have changed, much remains the same in effect. Black middle classes have crystallised. Some black women, on the strength of class, have graduated into the ranks of the white madams of the apartheid past, but the relationship between madams as independent citizens and maids as subjects or dependent citizens has remained largely the same. Despite the official demise of racialism, having maids continues to be what Shah (2000: 101–2), in relation to Nepal, has termed 'a status indicator' and 'one of the visible markers of success and upward mobility'. As the e-TV sitcom based on a weekly cartoon strip series 'Madam and Eve' demonstrates, madams and maids may both be citizens in the new South Africa, but socially, economically and culturally they are worlds apart (Francis et al. 1998). Their apparent conviviality and spatial proximity mask real and substantive cleavages that speak of de facto apartheid. And so, as was reported by the African Service of the BBC on 14 March 2003, maids in South Africa continue to suffer discrimination and exploitation by their employers, who, with traditional impunity, can demand potential employees to take an HIV/AIDS test or fire maids suspected of being HIV-positive, even though it is illegal to do so under the new South African law. Many employers continue to underpay and overwork maids, and, helped by the presence of even more desperate immigrants from African countries, can frighten citizen maids into a zombie-like compliance. Employers in South Africa are reluctant to comply with a new law which requires them to register their maids with the Department of Labour for unemployment insurance.[1] And because the devaluation of black humanity is yet to be undone in effect, it is not uncommon even

for foreigners in South Africa to exploit the resilience of apartheid attitudes, as occurred in early 2003 when a 15-year-old black maid was forced by her Chinese employers to copulate with a rottweiler while they watched.

Global Trends in the Consumption of Maids

A quick overview of the consumption of maids worldwide reveals several parallels to the subjection or subordination of the citizenship of maids in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa.

Domestic work is an old occupation. According to Jane Adams (2002), the growth of employment in domestic work in Europe goes back to the era of industrialisation and the accelerated rural–urban migration that followed. Men were employed as workers in manufacturing firms and as shopkeepers, and many single women, unskilled and uneducated, became maids. In the UK, where unemployed females have sometimes been pressured to become servants, domestic work has been 'widely regarded as an occupation of last resort for those who through economic adversity or other misfortune could not find anything better' (Horn 2001: 61). The tendency to undervalue women's work is endemic in most societies. Women of all races have, in general, been expected to make a pleasant home, fix meals and care for children in the name of love. In some cases, however, the gender dimension of service and servitude is compounded by the race dimension. Susan Tucker's study of domestic workers and their employers in New Orleans shows that the prevalence of the myth of black inferiority among white women – the idea of white privilege to be served by blacks – was crucial in the development of domestic work as an arena for black women (Koppel 2003). Tucker noted that black maids frequently served as surrogate mothers, and were often regarded with deep affection. However, the black women interviewed were resentful in many cases, understanding their experience as a double burden of pleasing their employers and providing for their children and husbands. The black maid in a white household is often perceived as a type of spy, receiving confidences, overhearing conversations, guarding her thoughts and feelings, then carefully using her special knowledge for her own

people (Koppel 2003). This is similar to the situation in apartheid South Africa, where black women served as maids in white homes and were often entrusted with the care of white children, thereby flatly contradicting the notion of racial separation (Whisson and Weil 1971; Cock 1980, 1981; *The Economist* 1999).

Worldwide, maids, house servants, domestics, house girls or domestic workers have been the subject of intense debate. These discussions are typically oriented towards the servitude and slave-like status maids endure in the service of their employers. The victimhood of maids has been equated and often related to the struggles endured by slaves, particularly African slaves in the Americas and the Arab world. Of particular significance is the plight of maids from economically impoverished countries in economically stable zones such as oil-rich Arab countries and the industrialised West. Maids are portrayed as common conveniences for the rich, and even the not-so-rich, because they are cheap and affordable (Jureidini 2003).[2]

In the USA, maids are most likely to be victims of the 'disposable worker' syndrome, whereby companies are attracted to those who are willing to 'earn lower wages, receive fewer fringe benefits, and enjoy little job security' (Miller et al. 1999: 112). In *Nickel and Dimed*, a book based on her personal experiences as a middle-class woman who deliberately stripped herself of her privileges to participate in the working world of 'the truly poor' Americans, Barbara Ehrenreich (2001: 51–119) gives us a guided tour of the ultra-exploitation of maids in the USA. Here, employers have devised various mechanisms to ensure that the 'scrubbing' maids shall never live their 'American dream', nor realise the benefits of citizenship under the world's largest and most vibrant economy. To get by (and often they do not), maids must stretch and strain and straddle jobs, and in many ways are left with time for little else than total and zombie-like dedication to low-wage work. Whether employed by a company or directly by the person needing their services, the exploitation is little different. In one instance, Ehrenreich discovered that the company she worked for charged $25 per person-hour, but paid its maids only $6.65. Hence her comment: 'So the only advantage of working here as opposed to freelancing is that you don't need a clientele or even a car.' By constantly changing teams and shifting workers around, the company minimised connivance between workers, and ensured that

there was little direct contact between workers and clients, who were made to communicate almost entirely with management. In this way, the company makes sure that 'there are no sticky and possibly guilt-ridden relationships involved'. And, as Ehrenreich argues, 'Since the franchise owner is usually a middle-class white person, cleaning services are the ideal solution for anyone still sensitive enough to find the traditional employer–maid relationship morally vexing' (Ehrenreich 2001: 72). However, studies on maids do not seem to stress adequately the growing role of third-party institutions, networks or go-betweens either in compounding, reorganising, mitigating or overcoming the relationships of exploitation and condescension (Meagher 1997; Mattingly 2001).

   If the situation of maids in the USA is generally grim, conditions are worse still for foreign maids, for whom the hardships are double as women, and as migrants. Foreign maids, even those with contracts, find that employers feel less obliged to adhere to the contents of the labour code or the contract. These about-turns are often truly disheartening, as the migrant-cum-maid arrives in hope, only to find the dream of abundance smashed. This was the case with a Filipino couple employed by an ambassador in Washington DC, who turned around and redefined the rules during the course of the game. Although Luis was hired as the ambassador's chauffeur, he ended up being the butler, valet and gardener. Both he and his wife soon realised that their aspirations, as reflected in the contract, would not be realised. 'It was all laid out in the contract, six days work, one day off, English lessons. All here, working for an ambassador in Washington, DC … It was our American dream' (Smith 2002).

   Maids are also subject to stringent rules, and, in addition to their disproportionately heavy workloads, are often forbidden from leaving the premises, making telephone calls or talking to strangers. According to Ruth, the maid of the ambassador mentioned above, 'We were expected to rise at six, but rarely did I ever take off my pinafore before 1 or 2 a.m. after serving at lunches, cocktail parties, receptions and dinners' (Smith 2002). Ruth was also forbidden from eating together with her husband Luis: 'What are you trying to do, form a union?' Close to the White House though Luis and Ruth happened to be, their dream was still deferred. As Smith observes, the experiences of Luis and Ruth mirror the plight of some thousands

of women escaping the impoverishment of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and who are brought to Washington DC by staff members of the World Bank, the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and by foreign diplomats.

The American dream rarely materialises for a majority of foreign maids in the USA. Although in theory no domestic worker is allowed into the USA without a visa based on a written agreement endorsing a minimum wage, social benefits and time off under American law, the contracts are rarely, if ever, monitored (Smith 2002). The special visa programme, which allows international agencies and embassies to sponsor workers, is at the heart of the problem. According to Carol Pier of a Washington-based human rights group,

> It leaves migrants very vulnerable to serious abuse. Most work-
> ers do not speak English and do not know where to go or how
> to complain. But if they do complain, and they're still with their
> employers, they risk being fired, losing their legal status and being
> deported, which scares them more. (Smith 2002)

Pier discovered that the servants for some diplomatic staff in Washington DC worked on average fourteen hours every day, and earned just $2.14 an hour, far less than the $6.15 minimum wage. Women, who had been lured by employers under false pretences, worked up to nineteen hours a day and were paid less than $100 per month. As Pier noted, these women suffer in silence because 'these are people who often live in fear of the reprisals they could suffer back home if they ever went against their powerful masters' (Smith 2002).

Smith is rightly critical of the double standards of global decision-makers who preach one thing and practise quite another. His point is that, 'while such people see themselves and their jobs as part of the grand mission to eradicate labour abuse and global poverty, all too often it is they who exploit – and sometimes flagrantly degrade, mock and maltreat – those who are less privileged.' In the thriving centres of global accumulation, there are innumerable cases of migrant workers held up against their will who were also sexually abused, all the more because they were 'guest workers' unaware of their rights, lacking any safety net, living in fear of deportation and working in very isolated conditions. Some women have been kept in basements, unable to see the light of day for years (Smith 2002).

Among the many factors propelling the international migration of female domestic servants are the poor economic prospects in the countries of origin. African and Asian women migrate to, and work as, maids in the Middle Eastern countries and other regions of the world. In Indonesia and the Philippines, for example, there are companies that specialise in the recruitment of maids to work in foreign countries.[3] The companies offer some job training to recruits, who are promised bigger salaries than those attainable in their home countries. Filipino maids in Hong Kong, for instance, are driven by the prospect of higher income, with some female university degree holders opting to be maids in Hong Kong, rather than work in the Philippines, since 'a doctor in the Philippines earns roughly as much as a domestic worker in Hong Kong' (Govani 1999). Filipino women migrate to Hong Kong, 'very often leaving behind a husband and children', in search of important sources of income for their destitute families back home. The remittances provided by these women are sometimes the only life support for entire families. According to one Filipino maid in Hong Kong: 'I came here in 1987 because I needed to work abroad to help my family and so I send back 90 percent of my pay back to them' (Govani 1999). This scenario is common currency with maids elsewhere.

Maids endure severe hardships in their status as maids and as women. In this regard, the suffering of maids is juxtaposed to their inferior status as women. In certain contexts, rising violence against women and maids makes this link more pronounced. In Bangladesh, for example, a recent study by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad observed that violence against women was rising at the rate of 14 per cent per year with, in recent years, 39 cases of fatwa, 508 abductions and 28 cases of torture of maids. Some 891 women were murdered, 15 brutalised by the police and 39 sold to brothels. These figures do not include the 258 maids molested, 191 who met a mysterious death, 308 who suffered physical assault and 702 who committed suicide.[4]

In the Arab countries of the Middle East, foreign maids (particularly Sri Lankans, Filipinos and Ethiopians and other Africans) are grossly exploited and victims of xenophobic practices (Jureidini 2003: 1–13). A working day stretches to over fourteen hours, sometimes even more, for a monthly salary of about $150. Middle-class Kuwaiti households have three to four maids tending the house (Prusher

2000). A Filipino maid working in Kuwait reported not receiving her salary regularly, and being beaten by her employers when she threatened to report them to the police. Instead, the employer reported her to the police and she was jailed for a month without trial, for allegedly stealing money. Some maids resort to flight, but at great cost. According to Prusher,

> When the maid runs away, the police cannot just go and catch her because she left, so they make a complaint for theft, so that the police can make a search for her and bring her back to the house. Or sometimes, when the employer doesn't want her anymore and wants to send her back home, he accuses her of stealing … and doesn't have to pay her salary. (Prusher 2002)

Such maltreatment has in some instances led to fatalities as maids attempted to escape, as was the case with two Filipino maids who jumped from the third floor of the home where they were working – one died, the other was seriously injured (Prusher 2002).

Saudis are considered to be the worst abusers of foreign maids. The confiscation of passports, contract terms that are unilaterally changed, long working hours, the denial of medical attention, verbal and often physical abuse, and a prison-like atmosphere characterise working relationships that sometimes end in dramatic escapes (Mowbray 2003). Twelve months prior to March 2001, more than 19,000 maids escaped from Saudi homes because of maltreatment by their employers (Mowbray 2003). Escaping domestics often find a haven at government-run shelters for runaway maids, where, according to a Saudi official, 'The ministry provides them with food and shelter until their cases are settled by either returning them to sponsors or deporting them to their home country.' Mowbray notes that although Saudi Arabia abolished slavery in 1962, it treats domestic servants in much the same way fugitive-slave laws treated blacks in pre-Civil War America. Saudi newspapers run ads announcing the 'escape' of maids and requesting the help of fellow Saudis in the return of this 'property'. 'Women who go to the police station seeking help actually get locked in jail until their employers come and pick them up' (Mowbray 2003). And, despite the existence of a loose-knit underground nationality-based network, the complicity of the government in the maltreatment of maids makes it difficult

for them to flee abusive employers. One commentator in the Saudi press, which is largely controlled by the royal family, wrote in the English-language daily *Arab News* that the solution is more stringent law enforcement: 'The police and security departments need to give greater attention to the network of escaping maids.' Worse still, Saudis often take these abusive tendencies with them elsewhere. The late King Fahd's niece, Buniah al-Saud, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanour charge for pushing her Indonesian maid down a flight of stairs in her Orlando, Florida, home. Three members of the Saudi royal family, including a sister of King Fahd, were caught up in a scandal in London in 2000 for their treatment of three Filipino women. As Mowbray (2003) puts it, the Filipino women sued the Saudi royals, alleging that they had been physically abused, starved and held against their will, were often locked in the attic, fed mere scraps of food, and even denied medical attention when they became gravely ill.

Maids are also subject to sexual abuse. Research on domestic workers in Tanzania suggests that 60 per cent of maids are sexually abused in their workplaces. The maids are often liable to exploitation when they are too young to stand up for themselves. In many cases they are threatened with losing their job if they do not have sex with their employer. According to a BBC World Service report by Daniel Dickinson, a 15-year-old house girl, Josephina Mbaya, had her male employer asking her for sex:

> he came to my room one night and said he wanted sex with me. I refused…but in the following days and weeks he kept on asking me to have sex… I felt terrible because he was very old, old enough to be my grandfather. It wasn't right what he did. I am too young, I haven't even had my first period. [He insisted and] promised to give me money and gifts as well as increasing my salary but I didn't believe him. He was very angry when I refused.

In some cases, maids are raped by their boss and other male members of the family, while others are denied their salaries for refusing to yield to sexual advances by the boss.[5]

Child maids – children employed as servants in the households of families other than their own (Blagbrough and Glynn 1999) – are not free from the abuse and exploitation experienced by adult maids. For instance, some foreign maids in Jordan are as young as 13 or 14. Ronica, a 14-year-old maid from Sri Lanka stated:

> I work in a house that has five family members. I'm the only serv-
> ant. I'm very busy all day working, washing, cleaning and preparing
> food. The children in the family go to school, but I don't get to go.
> They can also watch television, but I'm not allowed. I'm also not al-
> lowed to play with the children. I'm always working. I sleep on the
> floor in the dining room.[6]

According to Blagbrough and Glynn (1999), domestic work gives
rise to serious problems in the effort to protect children from abuse.
However, they argue that instead of banning all forms of domestic
work, there is a real need to understand the significance of societal
perceptions of the problem in order to have an effect on the way in
which child domestic work is perceived throughout society. This view
could be comprehended better by understanding societal structures.
As a Malaysian Crime Prevention Foundation vice-chairman, Tan Sri
Lee lam Thye, put it, 'the abuse of domestic workers arises when
maids are deemed as inferior and seen as fit for exploitation by the
employers.'[7] Little wonder therefore, that a 22-year-old Javanese maid
in Hong Kong was beaten with a brush until it broke and later had
a hot iron placed on her neck when she fell asleep exhausted at the
ironing board.[8] Hence the conviction by some that only by making
labour laws applicable to maids could such abuses be curbed.

As Abu Sater (cited in Prusher 2002) rightly argues, if a slave
'means someone who must do whatever you want for as many hours
as you want', then maids as foreign workers qualify as slaves, since
they have to work as long as the employer asks, even though the
payment is very arbitrary, the wages are far from fixed, and some are
not sure of getting paid at all. This reality of sustained exploitation is
compounded by the fact that employers often don't allow them the
privilege of an identity by confining their travel papers, as though they
possess the person of the maids. Psychotherapists counselling abused
domestic servants note that the inhumane treatment experienced by
maids has a long-lasting effect on their personality:

> After years of being trapped and isolated, many feel inadequate,
> powerless and worthless…they suffer from nightmares, flashbacks,
> intense psychological distress, insomnia and hypervigilance, and
> when they do escape, they frequently feel panic-stricken by their
> newfound freedom. (Smith 2002)

The Legal Status and State Protection of Maids

Trafficking of women to work as maids in the Arab world and other countries is a booming business. In Indonesia, for instance, in December 2002 the police rescued 250 women recruited by a company which had had its permit to recruit migrant workers revoked due to the owners' failure or inability to fulfil necessary obligations.[9]

Although news of maids being abused by their employers is known, for many maids, these risks are secondary to the quest for better socio-economic prospects. Unfortunately, few attempts have been made by host governments to provide legal protection. Malaysia stands out as one shining case of government commitment to the protection of the rights and welfare of foreign maids. One of the rights that Malaysia's maid policy promulgates is that families which hire foreign maids should accommodate their religious sensitivities and obligations, and employers must care for the maids, just as they expect the foreign maids to take good care of their families.[10] The Malaysian policy on maids is that a Muslim maid can work for a Muslim or non-Muslim employer, but non-Muslims engaging Muslim maids are required to give a written undertaking that, among other rights, the maids' right of worship must be respected.[11] Women's and migrants' associations have been urging the government to recognise maids as workers by including 'domestic work' in the Employment Act. Including domestic work in this Act would entail standardised contracts spelling out terms and conditions of work, wages, benefits, food, household facilities and medical benefits – all guarantees that domestic workers do not presently enjoy.[12] However, the process would require programmes to sensitise, educate and orient both employers and maids concerning work conditions, religious and cultural respect, and sensitivity to aspects of living in a pluralistic society.[13] This is underscored by the Ministry of Women and Development, which has called on maids and employers to respect each other to build a healthy living environment. As the Malaysian minister for women and development put it, maids have rights which employers should learn to respect instead of trying to take the law into their own hands by punishing their maids: 'No one is above the law. Employers and maids who use violence to settle problems will be punished.'[14] The government of Singapore

in 1998 amended the penal code to enhance penalties for offences committed against maids by their employers or members of their household, which entailed heavier fines and/or longer jail terms for offences such as physical assault, wrongful confinement and outrage of modesty.[15] In some cases, employers and their households found to have abused their maids are banned permanently from employing maids. In 2001 alone, forty-nine people were placed under such an employment ban.[16] When domestic employees become involved in criminal proceedings, legal counsel is made available to them, all investigations are thoroughly conducted in accordance with the rules and procedures governing legal evidence, and the accused is given a fair hearing in an open court.[17]

The abuse of foreign maids has been a cause of strain in international relations for certain countries, forcing some to stop the recruitment of their nationals as maids overseas. In March 2003 the government of Indonesia suspended for two months the recruitment of Indonesian women as maids by other countries due to rampant cases of mistreatment.[18] This response by Indonesia was rare, however, since there is a general tendency for source countries to ignore the plight of its maids abroad. Foreign maids in Kuwait, for example, have complained that their embassies do not do nearly enough to assist them because their officials are expected to help provide Kuwait with a pool of menial labour, and often do not want to endanger the relationship or deter the repatriation of income to their home economies (Prusher 2002).

Globalisation and the Exacerbation of Servitude among Foreign Maids

The globalisation of culture, capital and information has had a significant influence on the maid industry. For one thing, married women from poorer countries (or poorer regions of the same country), who would ordinarily be madams in their own right and locality, are increasingly forced by economic downturns to migrate to richer countries (or regions) in quest of income for families left behind. In certain cases, a maid in town or abroad might herself be compelled to hire a maid or rely on the labour of unpaid family members in

the village or home country to take care of the children she has left behind (Mattingly 2001; Lan 2003). 'While working overseas to maintain the families of others, migrant mothers have to leave their children behind under the care of local workers, and single women withhold the option of establishing their own families' (Lan 2003: 205). Such complexities occasioned by globalisation call for theoretical appreciation of the shifting meanings of love and money and fluid boundaries between maids and madams. As Pei-Chia Lan observes, 'those who offer domestic services are often wives and mothers who take care of their own families and households as well', and, as she notes of Filipinas in Taiwan, overseas maids 'become breadwinners, transnational mothers, and even domestic employers'. To these maids, 'taking care of the employer's family and taking care of their own family are interdependent activities, and the boundary between madam and maid is fluctuating and permeable' (Lan 2003: 187–9; see also Yeoh and Huang 1998).

Ehrenreich and Russell (2002) have explored the consequences of globalisation on the lives of millions of women as they leave the poverty of ailing economies to seek employment as maids in more affluent countries. They report that in the era of intensified globalisation, career-oriented, upper-middle-class women of wealthy nations and striving, adventurous women from crumbling poverty come together as madam and maid, to reproduce various hierarchies informed by power and wealth. The importance of maids cannot be overemphasised in East and South Asia, for example, where a significant source of childcare services derives from immigrant maids (Ghosh and Lien 2002). In their examination of the impact of immigrant maids on women's labour market participation, fertility behaviour and the household purchase of childcare service, Ghosh and Lien (2002) argue that a lower price for the maid service leads to a lower savings rate, a higher demand for children and less time being spent with children. They conclude that, quite paradoxically, hiring immigrant maids effectively leads to lower economic growth in the long run.

These findings are contradicted, however, by observations in some Asian countries, where, despite the fact that foreign maids 'steal' jobs that could be taken up by locals, they are felt to contribute substantially to the socio-economic welfare of the employers and

the nation at large. This can be illustrated by the experiences of the middle-class families in Hong Kong, where the proliferation of foreign maids has led the government to curtail their employment through taxation. With the unemployment rate soaring to just over 7.7 per cent in 2002, the government embarked on a review of policy regarding foreign maids with a proposal to introduce a tax for households employing more than one foreign maid.[19] According to secretary for economic development and labour Stephen Ip, 'tax had to be levied on the employment of foreign maids to open up opportunities for local people to work as domestics.' However, the policy review sparked greater controversy among the employers of foreign maids. According to the Hong Kong Employers of Domestic Workers Association vice-chairman, Joseph Law, changing the policy would have created a chaotic situation for many middle-income families, especially because most mothers and wives were entering the workforce following their husbands, who, as sole breadwinners, had suffered wage cuts or been fired. The effect was a rising demand for low-cost foreign maids to take care of children of working parents. The economic value of maids could not in this instance be small, especially in an economy where there are more than 240,000 low-priced foreign maids. According to the *Hong Kong Imail*,[20] while the official minimum wage stands at HK$3,600 a month, some Indonesian maids work for as little as HK$1,800. This is very low when compared to local maids, some of whom demand HK$50 per hour, which translates into a monthly expense of HK$15,000 for a family that needs a maid for ten hours a day.[21] Despite the wage differentials, a spokesman for the Movement Against Discrimination, Mak Hoi-wah, observed that introducing a tax for employment of more than one foreign maid would not lift prospects for local maids because 'foreign and local helpers are serving different markets. Overseas maids live with their employers, but local ones do not.'[22]

In the USA, black women have since the time of slavery run white households, and 'Between 1890–1960 … the majority of employed African American women were domestic workers' in the South, where 'domestic service was integral to the maintenance of its racial caste structure' (Beck 2001: 196). Increasingly, however, low-skill and low-status black women, who have historically serviced white households, have shied away from domestic work, thereby forcing

employers either to rely on poorly educated older women (Grossman 1980) or to turn their attention to corporate services, which mostly employ desperate immigrant women of colour obliged to take on a whole gamut of domestic activities just to get by (Wilson and Wilson 2000). Although much of the servant economy is still informal, between 14 and 18 per cent of households in 1999 were estimated to employ maids to do the cleaning, a figure that is 'rising dramatically', including even among feminists, as 'the employment of a maid is now nearly universal' among affluent homes. Housekeeping is not only mostly undesirable to those who perform it, for maids 'this is a kind of work that many have been trapped in – by racism, imperfect English skills, immigration status, or lack of education but few have happily chosen' (Ehrenreich 2000: 62–3). As having a maid is becoming more than just something 'that snobby rich people do' (Mattingly 2001: 376), some service providers 'are recreating "domestic service" to overcome its stigma of menial and feminine servitude' and to improve the rewards and working conditions of maids (Meagher 1997: 1–2). This is the case in Australia, for example (Meagher 1997), where a policy of 'mass removal and indenturing of young Aboriginal … pubescent girls' 'aimed explicitly at dismantling Aboriginal communities', has emphasised 'containment, incarceration, and consignment to oblivion' over 'assimilation' of Aboriginal female domestic workers into mainstream Australian society (Haskins 2001: 13–16). But recreation, and other initiatives such as unionisation and networking for better working conditions, are rather cosmetic solutions, as they tend to address the needs of individual domestic workers while ignoring larger and more complicated issues of equality in citizenship and humanity. For, far from providing a gateway towards a better life, such initiatives, like the domestic work they target, reinforce the very racial and class stereotypes that help to maintain social, racial and economic underclasses (Beck 2001; Haskins 2001). Thus, who qualifies for citizenship, and who among citizens can effectively claim entitlements, determine to a large extent the women who shall serve or be served (Mattingly 2001). In certain cases, citizenship also determines who shall be lucky enough to become a maid.

In South Africa, where both devalued citizens and unskilled migrants are scrambling for the same menial jobs, the Department

of Labour has made it clear that it 'owes its citizens priority in the jobs queue', as 'there are thousands of South African women roaming the streets' in search of jobs as maids.[23] Most governments in Europe and elsewhere, while increasingly recognising female migrant domestic workers 'to be a socially useful group' for whom migration should be encouraged, have enacted policies that allow only minimal scope for individual or collective agency among foreign domestic workers (Andal 2000: 147). Skilled or unskilled, immigrants tend to be exploited and treated as 'slave labour' or 'sleepwalkers' by employers keen to 'take advantage of their precarious state to drive down wages and circumvent labour laws' (cf. Dieux 2002). Often the immigrants are totally dependent on their agents, who may be their only access to employment, and perhaps their only contact in the host country, and who arranged their travel documents and who keep their passports. The agents may also act as moneylenders, charging extortionate rates of interest (Grandea and Kerr 1998: 9–12; Abu-Habib 1998: 53–5; Anderson 2000: 32). 'Debt-financed migration is a serious problem and combines with the legislation of receiving countries to tie migrants to their employers' (Anderson 2000: 32).

This is the case in Canada (Grandea and Kerr 1998), and increasingly the case in Europe, where paid domestic work has become highly racialised. Migrants of various social and professional backgrounds from countries enduring sharp economic downturns are desperate for any employment to make ends meet and support families and friends back home (Anderson 2000: 28–39). As more and more women in the developed world seek full-time employment within a context of 'poor welfare provisions and state facilities for child care', demand for maids from the underdeveloped world is on the rise (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000: 11). Bridget Anderson's book *Doing the Dirty Work* 'is based on empirical research into the living and working conditions of migrant domestic workers in five European cities – Athens, Barcelona, Bologna, Berlin and Paris – in 1995 and 1996', and also on her personal experiences working for 'a UK-based group campaigning for the rights of migrant domestic workers' (Anderson 2000: 1). She notes that although European employers want more cheap migrant labour, they are determined to strip those they employ of all personhood and dignity. The maids are made to live in so they can be compelled to do everything, sometimes in most

degrading ways, such as being compelled to 'clean the floor three times a day with a toothbrush' (Anderson 2000: 114), or 'to wash the anus of the dog if he shit' (Anderson 2000: 26). In general, their work covers 'all household chores and more, including cleaning their employers' workplaces, cleaning the houses of friends and relatives of their employers, chopping firewood, fetching water, looking after pets and houseplants, and tasks too many to list' (Anderson 2000: 15). As Anderson observes, much of the work seems invented especially for maids to do by employers who feel that they have bought the power to command not only the labour, but also the whole person of the maids. 'It is this power to command that is manifest in ordering a worker to stand in the same position all day, in calling a person "dog" and "donkey"', and in making them feel cheap and dehumanised (Anderson 2000: 114). This situation is analogous to the virtual slavery of Sri Lankan maids in Lebanon (Abu-Habib 1998: 52) and Filipina maids employed by Saudis (Mowbray 2003), who may not be entitled to eat more than leftovers, are extra-vulnerable to rape with impunity by employers, and may be locked up and their hands tied when their employers go out. The lack of job description that serves as a licence for dehumanisation of the migrant maids, most of whom are compelled to live in, is inadequately addressed by the ILO. This body's own attempt at a job description for maids is rather narrow and insensitive to the predicaments of migrant labour (Anderson 2000: 15), especially of those trapped by the invisibility of the private sphere.

This shabby and dehumanising treatment is directly related and rather limited to a problematic nation-bound conception of citizenship, in a context where globalisation has meant greater dislocation, mobility, cosmopolitanism, integration and interdependence of a type that challenges conventional notions of belonging and citizenship (Anthias 2000: 38–40; Mattingly 2001; see also Chapters 1 and 2). By denying rights to non-citizens whose labour they need – sometimes desperately (Andal 2000; Chell-Robinson 2000; Anthias 2000; Escrivá 2000) – European states are able to resolve a 'potential conflict between the rights of two groups of citizens (men and middle-class women) to participate in the public sphere … without requiring restructuring of the public and private' (Anderson 2000: 195–6; see also Anthias 2000: 26).

Chapter 4 provides further ethnographic evidence of how maids as nationals and as immigrants occupy the bottom rungs of the ladder of social visibility, this time in Botswana. It attempts to show, even more significantly, how differentiation between maids as citizens and maids as immigrants forestalls any possibility of common action by Batswana and Zimbabwean maids against their devaluation. Thus, although disadvantaged by both class and gender, the citizenship of Batswana maids is used to further institutionalise social inequalities and silences over the rights of Zimbabwean maids.

Maids, Mobility and Citizenship
in Botswana

That contemporary lives are plagued with uncertainties is not a phenomenon confined to the African continent. The era of intensified globalisation has distinguished itself through accelerated uncertainties and insecurities, as global consumer capitalism aggressively celebrates consumer citizens over consumer subjects, who are forced to reckon with increasing disjunctures between availability and affordability. The global character and ramifications of consumer capitalism notwithstanding, people's responses to it are far from straightforward. The commonalities and particularities of regional and local histories, politics, cultural and material realities, as well as the social configurations developed within and among individuals, groups and communities, all influence behaviour in the locales that act as subsystems of the global consumer order.

Very broadly, this chapter discusses how maids and their employers in Botswana grapple with increasing uncertainties and insecurities in a country whose relative affluence makes it a magnet for immigrants from Africa in particular and elsewhere. It aims to contribute towards a more predicament-oriented way of researching contemporary peoples and communities in Africa. The term 'zombification' is used here to characterise not only unthinking and routinised exploitative behaviour, but also the impunity of insensitivity to the humanity of the other. By denying that the other is a human being, an equal or

a citizen, one is able to justify treating her with callous disregard for the characteristics that otherwise would remind one of her rights and entitlements. In this sense, a zombie is someone for whom one has no respect, someone to be debased at will, knowing that the person is at one's mercy, without the opportunity to seek redress. While the madam, armed with assumptions of superiority, is able to zombify the maid in 'broad daylight', the maid, given her structural position of weakness, reserves her zombification of the madam for 'after hours' – at night, or when the madam is absent. In this way, zombification is possible not only for those perceived to enjoy power and privilege, but for the weak and the marginalised as well.

Using the example of Zimbabwean maids as cheap, affordable and largely devalued labour in Botswana, the chapter highlights an ongoing process of mutual exploitation or zombification that characterises the relationship between desperate Zimbabwean maids and local employers. The former are seeking ways to keep hope alive, and the latter are keen to maintain and improve upon their good fortune and the benefits of rare prosperity in a region of sharp economic downturns and capricious politics. Zimbabwean maids risk their lives in illegal immigration and subject themselves to exploitation and other indignities under pressure to earn some pula to save lives back home. In doing so, they negotiate away their dignity, honesty, integrity, morality and religious values in favour of creativity and manoeuvrability that enable them to appropriate the personal belongings of their employers. Dispossessed and disappointed by maids with whom they have shared their most intimate spaces, the Botswana employers consider themselves the real exploited and the ultimate losers in the relationship. Most of them conclude that the subservience and servitude of their Zimbabwean maids were a misleading performance mounted to catch them off guard, by maids resolved to pay themselves what they think they are worth. A consequence of this outsmarting of their Botswana employers is a hardening of attitudes towards and stereotyping of Zimbabweans. They are described as 'hardworking' but 'thieves', needed but repulsive. Thus, in an effort to find solutions to the uncertainties in their lives, Zimbabwean maids knowingly or unwittingly bring uncertainties to the lives of their Botswana employers, who in turn see themselves as compassionate and considerate hosts mistreated by ungrateful beggars.

Drawing from interviews with maids and employers, from a survey of maids, and from related sources, this chapter argues that uncertainties in contemporary Africa are no less the plight of the rich islands of prosperity than they are of the poor within and between national boundaries. The chapter also argues that, much as individual or collective agency might serve to mitigate the effects of various uncertainties, comprehensive and sustainable solutions are only really possible with organised, systematic structural transformations that guarantee the dignity and entitlements that have eluded the current territorially bounded articulation of citizenship in African states. When marginalisation is as chronic as that observable in the lives of Zimbabwean maids, it becomes very difficult for people, no matter how upright, to stick to conventional channels of self-fulfilment. In such a context, it is not enough simply to moralise, stereotype or label. One must rather seek to understand why apparently hardworking, humble and respectful maids should steal from the very people who have offered them a lifeline. Put in this way, it becomes as much in the interest of the privileged, powerful and comfortable few to address national, regional and global inequalities, as it is in the interest of the exploited and the marginalised to graduate from dehumanising poverty.

A Note on Methodology

The issues articulated above offer a useful framework for an examination of the situation of maids in Botswana in general, and Zimbabwean maids working in this area, in particular. The data analysed in this section were obtained through eighty in-depth interviews with maids and their employers in the capital city of Gaborone and from a survey of 300 maids, using a structured questionnaire and purposeful simple random sampling procedure. I personally conducted the in-depth interviews. Third- and fourth-year undergraduate sociology students were generally employed as research assistants to administer the questionnaire to maids, which they complemented with reports on qualitative aspects of their encounters. Two Zimbabwean research assistants – one female, the other male (a maid and the son of a maid, respectively) – engaged

the community of Zimbabwean maids, administering questionnaires and assisting with qualitative interviews. Concerning the survey, of a total of 300 questionnaires administered to the sample, 278 were returned, giving a response rate of 92.6 per cent, of whom Botswana maids comprised 54.1 per cent, Zimbabweans 42.2 per cent, and maids originating from Zambia, Malawi, Britain, Kenya and Somalia made up the rest.

To share with the reader some of the merits and demerits of this quantitative aspect of the study, excerpts follow from two reports submitted by three undergraduate students, at the end of the exercise.

Excerpt from report by Bigan Setume and Salphy Tachinyunyi

In two weeks we administered approximately eighty questionnaires, going door to door, asking people open-ended and closed questions, which took us a long time, especially since the questionnaire consisted of an entire booklet. As we posed questions, we recorded responses and, as these were face-to-face interviews, we had the chance to observe the respondents' feelings towards working as maids. This is one of the advantages of interviewing face-to-face: you get the true picture of how an individual feels as she responds. This also enabled us to clarify difficult questions and gave us the opportunity to put ourselves on the same level as the respondents, thereby acquiring an in-depth and generally honest response.

However, we had a problem with getting people to sit down and leave their work momentarily so they could respond to our questions. This was a risky exercise, inasmuch as we used the maids as our respondents without notifying their employers and we also put the maids at risk of being accused of not working, and of letting strangers into the employer's house. On occasion, an employer found us and chased us out of their yard, after insulting us and demanding that we never again set foot in their house without their consent. At other households, we had to administer the questionnaire under the employer's nose, preventing our respondents from giving us the full story since they would lose their jobs if they did. This was a big disadvantage, as all we were recording was false information. So

we then resolved to target times when we were sure most of the employers were not in. But we were not always lucky, as was the case at one household, where the maid received us as we had already made an appointment with her. We unfortunately found her employer present. All hell broke loose. She took the questionnaire and started howling at us. Ironically, this woman (the employer) is a lecturer at the University of Botswana, and we expected some diplomacy and cooperation from her since she is an academic. Yet she chased us away, claiming that she did not want any intruders in her house because of her child's security. At one house, we had to run away when a dog threatened us. Most employers were not happy with the questionnaire because they felt it corrupted the maid's mind.

Another constraint we faced was that of language usage. Our questionnaires were written in English but most of our respondents were not articulate in English, so we had to do a lot of translating: from English to Setswana, and sometimes Ikalanga and Ndebele. While translating, we at times undertook to explain, or rather clarify, when our respondents did not understand. Another disadvantage was that our translation and explanations at times had an influence on the responses we received. An example is question 232,

> How would you rate these employers in terms of payment?
>   *Makula le Machaena* [Asian]
>   *Makgoa* [white]
>   Batswana
>   *Makwerekwere* [black African]

Makula le Machaena and *Makwerekwere* are generally not liked, so in translating 'black African' into *Makwerekwere* we have already influenced the other person's judgement and perception. To make matters worse, we personally felt sympathy for the maids; hence there was a tendency to clarify or even to ask questions in a sympathetic manner, thereby further influencing their feelings.

Except for the fact that the questionnaire was arguably too big and took a long time to complete, we consider it to have been well constructed and to have covered all issues of relevance concern-ing maids. Its weakness was in the tendency for the questions to overlap. This made respondents reluctant to engage in what they considered to be repetition. On the other hand, as detailed as the

questionnaire was, at times maids wanted to say more than could be recorded.

Excerpt from report by Rosinah T. Tidimane

I was a research assistant for the survey of maids in Gaborone. In covering the Broadhurst region and Phiring, I chose houses at random, whether big or small. The major problem I encountered was the lack of response from maids, the majority of whom were foreigners, mainly from Zimbabwe. They feared I was working for the authorities and would report them as illegal immigrants so that they could be arrested and deported. For this reason, most of them refused to admit they were maids. Instead they simply said 'There is nobody working here as a maid.'

The other major problem I encountered was that most of the property owners, especially those who are well off, objected to their maids being interviewed. They argued that I wanted to invade their privacy via their maids. They therefore either refused to allow their maids to be interviewed or else insisted the interview proceed in their presence. Thus maids were very reluctant to answer certain questions, especially those dealing with their wages, job satisfaction, affairs and family secrets.

A further problem I encountered was maids' failure to complete the whole questionnaire. It took at least two hours to complete a questionnaire. This was troubling to most employers, and they would often ask me to leave because I was keeping their maid from performing her duties. If I came back later to complete the questionnaire, usually the maid would refuse to be interviewed further, arguing that I was brewing trouble for her with her employer. For this reason, some of the questions were only partially completed. I also found Botswana maids to be uncooperative. About 75 per cent of them refused to be interviewed, and indeed argued they were not maids, but were staying with their relatives and assisting them with their children and the household. They denied there was a maid in their household.

The Zimbabweans I interviewed mostly spoke only one language, Shona, even if they sometimes attempted English. I therefore had great difficulty explaining the questions to them. They would argue

that English was too difficult for them. This meant the process took even longer to complete, and that some questions were not even attempted.

Although I encountered major problems, the exercise was valuable and I learnt a great deal, including much that exceeded the brief. Some maids and employers told me stories of their encounters in the past. It is interesting how different people can be. In some homes, for example, I was made welcome by the employers and even offered snacks during the session. Some employers would even continue the work where the maid had left off, so that she could talk to me. My father took me to some of the households which he knew had maids and would approach the property owners, who were mostly his friends and co-workers, to allow me to conduct the interviews. This was very valuable, especially where employers had previously denied having maids in their households. Some of the maids who participated were desperate for help and saw me as their immediate solution; they felt they were being overworked and underpaid. They were unable to quit their jobs as they had families to support and no qualifications to help in the search for other jobs.

These methodological and logistical shortcomings notwithstanding, the quantitative survey yielded much useful information that compared with and complemented the qualitative interviews and documentary information, in ways that have made the following analysis possible.

Situating Maids in Botswana

Writing on the dialectic of domesticity in colonial Tswana communities, Jean and John Comaroff argue that, 'in seeking to cultivate the "savage" … British imperialists were actively engaged in transforming their own society as well; most explicitly, in domesticating that part of the metropolis that had previously eluded bourgeois control', by using negative images of the 'dark continent' to whip peasants and proletarians into compliance with bourgeois expectations of domesticity and civility. In this way, the colonial 'other' in Africa was used to reconstruct the peasant and proletarian 'other' in Europe. The Nonconformist missionary idea of home and modernity was

narrowly modelled on similar bourgeois notions back home in Britain. Although the Tswana reacted differently to such attempts at discipline and social control – with some emulating white ways, others appropriating them piecemeal, and a few refusing them outright – the outcome, in due course, was Tswana family homes that increasingly looked like their proletarian European counterparts, serving as a female dormitory for males who laboured elsewhere. By emphasising containment and portraying certain types of outdoor work as unnatural for women, the Nonconformist missionaries succeeded in effecting internalisation of bourgeois domesticity in Tswana communities. The result was the confinement of many Tswana women to home and family and to serving as maids, in a backstage role of nurturing and caring for men persuaded to do the hard work outdoors (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992: 44–68, 1997: 274–322). The missionaries were keen on converting women from the hoe to the needle, and from the outdoor to the indoor life, and, along with their menfolk, bringing the women into tune with the dictates of European fashion, architecture and domestication of nature. The missionaries' endeavours hinged upon the internalisation of this particular form of domesticity: the successful construction and reproduction of a public sphere informed by a Protestant, middle-class world-view (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997: 236–322). This 'expectation of domesticity' was premised on the assumption that, given the opportunity, Africans were just as capable of living in modern monogamous, nuclear families of respectable club-going, Christian housewives, tending and mending at home while their husbands fed the factories and mines with devalued labour (Ferguson 1999: 166–206).

In *Bringing the Empire Home*, Zine Magubane provides additional details of how stereotypes of black South Africans were appropriated by bourgeois England to harness women, the poor and the Irish as its internal others. Such stereotypes were often informed by images in popular literature of Africans as strangers to humanity (Magubane 2004; Achebe 2000), images churned out by writers determined to play fast and loose with the facts in order to, as Chinua Achebe captures it, 'make our colonization possible and excusable', 'validate the transfer of African lands to white settlers', and deepen the African's 'badly damaged sense of self' (Achebe 2000: 33–81). 'In the

days when voyages were still a rare adventure, feelings of cultural superiority mingled with imagination and fantasy in the pictures dished up by storytellers' (Schipper et al. 1990: 6). The fact that stories about the African as '*homo caudatus* or tail-man' served to reinforce prevailing bourgeois interests and notions of the African 'other' as inferior made Europeans

> only too willing to believe any and every story travellers told about what they had seen. There was much less interest in verifying these accounts than in the undeniable fact that they had been there and were relating what they had seen with their own two eyes. If, in the course of their travels, they had not actually seen something but had it from hearsay, then having been in the vicinity was quite enough.

Their credibility as storytellers was also enhanced by the fact that 'the people at home shared their views, their language and their culture whereas the people they were describing were different' (Schipper 1990b: 12–13). The slightest 'suspicion' of Africans 'not being inhuman' was too dangerous a speculation to entertain, determined as European storytellers were, and still very much are, to find their 'heart of darkness' in Africa (Achebe 2000: 46–7).

Focusing on Belgian Congo, Nancy Rose Hunt discusses interesting parallels in Nonconformist mentalities, practices and the 'policy of make-believe'. This involved the keeping up of appearances in their attempts at domesticating mission Africans (Hunt 1992). If the missionaries were God's servants in the 'heart of darkness', '"house boys" were the privileged of the domesticated, the trusted Africans, the servants of God's Servants, almost members of the family'. They were ultimately rewarded with conversion in exchange for the entertainment that their perceived savagery made possible. The more mission Africans proved themselves through hard work and loyalty, the higher up the 'hierarchy of domestic service jobs' they climbed. 'Good performance on the job … was rewarded by greater responsibility in a missionary household and greater access to its interior rooms. One had to be trusted to move inside…. Moving up meant moving in', better to serve and service God's servants. Moving up was thus like graduating from assumed cannibal to cannibalised by the cultural indoctrinations of God's men and women in Africa (Hunt 1992: 151–2).

Myths die hard, even in the face of science, especially when those who harbour the myths have an interest in keeping them alive (February 1991). Hence it is hardly surprising, as Schipper observes of herself and fellow Westerners, that 'The myth of the black savage, whether noble or aggressive or both, is part and parcel of our thinking and we have inherited from our forefathers a prejudice against Africans that still affects Western society today.' It is equally unsurprising that African counter-myths about whites, constructed mainly from the position of weakness as servants to European masters and madams, are widely ignored in the mainstream cultural agenda and menus of the West (Schipper 1990a: 32–4). That the myth of '*homo caudatus* or tail-man' continues to do its rounds of the eternally 'primitive' zones of the world, softening and harnessing them for global flows championed by the West, is telling enough that representations of the inferior other are patient neither with science nor with the morality of an all-inclusive humanity (Schipper 1990b: 12–21).

There is historical evidence of missionaries hiring female and male Tswana servants as part of their campaign against 'native idleness' and 'slavery', and in favour of 'wage labour', 'domestic toil' and 'civilisation'. But money was clearly not enough to persuade Tswana servants of the value of working for Europeans, as they often abandoned their missionary employers if they were 'put to more work than what may be considered play' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997: 197–8, 1992). Apart from missionaries, Botswana, as a British protectorate administered from the South African town of Mafikeng, had no significant white colonial community to which its men and women could have been of relevance in domestic work. To work as maids beyond what was offered by missionaries (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, 1997) and the local context of subsistence economy and patronage (Schapera 1970: 72; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997: 251–2), Batswana would most likely have migrated to neighbouring South Africa, Zimbabwe or Namibia, where there were resident white communities and significant modern economic activities. There are indications, for example, that many young women from the Mochudi area did migrate to South Africa to seek employment as maids, a practice that continued well into independence. Beverley Naidoo's children's novel *Journey to Jo'burg* tells the story of two children who are forced by the severe illness of a third child to

travel to Johannesburg to fetch their mother, whose husband 'got sick with the coughing sickness' and died working in the South African mines, leaving her to fend for their children as a maid in a white household. The white madam is reluctant to release her immediately because 'The master and I are going to a very important dinner party.' When the madam eventually releases her the following day, it is with a warning: 'I hope you realize how inconvenient this will be for me. If you are not back in a week, I shall just have to look for another maid, you understand?' To which the maid replies 'Yes, Madam' (Naidoo 1986: 22–32).

At independence in 1966, Botswana was a very poor country with hardly any educated elite or a modern economy, and so the need for maids beyond the traditional reliance on family members and relatives from the home village did not pose itself, even among those living and working in the budding city of Gaborone. Moreover, minority groups such as Basarwa and Bakgaladi, traditionally treated with condescension and as servants by the ethnic Tswana majority groupings, were always on hand to provide servitude where tasks were deemed inferior or too burdensome for family to undertake. Basarwa, for example, have had a long history of exploitation as herdsmen for Tswana cattle owners and as servants for Tswana and other families (Schapera 1970: 72; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997, 251–2).

However, diamonds were soon to be discovered. Together with cattle and tourism, they have propelled economic growth since independence, making Botswana one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Assisted by a government that has in many ways excelled beyond the tokenism characteristic of African democracies, Batswana have been able to transform their country from one of the poorest to one of the richest and most well-managed islands of prosperity on the continent. With this growth has come rapid urbanisation and an increase in rural–urban migration by men and women seeking employment. At the same time, urban families (nearly 50 per cent of which are female-headed) experience the need to recruit domestic workers to assist with chores and childcare, as parents engage in the modern economy. Another consequence has been an influx of opportunity-seeking foreigners or migrants from Europe, North America, Asia and Africa, both legal and illegal (see Chapter 2). While these migrants have positioned themselves

wherever they have stood to benefit in the country, the bulk of them are in Francistown and Gaborone, the largest urban centres. Gaborone, where the survey and most interviews with maids and their employers were conducted, is considered one of the fastest growing cities in the world (Ritsema 2003).

Among immigrants, maids in particular, from African countries plagued by economic downturns or political upheavals, Zimbabweans constitute the greatest number. Zimbabweans alone make up 42.2 per cent of the total maid population in Botswana, second only to Batswana themselves, who constitute 54.1 per cent. It is possible that the total number of Zimbabwean maids in Gaborone indeed exceeds that of Batswana maids, especially as some Zimbabweans lie about their nationality, using their cultural proximity with the Bakalanga to claim they are Batswana of Kalanga origin. These untruths probably arose because some maids had no passport and thought researchers would inform the police about them. Because of the crisis back home and their personal destitution, most Zimbabwean maids cannot afford to enter Botswana legally. According to the survey, Plumtree (72.4 per cent) and Francistown (19.5 per cent), both located close to the Botswana–Zimbabwe border, serve as the main ports of entry for the majority of – mostly Zimbabwean – foreign maids entering Botswana. They do so by bus (58.5 per cent), train (29.3 per cent) or trekking (8.1 per cent), and as 'illegal immigrants' in the main. Other formal ports of entry, such as the Seretse Khama airport (0.8 per cent) and Tlokweng border post (1.6 per cent) in Gaborone, which are more tightly policed and more expensive, receive the least number of foreign maids into Botswana. More risky routes, such as passing 'through the bush' and the 'Sinya fence', were equally a deterrent, with only 1.6 per cent of respondents claiming to have used them. The avoidance of formal border posts is evidence that the majority of respondents resorted to illegal ways of entering Botswana, which very few (21.1 per cent) reportedly faced any difficulty in doing. However, in individual interviews with the author, some maids claimed that many of the respondents who travelled to Botswana by bus or train were grossly discriminated against. In one interview, a maid mentioned how she was asked to remain standing during the long journey from Zimbabwe to Botswana as all foreigners were told to give up their sits to Batswana, to whom the train belonged. In

general, illegal Zimbabwean immigrants, especially those without a valid passport, preferred trekking or travelling by train to using the bus, to avoid checkpoints.

Zimbabwean migrants are most likely to be discriminated against by Batswana or harassed by the forces of law and order, which regularly organise 'clean-up' campaigns to repatriate illegal immigrants who 'litter' the landscape like wildlife. Known locally as border-jumpers (in reference to their illegal crossings over the border between Plumtree and Francistown), skilled and unskilled Zimbabweans have been crossing into Botswana on a daily basis, especially since the 1990s. They do so often at great risk, as there is a long barbed-wire fence between the two countries, which is constantly patrolled by Botswana immigration police (see Chapter 2). According to the survey, a majority of foreign maids (87.7 per cent), especially Zimbabweans, came to Botswana between 2000 and 2003, a period that coincided with the economic crisis in Zimbabwe, aggravated by sanctions introduced in response to President Robert Mugabe's controversial land redistribution policy. That Zimbabwean maids are bitter about the situation in their country is evidenced by sentiments such as this:

> I am a lady from Zimbabwe aged 22 years old. At home everyone is lacking food to eat, and everyone is selling vegetables, beans, and they go and work for food. Zimbabwe, it is now a bad country because of one person, the president only, who is killing the whole area of people. There is nothing to do for me to have some money, no jobs at all. Everywhere the shops are closed because of the more VAT they put on every day, so the businessmen, they broke down the shops and closed. I was sleeping in the doors of the shops every day waiting for the mealie-meal, which is called Kenya. This mealie-meal is from another country to help us to eat; it is a donation to the poor country like Somalia people. That is why most Zimbabweans, they end up stealing in other peoples houses, to sell and get money. Some, they rob you on the street and take whatever is inside, like cellphones, watches and money, and they throw away the handbag in the bush, empty. Sometimes they rob the banks with cars, having fake or toys gun, for the people to be scared.

Only a small minority (9.8 per cent) of maids surveyed indicated they came to Botswana between 1990 and 1999, a period of relative

economic and political stability in the region. The average duration of stay by foreign maids in Botswana was 22 months.

Few foreign maids in Botswana are documented or legal immigrants, with only 8.9 per cent of maids surveyed stating that their passport was stamped at the border on arrival in Botswana. The majority (90.3 per cent) entered Botswana without a valid passport or visa. Of those with a valid visa, only 16.7 per cent were able to obtain a work permit before entering Botswana, while another 16.6 per cent entered in the guise of a student or with a similar legal status. The majority (66.7 per cent) came to Botswana as visitors, with the intention of staying on to eke out a living for themselves. Even maids with a valid passport rarely receive authorisation to stay for more than thirty days, giving them very little time to pursue the rigorous and often lengthy procedures involved in applying for the work permit, while at the same time seeking a job so as to earn money to survive in Botswana and to fund the process of obtaining a work permit. More often than not, such persons end up overstaying. In other words, the conditions are so stringent that initially legal immigrants eventually become illegal, even with the assistance of consultants. This is how one maid put it:

> Right now I do have a passport but it's not valid. Since I came in January they gave me fourteen days and they were finished before the end of that month. I went back. 'The Zimbabweans are thieves, so they should go home', we are told. They gave me five days. I tried to talk to the consultants; they told me all that is needed is money. I gave one consultant seventy pula and the passport was stamped for ten days. I stayed for those ten days, and then they expired, and since that time I am staying like that, because there is nothing I can do. I think the government of Botswana should change, so that if somebody has a passport he or she can stay without being deported by the police. But the police are raiding each and every day. But we are coming because life is very difficult.

Ordinary Zimbabweans with passports seeking admission into Botswana are normally granted a fourteen-day period of stay, subject to renewal in principle, but very difficult to achieve in practice. The result is that even those who enter legally might become illegal by overstaying their welcome, especially if they get more than a 'piece job' that requires a longer period of stay in Botswana. Zimbabweans

are also most likely to be encountered combing the city looking for piece jobs,[1] or for work as maids, as garden boys and girls, or even as prostitutes. The precarious economic and political situation back home has pushed many of them into the willing arms of exploitation by employers in South Africa and Botswana. In most instances the Zimbabwean immigrants are in dire straits and desperate to keep their families and relations alive back home. This often entails bending over backwards and devaluing their labour and humanity to earn some badly needed rand or pula for eventual conversion into their grossly devalued Zimbabwean dollar. It is against this push–pull background that I attempt an appreciation of the relations of mutual exploitation or zombification between Zimbabwean maids and their Botswana employers.

The population of maids in Botswana comprises citizens (54.1 per cent) and immigrants (45.9 per cent), who are mostly Zimbabweans. The citizens consist of elderly women with hardly any education, and young girls of between 15 and 30 years of age who have dropped out of school for one reason or another – often an early pregnancy occasioned by a man with little regard for responsible fatherhood. In all, 80 per cent of maids interviewed claimed to have had some kind of formal schooling, but with few certificates to prove it. This, however, must not be mistaken for professional training as a maid, which 91.4 per cent said they have never received. Some laid claims to other professional competencies such as hairdressing, typing, tailoring, weaving and occasionally teaching and nursing. Conscious though maids were of the need for professional training, very few (8 per cent) had had the courage to suggest this to their employers for fear of being fired. Even then, the suggestions had all been turned down.

Batswana maids may be from the home village of those recruiting them, or recommended by a neighbour, friend or colleague at work. In the course of the interviews, I remarked that relatives brought in from the home village to assist with domestic chores in exchange for being assisted to attend school, for example, were often reluctant to accept the label of 'maid'. They tended to insist that they were merely helping out with the baby, cooking, laundry and/or other duties in the house, and that they were not being paid, even though they received regular token payments for their toiletries and other

basic needs. In some cases, they readily volunteered either that there was a regular maid besides them, or that the family hired a maid from time to time when the work was too much for them. Usually aged between 18 and 25, the majority of them cited failing their Ordinary-level examinations and the poverty of their parents back home as the reason for coming to live with their sister, brother or uncle in town, with the hope of giving their examinations a final go and moving on. In some instances, it was an unwanted pregnancy that had forced them out of school, and now that the child was big enough they had left him or her with parents in the village and joined relations in town to start life afresh. Sometimes it was the plight of those in the city that brought a girl from the village to help out. This was the case of a girl from Tonota who was asked by her parents to go and stay with her uncle in Gaborone, because he was too ill to take care of himself. She cooked for him, did his laundry and took him to the clinic for medical check-ups, but did not receive any monthly payment beyond what she needed for her toiletries. While she cared for her uncle in the city, her 9-year-old son was at school in the village under the guardianship of her parents. Although the girls I interviewed were generally happy to be with relations and treated as family, some complained that their brother-in-law or sister-in-law always found something to complain about, their being a bad cook, lazy and untidy common among the complaints. One girl told me that she had taken to plaiting people's hair in order to raise enough money to pay her way back to the village, in order to put an end to the conflict her presence had provoked between her sister and the husband. It would appear that to be a maid, it does not suffice to do a maid's work: one has got to be seen and treated as a maid to qualify. And when those one considers family begin to see and treat one as a maid, one knows it is time to move out, to be paid as a hired hand or to regret mistaking strangers for family.

Among foreigners, as with nationals, personal networks continue to serve as a major instrument for spreading information among potential maids about possibilities in Botswana. Of all foreign maids surveyed, 83.7 per cent said they learnt about life in Botswana from friends, through family relations or from their employers. Formal channels of communication such as radio, television, newspaper

and others accounted for only 9.8 per cent of relevant sources of
information for those seeking jobs as maids. Recruitment agencies
exist, but the bulk of transactions are conducted through informal
channels and networks, as passing through an agent implies a formal
contract sanctioned by the Department of Labour, which many
employers evade, even though by hiring illegal maids they expose
themselves to increased risk. Almost all the maids interviewed and
surveyed (92.2 per cent) had not signed a written contract with
their employer. Among those who acknowledged having a written
contract, 55 per cent said they had negotiated with their employer
before signing, while 35 per cent reported that the contract was
written by their employer and imposed upon them. Only 10 per
cent of respondents had their contracts drawn up by legal experts.
According to some employers, because maids are paid to be part
of their family, and because the family domain requires flexibility
given the unpredictability of daily life, it is unrealistic to expect a
formal job description or contract. In the words of a black English
single mother employer:

> I found it impossible to work with somebody who took the ap-
> proach that to be a maid you have to do A, B, C and D, when there
> is clear requirement that they need to do Z, X, S and in no particu-
> lar order. Now, that meant that somebody who is coming into my
> employ as a maid needed to be aware of that dynamic.

Equally dictated to more than half the maids were their wages, with
only 33 per cent of them indicating that the amount had been
discussed and agreed upon by both parties. Only 6 per cent of maids
said they participated fully in the decision over their wages.

As elsewhere in Africa and the world, maids in Botswana oper-
ate within a legal vacuum, and are consequently subjected to the
vicissitudes of the ultra-exploitation discussed above. Though widely
employed even by top bureaucrats and politicians, Zimbabwean
maids have no legal existence. According to a representative of
the Domestic Workers Foundation, 'some very important people',
including ministers, 'make deductions from our wages, claiming
that it is for accommodation, water and electricity and the poor
food that we get' (Ditshwanelo 2000: 188). Recently, the govern-
ment authorised the employment of foreigners to work on cattle

posts and farms, but it is yet formally to legalise the employment of foreign domestic workers. This has been criticised by women's lobbies as evidence of the male-dominated state's insensitivities to the domestic sphere, which continues to be perceived and treated as the woman's domain and 'as a natural arena for illiterate, poor and unemployable women' (Letsie 1993: 33). If, however, employers, men and women alike, choose to pursue a path fraught with insecurities, it is because of other factors at play, such as being able to combine the services of a maid with that of a childcare provider. In effect, the lack of a national, state-run (or even globalised) strategy for replacing the labour required in the home (women's labour, in the modern formulation) forces employers to hire illegals at greater risk so that they can effectively get two or more job functions out of a single employee.

In the course of interviews and the survey, we could not fail to notice a hierarchy of citizenship and belonging among maids. Batswana maids in general felt superior and more entitled than foreign maids, Zimbabweans in particular. Batswana maids saw themselves, and were seen by Zimbabwean maids, as more liberated in their attitudes, dress and comportment. The fact of being citizens seemed to provide Batswana with a cushioning effect to their hardships as maids. For one thing, they had a better chance of claiming their rights under the constitution than did Zimbabweans as foreigners, even if this was only in principle for most of the time. For another, they qualified to be recognised and represented by national NGOs such as Ditshwanelo, and as citizens could always, at least in principle, threaten abusive and exploitative employers with the Department of Labour. For their part, Zimbabwean maids, who were neither citizens nor legitimately qualified to belong even as foreigners, found themselves doubly disadvantaged vis-à-vis the exploitation and impunity of their employers, and in relation to the immigration police. Trapped between exploitation and the illegality of their existence, the Zimbabwean maids found themselves reduced to the dregs of humanity, a level where most sought exploitation as a better fate than being detained and deported by the gendarmes of belonging.

It is commonplace to hear employers, Batswana included, claim that maids from the minority ethnic home areas (especially BaKalanga) are hard-working, while maids from the majority ethnic communities

(especially BaNgwaketse, BaKwena and BaKgatla) are lazy. Said one Motswana employer:

> what I think I know is that Batswana women are lazy. Kalanga women are hard-working. They are also very respectful of their husbands. They don't question anything, they take everything as given and whatever happens they believe they cannot question, whereas a Motswana woman will be questioning things.

Another concurred:

> it is true. The Kalangas, they are very hard working. They can actually look after your house, take care of your kids in the house. I've heard friends who used to say 'Our maid is a Kalanga and she is very good.' And they are very obedient, very respectful.

In general, however, to most employers, Batswana maids are less hard-working than their Zimbabwean counterparts, who are often more desperate and limited in choices. This is what two Batswana, a Zambian, a Ghanaian and a British employer, respectively, had to say of their maids:

> There is this Zimbabwean lady who is helping in the house, once or twice a week. This lady is so obedient that it's like she is not from this world. The first time she came, she really knelt. She was like kneeling down to my 13-year-old sister, who said, 'Ah stand up, there is a chair'. And she would say, 'mammy what what?' Just like somebody from some other planet. She is just too good to be what we see.
>
>   My own experience, which I think is the experience of many people, is that Botswana maids compare less favourably. They are not as productive as the ones from outside, especially from Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean maids, maybe because they are highly motivated to make money, not to make trouble with the bosses, they work very hard. They do their work. If only they didn't have this problem of their stay, because we know when you like somebody from outside, you are very much aware that you shouldn't and therefore we are not relaxed. But they are so much better. Botswana maids, they… I don't know. It's not very easy for one to talk badly of your country people. But Botswana maids really give us trouble.
>
>   Almost all of us have the experience of hiring a maid for a week and she disappears. Come Christmas, they always go for Christmas

and they don't come back. And then when you start searching and you eventually find them, they will tell you a story about how the mother was sick a month later or how they have to go home to help with the ploughing because that's the ploughing season [*sighs*] – they are just a problem. In that context, they are not reliable. And when you have small children, it can be very very difficult. Because, Sunday night you want the maid to come back from wherever she went, so that you are sure that Monday when you go to work, the maid will be there to stay with the children. But sometimes Sunday night, there is nobody, she hasn't come back from the weekend and you have to run around and that is still happening, people still run around, because somebody just doesn't pitch up, especially after they have been paid. Yeah, they just disappear in the middle of the night.

I am not sure I know why they behave like this because they are complaining that we are hiring people from outside instead of hiring them. So I am not sure what it is that we are doing that is not right. Because I wouldn't want to buy the story that we don't pay them well, because I have seen maids who are paid much less than what I would pay, but would stay simply because the person who is hiring them is not a Motswana. Maids don't want to work for a Motswana woman. Batswana girls don't want to work for a Motswana woman. They would rather work for a white person or an Indian, and Indians pay very little. They pay very little, but still their maids stay because they are Indians. Indians don't give them food. Still they would rather work for the Indians. I have personally experienced somebody saying to me: 'Work for a Motswana woman? I would rather go home and plough.' And she was actually looking for a job, and I had no maid and my children were going to be alone the following day. She just wouldn't.

Yeah, there is a difference. I think after having three Zimbabweans, I came to have a Motswana. I think she was lazy, for one thing. And then she was too jumpy. What I mean by that is she would do the work so fast and leave, you understand what I mean? Just before you knock off, you will find her out – something like that. Or she's just at the gate waiting for you. Immediately you drive in, she just walks out, you know. With these Zimbabweans, actually they are – some are – polite people, quite polite, and unlike a Motswana. Maybe it's the way they are brought up or maybe they take us as this *Makwerekwere*, I don't know.

Batswana maids are not as hard-working as Zimbabweans. The problem with these Batswana is that every weekend they'll be going home. They tell you their grandfather is ill, their uncle is ill, their

grandmother is dead. I have to go home. This weekend there's a phone call… I have to… they have so many stories. I mean… wherever they used to get those stories and… you know with Zimbabweans, they are here to work and when they think my son is there and I have to work, you know they work. With these Bat-swana, ah no! They are not recommended at all.

We could not trust her [Motswana maid from Molepolole] any more because one of the last times that we went away for a week-end, we said, we'll get away, can you feed the dogs? We'll pay you, you know. Each day feed the dogs: extra from what we pay you every week. So there was no extra housework for her at all. Anyway we came back and basically she hadn't fed the dogs. She disappeared for a day or so, then she came back, we then just said we've had enough of this… but this is after a lot of things, you know. Break-ing things inside the house, she's always asked us for extra food, to lend her money, you know. We used to give her free accommoda-tion. But she was basically next-door's maid and she only used to work for us one afternoon in a week. And we used to pay her quite a lot, P40 [US$8]. So she had no sense of gratitude or loyalty or anything. What she had to do is a very simple thing: we didn't even ask her to do washing up. Sweep the floor, dust and iron clothes… they wouldn't be much – like from five pairs of trousers, five shirts, so it was nothing really to do in the afternoon. So a lot of times we used to come home she hadn't done the dusting or… I remember once, she had a habit of not doing the ironing. This went on over a period of months. Anyway it got too much.

Prompted on this issue, a Bakalanga and a Zimbabwean maid respectively explained their reputation for hard work as follows:

Yeah, because at home, I got to work. We work in the fields, we do everything. I mean the work that a man can do, we do that. We can thatch the house, we can chop the trees, we can do everything. But cleaning is just a minor thing. It's nothing to us. We plough, we cultivate in the field.

In Zimbabwe where I grew up everybody must know how to work as a maid. To clean the house, everything, sweep the yard, cooking, doing everything. We learn it from our parents, who don't want us to be lazy. They said, you know, if you work very lazy, if somebody gives you something to do and you do like you don't like to, but you like money, it's not good. Don't expect more money. Let them see how you work. They'll change their mind, serious, without

medicine, without anything, without saying that I want an increase in my salary. You'll see everything change.

A possible explanation for their alleged laziness could be that Batswana maids as citizens feel they are entitled to their fair share of the fruits of their country's phenomenal economic success, and are particularly bitter when non-citizens, especially from other African countries with weaker economies and harsh dictatorships, appear to be obtaining the lion's share of what rightly belongs to citizens. Thus if they hate to be lorded over by their fellow Batswana elite, they feel even more hostile to foreigners, especially *Makwerekwere* (from other African countries) and Asians, who appropriate their wealth and then employ them as servants (see Chapter 2).

Although Batswana maids are as citizens generally more entitled than Zimbabwean maids, they do not all feel the same degree of citizenship, entitlement or belonging among themselves. Batswana maids of Tswana origin feel more citizen and more entitled than maids from the ethnic minority groups. If it weren't for the chang-ing times, the Tswana would not be maids; rather, they would be benefiting from the services and servitude of the ethnic minorities, who, as commoners of old, were subjected to various degrees by the Tswana. What they find most belittling and difficult, even as maids, is working for fellow Batswana in general, and Batswana from the ethnic minority groups in particular. It is therefore hardly surprising that Batswana maids are said to be lazy compared to Zimbabwean or foreign maids, and that among themselves Tswana maids are considered less hard-working than maids from the ethnic minority groups.

Another thing that Batswana employers tend to hold against Batswana maids is the ease with which they draw from local cultural repertoires and philosophies of solidarity and hospitality to sabotage the strictly contractual relationship between employer and employee. In the example that follows, a maid, with the support of the mother-in-law of her youthful employer, claims her status as an elder, not only to redefine roles in the household but also to challenge the authority of the employer:

I once had a maid just before I started my Master's. So I will go out into the field, to the communities, come back after a week or

two, go somewhere else. This time I went to Côte d'Ivoire for two weeks. So before I left, I washed some clothes and left them to be ironed and thought OK I've done this for her. And my mother-in-law came just to help her with the small baby. The boy was about nine months. So when I came back after two weeks, those clothes were still there, and my husband was ironing a shirt every morning for himself. And normally, men don't push maids around.

It was around 6 p.m. when I came back. The maid was cooking. I went to bed. I wanted to sleep. I was tired. So I slept, and at night the elder boy came to my bedroom. 'Mummy I want water.' So I went to the kitchen to give him water and the kitchen was like a pigsty: plates all over, stuff not wiped, floors not mopped. Oh my God! Whose house is this? Then, around 2 a.m., I was so fed up, so I decided to clean the plates and sweep the floor and I went back to sleep. Morning, I wake up. She was there seated on the chair with her legs crossed, and my mother-in-law, the other side. Ahah! These women. What are they waiting for? So I went to her, I called her to the kitchen.

I said: 'You left the kitchen not in a good condition last night. Plates were all over, so I cleaned last night – at night. In fact, it was this morning. And also I washed some clothes before I left and they are still there. Why are they not ironed?' And she said: 'You know what? You are the lady of this house. You should do some of this work for yourself and your family.' Then I said, 'Well, I thought I hired you so that you could help me with these things.' And before she could answer that, my mother-in-law said, 'No but a daughter-in-law should do these things' – using the word *mwetsi* – '*mwetsi* should do that.' That's the Setswana word for daughter-in-law. A daughter-in-law or a married woman should show that she is a woman and take care of the household, look after the house.

I said, 'No. But I'm working and I'm not always here.' I kept quiet and the maid kept on talking, talking, talking, talking. 'These educated daughters-in-law, they don't work; they are lazy.' I said, 'You know what? You move out of my house now. I'm going to the bank before I go to work. I give you your money and you go away, you leave my house, because I didn't expect that kind of behaviour from you. And you are here because of me. I hired you because I needed those services.' And I went to the bank, collected some money, gave her the money and asked my mother-in-law to look after the baby and went to work to ask for a day or two off and report that I'd been away and this is the situation.

When I was at the office, I called after two hours: 'Is she gone?' And my mother-in-law said, 'Let me call someone for you', and she

called this lady. She came: 'I'm not going. I'm going to work here and please I'll change, I'll…' I said, 'No. You can't change. You can't change after talking like that to me.' So I went back home and I found her on my lawn with my mother-in-law, sharing a mat, seated and having tea. And then I said, 'You are still here, not going?' And then my mother-in-law said, 'No, she is not going. You need to sit with this lady and talk things out and divide duties among your-selves… according to the *sepo* Africa [meaning African culture], you are supposed to do this and that. You can't let her do all… every-thing in the house.'

I said, 'Oh my God! Hmm!' Then I said, 'But this one is going. What do I do?' Then I went to G-West Police Station and talked to one police officer. Then he came with me. When he came, he said '*dumelah mbo mma*' [How are you ladies?] Who is supposed to leave and doesn't want to move? And my mother-in-law said, 'No, she is not going?' He said, 'And who are you?' She said, 'This is my son's house; she's not going.' And the police officer looked at me and said, 'Are you married to this lady's son?' I said, 'Yeah, but not to her, to my husband. So this lady is going.' He said, 'No, no, maybe you people should talk this thing.' I said 'No, there is nothing to discuss. This woman should go. I don't want her. She's my maid. I pay her, I had her and I'm now firing her, now. So she should go.'

And this policeman said, 'We give you thirty minutes to get inside this house and collect everything that belongs to you.' So she went inside and collected her stuff and he took her away in the police car. After that, it was now a conflict between me and my mother-in-law, over the maid who was gone. She kept saying, 'This maid wasn't supposed to go. This maid was elderly and you were not supposed to talk to her like that. This maid was a woman older than you, and you were not supposed to give her commands.' Then I said, 'But I hired her because I needed her services.'

Uncertainties of Being a Maid

Whether Batswana or Zimbabweans, maids as wage earners in Botswana are underpaid and overworked. According to a 1996 Ditshwanelo study that focused exclusively on a sample of 205 Batswana domestic workers, maids are among the weakest and most vulnerable sections of the labour force in Botswana. They work long hours, their wages are generally low and their conditions of work are often deplorable – yet there is no legislation to protect them. Ditshwanelo found that only

9 per cent of the maids interviewed had a written agreement with their employer, 98 per cent had no employment card. Maids worked on average 10.6 hours a day for an average monthly wage of P188.86 (US$38) and only 53 per cent of maids had weekends off. In terms of employer, the majority of maids worked for Batswana (78 per cent). The majority of those interviewed saw their work as temporary and would have preferred to do something else (Ditshwanelo 1996; see also Selolwane 1982; Makati 1986; Letsie 1993; and Motlhale 1995). The employment and conditions of domestic workers in Botswana, discussed below, like those in sixty-eight other countries discussed in an ILO survey in the late 1960s (ILO 1970), demonstrate the lack of interest among policymakers in protecting the citizenship and/or humanity of those subjected to the whims and caprices of those in whose homes they worked.

Work and pay

The survey conducted for the present study concurs with these earlier surveys in many regards. As already mentioned, both the survey and interviews revealed that nearly all maids work without the benefit of a written contract. On average, maids work for approximately 8 hours per day: most (40.6 per cent) 1–10 hours per day, some (33 per cent) more than 10 hours, while others (26.4 per cent) do not have a defined daily duration of work. The majority report for work daily at between 5.00 a.m. and 7.30 a.m. (82.6 per cent), some 10.9 per cent between 7.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m., and the rest from 2.00 p.m. onwards. While some maids knock off work at 5.00 p.m. (17.8 per cent), others do so at 6.00 p.m. (7.7 per cent), 8.00 p.m. (10 per cent), and 9.00 p.m. (5 per cent). Still some maids (18.2 per cent) indicated that they did not know when they were supposed to stop work. As one Motswana maid summed up: 'It is a bad job, you wake up early and sleep very late. Weekends, if you are supposed to knock off at around 1.00 they make you knock off very late around 4 p.m. There are no working hours.' In the words of a Zimbabwean maid, 'I start very early in the morning, while others are still in bed, and work non-stop until I go to sleep. That's when I know that now I have knocked off.' It is worth noting, however, that what is stated in principle might not always happen,

as employers have devised various ways of claiming more of the maids' time without commensurate compensation. A Zimbabwean maid, whose employer did not want her to participate, complained as follows when she was finally interviewed:

> My brother, I am working just because there is nothing I can do but work. But to tell you the truth, here I only have off-day on Sunday. I work Monday to Saturday, but I am getting P200 [US$40] a month, and there is a lot of work at the house, and I spend the whole day standing. I wake up in the morning at 5.30 and make breakfast and from there I start cleaning the house, and the house is too big. I wish, my brother, you can help me to get another job elsewhere, because here they are abusing me. At times, they don't give me money in time, and there is nothing I can do because I don't have a passport. I wanted to go and report them to the labour office but the problem is I am an illegal immigrant. They would only arrest and deport me. But if I get employment somewhere, I will leave them.

Employers are not unaware of being overly demanding vis-à-vis their maids, as the following confession by a Motswana madam demonstrates:

> Yeah, I agree. There is an element of overworking them that we do. We do not observe working hours. Somebody even at 6 o'clock is still cooking dinner. After cooking dinner they have to wash up. By the time they can go to sleep it's 9 o'clock. The problem is that we treat maids the way we will treat a child at home. Because, according to Setswana culture, when there is a young girl in the home, whether it is your child or not your child, you send them to do chores as if they were your own child and they can work until anytime. Let's say somebody, your friend, or your relative, sends a child to stay with you and go to school in Gaborone. This child is expected to do chores and they do chores anytime and I think it's that mentality of the child in the home. We don't take it like this is a worker. So we don't observe working hours. They can work from early in the morning, when my children have to go to school, which means before seven, they should be up to prepare the children to go. But remember that during the day they have an easy time. It's not like they are forever on their toes during the day, because who is there to supervise them? And they don't really do a good job. Most of the time they will just be there, since there is nobody at home, or perhaps only the baby they are looking after. But yes, we do have long working hours.

Among the maids surveyed, 41 per cent said they did not have periods off during the day, while another 41 per cent said they were not entitled to any such privilege. Among the 16 per cent or so who did, 77 per cent said this coincided with the lunch break period between 1.00 and 2.00 p.m., while for others (18.5 per cent) this came after 2.00 p.m. or after work, with 4.5 per cent reporting that such periods were not very defined. These off-periods, for those who had them, were used to rest (47.6 per cent) or to go for lunch (37 per cent). Some maids (33 per cent) claimed they got two days off during the week, others (28 per cent) one, and the largest number (39 per cent) no off-days at all.

Slightly more than half the maids indicated that they did not work during public holidays (54.7 per cent), and those who did (88 per cent) were not compensated for it. Most maids (86.4 per cent) complained that they were not paid extra even when their employers had guests, which usually meant more work. The same was true when special occasions were organised at the employer's house, with 85 per cent of maids complaining that their employers took their extra services for granted. Among the 14.6 per cent who said they were paid for extra guests in the house, the average extra payment was P55 (US$11), and the range P50 (27.8 per cent), P20 (22.2 per cent), P30 (16.7 per cent) and P100 (16.7 per cent).

Equally disliked by 69 per cent of maids was the fact that their employers did not pay them during their leave, when they took or were given holidays. The average annual duration of maids' leave was approximately fourteen days. The majority of maids spent their leave in Botswana (68 per cent) or in Zimbabwe (23.3 per cent), with their families (55 per cent), employer (14.2 per cent), partner (10.3 per cent), or with their family and partner (10.3 per cent). The rest either spent their leave with friends, doing piece jobs or other things to make ends meet. The same trend held for special events or public holidays such as Christmas, Easter, national days and others, during which most maids reported they were not paid any extra money (80.3 per cent). Only 19.7 per cent of the interviewees maintained that they were paid extra during such occasions. Among those who said they received extra payment, the average additional pay was approximately P143. However, most (53.3 per cent) indicated that they were paid between P5 and P100 during such days, and

69.5 per cent of maids said their employers did not usually make gifts to them or to their family, even during special events like Christmas and birthdays.

Maids feel underpaid and overworked. According to one, 'working as a maid is not an interesting but a very exploitative job. We only do it because we suffer so much. It is better to do something than just sit, or else our kids will starve.' Another complained: 'my wage is too little, that if I buy my kids food that is all about it. Having three months working here they haven't increased the money but the work load keeps on increasing.' Still another preferred other relatively more humane forms of devaluation to being a maid: 'it is my first time working as a maid, but given the opportunity I would prefer to work in restaurants, shops, bars and being a cleaner because these jobs' description is better than being a maid. The wages are higher and you are not mistreated as much as when you are a maid. I'm not even satisfied to be a maid right now, I feel like quitting this job.' To another, it all had to do with the fact that she never completed school: 'sometimes I feel very sorry for myself. I keep on thinking why I did not manage to do well in school, otherwise I couldn't be here.'

Overworked as they may be, maids earn on average P10 per day, P25 per week, P400 per month, and P5,000 per year. In percentage terms, 58 per cent of maids said they earned P1–P15 daily, while 42 per cent indicated that they earned above P15 per day; weekly, 74 per cent of those who had fixed weekly incomes earned between P2 and P100, with 26 per cent saying they earned above P100. Monthly, 78.6 per cent were paid P251–550, 12.5 per cent P25–250, 6.5 per cent P551–750, and 2.4 per cent above P750. Half the maids surveyed could not say exactly what their annual wages were, or did not have any such fixed rate, or simply did not provide any answer to the question. Of the half who answered, 60.6 per cent earned P1,000–5,000 annually, 34.6 per cent above P5,000, and 4.8 per cent below P1,000. The average monthly wage for the first job for foreign maids in Botswana was approximately P200, with 43.2 per cent earning P100–250, 31.6 per cent P251–500, and 0.8 per cent below P100. Some 25.2 per cent either were not paid or could not remember how much they were paid for their first job in Botswana. Concerning their monthly wage for their current employer, 32 per

cent P300, 16 per cent P200, and 12.4 per cent P400. Although a few exceptionally earn above P750 per month, the bulk of maids, both local and foreign, earn less than P600. Most employers pay the lowest possible wage, determined not by any official minimum wage as such, but by how desperate the job seekers are and how well the employers are able to bargain downwards. Few maids were satisfied with their wages, as they all tended to feel that the money was too little for them to take care of themselves, their children or relations.

It is worth noting that almost all maids receive their wages from their employers in cash (90.4 per cent), while only a fraction are paid by cheque or through a payroll account (5.4 per cent). Also, most maids claimed that they did not benefit from any yearly salary increments (87.6 per cent). Even the few (7.4 per cent) who said they did were not aware of when their next salary increment would be. However, even when acknowledged, the average annual salary increment was barely P65, with the bulk of maids (45 per cent) involved receiving a yearly increase of P50, and 25 per cent P100. While employers are keen to sanction maids with wage deductions and with letters of warning or notice for absences, coming late to work, breaking things or misbehaving, they appear most reluctant to reward maids for overtime and overload. It is the case of employers as players and umpires, playing Lucifer in the lives of their maids, with the impunity that lawmakers have sanctioned by informalising the realm of domestic work. Employers might need a maid who can be there for them, someone they can rely on, someone who does not talk back or question what they are told, but they do not invest much in what it takes to have such a zombie.

It is hardly surprising that, overworked and undercompensated, few maids have space for leisure in their choked existence. When asked about the frequency with which they attend nightclubs, bars, restaurants and suchlike, most maids said they never go to these places (78.5 per cent), with 6.4 per cent saying they rarely did, 11.7 per cent sometimes, and only 3.4 per cent saying regularly. Many Zimbabwean maids insisted during interviews that there was a cultural difference between them and their Batswana counterparts when it came to claiming outdoor leisure activities. As one of them put it, 'our culture is different and in Zimbabwe ladies wear long dresses

and spend most of their time in the house preparing food for their husbands and cleaning the home. But here it's different because ladies, they go drinking like men.' This trend of staying indoors is accounted for not only by the phenomenal chores which confine maids in time and space but also by the fact that most live-in maids (93.4 per cent) stay in houses with fences and gates, a condition that makes it quite difficult for them to move about freely, as they are under continuous monitoring by their employers. Among maids who frequented such places of leisure, 44 per cent were accompanied by their partners, 42 per cent by friends or other relations; only 7 per cent said they went unaccompanied.

A Zimbabwean maid captured the sentiment of most maids vis-à-vis their profession as follows:

> I have a family back home and my husband is not working, but is the one looking after the kids. I only have two children, the first-born is a male and the second is a female. The first is 12 years and the second-born is 9. Both are doing primary education in Zimbabwe. I don't want any of them to become a domestic worker because domestic workers are looked down upon by the society. I will try my level best to educate them so that tomorrow they will get better jobs.

A Motswana maid added:

> I hate being called a domestic servant. To me this means that I am a slave. I would prefer to be called a domestic worker. Even a maid, what is this? To me a maid is a women who is not married, but I am married and still, I am called a maid.

Another said only poverty could explain her profession: 'being from a poor family is all that leads me to be working for such a profession, to earn a living I just have to do this.'

With such misgivings, it is perfectly understandable why the majority of maids do not want their children to become domestic servants. Most interviews echoed the following sentiments by two Zimbabwean maids:

> I am very poor and not educated at all. I thought of coming to Botswana to look for work, because I am having two kids, a boy and a girl. I need to take care of them to go to school. I do not like them to be like me. I wish them to be educated more and work for themselves, also not to be thieves in the streets.

> I always tell my kids to go to school and learn, and I do not want them to be like me, to be a maid holding people's dirty things in the houses. To be a maid they treat us like we are not normal at all in our brains.

These sentiments were also confirmed by the survey, where nearly every maid (95 per cent) believed that theirs is not the profession for their children. Most (88 per cent) rated domestic work very low (0–3 out of 10), with only 12 per cent of them scoring it slightly higher (4–6). Some maids even likened themselves to outcasts, despite the conviction of others (58.3 per cent) that maids were important to society. Not feeling terribly positive about their profession, most maids (70 per cent) said they would quit working as maids, given the chance. The same was true of almost all maids I personally interviewed. This explains why 51.4 per cent were dissatisfied with being a maid, 32.8 per cent not sure, and only 15.8 per cent claimed that they were satisfied with the profession. Most maids (69.3 per cent) said they did not enjoy domestic work, describing it as exploitative (36.5 per cent) and boring (28.85 per cent). Only 24 per cent claimed that being a maid was interesting, and 1.6 per cent even thought that being a maid could be lucrative.

In general, most maids (81.2 per cent) thought they were over-worked. At least 58.3 per cent would have liked their job description to be much more clearly defined than was currently the case, where they were involved in almost every activity (cooking, cleaning, washing, babysitting, ironing, sweeping the yard, gardening). Some 20.6 per cent had a clearer idea of their daily chores as consisting of cleaning, washing, cooking and ironing only, and 7.4 per cent limited it even further to washing, cleaning and ironing. For maids to describe their workload as too much is quite understandable, considering that very few households, no matter how big, employ more than one maid at any given time. As many as 92.6 per cent of maids surveyed declared they were the only maids working for their employers at the time. Maids had an average of 5 persons each to take care of at their employers', including an average of 2 (1–3) children for most maids (76 per cent). This burden was compounded by the fact that the average number of rooms needing cleaning per workplace was approximately 10. Houses with 6–11 rooms were in the majority (70.4 per cent); 13.4 per cent had 1–5; 13.3 per cent had

12–16; and 2.9 per cent had 17 and above. That notwithstanding, 69 per cent of maids said they were satisfied working for their current employer, an indication that they found their conditions of work acceptable, or were simply resigned to their circumstances, given that wages were generally low across social classes, as if there was agreement among employers on what to pay their maids.

Living conditions and relations with employers

The majority of maids (78.6 per cent) were conscious of major differences between their standard of living and that of their employer, and tended to perceive their employer as very rich (14.8 per cent), rich (44.4 per cent) and comfortable (13.2 per cent), even if rather ordinary to some (25.5 per cent) at times, but hardly as poor. More than half the maids surveyed (60.8 per cent) live in with their employer, mostly in the servants' quarters, but sometimes in the same house, in a room of their own or with the children or relatives of the employer. For almost all maids (91.9 per cent), accommodation is not negotiated as a separate issue, since it is assumed that employers will accommodate their maids free of charge if they have the space. For those without space, it is up to the maid to decide whether or not to work for them, but without expecting to be paid extra. In exceptional cases, however, accommodation was provided for in negotiations with the employer, who made it clear to the maid what the cost of their accommodation was, even if this had to be deducted from the maid's salary. In most of such cases, the average allocation was about P170 (US$34) per month.

Employers with live-in accommodation or 'servant's quarters' tend to pay less or to exert their maids more for the extra facility. Because maids, Zimbabweans in particular, often cannot afford decent accommodation of their own, they usually prefer employment by someone with 'servants' quarters', even if this entails additional exploitation and little respect for their off-hours and social life by their employers, whose idea of a job description is very fluid. Not amused by such fluidity, a Zimbabwean maid complained: 'I do a lot of work in the garden, but according to me this is not what I am supposed to do. This is not my job. They have to hire a garden boy for that. They even told me nowadays I have to sweep the yard

three times a day.' Few Zimbabwean maids would turn down the offer of live-in accommodation, since such an opportunity, regardless of the exploitation that comes with it, would usually facilitate saving for dependants and responsibilities back home in their beleaguered country.

The alternative for Zimbabwean maids is the nightmare of cramped and filthy hostels or ghetto dwellings at White City, Broadhurst and Old Naledi, where each pays between P6 and P10 a day. These places barely provide water, basic toilet facilities, or provision for privacy between men and women. They are also reputedly havens for criminals, with whom some Zimbabwean maids allegedly connive to dispossess their employers of money and household effects. White City in particular is said to be 'rough after 5 p.m.', as criminals 'can just hold you, take your cell and your money and then tell you to go'. A young man whose Zimbabwean mother is a maid affirms: 'I know a Zimbabwean lady who was standing there and counting her money and these guys came and took her wallet, and she didn't know whether they were Batswana or Zimbabweans.' Potential maids from Zimbabwe without family or friends in Gaborone are first exposed to the rough and tough world of the hostels, and some may return there for 'assistance' from their unemployed compatriots even after they have moved on to a job with live-in accommodation. Relations between the hostel owners, clients and the Botswana police (who often raid the hostels) are tense, as the owner of White City acknowledged:

Here there are a lot of Zimbabweans, only most of them are ladies. … Most are doing piece jobs in Gaborone and every evening I check their passport. If the period of stay has expired I make sure that I chase them out, because I am afraid of the police. They pay P3.50 in the evening. They only sleep in one room and in the morning they go to look for piece jobs and come back in the evening. If she does not have money I chase her out because I want money. They are good because they are giving me a lot of money. They know that anybody who brings a boyfriend I will chase her away. They can stay without boyfriends because here they have come to look for money only, not boyfriends. Most of their boy-friends are fellow Zimbabweans, and most of these Zimbabweans steal, they are thieves. I don't like thieves at all.

Maids who live out tend to rent independent housing or to share accommodation with one or more persons, usually other maids. Even with ultra-exploitation, the trend is for maids to conserve the same residence, unless forced out by the whims and caprices of their employers. For, as a maid confessed, 'they [her employers] change like clouds, this moment happy, you turned around they are angry. They treat me right if I have to do them a favour and that's only when they smile. All the other times they are rough.'

Among live-in maids, 44.2 per cent were pleased with their accommodation, 35 per cent rated it as average, and 18.4 per cent were altogether dissatisfied with it. This largely positive attitude towards live-in accommodation could in part be explained by the fact that many employers initially envisage their servants' quarters more as a guest wing for visitors, and therefore gave these rooms more facilities and comfort than would be the case had they been built and furnished exclusively with maids in mind. This would explain why the majority of live-in maids maintained that their employers provided them with a bed, a mattress, a water-closet bathroom/toilet and a wardrobe (57.6 per cent). However, among those who did not have these facilities in their rooms prior to occupation, 60.6 per cent were able to purchase the facilities for themselves, while 21.2 per cent had their employer buy them. Yet the unpredictability of the employer remains a problem: 'I have been warned that I shouldn't bring my kids, friends, relatives and even my boyfriend. Am I in a prison? I wonder how I am going to live without all these people near me or in my life.'

Much as employers may sometimes appear kind and understanding, their desire to objectify their maids sharply contradicts all that, and maids pick up such inconsistencies much more than employers think: 'How can they say they like me when my partner cannot visit? Being a maid doesn't mean you are not a person anymore. I am a person. I also have a social life. But my employer seems to think that I am made of wood.' Most maids complained of these irregularities in their dealings with employers, who were good at saying one thing and practising another.

Employers are keen on controlling the social lives of their maids, especially if and when they provide them with accommodation. Both the survey and interviews revealed that employers are quite strict

about where their maids should stay. The wish of most employers is to have their maids live in with them, so they can organise their lives with greater certitude and predictability. To some extent, it could be said that the main reason for requesting that their maids stay with them is not just for the sake of availability, but also because employers are very eager to exercise authority and control over them, forcing the maids to live as prescribed by their expectations, whims and caprices. This control is exerted whatever the marital status of the maid might be. Most maids (70 per cent) are not at liberty to accommodate any other person(s) in their live-in accommodation, with only 26 per cent claiming that they were allowed to share their accommodation with anybody, even if in effect the majority of maids have never lived with someone who was not liked by their employer (75 per cent). Only 10 per cent of maids said they had lived very briefly with persons whom their employers did not like, although many failed to provide detail when asked to describe their relationship.

The obsession of employers with controlling their servants is extended to include even those who live out. If employers cannot afford, for whatever reason, to have their maids live in, they insist that the maids live nearby. Of the maids surveyed, 39 per cent said they lived far away from their employers. The rest lived very near (11 per cent), near (17.1 per cent) or just in the vicinity (28 per cent). While the reasons for living nearby might also have to do with convenience and the pressure to save on transportation, it is equally evident that many employers would not recruit a maid whom they knew was living far away. And since maids are as common as a devalued currency, employers would always find those who are ready to put themselves out for a job. Although not always for compassionate reasons, employers seek to know where their maids live, and in the survey sample in 59.4 per cent of the cases they succeeded. Among maids who indicated that their employers did not know where they lived, 50 per cent said they would not want their employers to know, while the other half wished their employers knew. Both maids and employers may have their own strategic reasons for seeking to know or not to know, to disclose or not to disclose.

Transportation is an important factor for choice of accommodation for most maids living out. For 54.9 per cent of them, the combi (bus

for intra-urban transport) is the most affordable means of transportation, costing an average of P2.50 per day. The alternative is to walk to work and back, which 40.2 per cent of the living-out maids do daily. Fewer than 5 per cent come to work by taxi or are picked up by their employers. Of the maids using the combi the majority are Batswana (61.8 per cent), followed by Zimbabweans (38.2 per cent). Conversely, Zimbabweans walk to work the most (63.2 per cent), followed by Batswana (32.8 per cent). Despite the importance of transportation, very few maids (0.8 per cent) have successfully negotiated to have transport costs included in their virtual or real contract with their employers.

Concerning health, although maids are not medically insured by their employers, and although some employers have been known to dismiss maids suspected of suffering from HIV/AIDS, it would appear that employers are quite compassionate where illness is concerned. Almost all maids (91 per cent) said that their employers did not deduct money from their wages when they were sick. Even among the few who claimed that money was deducted from their wages because they were ill and could not work, most said that had happened to them only once or twice. As the survey revealed, although a majority of maids (62.5 per cent) had never fallen seriously ill while working for their current employer, in the case of light illness 81 per cent indicated that their employer either took them to hospital (33 per cent), provided medication (22 per cent), assisted with money (10 per cent), advised them to consult a medical professional (2.5 per cent), or gave them time off (1.3 per cent). However, 26.6 per cent claimed the employer did nothing to assist them.

The hiring and firing of a maid is almost the exclusive prerogative of women, even in families with boyfriends or husbands as heads, and in most cases the latter are expected not to interfere in the daily management of the maid. Most women I interviewed felt that the men were rather soft in their dealings with maids, and said they would treat all attempts at regular direct communication between their men and their maids with suspicion. Batswana employed the most maids, whether female or male, followed by whites, then other Africans and Asians. According to the survey, the majority of employers were female Batswana (67.2 per cent), whites (9.6 per cent), other Africans (7.6 per cent) and Asians (2.8 per cent). Male

employers were Batswana (56.6 per cent), whites (10.4 per cent), other African (9.2 per cent) and Asian (2.8 per cent). The languages most used for communication between maids and their employers were English (49.4 per cent) and Setswana (40.2 per cent), with some 3 per cent using both. Other languages such as Zezuru, Shona, Nyanja and Bemba were also used.

Most maids thought that their female employer was older than them (69.2 per cent), 14.2 per cent that they were around the same age, and 10.1 per cent that the female employer was younger than them. The male employers tended to be older than their maids (75.8 per cent), with only a few who were younger (6.9 per cent), or a similar age (2.8 per cent). Exploitation notwithstanding, a little more than half the maids (53.6 per cent) thought that they had a manageable relationship with their employers, 23.8 per cent perceived the relationship to be cordial, 8 per cent as very cordial, and 11 per cent thought the relationship was difficult. Concerning relationships with other members of their employer's household, most maids said these relationships were cordial, though with some difficulties. While some maids named the children (29 per cent) and the madam (28 per cent) as the most liked members of the household, and the husband or boyfriend (15 per cent) and others (22.3 per cent) as the least liked, it is worth bearing in mind that the majority of maids (52 per cent) operate in houses with single mothers, where the boyfriend may only visit from time to time to enjoy services, often with alienating presumptuousness.

The great majority of the maids (79.4 per cent) said they received the most assignments from the wife, while only 7.7 per cent said they did so from the husband; other persons such as children, employer's relations and friends accounted for 12.9 per cent. It was also the madam who tended to embarrass them the most: 'the madam in this house makes me wash her lingerie – I mean, her panties and bras. This is bad luck to wash another woman's dirt.' Detestable as this was, the maid added: 'I don't have any choice, I have a big family to take care of.' However, while maids might dislike being forced to wash their employers' underwear, some could deliberately decide to do so, as a sign of appreciation and intimacy:

For two years, I washed my own underwear, because it was not something that a maid did and I wanted to do that because I didn't

think they did that because nobody has done that for me since I was a child, until one day I came home and found all my knickers washed and swinging on the line. And I wondered why? What's this change? So I said to her, 'Why are you washing my knickers?' She says 'It's OK madam, I want to because I know you. You are fine and I have no problem.' And that for me was her way of saying that what I feel for you is so much more than being an employee and I would do the 'ultimate' thing a maid doesn't do. Which is being that kind of intimate. That to me – I mean obviously she may not articulate it, I mean her English is not very good – is her way of articulating her appreciation and her acknowledgement of how I treated her.

The madam was also the person most likely to treat the maid as a slave, deliberately refusing to render their work more humane. In most households where women are directly in charge, facilities like washing machines, tumble dryers and vacuum cleaners may be available, but maids are sometimes barred from using them by madams who prefer them to use their hands for scrubbing, polishing and washing. In one instance, I met a maid cutting a dog's fur, bathing it, cooking for it, and collecting faeces while the madam sat by. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most difficult assignments were given by the wife (64.2 per cent), compared to 8.5 per cent by the husband or boyfriend. Despite this, maids still perceived the wife as being slightly more compassionate (27.5 per cent) than the husband or boyfriend (23.4 per cent). Again, this could be due to the fact that most households are female-headed, and even when a man is present he is likely to be a boyfriend or a casual acquaintance who bosses maids around, and whose exact relationship with the madam the maid may not always fathom. Concerning compassion, children scored 17.2 per cent and others 4.9 per cent. Similarly, while most maids (79.2 per cent) thought their employers liked them, only the madam (27.5 per cent) and children (25 per cent) were cited as liking them the most among the family. Curiously, however, some maids also thought that they were most disliked by the wife (13 per cent), while a significant number (45 per cent) did not think that they were disliked at all by any of the members of the household.

Employers were perceived as mostly trusting (74 per cent) even if capricious, although 17.7 per cent of maids thought that they were not trusted, and 8.3 per cent were not quite sure whether their

employer trusted them or not. Maids thought that the madam was equally the most trusting member of the household (34.2 per cent), followed by the husband or boyfriend (14.8 per cent), children the least (1.2 per cent), and others (2.5 per cent). Though they claimed they were trusted, only a small number of maids said their employers discussed their problems with them (20 per cent), of whom 73.5 per cent named the madam as the person most likely to share their problems with the maid, and the husband or boyfriend as one of those least likely to do so (12.2 per cent). Similarly, most maids (60.5 per cent) did not discuss their family or personal problems with their employers, although the madam was most trusted by maids (38.7 per cent), followed by the husband (11 per cent), with the children being the least trusted (3 per cent). The majority of maids claimed that they were not aware of secrets about family members (83 per cent), and especially concerning the madam and her husband or boyfriend; 90.6 per cent and 93.8 per cent, respectively, said they knew no secrets about them to share with others.

Most maids expressed confidence that their employer was generally satisfied with their work (71 per cent), 20.2 per cent were doubtful, and 8.7 per cent thought that their employer was dissatisfied with their work. Most maids (72.8 per cent) were often praised by their employer, with the madam praising them the most (39 per cent), followed by the husband or boyfriend (16.5 per cent), and then by everyone else in the house (15.2 per cent). Children praised the maids the least (2.5 per cent), while 6.6 per cent of maids indicated that they received no praise from anybody in the household. A small percentage received praise from other household members such as the grandmother, uncles and others, while some maids (19.8 per cent) were not sure about who praised them the most at their workplace. The majority of maids (63 per cent) indicated that in comparison to former employers their current employer was better, good or excellent, with only 11 per cent thinking that their current employer was worse.

Despite the claims of trust, understanding and relative compassion on the part of employers, the turnover in maids is quite high. On average, each maid has had two jobs since they started work, with most (80.7 per cent) having had two or three. The average length of service as a maid is less than two years (22 months), and the

maximum length of service for most is two years or less: 1–12 months, 27.6 per cent; 13–24 months, 26.7 per cent; 25–100 months, 20.8 per cent; and 2.4 per cent have worked as maids for more than 100 months. The average length of service with the current employer was approximately 13.46 days, with 70 per cent saying they had worked with their current employer for 0–12 months, 20.5 per cent for 13–24 months, and 9.5 per cent for more than 24 months. This points to a fast turnover in maids and the fact that it is rare for maids to stay with the same employer for more than two years.

The relatively short periods of service may have to do not only with the fact that maids are poorly paid but also with the tendency by employers to monitor and control the social life of maids, thereby making their existence tense, frustrating and overburdened with insensitivities. A closer look at the social circles and responsibilities of maids beyond service and servitude to their employers would provide greater insight into some of the frustrations that contribute to their high rate of mobility among employers.

Of the maids surveyed 54.3 per cent said they were single, 11.5 per cent cohabiting with a male partner, and 10.8 per cent married. The rest were divorced, separated, widowed, affianced, or simply in a relationship (20.5 per cent). Most maids – both local and foreign (72.5 per cent) – said their partners were not living with them currently. Being married or affianced did not appear to affect this distance separating maids and their partners, as nearly half pointed out that they lived quite far away from their partners (44.1 per cent), with only 18.5 per cent maintaining that their partners lived nearby. Foreign maids were particularly affected, as only 2 per cent claimed they lived with their partner. Regular meetings with partners seemed rare, as nearly half (47.8 per cent) did not even bother to answer this question, and those who did claimed a range of possibilities, from once a year (6.1 per cent) when they visit their home country, to a few times monthly (13.1 per cent) for those who could afford regular visits home, every weekend (8.2 per cent) and daily (9 per cent) for those with partners in Gaborone or the vicinity. Of those with partners, nearly 26.7 per cent said their partner was allowed to visit them at work, and most claimed that the relationship between their employer and their partner was either casual or conflictual. For these reasons and more, 83 per cent of maids indicated that their

partner never slept over with them at the live-in accommodation. In the majority of cases (78 per cent), partners were explicitly not allowed by employers to sleep over with the maids. Although maids were not quite at ease with having their partner around their work environment, given the choice 40 per cent would want to live with their partner. In general, maids would very much like greater physical contact with their loved ones.

Partners for more than half the maids were either Batswana (31.3 per cent) or Zimbabweans (26 per cent), while others were mainly from South Africa, Zambia, Kenya and Burundi. The average age of partner was 33 years, and their average monthly earnings P5,565 (US$1,113), which by Botswana standards is quite significant, although maids did not think that their partners were well off, with the majority (81.3 per cent) rating their partners as poor. Maids scored their partners quite highly in terms of tender loving care (43.2 per cent), but not so highly in terms of family care (29.9 per cent), certainly because of the separation between the maids and their partners or immediate families.

While 38 per cent of maids have no children, 55 per cent of those with children had one, two or three, with an average of two still attending school. The majority with children (72.4 per cent) said their children had the same father, while 19.6 per cent said their children had different fathers. Most maids (83.4 per cent) do not live with or near their children, with 69.4 per cent leaving their children in the care of relatives, 14.2 per cent with their partner, and 7.5 per cent with their partner's relations. The rest had their children living on their own, at a boarding school or with a friend. A total of 77 per cent said they were living very far away from their children.

This emotional and physical distance was not compensated for by regular visits, as maids claimed to visit their children only monthly (22.7 per cent), sometimes (13 per cent), during the holidays (9.8 per cent), at weekends (8.6 per cent) or never (9.2 per cent). Even among maids whose children were authorised to visit, the children never came to visit in 77 per cent of cases, a fact which could be explained by fear of the employer or transportation costs, especially considering that the majority have their children living far away from them in remote villages and across the border in Zimbabwe.

For those with children nearby, only 50 per cent of employers allowed them to sleep over. In 74.2 per cent of cases the children never slept over. As with partners, this low frequency of children sleeping over with their mothers could be attributed to maids being careful not to become involved in any conflict with their employer because of their children, even if only a few (5.5 per cent) admitted to having had such a conflict before. Given the absence of maids' children, and hence opportunity to try the patience of employers, even when their presence was authorised, it is little wonder that the relationship between employers and the children of their maids was hardly characterised as negative (only 8 per cent), but mostly casual (23 per cent), very good (22 per cent) and even excellent (3 per cent). Perhaps not feeling enough warmth, respect and humanity flowing out of their employers in this regard, half the maids surveyed indicated they would still not be at ease having their children live with them at their employer's, even if they were given the choice. Also, many maids felt it would be cheaper for them to provide for their children at their home villages in Botswana and Zimbabwe, than living with them in Gaborone, where life is very expensive. Some 46 per cent said they were the sole provider for their children, 31.3 per cent that they did so jointly with their partner, and 7.4 per cent said that support for their children was provided jointly by the parents of their partner, their own parents, their partner and themselves. Friends, other relations and employers contributed a negligible degree of support.

Many maids have dependants other than their children and partners (63.3 per cent); these range from 1–3 (46 per cent), 4–6 (12.3 per cent), up to 7–10 (3.6 per cent) dependants. These include their extended family relations (91.4 per cent), their partner's relations (4 per cent), family friends and other long-term relationships. Maids are under continuous pressure to provide for relatives, who are mostly unemployed (77 per cent). Nearly all (95.4 per cent) said they regularly send money back home, the average amount totalling P854.72 (US$171) The money was either hand delivered by friends or acquaintances (32.2 per cent), taken home by the maids themselves (29.2 per cent), sent through the post office (8.5 per cent), or by Western Union electronic money transfer (1.9 per cent). While 13.2 per cent said they never saved, 27.3 per cent acknowledged saving

with the bank, 13.5 per cent to using the post office, 32 per cent to hoarding, and others to saving with their employer (0.7 per cent), partner (0.4 per cent) and others (0.2 per cent).

The social circles of maids were not limited to their partners, with 78.4 per cent admitting to having friends, made up mostly of fellow maids (74.3 per cent), and/or fellow church members for 57 per cent who regularly attend. Not surprisingly, the nationality of a maid's best friend tended to coincide with the maid's own nationality, and with the two countries that dominate the maids' profession, namely Botswana (43.3 per cent) and Zimbabwe (34 per cent). Maids tended to meet with their best friends quite regularly, although very few visits were exchanged during working hours (only 10.4 per cent), especially as most employers (72.3 per cent) frowned upon it, and 65 per cent of maids adhered to the instructions of their employer. In some cases, friends were not even allowed to visit during off-hours (54 per cent), and even less so to sleep over (84 per cent), with the majority of maids (84.6 per cent) scrupulously respecting their employer's instructions in this regard. About 86 per cent of maids have never encountered any problems with their employer because of their friends, because they have not dared to go contrary to instructions.

Most maids (81 per cent) said they were not allowed to entertain guests at their workplace, and 36.3 per cent were equally dissatisfied with the fact that they did not visit their family, partner, friends and other relations more regularly. Less than half (41.3 per cent) seemed satisfied with the frequency of their visits to loved ones. The majority of maids would like their children, partner, relations, friends and other guests to visit them always (17.3 per cent), very often (27 per cent), often (20.3 per cent) or sometimes (13.2 per cent). Only 1.2 per cent of maids said they would be happy without visitors of any kind.

In response to whether they were given enough food to eat by their employer, 53.8 per cent said they were and 7.5 per cent that they were not, while 38.8 per cent ignored the question. Maids generally ate the same food as their employer (69 per cent), but 20 per cent said they bought their own food, and 4 per cent maintained that their employer gave them food rations. While live-in maids reported receiving food rations the most, live-out maids mostly bought their own food. In both instances, 62 per cent said they liked the food

they were given, and among those who ate the same food as their employers 88 per cent said they had the liberty to help themselves from the pots. Responding to the enquiry as to where they took their meals, 32 per cent said at the dining table with their employers, 29.2 per cent mentioned the kitchen, while 10 per cent said the servant's quarters. Fewer than 2.5 per cent of maids indicated that they take their meals alone at the dining table, outside with the children or alone. With the exception of a few (15.4 per cent), most maids (86.3 per cent) were not allowed to take food home from their employer. Among the few who acknowledged doing so, 66.7 per cent said they took food home occasionally, and 22.2 per cent said always; 66.8 per cent said they were at liberty to make food, coffee, tea and drinks, or to eat fruits and other things which had not been given to them by their employer. Employers tended to trust and give more liberty to maids living in than to those living out. More maids living out reported that they were not allowed to make any other food or drinks, or eat other things other than what they were given by their employer. Further interviews with live-in maids revealed contradictions of this nature: 'I stay in my employer's servant's quarters, so I am making my food using a paraffin stove, and sometimes I do not have paraffin, so I will have to steal their stove to cook for myself.' Use of the term 'steal' implies that employers are not always as generous as a quick survey might imply, especially one in which maids were not always free to express themselves. The notion of stealing a stove to cook is a little like the maid stealing the toilet to use the bathroom. That some employers could be overly mean about food is further illustrated with this complaint by a Zimbabwean maid against her Motswana employer:

It was good for the first days on arriving at the place and later she started to talk too much, complaining about food, that I am eating too much. She said this is not your home. She said she is buying the food for themselves, not for me. I have to eat half of what they have, because I am a maid. If she is going to work, she leaves the house empty with no food to eat, no bread for me to make tea.

She used to leave the baby's porridge only, and she will come with food in the evening when they know that they are both hungry. I am always cooking porridge for myself to eat, because I cannot work with an empty stomach and no energy to work. The

other day she found me eating porridge and she shouted at me, that I am wasting the mealie-meal. I have to eat in the evenings only, when they are there, and I have to make tea without bread in the morning. No food in the afternoons. I was spending my time drinking tea to give me energy to work.

   I am now thinking of going back home because I am suffering like a slave. I am going to faint alone in the house because of weakness, of no power for the whole day, and in the evening I have a small plate of food that cannot make me full at all. I decided to leave the job and look for somewhere else better to work. She thought that if you are a maid, you do not get hungry. I stopped working for her because of her not treating me nicely at all. God will not bless her and the maids will not stay with her, if she is always doing this to them.

The attitude of employers towards maids

A glimpse of the exploitation and debasement that maids are subjected to can be provided by the attitudes employers reveal towards their maids. Although few employers have formal contracts with their maids, they prefer to consider them as employees in formal terms, required to behave professionally and responsibly. A maid is expected to be punctual, show work-related initiative, be exceedingly hardworking, meticulous, respectful, obedient, honest, trustworthy, understanding, healthy, clean and, above all, uncomplaining; she should be present but invisible. She should have no social life. In short, maids are expected to behave like automata, invisible enough to do their work unnoticed, possessing phenomenal reserves of energy, and without any pretensions to inhabiting a common humanity with their employers. Any deviation from this master script leads to complaints such as:

   Yeah, she doesn't do a good job. She always has to be reminded to do this. She always has to be told, 'You haven't cleaned the windows.' She always has to be told, 'You should move the bed and clean under the bed.'

   Oh boy! I mean the amount you spend on paying them and the food is not worth it. The potatoes – they love, and the bread – oh boy! And the drinks! They have a good habit of – if they drink – they put in water to come to the same level. You know, even the oil, they do that. That's why I decided I'm going to put everything

in my storeroom, closed. If you don't have a lockable fridge, you are
in trouble. Try to lock your fridge.

They have that bad habit of doing little, and getting more from you.
And the washing! Washing white things, they are not very good
at it. They don't know how to iron, and even when you tell them
'You don't iron the swimsuit', or whatever, that's the first thing
they'll go for to iron and then it burns, and then they'll hide it
somewhere as if you wouldn't know that it has gotten burnt, until
your child is going out in the morning and you find out, and its the
only swimming costume you have for the child; and then you have
to write a letter or you go to school and … that's the bad part of
them. What you say you don't want them to do – that's what you
push them to do.

I got annoyed when she had burnt my husband's trousers and she
was crying and said 'I've burnt this.' But the series of burnings, dif-
ferent items, continued and she said 'I wasn't thinking properly and
my former husband, I understand he is very sick, he's got AIDS and
I'm afraid. I've been with him for so many years. I've had two chil-
dren with him and I think I've got it. Don't you think I've got it
too?' I said 'No, I don't know, I can't answer that. You have to go for
a test.' She said she had gone earlier when she had her second child.
And then after that she said, 'I don't know whether you are going
to allow me to work here now that my husband has got AIDS and
maybe I've got AIDS too' – you know, things like that. And then,
I think she even talked to the sister at one time, when she said, 'I
don't know whether – meaning my husband – whether my boss's
husband likes me – you know, things like that – because he is always
shouting.' So she asked the sister to come and ask me.

I indicated earlier, when I came here in early 1998 we hired a
Motswana maid and she was an elderly lady who was very reliable
and fast and very good, but she had her own limits, as she gave me
her conditions that I had to buy a washing machine. And I found it
very strange because that is not how it is, to insist on things which
you do not necessarily need. I didn't need a washing machine. The
clothes she was washing were just for two people and so I told her
it is not possible. I could not even afford a washing machine by
that time anyway. 'Do what you can', I told her. 'If you feel that
you cannot do the washing without a washing machine, you are
free to leave.' And, unfortunately, one day it rained and the clothes
were quite dirty and she told me, 'The jeans, they have to be taken
to the laundry' and that kind of thing, if we cannot afford to buy
a washing machine like the white she had worked for.… She told

me that if it rains I have to get an extra hand because her work is just to dust the house and maybe mop a bit, not to clean the bath. I thought it was too much for me. So after that I requested her to leave at the end of the month, and she said since I didn't give her notice, she was going to report me to the Labour Department, which she did.

Aha! That's definitely it and they are very good at pinching your clothes if you are not careful – especially for the little ones. Because most of them have their own children, so they will definitely do it. Mine, I handled my own, I don't want anybody doing my clothes. So in terms of those things missing, very rare. But for the children, that is possible because they handle them, especially things like socks, underwear, what have you, those are bound to go very quickly if you don't check at the end of the day. But sometimes you are so tired, you don't check. You say well, some other time I'll do it. Then it will be too late. When they are expecting friends at the weekend: by Thursday or Friday definitely things will start moving from your room to somewhere else. That is very common among the maids.

Maids are not straightforward. If they get pregnant, they don't tell you. They just sit there, so that in the end you take up most of the responsibility. Because they want to keep the job, they'll pretend nothing is happening to their belly, they are OK. And when you want to chase them, they are the first ones to cry.

That's why I don't allow them to cook my food, because I know the hygiene is very questionable. Even if you say, well before you do this, 'Wash your hands', they don't. They will come from the garbage there, straight to your plates… There isn't much hygiene, so I refuse to let anybody cook my food. Even if I'm very very hungry, tired, I'll cook my own food. No matter how late, I'm going to cook my own food.

So month end she took her money and said she was going shopping. OK, normally I give maids Saturdays and Sundays off and this one never went away at weekends. But this time she went away and she didn't come on Monday. I didn't come to school. I was there. I came only for the lesson and went back home. The following day, Tuesday, she came around 11 o'clock and she was like… you know when someone either was hiding in a hole or something, covered with soil, dirty, beaten up, blue eyes and… I said, 'My dear, you can't look after a baby like that. Just take your bags and go.' And she left.

I waited for her. She was supposed to come on Monday morn-
ing. She came on time around 7 o'clock. I was supposed to leave at
that time. And then she stepped into the house – you know when
you look at someone and feel no, I can't leave my baby with this
person. I mean, her nails were big, and hands were like bluish, lips
with scars… pink scars… So I can't leave this one with my kid.
So I gave her a new face cloth, soap, toothpaste and a toothbrush.
'Please take this. Have a bath, I'll come back later.' I went back
with the baby again. I just couldn't find it inside my heart to trust
her with the baby. So for the whole week, I just kept on going to
work with the baby. And then on Friday she said, 'I am going out,
around 7 o' clock.' 'You are going out! Where?' 'No, I just want to
go out. I'll come back around 9 p.m.' OK, it is OK. She went out,
she came back Saturday night, the following day, at night around
11 with the boyfriend to my house. They were knocking. I went
to the door. There were two people. I said 'No.' 'This is my boy-
friend', she said. And they were both drunk. I said 'No, you can't
come with your boyfriend inside my house.' 'But this is where I live
(laughing) and this guy is my boyfriend', she said. 'It's not like we
are going to sleep on the same bed with you. So lady, what are you
talking about?' I said 'No, you can't.' So I just locked the door and
they kept on knocking until my neighbour came and said, what is
happening?

    They are not easily converted. You can't say OK, I'll tame her
and change this buffalo into a pet.

We've hired two and the first one took advantage and made several
hundreds of telephone calls when we weren't home, to the tune
of 400 pula. She was miserable… sort of not happy. But she was
hardworking until she figured out she could just make phone calls
all morning [laughs], and that's how we figured out that we would
just not trust her, and I had never figured out somebody would do
something like that. When we found out, I confronted her and I
said, 'I can't trust you anymore and I am afraid I will have to ask
you please park, and that will be the end of our relationship.' I'm
such a soft touch and she begged me to stay. We will deduct 50 pula
a month; she will pay me back, and bla bla bla. We just paid the
phone bill and were very careful not to leave valuables lying around.
You don't want to tempt people by leaving money around… And
then she found another job.

Employers are only reassured by the fact that losing a maid is
not the end of the world, since the supply of maids far outstrips

demand. 'When we first came here, we had about a hundred people knocking on the door – "Could we live in your house… be your maid?" That's the grapevine obviously when you move in.' Following the failure by their delinquent Motswana maid to react with threats to take them to the Department of Labour, a young English couple had no problem using their networks to hire another maid, though this did not mean the end of their problems:

> She did not react at all, when we fired her. She just said 'OK then', walked off… Then she came back an hour later, said she's got her friends to help her move her belongings. So then the next day, I think one of her boyfriends turned up with a bakkie and they just loaded her things and went. And then our neighbour, the American who lives opposite there, her maid told us... well, we asked her to ask her maid whether they knew of anyone who was trustworthy because we had had enough of our maid. So their maid came and told us that her cousin is looking for work. So we said 'OK, go on and try her.' And she's fantastic. I mean she's amazing. She just does everything, without being asked. Last Thursday she did all the washing, because we showed her how to use the washing machine. But we didn't show her how to do that to wash our clothes. We showed her to do that because we wanted her to use the washing machine for her clothes. But, anyway, she's now using the machine to wash her clothes and our clothes as well. The only problem now is she told us last week she's pregnant. So it's a shame for us because she's very nice. So she's going back home in April.

Compounded Uncertainties of Zimbabwean Maids

Whereas maids in general are vulnerable, Zimbabwean maids are particularly so because of their status as foreigners, and mostly illegal ones at that. Even a local NGO like Ditshwanelo, which runs a programme of activities aimed at informing maids about their rights and mobilising them to defend their interests (see Ditshwanelo 1996), does not include Zimbabwean maids because the latter 'are illegal' in Botswana. Prompted to comment on this issue, the person in charge of the programme insisted that only those with legal papers were free to participate, adding that 'there are a lot of human beings who fall through the cracks of Ditshwanelo because it is impossible for us

to help everyone, especially if they do not present themselves to us.' It is hardly surprising, therefore, that 90 per cent of maids surveyed in this study claimed little knowledge of the Ditshwanelo project. Of those who knew something about the project, their knowledge came largely from the radio (48 per cent) and through friends (22.2 per cent), with employers contributing only 7.4 per cent to that knowledge. It is quite understandable, too, why employers should be reluctant to inform maids on how and where to seek redress for exploitation and servitude. Among maids interviewed, only 2 per cent had ever attended a Ditshwanelo meeting. Little wonder, therefore, that as many as 89 per cent did not respond to the question on Ditshwanelo, were not sure, or categorically stipulated that the Ditshwanelo project was not helpful to them and other maids. Most could not outline what they liked about the Ditshwanelo project, not least because they were not aware of its activities.

The implication of Ditshwanelo limiting its programmes only to national citizens or legal immigrants is that for Zimbabweans to claim their human rights they must be legal – evidence that even a human rights NGO can fall easy prey to the parochial rhetoric of citizenship articulated by states and their institutions of legitimation. While Batswana maids can claim their rights and mitigate abuse by reporting difficult employers to the police and the Department of Labour, Zimbabwean maids, who are often illegal, can hardly enjoy the same privileges. Employers know this only too well, which might partly explain why they tend to prefer Zimbabwean maids to Batswana maids, so they can use and abuse them with impunity. For some employers, illegal Zimbabwean maids, the risks of recruiting them notwithstanding, are much more attractive since they are more flexible and unlikely to complain too much if asked to combine the services of a maid with those of a childcare provider, at more or less the same pay. To this category of employer, Zimbabwean maids are a necessary evil: 'They steal. Friends, they have friends that come in and they destroy your property. They destroy things, and they are just wasteful. But if you have children, you need them. They have to be there.'

While NGOs like Ditshwanelo have played a vital role in protecting those whose rights are legally recognised and represented under national and international law, they have been unable to encompass

adequately the interests of foreign maids or to acknowledge their real situation. Clearly, this is linked to the rather narrow, male-centred Western distinction between the public and private spheres that tends to trap women in varying degrees of invisibility. The beliefs that re-produce these hierarchies have been uncritically internalised, especially by international agencies (e.g. ILO) and NGOs said to champion the causes of the marginalised. Until the simplistic oppositions between men and women, public and private, citizen and subject, national and foreigner, work and childcare, madam and maid are clearly and firmly legislated away, there is little even a well-meaning NGO like Ditshwanelo can do to reconcile the interests of those with 'rights in reality' and 'rights in principle'.

Zimbabwean maids and Batswana employers

However, if all employers (foreigners and nationals) are likely to exploit Zimbabwean maids more, Batswana employers, in their capacity as citizens, are the most likely to do so. In the words of one maid:

> Batswana don't like Zimbabweans. No matter how a Zimbabwean is educated, no matter how a Zimbabwean might be upstairs there, Batswana have a certain fixed impression about Zimbabweans, but Zimbabweans are not all the same, you see. When you say you are a Zimbabwean, they just look at you in a very mean way. They put you right down there.

Another maid hated the stereotypes harboured by Batswana employers vis-à-vis Zimbabweans, for which reason she would not work for them, if she could help it:

> I always pray not to work for Batswana people because they ill-treat us Zimbabweans and they make us like slaves when we work for them. Some time they say you have to work for food because you have never seen food in your country; it is your first time to see rice and chicken. Some, they say we don't bath, we are dark in complexion because we are always in the sun selling things, so all Zimbabweans, they smell and all they know in Setswana is how to say Dumela. These people, sometimes you work for the whole month and they refuse to pay.

Yet, despite their attitudes of superiority, they can be highly dependent on their do-all maids, sometimes to the point of relinquishing even their maternal duties to the 'dirty' Zimbabwean maids, who sooner or later complain:

> They were both drinking alcohol. They were gone until at night and I will be still sitting with the baby until they came any time, even at night. The baby's mother used to say, 'Please Aunty, can you go and sleep with the baby? I am tired. You will bring her at night when she is crying.' She will be so drunk that she cannot take care of her own child. It was like the baby was mine every time. I did not have time to rest or bath, because I will be carrying a baby. If I asked to go home to see my own family, she will say: 'Who is going to stay with the child when you are not around?' She refused for me to go. After that, I told her that I am leaving, and I am going away because I cannot stay in your house for ever. I have to go and see my own kids and parents also, like you with your family close to you. Bye. I asked her to look for another maid who will like to stay and not go back home for ever. That was the time I left the job, and I went home for a short time to see my parents.

Such insensitivities on the part of Batswana employers tended to be seen by maids as enslavement – I was shocked by how many times the term 'slave' was used by maids, both local and foreign, during interviews. Batswana employers, a significant proportion of whom grew up in families with maids, are said to talk too much, and to want to play the boss. As one maid put it, 'If you are a maid, you have to work everything very fast and the madam will be watching television or sleeping. And she will be busy calling for you to bring some cold water to drink.' To another: 'Some of the Batswana women, they tell the maid or shout at them to wash the pants for them, when they are dirty. And some, you go and pour some water for her to go and bathe. After that, you go and remove the bath things for her. She does not touch anything because she is having a maid at home.'

Sometimes, the madam could be painfully demanding:

> when I was doing my work in the house, she was always on my back: do this, do there. If I am cleaning the room she takes a chair and sits there to see how am I cleaning the house; if I miss some-where else, she will tell me to go back and clean there. I sometimes

spend two hours cleaning one room. When I go to sleep, I will be sick, having pains in my body.

Typical of Zimbabwean maids' narratives of negative experiences with Batswana employers is the following:

I am a lady called Perseverence Tshuma from Plumtree area near the Ramakwebane Border Post. I came to Botswana because there in our country we are suffering from everything. I found the job at a big house for a Motswana. She paid me P200 per month. But the problem is that the work which she had was changing almost every day: this, the next day this. So the money was very little and the work was too much for me.

When I came the house was stinking and smelling, but after some days she said everything has to be cleaned fast. She started to complain that the house is dirty, but when I came it was worse than now because I am trying to keep the dirt away.

One day the dust came to my nose too much and I started coughing and I had a headache. I told her that I am not feeling well this morning and she said nothing to me. She just looked at me as if I was mad or telling her something funny. I was working like that with my pains, because there was nothing I could do, because I was a maid. I am not supposed to be sick at all. I have to be strong all the time. But if she was the one who was sick, it was like she is dying and she won't go to work for the day, she will spend the whole day sleeping. On the second day I was very sick. I asked to go and have a bed rest, and she was very cross with me when I told her that. I went to sleep even. She did not agree that because I was feeling the pains that I cannot work at all. I did not have the power to stand up. I went to sleep in my servant room. There was no one who was taking care of me, no food to eat, spending the whole day sleeping with an empty stomach. She said I have to come and cook for myself. She did not feel pity for me, because I was not her child but a slave for her. The slaves work hard even if they are sick.

I stayed three days in bed. When it was at the end of the month, she gave me half-money, and she said I did not work some of the day. She was doing the things for herself when I was sleeping. I told her that I did not sleep because I liked to be sick or I was pretending as if I was sick. She said she does not mind about that; I was supposed to work like that, and go to sleep when I knock off from work. I said 'Thank you very much Madam, for you to say that to me. I am sorry for me that I was sick. I did not know that you were very angry.' I did not take the money from her. I told her not to pay

me any money. I left the money to her, that half-salary which she wanted to give me. I told her: 'I am leaving you because I am not made of metal that I cannot be sick for years. Thank you. Bye. You will find someone who will not get sick like me.' I left her with the money and I went out from her room with my things.

Sometimes, falling out with and losing a maid could be a learning process, especially when the employer has had the opportunity to experience other maids, as the following example illustrates:

I worked for two months, no pay. They told me that they are having problems. They will see me after they solve them. At the third month, they were chasing me to go, because I do not work well for them, and I need more money from them. When I asked for my pay for three months, they said I have to go and report them. They did not pay me. I left the job peacefully. I went where I was staying. I prayed that God will punish them for what they did to me.

One day they had another different maid after me, from Zimbabwe again. They did the same to her what they did to me. But she was a clever one. She took everything she wanted in the house when they were not around. She paid herself, she ran away back to Zimbabwe, until now they did not see her anymore. She taught them a lesson not to do that to the maids. From that day they said they do not want Zimbabweans to work for them any more – they stole things.

One day I met them on the way to the shops. She cried when she was looking at me. She said can I forgive her for what she did to me? I said, 'Why forgiveness? You knew what you were doing in that time.' She took money from her pocket and gave me P600 cash in my hands, and said can I come back to work? I was working very well for them. She will start me on P300 now. I forgave her and I told her I hope she will not treat me like in the past. She said forgive me, the past is past.

I forgave her. I went back to work to her. For now she has changed her behaviour. She was very good to me; everything was good between me and her. I am still working for her until now and we are staying together in the same roof; I eat what they eat. I am not worried about her any more; now she is my boss.

Batswana employers are mistrusted, especially by Batswana maids, who readily tell you that they will never work for a fellow Motswana, because Batswana either do not pay them at all or pay them very

little. Not only do Batswana underpay and overtask their maids; they also are most irregular with payment. And, if pushed, they are most likely to threaten the maids with the police. And the maids themselves are the least likely to seek any legal recourse: 'I work a year and then I shift from there because they were refusing to give me money. So I just say "If you are refusing to give me the money, I'll move from this place." Then I changed and go to another woman.' Hence the repeated insistence by Zimbabwean maids that they wouldn't work for Batswana employers if they could help it. They would rather work for expatriates because they know they are afraid of the authorities in view of the fact that they employ illegal immigrants, so they pay on time.

It is important to stress, however, that though stereotypes of negative treatment of maids by Batswana employers are widespread, not every Motswana employer is insensitive or uncaring, and maids were keen to point that out. Many maids said they had been lucky enough to work for an understanding and respectful Motswana once in a while, with stories like the following being not entirely uncommon:

My name is Morina Ndebele. I came from Zimbabwe at Bula-wayo town. I was very happy when I reached a different country. I did not look for a job for a long time. I got onto a Motswana at Broadhurst. She was a good Motswana lady. She was not like others who hate Zimbabweans. She liked the Zimbabwean people a lot. She felt very sorry for us because she knew how we live in Zim-babwe and how some of the Batswana treat us like dogs. I like her and the job, even though the salary was low. She was very open to me. I will never see such a good Motswana. I think because she was a Christian. Some of the people who go to church, they have good hearts for other people.

I was staying with her and her husband and two kids, both girls, in the same house. She gave me a spare room inside to stay. She felt sorry for me that I can be caught by the police when I move around every day, as I was going out to visit my Aunt at Old Naledi near the station.

I have worked for her for a long time. I am now used to her and everything. She can go to South Africa and leave me with the kids to take care. When she comes from there, she used to pay me money just to say thanks. I care nicely for her kids. Until now she

can go wherever she wants to go. She will know that the maid is there, taking care of everything. What they eat is what I eat too. I like my job very well. If I go home to visit and I come back late, I will find her still not having another maid, waiting for me to come back. She knows that Zimbabwe is far away and I was a border jumper also, and there can be roadblocks on the way; there are SSG all along the road from Zimbabwe. So she knows that I am coming any time, to work for her. After two months, she increased my salary because I was working well for her. I will never leave my job unless she fires me.

Every dark cloud has a silver lining, so they say, and this is no less true of the relationship between Batswana employers and their maids.

Zimbabwean maids and foreigner employers

Among foreigners, on the other hand, Zimbabwean maids (and Batswana maids as well) feel the least exploited by whites, especially those from Europe and North America, who tend to pay generously, and to be considerate and caring. Whites provide the best working conditions and set standards against which maids measure other employers. There is a general feeling among maids that if they work for whites their situation will be much better. This is not only to do with money, but also how maids perceive whites – as better than them. If the reality of maids is one of enslavement, many would rather be enslaved by whites, whom they see as less demeaning in their attitude. Batswana in particular feel much more bitter about exploitation by fellow Batswana, especially the nouveaux riches, who might have been nothing but commoners in the past, than by foreigners, whites most especially. They feel equally bitter towards Zimbabwean maids, whom they regard as inferior, and who weaken their bargaining power by settling for anything. Employers who other-wise would have offered better wages for Batswana maids are able to settle for much cheaper and more desperate Zimbabweans ready to bend over backwards for chicken feed. Even Batswana employers, who are generally shunned by Batswana maids for overworking and underpaying, can afford Zimbabwean maids without effort. Most employers prefer Zimbabwean maids, not only because they are cheaper and easier to exploit but also because they are not as rights- and entitlement-conscious as Batswana maids.

When interviewed, whites of middle-class background acknowl-
edged that, coming from countries where maids were not easily
affordable, they felt uncomfortable, slightly guilty even, with the
whole idea of a full-time maid, and that the least they could do was
to reward her generously. A young Norwegian woman recounted to
me how her parents never let her take advantage of the maid they
had when she was growing up in Gaborone:

> I also remember that my parents wanted me to keep my room tidy,
> which was often a mess. And they'd instructed the maid that she
> should never come and clean if I hadn't tidied up. And I sort of
> understand that. But you know, I was still like, shit, we are paying
> her. She is here full time. Why can't she just do it? I think some-
> times she will just come and sort of lift the file, sort of dust the bed
> underneath. But you know, I think we were just pretty grateful to
> stay in Botswana for a couple of years and just enjoying the luxury
> of having somebody, you know, for doing your dirty work, and we
> taught her a bit of cooking, our style. So we were grateful for that
> because we knew it was a luxury that wouldn't last.

Such gratitude comes in the form of relatively generous wages
and gifts, especially when the whites concerned are paid expatriate or
Western salaries. The Norwegian quoted above shared the following
confidence with me:

> I can take an example, a Norwegian family who is staying here.
> They have a Norwegian salary. So they are very uncomfortable
> and so what, you can tell that what they are doing is trying not to
> stick inside the salary but sort of thinking, how can we bring some
> development, how can we do something for her [the maid's] grand-
> son? We would give him a nice toy for Christmas, but it shouldn't
> just be expensive. It has to be a toy that can develop him and, you
> know, every time she babysits, she gets extra. She does this, she gets
> extra and they are really giving her a generous salary. I mean very
> generous, and benefits and… I think that's… there is certainly a
> way to compensate, to feel more comfortable, that you are giving
> something back too, not just to this person but also to the wider
> community.

This, of course, does not mean that all whites are generous; nor
does it imply that whites are necessarily the most well-paying taken

individually. A maid with a long and rich experience of working with whites of different countries puts things in perspective, as follows:

> I think this one pays me more than those I've been working for be-fore. Now I'm at P850. With the English family in 1993, it was P250. Then 1995, the first American person I worked for, I was working for her part-time, so she started me, the first month, on P150. Then she found another job for me. I worked for the secretary of the British high commissioner. So that one also gave me P150. So it was P300 altogether. Then, within three months, altogether my money was reaching P400. Then after a year, because I worked for her two years and a half before she left, it was almost P450. Then the second one came; she found me being given P450, then she said OK, I'm going to give you P500. So I worked for her two years. She didn't give me any increment. So, then after that she left; she is now in Mozambique. So this one took me, I was given P500. Then she kept on increasing.

To this maid, although she was generally well treated by her white employers, the Americans were not the same as the British, who are both 'quite different from Batswana':

> First I worked for British, they were OK. They were my parents. But I think their culture is different from the Americans, because with the Americans, they are very good people. And they are good and caring. Again they don't criticise. If I work for her, she takes me just as the same level with her. They don't make a person very different from them. Because if you do good to one, you have done good to the whole of America. Then, if he or she is angry or not happy with you, yes America is not happy with you. It's not like Batswana.

It is within the context of their perceived generosity that whites feel bitterly disappointed when a maid appears to take them for granted.

Asians, on the other hand, Indians in particular, were considered the most exploitative by maids in general, and Zimbabwean maids especially. To some, Indians are the most status-conscious and con-descending of foreigners and are just as bad and as underpaying as Batswana employers, threatening to report the maids to the authorities for their illegal status whenever the maids ask to be paid. In certain

cases, they deliberately accused maids falsely of stealing, in order to avoid paying them:

> These Indian people, they are almost like Batswana people. They like to say that the maid steals something when it comes to month-end, in order for them to cut the money for what they say the maid stole. They are scared to pay the money and they are scared to be stolen from by maids. The Indians are not good at all, because they do not like some black persons. They have tribalism in them. They do not like to speak any other language but their own.

Indians are the most likely to charge maids for living in the servant quarters, and for electricity and water consumed, and to exaggerate claims of benevolence whenever they provide food, toiletries or other provisions to their maids. They are also considered to be rather condescending to their maids, which can be most disturbing, as a certain Motswana maid attests: 'I am wondering if I am a disease or I am dirty or whatever, because whenever I pass by them when they are eating they will leave their food.' It was not enough that her Indian employers thought her too inferior to cook for them; she was not to pass by when they were eating. With Zimbabwean maids, they are reportedly even more condescending, 'treating us like dogs' or 'hating us like hell', as the following accounts attest:

> When I came to this place, I started working for some Indian people. These people, they talk too much and they do not want to pay. They say work for 'Mahala', which means work for food and go, because they say Zimbabweans only want food because we are starving in our country. The Indians, they are paying me P250 per month and I am buying my own food to eat. They cannot share food with you, but they give you when they do not want to eat it, like leftovers and rotten food which stayed for a long time in the fridge and which is already expired. I do not eat their food because it is dirty food, which will make me sick.

> The problem of Indians is that they are very talkative. They like to complain about silly things. They think maids eat rotten things only. I did not wish to be a maid, but I am a maid now. If God wills, our country is going to be OK and normal, peaceful as it was before, and we can go back to look for better jobs there.

> I was working for the Indians. These people, they treated me badly. I was having my own chair, cup, plate, spoon to use. They said I do

not have to touch their plates; I have bacteria, so they do not share with black people. I kept on working for them. I have stayed for some time working for them. Now even if they talk, I do not let it in my mind. I am used to a tough place. I was used to them. When they are complaining, I only close my ears and laugh inside my heart, as long they give me my money at the end of the month. I am still working for these Satan's people called Indians. They are the same as Batswana. If I ask to go home, they tell me to go for ever; there are many people who want the work. But they themselves go back where they come from, and I stay with the dog in their yard as a security guard, and they do not pay me for that. I am still look-ing for another job. Maybe I can find good people who are not like these ones.

I was employed at Block 5 as a maid by an Indian. She was giving me P400 per month. The job was good, but for one thing – they were not treating me nicely. They used to call me any time they wanted; even if I was sleeping they said 'You can make me a cup of coffee.' I was waking up at 6.00 a.m., retiring at 10.00 p.m. Busy with the kitchen, cleaning some many plates and pots. If I was working they did not give me any food to eat. They treat people like the Batswana people; they are the same. If an Indian gives me food, it is rotten inside. They treat us like animals.

One day when it was month's end I asked my madam when was she going to pay me, because they were quiet with my pay. She said that I eat her food, I bathe with her water, so why do I need the money, for there is no pay for me. I worked there without pay. I was their slave. I left the job there. I told her I cannot work any more.

Other attitudes of maids towards Indians are summed up by the following comments:

Indians, they pay you hospital money. You spend it all to buy drugs to treat yourself after you work so hard for them.

They don't pay them that much. For the Zimbabwean maids the Indians say we'll go and report you at the end of the month. So you get scared and you just keep on working for months without being paid. Actually there was an incident in Broadhurst: the maid just beat up the lady; when it was month's end she said she didn't have money. She just beat the woman up, packed her bags and left.

Indians are perceived to be generally exploitative, regardless of whether or not one is a maid:

When it comes to Indians, I think Indians are not good people. They may suffer in their country the way we Africans are suffering, but they don't treat us like human beings. The way you may even work for a Boer or a black and they pay you P1,000, an Indian will want to give you P200. These are inhuman acts. These are inhuman treatments that he will make you feel. Even if you are educated, even if you are capable of doing the job, he makes you feel that you are nothing. It's like he is managing you, you know. You are selling something for maybe P10,000; you go to an Indian, he will want to give you P500 without shame, you know. Indians don't treat people well. Perhaps it's because they come from a place that is heavily populated. They are suffering, so when they come here, that hardness they are just trying to put on everybody. But Indians are not good people.

The Chinese, who are increasingly part of the landscape in Gaborone and elsewhere, heavily involved in construction, textiles and shops, are characterised by maids in various ways. While in some ways the Chinese shared the same prejudices as the Indians and Batswana vis-à-vis maids in general and Zimbabwean maids in particular, in others they were sometimes seen as more under-standing, at other times more exploitative, as the following excerpts of interviews indicate:

I came to this country on 15 June 2000. I met Chinese people. I worked for them as a maid in their house at Phase II. I was starting work at 6.00 a.m. until 6.00 p.m., no food to eat there. They said we are called *Makwerekwere* people, that we are not educated, and all Zimbabweans are maids. They were paying me P200 per month and I will pay rent of P50, buying food for P50 and transport every day, and I will be left with nothing. No money, as if I was not paid. It was very little to me because I have to support my kids and my-self. I only worked for two months and I left the job. I looked for another one. I found one at Kale-view as a maid, again to Batswana people. That was worse than Chinese people I was working for before. These people, they really hate Zimbabweans.

I once got a job with foreign people, Chinese. These people, they were giving me P200 per month, but the only thing was I had to buy my own food with that money, because they eat food that I never ate in my life. Their food smelled bad and they sometimes eat bad-smelling spices – and their funny forks made of wood.

I went to a Chinese place in Gaborone-West. I found a job im-
mediately. He was paying me P300 per month. This man, he was
very cruel to me. He said I have to do my work, and wash the dogs
with a shampoo cleaner, and feed them. When he came from work,
he asked why I did not brush the dogs' bodies – it was 9.00 p.m.
He said I had to wake up and do that. I was doing some overtime
and he was not paying for that at all. Every morning he was waking
me early to polish his shoes before he went to work. I was work-
ing very hard for him and waking at 5.30 a.m. and stopping at 6.30
p.m. I am still working for him, but he treats me like I am his slave.
I do not have the energy to rest. I will stick to it, because there is
no choice.

The problem with Chinese is that they are too smart. They are
clever. I for one, I lived with a Chinese. The problem with Chinese
is that they live in a country where the economy is really growing
and they have a good knowledge of business. They know it's diffi-
cult to control people in the business and they know there is cheap
labour in China. So, wherever they are, they forget they are out of
China. So wherever they are, they are going with that spirit – I'm
looking for cheap labour.

And the exception is always there to prove the rule:

Chinese are better people than all of them here in Botswana. I like
them because they know how to treat a human being who is work-
ing for them. My bosses used to give me shoes and extra pay for
my overtime working; they did not want to rob someone else. They
liked Zimbabweans very well and they trusted me a lot. The Bat-
swana people always think that we steal from them. We do not steal
for no reason. Some, they do that because the bosses do not pay
them, and some do not treat people well, so they will take revenge.
    When I was working for my Chinese people, they always gave
me shoes to use when I was working inside their house. They say
there have to be inside and outside shoes to work in their home. So
they gave me two pairs, because they say that dirty shoes have germs
underneath. They like to eat crabs and snails from the river.
    They speak in broken English and I am used to them. I now
know how to talk to them in the same way. These people, they like
to say 'Hey, you do this because I am paying you.' That is the only
thing I hate about them. One time I had to wash the two cars for
the wife and the husband; they paid me P30 for them. That is why I
love them; they treat me well and they know that I am from a poor

country. I need money from them. They have to help me help them in the house. We help each other.

Thank you God, for this kind of a job. I praise him a lot. Please, can I have more? Jesus, I am your daughter, I am poor. I love Botswana because we earn more money and food than in Zimbabwe, and we can have jobs to work for our families who are in that poor country.

For the first time, immigrants from other African countries who are normally ranked at the bottom of the hierarchy of foreigners by Batswana are considered better employers than Asians, and to be capable of greater love and care. They may not be as generous as whites, but they are preferred to Batswana and Asian employers. Together with Batswana, however, immigrant Africans are most likely to have an affair or a relationship with their maids. It is in interviews among them that I experienced the greatest expression of concern by wives and girlfriends over a certain type of permissiveness, provocative dressing and tempting behaviour among the younger generation of maids. Although Zimbabwean maids were also guilty of this, the tendency was thought to be more common with Batswana maids. Some interviewees felt that it was risky to allow maids to cook for their husbands at all, or to do so often, since the way to a man's heart is through his food. If the maid, who has already taken over most of the domestic chores that are traditionally the domain of the wife, were to take over the cooking as well, what would stop her from taking over the bedroom and the husband's heart? This question arose with a significant number of the women employers I interviewed, and quite a few recounted stories of experiences where friends or people they knew had lost their husbands or boyfriends to maids. Most women complained of maids who start off meek, humble and respectful, but who soon after installing themselves into the routine of their job take over or threaten to take over the running of the house from them as the rightful madam. Here is one such example, where a Zambian wife lost not only her position as manager of the domestic sphere but also her husband to a maid:

It happened to one of my friends. The maid was of course a young girl from Mochudi and the husband and wife were both working. … When you went to their home, you could see that they used to

eat altogether with the maid at the table. Her husband allowed that.
He wanted them to have food together. I think it's because he had a
big interest in the girl. But the wife didn't bother. And you could go
there, and see the maid nicely dressed and wearing lipstick. I think
when his contract ended, the maid knew more than the wife, you
see. So when they started having problems, the wife actually came
to us and explained. But then, the wife wasn't actually facing the
husband. I don't know whether she was afraid of telling the husband
– and she had lived with the husband for a long time because they
have a child who's 25 now. The maid became pregnant. We were
suspicious. But the wife never confronted the husband actually to
say, this is what I see, this is what you know. The coming home late,
every day he was going, and he was always in Mochudi. And the
maid had the child. Because of the problems they were having, the
wife moved out. When he got his gratuity he went to ask the wife,
'Now that I'm getting this gratuity, do you think the maid should
also get a gratuity?' And she said, 'Well, I'm no longer in your home,
so you should decide what you should do.' But the wife thought he
must have built a house in Mochudi for this girl. She never con-
fronted the girl, but she just decided that she should move out.

Using gender and domesticity, this chapter has further dem-
onstrated the intricate interplay of various hierarchies at work in
Botswana. While all nationals may be citizens by law, women have
fewer chances of fulfilling their citizenship than men. Even then, not
every female national is disadvantaged to the same degree, as class,
status and ethnicity make it possible for some (maids) to be further
disadvantaged by others (madams). On the other hand, disadvantaged
as they may be as women and as maids, Batswana maids are, by virtue
of their virtual citizenship, structurally better protected than their
foreign counterparts, who are mostly *Makwerekwere* from Zimbabwe.
Employers as well are characterised by similar hierarchies, and how
they perceive and interact with maids, and how they are perceived
and related to by maids, are equally informed by such hierarchies.

Madams and Maids:
Coping with Domination and
Dehumanisation

We have seen how women, to be able to claim equality with men, have had to resort to the devaluation and dehumanisation of fellow women (Chapters 3 and 4). It is clear from our discussion of gender, domesticity, mobility and citizenship that the world of maids is one of uncertainties, insecurities and acute dehumanisation, even in the midst of abundance and the rhetoric of rights and entitlements. If global capitalism is all about opportunities, to maids this comes at the cost of their very dignity as human beings. Not only are maids victims of ultra-exploitation; they enjoy little legal protection and even their basic human rights are always in jeopardy, thanks to inequalities generated through the intersection of race, geography, class, gender and citizenship. Maids are indeed powerless and extremely vulnerable to manipulation and abuse, and are often treated as if their humanity were deliberately frozen for zombification with impunity. This necessarily raises the question of coping strategies, individual and collective. How do these maids survive the structures of repression and utter debasement? What do they do to make the best of a desperate situation in the interest of hope? In other words, what agency are they left with (even as labour zombies) and how do they capitalise on it, despite the structural disempowerment of which they are certified victims? Some of the authors examined in Chapters 3 and 4 have touched on these issues, which I intend to

elaborate upon in this concluding chapter. The argument here is that even those at the bottom of the hierarchy informed by race, geography, culture, class and gender are actively involved in strategies of keeping hope alive. They cherish the idea that the insensitive prescriptiveness of the powerful and exclusionary few would harken to the call for a cosmopolitan citizenship of diversity and inclusion, where difference is practically liberated from the tokenism of the coercive illusion embodied in the pursuit of the nation-state. The plight of maids demonstrates not only that the 'nation-state' is deaf and blind to the sounds and images of difference but also that, like a workman whose only tool is a giant hammer and to whom every problem is a nail, the nation-state lacks the creative flexibility to be entrusted with the task of managing a world marked by ever more flexible mobilities.

Turning the Tables of Exploitation

In her study of maids and madams in South Africa, Jacklyn Cock remarked that, for the most part, the parameters of choice opened to maids were 'extremely narrow', and that they were 'markedly powerless to alter their situation'. This left them with 'a sense of being trapped; of having no alternatives; of living out an infinite series of daily frustrations, indignities and denials'. To blame were their 'lack of educational opportunities and employment alternatives, coupled with influx control legislation restricting the movement of black workers' (Cock 1980: 7). Despite these frustrations, maids seldom displayed 'overt signs of dissatisfaction', their voices of complaint were rarely heard, they did not indulge in strikes, and they were hardly absent from work. As a result they were often viewed as deferential workers, implying an acceptance of the legitimacy of their own subordination in the social order (Cock 1980: 104).

However, although maids were widely viewed as 'deferential workers', their 'deference' was 'more apparent than real'. According to Cock, because of their powerless situation, which blocked any overt expression of dissatisfaction, many maids adopted 'a "mask of deference" as a protective disguise', which enabled them to conform to the expectations of their employers and to shield their real feelings.

They did 'not accept the legitimacy of their own subordination in the social order', were highly conscious of being exploited, and were quite aware of the structures that made this possible. They also felt a sense of community of interests (Cock 1980: 102). Cock identified the 'cheerful incompetence', 'non-commital attitude' and silence of maids as their 'most effective weapons' against the quest by their all-powerful employers to know them. Significantly, Cock suggested that the maid's 'silence, and mockery of employers' could 'be viewed as muted rituals of rebellion', and as 'a crucial mode of adaptation, a line of resistance' that enabled the maids to maintain their personality and integrity intact. She further suggested that even 'petty pilfering' could be construed as 'an expression of situational rebellion', although it was more likely to be 'a strategy of survival than a private revolt', given the maids' low wages and high number of dependants (Cock 1980: 103).

Apart from these passing references to muted resistance or agency, Cock's study seems mainly about demonstrating the extent to which maids in apartheid South Africa were powerless and vulnerable victims of ultra-exploitation. While such a focus was important at the time of her study, it is likely that an additional set of questions on agency might have yielded a richer harvest of coping strategies, and perhaps how in very subtle ways maids sought to turn their structural powerlessness into personal strength, as is the case in Swaziland where rural women who migrate to Manzini reportedly 'use domestic work as a housing strategy' and also as a stepping stone to better things (Miles 1998). This is pursued further in the Botswana study, above, with more examples.

Just as studies have proliferated on the situation of women and gendered power relations, increasingly scholars are seeing the need to study how domestic servants question and contest their circumstances and treatment by employers, as a way of understanding individual and collective strategies of coping with or resisting dehumanisation. Drawing on James Scott, Shah (2000: 108), in her study of domestication of household labour in Nepal, notes everyday forms of resistance, coping and complicity among responses by servants to their predicament. Depending on the degree of their frustrations, servants might as a way of coping 'vote with their feet' or indulge in 'foot-dragging, going slow, pilfering, sulking, and non-responsiveness',

and also in ridiculing their employers through gossip, but 'without
openly challenging the dominant ideology'. Although such action
might, according to Scott, appear as little more than 'nibbling away'
at the structures of their subordination (cited in Shah 2000: 108), they
are nonetheless an eloquent statement about how those at the margins
of conventional, institutionalised and hierarchical structures of power
and citizenship contribute to the sabotage, capture or redefinition of
relations of exploitation. That a useful culture of resistance finds its
genesis in such everyday forms is well demonstrated by how much
ordinary slaves in the Americas or colonial subjects in Africa with
no institutional support contributed through their everyday actions
to raising and sustaining awareness about their predicament among
those with the power to transform the structures of repression.
Seen only as actions by desperate individuals, such nibblings are
likely to be misrepresented and their importance underestimated.
Taken collectively, however, they certainly contribute to a culture
of contestation that should eventually undo or at least significantly
weaken the structures of unequal citizenship and relations between
maids and their employers. While contestation by individual maids
alone cannot undo the structures of exploitation and inequality, they
cannot be undone without their collaboration and active participa-
tion either. Such agency is suggested by Grandea and Kerr (1998)
in their report on a participatory action research by a group of
fourteen Filipino maids in Canada, who set out 'to investigate and
understand their working conditions and factors that gave rise to
them and, more importantly, to identify action-oriented strategies to
improve their situation' (Grandea and Kerr 1998: 7–8).

Maids may or may not be organised into trade unions aimed at
safeguarding their interests as a professional group, but they boast of
informal personal and social networks for mitigating the effects of
disorganisation in contexts of reluctance by states and employers to
recognise and provide legal and contractual protection for them (Cock
1980: 73–4; Yeoh and Huang 1998; Shah 2000: 109; Anderson 2000:
162–6; Mattingly 2001). In Europe, despite legal barriers and notwith-
standing the atomising nature of domestic work, both documented
and undocumented migrants use their personal networks of relatives,
friends and church members to seek employment and sociality, and
to exchange information (Anderson 2000: 31–9; Anthias 2000: 35–8;

Chell-Robinson 2000: 109–15). In certain cases, migrants' friends or relatives may lend them the airfare and offer help with employment and accommodation, or simply offer to help support them until they find work. In some instances, in Barcelona for example, 'it was not unusual for contacts to arrange false employers for their friends: asking Spaniards to offer a job to a friend back home to enable them to get a visa, but with both parties understanding that, on entry to Spain, the migrant will look for work elsewhere.' The networks are equally beneficial to employers who may want certain types of persons to work for them, and have proved useful for ensuring a community check on employer abuse (Anderson 2000: 31). In the case of Filipinos in Italy, their networks and greater experience as maids enable them to negotiate for relatively better wages with Italian employers, who have grown to prefer them (Chell-Robinson 2000: 111). However, not only do networks initiate migration and support the migrants in their migration; they also encourage further migrations (Chell-Robinson 2000: 115). As Ribas-Mateos (2000: 181) notes of Filipino migrant domestic workers in Spain, 'When a female migrant is able to save sufficient money and has enough information about the administrative procedures relating to family reunion, she attracts the rest of her family groupings', and in certain cases a maid's family may be dispersed in different European countries to maximise opportunities.

Maids are not passive, uncalculating victims of ultra-exploitation. Sometimes their solace or strength comes from being able to compare and contrast between evils: abject poverty versus ultra-exploitation or miserable wages; asphyxiating patriarchy versus abuse or de-humanisation by employers; losing one's own family to hunger, ignorance and disease versus temporarily sacrificing it through enslavement by employers and their families; perishing under the scourge of senseless dictatorships where one calls home versus living as a marginally better off but undocumented zombie abroad. With 'long-term dreams and goals' of financial gain, self-determination and autonomy, the migrant maids in Italy, for example, consider 'hard-ships and considerable sacrifice … as unavoidable, but a worthwhile price to pay' (Chell-Robinson 2000: 111). This leads Anthias (2000: 35–8) to observe that while migrant domestic workers might see migration as an opportunity for economic improvement for their

families, the very same migration could also serve 'as an escape route from patriarchal structures', for 'women running away from their allotted place' in their societies of origin. The empowerment that comes from migration in such a context could provide them with the strength they need to bear the excesses of service or servitude to which they are subjected by their employers and the host state. This 'multi-faceted and complex' life of the migrant women, Anthias argues, hardly permits migration to be seen 'in simple terms as either leading always to a loss, or always to a gain, in social status'. The maid emerges as someone who juggles structures and agency in a delicate mixture of frustration and gratification to ensure her survival and sustenance for her relationships with relatives, friends and communities at home or in the host country.

Throughout the world, the relationship between maids and their employers is marked by tensions, frustrations and complaints, with very rare moments of satisfaction, as both strive for what they perceive to be their rights or entitlements. In this context, it is as commonplace for employers to glorify their generosity as it is for maids to celebrate victimhood. While the structures of inequality might lend credence to perspectives that focus too narrowly on simple dichotomies or binaries, a closer look would suggest that maids are as manipulative as they are manipulated, and that power and victimhood beyond their structural confines may each be as much the reality of the employer as they are of the maid. In Indonesia, for example, employers are sometimes victims of their maids, who enrich themselves by stealing household effects and money.[1] In 2001, two Indonesian maids reportedly escaped with more than RM46,000 belonging to their employers.[2] In another incident, a maid stole between RM6,000 and 7,000, threatening to accuse her employer of molesting her should he report her to the police.[3] In Jakarta, the common cause of theft by maids has been explained as the lack of registered maids, and of manpower agencies, and weaknesses in recruitment exercises, largely the failure of the so-called 'sponsors'. Poor working conditions, especially employers' disrespectful treatment of maids, have also been identified as another important factor responsible for a growing dishonesty among maids.[4] However, according to a Jakarta maid, Winarso, aged 30, the person's character is also one particular aspect that could account for incidents

of theft: 'Thefts by maids greatly depend on a person's character. This is an important thing to remember as not all people conduct themselves in a proper manner. Some people were just born with bad behavioural traits.'[5]

Maids, Employers and the
Struggle against Uncertainties in Botswana

In Botswana, maids and their employers are all concerned with the uncertainties that plague their lives. Although employers are assumed to be in positions of power, exploiting rather than being exploited, their reality is often more nuanced and prone to constant negotiation with and concessions to maids. At one level, their own preoccupation with avoiding uncertainties by maintaining whatever advantages they can cultivate implies that vis-à-vis their maids the employers cannot always afford to enjoy the benefits of being in control. As we have seen from some of the complaints by employers in Botswana (Chapter 4), employers may find themselves cooking their own food, looking after their own children, and ironing their own clothes, even with maids employed to take care of these things. Maids are far from being a permanent asset, and employers' real experiences with them suggests they are quite often a liability. Employers are not at ease, even when maids are employed precisely to make it possible for them to live a life of comfort. Like most employers, one British woman felt her flexibility, generosity and sociality were taken advantage of by her maid:

> So, for example, she would say, can I borrow your clothes and can I have this day off? And at first I was, like, OK. No problem. But then I began to realise that this person was actually taking advantage of what she perceived to be my ignorance of what was involved in her job.

  In other cases, generosity, especially by European employers, has been fed upon, and often abused by maids inviting their extended families from the villages to harvest opportunities and material comfort they hardly dreamt of. Attempts by sensitive employers at empowerment of their maids through better wages and more comfortable living conditions are greeted with ever more claims on their generous wallets.

Employers feel compelled to keep their fridges locked, and must constantly monitor their possessions to ensure against theft by maids. Some clean their own bedrooms rather than risk losing prized possessions, and others would rather be their own servants than task the 'filthy' maids they employ with cooking for them. Some are so distrusting that they refuse to leave their maid with the key to their house when they are away at work and the children at school, allowing access to the house for the maid only in the afternoons when the children are back to keep an eye on things. Others find themselves fighting with maids and their boyfriends for authority over their own domestic spaces, and in certain cases maids have been known to question the authority of the madam to give them orders.

Thus, although employed as subordinates and generally perceived as underdogs, even by scholars, maids are not always as passive and as powerless as they appear to be. Maids in the above scenario may be underpaid, but they certainly are not overworked, despite the potential in principle for employers to exploit them. It is therefore not surprising to find some madams deliberately tempering the comfort of having a maid, afraid to lose out to the maid in one way or another, as the following concerns illustrate:

> If I am a housewife, I sit and watch when my husband comes and the maid takes the briefcase; he sits down and the maid makes coffee; the maid goes and cooks, serves and I am still sitting; I don't make any input in the quality of the food; then I shouldn't blame anybody if there is a problem in this marriage, if the man now starts looking at the person who is feeding him. And I think it would be a very foolish woman who would allow a maid to take over.
>
> To me the role of a maid is to assist me and I cook. Even when my children were small and I was still lecturer here, I had a lot of work to do, I still cooked in the evening and she would be peeling potatoes for me. But I would be doing the mixing and all that, you know, because they will never cook the way I cook. And I know what he likes. I don't even expect her – the maid – to know how to please my husband, so I think it depends on how one is brought up – how lazy one is and how smart or not smart one is. No matter how busy I can be, it's not smart, as far as I am concerned, to allow her to take over completely. But at the same time, the husband should also appreciate the extent of commitment of this woman also to be a breadwinner, and maybe at the same time as being a breadwinner she gets pregnant, which means unable to do a lot of

things. In such situations, yeah, there's a need for understanding. But a smart husband also will see that it's because of those problems that the maid is taking over some of the wife's responsibilities, otherwise his wife normally is caring.

You know men. Yeah, women know how men are! They just look at women as women. Not who does what. And I think again, it's this thing that when somebody hires a maid, they put absolutely everything on her. You'll find that if you have to prepare water for your husband to go and take a bath, it's the maid who does it. The maid is the one who puts out the shirt that the man is going to wear when he is going to work the next morning. The woman doesn't do anything. I think as an African that is part of the woman's duty, whether or not they would accept it. I mean, its African culture; you have to make sure your husband has eaten nice food. Like the saying goes, the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. If you let the maid cook for your man, the maid is always asking '*rra* can I prepare something for you?' When you are busy lying down watching television, I mean, they start to have that kind of bond. He can't find his socks; he is going to ask the maid. He wants the white shirt he was wearing last week; he is going to ask the maid. You know, the wife is absolutely not part of the whole thing. So, I think men, because they are human, they just feel, this girl is really, you know…

In some cases, maids have actually turned the tables on madams, stripping them of the ultimate attributes of being in charge. The maid comes in an outsider, imposes her strategic presence, and takes over not only the domain of serving, but also the wife's responsibilities in the house, thereby eclipsing the wife. Eventually, the husband sees more of the maid through her presence, activities and empathy than he does of his own wife. And the maid in that sense becomes a wife substitute, and eventually, in certain cases, the wife.

At home, about three houses from my place, the husband of that house ended up marrying the maid and divorcing the wife. I'm not talking tales, you understand? The wife was a nurse. He divorced the wife and married that maid and they are staying together. The man works with Shell, drives a company car, is about 50 years old, and both he and his new wife are Batswana.

Some madams found direct contact between maids and their partners uncomfortable, risky and to be discouraged. As one put it:

'I know two where the husband slept with the maid. And I know a case where the maid accused the husband of making advances at her…. So I think it's always better for a man to keep quiet and keep out.' It is not always men who confine women to the role of dealing directly with maids. The self-interest of madams is usually a key factor, and smart maids can play madams against their husbands or boyfriends for their own ends.

The second scenario is of employers who are not deterred by the possible uncertainties maids might bring to their lives, and therefore are more ready to exploit and debase maids to the fullest. They employ maids from off the streets, who are mostly illegal Zimbabwean immigrants and whose full names and backgrounds they hardly know, and so are vulnerable from the outset. They leave these maids with keys to their homes, not so much out of trust than of necessity, expect the maids to cook, clean, wash and iron for them, and are generally dependent on the maids, whom they relegate to the kitchen during meal times. The maid may be too dirty and unsophisticated to cook a decent meal, or unqualified to take care of children, but the employer is ready to ignore all that in the interest of exploitation. Some even go so far as relinquishing their most intimate prerogatives, such as cleaning their own and their husbands' underwear, to maids, most of whom feel diminished for being compelled to do so.

The maids in turn feel aggrieved for being treated as beasts of burden or zombies by employers to whom their presence matters only in service or servitude. As such, a maid is likely to indulge in everyday resistance of the type noted elsewhere. In the case of Botswana this includes petty theft or serious theft in connivance with gangsters they know; abusive or reckless use of the home phone to call cellphones or to call abroad while pretending not to know how to use the phone or that no relatives or friends have a phone; extravagance in consumption of foodstuff, water and electricity; eating the baby's porridge when the madam turns a blind eye to the maid's need for food; provocative behaviour aimed at upstaging the madam or playing up to her boyfriend or husband; deliberately disobeying or challenging the authority of the madam; taking unscheduled days off or not returning in time from days off, forcing the employer to change their plans or to become angry; acting with reckless abandon

and disregard for the values of the employer by bringing a boyfriend home to their living quarters or by simply going off with them unannounced; inviting boyfriends and other acquaintances to watch television, drink, eat and chat instead of attending to chores when the employer is away at work; sampling the wardrobe, jewellery and prized possessions of the madam when she is away at work and sometimes wearing her dresses and jewellery to parties without permission; gossiping with neighbouring maids and eavesdropping on the tensions and conflicts of the employers with the possible intention of making social capital out of it; beating, abusing or roughhandling the children left under their care. Here are some further supporting complaints by employers:

> You know, I had to hurry back home from a weekend once to get something and I found that girl in my bedroom dressed… you know, putting a bunch of clothes on my bed, trying them on. Yeah!

> You come back after 5 o'clock, she will shout. You said you'll come home early. I said but I can't come home early before I knock off, so I should wait until I knock off. But then because she was elderly and I thought, if you have kids and you change maids like servi- ettes, it's not good. So, I kept her for some time, but it just became too much. She started bringing her elderly men in the house. The boyfriends will come and… you'll come home before 4.30, you'll find him there as if in his own house, comfortable and commanding the kids to leave him, or to do this and that, or to switch down the volume of the TV, or to change from Cartoon Network to some- thing better, or football or something. And even if you find them in that position, she wouldn't have the courtesy to come and say 'Please, its not what you think', or this is because of this, or at least say 'This is my uncle', or 'This is my brother', or something. Then she will just keep quiet. Until a point when I came home earlier than usual, I wasn't feeling well. I just went into my bedroom and slept. And she… around 4, I think it was 4 o'clock… she called the boys to dress them up, bathe them and give them food. And she was shouting, insulting and, you know, using words that she never used when we are there. And then I just decided, OK, this I can't stand. I've kept her and I thought she's good with kids but she's not. So I just called her and said, 'Please don't do that. And month's end let's part ways, because it seems we can't live together any more.' Month's end she left.

This one, she was maybe two years older than me but she felt that she was an adult more than I was. Telling me, OK with kids you do this and this. The other thing that I noticed with her was the language. The little boy started changing his language, the use of words and whenever I tried to ask him, 'Please don't do this', he'll come and start pinching, you know, under my feet and inside my hands and I said, 'What is this?'

Then I talked to a social worker. Normally, they know how to analyse these situations. She said if you see him doing this, especially when you talk to him like that, it's because this person is doing this thing to him. She is pinching him inside the hands and under the feet, so you wouldn't see that the boy is being pinched. Could this be? So I went home, asked the elder boy, who was 4 by then, and he seemed not to know what I was talking about and then I just talked to the maid: 'But do you ever do this to…' 'No! No! I never do that!' 'Have you seen him doing…?' But no, no, he never did this before.

I just said 'OK, maybe because it seems we can't do well together, let's just go our separate ways.' 'No, no, no, I'm not going and I'm going to keep this job.' So this woman decided not to go. She stayed in the house and I tried to talk to her. She said, 'I'm not going. Not today, I'm not going. Not today and not ever. I'm staying here and working.' 'Lady, I gave you your money for the month. I gave you your money for the notice, so I believe you should move, and this is my house.' 'I'm not leaving.' Until I called the police and they told her to move out. Then I just said, maybe I'm just too young. Why is she doing this?

As a Ditshwanelo staff member so aptly stated, it is not that all maids are bad, or that Zimbabwean maids are thieves, but it is evident that 'if you don't pay the maids, they'll pay themselves'. Zimbabwean maids, some employers tended to agree, were more likely to steal out of need and desperation, given the precarious situation of their families back home. This situation made them even more desperate and frustrated when faced with insensitive employers, as various accounts from maids during interviews, some of which have already been cited, have shown. By way of yet another example, here is what a Zimbabwean maid said:

These people, they think us Zimbabweans, we do not have minds to think or we do not feel the pain when they are shouting at us. That's why some of the Zimbabweans beat their bosses, because

some they shout with bad words like, 'You smell, move away from me. Some say, 'You have learned to sleep on a bed in my house.' Some say, 'You have to drink tea without milk, because the milk is very expensive.'

In other instances, maids who felt maltreated by their madams could hide vital information from them concerning the infidelity of their husbands or boyfriends, even if not necessarily with them as accomplices:

> This woman thinks she is better than me. If only she knew what happens. I know people around here whom her husband sees, but why should I tell her when she treats me like dirt? Everyone in the neighbourhood is laughing behind her back. Serves her right.

And these forms of everyday resistance are just some of the ways employed by maids for paying themselves or mitigating the effects of exploitation on their humanity.

Zimbabwean maids in particular have to do a lot to cope with the uncertainties in their lives and with the insecurities facing them in Botswana. Networks are very important for them, if they are to have accommodation, do more than piece jobs, be informed of job opportunities at the earliest, and earn a reasonable amount of money before their stay expires or before they fall prey to one of the routine 'clean up' campaigns organised by the police. Maids serve as ears and eyes for one another at their various places of work, and are ready to recommend their friends or relations to their employers. As ears and eyes for one another, they would recommend someone and say, 'This one is a good person, I know this person, and where she comes from, we are from the same village at home. I know her family, I know this one, I know that one.'

These networks are also important for safe keeping of whatever items maids may be accumulating, by theft or otherwise, for taking back home to families and friends in Zimbabwe. Once items are safely disposed of, few maids would own up to stealing. 'It's only when you have caught them that they would admit it. But if you have not caught them, even if you know it's them who have stolen, they would still deny it.' According to a Motswana madam, Zimbabwean maids are much better at networks than their Batswana counterparts:

The problem with the Zimbabwean maids, from what I have gathered, is that they network. Our Botswana girls tend not to network. When they pinch, they pinch, for themselves, by themselves and I have a lot of experience of girls who have taken very important and valuable things from my house – Botswana girls. The problem with Zimbabwean girls is that they network such that they can clear the house; not even a piece of carpet, nothing will be found. If they have connections with some men who have some trucks, so you leave the maid for the weekend and go for maybe a long journey, you go away, when you come back there's not a curtain there, nothing, she's taken everything and she's crossed the border. Batswana girls don't do that. That is the difference. They can pinch a watch or food or shoes, but they cannot clean out the house.

In this regard, Zimbabwean maids who stay out of their places of work are deliberately vague or circumspect about the exact places they stay, since they feel more vulnerable if their employers know. This makes it much easier for them to steal in bulk and make their way across the border before they can be traced, as yet another Motswana employer attests:

You know, you cannot take this person because she's from across the border. She could have brought papers that were faked. At the same time, where would you go to complain, because she was illegal in the first place? And they are aware of that: the fact that they were illegal and therefore there was nowhere for us to go to complain. But as a Motswana girl with Omang, the first thing I want to do is to get her Omang details and to trace her. If she's taken something that is really substantial, I could trace her and I would find her. So the Zimbabwean maids, they are aware of our vulnerability, so they can just come in, and when you have really learnt to trust them, they just clean everything and vanish.

The networks are also useful sources of information on possible raids by the Botswana police. Family and friends in Botswana serve as points of contact, providing potential or newly arrived maids with useful information on how to access and integrate themselves in Botswana. No space is too full to accommodate temporarily a relative or friend who has just arrived and yet to find a job, as this example illustrates:

I was walking a long distance from the border post as a border jumper going over the fence wire. I came with a train from

Francistown to Gaborone. I stayed for two to three weeks, staying with my sister at Mogoditshane and my sister's husband, and we were staying in a one-room house, the three of us. It was very hard for me to live with them because they were married, and I was not free to them, because when I was bathing I will not be free at all, and I cannot live with someone with her husband in the same room. I liked my sister very well. I am living in a tight place. I like Botswana but the accommodation is bad.

Church membership, the Zionist Church of Christ (ZCC) in particular, provides useful solidarities and a feeling of invulnerability, as one maid acknowledged: 'When I put on my badge, star and uniform as a ZCC member, I feel safe and praise God, and no police will ask me anything.' In general, most maids keep hope alive through their faith in God, as is evident from constant references to God in the face of success or failure: 'Even if they treat us bad, I do not care. At least God is there, who knows who is wrong or right, and he is looking at us all'; wherever I go, I know that God is always with me'; 'I praise you Lord for guiding me every where I go, even to these people called SSG policemen'; 'I thank God, who gave me a good job for my first time'; 'People who do like this they will be seen by God I will be having no sin at all to him'; 'For now God blessed me, I am not working any more. I am married to a Motswana man and I am a Motswana also. I have the papers'; 'Oh thank you God'; 'Please God, take care of me. I am suffering whilst I am still young'; 'It does not mean that I will always steal where I am working. No, that was a gift from God, who saved me for that. At least I bought something for my kids' future then'; 'I thank God who gave me this job even if the salary is little. I will be sticking to it until I have another better one and move'; 'I thank Jesus Christ, who gave me the job to work'; 'For now I want to work, not to steal. I want to work for my family. I pray to God to forgive me for what I did'; 'I leave them, God will bless them'; 'Oh yes, I believe in God'; 'But I said to myself: God you have heard my prayer. They took my passport, looked at it and it was my first time to come to Botswana. I was told to go get my bag. That day I was so happy but when I think that these people are Batswana I could get worried because I know what I have heard about these people that they are bad.'

Sometimes solidarity is not based on blood relations, friendship or familiarity of any kind, apart of course from a common language, a common sense of being Zimbabwean, a common sense of victimhood. This is well illustrated in the following account:

> I arrived in Botswana on 27 March 1999 on an appointment with my friend that he will come and collect me there, but he didn't come at all. I was stranded under the shades of the buses, where I slept for that night, when I did not know where to go from there. Early in the morning, I just went on the street homeless and hungry and moneyless. When I crossed the road, I saw two BaShona ladies. I greeted and I asked them to help me. It's my first time to be here; I am looking for accommodation where I can be looking for a job. We went together with those people. I went to live with them and the next day, early in the morning, I heard a knock. I was scared. I thought it was the policeman. The lady was coming to give me one glass of drink and a bun. I stayed for two months there, with no job. At last I found one as a cleaner at a shop.

Another survival strategy is how maids or Zimbabwean immigrants in general manage their passports and stay in Botswana. One maid told me that, given the reluctance of immigration authorities to give visas repeatedly without evidence of business in Botswana, and given the relatively short periods of stay authorised, many of them send their passports back to Zimbabwe once they have been let into Botswana. For they have discovered that it is more advantageous to live in Botswana without a passport than to be caught with one that has expired. As she explained:

> It is better, because if they caught you with that passport overstay-ing, you have to pay for these days. Each day is P10. If you stay for two years, it's P10. You go and pay the fine here, and then they can stamp for you to go out. They just give you one day for you to go out, but you have to pay for those illegal days to stay here. But if they catch you without a passport, they just deport you, free! Free transport; you just go home. It is better not to have a pass-port, because with a passport that has expired sometimes you go to Mahalape prison for one month or two months there. You work there as a slave, there in Mahalape, but if you don't have, from here there is a big kumba-kumba truck. You just go home straight to Plumtree. They just deport you. Because with the passport, it's very difficult. Because they count the days you have overstayed. They'll

start searching the passport from the start. But if you don't have, if I just see them, they say: '*Outswakai*?' I say 'I don't have a passport', I just go inside, only two days here at Broadhurst police station, they deport you, you go free.

She added that towards Christmas, when Zimbabweans liked to go home for family reunions, it is commonplace for many to seek to be deported, so they can have free transport home, enjoy Christmas and then come back.

Maids and Madams: The Need to Question Intra-Gender Hierarchies

It is important to salute efforts that have been made in the study of domesticity, and in the changing material and historical circumstances that generate new configurations in Africa and elsewhere. It is also important to appreciate the impressive volume of work done towards documenting the ultra-exploitation and dehumanisation to which women as maids are being subjected as a result of cultural, political, racial, class, gender and economic biases. What remains inadequately explored are relationships between maids and employers that seek not to confirm or perpetuate exploitation and dehumanisation, but rather to question these. Some relevant efforts exist, but much remains to be done, especially on and in Africa.

This study of maids in Botswana should be seen as an effort in this direction. The intention has not been to ignore or minimise the power of structures of exclusion, but rather to investigate both the power of those structures and how those subjected by them seek to cope or even to challenge the control they impose. Such efforts, including those to forge more democratic and horizontal relationships between madams and their maids, even if articulated mostly in the form of everyday resistance, contribute towards a culture of contestation that, as analysts, we cannot afford to ignore. If the uncertainties and insecurities plaguing the lives of contemporary African maids and madams must be addressed, it is important to look beyond our conventional focus on constitutional and institutional forms of power, or on rules and procedures, to social actions by maids and madams that renegotiate and redefine power relations on a daily basis.

What certainly requires more research, both in Botswana and elsewhere, is why and how women, fully conscious of their collective subordination as a social class, should allow themselves to be co-opted by masculine structures of domination, to the point where they pose as gatekeepers against the emergence of fellow women. From Europe, North America and Australia, we have learnt how the identities and role of educated middle-class women as graceful and cultured have depended on their ability to negotiate conviviality with the dominant male order and to escape some of the trappings of domesticity by using race and class as a licence to deny fellow women their citizenship and humanity (Palmer 1989; Anderson 2000; Haskins 2001; Mattingly 2001), thereby raising legitimate questions about those of them who claim 'feminist commitments of "sisterhood" and support for all women' (Tronto 2002: 35).

Focusing on the USA, Tronto argues that the incomplete feminist revolution is in part to blame, for leaving 'unresolved the fundamental questions of how to allocate responsibility for child care in our society' (Tronto 2002: 47). To her, the twin pursuits by upper-middle-class women of greater professionalism and intensive and competitive mothering have only enhanced the class and citizenship privileges of some while reviving the semi-indentured servitude of others (Tronto 2002: 44–6). She uses 'The "Nanny" Question' to argue that basic feminist notions of justice are undercut 'when the wealthiest members of society use domestic servants to meet their child care needs' (Tronto 2002: 35). Furthermore, 'It does not bode well for the creation of democratic citizens if children witness the arbitrary and capricious interaction of parents and servants or if they are permitted to treat domestic servants in a similar manner.' Tronto argues that there can be no equality of opportunity 'for a child who grieves as her mother goes off each day or week to serve, essentially, as a substitute mother for some other children and leaves her without her mother'. Just as there can be no equality of opportunity 'when the child is taken along to be a human toy for the children of the well-to-do' (Tronto 2002: 40). This calls for the completion of the stalled feminist revolution by 'reallocating household responsibilities within and among households' (Tronto 2002: 47). Not even the fact of developing a national network of crèches with state support – in Mozambique, for example – has diminished the role of women as

the primary caregivers, both as crèche workers and as the parents with daily responsibility for the children (Sheldon 1992).

In Africa, a similar hierarchy of citizenship and humanity is recognisable in the relationship between maids and madams (see Chapters 3 and 4). We have noted how in apartheid South Africa, race, geography and class connived to keep the black maid a 'girl' for ever, even as the children she babysat grew up to be ladies and gentlemen. Seen as an eternal child by her white employer, the black maid could

> even be denied legitimacy in the crucial mark of adult status – that of being a proper wife and mother. As an eternal child, she should be virgin, and any excursion into sexual activity is likely to be described in terms implying immorality. She has 'boy-friends' rather than a husband and her children are viewed as the fruit of irrespon-sible lust rather than as the natural consummation of her woman-hood. She is 'irresponsible' because she 'cannot afford to bring them up properly, so I suppose we shall have to help out as usual'. Her duties as a servant make it impossible for her to fulfil her maternal or wifely roles as she would wish, and so she is viewed almost as a teenager who has produced an illegitimate baby. (Whisson and Weil 1971: 39)

Although the maid or nanny is usually 'the child's first ally against parental authority', the child rarely accords her the respect and dignity she deserves. On the contrary, 'she is addressed like a child, ordered about like a child, and responds appropriately.' Soon she even begins to treat the growing child as if he/she is her elder and superior, despite any efforts by the child's 'parents to support her adult status in the child's eyes'. The features which mark her off from other adults in the child's mind are her colour and status, the fact of being called 'maid' or 'girl', treated as a second-hand being, or addressed as a nameless creature, a labour machine, a zombie. In instances where the maid is black, brown or yellow, as is likely to be the case in these days of accelerated flows of migrants or in contexts of racial segregation, the child tends automatically to associate status with colour, and to see his/her 'warm relationship' with the nanny as something to be outgrown if he/she is to become truly adult like his/her parents. And, most of the time, the dependent position of the maid is likely to assist the child 'in this development by her

ready adoption of the subordinate role in relation to him' (Whisson and Weil 1971: 46).

In other parts of Africa where race is not a factor, class, status, culture and other indicators of hierarchy and belonging are used to determine who shall be served and serviced by whom and how. But, as discussed, sometimes the servant resists in myriad ways, seeking whatever dignity she can afford to reassert her truncated citizenship and humanity. Barbara Ehrenreich, commenting on a suit brought by Elizabeth Senghor, a Senegalese maid in Manhattan, against her employer and fellow Senegalese, writes:

> What gives this case a certain rueful poignancy is that her employer, former U.N. employee Marie Angelique Savane, is one of Senegal's leading women's rights advocates and had told *The Christian Science Monitor* in 1986 about her efforts to get the Senegalese to 'realize that being a woman can mean other things than simply having children, taking care of the house'. (Ehrenreich 2000: 64)

To talk housework, as Ehrenreich rightly points out and as we have seen in this study (Chapters 3 and 4), is really to talk power. If housework is degrading, it is not because this is manual labour, but rather because it is 'embedded in degrading relationships', which it inevitably serves to reinforce.

> To make a mess that another person will have to deal with – the dropped socks, the toothpaste sprayed on the bathroom mirror, the dirty dishes left from a late-night snack – is to exert domination in one of its more silent and intimate forms. One person's arrogance – or indifference, or hurry – becomes another person's occasion for toil. (Ehrenreich 2001: 61)

And when the person who consistently and heavy-handedly oversees the cleaning up is another woman, and, worse still, one armed with the rhetoric about women's rights, entitlements and empowerment, there is reason for cynicism to take centre stage. It then becomes legitimate to doubt the extent to which women can effectively resist co-optation by the dominant male order that has made a mockery of citizenship in real terms.

That the world of domestic work is today dominated by women derives from globalised capitalist structures of and assumptions about gender and power, which have tended to prescribe and legitimate

the public sphere for men, while domesticating women or confining their abilities and capabilities to the private sphere and less visible zones of the public workplace (Anderson 2000: 162–6; Hansen 1992b: 3–4). The implications of this are that while men are free to seek employment and harness possibilities outside of the home, women are generally tamed and contained by domestic chores, from which they can only graduate fully or temporarily by compounding the subjection of fellow (socially, politically or economically less well placed) women.

Maids and madams may both be subordinate to men, but they are not equal in terms of power, dignity and entitlements. While madams may sometimes feel treated as maids by the men in their lives, it is not often that maids feel treated as madams. The price of women's freedom to work outside of the home or to claim real or symbolic equality to men, far from being the privileges, comforts and power of men, is often the further debasement of their humanity as women and the internal conflicts and contradictions that generate among them as a social category. Race, class and socio-economic status largely determine which women shall qualify to be co-opted by men into the public sphere to further the debasement of fellow women (Anthias 2000: 27). Hence, it is not only the high status of men and their economies of masculinity that are premised on the domestication or 'housewifisation' of women (Mama, 1999: 68–71); status-seekers among women can only claim their space in the limelight of the public sphere through compounding the domestication, trivialisation or debasement of other women.

It would appear that, in Botswana at least, men are a lot more sympathetic to maids and the uncertainties and insecurities that plague their lives than are their wives and girlfriends who hire and fire maids. It is men who are likely to appeal to the madams to be less harsh on their maids, to display some generosity in pay, gifts or tips, and to ask the maids to emerge from the kitchen to eat at the dining table, even if sometimes this is motivated by selfish, predatory reasons. Maids are more likely to describe their madams in less positive terms than do the men, even if this could in part be explained by the fact that the madams are their direct bosses and therefore in the firing line of their daily frustrations. Nevertheless, this gives the impression that it takes women as gatekeepers to

dehumanise or zombify fellow women with impunity. Just as it takes black South Africans (Chapter 1) and black Batswana (Chapter 2) to demonstrate to black immigrants (*Makwerekwere*) that they are the scum of humanity undeserving of the dregs of Eurocentric citizenship. This calls for further research into the nature, scope and depth of repression by women of women as a social category repressed by men.

Conclusion:
Requiem for Bounded Citizenship

Mobility and Belonging

This book has described how belonging is variously construed, claimed and contested in South Africa and Botswana. As modern centres of accumulation in a continent of sharp downturns and uncertainties, they suggest that globalisation and citizenship are highly hierarchical and inegalitarian processes, affecting individuals and communities differently as informed by race, ethnicity, class, gender and geography. Paradoxically, national citizenship and its emphasis on large-scale, assimilationist and bounded belonging are facing their greatest challenge from their inherent contradictions and closures, and from an upsurge in rights claims and the politics of recognition and representation by small-scale communities claiming autochthony at a historical juncture where the rhetoric highlights flexible mobility, postmodern flux and discontinuity. Everywhere accelerated mobility and increased uncertainty are generating mounting tensions fuelled by autonomy-seeking difference. These dynamics play into the hands of reactionary forces eager to cash in politically and ideologically on such mobility by posing as the legitimate champions of the interests of their unsettled nationals or ethnic kin, as we have seen in the case of xenophobia in South Africa and Botswana. Given the skewed distribution of the benefits of their relative economic success, both

countries are pregnant with disaffected nationals who, in conjunction with the state, direct their resentment against immigrants and ethnic minorities as the easiest and most obvious targets, whom they often project as the cause of social ills. Linking migration and belonging to crime, and increasingly to terrorism, makes certain kinds of mobility by certain kinds of people from certain kinds of places a most contentious political issue within many states.

The predicament of migrants, racial and ethnic 'others' in a world where globalisation seems to bring about an obsession with boundaries and belonging is all too obvious. Even when legal rights are extended to migrants, racial and ethnic minorities, they have not always been able to claim them because they are denied the social membership in local and national communities on which claiming such rights is contingent. The cultural and social rights of migrants and other minorities cannot be adequately provided for by a nation-state-based or by an individual-based conception of rights and citizenship alone, in contexts where social relationships and social membership with 'recognised' others are key to any meaningful rights or citizenship claims. Seen as not quite belonging even when they have lived most of their lives in their host 'nation-states', migrants (or those with the wrong race, ethnicity or geography) feel more and more vulnerable to the growing popularity of the extreme right and of anti-immigration and racial or ethnic purity politics and the policies of various states. Such threats of insecurity push even third-generation migrants to look for a mythical essence in a 'homeland' elsewhere. Notions and identities of 'authenticity', 'indigeneity' and 'purity' are thus imposed upon and claimed by even the most cosmopolitan of immigrants, who are always expected to return to their Bethlehems (dead or alive) and be counted, even when their umbilical cords are firmly linked to diasporic spaces (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000). Cosmopolitanism as 'a deterritorialized mode of belonging', defined more by relationships with others than by 'spatialized' and 'essentialized' landscapes, seems confined to rhetoric, making it difficult in reality to feel at home away from home (Englund 2004a). No amount of questioning by scholars, human rights advocates and immigrants immersed in the reality of flexible mobility seems adequate to de-essentialise the growing global fixation with an 'authentic' place called home. Thus trapped in cosmopolitan spaces in a context where states and their

hierarchy of 'privileged' citizens believe in the coercive illusion of fixed and bounded locations, immigrants, diasporas, ethnic minorities and others who straddle borders are bound to feel like travellers in permanent transit. But these xenophobic manifestations ignore historical immigration patterns and their benefits for recipient states. They also ignore the success stories of forging new relationships of understanding between citizens and subjects that are suggestive of new, more flexible, negotiated, cosmopolitan and popular forms of citizenship, with the emphasis on inclusion, conviviality and the celebration of difference.

The Ills of Bounded Citizenship

In the age of accelerated mobility and clamours for greater cultural, economic, social and political recognition, the ills of bounded citizenship are all too obvious. In the case of South Africa and Botswana, we have seen how hierarchies and dichotomies in citizenship and belonging structured on race, ethnicity, class, gender and geography have readily played into the hands of opportunistic capital and politicians to the detriment of human rights, entitlements and dignity. In both cases, a narrow focus on legal and political citizenship has resulted in citizens without meaningful economic and cultural representation, who in turn have tended to scapegoat ethnic minorities and foreigners, the *Makwerekwere* in particular, instead of seeking justice from multinational capital and the elite few who benefit under global capitalism. The common reference in both countries to the backwardness of other African societies thus serves to occlude the marked economic differences between whites (and/or Asians) and blacks in general, and among citizens. In both instances, the cultivation of a conviviality seemingly so important to manage racial relationships has found its limits in the structuring of the reception of strangers – a reception that is racialised and ethnicised in ways that would be intolerable to relationships among bona fide citizens. By focusing narrowly on race and geography, the immigration services, the state, the media and the general public have been overly critical of black migrants from the rest of Africa, while remaining overly generous towards white migrants from Europe, often regardless of

the potential benefits or burdens of the migrants in question to the host country. Again, if there are prospects for a global citizenship in mobility within the current narrow framework of the 'nation-state', whites are more likely to benefit than are blacks, not only because of their greater economic power but also because of their race and geography. In both South Africa and Botswana, ethnicity and ethnic citizenship (spearheaded by the Zulu Inkatha Freedom Party of Chief Buthelezi for South Africa, and the Society for the Promotion of Ikalanga Language elite association of the Kalanga for Botswana) have added a significant dimension to clamours for recognition and representation.

The focus on the vulnerable bottom-of-the-ladder *Makwerekwere* as a most urgent immigration problem in both countries has had the effect of reiterating this bottom rung as the proper place for black labour. As Simone (2001) has aptly argued, faced with a reality that black migrants bring with them the capacities for informal trade honed over generations – a livelihood hitherto largely unfamiliar to blacks in South Africa and Botswana – black South Africans can defer such recognition by compartmentalising their feelings about strangers in racialised terms. A racialised splitting of immigrants thus ensures that non-African migrants may be accorded a status of respect and admiration, while Africans are vilified as *Makwerekwere*. As this splitting in some ways mirrors the long-term fragmentation of space, economy and culture engineered by apartheid, it is in the very gaps and interstices of urban economies that *Makwerekwere* have usually managed to piece together some livelihood. While a practice of splitting may make their situations highly precarious, its residual topographies are then the very site where some kind of ongoing presence has been consolidated. At the same time, the resentment demonstrated towards *Makwerekwere* permits black South Africans to ward off the feeling that the long struggle for democracy has not improved their economic and cultural lives, and that the nation-state they fought to claim might at the very least have the instrumental value of making a crucial difference between them and backward others. However, as Ngema's song on Indian privilege demonstrates, while black South Africans invoke the nation-state as an instru-ment for marking an essential difference between themselves and *Makwerekwere*, they may question whether Indian South Africans are

sufficiently South African, and determine to what extent claiming autochthony vis-à-vis the Indian community constitutes a more salient and marketable identity in a context of competing uncertainties.

The discussion on South Africa thus goes a long way towards arguing the salience of a notion of flexible citizenship as something inherent in the very viability of South Africa as a country. For, as Simone (2001: 157–62) has pointed out, what is largely kept from view in most discussions of South Africa's reaction to migration is the degree to which the engagement of Johannesburg as the country's primary commercial centre, by a wide range of African actors – migrants, businesspersons, academics, sojourners, NGOs – has substantially increased as the South African presence in the rest of the continent has itself broadened. Through a combination of greater centralisation of regional services, the domination of regional inward investment, and the continued elaboration of unconventional circuits of resource flows, South Africa has maintained a strong comparative advantage in terms of the costs of moving money, goods and people across enlarged spaces of operation. This makes Johannesburg a centre not only for a formal regional economy but also for a variety of other 'real' economies at different scales and degrees of legality. The elaboration of a more sophisticated formal trading, service and financial infrastructure has its counterparts in a more invisible, 'informalised' one. The latter is composed of highly diverse economic activities and actors at widely divergent scales and capacities, often drawing upon illegal goods, the illicit exchange of conventional goods and services, and the mobilisation of diverse actors, some of whom are marginalised from more formal activities. Thus the very economic foundations of citizenship themselves would seem to require large degrees of definitional flexibility.

This study has thus sought to emphasise the importance of comprehensively putting race, ethnicity, class, gender and geography into the equation of understanding globalisation, mobility, citizenship and xenophobia. Simply by asking a few questions on these concepts, our understanding of their merits and limitations can be greatly enhanced. The popular rhetoric around globalisation, for example, is all about free flows of factors of production and consumer goods, regardless of attempts by states to control or confine them. Labour being often racialised, ethnicised, gendered and informed by class

and geography, this study has sought to inquire: just how true is such rhetoric of flexible mobility, equality of citizenship and opportunity across racial, ethnic, class, gender and geographical divides? Does a female black Zimbabwean maid or cross-border trader, for instance, stand an equal chance of mobility, and of being accepted by immigration authorities into South Africa or Botswana as her female white Zimbabwean compatriot farmer? This study tells us that such equality is more in the rhetoric than in the practice, and that globalisation and its promise of global citizenship are more like a bazaar to which multitudes are invited but few rewarded. The Zimbabwean maids are driven into illegality because they are rejected at the borders, only to be exploited first as *Makwerekwere* and then as women, while their white counterparts are formally accepted into South Africa and Botswana on the basis of race and class, even if to lose out eventually to fellow whites who are male with the same credentials. A hierarchy of humanity informed by race, ethnicity, gender and geography is there to ensure that only a minute few shall qualify even when all and sundry have been invited to participate and belong.

On women in particular, the study has highlighted a universal tendency to immobilise them in domestic work even when, like maids, they are physically most mobile within and between borders. While men are free to seek employment and pursue possibilities outside of the home, women are generally tamed and contained by domestic chores. They can only graduate fully or temporarily from this situation by compounding the subjection of other, less-well-placed women. Maids and madams may both be subordinate to men, but they are not equal in power, dignity and entitlements. While madams may sometimes feel treated as maids by the men in their lives, it is not often that maids feel treated as madams. The price of women's freedom to work outside of the home or to claim real or symbolic equality to men often comes down to the further debasement of their humanity as women and to internal conflicts that are generated among them as a social category. Race, class, socio-economic status and geography largely determine which women may qualify to be co-opted by men into the public sphere to further the debasement of fellow women. Madams and maids, though united by their femininity, are divided by their respective realities of citizenship and subjection, primarily but

not exclusively by class, with race, ethnicity and geography remaining important factors. Intensified globalisation is bringing together as madams and maids career-oriented, upper-middle-class women of wealthy nations and striving, adventurous women from crumbling poverty, to reproduce various hierarchies informed by power and wealth. Unfortunately, while most national constitutions promote and protect the rights of women as 'independent citizens', they are silent over the rights of women as 'dependent citizens', or as victims of the injustice of collective exclusion. Thus, who qualifies for citizenship and who among citizens can effectively claim entitlements determine to a large extent the women who shall serve – or be served. In certain cases, citizenship also determines who shall be lucky enough to become a maid.

Few foreign maids qualify to benefit from 'token' recognition by the constitution, a situation that leaves migrant maids very vulnerable to serious abuse. Although foreign maids may use their mobility to engineer positions of autonomy vis-à-vis families, households and local economies in their home countries, they do at the same time become embodiments of the vulnerabilities of those same countries within the global economy, thereby subjecting themselves to the whims and caprice of opportunistic employers who are all too conscious of this position of weakness. The fear of deportation and consequently of reprisals or rejection by relations back home make maids reluctant to claim their rights and dignity, preferring to bargain away their humanity in the silence of zombiehood. Among the many factors propelling the international migration of maids are the poor economic prospects in the countries of origin. The threat of destitution in Zimbabwe, for example, pushes women to undertake risky journeys to Botswana and South Africa, often leaving behind husbands and children, in search of important sources of income, and indirectly prolonging the life of the government and state that have failed them (Mate 2005). The remittances provided by these women are sometimes the only life support for entire families, who otherwise would be demonstrating daily against the failures of the state to deliver basic subsistence.

Maids endure severe hardships in their status as maids and as women. Globally, the trafficking in women to work as maids is a booming business. Migrants of various social and professional

backgrounds from countries enduring sharp economic downturns are desperate for any employment to make ends meet and support families and friends back home. As more and more women in the developed world (and in other centres of accumulation such as South Africa and Botswana) seek full-time employment within a context of poor welfare provisions and state facilities for childcare, the demand for maids from the underdeveloped economies is on the rise. Married women from poorer countries (or poorer regions of the same country), who would ordinarily be madams in their own right and locality, are increasingly forced by economic downturns to migrate to richer regions in search of income. In certain cases, a maid in town or abroad might herself be compelled to hire a maid or rely on the labour of unpaid family members in her home village to take care of the children she has left behind. This permits them to circumvent and at the same time reproduce their micro- and macro-level marginalities. Such complexities occasioned by globalisation call for theoretical appreciation of the shifting meanings of love and money and fluid boundaries between maids and madams. They point, as well, to the need for more nuanced understanding of citizenship and belonging.

Although employers want more cheap migrant labour, they are determined to strip those they employ of personhood and dignity. Most governments, while increasingly recognising the social and economic importance of female migrant domestic workers, enact policies that allow only minimum scope for individual or collective agency among them. Skilled or unskilled, immigrants tend to be exploited and treated as labour zombies by employers keen to take advantage of their precarious state to pay them slave wages and circumvent labour laws. Often the immigrants are totally dependent on those who recruit them, who may be their only access to employment, and perhaps their only contact in the host country, and who arranged their travel documents and who keep their passports. The maids are forced to live in, so they can be compelled to do everything, sometimes in most degrading ways. The lack of job description serves as a licence for dehumanisation of the migrant maids, trapped by the invisibility of the private sphere.

This shabby and dehumanising treatment is directly related to the problematic nation-bound conception of citizenship, in a

context where globalisation has meant greater dislocation, mobility, cosmopolitanism, integration and interdependence of a type that challenges conventional notions of belonging and citizenship. By denying rights to non-citizens whose labour they need, states like South Africa, Botswana and other centres of accumulation are able to resolve a 'potential conflict between the rights of two groups of citizens (men and middle-class women) to participate in the public sphere … without requiring restructuring of the public and private' (Anderson 2000: 195–6; see also Anthias 2000: 26). This study provides ethnographic evidence of how maids as nationals and as immigrants occupy the bottom rungs of the ladder of social visibility. It attempts to show, even more significantly, how differentiation between maids as citizens and maids as immigrants forestalls any possibility of common action by maids against their devaluation. Thus, although disadvantaged by both class and gender, the citizenship of national maids is used to further institutionalise social inequalities and silences over the rights of their foreign counterparts.

Implementing the narrowly legalistic and bounded regime of citizenship on which all of these inequalities and injustices are founded, as this study of South Africa and Botswana demonstrates, is, as I have argued elsewhere, like trying to force onto the body of a full-figured person, rich in all the cultural indicators of health Africans are familiar with, a dress made to fit the slim, de-fleshed Hollywood consumer model of a Barbie-doll entertainment icon. But instead of blaming the tiny dress or its designer, the tradition has been to fault the popular body or the popular ideal of beauty, for emphasising too much bulk, for parading the wrong sizes, for just not being the right thing. Not often are the experience and expertise of the designer or dressmaker questioned, nor his/her audacity to assume that the parochial cultural palates that inform his/her peculiar sense of beauty should play God in the lives of regions and cultures where different criteria of beauty and the good life obtain. This insensitivity is akin to the behaviour of a Lilliputian undertaker who would rather trim a corpse than expand his/her coffin to accommodate a man-mountain, or a carpenter whose only tool is a huge hammer and to whom every problem is a nail (Nyamnjoh 2005: 25–9).

Challenge to Scholarship

Mainstream scholarship is yet to capture these contradictions, contestations and possibilities with the nuances they deserve. Especially in Africa, where problematic expectations of modernity (Ferguson 1999) have engendered technicised, disembedded, depoliticised and sanitised approaches to 'development' as a unilinear process of routinised, standardised, calculable and predictable practices (Ferguson 1990), the tendency has been to de-emphasise small-scale 'ethnic' in favour of large-scale 'civic' citizenship, whose juridico-political basis is uncritically assumed to be more inclusive than the cultural basis of ethnic citizenship (Mamdani 1996, 2000). The mistake has been to focus analysis almost exclusively upon institutional and constitutional arrangements, thereby downplaying the hierarchies and relationships of inclusion and exclusion informed by race, ethnicity, class, gender and geography that determine accessibility to citizenship in real terms (An-Na'im 2002; Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004; Harnischfeger 2004; Alubo 2004; Nyamnjoh 2005). There has been too much focus on 'rights talk' and its 'emancipatory rhetoric', and too little attention accorded the contexts, meanings and practices that make citizenship possible for some and a far-fetched dream for most (Englund 2000, 2004b). Sociological and anthropological accounts, such as provided in this study, indicate that far from passing away, ethnic or cultural citizenship has actually won itself more disciples, not least from among scholars themselves, who are no longer keen on simply being civic citizens but also wish to claim ethnic and cultural subjectivity over and beyond what the state and nation have to offer (Nyamnjoh and Rowlands 1998; Nnoli 1998; Werbner and Gaitskell 2002; Werbner 2004; Halsteen 2004).

In this regard, it is significant to note that despite his being a key proponent of a common political and legal regime that guarantees equal citizenship for all, and for the abolition of the 'decentralised despotism' that informs bifurcations like 'citizen' and 'subject' in Africa (Mamdani 1996), Mahmood Mamdani does believe in ethnic citizenship of any kind. During the constitutional debates in Uganda, in which Mamdani was very active (Halsteen 2004), 'citizens of Asian descent applied to be considered an "ethnic" group, and to be listed as such in the appendix to the Constitution'. Mamdani notes that the

'petition … had little chance of succeeding', not because the Asians were not serious about it, but because 'its consequence would have been to define an "ethnic homeland" for Uganda Asians' (Mamdani 1998). Following such a failed attempt for ethnic recognition and representation by the Asian community in Uganda, it is significant that in 2004 Mamdani chose to describe himself on the jacket of the American edition of his *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim* as 'a third-generation East African of Indian descent, [who] grew up in Kampala, Uganda' (Mamdani 2004). This description identifies Mamdani primarily as a 'settler' from the Indian 'homeland' who – like Salim the Indian shopkeeper and narrator in V.S. Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* (Naipaul 1979; see also Achebe 2000: 88–91), or like the Indians of Durban depicted in Mbongeni Ngema's May 2002 song 'AmaNdiya' – may be in Africa but is not of Africa. For if being of Africa (or anywhere else) is essentially a matter of 'culture' and a 'homeland', then such belonging can only be effective for those 'constitutionally' accredited (even if contested) as 'natives', thereby making it impossible for 'settlers' ever truly to qualify for citizenship (Mamdani 1998), no matter how hard they, like V.S. Naipaul, subscribe to a universal civilisation that 'tramples on' and 'crushes' 'the past' or the doomed traditions of primitive ties (Naipaul 1979: 120; see also Achebe 2000: 89–91). The best even the most achieving of them are permitted in their committed pursuit of a 'universal civilisation' is belonging as members of essentialised and starkly dichotomised communities, thereby making 'half a life' (second-class citizens) of diasporic nationals with multiple identities (Naipaul 2001). Such essentialist and rigid articulation of belonging makes of everyone a slave of the past in a world pregnant with mobility. To those who truly believe in a universal civilisation and citizenship, such an obligation to 'the past can only cause pain' (Naipaul 1979: 147–8). And repeated reminders that they do not quite belong can only drive even third-generation Indian diasporas in Africa and elsewhere to revisit, albeit reluctantly in certain cases, the autochthony they thought their forebears had left behind when they migrated to East and Southern Africa as indentured labour, commercial workers and petty entrepreneurs.

Even as a third-generation settler, and despite his belief in a universal citizenship that is not a slave of invented or distorted traditions, Mamdani is and remains a 'subject' or 'autochthon' of India, or

an Indian in the diaspora, and therefore only secondarily a Ugandan (citizen of Uganda), in the same way that other Ugandans (freely or reluctantly) display primary patriotism to their ethnic groups of origin (Halsteen 2004; Kahyana 2003). What this tells us is that even the most articulate opponents of 'ethnic' or 'cultural' citizenship in scholarship and in principle do consciously or inadvertently yield to expectations of authenticity or autochthony, and comb national, regional and international corridors of power and resources discreetly or overtly seeking political, economic and cultural empowerment for their 'autochthonous' regions and communities (Nyamnjoh and Rowlands 1998; Nnoli 1998; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000; Englund 2002; Werbner 2004; Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004; Nyamnjoh 2005). National identity or citizenship is far from being an uncontested equaliser, as it is experienced generally as an inadequacy badly in need of complementarity, or simply an occasion to revitalise essential identities and exclusionary pursuits of belonging.

The history of difficulty at implementing rigid notions of the 'nation-state' and 'citizenship' in Africa attests to the gross inadequacy of a narrow and rigid juridico-political regime of rights and entitlements in a context where individuals and communities are questioning the Western monopoly over 'freedom of imagination' and challenging themselves to think of 'new forms of the modern community' and 'new forms of the modern state' (Chatterjee 1993: 13). The challenge is clearly to harken to the sociology and anthropology of Africans and their communities at work in laboratories that experiment with different configurations, as they seek a broader, more flexible regime of citizenship. Here meaningful cultural, political, economic recognition and representation could be negotiated for individuals and groups regardless of race, ethnicity, class, gender and geography.

Investing in Flexible Citizenship

Now that even 'civic citizenship' is proving to be anything but an inclusive and satisfactory solution for even its foremost proponents, driving both nationals and non-nationals, settlers and natives, ethnic strangers and ethnic citizens to rediscover fundamental and chauvinistic identities, the citizenship debate is back in full force.

Throughout the world civic citizenship is facing hard times, as multitudes (ranging from women's movements to diasporas through youth movements and cultural communities big and small) clamour for inclusion by challenging the myopia implicit in the conservative juridico-political rhetoric and practices of nation-states (Imam et al. 1999; Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999; Kabeer 2004; Kerr et al. 2004; Antrobus 2004; Kabeer 2005).

In West, Central and East Africa, youth movements are involved in renegotiation of the exclusionary bases of citizenship that have fuelled conflicts over belonging and representation (Sall 2004; Rashid 2004; Chachage and Kanyinga 2003; Fokwang 2003; Pratten 2004; Kagwanja 2004). Women's movements are equally active throughout the continent, challenging the indicators of citizenship narrowly informed by the privileged bases of Western and African masculinities (Imam et al. 1997; Dow 1995; Selolwane 1997, 1998; Mama 2001; Abdullah 2002; Wanyeki 2003; Pereira 2004). There is a clear need to reconceptualise citizenship in ways that create political, cultural, social and economic space for excluded nationals and non-nationals alike, as individuals and collectivities. Such inclusion, as stressed throughout this book, is best guaranteed by a flexible citizenship unbounded by race, ethnicity, class, gender or geography, and that is both conscious and critical of hierarchies that make a mockery of the juridico-political regime of citizenship provided by the coercive illusion of the 'nation-state' (Kabeer 2005). In this flexible citizenship, space should be created for its articulation at different levels, from the most global to the most local or autochthonous, from the ethnic to the civic, and from the individual to the collective. Just as cultural, economic and social citizenship are as valid as juridico-political citizenship, so collective, group or community citizenship is as valid as individual citizenship, to be claimed at every level, from the most small-scale local to the most mega-scale global level. The emphasis should be on the freedom of individuals and communities to negotiate inclusion, opt out and opt in with total flexibility of belonging in consonance with their realities as repertoires, melting pots or straddlers of various identity margins.

Obviously, such flexible citizenship is incompatible with the prevalent illusion that the nation-state is the only political unit permitted to confer citizenship in the modern world. Nor is it

compatible with a regime of rights and entitlements that is narrowly focused on yet another illusion – 'the autonomous individual'. We have discussed how the price of perpetuating these illusions has been the proliferation of ultra-nationalism, chauvinism, racism and xeno-phobia that have consciously denied the fragmented, multinational and heterogeneous cultural realities of most so-called 'nation-states'. The tendency has been for the citizenship thus inspired to assume the stature of a giant compressor of, especially, cultural differences. Almost everywhere, this narrow model has cherished hierarchies based on race, ethnicity, class, gender and geography, which have tended to impose on perceived inferior others the decisions made by those who see themselves as more authentic or more deserving of citizenship. The citizenship that hails from such a celebration of insensitivities is clearly not a model for a future of greater mobility and increased claims for rights, recognition and representation by its individual and collective victims.

Notes

Chapter 1

1. www.southafrica.info/doing_business/economy/econoverview.htm.
2. Labour agreement with South Africa, Maputo, Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique, 17/01/03, www.queensu.ca/samp/news/2003/.
3. www.hrw.org/reports98/sareport/.
4. Botswana National Archives and Records Service, No. S. 244/16, 'Confidential No. 2109, local naturalization of aliens'.
5. www.africapolicy.org/docs97/samp9702.html.
6. Ibid.
7. www.queensu.ca/samp/news/2002/-Migration News-December 2002.
8. Nigerians to appear for 419 scam (SABC, 23/12) www.queensu.ca/samp/news/2002/ Migration News-December 2002.
9. www.hrw.org/reports98/sareport/.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. www.sabcnews.com/entertainment/music/0,1009,35249,00.html.
18. www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/0,1113,2–7_1202278.
19. www.sabcnews.com/politics/the_provinces/0,1009,34910,00.html.
20. www.news24.com/News24/Entertainment/Local/0,5036,2–122.
21. www.news24.com/News24/Entertainment/Local/0,5036,2–122; www.

sabcnews.com/entertainment/music/0,1009,35249,00.html; www.sabc-news.com/entertainment/music/0,1009,35098,00.html; www.udm.org.za/statements.html.

22. www.sabcnews.com/entertainment/music/0,1009,35249,00.html.

23. www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/KwaZulu-Natal/0,11.

24. www.sabcnews.com/entertainment/music/0,1009,35098,00.html.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. www.sabcnews.com/entertainment/music/0,1009,35249,00.html.

28. www.news24.com/news24/South_Africa/0,1113,2−7_1194787.

29. www.news24.com/news24/Entertainment/music/0,5036,2−12.

30. www.news24.com/City_Press/City_Press_News/0,1885,186−1.

31. southafrica.indymedia.org/print.php?id=1599.

32. www.news24.com/City_press/City_Press_leaders/0,1885,186.

33. www.news24.com/City_press/City_press_news/0,1885,186−1.

34. www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/KwaZulu-Natal/0,11.

35. Concerned that *Makwerekwere* steal their women, South African men have been known to set up foreign African men with local women, for purposes of deceiving and defrauding them.

36. www.queensu.ca/samp/news/2003/.

37. Brain drain to brain gain (*Mail and Guardian*, 22 January 2003); www.queensu.ca/samp/news/2003/.

38. Comment on an earlier draft of this chapter.

Chapter 2

1. Cf. *Mmegi*, 25 February 2000, p. 3; *Daily News*, 24 February 2000, p. 2.

2. See *Midweek Sun*, 19 September 2001, pp. 1, 3; For more reports on the suspension and court ruling in favour of the newspapers, see *Midweek Sun*, 11 July 2001, pp. 1, 4; *Mmegi*, 6 July 2001, p. 4; *The Mirror*, 22 August 2001, p. 4; *Botswana Guardian*, 21 September 2001, p. 5.

3. It must be noted, however, that much has been done to liberalise land policies in order to empower the individual (regardless of ethnic origin) more. Elected land boards now have authority over the land in 'tribal' territories. Under state law a citizen has the right to claim and hold land from a land board anywhere in the country, but the past 'tribal' order, with subjects holding land under chiefs, still has a hold in every-day attitudes and in the popular imagination. Legal pluralism may prove complicated, and in practice being able to get what officially one is entitled to may not come so easily.

4. See *Sunday Tribune*, 12 August 2001, for excerpts of President Mogae's address during a fundraising dinner of the Society for the Promotion of Ikalanga Language (SPIL) held at the Bonatla Cafeteria in Gabonre.

5. *Botswana Gazette*, 10 April 2002 and 3 April 2002; see also *Mmegi Monitor*,

26 March 2002.

6. *Midweek Sun*, 1 May 2002; *Mmegi Monitor*, 2 April 2002.

7. See *Botswana Gazette*, 10 April 2002; see also *Mmegi Monitor*, 26 March 2002.

8. See *Botswana Guardian*, 3 May 2002.

9. 'Minorities Petition President Mogae', *Midweek Sun*, 22 May 2002.

10. 'Minorities Petition Mogae', *Mmegi Monitor*, 21 May 2002.

11. 'Politicians Criticise Mogae', *Mmegi*, 24 May 2002.

12. The term *Makwerekwere* is generally employed in a derogatory manner to refer to African immigrants from countries suffering economic downturns. Stereotypically the more dark-skinned a local is, the more likely s/he is to pass for *Makwerekwere*, especially if s/he is inarticulate in Setswana. Bakalanga, who tend to be more dark-skinned than the rest, are also more at risk of being labelled *Makwerekwere*. In general, the '*le-/ma-*' (sing./pl.) prefix in Setswana designates someone as foreign, different or outside the community. It is not used just for ethnic groups but for any group or profession that seems to be set apart from the average citizen (see Volz 2003).

13. Economically, ethnic minorities such as BaKalanga allegedly control the lion's share of opportunities available to nationals, and are claimed to have benefited disproportionately (cf. Selolwane 2000).

14. Interview with Sechele Sechele, editor of *Mmegi*.

15. See *Mmegi*, 22 September 2000.

16. See *Botswana Guardian*, 20 October 2000.

17. See *Botswana Guardian*, 7 January 2000, whose front-page headline, 'The Shrinking President', accused the president of bending over backwards to grant Ian Khama a year-long sabbatical leave from politics, among other things. See also *Botswana Guardian*, 27 April 2001, on how the office of the president snubbed the ombudsman's recommendations which sought to bar vice-president Ian Khama from flying in Botswana Defence Force helicopters and taking public officers with him to political rallies.

18. See *Botswana Guardian*, 6 October 2000.

19. See *Mmegi Monitor*, 11–17 July 2000.

20. According to Richard Werbner, 'cosmopolitan ethnicity' is at once inward- and outward-looking; 'it builds inter-ethnic alliances from intra-ethnic ones, and constructs difference while transcending it', as to be cosmopolitan 'does not mean turning one's back on the countryside, abandoning rural allies or rejecting ethnic bonds' (2002b: 731–2).

21. See also 'Minorities Conference Raises a Storm', *Mmegi*, 2 June 2000.

22. See 'Leepile Forces Tribalism on the Table', *Botswana Guardian*, 10 August 2001, for an example of press representation of Lydia Nyathi Ramahobo's position.

23. See *Botswana Gazette*, 29 August 2001, for Methaetsile Leepile's reply to Edward Maganu, 'Dealing with the Ethnic Cutworm'.

24. Interviewed 26 and 29 July 2001.

25. See *Sunday Tribune*, 12 August 2001.

26. See *The Voice*, 27 July 2001.

27. Interviewed 30 July 2001.

28. Interviewed 31 July 2001.

29. Interviewed 30 July 2001.

30. See 'BaKalanga Challenge Balopi Commission', *Midweek Sun*, 18 July 2001.

31. For more on this version of history, see Eric Moseja, 'Clearing Cobwebs Off Leepile's Mind', *Sunday Tribune*, 9 September 2001. See also Werbner 2002.

32. Often a distinction is made between *Maburu* (Boers or whites from South Africa) and *Makgowa* (whites from Europe and North America), with the latter considered superior to the former.

33. See Shepherd Chimururi, 'The Agony of Being a Zimbabwean', *Mmegi*, 27 April 2001.

34. See *Botswana Gazette*, 7 March 2001, for 'Foreign Labour in Manual Jobs?', and the general lack of protection for domestic and manual workers by the labour laws.

35. Cf. *Botswana Daily News*, 5 May 2000.

36. See *Mmegi Monitor*, 18 July 2000; *Sunday Tribune*, 9 September 2001.

37. At the rate of 5 pula to the US dollar.

38. See *Mmegi*, 16 March 2001; see also *Botswana Guardian*, 27 October 2000.

39. See Tevera and Crush 2003, for a survey of Zimbabweans and their penchant for emigrating.

40. See *Botswana Guardian*, 13 October 2000, on harassment by the Special Support Group (SSG) of the police, who often target Zimbabweans. The paper quoted Raison Madapandu, allegedly 'severely beaten and left for dead' by members of the SSG, as saying: 'They [the police] persistently tell us: "You *Makwerekwere* are a problem. Go back to Zimbabwe and occupy white farms."'

41. See 'Botswana Faces Flood of Illegal Immigrants', *Sunday Tribune*, 9 September 2001.

42. See 'Zimbabweans Take Advantage of "Lazy Batswana"?', *Mmegi*, 27 April 2001.

43. See 'Scrap Expatriate Allowance', *Mmegi*, 12 April 2001, by Moitsheki Pelotona of Gaborone.

44. See 'Racism Self-imposed?', *Mmegi*, 16 February 2001.

45. See 'Please Save Our UB', *Mmegi*, 30 March 2004, by 'Concerned Citizen'.

46. 'Cheap, Poor Quality Made-in-China Merchandise', *Botswana Guardian*, 30 March 2001.

47. See *Mmegi*, 8 September 2000.

48. See *Mmegi*, 1 September 2000, for an article by Bugalo Maripe titled 'Fraudsters Hit Jackpot: An Indictment of Our Systems', on foreigners

with dubious credentials who 'have been able to circumvent the pro-
cedural channels for recruitment and land themselves comfortable jobs
under dubious circumstances'.

49. See, for example, 'Indian Fraudster Falls Into Anti Corruption Trap',
    Mmegi Monitor, 20 June 2000.

50. See *Mmegi*, 28 January 2000.

51. See 'Apartheid is Alive and Well … and Living in Botswana?', *Botswana
    Gazette*, 1 November 2000.

52. See 'Batswana Are "Stupid, Promiscuous" – Former Stanbic MD', *Mmegi*,
    12 January 2001, based on a confidential internal document by former
    managing director of Stanbic Botswana, Neil Mcleman.

53. This sweeping generalisation elicited approbation from some Batswana
    and condemnation from others, as evidenced in reactions to yet another
    such assessment, this time by a certain Smith in *Botswana Guardian*, 2
    June 2000 (cf. *Botswana Guardian*, 9 June 2000).

54. See 'Immigration Scam Unearthed', *Mmegi*, 28 January 2000.

55. *Mmegi*, 1 September 2000.

56. See *Mmegi*, 23 June 2000.

57. Cf. *Botswana Gazette*, 28 June 2000.

58. *Botswana Guardian*, 11 August 2000.

59. See 'Chiefs Bash Foreigners', *Midweek Sun*, 6 June 2001.

60. *The Voice*, 15 September 2000; *Mmegi Monitor*, 19 September 2000.

61. See *Botswana Guardian*, 11 August 2000.

62. See *Botswana Guardian*, 8 December 2000.

63. Ibid.

64. See *Mmegi*, 20 April 2001.

65. See 'Parliament Attacks Foreigners', *Botswana Guardian*, 16 February
    2001.

66. See 'Mogae Gets Tough with Aliens', *Mmegi*, 10 November 2000.

67. See 'Citizen Reservation and Preference Schemes Must Not Fall into
    the Hands of Chancers Fronting for Foreign Interests', *Botswana Gazette*,
    7 March 2001.

68. See 'Budget Generates Anger among the Concerned', *Mmegi*, 9 February
    2001.

69. *Botswana Guardian*, 31 January 2003, p. 25.

70. See National Assembly Papers No. 10 of 1966/67 (BNB 638/1/),
    'Statement on Government Policy in Relation to the Elimination of
    Racial Discrimination and the Furtherance of Localisation in Statutory
    Corporations and Private Enterprise'.

71. See Government Policy on Employment of Non-Citizens in Botswana,
    1971 (BNB 2243).

72. See National Assembly Papers No. 10 of 1966/67 (BNB 638/1/).

73. Announcing this decision in November 2001, the minister of health
    called on Batswana to be armed with their national identity cards, since
    the foreigners who take advantage of Botswana's free and generous medi-

cal services would have to be weeded out and charged a consultation fee and for treatment.

74. See 'Aliens Bashed', *Botswana Guardian*, 16 February 2001.

75. See *Botswana Guardian*, 30 March 2001.

76. See *Botswana Guardian*, 23 February 2001.

77. See A. Gari, 'You Abuse Expatriates', *Midweek Sun*, 18 July 2001.

78. See 'Merafhe Slams Xenophobia', *Botswana Guardian*, 30 March 2001.

79. See *Sunday Tribune*, 12 August 2001.

Chapter 3

1. Cf. *Mail & Guardian*, 9–15 May 2003, p. 4, 'The Unemployment Insurance Contribution for maids came into effect in May 2003, and 'compels employers of domestic workers to register their staff and contribute a percentage of their salary to the unemployment benefit fund' but this applies only 'to employees who carry a valid South African identity document or have been granted work permits'.

2. See *The Economist*, 18 January 1997.

3. 'Over 250 Women Rescued', *Jakarta Post*, 28 December 2002.

4. 'Violence against Women on the Rise', *Independent*, 1 April 2003.

5. www.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/.

6. 'Domestic Maids: Has Their Role Changed', *The Star*, 7 September 2002.

7. 'Maid Policy Stays', *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 8 May 2003.

8. 'Maids Brave Odds on Abuses', *Hong Kong Imail*, 18 June 2001.

9. 'Over 250 Women Rescued'.

10. 'Maid Agencies Welcome Ruling', *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 8 May 2003.

11. 'Existing Foreign Maid Policy Stays', *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 7 May 2003.

12. *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 8 May 2003.

13. Ibid.

14. 'Bosses, Maids Must Respect Each Other', *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 14 March 2003.

15. *Jakarta Post*, 28 June 2002.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. 'Indonesia Urged to Discuss Maid Abuse Issue', *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 4 March 2003.

19. 'Households May Face Tax Over Second Maid', *Hong Kong Imail*, 13 August 2002.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.
23. See *Mail & Guardian*, 9–15 May 2003, p. 4, where Snuki Zikalala, spokesperson for the Department of Labour said, 'We want to create employment and that employment should go to South Africans first. We would not like to see South Africans living unemployed and living in squalor and perpetual poverty. Our first responsibility is to South Africans.'

Chapter 4

1. Visibly irritated, one of the female employers I interviewed shared the following experience with me: 'Some of these Zimbabweans can be very irritating. On Friday a boy rang the bell and when I came out, he said he's looking for a piece job. I told him there is none, but he said "this is grass, let me weed it for just P10." I told him to go away, for I'll weed it myself.'

Chapter 5

1. *Jakarta Post*, 25 February 2003.
2. *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 18 January 2001, 'Maids escape with more than RM46,000'.
3. *New Straits Times–Management Times*, 18 January 2001.
4. 'Protecting Foreign Maids', *Jakarta Post*, 28 February 2003.
5. 'Treat Your Maids Well and with Respect', *Jakarta Post*, 28 February 2003.

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