

**Xenophobia, social change and social continuity: Changing configurations of intergroup allegiance and division among farm workers and farmers in De Doorns, 2009-2013**

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## Declaration

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Graduate Programme in Psychology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, Philippa Louise Kerr, declare that

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## Abstract

This thesis is about continuity and change in South African intergroup relations, especially group relations implicated in xenophobia, as new African migrants have arrived on a scene dominated by long-established, but also changing, South African race/class relations. It also critiques social psychology's 'two-group paradigm', which conceptualises intergroup conflicts in binary terms involving dominant and subordinate or minority and majority groups. In November 2009, a community of Zimbabwean farm workers was forcibly evicted from the informal settlements of De Doorns, a grape-farming town in the Western Cape, by their South African neighbours. South Africans accused Zimbabweans of taking their jobs by working for white farmers at less than the minimum wage, which Zimbabweans and farmers denied. Two interview-based case studies were conducted with De Doorns residents, one in December 2009 (37 interviews), and the second in 2012-2013 during and after the Western Cape farm workers' strikes (33 interviews). While xenophobic violence can be seen to involve two parties – black South African perpetrators and foreign black victims – in 2009 residents constructed an 'alliance' between farmers and Zimbabweans, excluding South African workers, and differently judged this alliance as legitimate or illegitimate according to ideological imperatives of black liberation, white responsibility, anti-xenophobia or free-market capitalism. The 2012-2013 interviews show that, despite the absence of xenophobic violence during the strike, the anti-xenophobic imperative had not necessarily triumphed, as Zimbabwean and South African workers interviewed both continued to level and rebut the same accusations about the 2009 violence while claiming that their relationship had improved since then because of adjustments made by the other group. Also, a 'new' *racial* division appeared – between coloured and all black people irrespective of nationality. Thus, the nationality category 'South African' workers, that appeared united in its opposition to the Zimbabweans in 2009, can itself be historicised as an 'alliance' among groups with different but converging interests in change. The intersection of racism and xenophobia in this community is considered, as are dilemmas of taking an anti-xenophobic stance which problematises the Zimbabwean-South African worker relationship but does not sufficiently problematise the overall farmer-worker relationship. Overall I argue for a historical approach to intergroup conflict discourse which treats constructions of intergroup relationships as oriented to speakers' interests in change.

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## Introduction

This thesis is a reflection on the simultaneous presence of social continuity and social change in South African intergroup relations since the end of apartheid. In particular, it is concerned with those group relationships implicated in xenophobic violence, where relatively new African migrant communities have arrived on a scene dominated by long-established – but also changing – South African race and class relations. Understanding social change and social continuity is important both from South African history perspective and from a critical social psychology perspective. From a South African history perspective, it is important for a critical analysis of the transition from apartheid. I used to think of the transition as a complete *political* change of direction – from illegitimate white minority rule to real democracy – and then wonder why, so often, so little appeared to have changed. Indeed, other academic commentators on xenophobia also seem to have assumed this perspective: when the anti-foreigner violence of May 2008 broke out around the country, some observers adopted expressions of incomprehension about how such anti-black violence could persist when South Africa was supposed to be in a state of post-racial liberation (see Hassim, Kupe & Worby, 2008). This conundrum battles to reconcile the *assumption of political change or discontinuity* – discontinuity between the divisive, exclusive politics of apartheid, and the supposedly inclusive politics of democracy – with *evidence of political continuity*: continuity between the anti-black discourse and violence of white-ruled apartheid South Africa, and the anti-black discourse and violence of black-governed democratic South Africa (Valji, 2003; Everatt, 2011; cf Monson, 2015).

But a superficial analysis of the transition as an abrupt national political about-face – a transition *to democracy* – lacks an appreciation of how the various institutions making up South African life have actually changed or not changed during this time. Indeed, it turns out that there is some literature arguing that understanding where we have got to in South Africa involves understanding the transition at least as much in terms of continuity and similarity with the apartheid past as it does in terms of discontinuity and change (Bond, 2003; Bernstein, 1996; Li, 2009; Neocosmos, 2006; Pillay, 2013; Vale, 2002; Hodes, 2016). Xenophobic violence as we know it in South Africa – perpetrated mainly in black South

African communities in townships, informal settlements, and latterly city centres against the black African migrant communities living among or alongside them – is evidence of social change, insofar as the current strong distinction between black people who are South African citizens and black people who are non-citizens or ‘foreigners’ is something that only emerged after the end of apartheid (Neocosmos, 2006). Neocosmos argues that this distinction was not made during apartheid either by the state or by the anti-apartheid movement, because the apartheid state was attempting to ‘denationalise’ all black people anyway by making them citizens of separate homelands, and regulating their presence in ‘white South Africa’ according to how it could make use of their labour (Neocosmos, 2006; see also Pillay, 2013). In this way, it treated black South Africans much like it did foreign migrants from further afield. In response, and as a way of challenging the ethnic divisions institutionalised by the state, the ideology of the ANC and the anti-apartheid movement was Pan-Africanist and ‘was very much conceived...as a fight of all Africans and their allies against the apartheid state. The concept of “nation” thus developed tended to be inclusive rather than exclusive of Africans from the region’ (Neocosmos, 2006, p. 30-31). While there were other forms of ‘black-on-black’ violence during especially the latter years of apartheid, these occurred around political, ethnic or migrant identities, such as the ANC-IFP conflict in Natal/KwaZulu and the Transvaal (Minnaar, 1992; Sparks, 1994); they were not framed in terms of a distinction between who was a *South African citizen* and who was not. In this way, Neocosmos (2006) gives a historical backing to the popular understanding of xenophobia as something that only emerged after the end of apartheid, and thus, as evidence of change.

But Neocosmos’s argument is that contemporary xenophobia is also simultaneously evidence of continuity with the apartheid past:

Under apartheid all rural migrants whether emanating from South African territory or not, were interpellated as foreign through the medium of tribal identification. Post-apartheid, only those emanating from beyond South Africa’s borders are interpellated as foreign, as the Bantustans are simply struck off the map. It is no longer ethnic identity but national (and increasingly black African) identity which enables access to resources (Neocosmos, 2006, p. 19)

Neocosmos argues that xenophobia was not, however, an inevitable outcome for post-apartheid South Africa, given the Pan-Africanism that had earlier prevailed in the ANC. But, as the new state chose to treat its population as passive 'subjects of state or white largesse' (ibid., p. 77), a distinction then needed to be made between those living in South Africa who qualified for state assistance and those who did not. The dividing line for this distinction was South African citizenship. Thus, a new set of reconfigured borders delineating foreigners from citizens replaced the old ones; and simultaneously a new (racialised) category of denationalised outsiders was created amongst those living within South Africa's borders (ibid)– a distinction policed and enforced with seemingly as much zeal as was put into policing 'white South Africa' under apartheid (Vale, 2002). Thus, in Neocosmos's view the transition, although not inevitably, was 'a transition between two different forms of xenophobia, simultaneously with continuity between state practices' (Neocosmos, 2006, p. vi).

This thesis examines one specific incident of xenophobic violence that played out in De Doorns, a grape-farming town in the Hex River Valley in the Western Cape, in November 2009. This violence took the form of a forcible eviction of a community of Zimbabwean farm workers who were living in the informal settlements around the town; and it precipitated the first large-scale displacement of foreign nationals within South Africa after the widespread anti-foreigner violence of May 2008 (Misago, 2009). About 1500 Zimbabwean workers were evicted from their homes by South Africans living in the same settlements, who broke down Zimbabweans' houses and looted their possessions, accusing them of taking their jobs by accepting less than the minimum wage from white farmers. Farmers and Zimbabweans responded to these allegations by insisting that no low wages had ever been paid or accepted (see Agri WesCape media statement in Appendix 3). If the Zimbabweans were preferred it was because of their better 'work ethic' and not because they were cheap; but Zimbabwean workers and farmers also insisted that this preference was not actually costing South African workers any jobs, as the violence happened in the peak early summer season when farmers' demand for labour dramatically increases (see Misago, 2009). Indeed, in its media statement Agri WesCape levelled its own veiled counter-accusation against the 'criminal element' that appeared to be responsible for instigating the violence, and alluded to 'political support' for the attack, but did not

elaborate. Research on the De Doorns xenophobia conducted by the Forced Migration Studies Program (FMSP, now the African Centre for Migration and Society or ACMS) at Wits University suggested that a local ward councillor had been involved in inciting the attack on the Zimbabweans. The reasons ACMS suggested for this councillor's involvement were that he and other committee members of Ward 2 of the Breede Valley municipality were either acting as labour brokers themselves, or were in cahoots with a group of other labour brokers in De Doorns. It was allegedly in their financial and political interests to get rid of competing Zimbabwean labour brokers and workers, to increase their own bargaining power and to garner support ahead of upcoming local elections (Misago, 2009). Meanwhile, while some of the evicted Zimbabweans left De Doorns altogether, most remained and were accommodated in a displaced persons' camp that was established on a sports field in the town, from where they continued to be fetched by farmers for work on the farms until the end of the season in April 2010. About 300 others were accommodated by farmers in their available farm worker accommodation.<sup>1</sup> About three weeks after this attack, I went to De Doorns to do fieldwork for my master's thesis. I spent nine days there with Gina Fourie, a master's student at the University of Cape Town who agreed to act as research assistant, interviewing residents about these events and about the issues they raised for different groups in the town. Mainly, I was interested in finding out what caused or led to the violence, and also how groups in the town understood the nature of their relationship with locally significant other groups (cf Durrheim & Dixon, 2005a).

Thinking seriously about social continuity and social change is also important for developing a critical social psychological perspective on intergroup conflicts such as xenophobia and racism. Until I was well into the process of writing this thesis, I did not really understand the persistent emphasis of critical social psychologists on the importance of understanding 'social change' (e.g. Sherif, 1966; Gergen, 1973; Parker, 1989; Billig, 1991; Reicher, 2004; Reicher & Haslam, 2013; Parker, 2015), or why this was something we should be concerned to study. While I would not have disagreed that most societies, including De Doorns, are changing, saying so seemed nothing more than a truism. But in time I realised why it is important not to take change for granted. Critics contend that mainstream social psychology dehistoricises its subject matter by ignoring processes of socio-historical change

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Hex River Table Grapes Association Chairperson, December 2009.

and searching for explanations for social phenomena in psychological universals (Reicher & Haslam, 2013; see also Tileaga & Byford, 2014). Long ago, Sherif observed that

It runs against the grain of many theorists, psychologists in particular, to include 'history' in an analysis of psychological events, such as those traditionally treated under the labels of 'group prejudice', 'social distance', or 'stereotypes'...[S]ome prefer to interpret events from a 'psychological viewpoint' or to leave historical factors to historians. ...Unfortunately, whether we like it or not, history enters into the very definition of the problem of intergroup attitudes and the images we have of our own and other groups. ...The psychology of intergroup attitudes and behaviours must specify contemporary events *within the framework of both past relationships between people and their future goals and designs*. Otherwise, a large proportion of intergroup actions appears pathological and irrational, as indeed some psychiatrists and social scientists tell us they are. (Sherif, 1966, p. 20-22, italics added)

More recently, Reicher and Haslam have argued that ignoring historical change depoliticises the status quo by presenting it as something that has simply always been and thus 'serve[s] the cause of power' (2013, p. 114). Citing Moscovici, they have argued that social psychology should be a 'science of movement' which 'must problematise the status quo and focus on the way in which social stability as well as social change is actively produced' (Reicher & Haslam, 2013, p. 112). These claims that social psychology should include a sensitivity both to the changing historical context in which any intergroup relationship is embedded, and to the contingency of any status quo, have several implications for the social psychological approach to intergroup relations taken in this thesis, which are elaborated below.

First, problematising the status quo and historicising our objects of study means that we must problematise the notions of 'advantaged' and 'disadvantaged', 'dominant' and 'subordinate', 'minority' and 'majority' or 'high' and 'low status' groups which form the conceptual and methodological framework for most social psychological studies of intergroup relations (cf Subašić, Reynolds & Turner, 2008). These terms – once used by Tajfel with such powerful effect in showing how minority groups respond to intransigent social inequality (e.g., Tajfel, 1978a; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) – have mostly lost their critical

edge in social psychology. They are simply taken for granted, such that inequality and status differences are treated as an unremarkable part of how the social world is organised, which then have consequences for group members' perceptions and behaviour. By contrast, in this thesis I will start from the premise that all currently 'advantaged' and currently 'disadvantaged' groups *became* so through processes of socio-historical change, and thus they continue to have interests in the direction their society is changing towards, as well as in the ways that moments of collective action or intergroup conflict could potentially divert these changes. For De Doorns, this means that we must know something about recent historical changes in this community and how they have differently affected different groups (cf Sherif, 1966) – the Zimbabwean community, different groups of South African farm workers, and also farmers. In multi-group contexts such as De Doorns, such interests will be aligned with or antithetical to those of certain other locally significant groups respectively. Thus, the point is not to argue against the categories of 'advantaged' and 'disadvantaged' groups *per se*, but rather to recover their critical edge by showing how groups' interests in change are implicit (or explicit) in the way they talk about their relationships with other groups.

This brings us to a second limitation associated with the binary advantaged-disadvantaged intergroup relations paradigm in social psychology, or what I have called the 'two-group paradigm' (Kerr, Durrheim & Dixon, 2016). When social psychologists conceptualise intergroup relations in terms of unequal pairs, they tend to overlook the unique dynamics that can emerge when groups are dealing with social relations on more than one front (Kerr et al, 2016; Subašić, Reynolds & Turner, 2008). When three or more groups are involved in an intergroup relationship, dynamics of loyalty, solidarity, favouritism, collusion, and betrayal can be produced which are ultimately not reducible to a simple us-versus-them binary logic. The two-group paradigm in social psychology is in danger of obscuring the way that power works (cf Parker, 1989) through the construction of intergroup *alliances*, by overlooking the third parties that are sometimes involved in constituting conflictual relations between two other groups even if they are not directly or physically involved in this conflict themselves. In the two-group framework, the attack by South Africans living in the De Doorns informal settlements on their Zimbabwean neighbours in 2009 might have been read clearly as 'xenophobic violence', with South African perpetrators and

Zimbabwean victims at the front lines of this conflict. It would be their attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices under study. As we have already seen, however, things were not as simple as this. For a start, it is difficult to determine whether Zimbabwean farm workers are particularly more disadvantaged and powerless than their South African counterparts. Indeed, South African workers who complained about the Zimbabweans accepting less than minimum wage from farmers construed this as the Zimbabweans' being unfairly *favoured* and *advantaged* by farmers; accusations of favouritism and of exploitation were often made in the same breath. The Zimbabweans also had a clear sense of themselves as superior to South African farm workers; they presented themselves as morally superior, financially more savvy, more hardworking, more reliable and so on – not the language of an inferior or powerless group. Neither did the Zimbabweans construe themselves as being exploited, but rather as being rightly favoured by farmers who recognised their superior qualities. Therefore, although the Zimbabweans were indeed a numerical minority of immigrants, to define them as 'disadvantaged' or the 'subordinate minority' simply *because* they were victims of violence would be a post-hoc, circular and ultimately unhelpful way of understanding the intergroup dynamics in this town.

What is missing from such a two-group analysis of intergroup relations in De Doorns is a sense of the wider relational context in which this xenophobic violence took place (Kerr, Durrheim & Dixon, 2016). We can already see that there was at least one third party which was neither victim nor perpetrator, but which was implicated in almost all workers' explanations for why the attack had happened: the farmers, or sometimes the 'white people', 'boere' or 'larneys'. The two-group paradigm in social psychology tends to overlook the possibility that the meaning of any particular two-way relationship may depend on its location in a broader matrix of intergroup relations (Kerr et al, 2016). We will see that many South African workers in De Doorns were actually complaining primarily about the relationship between the *Zimbabweans and the farmers*, which was arguably functioning as an intergroup *alliance*, because it was always premised on the exclusion of South African farm workers. For farmers and Zimbabwean workers themselves, this alliance was judged as perfectly legitimate and justified according to the imperative of free-market capitalism, which necessitated the use of the most efficient workers. They also judged the eviction itself as completely wrong and illegitimate according to the principle of anti-xenophobia, in



terms of which the Zimbabweans were victims of an inexcusable attack carried out by scheming South African criminals. By contrast, for those South African workers who supported the eviction, it was the close Zimbabwean-farmer relationship that was judged as completely illegitimate according to the imperatives of white responsibility and/or black liberation, in terms of which farmers had an obligation to prioritise fellow South Africans when selecting people for employment, and Zimbabweans needed to show solidarity with South African workers' wage struggles. Indeed, farmers and those South Africans who supported the eviction both accused each other of *using* the Zimbabweans as a tool by which to achieve their own respective illegitimate ends. Clearly, a more complex set of intergroup relationships and dynamics is implicated here than just a binary one between Zimbabwean and South African farm workers.

There is a final way in which questions of change and continuity are relevant in this study of xenophobia in De Doorns. If we locate intergroup relationships and alliances in a history of social change we start to see that groups' sense of where their allegiance lies can itself change over time (cf Subašić, Reynolds & Turner, 2008). Indeed, if, as we have said, such alliances are constructed strategically with an eye to group interests in change, then we should not be surprised when this happens, as changes appear in the conditions that first made a particular cooperative intergroup relationship seem appealing. After I submitted my master's thesis in November 2011, it was recommended for upgrade to a PhD. This upgrading process has involved extending and contextualising the first case study of intergroup relations at the time of the Zimbabweans' eviction in 2009 by looking both 'forwards' and 'backwards' historically. Looking forwards, after the upgrade process was officialised I decided to go back to De Doorns to do another round of fieldwork in November 2012. The aim was to follow up on what had become of the Zimbabwean community since 2009, and whether 'xenophobia' and the intergroup dynamics from 2009 had changed at all. I did not realise until after I had made my travel arrangements that the Western Cape farm workers' strike was about to explode onto the scene beginning in De Doorns. Nevertheless I spent four days in De Doorns during the strike, and returned again a few times in 2013 to finish interviewing. Although my initial research intention – to find out about the Zimbabweans – was somewhat thrown by the bigger and more immediate issue of the strike, the addition of this second case study produced a kind of longitudinal design which

allows a tentative case to be made about how intergroup allegiance in the Hex Valley had shifted between 2009 and 2012. Somewhat surprisingly given the substance of the complaints against them in 2009, there were no attacks on the Zimbabwean community – who were still very much a presence in De Doorns – throughout the whole process of the strike. Trade unionists and other activists observed that intergroup tensions between the South African and foreign farm worker communities in De Doorns were at an ‘all-time low’ just before the strike began (Hanekom, 2012), and that workers showed ‘maximum unity’ and ‘zero xenophobia’ during the strike (Masemola, 2012). In this sense, some change is discernible in the nature of the Zimbabwean-South African worker relationship since 2009. However, analysing the discursive content of this reported ‘unity’ in our interviews about Zimbabwean workers’ participation in the strike suggests that while both groups did report an improvement in their relationship since 2009, they did this without bridging the ideological gulf that was so evident between them at that time. That is, when Zimbabweans were asked to account for why there had not been any violence against them during the strike, they mainly said that this was because South Africans had become more tolerant and realised that the allegations about low wages in 2009 had been false and misguided. But when South Africans were asked the same question, they said it was because Zimbabwean workers had changed their ways and shown greater solidarity with South Africans’ wage struggle during the strike. They did not say anything remotely substantiating the Zimbabweans’ claim that they (South Africans) had come to realise that the claims of low wages were false, or that this is why they had abstained from violence. Furthermore, the Zimbabweans reported that they had mainly joined in with the strike out of fear of violent retribution if they did not, rather than because they really believed in it. In this way, intergroup allegiance can shift in response to events that are external or internal to the relationship itself; but also that both sides could report a qualified improvement in the relationship between their groups without either one accepting the onus to change and without demonstrating the emergence of a shared set of norms about what constitutes right conduct for farm workers. Effectively the groups were continuing to play by different ideological rules.

However, the 2009 case study can also be contextualised by looking backwards historically. What I was only dimly aware of when I first went to De Doorns is that the ‘good

relationship' between the white farming community and the Zimbabwean farm worker community can be contextualised in a changing matrix of farmer-worker relations dating back to the days of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy or CLPP (Ewert & Hamman, 1996; du Toit, 1993; Goldin, 1984; Theron, 1976). The literature on the 'paternalistic' relations between coloured farm workers and white farmers in the Western Cape during apartheid suggests that this relationship functioned as a kind of 'quasi-alliance' (Ewert & Hamman, 1996, 1999) – albeit a highly unequal one – which was intended to co-opt coloured people into siding with whites against the black majority (Goldin, 1984). In the Boland, this alliance served to defend farm relations against ideological criticism from the outside (du Toit, 1993) and then, after the CLPP was repealed in the late 1980s, to exclude newly-arrived black workers from becoming part of the 'farm family' (Ewert & Hamman, 1996). This means that the Zimbabweans are not the first group of workers in this community to be invested in a simultaneously favouring and exploitative relationship with farmers. In fact, it seems that the Zimbabweans began to arrive on the scene in the Hex Valley just at the time when farmers were partly disinvesting from their paternalist quasi-alliance with the coloured community in the early 2000s, which happened through a process of evictions and outsourcing that constituted the 'externalisation' and 'casualisation' of farm labour (du Toit & Ally, 2003; Ewert & du Toit, 2005). However, this disinvestment has been far from total, as even during the more recent farm workers' strikes, some farmers tried the familiar tactic of claiming that coloured workers had no interest in the strike, as opposed to black workers who did, and thus, once again, appeared to be attempting to co-opt the coloured community back into an alliance (see Webb, 2013; also Western Cape government media statement in Appendix 4).

There are two important theoretical points to draw from this history of change and continuity. First, as we will see, groups that have lived through these changes have experienced them as real and deeply significant, and group members' own ideas about where their interests lie in this changing socio-economic landscape find their way into constructions of their relationships with other groups. Such constructions are thus highly strategic, insofar that they are geared towards rendering certain proposals for and evaluations of change sensible and defensible while dismissing others as unworkable or immoral. Second, however, reading this history shows us that despite all this change,

striking similarities in the texture of intergroup relations are evident between present-day De Doorns – in which farmers had a clear sense that the most desirable workers were also those whose migrancy status was most precarious – and those produced by the coloured labour preference policy (CLPP) in other industries during apartheid (Goldin, 1984). Under the CLPP, the majority of black people were forcibly removed from the Cape to the homelands and allowed back on year contracts to work, thus creating a stratification between coloured workers who lived permanently in the Cape, ‘contract blacks’ who had legal migrant status, and ‘illegal blacks’ who were in the Cape but risked being deported to the homelands. As Goldin shows, the hierarchical system of preference in the eyes of employers that this system created (in opposition to what its intended effects were, with ‘illegal blacks’ being the most preferred) – resembles the current, reconfigured relationship between Zimbabwean ‘non-nationals’ (who are supposed to be excluded from citizens’ rights, but are nevertheless preferred by farmers) and South African citizens who are seen as belligerent and lazy. Thus, one of the overall arguments I will make in this thesis is that deciding whether any observable ‘social changes’ constitute significant discontinuity with the past or mere variation on a longer continuous theme depends on the scope of one’s overall historical frame of reference.

The order of the chapters that will make this case is as follows. Chapter 2 describes the events of November 2009, including who and what was involved in the eviction of the Zimbabweans, and uses research by ACMS to compare this with other episodes of xenophobic violence in South Africa. (This is not the main results chapter, but describes the context before the empirical chapters later on.) Chapter 3 gives a short history of socio-economic change in Western Cape commercial farming communities like De Doorns since the early 1990s in order to locate the arrival of the Zimbabweans historically both in a process of ‘externalisation’ in which many coloured workers moved off the farms into informal settlements (Ewert & du Toit, 2005), and after the arrival of black work seekers once the influx control laws were repealed (Ewert & Hamman, 1996). Chapters 4 and 5 turn to social psychology; Chapter 4 offers a critique of social psychology’s ‘two-group paradigm’, in which intergroup relations are mainly conceptualised in terms of binary opposition, and suggests some ways to move beyond thinking and researching in two-group terms. Chapter 5 is about social psychology and social change, and makes a case for reading discourse

about intergroup relations as being located in, and oriented to speakers' interests in, a process of ongoing historical change that is partially constituted by the interaction among groups (Drury & Reicher, 2000). Chapter 6 describes the research methods for the 2009 fieldwork, and Chapter 7, entitled 'Dilemmas of xenophobia and anti-xenophobia in De Doorns', gives the 2009 results. Chapter 8 narrates the aftermath of the 2009 eviction and the build-up to the 2012 farm workers' strike three years later, as well as other commentators' views on the status of group relations among farm workers during the strike. Chapter 9 describes the 2012-2013 fieldwork, and Chapter 10, entitled 'Towards solidarity?', contains the results of the 2012-2013 fieldwork. This addresses questions of conflict resolution between South African and Zimbabwean workers and argues that the absence of xenophobic violence during the strike was not necessarily an indication of ideological unity among workers or a vindication of the anti-xenophobic position. Chapter 11, the penultimate chapter, is entitled 'The more things change the more they stay the same', and makes an apparently contradictory case for reading the historically changing intergroup dynamics in De Doorns as but a variation on those produced by the Coloured Labour Preference Policy 25 years earlier. Seeing the transition from apartheid as a transition between two forms of capitalism allows us not to be surprised at such continuities. Finally, Chapter 12 contains conclusions and recommendations for further research.

## **Chapter 2: What happened in De Doorns in November 2009?**

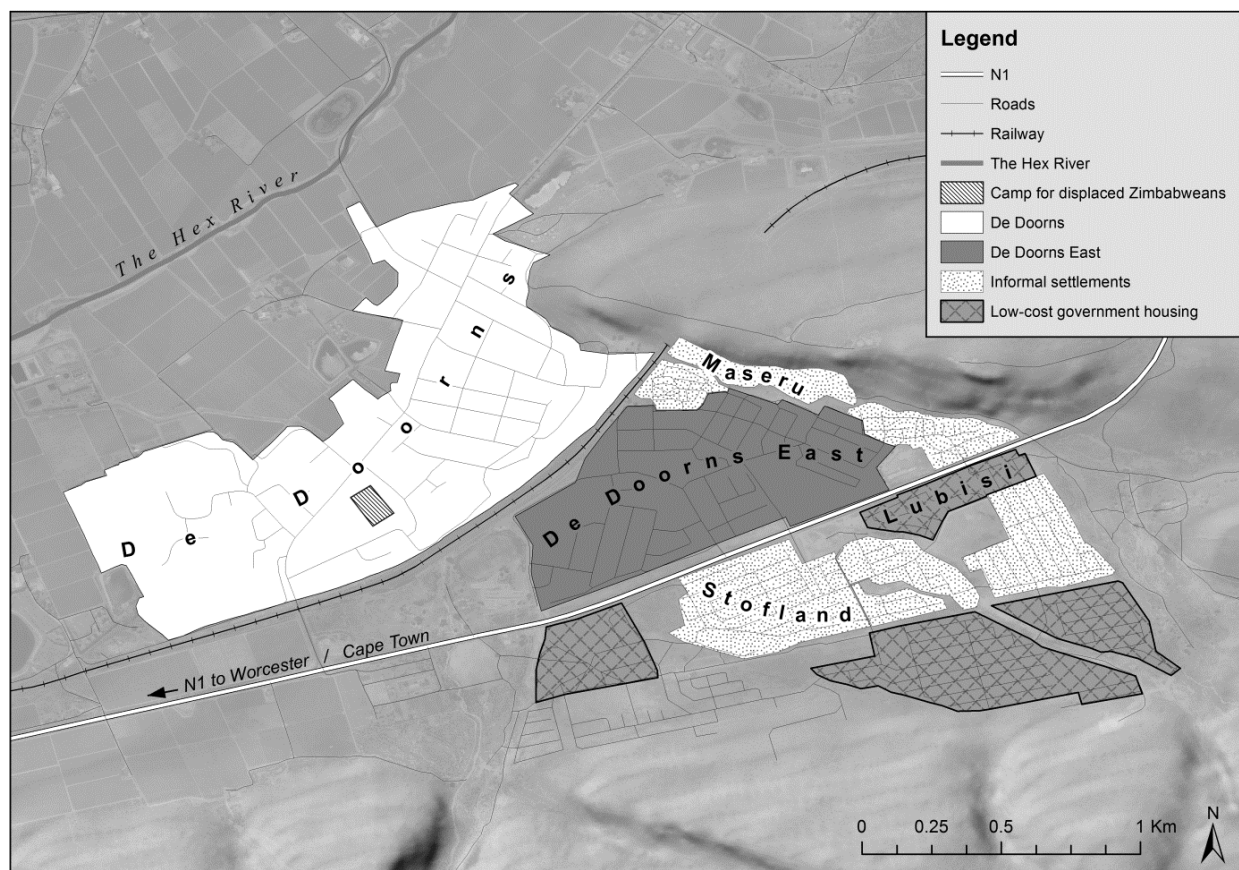
This chapter begins with a brief description of the town of De Doorns and some of its community dynamics, and then draws on the findings of two research reports as well as my own fieldwork in De Doorns to explain how and why the forcible eviction of the Zimbabwean community from the informal settlements happened in November 2009 (Misago, 2009; Robb & Davis, 2009). Following this, other xenophobia research by the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) at Wits University is used to contextualise these events within the pattern that has characterised xenophobic violence in South Africa, especially that of May 2008 and April 2015. Finally, the chapter differentiates my research aims from those of these other authors.

### **De Doorns in context**

De Doorns is a small town in the Hex River Valley in the Western Cape. It is situated on the N1 freeway, about 140 km from Cape Town, and falls under the Breede Valley Local Municipality. The layout of the older parts of De Doorns follows a typical apartheid town planning scheme (see Figure 1). The town centre contains the shops, police station, municipal office, schools, churches, a cemetery, the Hex River Table Grapes Association offices, the Ledeklub (Members' Club), and the historically white residential area. To the east, separated from the town centre by a railway line, is De Doorns Oos (De Doorns East), the small 'coloured location' historically housing coloured people who did not live or work on farms. Further south-east, and mostly separated from the rest of the town by the N1 freeway, are the relatively new informal settlements and an even newer large section of RDP housing (low-cost, post-apartheid government housing). There is no direct vehicle access between these different parts of town: to get from the middle of De Doorns to De Doorns Oos one must either walk across the railway line or else exit De Doorns by car, get back on the N1 for a few hundred metres and then enter the location by its own turnoff. Further, to get to Stofland (the largest of the informal settlements) and the RDP housing around it, one must continue through the residential streets of De Doorns Oos and then cross a bridge over the freeway into Stofland (see Figure 1). At the time of our first research in 2009, this RDP housing did not yet exist, but there were a number of informal settlements: Stofland on the south side of the freeway, and Ekuphumleni, Maseru (where

Lesotho migrants lived), Hasie Square and Matjoks on the northern side around the edges of De Doorns Oos. Ten kilometres away there is also another informal settlement called GG Camp, near the west end of the valley. Being informal, these settlements are also subject to change and removal, and by 2012, Maseru – the former home of most Lesotho migrants – no longer existed, its residents having been moved into Stofland.<sup>2</sup> The map of De Doorns in Figure 1 is therefore a kind of composite or time-lapse map, as it includes the informal settlements around the north-eastern edges of De Doorns Oos which were present in 2009 but gone by 2012, and it also includes the RDP housing around Stofland (a section of which is called ‘Lubisi’) which was not yet built in 2009 but has been steadily expanding since about 2010. At the time of our first fieldwork in 2009, these settlements were absolutely unserviced and had no piped water, electricity, sewerage system or refuse removal. By 2012, Stofland had been semi-formalised, as the shacks had been ordered into a grid and had been provided with electricity and some outside concrete toilets.

**Figure 1: Map of De Doorns, 2009-2012**



<sup>2</sup> Interview with farmer 1, November 2012.

De Doorns revolves around the production of export- and locally-sold table grapes. Almost everyone who lives in the informal settlements and RDP housing works on grape farms for at least part of the year, and most of the rest of the Hex Valley is covered by vineyards and farm houses. The farms are owned by white Afrikaans families or else agricultural companies. Between the mid-1950s and 1986, the Western Province was designated a 'coloured labour preference area' (Goldin, 1984) and so historically the labour force consisted overwhelmingly of coloured workers who lived permanently on the farms in accommodation provided by farmers in a system of 'tied housing' (du Toit, 1993). However, for a number of reasons explained more fully in the next chapter, a large part of the coloured farm worker community subsequently moved off or was evicted from the farms, and, along with incoming local and international migrants from the Eastern Cape, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho, they built and occupied the informal settlements. From these, workers are recruited back to work on farms on a casual and temporary basis, often sourced through labour brokers (Ewert & du Toit, 2005; du Toit & Ally, 2003). Another way for farmers to recruit workers is simply to send a lorry and driver to the informal settlements with a set price per day; in the mornings and evenings De Doorns was full of lorries with crowds of people on the back being transported between the farms and the locations.

The Zimbabweans are the most recent migrants to the area. According to the Hex River Table Grapes Association (HTA), the first farmer in De Doorns to employ Zimbabwean workers did so in 2002, while according to other farmers and Zimbabweans they have constituted a significant and regular minority in the seasonal labour force since about 2006 or 2007.

### **A history of violent conflict in De Doorns**

How did it come about that by 2009 the Zimbabwean community were the victims of an attempt to forcibly evict them from De Doorns? Robb and Davis (2009) point out that this eviction in November 2009 was not the only recent case of violent conflict in this town or even the only case where the Zimbabwean community was victimised. Rather, they argue that



The context of violent protest that the host community has been subject to and engaged in for the past decade can be assumed to have normalized protest action and violence as a viable mechanism to engage government's attention. The effect on the community of Stofland could be interpreted as a siege and a battle between the community and the police/state (p. 16).

Robb and Davis also note that the previous year in November 2008 a South African man was shot and killed by police using rubber bullets during a service delivery protest in Stofland. During further protests which followed this death the police continued the attack on Stofland using rubber bullets, breaking down people's doors, using abusive language and harassing residents.

Then, in February 2009, seven Zimbabweans were killed when they were locked in a shack which was then set alight. Although these murders are much more shocking and extreme than the eviction of the Zimbabweans later that year, they appear not to have had the same 'xenophobic' overtones, partly because they were allegedly perpetrated by other non-nationals from Lesotho, and partly because they were the result of a personal dispute (Robb & Davis, 2009) rather than a community effort to make all the Zimbabweans leave the area. However, shortly after this event – and apparently (bizarrely) precipitated by it – the police carried out a night-time 'immigration raid' on the homes of Zimbabweans in the De Doorns informal settlements (Robb & Davis, 2009). The local police were believed to have been involved in this raid, and it 'was carried out with great brutality and descriptions of ensuing mayhem are related' – people were reportedly pulled from their beds during the night and '350 Zimbabweans were arrested on immigration charges' (ibid., p. 17). Robb and Davis suggested that

It can be assumed that the local community when witnessing the actions of the state against 'illegal aliens' interpreted it [sic] as legally sanctioned and thus [this] sustained their beliefs of the non-entitlement of their immigrant neighbours to be living in South Africa...It could [also] be argued that this demonstration by the State of a violent 'attack' that criminalized the Zimbabwean community members may have instilled a sense of justification for their future actions of 17 November 2009. (2009, p. 17)

Robb and Davis have another important insight about this context of near-constant conflict between informal settlement residents and the state (police and municipality), and the role (or lack thereof) of foreign communities within it:

protest action appears to be an important aspect of community life in the informal settlements and symbolic of social cohesion....[Zimbabweans'] not partaking in this long existing cultural collective form of resistance is regarded as divisive to social cohesion and confronts and confounds local beliefs of what it is to be a community member (p. 20).

Monson (2015) similarly argues that the attacks on foreign-owned shops and looting that often take place during service delivery protests reflect South African communities' anger over migrants' apparent political indifference to collective struggle. Overall, this discussion suggests that in De Doorns the Zimbabwean community are victimised by police and fellow civilians respectively for protesting, for not protesting, and for simply being foreign.

### **Explanations for the eviction of the Zimbabweans in November 2009**

There were also a number of more specific and immediate contributing factors that led to the eviction of the Zimbabwean community in November 2009, however. The following section covers four reasons for this eviction offered by different researchers as well as participants I interviewed: competition among Zimbabwean and South African labour brokers; the context of bargaining for higher wages during the peak season of 'uitkniptyd';<sup>3</sup> the connivance of labour brokers and a local ANC ward councillor; and a shortage of housing space in the informal settlements (Davis, 2010).

#### **Reason 1: Competition between labour brokers**

The ACMS report on the De Doorns eviction (Misago, 2009) mainly emphasised competition among Zimbabwean and South African labour brokers as a reason for the eviction. This is matched by the explanations of three of the De Doorns farmers we interviewed in 2009. Farmers explained that they use brokers to recruit workers only when demand for labour

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<sup>3</sup> Uitkniptyd (literally 'picking out time') is the period in early summer when bunches of grapes must be thinned. Small grapes must be picked out of the bunches on every vine so that the remaining ones can grow fat without squashing each other. This is an extremely labour-intensive period when farmers' labour demand can double for just a few weeks.

outweighs supply, or when workers are hard to find. At the time, the labour brokering system was completely unregulated, but labour brokers in De Doorns were generally of two kinds: more informal labour ‘finders,’ and labour brokers proper<sup>4</sup> (see du Toit & Ally, 2003).<sup>5</sup> Labour ‘finders’ would simply gather a group of people together for the farmer, charging the worker a portion of their wage and the farmer a price ‘per head’ – in 2009, between R2 and R5. These finders did not supervise the workers or take responsibility for them after they had placed them, but they were supposed to pay them their wages. ‘Proper’ labour brokers had a more formalised system: they had their own labour force and the farmer would pay the broker a once-off fee for him to provide, transport, supervise and pay the labourers. The broker was also responsible for deducting UIF (unemployment insurance fund) contributions. Using labour brokers saves farmers the administrative hassle of individually finding and paying large numbers of workers, especially when they are employed only for short periods. At the time, there were only a few ‘proper’ labour brokers in the Hex River valley, perhaps fewer than five,<sup>6</sup> but there were about 90 informal ones (Misago, 2009). Both kinds of brokers are referred to as contractors (in Afrikaans ‘kontrakteurs’).

At the time, three factors (by my reckoning) made the informal South African labour brokers’ position precarious. Firstly, there were enough seasonal Zimbabwean workers in De Doorns (about 1500<sup>7</sup>) to make a significant difference in the labour supply and hence in the drop in farmers’ demand for labour finders’ services. Secondly, there was competition between Zimbabwean and South African contractors, because farmers tended to prefer the Zimbabweans. South Africans we interviewed also accused the Zimbabwean contractors of only recruiting Zimbabwean workers, which they said was unfair. Some Zimbabwean workers agreed with this, presenting it as natural that farmers would want Zimbabwean workers since they had had good experiences of working with them. However, the Zimbabwean contractor we interviewed said it was not true that she was only using Zimbabwean workers. Thirdly, several of these South African labour brokers had given themselves a bad name by walking off with labourers’ wages instead of paying them, and so

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with Farmer 1, December 2009

<sup>5</sup> Interviews with HTA Chairperson and formal labour broker (interview 34), December 2009

<sup>6</sup> Interview with formal labour broker in De Doorns, December 2009

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Agri WesCape CEO, December 2009

the farmers had largely stopped using them.<sup>8</sup> It was suggested in some of our interviews that the allegations of Zimbabweans working for lower wages may have originated through their having been being cheated out of their full wages by crooked contractors.

It was agreed among the five farmers we interviewed in 2009, including the HTA chairperson and the Agri Wes-Cape CEO, that the Zimbabweans were well-liked because of their 'good work ethic'. Unlike South African workers, who were said to be often absent for various reasons such as being drunk or hung over, collecting social grant payouts (called 'All-Pay' in De Doorns), going to the clinic, or simply not feeling like coming to work, Zimbabweans were described as reliable and seldom absent from work. However, Zimbabwean workers and farmers both vehemently denied that this preference was costing South African workers any jobs. Farmers differed slightly in their accounts of exactly what the level of need for labourers was at the time: the CEO of Agri Wes-Cape provided me with figures showing that there was too much work to be done and farmers could not find enough labourers to do it. There were about 14 000 workers employed on the farms while the number that was needed was closer to 17 000. (The figure provided to Misago (2009) by Agri Wes-Cape's media liaison officer two weeks previously was that there were 14 000 workers needed and only 13 000 working.) Two other farmers,<sup>9</sup> however, said that demand and supply were just about equal, but that the Zimbabweans' presence put the bargaining power back into the hands of the farmers. Hence, while some farmers admitted that they did (justifiably) prefer Zimbabwean workers, they gave figures to demonstrate that – at the time of the violence at least – the accusations that the Zimbabweans were 'stealing South Africans' jobs' simply could not be true – there was 'work for everyone', according to the Agri Wes-Cape CEO. Farmers and formal contractors said they were even fetching workers from other nearby towns such as Touws River and Worcester when necessary – showing that there was a higher demand for workers than De Doorns could satisfy. In this way, they deflected the suggestion that they, as employers, were in some way responsible for the conditions which precipitated the eviction.

Even if there were not enough workers available to work at the time, however, there were

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<sup>8</sup> Interviews with Farmers 1 and 3 and elderly coloured man (interview 15).

<sup>9</sup> Interviews with Farmers 1 and 2, December 2009.

still more than there would have been without the Zimbabweans. Therefore it was likely that South African *brokers* were losing business to Zimbabwean competitors (Misago, 2009). These brokers were allegedly trying to force the farmers to use them and to force up the price they could charge 'per head' by inciting violence to get rid of the Zimbabweans (Misago, 2009).<sup>10</sup>

## **Reason 2: The eviction as a form of wage bargaining**

Farmers explained the eviction of the Zimbabweans in a more general context of work stay-aways and strikes that South African workers had tried to initiate at that time of year in previous years. The violence happened in November, which is 'uitkniptyd', or time for thinning bunches of grapes. Farmer 1 explained that because this work must be done during a short window in early summer or not at all, a small group of South Africans in the informal settlements were taking advantage of the desperation of the farmers during this crucial period to try and force up the price of labour by calling stay-aways. He called this 'manipulation' and said that just a few influential people were holding the whole valley to ransom by forcing people who wanted to work to stay at home so that they could force up the price (per bunch or per day) without having to do any harder work. Indeed, he said that this routinely happened during uitkniptyd and that 2009 was not the first year it had happened. Apparently threats of breaking down even South Africans' houses, and other kinds of intimidation, had been used to get people to stay away from work. Robb and Davis (2009) similarly reported that 'there is great social pressure and the fear of violent retribution is present if calls to stay away from work are not heeded' (p. 22). Not surprisingly, however, Zimbabweans interviewed by Misago (2009) said that they did not know about any such stay-aways. When I phoned farmer 1 again in 2012 to ask if I could interview him about the strike, the first thing he asked was whether I remembered what he had said in 2009 about labour upheavals happening every year at that time. In the view of the farmers, then, the attack on the Zimbabweans' houses was less an act of 'xenophobia' than a form of wage bargaining – though in their view, a highly illegitimate one. They did not see the eviction as 'xenophobia' because they said it was not carried out for reasons of 'race hate' – simply because a lot of people disliked the Zimbabweans enough to want them

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<sup>10</sup> Also interviews with farmers 1, 2, 3 and the HTA, December 2009

to go away. Rather, they saw it as a strategic act with economic and political consequences for its instigators.

### **Reason 3: Party politics and labour brokering intertwined**

Misago (2009) and most of our interviewees also implicated the ANC councillor for Ward 2 of the Breede Valley local municipality in the instigation of the attack. According to Zimbabweans we interviewed, this councillor had been going door to door in the informal settlements some time before the violence, telling Zimbabweans that they were not wanted and that they should not be living there.<sup>11</sup> These actions were ascribed by farmers and Zimbabweans to the councillor's need to gain popularity and garner support ahead of the upcoming local elections, since he had been generally unpopular. Indeed, according to Robb and Davis, 'leadership of the community is vested in an informal Committee with little confidence in local government representatives' (p. 2) and which, importantly, did not include the local councillor (p. 14). The councillor's name was Mpumelelo Lubisi but he was more commonly referred to by his nickname Poyi or as 'die grootkop' (the 'big head'). The exact relationship between the labour brokers and the councillor is not entirely clear to me, but interviewees said that the councillor was either a labour broker himself, or was in cahoots with the other ward committee members who were brokers. The brokers were a 'powerful pressure group' (Misago, 2009) whose political support the councillor needed. In Misago's (2009) research,

a number of respondents offered two reasons for their belief that the councillor and ward committee members were involved in organising the violence:

- i) the **councillor** reportedly gave in to demands by a powerful pressure group (contractors) in order to **protect his position during the upcoming local elections;**
- ii) some **ward committee members have interests in protecting their jobs as contractors.** (p. 3, emphasis in original)

The De Doorns farmers we interviewed, as well as members of PASSOP (People Against Suffering, Oppression and Poverty – a refugee and immigrants' rights activist group), all largely concurred with this explanation. However, the Agri Wes-Cape CEO whom I

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<sup>11</sup> Interviews with first and second groups of Zimbabwean men, December 2009 (interviews 30 and 31).

interviewed located the violence in a broader party political context which he described as ‘the battle for the soul of the Western Cape’s political future’ between the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the ANC, and which was instigated by as-yet unidentified ANC persons who had been brought in from Cape Town. This is the familiar ANC-trying-to-take-over-the-Western-Cape conspiracy theory that underlies most DA-aligned analysis of any protest events in that province, and which Agri WesCape also gives for all labour-related upheavals including the widespread 2012 farm workers’ strikes (see Underhill, 2013, and Agri Wes-Cape media statement in Appendix 2).<sup>12</sup>

#### **Reason 4: Limited space in the informal settlements for electrification of houses**

A final contributing factor to the eviction, which was not mentioned by any of our participants or by Misago (2009), appears in a thesis by Davis (2010). Davis argues that conflict and competition among Zimbabweans and South Africans over housing space and electricity supply in the informal settlements was an important factor in precipitating the eviction. She points out that plots in the settlements are the property of the municipality and are supposed to be (a) free and (b) reserved for future RDP housing recipients, which excludes non-citizens. However, both Zimbabweans and South Africans had been renting out shacks to tenants, which is a kind of fraud since they do not own the sites. Physical space limitations were also an issue: some South Africans’ homes were built in an area that was susceptible to flooding, and so they could not be electrified. Thus, when moves were made in late 2009 to provide Stofland with electricity, some South African residents apparently informed Eskom (the Electricity Supply Commission) which houses to avoid electrifying as they were planning on ‘doing xenophobia’ there (p. 35). Davis reports that ‘In interviews with community leaders, some expressed that there was a need to “make room” [by evicting Zimbabweans] in the main Stofland area so these South African “brothers and sisters” could move their homes to areas where electricity would be provided’ (p. 36).

#### **The eviction**

On the evenings of Friday 13<sup>th</sup> and Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009, two public meetings were held in which Councillor Lubisi allegedly openly expressed his intention that the

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<sup>12</sup> However, the farmers themselves are not without political connections: Elza Jordaan, long-time DA councillor in the Breede Valley local municipality, was also the chairperson of the Hex River Table Grapes Association – the local farmer’s association – for several years.

Zimbabweans should leave or be made to leave (Misago, 2009).<sup>13</sup> The first meeting was followed the next day by an attack on the homes of some Zimbabweans in the informal settlement of Ekuphumleni, after which 68 Zimbabweans left and took refuge at the De Doorns police station where they stayed for the weekend (Misago, 2009). The second meeting preceded further violence on the morning of Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November. That morning, in order to push for a stay-away, South Africans had tried to prevent some Zimbabweans from getting into the trucks that were sent to collect them for work (Misago, 2009). This apparently ended in a fight (Misago, 2009). What happened therein and thereafter is not exactly clear, but a group of South Africans then went through the informal settlements of Hasie Square, Ekuphumleni and Stofland and tore down shacks in which Zimbabweans were living, both as rent-paying tenants of South African landlords, and as owners of their own houses. Zimbabweans we interviewed later recounted being confronted by South Africans who told them to get out of their houses and then started to dismantle them, stealing their things and making a mess of whatever else they found there. Zimbabwean interviewees also expressed extreme disappointment in the police, who had been on the scene but had apparently not done anything to prevent the attacks, rather appearing to ‘escort’ the attackers while calling on them not to harm anyone. By all accounts, however, and somewhat surprisingly, no Zimbabweans were physically assaulted in the process. Zimbabweans who witnessed this violence estimated the number of people who carried it out at less than fifty;<sup>14</sup> another man from Lesotho at less than a hundred.<sup>15</sup> Almost the entire Zimbabwean population – probably between 1500 and 3000 people – then left the informal settlements. Most moved into a camp for ‘internally displaced persons’ made of UNHCR tents that were speedily erected on a rugby field in front of the Members’ Club in the middle of the town, and was managed by the Breede Valley Municipality. Other Zimbabweans, about 300 according to the Hex Valley Table Grapes Association (HTA), were accommodated by farmers in on-farm accommodation. Still others left the area altogether.

### **Responses to the violence**

Members of the police, some representatives of the HTA, the police and the mayor of the

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<sup>13</sup> Also interview with Owen Maromo, August 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with first group of Zimbabwean men, December 2009 (interview 30)

<sup>15</sup> Interview with man from Lesotho in Stofland, December 2009 (interview 26)



Breede Valley Municipality, Charles Ntsomi, were all present at both the public meetings described above.<sup>16</sup> Since these stakeholders had been at the meetings and knew an attack was imminent but did little or nothing to stop it (Misago, 2009), Zimbabweans we interviewed interpreted this as the police and the mayor giving support to the perpetrators. In fact, Braam Hanekom, then-director of the refugee rights activist group PASSOP, believed Councillor Lubisi to be acting under instructions from the mayor, Charles Ntsomi.<sup>17</sup> Despite the police's limited intervention and help at the scene of the attack, twenty-three people were later arrested for crimes committed during this violence. Though I do not know the outcome of these trials, South African residents staged a solidarity protest outside the court in nearby Worcester demanding that they be let out. Misago (2009) did not know whether this was because they supported the actions of those arrested, or because they believed that the wrong people had been arrested. Misago also reports that Lubisi denied allegations that he himself was involved in instigating the violence. However, our interviewees' responses suggest that perhaps the role of this councillor was underplayed in Misago's report. We also interviewed Lubisi but he was not prepared to sign the informed consent form or have the interview recorded. However, one thing he did say was that he was 'not Moses' and was not able to stop a community from doing what it had already decided to do – thus placing responsibility with 'the community' rather than himself. Lubisi was suspended by the ANC after calls for his removal (Majavu, 2010); but later he was reinstated,<sup>18</sup> and the RDP housing area which was later built next to Stofland – Lubisi – is named after him.<sup>19</sup>

Some South Africans we interviewed who identified themselves as those who had 'chased the Zimbabweans away' were at pains to emphasise that no violence was done to any persons, only to their property. The Zimbabweans' own accounts of the days of violence agreed with this superficially: the police had allegedly escorted them out of the informal settlements to the middle of town, while calling on the crowd not to hurt anyone,<sup>20</sup> rather than actually intervening and stopping the attack. Misago (2009) also highlighted this

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<sup>16</sup> Interviews with Charles Ntsomi and HTA chairperson, December 2009

<sup>17</sup> Interview with PASSOP members, December 2009

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Braam Hanekom, July 2013

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Braam Hanekom, July 2013

<sup>20</sup> Interview with second Zimbabwean man (interview 13), December 2009

failure on the police's part. Whether the police and the mayor were actually supporting the perpetrators is difficult to verify, but given Robb and Davis's (2009) report of the earlier police raid on Zimbabwean homes, this seems a likely possibility.<sup>21</sup> Overall, responses from Misago's interviewees about the De Doorns violence

suggest widespread mistrust of elected and municipal officials among residents, and they raise the need for better oversight and investigation. A key concern is that it is not clear which institution has the mandate to regularly monitor and oversee local political actors if they are suspected of inciting or being complicit in violence (Misago, 2009, p. 6).

Misago (2009) pointed out the fact that town authorities were all present in the meetings preceding the violence suggests that 'early warning' systems were not functioning as they should. This corresponds with ACMS's broader conclusion that 'violence against foreign nationals and ethnic minorities is a **symptom of broader challenges of legitimate and accountable local governance**, especially in informal settlements' (Polzer, 2010, p. 5, emphasis in original).

At the time of our research there was talk of quickly 'reintegrating' the Zimbabweans back into the informal settlements. Although a 'reintegration committee' was established, the process became 'deadlocked [by late January 2010] as the community is demanding evidence of service delivery before moving forward' (Robb & Davis, 2009, p. 27). (This demand may have worked, because the Lubisi housing area was built subsequent to this.) The reintegration committee's efforts were further scuppered as people who were involved in this committee were also among those arrested for public violence (Robb & Davis, 2009). In the end, reintegration did not happen that year: the camp remained full until the end of the season in April 2010, when the majority of Zimbabweans eventually left De Doorns (Burgsdorff, 2010). About 350 people were left in the camp after the majority had moved on, and they remained there until October 2010 when the camp was finally closed almost a year after it was created. By this time, the next season's cohort of Zimbabwean migrants

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<sup>21</sup> I also interviewed the De Doorns station commissioner but did not go through the necessary permission procedures with the South African Police Service. Consequently the interview cannot be cited. Part of the procedure would have involved signing an agreement that I would not say anything in my research that presented the police in a negative light.

were already starting to arrive or return to De Doorns.<sup>22</sup> At the camp closure, most of the Zimbabweans who were still there (but not all, because of a technicality) were given a 'repatriation gratuity' of R1500 per family member by the Breede Valley municipality,<sup>23</sup> and were offered free transport home to Zimbabwe by the International Organisation for Migration (Burgsdorff, 2010). Members of PASSOP, who had been working for the rights of the Zimbabweans in the camp since the eviction, were present at its closure to give financial assistance to those Zimbabweans who were not amongst those given the gratuity and were left with nowhere to go (Burgsdorff, 2010).<sup>24</sup> Burgsdorff reported that the closure of the camp happened in a humane and peaceful manner.

### **How the De Doorns violence followed the trend of May 2008: Findings from ACMS**

The African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) is a major contributor to the research literature on xenophobia in South Africa and their work shows how De Doorns fitted closely into the pattern that has characterised xenophobic violence before, during and since May 2008. In all its writings and reports on xenophobia, ACMS has insisted that general factors such as poverty, unemployment, and long-lasting community tensions are inadequate to explain outbreaks of anti-foreigner violence. They have also not been satisfied with the popular lay justifications or accounts for violence such as 'foreigners are taking our jobs'. Their research aims to go beyond these lay accounts, and identify the particular people who are involved in instigating or preventing violence, and to what ends. This investigative thrust in ACMS research is accompanied by a conviction that

[v]iolence is...a form of conflict with its own dynamics. Even where violence is clearly rooted in pre-existing conflict, it should not be treated as a natural, self-explanatory outgrowth of such conflict, something that occurs automatically when the conflict reaches a certain intensity, a certain temperature. (Brubaker & Laitin, 1998, cited in Misago, 2009, p. 13)

Misago (2009) has demonstrated this clearly in the case of De Doorns. While all the above-

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<sup>22</sup> Interview with Owen Maromo, August 2013

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Braam Hanekom, July 2013

<sup>24</sup> A more detailed report of conditions in the camp, also provided by PASSOP, is available at [http://issuu.com/braamhanekom/docs/de\\_doorns\\_osisa\\_report](http://issuu.com/braamhanekom/docs/de_doorns_osisa_report)

mentioned conflicts and dynamics were present – high unemployment, poor living conditions, low wages, the arrival of the Zimbabweans and the perception that they were favoured by farmers, competition between labour brokers, and even a history of violent conflict in this town – it seems that it took the incitement of the ward councillor at public meetings to mobilize people to act on these frustrations and launch an actual attack which was then not prevented by the apathetic (or perhaps equally xenophobic) police. Moreover, this councillor stood to gain financially and politically by getting rid of labour brokers who were competition for those close to him, and being seen to be effective at solving community problems. One of ACMS's most important findings in their research into the xenophobic violence of May 2008, eighteen months before the De Doorns attack, was that

violence against foreign nationals was organised and led by local groups and individuals who used popular frustration as a means of mobilising people to commit violence. From case study to case study, the instigators of the attacks used the violence as a means to appropriate localised state authority for personal political and economic benefits. The report therefore concludes that the emergence of violence is rooted in the micro-politics of township and informal settlement life. (Misago, Monson, Polzer & Landau, 2010, p. 10, emphasis added)

Misago, Monson, Landau and Polzer's (2010) case studies of violence in 2008 also found that what made the difference between violence and no violence in each area was such elected or self-appointed leaders, and that 'by comparing affected and non-affected areas, our research clearly shows that only a trusted, competent and committed leadership (from grassroots to high-level officialdom) can make a significant difference in terms of preventing such sentiments from turning into xenophobic violence' (p. 11).

These are perhaps the most important findings from ACMS's xenophobia research, and they show how closely De Doorns followed the pattern of community-based violence against foreign nationals in South Africa. The ward councillor and committee members' financial and political interests seem to have been tied up with those of the labour brokers (if they were not the same people) and violence was incited in the service of these interests. Also following the trend, the authorities – the police and the mayor – were accused of (at least)

failing to prevent the attacks although they had been at the meetings. Indeed, we also know that the police had previously been involved in persecuting and arresting Zimbabwean migrants through the 'immigration raid' which appeared to legitimate taking action against immigrants. Indeed, although Misago's report stated an intention to put out a more comprehensive research report on De Doorns in January 2010, the De Doorns violence was judged to have followed the pattern of violent xenophobia in 2008 and elsewhere so closely that another report was deemed unnecessary.<sup>25</sup> After a more recent wave of xenophobic violence that started in Durban in April 2015, ACMS once again re-emphasised that acts of violence against migrants are not an automatic outcome of general social problems:

The attacks' deep roots may be in generations of discrimination, the migrant labour system, or persistent poverty. Yet many places – including many in South Africa – face these challenges without violence. Outbreaks occur where governance systems fall short. Part of the problem is rooted in how South Africa selects and supports local leaders. Ward councillors...are the only directly elected officials and the only ones who must appear before constituents to win elections...Yet...[w]ith almost no budget or legislative authority, they are held responsible for problems they have no hope of resolving. Faced with perennial shortfalls of services, dwelling, and jobs, is it any wonder local leadership allows and abets the scapegoating and appropriation of foreign owned shops, houses or goods?...That there is no evident penalty from law enforcement or from their political superiors only sweetens the deal.

Talk of institutional and technocratic reform does not stir the heart or ease our collective [conscience]. To those ends, people can continue marches, dialogues and impassioned speeches. However, seriously combatting xenophobic violence will mean moving beyond such appeals. It will instead require addressing the institutional incentives that foment conflict. (Landau, 2015, n. p.)

These observations also show that the farmers' and other residents' descriptions of the eviction as 'not xenophobia' – but rather as a power struggle, a form of wage bargaining or a way of drumming up political support – do not necessarily mean that it cannot be called

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<sup>25</sup> Personal correspondence with J. P. Misago, January 2011

‘xenophobia’. Indeed, we can now see these are the same features which have distinguished most incidents of anti-foreigner violence in South Africa (Landau, 2015).

### **A different research agenda**

At this point it is appropriate to distinguish the main research aim of this thesis from that of ACMS (Misago, 2009). Explaining who and what was involved in inciting the violence and for what reasons is not the main research aim – if it had been, it is unlikely that I would have been able to improve on the findings of Misago (2009). Indeed, discovering his report soon after our 2009 fieldwork was very useful because it explained things that I left De Doorns without fully understanding, especially the relationship between the councillor and labour brokers. As is hopefully by now very clear, the agenda of ACMS research is always to problematise and explain outbreaks of *violence*. This is discernibly for two reasons: one political, and one empirical (Kerr & Durrheim, 2013). Empirically, while ACMS acknowledges that instigators of xenophobia ‘use popular frustration’ (Misago, Monson, Polzer & Landau, 2010, p. 10) to drum up support for violence against foreign nationals, it notices that disagreement, frustration or even conflict in a community do not automatically end up in violence. Many township and informal settlement communities around South Africa did not experience xenophobic violence in 2008 despite having similar underlying conditions to those which did (Misago, Monson, Landau & Polzer, 2010; von Holdt et al, 2011). For this reason, in his report on De Doorns, Misago (2009) did not place a great deal of emphasis on the kinds of ‘popular’ explanations for why the Zimbabweans had been evicted which were circulating in the media and in the South African farm worker community after the violence, such as that the Zimbabweans were accepting less than the minimum wage from farmers and thereby ‘taking our jobs’ (Kerr & Durrheim, 2013). In ACMS’s view, to equate community conflict and disagreement with *violence* is a conceptual and empirical mistake.

But there is also a political reason for not paying too much attention to the popular accusations that the Zimbabweans were ‘taking South Africans’ jobs’ and that farmers were paying them lower wages. This is that simply to report and agree with such allegations would have been to appear to legitimate the claims and allegations made by those who supported the eviction and thus to bolster a xenophobic agenda. Like much of the academic South African xenophobia literature, ACMS’s work is committed to an anti-xenophobic

stance which serves to counter the widespread xenophobia that permeates South African public discourse (Kerr & Durrheim, 2013). While Misago (2009) did acknowledge that farmers in De Doorns preferred Zimbabwean workers for reasons ‘which reflect prevailing stereotypes about South African versus foreign workers’ (p. 8) – namely the Zimbabweans’ ‘better work ethic’ – he dealt with this simply by citing statistics provided by Agri WesCape to show that at the time of the eviction the demand for labour outweighed the supply and therefore it could not be true that any jobs were being taken. Moreover, the allegations about low wages were explicitly argued to be at best a distraction from, or at worst a justification for, the *real problem*, namely the violence which was instigated by labour brokers and the councillor for political and financial gain. Misago observed that

Many government officials and stakeholders initially explained the violence by **rationalising the perpetrator’s actions**. They repeatedly identified the following factors as the primary causes: Local farmers’ preference of foreign workers because they are seen as being cheap labour; labour brokers importing people from Zimbabwe; and the presence of a Home Affairs satellite office that attracted foreigners to the area. Addressing labour issues, and specifically farmers and labour brokers who exploit workers and break labour laws, is undeniably important. However, exclusively focussing on these issues risks casting the perpetrators as victims in ways that legitimise or justify the attacks on Zimbabweans. (Misago, 2009, p. 3, emphasis in original)

The leader of PASSOP argued similarly that the very people who PASSOP believed to be largely responsible for the violence, namely local politicians and labour brokers, were the same people pointing fingers at the farmers and diverting attention away from themselves, by ‘trying to make it a racial battle and a historic battle, instead of an issue of greed in a small community and political gain’<sup>26</sup> (referring to greed on the part of the labour brokers and political gain for the ward councillor). Thus, the rhetoric of job-taking and the possibility of farmers’ implication were all but dismissed in these accounts, because they simultaneously serviced a violent xenophobic agenda.

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with PASSOP members, December 2009

By contrast, my thesis takes an intergroup relations perspective on these ‘popular’ understandings of the relationship between groups in the town – a perspective that pays attention to how ordinary people collectively construe the nature of their relationships with significant other groups (Durrheim & Dixon, 2005a). This is important because it reveals the ‘moral codes’ by which perpetrators and supporters of xenophobic violence render their actions legitimate (Palmary, 2017, p. 79), and because incitements to violence would not be successful if they did not resonate with some already-existing and commonly shared understanding of what is problematic about the relationship between the groups. As Misago (2009) pointed out, the most common layperson’s reason for the attack given by both supporters and victims of the eviction we interviewed was the problematic relationship between the Zimbabwean farm worker community and white farmers; especially the suspicion that farmers were paying Zimbabweans less than the minimum wage and that this was unfairly costing South African workers their jobs. Many of our respondents thus implicated the farmers directly as playing a central part in the processes in the town to which the violence was construed as a *response*. They accused farmers of playing Zimbabweans and South Africans off against each other, or removing South Africans from their rightful or historical places on farms and replacing them with Zimbabweans because they could pay the Zimbabweans less. Others suggested that the farmers were being hypocritical, showing a lot of concern for the Zimbabweans and supplying them with jobs and accommodation but apparently not caring about ‘their own people’ – South Africans and especially coloured people – who were unemployed and/or had been evicted from these same farms. I will argue that a fundamental problem some of these respondents communicated was a sense of being ‘screwed over’ more than once by farmers; farmers’ favouring of Zimbabweans was only one way that this had happened in the long history of farmer-worker relations dating back to before the end of apartheid. My proposal is that if the history of problems in De Doorns – of which the violent eviction was but one part – are to be properly understood, then ordinary South Africans’ accounts of these problems, which involve farmers, should be taken more seriously, as must the farmers’ accounts of their own conduct and responses to accusations levelled against them. The allegations of low wages and job-taking have historical and relational overtones which are more than technicalities about whether the Zimbabweans ever did or did not accept lower wages (this thesis does



not take a strong position on whether Zimbabweans were ever paid less than the minimum wage and if so whether this was costing South Africans jobs; Pahle (2015) has suggested that in fact many South African farm workers are routinely denied the minimum wage). Rather, these allegations can tell us something about the texture and history of relationships between Zimbabwean and South African workers and farmers in this community. The assumption that the *instigation of violence* was the main or the only problem in this community is one I also made before I went to De Doorns; I went there because violence had happened and had been on the news, and I expected to arrive to find everyone loudly condemning the attack. But when I got there I found that only some people were doing this. For others – at least some members of the South African labouring community – the main problems were a sense of their own displacement from their historical places in farm jobs and the undercutting of their wage-bargaining power. From this perspective, evicting the Zimbabweans was construed an attempt to *solve* these prior problems, rather than being the main problem itself. Indeed, South Africans we interviewed who identified themselves as those who had ‘chased the Zimbabweans away’ or supported the effort to do so emphasised that no Zimbabweans had been physically attacked in the process, and that there was a difference between ‘chasing away’ and ‘fighting’, which they said they did not do. These speakers thus understood themselves as exercising restraint. While the absence of physical assault was true enough according to Zimbabweans we interviewed, they and PASSOP members used this fact to decry the failure of the police during the eviction and the absence of law and order in South Africa more generally. They ridiculed the minimal level of ‘morality’ implied in the argument that what had happened was acceptable because no one was physically assaulted. Misago (2009) also did not make any special mention of the fact that there were no assaults: understandably, as the agenda of ACMS is not to find ways of excusing xenophobic violence but to highlight the incentives (looted goods, houses, shops, and acquired political power) that drive it – incentives which were clearly present in De Doorns. Nevertheless, this discussion shows the gulf between the understandings of those who supported or carried out the eviction and those who opposed it about where the problem lay and who was responsible for creating it and solving it.

An example of such an intergroup relations perspective on the De Doorns conflict is given by Robb and Davis (2009) in their report on the eviction. Robb and Davis pointed out that

before the eviction, the South African labouring community felt frustrated over what they saw as the 'omnipotence of the [white] farming community' (p. 3) in its dealings with workers. This omnipotence was exemplified by a semi-successful attempt by farmers to set up a Refugee Reception Office in De Doorns late in 2009 in collaboration with the Department of Home Affairs (the same office that was mentioned by Misago (2009) above). Earlier in the year, farmers had approached the Department of Home Affairs to ask for a Refugee Reception Office to be established in De Doorns, because of the mistreatment of applicants at the Nyanga Refugee Reception Office in Cape Town, and also because of farmers' concern that they could be fined if caught even just transporting undocumented migrants to that office. Home Affairs agreed, and established a Home Affairs 'satellite office' on private farm land. However, the De Doorns farmers' intentions were superseded when immigrants in other parts of the Western Cape 'began to arrive in large numbers to access the services of the satellite centre...effectively the predictable yet unforeseen surge in applications "gatecrashed" the farmers' neat arrangement with the Department of Home Affairs' (Robb & Davis, 2009, p. 20). Some De Doorns residents became so angry about this office that they threatened to set it alight, and it was soon closed. Nevertheless,

Although the office was short lived, it cannot be ignored as contributing to...a developing discourse whereby Zimbabweans were perceived as receiving 'special treatment' and preference from farmers. The omnipotence of the farming community and disregard for consultative process frustrated the community. (ibid., p. 20)

These observations suggest that an emphasis on the financial and political interests of the instigators of violence is but one part – albeit a very important part – of the bigger picture of group conflict in this community. Robb and Davis's research points to a three-way relationship between the South African farm labouring community, farmers, and Zimbabwean workers, and a sense among South African workers that Zimbabweans were receiving preferential treatment from farmers. From ACMS's perspective, such general or popular intergroup attitudes are not as important as the 'trigger' factors that initiate actual violence – and in this way, violence is prioritised and problematised. The aim of this thesis is to problematise not only violence but also the discursive substance of intergroup relations

among farmers and workers in which the attack on the Zimbabweans was embedded, because this can help to explain why the ward councillor's incitements did not fall on deaf or indifferent ears, but apparently struck a chord with many people. To this end, the first results chapter below (Chapter 7) will offer a detailed study of how South African workers, Zimbabwean workers and farmers understood the three-way relationship in which they were all participating at the time of the eviction.

The dilemma inherent in proposing an intergroup relations perspective such as this, however, is that if one argues that the perpetrators and supporters of xenophobic violence need to be better understood one appears to be legitimising their actions – or at least entertaining their arguments – and thus implicitly supporting a xenophobic agenda (Kerr & Durrheim, 2013; cf Palmary, 2017). Much of the academic xenophobia literature takes an explicitly anti-xenophobic stance on xenophobia by dismissing complaints about foreigners taking South Africans' jobs and so on not only on the political grounds that they add fuel to the fire of xenophobia, but on the factual grounds that they are simply untrue (Kerr & Durrheim, 2013). As we have already started to see, and as I will argue later in the 2009 results chapter, however, the dilemma at the heart of the De Doorns case is that in this town xenophobia and resistance to exploitation from farmers seem to have become almost indistinguishable processes and discourses, so that it is no longer facts but deep moral and political dilemmas that are at stake. But as we shall see, this connection is being challenged by (among others) PASSOP, whose members later worked to bridge divisions among farm workers after the eviction and were also active in the first successful farm workers' strike three years later in 2012.

However, the 'good relationship' between farmers and the Zimbabwean workers that pertained in 2009, and the complaint about the Zimbabweans receiving 'special treatment' from farmers, can itself be located in a longer history of preference, allegiance and favouritism among workers and farmers in Western Cape commercial farming dating back at least to the days of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy. The following chapter provides some of this historical context by describing the 'paternalistic' relationship between white farmers and coloured workers under apartheid (du Toit, 1993) and then showing how this relationship changed in numerous ways as a result of both farmers' and workers' responses

to structural socio-economic changes brought about before and after the end of apartheid. Thereafter, Chapters 4 and 5 turn to social psychology theory on social change and intergroup relations.

## **Chapter 3: A brief history of recent changes and continuities in Western Cape commercial farming communities**

### **Introduction**

One of the claims made in the Introduction chapter was that the way participants talk about their relations with other groups reflects something of their interests in change, in the sense that constructions of group relations are closely rhetorically tied to evaluations of and recommendations for change in their community. If we want to analyse discourse about group relations with an historical eye like this, we must know something about the kinds of changes that have taken place in this community and the ways they have differently affected different groups. This chapter therefore offers a brief history of social, political and economic changes that have affected Western Cape commercial farming communities like De Doorns since the days of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy (CLPP), through the effects of the post-1994 labour and tenure legislation and up to the arrival of the Zimbabweans in the early to mid-2000s. In particular, the chapter locates the ‘good relationship’ between Zimbabwean workers and farmers that pertained in 2009 in a longer history of racial divisions in the workforce that were institutionalised earlier by the CLPP. The ideology of paternalism served to construct farmers and coloured workers as being in a kind of ‘ethnic alliance’ (Ewert & Hamman, 1996) or ‘quasi-alliance’ (Ewert & Hamman, 1999) that obscured the conflict of interests inherent in the farmer-worker relationship (Theron, 1976), defended farm relations against criticism from the outside (du Toit, 1993), and became consolidated along racial lines once black workers started to arrive in the Western Cape after the CLPP was repealed (Ewert & Hamman, 1996). Thus, before Zimbabwean migrant workers started to arrive in De Doorns in the early 2000s, it was actually the coloured community who occupied a putatively ‘favoured’ – but simultaneously subjugated – position in the eyes of farmers, relative to black South Africans. This chapter thus locates the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship in a longer history of changing intergroup allegiance among farmers and sections of the workforce. It also highlights some continuities that have been present through this period of change.

### **Black labour migration in the Western Cape under apartheid**

Apartheid was, among other things, a form of labour control designed to ensure a supply of cheap, migrant black labour to white industry through a system of tight controls on the movements and work opportunities of black people (Legassick & Wolpe, 1976; Posel, 1991). In the Western Province (Western and Northern Cape), this regulation took a distinctive and more vigorous form than elsewhere because of the large coloured population, and the state's desire to forge an alliance with coloured people against the black majority while still making use of their labour (Goldin, 1984). The 'Coloured Labour Preference Policy' (CLPP) was formally introduced by Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, in 1954. This meant that there would be no coloured homeland, but the Western Province was to be 'the preserve of "coloured" people', and blacks were to be 'discouraged' from settling there (Verwoerd, cited in Goldin, 1984, p. 10). Hence, the corollary of the CLPP was the forced removal of thousands of black families from the Western Cape to the Transkei and Ciskei from the 1950s. The government announced in 1955 that 'all foreign Natives are gradually to leave the Western Province and no more are to be permitted in this region' (*ibid*, p. 10).

### **Paternalist relations between coloured workers and white farmers**

Throughout apartheid and up until the early 1990s, the permanent and seasonal labour forces on fruit and wine farms in the Western Cape were therefore almost exclusively coloured (although there were also small numbers of black workers – e.g. see Theron, 1976). The relationship between white farmers and coloured workers living on these farms has been described as 'paternalistic', something of a euphemism for a system of near-total control over workers' lives and labour power by farmers:

Ever since the time of slavery, labour relations on Western Cape fruit and wine farms have been governed by the institutions and systems of paternalism, in terms of which the farmer as 'master' was the ultimate authority and the law of the land gave way at the borders of the farm to *die boer se wet* (the farmer's rule). (du Toit & Ally, 2003, p. 3)

There were no regulations governing farm workers' minimum wages or working conditions during apartheid, and 'the powerlessness of agricultural workers and their families is largely the result of the extensive and direct control that farmers have over most aspects of their

lives' (van Ryneveld, 1986, p. 73). Workers were usually dependent on farmers for almost every material and social need, including money, housing, transport, water and electricity, sometimes food, a social life, and access to medical services, and the 'tied housing' system meant that if a worker lost their job they also lost their home on the farm (van Ryneveld, 1986; Theron, 1976; du Toit, 1993). Farmers even had control over 'the labour power of male workers' wives and children' (du Toit, 1993, p. 316). At worst, workers were practically enslaved to the farms through debt, incurred at farm shops or through loans from farmers, and alcoholism produced by the 'dop' system, by which some farmers paid a portion of their workers' wages in alcohol (Theron, 1976; van Ryneveld, 1986). Not all farmers used the dop system, but alcoholism was so widespread and so entrenched that many farmers worried that they would not be able to attract workers if they did not offer dop (Theron, 1976; van Ryneveld, 1986). While the Hex Valley is not a wine-growing region, van Ryneveld (1986) claimed that Western Cape farm workers were consuming 3% of the region's total annual wine crop. The effects of the dop system continue until the present day in the form of widespread alcoholism among Western Cape farm workers (London, 2000).

However, this control also went hand in hand with a kind of familial intimacy between workers and farmers. Often, several generations of farmer's and workers' families grew up closely together on the same farms, and farmers assumed the position of 'father' in the 'farm family' (du Toit, 1993). A farmer interviewed by Wilderman (2014) recalled that 'when my mother and father took over in 1970 they would buy the staff underpants and decide the colour' (p. 25). This interviewee went on to note that 'not all paternalism is completely bad – it has an element of care and interest in their lives but ideally we want to move away from it and give people more responsibility and freedom' (p. 25). The wife of one of the farmers we interviewed in 2009 joked that she even acted as marriage counsellor to their workers.

At best, then, paternalism enabled relationships of trust and loyalty among highly unequal parties. In such a system, 'obligations between farmers and workers extend far beyond the wage-labour nexus' (du Toit, 1993, p. 314). Farmers and workers were bound together in a supposedly two-way relationship of mutual help, responsibility and understanding – although in practice these obligations were highly asymmetrical. For workers, they mainly involved obedience and submission to farmers' authority, and in exchange, they could

expect farmers to 'help' them with expenses they were unable to afford on the wages farmers paid them (du Toit & Ally, 2003). Any claims workers made on farmers were construed as claims on the farmer's generosity and beneficence, which could not be demanded by appeals to rights; so workers ultimately had no recourse if farmers failed to keep to their side of the paternalistic bargain (du Toit, 1993). Workers could also be fired and evicted at the farmers' will if the 'good understanding' between them collapsed. Du Toit explains how the notion of the farm as a 'family' went hand in hand in with a fear for workers of losing their place in this family:

In paternalist discourse, a yawning gap opens between the inside and the outside of this community...the breakdown of this relationship is traumatic. To know that you and the farmer no longer 'understand one another' is to feel like a *vreemdeling* (a stranger), an *indringer* or an *inkommer* [sic] – an outsider, a trouble-maker' (1993, p. 320-321).

Indeed, one of the main reasons why trade unions never took off in Western Cape agriculture during and even after apartheid – another one being the physical isolation of workers on widely-spaced farms (Wilderman, 2014) – was that paternalism was so successful at making workers dependent on farmers, obscuring the conflict of interests between farmers and workers and thus suffocating worker resistance (du Toit, 1993; Theron, 1976). Du Toit (1993) observes how paternalism discourse construed farmer-worker relations as a kind of alliance of the farm against trouble-causers and outsiders:

In a paternalist world-view, it simply does not make sense to think of workers or farmers as two significantly separate groups, nor to ask whether someone is on the one group's side or on the other's. In its terms one cannot be for or against the workers; only for or against the farm. ...Paternalism conceives of the farm as a crucially threatened community. It denies systematic antagonism within the farm, but asserts an antagonism between the potentially harmonious farm as community and that which threatens its harmony: the lazy, irresponsible or drunken worker, with the thief, the city lawyer, the trade unionist (du Toit, 1993, p. 322).

### **Change and continuity: Paternalism adapts to new circumstances**

Du Toit (1993) goes on to describe some changes that were brought to Western Cape fruit



and wine farming communities and to the institutions of paternalism by both the farmer-led Rural Foundation reform movement and the worker-led beginnings of trade unionism in the late 1980s and early 1990s (although, as mentioned, trade unions never took off and even at the time of the strike in 2012, only about 5% of workers or less were members of formal traditional trade unions). The Rural Foundation implemented social upliftment programs for farm workers, and also encouraged farmers to 'modernise' away from the racism of old-school paternalism, towards an at least superficially more egalitarian approach to farming that used the discourse of 'human resources management' rather than emphasising the absolute rule of the farmer. Rural Foundation farmers tried to implement a more impersonal approach to labour relations which included educating workers about how the farm made money:

Workers were shown how the farm (rather than the farmer) makes a profit and how that profit depends on care and speed in their work....[T]he workers were thus given to understand that the farmers' personal power to determine their conditions had been replaced by the 'market' and that the success of the farm in the 'market' depended on workers' productivity (Mayson, 1990, cited in du Toit, 1993, p. 326)

By substituting these abstract concepts for the personal figure of the farmer, '[m]anagement discourse works to render the operation of power increasingly impersonal' (du Toit, 1993, p. 326). In the results chapters below we will see that impersonal abstract entities like 'the market' still appear in farmers' discourse and serve to take the place of their own agency in accounting for their choice of workers as well as the inequality of the farming system more generally (see also Kerr, Durrheim & Dixon, 2016).

Early trade unionism also began to challenge paternalism in some important ways (du Toit, 1993). For instance, unions and farm worker committees challenged the notion that workers and farmers on the farm were 'one family' and advocated for the two to be seen as separate groups with a more openly adversarial relationship between them. Union members also stopped seeing 'fringe benefits' ('free' housing, transport etc) as evidence of the farmer's benevolent generosity but as something they had a right to expect. Unions also provided a forum for workers to air their grievances in ways that politicised them,

rather than experiencing them as isolated personal problems in their individual relationship to the farmer (du Toit, 1993).

However, du Toit also shows that in some ways both of these changes continued to mirror aspects of paternalist discourse even while they were challenging it. Neither the discourse of the farm management movement nor the trade unions and workers' committees constituted an absolute break with the discourses of paternalism, and in this way, aspects of continuity were evident even in processes of change (cf Billig et al, 1988; Billig, 1991). It was 'impossible for the Farm Management Movement to make a clean break with the past [because] it acts in a context where paternalism is still a living tradition' (du Toit, 1993, p. 327). For example, farms that subscribed to liberal reform involved some workers being appointed to middle management positions. In some ways, this was a radical break with the past, as under traditional paternalism no workers occupied management positions. But in fact this new arrangement retained aspects of the older one, as farmers still had ultimate authority over workers and any right they had to speak was still given them by the farmer. Moreover, workers appointed to management positions risked being seen by other workers as 'piempers' or farmers' favourites – informers, suck-ups – just as they had under paternalism, and du Toit reported how on one farm a group of such appointees went so far as to deliberately break into a wine store and steal a quantity of wine so that they would not be seen as piempers trying to curry favour with the farmer. He noted that workers were 'intensely resentful of the way in which [management discourse] pays lip service to some of the ideals of rural reform, while surreptitiously insisting on [farmers'] "paternal" authority (p. 332). In this way, some dynamics from the old regime continued into the new.

Similarly, while some aspects of the early trade unions made significant breaks with paternalism, du Toit shows how they, too, continued to make use of aspects of both paternalist and management discourses in articulating their demands and working out what the role of the union should be (du Toit, 1993). For example, despite insisting on democratically elected representatives, workers articulated that the reason why such a democratic system was necessary was so that they could feel 'deel van die plaas' or part of the farm – rehearsing once again the notion of the farm as a family to which everyone wanted to feel they belonged. Workers also expected unions to address a wide range of issues beyond representing workers' interests at work – for example, organising social

events and tackling alcoholism. In this thinking, an all-encompassing workplace (the farm) would be replaced by an all-encompassing union, so that again, not much space was conceptualised in which to have an independent social life apart from the farm. In other words,

It seems that workers, when they made the case for a union, did not suddenly start articulating some radically new discourse, some ideology systematically separate from corporatist management discourse. The basic concepts in terms of which they justified their mobilisation were precisely those that form the basic building blocks of paternalism. The metaphor of being *deel van die plaas* (part of the farm), the notion of worker and farmer alike sharing a common commitment to the success of the farm as enterprise, the belief that they therefore had an overriding moral commitment to protect the farm – all these seem to have been taken up wholesale into their discourse, and enlisted on the side of the union. (du Toit, 1993, p. 330-331)

In these ways, du Toit shows how change – even dramatic change – can be made out of old or familiar elements.

### **Paternalism as a ‘quasi-alliance’ between workers and farmers**

We have seen how the paternalist farmer-worker relationship was construed as a kind of alliance between farmers and coloured workers, and farms as communities threatened by outsiders and trouble-causers, and that this served to defend the farms against any ideological criticism (du Toit, 1993). Another way that continuity and change in this relationship were simultaneously present is in how elements of this ‘quasi-alliance’ took on a more explicitly intergroup aspect in response to the arrival of black work-seekers from the former homelands after the Coloured Labour Preference Policy was repealed in 1986 (Ewert & Hamman, 1996). In Ewert and Hamman’s survey of 42 farms in six Western Cape fruit and wine farming districts (excluding the Hex Valley) in the mid-1990s, ‘one finding that stands out...is that Africans have not even begun to penetrate the core of permanent workers on these farms’ (p. 159). While the coloured workforce had its own internal divisions such as skill hierarchies, gendered divisions of labour, and inequalities in pay,

[w]hatever divisions exist between (coloured) men and women, these are largely set aside when it comes to maintaining solidarity *vis-à-vis* “outsiders”, that is, Africans.

Almost without exception the coloured workers interviewed did not regard Africans as part of the “farm family” ...[and] many of the observations and reservations of coloured workers corresponded to the views of farmers themselves. Stressing the importance of communication, and the feelings of coloured workers, farmers said it would be “inviting trouble” to employ a substantial number of African men living permanently with their wives and children on the farm. Not only would it result in ethnic friction, but it could also mean inviting the union vanguard onto the farm, as African workers are often perceived as more militant and inclined towards collective action. The upshot of this *shared consciousness between white owner and coloured farmworker* is that Africans, where they are employed, are mostly hired on a seasonal basis, work in separate gangs, are housed separately and live separate social lives (Ewert & Hamman, 1996, p. 159, emphasis added).

The tropes of paternalism are all present here: the farm as a threatened family community, the *inkomer* or outsider as trouble-maker, and white farmers and coloured workers as being on the same side (du Toit, 1993). But Ewert and Hamman show how these tropes are adapted and applied here to the emergence of an *intergroup* labour context. It was now not just troublesome individuals, but black people as a group, who were the outsiders.

This is an important piece of contextual history for understanding the intergroup dynamics that had emerged in the Hex Valley by 2009. When I first went to De Doorns, I took it for granted that the Zimbabweans were the favoured group in the eyes of farmers. Even though they did not mainly live on the farms, they clearly had a ‘shared consciousness’ with farmers about their own superior work ethic compared to that of South African workers. Since I was initially approaching the Zimbabweans’ eviction in De Doorns as an instance of ‘xenophobia’, I also took it for granted that the Zimbabweans being *non-citizens* was the basis on which the ‘preferential treatment’ shown to them was deemed by South African workers to be unfair. And indeed, empirically, grievances about the Zimbabweans’ unfairly favoured position came equally in our interviews from all South African workers – coloured and black. But Ewert and Hamman show that in the not too distant past, before the Zimbabweans were present, it was in fact the coloured community who occupied this putatively favoured position relative to black workers, and so racial, rather than national, divisions in the workforce were to the fore (cf Neocosmos, 2006). Indeed, we shall see in

the results section that racial identities continue to crop up. For many coloured workers who used to live on the farms but no longer do, the memory of their erstwhile paternalistic relationships with farmers is strong, and continues to inform expectations of good or preferential treatment from farmers – expectations which are often disappointed by a sense of having been displaced by newer (black) workers from ‘outside’.

### **The paternalist quasi-alliance comes partially undone: Effects of labour law**

How did it happen that by 2009, the relatively recently arrived Zimbabwean community had taken up the position of favoured workers in the eyes of farmers, to the point of forming a new ‘quasi-alliance’? To answer this we must first know something of how the paternalist quasi-alliance had started to come undone by the early 2000s, and why the Zimbabweans, who began to arrive at this time, were suited to partially filling farmers’ demand for a disposable seasonal labour force, a need that was created as a result of these same processes.

The reforms of the Rural Foundation in the 1980s (du Toit, 1993) were presumably overtaken by bigger changes that followed the introduction of labour legislation and the deregulation of commercial agriculture in the 1990s and early 2000s. As we know, during apartheid there were no laws regulating farm workers’ wages, hours or conditions of employment, leave or sick leave, and workers’ labour power was entirely at the disposal of the farmer (du Toit, 1993; du Toit & Ally, 2003). The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, which regulated all these things, was extended to agriculture in 1993 (Ewert & Hamman, 1996) and the Labour Relations Act of 1995 legalised collective bargaining (Theron, 2014). Also, the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA) of 1997 put limits on who could and could not be evicted from farm housing and under what conditions (Theron, 2010), supposedly limiting the extent to which farm workers’ and dwellers’ housing security was dependent on the whim of the farm owner (Ewert & Hamman, 1999).

However, the intentions behind these laws did not translate straightforwardly into improved conditions for and less exploitation of farm workers (Rutherford & Addison, 2007; du Toit & Ally, 2003; Ewert & du Toit, 2005). Instead, they produced a series of unintended consequences, partly because of the way farmers responded to them. One of these

consequences was a renegotiation of the terms of the farmer-worker relationship.

According to du Toit and Ally (2003),

If farmers are no longer allowed to be 'masters', then they will be 'employers', but on new and different terms. If permanent employees are now to be the bearers of rights, able to make demands, and able to challenge farmers' power, then the pros and cons of engaging a large body of permanent workers need to be reassessed (p. 46).

Many farmers also perceived ESTA as giving farm dwellers – sometimes people who were not actually working on the farms they lived on – permanent rights to their land (Jacobs, 2008) and so, ESTA notwithstanding, many farmers either simply bulldozed their worker housing and evicted the workers, or found other ways of avoiding ESTA's implications (Wegerif, Russell & Grundlingh, 2005; Ewert & du Toit, 2005; Ewert and Hamman, 1999). The result has been a large-scale move of workers off farms, with only a tiny fraction of these following due process (Wegerif et al., 2005). A national survey of evicted farm workers published in 2005 suggests that the number of evictions nationally spiked precisely at the time of the 1994 elections, at the passing of ESTA, and at the passing of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Wegerif et al., 2005). The 'dumping' of evicted farm workers and the resultant appearance of rural informal settlements such those around De Doorns is part of a similar trend across the whole of South Africa since at least the early 1990s (Wegerif et al., 2005). Consequently, the total number of farm evictions in the first ten years after the end of apartheid did not decrease at all compared to the ten previous years (Wegerif et al, 2005). An evicted worker interviewed by Du Toit and Ally (2003) summed things up thus:

Farmers don't want to bother with people on their farms. This is because farmers have fewer rights on the farms. If I do something that the white man doesn't like, he will have to leave me alone, because I have too many rights...the farmers would rather get contractors than have to deal with people on the farms (2003, p. 39).

This means that, where previously many farm workers were employed in permanent, year-round jobs and supplied with on-farm housing, this is no longer the norm. On many farms, gone are the days of generations of farmers and workers living and working together. Rather, farmers mainly now employ a small core of permanent staff and make up the

difference with temporary and casual workers who live off the farms in informal settlements and new townships, and are fetched back to work on the farms on a short-term and casual basis as fits the farmer's seasonal requirements, often sourced through labour brokers (Ewert & du Toit, 2005; Webb, 2013). In this way, farm work has been both 'casualised' and 'externalised' (du Toit & Ally, 2003). Ewert and Hamman (2005) showed how the process produced a 'deepening divide' between workers who stayed on the farms and those who did not. The few remaining permanent workers, 'though often still living on the farm and caught in the web of paternalism, are on the whole...[better off than] the seasonal, casual and contract workers: a rural lumpen-proletariat, often residing in rural, peri-urban or metropolitan shanty towns' (Ewert & Du Toit, 2005, p. 317). In my experience, workers who still live on the farms tend to retain such a 'shared consciousness' with farmers, which is not evident among workers who live in the 'locations'. As we will see in the results chapters, many coloured workers who used to live on the farms but now live in the informal settlements and RDP housing have experienced this 'externalisation' as a process of enormous loss (cf du Toit, 1993; cf Ewert & Hamman, 1996), and for them in particular, farmers' apparent shift of favour to the Zimbabweans was a real kick in the teeth.

Moreover, because of the government's incapacity to monitor or enforce compliance with labour law (Munakamwe & Jinnah, 2014), and because there is almost no organised collective bargaining capacity among farm workers such as trade unions (Pahle, 2015), the conditions that prevail on farms are in practice still largely up to the individual farmer, leading to a high degree of variation in the extent to which farms adhere to minimum wages and working conditions (Munakamwe & Jinnah, 2014). From their interviews with Zimbabwean and South African farm labourers in the Western Cape and Mpumalanga, Munakamwe and Jinnah conclude that 'the power and resolve of employers – to subvert or comply with national legislation – determines actual outcomes for workers' (2014, p. 35). Indeed, many of the workers they interviewed had only the vaguest idea of what their labour rights meant, and even those who had a better idea 'stated that labour legislation meant very little to them due to poor implementation and enforcement' (p. 56). Despite a progressive labour rights regime on paper, in practice 'farm workers' freedom of association and right to bargain collectively are hardly realised at all' (Pahle, 2015, p. 121). In these ways, once again, continuity with the past – worker disempowerment under the authority of

farmers – is evident even in the midst of processes of change. Indeed, Ewert and du Toit observed that

labour law has significantly disrupted the institutional order of paternalist labour management but has not decisively transformed it. The state is far away and lacks the ability to enforce its own laws. Farm workers find that insisting on their rights can be a dangerous strategy, and know that maintaining patronage relationships may be as important. The result on the ground is a palimpsest in which labour relationships are simultaneously governed both by the formal codes of legislation and by the personal relationships and implicit contracts of paternalist practices. (2005, p. 325)

### **Deregulation of commercial agriculture**

A second factor contributing to the move towards casual and externalised labour is the deregulation of South African commercial agriculture on the side of capital that took place in parallel with labour regulation (Kritzinger, Barrientos & Roussouw, 2004; Rutherford & Addison, 2007; Ewert & Hamman, 1999). During apartheid, the state had intervened heavily to protect white commercial agriculture through the provision of land, cheap labour, subsidies and highly regulated internal and export markets (Genis, 2012; Bernstein, 1996). After 2000, commercial agriculture became deregulated, 'evidenced by the dismantling of apartheid-era marketing boards, privatisation of cooperatives and removal of practically all direct subsidies for (white) farmers' (Rutherford & Addison, 2007, p. 624). South African fruit farmers thus became incorporated, without state protection, into highly competitive international markets dominated by European and UK supermarkets, which 'determin[e] the specifications of supply on a pre-programmed basis to meet their requirements. They insist on high technical, environmental and employment standards, but ultimately provide little surety of purchase and allow market conditions to govern prices' (Kritzinger, Barrientos & Roussouw, 2004, p. 17). In this climate of risk and few protections for farmers, reducing the permanent work force lets farmers 'reduce labour costs, avoid the effects of more stringent labour legislation, and importantly helps them to vary their labour requirements at short notice to meet the flexible but tight production schedules set by global buyers' (ibid., p. 17). Farmers also use labour brokers to source and take responsibility for these workers, which is



a 'winning situation' for farmers (Jacobs, 2008), as farmers do not need to pay workers during winter when there is little work to be done, and they can outsource the administrative burden of dealing with a large number of short-term workers.

Overall, the consequences of this externalisation and casualisation for workers' livelihood and job security have mainly been disastrous. Risk and the burden of social reproduction have been transferred from farmers' to workers' households (Kritzinger, Barrientos & Roussouw, 2004). Many seasonal and casual farm workers are employed for half the year or less, and do not receive any income on days when they do not work, for example when it is raining or on public holidays.<sup>27</sup> There is supposed to be a minimum wage for agricultural workers (at the time of my first research in 2009 this was R57 a day, in 2012 it was R69, and after the strike it was raised to R105), and on some farms, higher wages than this are paid. However, even if the minimum wage were implemented on all farms – which several authors, as well as workers we interviewed after the strike, have suggested it is not, even for South African workers (Munakamwe & Jinnah, 2014; Pahle, 2015; Rutherford & Addison, 2007) – it would be insufficient for a worker's family's basic nutritional requirements (Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy, 2012). But the dilemma is that many farms would not be able to afford to continue running if the wage bill were significantly increased (Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy, 2012). In this way, it appears that farm workers are subsidising the fruit farming industry with their own livelihoods.

However, the 'deepening divide' (Ewert and du Toit, 2005) applies also to farmers, and increased inequality among farmers has been another consequence of labour regulation and capital deregulation. Those farmers who were not able to stay afloat in the new competitive climate sold out to bigger farmers or companies, while others were able to capitalise on the new conditions (Ewert & du Toit, 2005; Theron, 2010). In the Hex Valley, a consolidation process is evident as the same or a larger area of grapes is being cultivated but the number of farmers has decreased; one farmer explained that in the old days the norm was for farmers to own one or two farms each whereas by 2009 the norm had become three or four farms, as it is increasingly difficult to be profitable on a small area of grapes. A PASSOP member we interviewed suggested there are a few farmers in the Hex Valley who own more

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Owen Maromo, August 2013

than ten farms each. The consolidation trend is also evident nationally, as the number of farming units in South Africa decreased from around 60 000 in 1995 to around 40 000 in 2007 (Pahle, 2015).

### **Further change: International labour migration to De Doorns**

These changes coincided with the beginnings of another wave of migrant work seekers arriving in De Doorns, this time from Zimbabwe. As we know from Ewert and Hamman (1996), black work-seekers from the Eastern Cape began to arrive in the Western Cape from the late 1980s after the end of the influx control laws.<sup>28</sup> Then from the early 2000s Zimbabweans started to arrive, shortly after the start of Zimbabwe's own political and economic crises and subsequent diaspora. The very first Zimbabweans were employed on a farm in the Hex Valley in 2002,<sup>29</sup> and by 2006 or 2007 they had become an established minority in the seasonal labour force.<sup>30</sup> There is also a smaller number of workers from Lesotho (according to our interview with the Agri WesCape CEO, about 800 workers during peak season in late 2009). These groups have joined the longer-established coloured farm worker community who also now live predominantly in the informal settlements and RDP housing around De Doorns. Thus, the workforce has become much more heterogeneous than it was in the early 1990s.

The narrative in this chapter so far suggests that different groups have somewhat different interests in the processes of change that led them to be part of the externalised farm workforce in De Doorns. Change has worked more in favour of some workers and farmers than others (Ewert & du Toit, 2005). Our interviews suggest on one hand that many coloured people who used to be part of farm communities, but are no longer, have experienced the arrival of the Zimbabweans onto these same farms as a process of displacement. On the other hand, some workers were never incorporated into close-knit farm communities anyway (Ewert & Hamman, 1996); and it is possible that South African workers who had no particular investment in a 'farm community' were more concerned by 2009 about the Zimbabweans' over-willingness to comply with farmers and how this was

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<sup>28</sup> I do not know how appropriate it is to keep calling these workers 'migrants', which assumes their primary home attachments are still in the Eastern Cape.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with HTA chairperson, December 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Zimbabwean worker, December 2009 (interview 13).

undercutting their own power to negotiate with farmers than about a sense of personal loss of place. The Zimbabweans themselves, migrating from a context of mass unemployment and livelihood and food insecurity, came to De Doorns out of necessity, looking for work, sometimes to save and send money back to their families. They had no history in this community, but were quickly snapped up by farmers.

Based on their research with Zimbabwean workers on farms in northern Limpopo province, Rutherford and Addison (2007) have argued that the incorporation of Zimbabwean migrant workers into South African farm labour forces is the reverse side of the same externalisation and casualisation process which saw the coloured farm worker community ejected. The same conditions encouraging farmers to move towards 'flexible' casual labour are also those making Zimbabweans an attractive alternative, for a number of reasons.<sup>31</sup> First, most Zimbabweans are already migrants who arrive in De Doorns in spring and leave in autumn and in this way match the farmers' requirements for an 'easily disposable' seasonal workforce (cf Rutherford & Addison, 2007). Second, farmers we interviewed all spoke about the Zimbabweans' 'good work ethic' (as did the Zimbabweans themselves), and how their reliability, sobriety and agreeableness as workers (cf Ewert & Hamman, 1996) made them more attractive than their South African counterparts. Thirdly, international migrants may be attractive to farmers precisely because they cannot make claims for tenure rights and are also less likely to make demands based on labour rights (cf Pahle, 2015; cf Munakamwe & Jinnah, 2014; Johnston, 2007). Indeed, 'in the absence of enforcement mechanisms, the minimum wage laws have merely encouraged farmers [in Limpopo] to seek out undocumented migrants' (Rutherford & Addison, 2007, p. 626). Pahle (2015) also researched Zimbabwean workers on farms in Limpopo, and found, against the general trend of 'externalisation', that many Zimbabwean workers are now being offered permanent jobs and accommodation on farms:

Present evictions need not spell the end to tied housing: farmers [in Limpopo] are primarily bent on removing those yesteryear tenants who have lived so long on the farm as to be on the brink of earning legal titles to their land. Once such claims are

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<sup>31</sup> Zimbabweans working in De Doorns in late 2009 constituted only around ten percent of the peak season workforce, whereas in parts of Limpopo (Rutherford and Addison's research context) they made up as much as 80% of the work force.

pre-empted, farmers may offer on-farm dwellings to new and temporarily employed workers. (Pahle, 2015, p. 138)

Pahle (2015) and Rutherford and Addison's (2007) farm research was conducted in a different province at the other end of the country, but according to workers we interviewed in De Doorns during the strike in 2012 a similar process is happening on at least some farms in the Hex Valley. These interviewees said that some Zimbabwean workers to whom farmers offered temporary accommodation after they were evicted in 2009 ended up staying on indefinitely and taking up permanent farm positions. Although it is difficult to quantify this process, and bearing in mind that in 2009 Zimbabweans in the Hex Valley were only a small minority in the peak season workforce (unlike in Limpopo, which is on the Zimbabwe border), it may be true that Zimbabweans are in some cases replacing older workers in permanent farm positions. In this way, continuity is again evident even in processes of change. The process has come full circle: we are back to tied housing, albeit with new workers this time round who are less likely to cause farmers trouble.

### **Conclusion: Intergroup relations, change and continuity**

This chapter has tried to locate the intergroup scenario that pertained at the time of the attack on the Zimbabweans' houses in 2009 – in which the Zimbabweans were perceived by many South African workers as being unfairly favoured by farmers but were simultaneously also accused of accepting less than the minimum wage from them – in its historical intergroup context. This is a context of selective and strategic favouritism by farmers towards sections of the workforce and a partial reconfiguration of these lines of allegiance as part of a process of socio-economic change since the latter years of apartheid. The chapter has also tried to show how different groups in the Hex Valley have been differently affected by these changes; and how, within this multi-group scenario, some groups' interests have aligned while others are opposed. In particular, Zimbabwean work-seekers, leaving Zimbabwe at a time of economic collapse in search of other livelihoods, arrived when changes in the old paternalist relationship between farmers and coloured workers produced a space which the Zimbabweans were able to fill by being willing, reliable and uncomplaining workers who were quickly snapped up by farmers. As Sherif (1966) recommended, constructing this history helps us to understand 'contemporary events within the framework of both past relationships between people and their future goals and

designs'. Certainly, we will see that many De Doorns residents drew on their own different histories when talking of what was problematic or wonderful about their current relationships with one another, although ignoring history was also a strategy used in levelling criticisms and making justifications. I will argue in this thesis that the way groups construct their relationships with significant others is oriented to their interests in change, in that these constructions are tied rhetorically to particular recommendations for and evaluations of change in their community. The next two chapters turn to social psychology theory and make this argument first through a critique of social psychology's 'two-group paradigm', and secondly in a chapter about change and continuity and the place of discourse in this process.

## Chapter 4: A two-group paradigm in the social psychology of intergroup relations

One of the overall claims that is being made in this thesis is that the intergroup relationship between Zimbabwean and South African workers that culminated in the xenophobic attack of November 2009 in De Doorns cannot be understood outside of these groups' relationship to a third party – their employers, the farmers. But social psychology tends to conceptualise intergroup relations precisely in terms of unequal *pairs* of groups – such as dominant and subordinate, advantaged and disadvantaged, black and white or minority and majority groups (Subašić, Reynolds & Turner, 2008). The following extracts from some influential theorists in social psychology illustrate this tendency to think about intergroup relations in two-group terms:

Prejudice...may be reduced by equal status contact between minority and majority groups in the pursuit of common goals. (Allport, 1958, p. 267)

An unequal distribution of objective resources promotes antagonism between dominant and subordinate groups, provided the latter group rejects its previously accepted...negative self-image...and starts working toward the development of a positive group identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, p. 38)

Just as the system-justification perspective does not assume that underprivileged groups will be stereotyped negatively, neither does it assume that privileged groups will always be stereotyped in positive terms. (Jost & Banaji, 1994, p. 19)

[W]hen confronted with an issue as complex as racial prejudice, researchers cannot afford to limit themselves to studying prejudice from the perspective of Whites...[Researchers should] examine how Blacks' racial attitudes and behaviours influence intergroup dynamics between Blacks and Whites. (Shelton, 2000, p. 374)

High levels of SDO should...be associated with increased ingroup identification among dominants and decreased ingroup identification among subordinates. (Sidanius, Pratto, Van Laar & Levin, 2004, p. 865)

Prejudice reduction research could assist in creating positive attitudes and reducing discrimination by the advantaged group, while collective action research informs efforts to initiate and sustain social movements designed to improve the status of disadvantaged groups. (Wright & Lubensky, 2009, p. 293)

[T]he collective action of subordinated groups inevitably takes place in a context where dominant groups act and *react* to such collective action. It is our contention that such reactions occur and are given legitimacy on the basis of both prejudicial representations of the subordinate group and the interpretations and discourses that surround the subordinate group's collective actions (Stott, Drury & Reicher, 2012, p. 287).

This chapter considers in detail some social psychology studies in which a two-group analytic framework has been used to study intergroup relations among three or more parties, and argues that the application of the two-group framework sometimes means we overlook the way power is exercised and contested through the construction of intergroup alliances and exclusions among three or more parties. In this way, the chapter develops a critique first made by Billig (1976) in his reinterpretation of Sherif's famous boys' camp studies and the role of the experimenters in constituting the relationships between the two groups of boys.

### **A two-group paradigm in Sherif's realistic conflict theory**

Sherif's Realistic Conflict Theory was developed on the basis of his three well-known holiday camp studies (Sherif, 1966; Sherif & Sherif, 1969). Sherif considered these as situations involving two groups of boys: Red Devils and Bulldogs; Pythons and Panthers; Rattlers and Eagles. The effects of the competition and co-operation that were induced between them by the experimenters were examined in terms of the boys' intergroup behaviour (Sherif, 1966). Sherif used these studies to show that prejudiced behaviour and conflict could be induced in individuals as a product of competitive relations between groups *at a group level*, rather than being a consequence of a pathological personality (Sherif, 1966; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

In his re-reading of these studies, however, Billig (1976) wondered what would have happened if the boys had found out they were being set up by the experimenters; that the organised competitions between them were deliberately designed for the experimenters to study their effects, and that in some cases the experimenters were covertly intervening to 'frustrate' one of the groups but ascribing this intervention to the other group (Sherif, 1966). Billig saw these studies as an analogy of real-world situations where a group in a position of greater power helps to constitute, and has vested interests in, the relations between two other groups. 'This third group,' he wrote, 'the group of experimenters, is the social group which creates the other two groups – giving them their social meaning and their social reality' (p. 307). Billig saw the ensuing intergroup conflict as 'false consciousness,' where the two groups believed each other to be the source of their troubles when in fact the real source was a third party. But he concluded that what would have happened if the boys had found this out was 'an empirical question for which there is no immediate data' (1976, p. 318), since he found no evidence that this ever happened in the experiments.

In fact, however, Cherry (1995) found one obscure reference to the fact that the boys did find this out in the second study, a reference which Billig appeared not to have read:

in the 1953 study, this stage [planned frustration] was not completed. In a frustration episode, the subjects attributed the plan to the camp administration. Since testing hypotheses required that the source of frustration be attributed to the experimental outgroup, the 1953 study was terminated at this stage. (Sherif, 1956, in Cherry, 1995, p. 109)

Thus, Sherif ended the study too early to see how group relations among the boys, and between the boys and the experimenters, would develop once they became aware of the experimenters' designs (Reicher & Haslam, 2013). In this way, Sherif took the experimenter's role for granted, treating it as transparent, instead of analysing the setup *as* a case where two groups were having their relationship manipulated by a third party, and letting it play out long enough so that questions could be asked about what effects this would have on the boys' intergroup relations – whether they would have forged an alliance



against the experimenters, say, or whether they would have lost interest in the competitions altogether.

### **A two-group paradigm in the contact hypothesis**

Another classic example of third party involvement in the intergroup relations literature is the concept of 'institutional support' which Allport (1958) identified as an essential condition for intergroup contact interventions to be effective in reducing prejudice. However, despite this early recognition of the important role that third parties can play in intergroup relations, a two-groups-at-a-time approach to intergroup contact still predominates in the contact literature (Van Laar, Levin, Sinclair & Sidanius, 2004). The contact hypothesis has generated research on contact/prejudice between a wide variety of kinds of groups – for example, right from the start, Allport's (1958) *The Nature of Prejudice* mentioned 'Negroes', whites, Catholics, Jews, Italians, Irish, Yankees, Southerners, Greeks, and Chinese. Some of the studies in Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analysis also went 'beyond a focus on racial and ethnic groups...[I]nvestigators have tested the theory with participants of varying ages and with target groups as diverse as elderly, physically disabled and mentally ill participants' (p. 752). But in contact research, this multiplicity is usually operationalised as a series of pairs. This includes some studies in which relations between three or more groups are re-construed in two-group terms so as to fit the predictions of contact theory. Some work on contact between minority groups has been inspired by Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analytic finding that the effects of contact are smaller for minorities than for majorities but greater for higher-status minorities than lower-status ones (Bikmen, 2011; Shelton & Richeson, 2006; Van Laar, Levin, Sinclair & Sidanius, 2004). Bikmen (2011) examined the effects of intergroup contact between two different-status student minority groups, blacks and Asians, in a majority white American university. Her main hypothesis is that since Asians are a 'higher status' minority than blacks, the effects of contact between them ought to resemble those between a majority (high status) and a minority (low status) group. That is, she tested the hypothesis that the prejudice-reducing effects of contact would be greater for Asians than for blacks, and found this to be the case. A secondary hypothesis was also proposed, that, since Asians are viewed as 'honorary whites', the effects of contact with Asians on black students ought to be greater for those blacks who already had favourable attitudes towards whites. This hypothesis was also not

disconfirmed. In this way, relations among minorities are reconceptualised in terms of a minority-majority framework, with the relations between black and Asian students to the fore.

Bikmen's approach shows how a two-group framework can be used to analyse what she gives clues to suggest is in fact a more complex multi-group situation. Already we know that the university was majority white, and thus, in a literal sense, the *actual* majority (as well as 'the institution') has been omitted from the analytic framework, which is concerned with the relations between black and Asian students. However, this majority has not been *completely* omitted, as the status of the two minority groups is defined in the following way:

Asian students, compared to Black students, reported having more White friends, were more favourable toward Whites, reported experiencing less discrimination, and were more trusting of the college authorities. Underlying these differences were perceptions of acceptance of and respect for their group; that is, *public regard* (p. 191, italics added).

Bikmen then considers how such differences in status may affect college campus politics:

Differences in status and the associated differences in college experiences [of blacks and Asians] may make articulating a common ingroup identity (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), for example as 'students of color,' harder, and arguably, present a major obstacle to multicultural solidarity (Greenwood, 2008) among Black and Asian students in college campuses. (p. 192)

However, different implications of this 'status difference' can be drawn if we more explicitly consider this university as (at least) a three-way intergroup situation rather than focusing on these two minorities alone and treating them as a minority and a majority. First, as we have seen above, the 'status' of the two minorities was actually operationalised as *how well they got on with, and were viewed by, whites*. But instead of making this explicit, white regard is described as 'public regard' or 'status'. In this way, status' is universalised, and the role of whites is rendered transparent. Thus, the relations between black and Asian students are problematised, instead of the whole group hierarchy with whites (students and university

administration) at the top. When viewed in this way, the Asians' 'higher status' can be contextualised and relativised in a local group hierarchy; and once this is done, the relations between Asians and blacks can be interpreted in a different way. Instead of asking whether differences in 'status' and in college experiences are in and of themselves a potential barrier to inter-minority solidarity, we can ask whether articulating a common identity among all students of colour would be difficult *because the Asian students were invested in their good relations with whites* and thus in the current hierarchy among minorities. If this were the case, they might indeed stand to lose something by demonstrating solidarity with black students, as this might mean letting go of their honorary-white status in order to embrace a Black identity. In minority-majority terms, the Asian students' unique middle-status position is lost, because they are either treated as equivalent to a majority (in Bikmen's research), or grouped together with black students as 'students of colour'.

This alternative interpretation of Bikmen's college campus dynamics is supported by Bonilla-Silva (2004) who has argued precisely that a tri-racial order has emerged in the US, with whites at the top, 'honorary whites' in the middle – including certain higher-status Asians and lighter skinned Latinos – and a 'collective black' at the bottom, including African Americans, darker skinned Latinos and lower-status Asians. In Bonilla-Silva's analysis, it is imperative to understand the dynamics of these two 'lower-status' groups in terms of an overall racial order that maintains white privilege. He also suggests that particular dilemmas are produced for the 'honorary whites' in this hierarchy, who must decide whether to seek acceptance and relative privileges from whites – despite the fact that they are unlikely to be fully accepted by them – or throw in their lot with the 'collective black'. Bikmen's application of the two-group framework blots out these dilemmas, which imply that whites are an actual participant group in the university's intergroup relations.

But the supposedly favourable relationship between Asians and whites in Bikmen's university must also be read in light of the high degree of racism from whites which, Bikmen acknowledges, Asians in America continue to experience – 'public regard' and 'status' notwithstanding (c.f. Bonilla-Silva, 2004). This raises questions about the instrumentality of favourable intergroup representations – in this case of Asians by whites. When do groups have an interest in maintaining and proclaiming good relations with certain others and when do they not? It is possible that the intergroup dynamics at this university represented

a kind of Asian-white alliance from which blacks were excluded – an alliance which presumably served some purpose in this context but does not mean that ‘honorary whites’ in America can always expect good treatment from whites. In South Africa, likewise, white racism towards coloureds and Indians is alive and well, and yet there are times when coloureds and whites or Indians and whites ‘band together’ against blacks. Representative sample attitude surveys have found similar levels of xenophobia towards foreigners in South Africa across all race and class groups (Crush, 2000, 2008; Crush & Ramachandran, 2014), and yet, in De Doorns for example, there was a clear difference between the attitudes of South African workers and those of farmers towards the Zimbabwean farm worker community. On what occasions, and for what purposes, then, are ‘good relations’ between groups invoked or ignored? Such questions cannot be addressed from within a two-group framework, because if we simply examined the coloured-white or the Asian-white relationship in isolation, noting that it was either positive or negative, this would not tell us how this particular two-way relationship derived its meaning and function from its particular location in a wider web of group relationships (Kerr, Durrheim & Dixon, 2016).

However, another study of inter-minority relations in America by Glasford and Calcagno (2011) moved beyond the two-group paradigm by specifically conceptualising the relationship between black and Latino Americans in terms of how this was mediated by each group’s relationship to whites. The authors investigated whether a message of commonality between Latino-Americans and African American participants had an effect on these groups’ sense of political solidarity, and secondly, whether this solidarity effect was moderated by contact with whites. Indeed, Latino-Americans who expressed ‘common identification’ with African Americans also expressed a greater sense of common political solidarity, but this was diminished by Latino-Americans’ self-reported experiences of positive contact with whites. This is an example of how including a third party explicitly in the overall analytic framework of intergroup relations studies can begin to capture the dynamics of intergroup relations which are produced in situations of multiplicity and which cannot be reduced to binary opposition (Kerr, Dixon & Durrheim, 2016).

### **A two-group paradigm in social identity theory**

A third and final example of the two-group paradigm in action comes from Tajfel’s (1978b) analysis of Hutu-Tutsi intergroup relations in Rwanda, which he used as a supposedly real-

world illustration of the 'positive distinctiveness' hypothesis with which he explained the results of the early minimal groups studies (Tajfel, 1978b; Turner, Oakes, Hogg, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987). Tajfel argued that the intergroup situation in Rwanda was

[i]nteresting because it comes from a fairly closed-in society which has had until recently very few contacts with the outside world...The society in question is Ruanda [sic], where one of the two very nearly impermeable ethnic groups, the Tutsi, has consistently dominated the other, the Hutu, since the Tutsi conquest four centuries ago (Tajfel, 1978b, p. 84-85).

The research Tajfel used to illustrate positive distinctiveness in Rwanda was undertaken by anthropologist Macquet in the 1960s (in Tajfel, 1978b). According to Macquet's account, the Tutsi maintained distinctions with the Hutu by which to emphasise their own superiority. For example, the Tutsi ate hardly any solid food, to distinguish themselves from the Hutu who did; they also did not show emotion, considering this to be a Hutu characteristic. There are more examples, which supposedly illustrate Tajfel's point about the need for intergroup differentiation. But the main point is that Macquet and Tajfel failed to notice the part that the Belgian colonists had played in politicising and concretising Hutu and Tutsi identities, especially during a period of administrative reform in Rwanda between 1926 and 1931 (Mamdani, 2001). Mamdani (2001) shows how, though the identities of Hutu and Tutsi certainly pre-existed the colonial era, they took on particular nuances and meanings during the Belgian colonial period. Mamdani suggests that the labels of Hutu and Tutsi were in fact far more ambiguous and fluid in the pre-colonial era. They more closely resembled class distinctions, with the Hutu traditionally crop farmers and Tutsi the more wealthy cattle farmers. There were even ceremonies that marked a person's move from one group to another, though Tajfel understood the groups to have been 'very nearly impermeable' for the last four centuries. Under the Belgian regime, Tutsi superiority was entrenched by the 'Hamitic myth,' whose colonizer proponents claimed that the Tutsi were descended from a superior, non-African race somewhere in the Middle East – the Hamites. The Hutu-Tutsi distinction was thus racialised and rendered inflexible, with the Tutsi seen as the non-indigenous, and superior, settlers. Identity cards were introduced which contained the bearer's 'ethnic' identity and rendered this identity fixed (Mamdani, 2001).

The racial superiority supported by the Hamitic myth both justified and was re-inscribed by various bureaucratic practices in the colonial administration of Rwanda. For example, it was the Tutsi who were made petty government officials; Tutsi children alone were sent to missionary schools; and Hutu chiefs were done away with. Opposition to this Tutsi privilege was later to become a central aspect of the Hutu Power movement which played a crucial role in the instigation of the genocide in 1994 (Mamdani, 2001). According to Mamdani, pre-colonial identity narratives – in which ‘Tutsi’ was indeed associated with power and with privilege – interacted with and were used in the politics of the colonial and post-colonial eras. Understanding the binary form that these groups’ relationship took thus requires understanding how a third group helped to constitute them in the first place (cf Billig, 1976) – a fact which Tajfel seems not to have noticed.

This brings us to an important way that these examples of third-party politics are unlike Sherif’s summer camp experiments. Although Billig rightly saw the role of the experimenters for what it was, he did not say anything about the fact that the studies were set up in such a way that neither of the groups of boys was systematically favoured by the experimenters. Although they competed, a stable hierarchy did not develop among them, and neither did either group develop an alliance with the experimenters. In the USA, in Rwanda, and in De Doorns, however, the intergroup dynamics among the ‘less powerful’ or ‘minority’ groups were not constituted like this. Rather, they were differently positioned in a social hierarchy of proximity to whites. Mamdani (2001) has called the Tutsi an example of a ‘subject race’. Subject races in European colonies in Africa were caught somewhere between the lowest groups in the social hierarchy and the white colonists way up at the top, often given petty privileges, but also denied full citizenship. These subject races were placed in the unique position of looking in two directions to their supposed racial superiors and inferiors (Fanon, 1985). In apartheid South Africa, the coloured and Indian communities were subject races (Mamdani, 2001). Adhikari (2005) has argued that a distinctive feature of the coloured community over the 20<sup>th</sup> century was its assimilationist aspirations: the desire to be absorbed into, or at least affirmed by, white society, and to accept small relative ‘advantages’ in order to avoid being lumped together with blacks (see also Goldin, 1984). In the French empire, Fanon (1985) described the predicament of Creole-speaking black people in Martinique (West Indies), who aspired to be like French Europeans and disparaged

black Africans who were ‘more black’ than themselves – this sense of superiority supposedly being based on having greater cultural proximity to white Europeans. Arguably the De Doorns farmers’ favouritism towards the Zimbabweans over South African workers is yet another manifestation of this same phenomenon – overlaying the earlier variant in the Western Cape, which was the Coloured Labour Preference Policy (Goldin, 1984; Ewert & Hamman, 1996).

### **Beyond the two-group paradigm in self-categorisation and social identity theory**

There is some work in social psychology on collective action and social change from a self-categorisation perspective which goes beyond the terms of the two-group paradigm.

Subašić, Reynolds and Turner (2008) have proposed a model of ‘political solidarity’ which seeks to specify the conditions under which members of majority groups will act in solidarity with a minority group to challenge an authority group like the government. When minority groups direct collective actions towards an authority group to express a grievance in the hope of effecting some change, there is a contest between these two groups for the support and allegiance of a third party, namely the majority group, the ‘general population’ or ‘silent majority’, which may initially be neutral towards the minority but can potentially be won over to support their cause. Subašić et al describe this as a process of forging ‘political solidarity’. Their self categorisation-based explanation for when this happens is that majority groups will act in solidarity with the minority once they stop seeing themselves as sharing a common group identity with the authority, and rather develop a sense of shared superordinate identity with the minority group. Incidentally this explanation is not convincing because it is circular: developing a shared superordinate identity may *describe* what solidarity looks or feels like, but this is not an adequate *explanation* for solidarity because solidarity has already been *defined as* having a shared superordinate identity. Nevertheless, Subašić and colleagues’ basic point is an important one: that there can be a contest between parties for the allegiance of a third group, and that sometimes the outcome of this contest is actually to change the configuration of intergroup allegiance in a society. In De Doorns, we will see that at the time of our first research in 2009 there was little question of where the Zimbabwean community’s allegiance lay, but by the time of the farm workers’ strike three years later, at least some Zimbabweans had realised the importance of trying to forge a kind of political solidarity among all farm workers *as farm*

*workers* that cut across national and racial divides. There was no xenophobic attack on the Zimbabweans during the strike, and some South Africans we interviewed ascribed this to how, since 2009, the Zimbabweans had changed their behaviour and ‘done better things that showed that they were with us’. It is possible that this was partly due to the intentional efforts of groups like PASSOP to forge a shared superordinate worker identity among all farm workers, rather than playing up ethnic, national and racial identities into which workers have historically been divided. However, in other cases, it appears that the Zimbabweans were simply remembering what had happened to them in 2009, and were fearful of what could easily happen again if they failed to show solidarity with South African workers’ wage protests. In such cases, it does not appear that any meaningful superordinate identity had developed – Zimbabwean workers did not now think of themselves more as ‘workers’ than ‘Zimbabweans’ – even though a form of political solidarity was, indeed, achieved in the strike.

### **Third parties in the South African xenophobia literature**

While many cases of xenophobic violence in South Africa do not so directly implicate a third party of (white) employers in the way that the De Doorns violence did (e.g. Misago, Monson, Landau & Polzer, 2009; von Holdt et al, 2011; Steinberg, 2015; Monson, 2015), the issue of white favouritism and white employers as significant third parties has appeared in the xenophobia literature in a few places. First, Pillay (2010) discussed the role of whites who tried to help victims and potential victims of xenophobic violence in Hout Bay and Imizamo Yethu during the 2008 xenophobia by coming into Imizamo Yethu and holding a ‘say no to xenophobia’ march, in some cases taking their foreign employees away to safety. Pillay (also Mngxitama, 2008; Landau, 2008) asked why a similar activism and engagement is not present among this sector in response to everyday structural violence: ‘why is it that the structural violence...that condemns many unemployed, those lacking in formal education or job prospects, a violence that assaults dignity, imagination and hope, why is that violence not the scandal that mobilizes the middle classes, the suburbs, the bulk of NGO’s, the media into action?’ (n.p.). Secondly and more recently, black South Africans interviewed in a thesis by Eliastam (2015) discussed how white South Africans seem to treat black ‘foreigners’ better than black South Africans. They, too, remembered the way whites mobilised to help foreigners after the xenophobic violence of May 2008 but are apparently blind to the



ongoing suffering of many black South Africans all the time. One of Eliastam's participants had this to say:

I encounter lots of white people who compare black people, and I think it comes from Apartheid as well, where they basically say that Zulus are better, or these people are better, and anyone who is not a black South African is a better black...I think the favouritism and the better treatment shown by white South Africans that are shown to non-South African blacks, it is I think something that makes black South Africans resent those, you know, foreigners...it just strikes deeper: you're worthless. (cited in Eliastam, 2015, p. 112).

From the perspective of African migrants themselves, however, Sichone (2008) notes that the xenophobic treatment they receive from black South Africans is typically worse than racism from white South Africans.

A third place that white employers appeared in the relationship between black South Africans and black foreigners was in my honours project (Kerr, 2009). We interviewed black and Indian South Africans in Pietermaritzburg about their experiences of living, working and interacting with African 'foreigners'. Some participants problematised the relationship between African foreigners and white employers as a process by which their own continued struggle as black people to resist white exploitation was being undermined. A security guard explained thus: "He [the foreigner] just says [to his foreign friend] 'no come there is a job here for you'. Then all of a sudden...he's talked to the boss and there's someone from his country here who doesn't...they don't have a problem earning a small amount of money; we want bigger payment, but they don't have a problem. Like for example I'll say I want R50 a day and he'll say R20 is better. ...So that's why now the white people here in South Africa say 'hold on. They're better because they are cheap'." Similarly, another participant had this to say: "Indeed they do take them [jobs], why? Because they agree with everything the white person says...whereas we black people don't agree with just anything. Everything that is said by the employer a black person can see, no, they cannot stand for this, and disagrees. Whereas they [foreigners] have come to South Africa to look for money, so they want anything that will get them some money; they agree to everything." In these accounts, whites as employers are inextricably implicated in what the speakers find so problematic

about the presence of ‘foreigners’. Notably, in the second quote above, ‘foreigners’ are not even counted as black people because they do not engage in black people’s resistance to whites. A third participant claimed that ‘We must fight the employers and report them that “no, he employed us and then he doesn’t want to give us money, he’s saying these things” ...I think that’s the best thing we must do not fighting each other’. But when he was asked ‘what if they [foreigners] do not want to engage in that process?’ he replied ‘We call them now, amagundanes (*rats*)...and then they get beaten’. What is dilemmatic about these extracts is that justifications for xenophobia become inextricable from a discourse of black liberation and resistance to white exploitation. From this perspective, ‘xenophobia’ does not implicate only two groups – black South Africans and black ‘foreigners’. Rather, African migrants are a third group whose meaning for black South Africans is derived from how they intervene in and affect the already-extant race and class relationships among South Africans.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has considered some ways that the default application of a binary or two-group analytic approach to intergroup relations in multi-group contexts can overlook the unique kinds of social relations and subjectivities that are produced in situations involving three or more parties, and in particular, the way power can be exerted and contested through intergroup ‘alliances’ – often exploitative ones – between a powerful or dominant group and one of two less powerful groups. It has also considered some literature from within and outside of social psychology which has moved beyond the two-group paradigm to explicitly theorise intergroup relationships involving three or more unequal parties. We could have understood the attack on the Zimbabweans’ homes in the Hex Valley in 2009 simply as xenophobia that implicated a group of perpetrators and a group of victims; but as we have seen and will continue to see, residents in De Doorns commonly constructed a three-way relationship between Zimbabwean and South African and workers and farmers. Both farmers and members of the South African farm worker community accused each other of *using* the Zimbabweans as a pawn in the pursuit of their respective illegitimate agendas. It is thus possible to read this eviction as a kind of ‘proxy-attack’ that was nested inside a more longstanding conflict between farmers and the South African farm labouring community.

The following chapter, on social psychology and social change, will make a case that discourse about group relationships is oriented to group interests in change, and that there is a rhetorical relationship between the way speakers construct their relationship with significant other groups with whom they interact on the one hand, and the way they recommend and evaluate change in their community on the other.

## Chapter 5: Social psychology and social change

The first principle for innovative discursive research is that in place of fixed method abstracted from context, we are concerned from the beginning of our work with the phenomena we study as *historically* constituted. This means that even before the analysis begins we are oriented to noticing how the phenomenon has come into being and how it changes (Parker, 2015, p. 3).

### Introduction

This chapter is about developing a theoretical approach to an empirical study of intergroup relations and social change when working with sets of interviews which were mostly not generated with questions of social change in mind. That is, I did not initially go to De Doorns to find out about historical social change in the Hex Valley; I went there to find out about xenophobia and intergroup conflict. But in due course I came to realise that the eviction of the Zimbabwean community in 2009 by South African informal settlements residents and the intergroup conflict and controversy in which this was embedded could be seen as a point of convergence of several strands of history (cf Rutherford, 2008) – the Zimbabweans' own history of displacement, the history of changing relations between farmers and workers in the Hex Valley, and the broader history of economic, legal and political changes in South Africa and internationally that have affected commercial agricultural communities from the outside. Some of these changes were described in previous chapters.

Since the main empirical and theoretical contribution of this thesis is a social psychological one, this chapter offers a social psychological perspective that can inform a study of historical change and continuity in intergroup relations. The chapter first discusses three kinds of discourse analysis in (or alongside) social psychology, which have each offered a different perspective on how social change and social continuity can be studied empirically or operationally in discourse. The first is Billig's style of ideological discourse analysis (Billig, 1988, 1991, Billig et al, 1988). Billig sees common-sense discourse as historical and ideological: that is, social continuity is displayed in ordinary common-sense talk about everyday issues, as this talk contains ideological traces and overtones that are the legacy of earlier historical moments. However, change is possible too, as major events occur which

change the rhetorical context and thus shift the meaning of previous attitudes and positions (Billig, 1991, 1996).

The second kind of discourse analysis that (inadvertently) studies history and social change is conversation analysis (CA). This may sound a strange claim, as conversation analysts themselves do not say they are producing a study of historical social change. Moreover, Billig (1991, 1996, 1999) accused CA of being overly focussed on interactional *form* (such as turn-taking, repair and so on) at the expense of an appreciation of the historical overtones of the *content* of what people say when they talk to each other. Nevertheless, I will argue that the emphasis of CA on turn-taking and consequentiality – how speakers interact to collaboratively arrive at some conversational achievement such as the opening of a phone call or the conclusion of a medical diagnosis – gives a view of conversation as a kind of micro-history playing out in real time in an open-ended way (Maynard & Heritage, 2005; Schegloff, 1986).

A third way that social change has been studied through discourse in social psychology is in the work of Reicher, Drury and Stott, who have studied processes of change more directly through observations of group interactions at crowd events (Reicher, 1984, 1996; Drury & Reicher, 2000; Stott & Reicher, 1998; Stott, Drury & Reicher, 2012). In this view, historical social change is a collaborative and often unexpected outcome of interaction between groups who have incompatible ideas about what constitutes legitimate social conduct and about who is upholding or violating these norms. I will suggest that Billig's approach and conversation analysis differ in the extent to which they emphasise the *form* or the *content* of discourse, but that Reicher and colleagues' work shows that social change cannot be understood without understanding both form and content. While my empirical contribution in the data chapters below is not a straightforward replication of any of these approaches or methods, they provide the groundwork for a discursive intergroup relations approach which examines the rhetorical relationship between groups' constructions of their relationships with one another and their recommendations for and evaluations of change in their community.

### **Commonsense discourse is historical and ideological**

In Billig's view, history is made apparent in the traces it leaves in contemporary discourse

(Billig, 1988, 1991; Billig et al, 1988). In his critique of individualistic cognitive social psychology, Billig (1991) argued that '[s]ocial psychology should reach out from the study of the individual, in order to see how wider patterns of society and of history are reflected in the thinking of individuals' (p. 2). He stressed that

The very contents of everyday thinking – the values, maxims, and opinions which are commonly held, etc. – are themselves cultural products. In ordinary thinking, people use a common sense, which they do not themselves invent, but which has a history... Common sense is a form of ideology. This means that common sense not only has a wider history, but that it also possesses present functions, which relate to patterns of domination and power....In this way, the continuing history of domination flows through the patterns of commonsensical thinking. (Billig, 1991, p. 1)

Billig et al's (1988) book 'Ideological dilemmas: A social psychology of everyday thinking' contains a set of chapters each showing how the philosophical legacy of the Enlightenment permeated late 20<sup>th</sup> century British discourse about a range of topics, including education, health, race, immigration, and gender. Speakers discussing these issues in their own lives drew on concepts of freedom, tolerance, rationality, individuality, and egalitarianism that are part of the liberal ideological legacy of the Enlightenment. For example, the chapter on 'Prejudice and tolerance' shows how the very concept of 'prejudice' emerged during the Enlightenment and came to refer to opinions formed and held without sufficient consideration of the facts. In this sense it reflected a turn towards values of rationality and observation over prejudging or making decisions based on received wisdom from the established Church (Billig et al, 1988). In modern use, the term 'prejudice' has come to mean negative attitudes towards particular social groups as opposed to irrational judgements in general, but it retains traces of these Enlightenment roots in the continued implication, especially in psychology, that such attitudes are by definition irrational, unexamined, false, a faulty generalization, and so on. In Billig et al's examples, these Enlightenment values were so deeply rooted that even supporters of overtly racist and fascist British political parties accepted the norm against being prejudiced and distanced themselves from it, either by arguing that their arguments were actually based on 'fact' and were thus true rather than 'mere prejudice', or else that it was their opponents – liberals or

black people – who were in fact guilty of prejudice in making the accusation that the racists were prejudiced.

Billig et al. (1988) thus illustrate how contemporary common-sense thinking continues to be informed by ideological imperatives whose roots are in earlier eras. Viewed in this way, ordinary talk about contemporary issues and institutions becomes like a palimpsest (to borrow Ewert and du Toit's (2005) metaphor), containing traces of the different historical periods through which it has passed:

The history of ideology affects contemporary thoughts and routines, and thus this history is daily continued in everyday life. It is this historical dimension which distinguishes our analysis from most other social psychological analyses. ...[W]e have sought to draw attention to the continuing ideological history of liberalism, in the comments of our respondents. (Billig et al, 1988, p. 145)

Thus, contemporary discourse is a historical record of both change and continuity: discourses from previous eras continue into the present, but they become adapted and changed as they are applied to new historical circumstances (Durrheim, 2014). A similar view is taken in this thesis insofar as the results chapters show the different ideological and economic imperatives by which groups in De Doorns continue to judge their own and one another's actions as legitimate or illegitimate. Of course, in the Hex Valley it was not only the liberal ideology of the Enlightenment that was present in discussions about xenophobia, although such themes are discernible too. The aim of the previous chapters has been to establish some of the ideological history of nationalism, race, and economics in South Africa, so that with this background in mind, we will be able to see that the interviews with De Doorns residents are saturated with the 'echoes of the past' (Billig, 1991, p. 17) – echoes of ideologies about race, nationality, apartheid, labour, business, farming, migrancy, and expectations about the nature of the farmer-worker relationship, which were developed in earlier times and, in a changing post-apartheid context, coalesce into contemporary imperatives such as black liberation, white responsibility, free-market capitalism and anti-xenophobia.

However, Billig's view is that not only is commonsense discourse historical, but it is also rhetorical and dilemmatic. This means that 'ordinary people do not necessarily have simple

views about their social worlds and about their places in these worlds. Instead, their thinking is frequently characterized by the presence of opposing themes' (Billig et al, 1988, p. 143). One of the central arguments of 'Ideological dilemmas' is that when people express their opinions on an issue (such as the presence of foreigners in 'their' country), they usually know that there is more than one widely-shared discourse in circulation on the matter, in light of which they have to justify their arguments. In the chapter on the dilemma between 'Prejudice and tolerance,' Billig *et al.* point out that when people in democratic, post-Enlightenment societies express dislike for certain kinds of people, they usually do so in relation to the cultural/historical imperatives of tolerance, equality and rationality which exist in these societies. The example above of the fascists appropriating the norm against prejudice to turn the accusation back on their opponents is an example of how everyday discourse is rhetorical, that is, geared towards rebutting potential or actual criticism and levelling accusations of one's own (Billig, 1996; Edwards & Potter, 1992). Moreover, these rebuttals presume the overall imperative to be rational and tolerant without an accusation of irrational racism even needing to be said aloud. In this sense, people's expressions and opinions are argumentative and rhetorical by nature, because they are already positioning and justifying themselves in relation to potential criticism.

Although Billig was interested in how history is made continuously re-present in ideology and discourse (albeit dilemmatic discourse), he also knew that significant changes in society can occur so that the ideologies and dilemmas of a present society are not exactly the same as those of earlier periods. Billig et al (1988, p. 14) observed that

Dilemmas may be constant within society, but our present dilemmas will reflect our present society. That being so, it becomes entirely feasible to change the basis of society, not in order that dilemmas will be removed *tout court*, but so present dilemmas may be replaced by others.

How, then, are societies and their dilemmas changed? Although Billig's work does not address change in as much detail as his arguments about continuity, an illustration of how change happens and alters local dilemmas is given in his (1991) analysis of the rhetorical strategy of 'taking the side of the other'. Billig (1991) was developing a critique of the



traditional psychological concept of 'attitudes' as mental states directed towards objects, and making an alternative case that attitudes are positions taken in arguments or on matters of controversy. Hence, the meaning of an 'attitude' depends on the rhetorical context in which it is uttered (Billig, 1996). Using historical records of the work of satirical British political cartoonist James Gillray in the late 1700s, Billig (1991) shows how an apparent change in the cartoonist's attitude towards the monarchy between 1792 and 1793 – reflected in the changed tone of the cartoons he drew about the British Royal Family in these years – could be attributed to a significant change in the local rhetorical context during this period. Gillray's initially highly critical stance towards the Royal Family became attenuated after the execution of the king in neighbouring France in 1792. Billig argued that criticising the monarch in a climate of general support for the monarchy meant something very different to criticising the monarch in a climate of serious republicanism; and thus, the cartoonist had not simply 'changed his attitude' and become more sympathetic to the monarchy between 1792 and 1793, but had made apparent the limits of his critique by appearing to take the side of the other in a changed rhetorical context. This is an example of how major events that change the local rhetorical context are a part of the process of socio-psychological change (cf Durrheim, 2014).

### **Form and content: A critique of conversation analysis**

By his own admission, Billig's style of historical discourse analysis tends to be 'cavalier' with the details of natural spoken language (1996, p. 21). He is not very concerned with conversational forms or with how any utterance functions locally in a particular conversational exchange. For instance, the chapter on 'Prejudice and tolerance' in *Ideological Dilemmas* begins with a short, two-line quote from a schoolgirl talking about race and prejudice, which is extracted from its conversational origins (we are not told who she was talking to and what was said by her or others before this), and which is then analysed extensively in terms of the historical overtones of the language and ideology of prejudice and tolerance contained in these two lines. Indeed, we are not even certain if these are the *exact* words the schoolgirl spoke (cf Billig, 1996).

Billig compared his style of discourse analysis to that of conversation analysis (CA). CA is concerned precisely with conversation as a form of social interaction which, on close

inspection, can be shown to be a highly sophisticated collaborative accomplishment between speakers in which each utterance is both dependent on what came before it, and consequential for what comes after it (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 1986; Maynard & Heritage, 2005). However, Billig critiqued conversation analysis for being overly focussed on the minutiae of interaction and conversational forms, such as turn-taking, at the expense of an appreciation of the historical and ideological resonances of what speakers are actually talking about:

By and large conversation analysts have not been concerned with critical issues of ideology. In fact, the selection of the 'trivial' conversations encourages the wider themes of ideological critique to slip from the theoretical agenda. ...[C]onversation analysts have been developing the sociological microscope, examining how the tasks of interaction are accomplished...[T]he metaphorical microscope of sociology might magnify the details of present interactions, but it does not suggest that these interactions fit into a historical pattern. The echoes of the past are absent in conversation analysis. (1991, p. 17)

Billig's critique is in some ways confirmed by Schegloff (2006, p. 73), who argues that

Talking about things—"doing topic talk"—is surely one observable feature of talk in interaction. But it is only one of the things people do...We would do well to open inquiry to the full range of things that people do in their talking in interaction—asking, requesting, inviting, offering, complaining, reporting...and so forth. ...Proceeding in this way treats action and courses of action as the more general tack and doing topic talk as one of its varieties.

According to Billig, however, this preoccupation with conversational form and activity means that the conversation analyst routinely 'disattends' to the issues the speakers are actually talking about (Sharrock & Anderson, 1987, in Billig, 1999, p. 548). For example, in Schegloff's (1997) analysis of a phone conversation between two separated parents talking about their son who is supposed to be on his way between their homes – with it becoming evident that neither parent knows exactly where the son is at present – Billig (1999) points out that a critical feminist analyst 'might wish to use Schegloff's...example to talk of patterns of child supervision, rather than of second assessments' (p. 548). In this way, Billig has

accused CA of ignoring content in favour of form, in rather the opposite way to how Billig focuses on conversational content without much concern for its form or functions in a particular conversational exchange (Billig, 1991, 1996).

### **Conversation analysis as micro-history**

Indeed, conversation analysis has from its beginnings paid more attention to the form of spoken discourse than to its content (e.g. Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, Sacks & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 1986; Schegloff, 2006). However, I will argue in this section that CA nevertheless gives a view of conversation as a kind of ‘micro-history’ unfolding unpredictably in real time in the interaction between speakers. As far as I know, conversation analysts do not claim to be producing a study of history or of social change. Rather, they claim to be producing a study of *interaction*, which is treated as the foundation of all sociality and institutions (Schegloff, 2006). However, I will argue that its very preoccupation with conversational forms, especially turn-taking and sequencing, can teach us something important about the mechanics of historical social change that is produced in interactions between parties.

Analyses of turn-taking have shown that any turn in a conversation is both ‘context-shaped’ and ‘context-renewing’ (Maynard & Heritage, 2005). A turn being context-shaped means that what is said at any point in a conversation is contingent on – but not wholly determined by – what preceded it. Being context-renewing means that it also in turn provides the context for the next utterance to be made (usually as a coherent response). Consider this example from Sacks (1992, p. 4):

A: Hope you have a good time

B: Why?

In this exchange, the response ‘Why?’ is clearly and understandably related to the statement that preceded it – thus, it is context-shaped or contingent – but is also not absolutely determined by the prior turn. ‘Hope you have a good time’ could also have been followed coherently by ‘thanks’, ‘you too’, ‘mm’, silence, or any number of other related, sensible utterances. It was not entirely possible to predict ahead of time which one would be said. In this way, conversation is open-ended. But ‘Why?’ is also context-renewing

because it produces a new, unanticipated context in which A must now decide how to respond. It could not be known in advance, or in the split second after A says 'Hope you have a good time' but before B replies, that A's seemingly banal utterance was going to become something for which she or he was called to account (Sacks, 1992). Sacks concludes, 'Others can, by virtue of their return, cast your activity into something other than what it was produced to be – or...they can by virtue of their return cast it into what you thought it was' (p. 5). Thus, one emphasis in analyses of turn-taking has been on the way speakers interpret each other's utterances: 'speakers can look to the next turn after their own to find an analysis of what they have just said' (Maynard & Heritage, 2005, p. 430).

In this way, while perhaps not paying sustained attention to the historical resonances of particular words or ideologies in conversation, conversation analysts have gestured towards the relationship between the content and the form of discourse by showing that participants' interpretations of the content of what their interlocutors are saying are embedded in conversational forms such as turn-taking. The mutual embeddedness of form and content is illustrated well in conversation analytic studies of doctor-patient consultations, which have shown that what a doctor says or does not say while examining a patient is consequential for whether the patient resists or accepts the doctor's eventual diagnosis that there is nothing wrong (Heritage & Stivers, 1999, cited in Drew, Chatwin & Collins, 2001). Heritage and Stivers found that when doctors verbalised what they were seeing and feeling as they examined the patient (gave 'online commentary'), it was much more likely that patients would accept the doctor's subsequent diagnosis that there was nothing wrong, than when doctors were silent as they made their examination (made no such commentary). Thus, giving such online commentary was shown to be an effective way for doctors to resist patient expectations of being prescribed antibiotics. Hence, 'Turn design has consequences for the subsequent sequential development of the talk and the part which the patient plays in it' (Drew et al, 2001, p. 64). Thus, while the echoes of the ideological past may be absent from conversation analysis, the echoes of the immediate past are very present: indeed, they are shown to have an abiding influence on what is said now and for the rest of the conversation – in the case of doctor-patient consultations, even what diagnosis is eventually reached and what prescription is made. In this way,

conversation analytic studies give a view of interaction between speakers as a micro-historical process in which change is both a process and an outcome of the interaction.

Another conversation analysis study which shows the relationship between the form and the content of discourse and how social change is a product of this is given by Durrheim, Greener and Whitehead (2015). They show how a discussion among South African academics in an online forum about student protests at their university started out without any explicit references to race but became more and more explicitly racialised as the discussion progressed. A reference to disruptive protesting students as 'savages' by one participant in the discussion was later interpreted by other participants as a racialised reference to black students, and eventually led to accusations and denials of racism and partial concessions later in the discussion. Certainly, this discussion could be analysed as a series of actions, as Schegloff (2006) suggests: participants were accusing, blaming, counter-accusing, denying, conceding, partially retracting, and so on; and we could also analyse how the online platform shaped the form of the participants' contributions, such as the length of their turns, the lack of opportunity for interruptions, and so on. But what the participants were doing all these actions *about* was the word 'savages' and its ideologically loaded meaning as an evidently racialised and arguably racist way of talking about protesting black students. This suggests that in order to understand how the conversation ultimately got to its conclusion, and the changes that occurred in the process, the form and the content of discourse cannot be understood apart from one another. Reading Durrheim et al's analysis of this online exchange shows how a small piece of 'social change' happened in the course of the interaction. By the end of it, participants had realised the consequences of making particular kinds of racialised statements in public, had realised that statements in which racial references were covert would nevertheless be read as racist, and done a host of other things which made them as individuals, as well as the surrounding rhetorical context, slightly different to how they were before the conversation started. Conversation analysis thus gives a view of conversation producing a kind of micro-history that is unfolding in front of our eyes in real time. Although we as the readers of the transcripts can look into the future (the end of the extract) to gain a 'God's-eye view' of what ended up being said, the whole point of conversation analysis is to show that the speakers themselves cannot do this, as they are collaboratively and in a turn-by-turn fashion producing a conversation which could

at any point be diverted, interrupted or derailed by an unexpected utterance – hence ‘the routine as achievement’ (Schegloff, 1986). I will argue below that a similar view of social change has been suggested by Drury and Reicher (2000), albeit at the level of interaction between groups rather than individual speakers.

So far, this chapter has described two kinds of discourse analysis which have different ways of operationalising ‘history’ or ‘social change’. The first is Billig’s approach, which is to treat words and discourse as bearing the traces of the earlier historical periods that they originated in. In this way, the history of ideology is passed down and is used in making sense of contemporary events. However, change also occurs as new events shift the rhetorical context and thus change the meaning of previous positions. The other approach, conversation analysis, has something of an opposite emphasis: while not claiming to be a study of social change or history, and while paying less attention to the ideological and historical resonances of spoken discourse, it can be read as an illustration of how micro-history unfolds contingently and open-endedly when people interact and talk to each other. However, neither of these approaches is concerned directly with relationships between groups. Thus, the third and last approach discussed is Reicher, Drury and Stott’s elaborated social identity model of crowd interaction or ESIM (Reicher, 1984, 1996; Drury & Reicher, 2000; Stott & Reicher, 1998; Stott, Drury & Reicher, 2012). Drury and Reicher (2000) see social change as both the process and outcome of ‘a historically developing interaction between collective subjects’ (p. 582). In their analysis, the *form* of intergroup interaction in crowd events – also a kind of turn-taking, but on a group scale between the police and protestors – turns crucially on the *content* of how these groups construct their own and one other’s identities.

### **The ESIM and crowd interaction**

The elaborated social identity model of crowd interaction or ESIM has its roots in an attempt to use social identity theory principles to explain the form and the limits of a crowd’s action in a ‘riot’ event in London in 1980 (Reicher, 1984). However, it developed into a theory of social change by observing some changes that typically happen in crowd events and trying to account for these changes (Reicher, 1984, 1996). The first change is how violence is initiated, spread and escalated among crowds which do not start out as

violent and in some cases have an explicit commitment to non-violence (e.g. Drury & Reicher, 2000). An illustration and explanation for the spread and escalation of violence is given in a study by Reicher (1996) of a student protest in London in 1988 which turned into a violent confrontation between university students and the police that became known as the Battle of Westminster. Students marched to the Houses of Parliament to protest against the Conservative government policy of converting student grants to student loans. Reicher observed that there were two aspects of the escalation of violence that occurred by the end of the day and required explanation: the initiation of violence in what started as a peaceful march, and once conflict with the police started in a small sub-section of the crowd, how it then spread to other sections. Reicher's answer turns on the fact that protestors and police had incompatible notions about what constituted legitimate social practice and about who was upholding or violating this practice. The students wanted to get to the Houses of Parliament to stage their demonstration, which they considered to be a legitimate democratic right. However, in the police's view, the students' efforts to get to Parliament were illegitimate as there was a law disallowing demonstrations within a one mile radius of Westminster Palace while Parliament was in session. Thus, when the police, on horseback and in riot gear, tried to prevent students from getting to Parliament, the students saw this as preventing them from exercising their democratic rights to protest. Initially, there was a minority of 'radical' students who were calling for confrontation with the police, but most of the students initially distanced themselves from this (Drury & Reicher, 2000). The police's belief in the illegitimacy of the students' attempts to get to Parliament legitimated their own use of force to start driving the crowd back, while the students perceived this as the police's illegitimate use of unprovoked and indiscriminate violence, which legitimated their own efforts to start pushing back against the police. Furthermore, since the police saw all crowd members – not only the initially aggressive or confrontational ones – as potentially dangerous and thus treated them with the same degree of indiscriminate force (cf Stott & Reicher, 1998), initially non-confrontational students became drawn into this conflict too, as they saw themselves being treated roughly by the police for no apparent reason. Thus the conflict escalated as each party reacted to what they saw as the other's illegitimate actions; the fighting became intense and the police eventually dispersed the crowd with a mounted police charge – which further outraged students as yet another instance of unprovoked and unnecessary violence. In this way,

Reicher and colleagues argued that crowd events between protestors and the police are 'a historically developing interaction between collective subjects and must be analysed as such' (Drury & Reicher, 2000, p. 582).

The second kind of change that Reicher and colleagues observed and tried to explain in crowd events is the change that occurs in participants' social identity: how people who join crowds acting in terms of one social identity can come out of a crowd event with that identity transformed (Reicher, 1984, 1996; Drury & Reicher, 2000; Drury, Reicher & Stott, 2003). 'Social identity' in this work is understood as

a model of one's position in a set of social relations along with the actions that are possible and proper (legitimate) given such a position. Social identity is therefore understood as tied to action in the world. It is therefore amenable to change as actions and the social relations that frame them also change (Drury & Reicher, 2000, p. 581).

In their analysis of another conflict between the police and protestors that developed during an anti-roads environmental protest in London in the 1990s, Drury and Reicher (2000) showed how protest participants underwent a process of change in the way they saw themselves and their relationship to the police. This initially non-violent direct-action protest again developed into a fight between protesters and police when the protesters, who were attempting to prevent the felling of a large tree on a green in a London suburb that was to make way for a new road by occupying a tree-house in it, were evicted and the tree cut down. Supporters who had been tipped off about the planned eviction of the tree house showed up and surrounded the tree, and one man handcuffed himself to the hydraulic platform that was going to be used in cutting it down. Some of the protestors, believing in their democratic right to protest and that the police would respect this right, started off with an explicit commitment to non-violence and passive resistance, expecting that if they refused to move away from the tree when police told them to, at most the police would simply drag them away. They also expected police to distinguish between obstructive and compliant protestors. However, for the police, 'the very fact that protestors had gathered to impede bailiffs from executing their lawful duty [felling the tree] meant that they were acting in defiance of the democratic system' (Drury & Reicher, 2000, p. 588).



Thus, no matter whether participants saw themselves as actively confrontational, offered passive resistance, or simply moved out of the way when asked, the police saw them all as equally in breach of the peace and thus treated them all in the same unexpectedly rough manner. Participants were dismayed at the way they were being treated like ‘football hooligans’ (p. 591). The driver of the vehicle with the mechanized platform continued to operate it even while the man was still handcuffed to it, provoking outrage in other protestors who saw this as putting the man’s life at risk.

Thus, in similar manner to the Westminster student protest, the environmental protestors found themselves drawn into a conflict with the police beyond what they had anticipated when they went out to protest that morning. For those who had initially expected the police to respect their rights to protest, the event produced a profound shift in their social identity – that is, in their views of themselves and of the police and the relationship between the two (Drury & Reicher, 2000). Their experience of what they perceived as unnecessarily heavy-handed police violence towards all participants no matter how compliant they were eroded their trust in and respect for the police and ‘the system’ they represented. Many participants reported coming to see the police as a partisan force on the side of the state rather than neutral keepers of the peace. Indeed, for such participants, opposing the police in subsequent anti-roads and environmental protests started to become an end in itself. In this way, protest participants experienced an unexpected transformation of their social identity – their sense of location in a set of social relationships, as well as the actions that they saw as proper given that location. Thus, once again, Drury, Reicher and Stott’s explanation for why participants who act in terms of one social identity (decent citizens with a respectful relationship to the police) can end up with a different identity (being suspicious of and oppositional to the police) is because of the *intergroup interaction* that takes place in crowd events (Drury & Reicher, 2000; Drury, Reicher, & Stott, 2003; Reicher, 1996).

In making this point, the ESIM authors echo the point made by Sacks (1992) and Maynard and Heritage (2005) above about conversation: that in the course of an intergroup interaction, one party’s action can be treated by the other as something other than what it was intended to be: ‘[o]thers can, by virtue of their return, cast your activity into something other than what it was produced to be – or...they can by virtue of their return cast it into

what you thought it was' (Sacks, 1992, p. 5). When the student protestors set out for Parliament, or the environmental protestors occupied the tree on the green, they did not see these acts as being something illegitimate; but the police treated them as such. Thus there is an element of unpredictability and open-endedness in intergroup events such as protests – just as there is in conversation – because it cannot be known in advance how the other group will respond to one's own actions:

Whatever the intentions of one group, their acts may be reinterpreted by the other group which then reacts in unanticipated ways and creates new contexts within which the original group subsequently exists. Acts may be intentional, but in a differentiated social world, intentions are not always realized. Acts often have unintended consequences. (Drury & Reicher, 2000, p. 582)

Thus, in this view, change is a collective and often unpredictable outcome of intergroup interaction. Where the ESIM's understanding of change differs from most conversation analysis, however, is that the *form* of the interaction in crowd conflicts – the exchange of actions leading to the initiation of violence in a sequence similar to turn-taking on a collective scale – is shown to be absolutely dependent on the *contents* of group discourse about themselves and each other. For example, the Battle of Westminster turned on the fact that the police and the protestors had differing ideas about what constitutes legitimate action for citizens of a democratic country and for the police force in such a country. If protestors and police had been in agreement about what constituted right behaviour and saw each other as abiding by such norms, then there would have been no escalating violence because there would be no retaliatory turn-taking on a collective scale. In this way, we cannot understand the 'form' of an interaction without also understanding the ideological content (Billig, 1991, Billig et al, 1988) of what the participants are arguing about. This is where Drury and Reicher's (2000, also Reicher & Hopkins, 2001) definition of social identity as linked to action is central. Groups only 'do disagreement' if there is something to disagree about; they only complain or accuse or protest or react aggressively if something has happened that they find wrong or unacceptable. What groups find wrong or unacceptable comes from a long history of collective understandings and representations both of their own moral and political 'rules' or imperatives as well as their perceptions of

what one another's intentions are with respect to these rules (cf Billig, 1991, Billig et al, 1988). If the escalation of violence begins with differences in beliefs about what constitutes proper social practice and about who is violating or upholding this practice, these beliefs are essentially ideological ones – about the rights and obligations of the police, the state and the public in a democracy – with their own historical roots. It would not make sense to analyse these conflicts using empty verb categories such as 'marching', 'shoving' and 'hitting', or even more interpretive ones such as 'protesting', 'protecting', or 'reacting', without having an idea of what was at stake in the overall interaction. For this reason, a close analysis of how groups understand the nature of the relationship between themselves and their opponents is essential for understanding the direction in which change is unfolding:

the collective action of subordinated groups inevitably takes place in a context where dominant groups [such as the police] act and *react* to such collective action. It is our contention that such reactions occur and are given legitimacy on the basis of both prejudicial representations of the subordinate group and the interpretations and discourses that surround the subordinate group's collective actions...[Thus] the collective action of subordinate groups...can only be adequately understood when theory takes into account dynamic interactions between powerful and subordinated groups – interactions which do or do not serve to restructure the material reality of behavioural relations between those groups. (Stott, Drury & Reicher, 2012, p. 287)

### **Beyond two groups: Alliances in the ESIM**

Part of the ESIM's theory of identity change in crowd events depends on a model of group interaction that goes beyond the two-group paradigm. Although Stott, Drury and Reicher's (2012) formulation above illustrates a binary conceptualisation of intergroup conflict in crowd events, several of the ESIM studies show that what ends up as 'the crowd' in protest events is actually often made up of initially disparate groups, sometimes with slightly different interests in the issues being protested (e.g. Drury & Reicher, 2000). Being *treated* as all potentially equally dangerous by the police (Stott & Reicher, 1998) is what leads to a more united identity among all protestors (Drury & Reicher, 2000; Drury, Reicher & Stott, 2003). For example, Drury, Reicher and Stott (2003) showed that people who turned out for

the anti-roads protest initially consisted of relatively wealthy local residents of the suburb in which the green and proposed road were situated (Wansworth), as well as environmental activists who came from further afield. The Wansworth residents had an image of themselves as the elderly upper-middle class, whereas the activists were described by one such resident as ‘people straggling round the town in dreadlocks and very very tatty boots and very very tatty anoraks and all the other bits and pieces of the lifestyle which to most of these people is a total anathema’ (p. 196). The interests of these two groups in opposing the road-building were also initially somewhat different: the motivations of some Wansworth residents were seen by some activists as relatively parochial and as ‘NIMBYism’ (‘Not In My Back Yard’) – trying to maintain the green and pleasant, and thus exclusive, feel of their area – whereas those who were self-defined environmental activists came from round the country and had a broader concern with the harmful environmental and social consequences of the international oil and motor industries and of road-building. Drury et al (2003) show how at least some members of these two groups developed a greater sense of unification and a more inclusive shared group identity as a result of their participation in the protest. This was in part due to an intentional effort by the activists to co-opt the Wansworth residents’ concerns about the spoiling of their green and pleasant area into the bigger concerns of the anti-roads movement, and in part a consequence of residents’ and activists’ shared experiences of police violence – because the police typically did not make distinctions between subsections of the crowd when they intervened (Stott & Reicher, 1998; Reicher, 1996). Initially disparate groups experiencing a process of unification as a result of violent confrontation with police – and thus the spread of violence from a small section of the crowd to the crowd in general – is central to the ESIM’s theory of identity change in crowd events (Reicher, 1996; Drury & Reicher, 2000; Stott & Reicher, 1998; Drury, Stott & Reicher, 2003; Stott, Drury & Reicher, 2012). Their work thus shows how crowd and protest situations often *resolve* to two-group scenarios – the police and ‘the crowd’ – even though they do not typically start off as such.

### **Qualifications and implications**

Just as the empirical analysis in the results chapters below is not going to be a conversation analysis, it is also not going to be a straightforward replication of the ethnographic methods of Drury, Reicher and Stott’s crowd studies applied to De Doorns. Methodologically, the

ESIM studies have made efforts to capture the way interaction unfolds in the course of a protest by using longitudinal methods and sources such as participant observation, video recordings, in-situ interviews, and letters from protestors to newspapers and to the police (e.g. Drury & Reicher, 2000; Stott & Reicher, 1998), rather than depending only on retrospective and post-hoc interviews with participants. In this way, they have tried to use 'diachronic' data to plot the way change unfolds in real time over the course of a day. The data I have to work with are different in that they are mainly retrospective interviews, and were not conducted with the intention of tracking identity change over time. The last section of this chapter spells out what can be taken from the kinds of discourse analysis discussed in this chapter – Billig, conversation analysis, and the ESIM – and then makes a case for an approach that reads the rhetorical relationship between groups' interests in change and the way they construct their relations with significant other groups.

### **History is made present in discourse**

First, following Billig, this thesis emphasises that the discourse of De Doorns residents is ideological and historical. In talking about the controversies of their time, people in the Hex Valley are using forms of 'common sense, which they [did] not themselves invent, but which [have] a history' (Billig, 1991, p. 2). Farmers defend the running of their businesses according to the imperative of free-market capitalism (cf Bernstein, 2013), in terms of which 'the market' serves an important rhetorical function, and the need for productivity and efficiency justify any choice of workers. The De Doorns farmers of today did not invent this language; as du Toit (1993) showed, farmers started to change the way they talked about farming – from 'farming as a way of life' to 'farming as business' – in the 1980s at least. Possibly they borrowed this concept from earlier, liberal, 'modernising' ideas about how apartheid was hampering economic growth by artificially constraining labour markets (cf Legassick & Innes, 1976). By contrast, South African workers mainly operate according to the rules of black liberation and/or white responsibility. In terms of the former, it is expected that farmers are out to exploit and manipulate workers and this should be resisted in every possible way. In terms of the latter, it is assumed that farmers have a responsibility towards their South African workers because of a shared history and because South African (and especially coloured) workers are 'their own people'. Again, farm workers in De Doorns did not invent these imperatives themselves; they are drawing on a black perspective on the

history of race relations in South Africa that goes back decades if not centuries.

Zimbabweans were largely playing by the rules of anti-xenophobia, an imperative which comes closest to the liberal imperative of rationality over prejudice discussed by Billig et al (1988). In these terms, the Zimbabweans read what happened to them in 2009 not as being part of a racialised labour conflict but as a direct outcome of South Africans' xenophobic tendencies, inaccurate judgements and moral failings. While not attempting as rigorous a historical analysis of the roots of these ideological imperatives as Billig did for the concept of 'prejudice' (Billig, 1988, Billig et al, 1988), the analysis nevertheless tries to show that 'wider patterns of society and of history are reflected in the thinking of individuals' (Billig, 1991, p. 2). Groups in De Doorns are making sense of their relations with others in terms of an accumulated history of common sense – common sense which does not make any sense to the groups with whom they are in conflict. In this way, history is made present in the ideological traces that continue to inform participants' understandings of their current predicament. Discourse is therefore like a historical record or palimpsest in which traces and artefacts from different ideological periods are all brought to bear simultaneously on the present.

### **Constructions of group relations as hinges on which change turns**

However, Billig's historical ideological analysis is not necessarily an intergroup analysis. My interviews, while being ideologically saturated, capture groups' current misrecognition of one another's social identities, a misrecognition which, according to Reicher and colleagues (Reicher, 1996; Stott & Reicher, 1998; Drury & Reicher, 2000), seems to be a precondition for conflict during moments of group interaction. Our interviews reflect a slice or moment in an ongoing process of change which similarly turns on the contents of how groups differently understand the relationship between themselves, and in this way, they are turning points in a process of intergroup interaction similar to that described by Drury and Reicher (2000) as 'a historically developing interaction between collective subjects'. In order to understand the direction in which change turns – that is, the nature of each subsequent action in a sequence of interactions – one must know the *contents* of how groups understand the nature of the relations between themselves at that moment (Durrheim & Dixon, 2005a). In this way, I hope that my analysis will go a step beyond the historical analysis of Billig, so as to show not just that any group ideology has historical roots, but also

that this ideology has implications for the way change is playing out through intergroup interaction in the present and may continue to play out in future. Our interviews thus capture moments that are located historically in an ongoing process of socio-historical change.

### **Historical scale**

Stott, Drury and Reicher have studied changes that happen over the course of a single day – changes at the level of social identity as well as in the increasingly violent nature of protests. Thus, the scale of their analysis and mine are different. My focus is not on the conflicts between crowds and the police in De Doorns in 2009 or during the strike, although such conflicts were numerous and could undoubtedly have been the subject of study in their own right. The ESIM work zooms in on moments of crowd conflict and does not go to great lengths to explain how these moments of protest fit into a broader trend of socio-economic change in the UK. Understandably, this has been because the researchers have aimed to understand the changes in social identity and group interaction that occur within the course of a single day, which requires a detailed and fine-grained analysis of change unfolding hour by hour. But we are not told much, for example, about the Conservative government's decision to cut university funding in the 1980s and how this formed part of a trend of socio-economic change in the UK to which the Battle of Westminster protest was presumably just one response. In my thesis, some attempt has been made in Chapters 1 and 2 to provide such a historical context to the events of December 2009 in De Doorns, suggesting how intergroup relations have been configured and reconfigured over the last two decades, and how interactions between groups in De Doorns, as well as the interventions of the state, have produced change in sometimes unanticipated ways that seems to be leading deeper and deeper into crisis. For example, from du Toit and Ally (2003) we saw how farmers reacted to the political and legislative changes that made them no longer 'masters' but 'employers': 'If permanent employees are now to be the bearers of rights, able to make demands, and able to challenge farmers' power, then the pros and cons of engaging a large body of permanent workers need to be reassessed' (Du Toit & Ally, 2003, p. 46). Indeed, every round of legislation or protest seems to lead to more retrenchments (interview with farmer 4, February 2013). Another example from some years later is the hiring of an armed private security company during and after the strike in

response to workers' burning of vineyards, which is a step towards the militarising of agriculture in this community. As we will see, the farm workers' uprising of 2012 was itself in part a response to or outcome of the changes that were described in Chapter 2, but also produced its own unintended consequences, many of which were negative for workers (Wilderman, 2014). In short, the way farmers and workers respond to one another's actions – as well as to the actions of other parties such as the state – is producing changes in the way commercial agriculture is done that were probably not foreseeable 25 years ago (cf du Toit, 1993). This means that a close analysis of the content of group discourse at moments of protest and upheaval is a crucial part of understanding the mechanics and direction of social change, as these are the discourses that legitimate groups' reactions (Stott, Drury & Reicher, 2012), and thus are the hinge or fulcrum on which action, and the direction of change, turns. The results chapters will demonstrate that since groups have interests in the direction their society is changing towards – interests which are aligned with or opposed to those of other groups – their constructions of relations with other groups are *strategic* in that they serve to justify certain recommendations for change while dismissing others as unworkable or immoral.

### **Power**

The quote from Stott, Drury and Reicher (2012) above – that 'the collective action of subordinated groups takes place in a context where dominant groups act and *react* to such collective action', and that these reactions are given legitimacy on the basis of 'prejudicial representations and discourses' about the subordinate group and its actions – suggests an asymmetry of intergroup power. In the ESIM, the powerful group is typically defined as the one which has the power to enact its views of the other group onto that group. In their studies, this group is the police: likely because of their superior organisation and equipment, the police have a greater ability to enact their views of the crowd than the crowd have to enact their views of the police. For example, even if crowd participants see themselves as being made up of different sub-groupings – such as those who are being deliberately antagonistic to the police and those who are not, or those who are committed to non-violence and those who are willing to use violence – the police typically treat crowds as being composed of members who are all equally potentially dangerous (Stott & Reicher, 1998). Crowd members, by contrast, do not typically have the power to enact their views of



the police onto the police in the same way (c.f. Stott & Reicher, 1998). Thus, the power of the police is that they

do not just perceive the social position of the collective differently to the way participants perceive it themselves, but they are also able to re-position participants in practice. Such police action will therefore impact on the self-definition and subsequent action of the participants (Drury, Reicher & Stott, 2003, p. 193).

More basically, these formulations assume that the subordinate group is the one doing collective action, not the dominant one (which in these studies is always the police); and that it is the 'dominant' group which has 'prejudicial representations and discourses' about the subordinate group and its actions, not the other way around.

But my assumption is that *all groups* act and react to one another in ways that are given legitimacy by how they understand one another's group and its actions. Farm workers in the Hex Valley also act towards other groups – both Zimbabwean workers and farmers – on the basis of 'representations and discourses' that they have about these groups and their actions, and it is not helpful to start arguing about which ones are prejudicial and which ones are not (Durrheim, Quayle & Dixon, 2016). The question of how to define a powerful group is not mainly to do with which group is 'prejudiced', or which one undertakes collective action and which one responds to collective action. Farmers also act collectively, although they do not engage in protest in the traditional sense. Also, as discussed above, it is not helpful to identify the dominant/advantaged and subordinate/disadvantaged groups in De Doorns simply by observing who were the victims and perpetrators of violence. South African farm workers are both perpetrators and victims of violence, as they are often in the position of being unable to escape from the terms dictated by farmers or the violence of the police and private security, but they also have the power to visit violence on other workers, such as the Zimbabweans, and on farmers' property, during the strike. Rather, thinking in interactional terms, we can ask a related but slightly different question about power: who has the ability, by their response, to make the initially unforeseeable consequences of interaction work in their favour? This is similar to the ESIM's understanding of a powerful group as the one which has the power to enact its views on the other in a way which has material consequences. But a view of power as being able to control outcomes is important

because, while *all* groups are agents who *act* on the basis of their understanding of who the other group is and whether its actions are legitimate or not, workers are not in a position to ‘escape’ the consequences of farmers’ actions in the same way that farmers are able to escape the consequences of workers’ actions. Some groups have a greater ability to act on their view of the opposition in a way that ends up ‘restructur[ing] the material reality of behavioural relations between [these] groups’ – either in a way that best serves their interests, or else in a way that nullifies the attempts of other groups to restructure this reality in a way which would have served *their* interests. In 2009, South African informal settlement dwellers managed to evict the entire Zimbabwean community from the informal settlements. During the farm workers’ strike, they exerted an enormous amount of agency and power by enforcing a valley- and then province-wide strike and forcing the government to intervene to raise the minimum wage to R105 a day. In this way, power is not solely about who has agency, because workers themselves do exercise agency. However, during the strike workers never managed to tactically force *farmers* into a position where their only option was to negotiate (Wilderman, 2014). Rather, the strikes on most farms came to an end only once the *state* intervened to impose the raised wage on farmers, which meant that farmers themselves never agreed to the new wage and thus had no incentive to maintain it, or to keep employing the whole of their old workforce at this rate, once the heat of the moment had passed. Rather, workers were left to rely on ineffective state mechanisms to ensure that the new wage and the spirit of the strike’s gains would be upheld, whereas many of our interviewees, as well as other academics (Wilderman, 2014; Webb, 2013; Kleinbooi, 2013), suggested that this was not done. Farmers were able to circumvent the negative consequences of the state’s intervention for themselves either by applying for exemption from the raised wage; changing workers’ contracts or terms of service to cancel out the increased wage cost; or by simply refusing to pay the new wage (e.g. see Kleinbooi, 2013). They also enacted large-scale retrenchments after the strike (Fogel, 2013). Overall, workers felt that ‘[many] employers have become even more arrogant since the protests’ (Kleinbooi, 2013, p. 3). Thus, power can be defined not by who has agency or who is prejudiced, but by who has the ‘last word’ in a series of intergroup interactions. It appears that farmers essentially ‘won’ the strike, even if they did pay some short-term costs for that. We will see that there was one farm, however, where workers’ own tactical striking did

force the farm management to enter into an agreement on raised wages from which they could not later escape.

A view of power as having the last word or being able to escape the consequences of another's actions also has the advantage of seeing power relations as at least potentially contestable and changeable. Because there is never actually a last word (Billig, 1996) – that is, history is open-ended, and something further can always be said, or done, or attempted – there is always the possibility that something may happen to shift the balance of power again in future. Thus, power and weakness are contingent: they are things that are being maintained or challenged, rather than being an inherent property of any group or intergroup situation.

### **Third parties and alliances**

When we bring the Zimbabwean community back into the picture, it becomes apparent that there are layers of power relations and not simply a binary farmer-worker relationship. South African farm workers and informal settlement residents in 2009 were able to evict an entire community of Zimbabwean workers from these settlements, an eviction which was also justified and legitimated on the basis of 'prejudicial understandings and discourses' about the Zimbabweans – this is a form of power. But the Zimbabweans did not leave, partly because they continued to be employed and accommodated by farmers, and partly because they had PASSOP and other groups who helped to set up the camp and to advocate for their rights for the duration of its existence. However, the Zimbabweans are not entirely able to escape the consequences of violence. Although we will see that the Zimbabweans were skilled rhetorically at neutralising the accusations that South African farm workers levelled at them at the time of the eviction, and even turning the blame for whatever problems were raised back onto South Africans, this rhetorical avoidance of blame was not sufficient to prevent or escape actual violence. The Zimbabweans 'escaped' to the displaced persons' camp and onto the farms only after violence had happened, although having these places did, at least, give them some refuge and enable them to continue working on the farms. However, the fear of being unable to escape violence becomes evident three years later in the 2012-2013 findings, where we will see that the memory of the 2009 eviction, as well as other threats of violence, were exerting an influence on the Zimbabweans' decision about how to respond to the strike – to join in even though they said did not really want to

and did not believe in it, but knew that this was a way of avoiding further violence. In this way, it becomes clear that the Zimbabweans also had no means of 'escape' from violence or the threat of violence except to respond on the terms of those South African workers who have used it against them in the past. Thus the Zimbabweans are in a doubly constrained position: first they are black workers in a position of being simultaneously 'favoured' and exploited by farmers; and second, they are victims and potential victims of xenophobic violence.

## **Chapter 6: Research methods for 2009 fieldwork**

### **Research aims**

My honours project was also about xenophobia, and formed one half of a pair of studies which investigated how black South Africans and black African foreigners in Pietermaritzburg construed relations between themselves (Kerr, 2009; Singh, 2010). Also having started out in a 'two group paradigm', however, we did not think to ask what role employers or other third parties may play in these relationships, and interviewing such people occurred to me as a possible topic for a master's thesis. When the De Doorns violence appeared in the news at the end of that year, my supervisor suggested that I go to De Doorns and carry out fieldwork for my master's thesis. I went there with very little knowledge about the town beyond that it had been the site of a xenophobic attack; I did not know anything about most of the relevant contextual issues and institutions such as the labour recruitment system, municipal and informal settlement politics, the history of paternalism, and the history of labour migrancy. In this sense the research process has been inductive, because the focus and direction was refined and narrowed after arrived in De Doorns, in the course of deciding who to interview and what to ask them, and also once the data had already been generated.

### **Research design and sampling**

The research was qualitative. In 2009, Gina Fourie and I spent nine days in De Doorns during which time we conducted 37 unstructured interviews involving 65 people. The number of people per interview ranged from one to eight. The initial sampling aim was to have ten interviews each with South African workers, Zimbabwean workers, farmers, and NGO and government officials. I had made only two contacts before arriving in De Doorns (Braam Hanekom and Farmer 1); otherwise the sample had to be generated from scratch. We were guided in our search for participants by what we learned from interviewees, and from our own observations about the town. This has been called 'conceptually-driven sequential sampling' (Miles & Huberman, 1994), a label which touches on both the purposive and the evolving nature of the choice of participants. In practice the ways we found people to interview can be divided into three strategies. One was to contact directly, by phone or

email, public figures or people whom I knew of in advance or heard about while in De Doorns. In 2009 this included farmer 1, PASSOP members, the Agri Wes-Cape CEO, the ward councillor, and the police superintendent. A second strategy was snowball sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994), in which we were put in touch with potential participants by others we had already interviewed. On our first evening in De Doorns, our host recommended we speak to the chairperson of the Hex River Table Grapes Association (HTA), so we went to the HTA the next day and at that interview we were given the phone numbers of two other farmers whom we later interviewed. Snowball sampling thus yielded interviews with the HTA chairperson, two farmers, one farm manager, one (white) labour broker and one farm employee in a supervisory position. A third strategy was to go door-to-door in areas of the town where we expected to find people representing certain groups but did not have particular individuals in mind. On our first evening, our host kindly gave us a short tour of De Doorns, pointing out the informal settlements, the 'coloured location', the Zimbabweans' camp, and the HTA offices. This helped us to know where to start the next day. This was theoretical (Silverman, 2005) or stratified purposeful (Miles & Huberman, 1994) sampling. In 2009 areas sampled in this way were the Zimbabweans' camp, the informal settlements of Stofland and Maseru, a street in the predominantly white suburb adjoining the rugby field that housed the Zimbabweans' camp, and the coloured 'location' of De Doorns Oos. Within this third strategy of sampling by geographical area, the actual people we spoke to in each location was largely on a convenience basis. We approached people who were within view of where we were walking, either on the street or in their yards. Some people turned down our requests to interview them, but I did not keep a record of how many people declined or the reasons they gave (if any).

**Table 1: Sample of participants, 2009.** Interviews with an asterisk \* have been quoted from in the results section.

Interview number	Date	Number of participants	Description of participants	Location	Interviewers present (order indicates who did most of the interviewing)	Interview language
1*	Monday 7 December	2	Chairperson of Hex Valley Table Grapes Association (HTA)	HTA offices, De Doorns town centre	Philippa and Gina	English
2*	Monday 7 December	3	One black South African labour broker and two other black South African men	Stofland informal settlement	Philippa and Gina	English and Afrikaans
3	Monday 7 December	1	Unemployed coloured woman	Stofland informal settlement	Gina and Philippa	Afrikaans
4*	Monday 7 December	3	The woman from interview 3, her brother, and one other man	Stofland informal settlement	Philippa and Gina	Afrikaans and English
5*	Tuesday 8 December	1	An elderly black man who described himself as a liberation struggle veteran	On the man's front stoep in De Doorns Oos	Philippa and Gina	English
6*	Tuesday 8 December	8	Members of PASSOP: leader and international students at UCT	In a coffee shop in the town centre	Philippa and Gina	English
7*	Wednesday 9 December	1	First Zimbabwean man, living in the camp and working on the farms	In our car on the side of the road between the Zimbabweans' camp and	Philippa and Gina	English

				the town centre		
8*	Wednesday 9 December	1	Farmer 1 – white middle aged man	In the farmer's sitting room	Philippa and Gina	English
9	Wednesday 9 December	1	Farmer 1's employee (coloured man)	On a bench in the farm yard	Gina and Philippa	Afrikaans
10	Wednesday 9 December	1	Young woman from Lesotho, working on a farm	Maseru informal settlement	Philippa	English
11	Wednesday 9 December	1 (many bystanders)	Sotho-speaking man	Maseru informal settlement	Philippa	English (mostly incomprehensible)
12*	Thursday 10 December	1	Second Zimbabwean man living in the camp and working on a farm	On the side of the road between the camp and the middle of town	Philippa	English
13*	Thursday 10 December	1	Third Zimbabwean man living in the camp and working on farms	As above	Philippa	English
14	Thursday 10 December	1	White shop owner (man)	In his shop in the middle of town	Gina	Afrikaans
15	Thursday 10 December	1	Elderly coloured man	Unknown	Gina	Afrikaans
16	Thursday 10 December	1	White businessman	In the middle of town	Gina	Afrikaans
17*	Thursday 10 December	1	Young coloured man, employed on farm	Unknown	Gina	Afrikaans



18*	Thursday 10 December	3	Zimbabwean women living in the camp and working on farms	Outside a tent inside the Zimbabweans' camp	Philippa and Gina	English
19*	Thursday 10 December	1	Zimbabwean labour broker (woman)	On the grass inside the Zimbabweans' camp	Philippa and Gina	English
20*	Friday 11 December	3	A coloured family (a middle-aged couple, and their elderly father/in-law) in De Doorns Oos	On the family's front veranda	Philippa	English and a bit of Afrikaans
21*	Friday 11 December	3	Three young coloured women	De Doorns Oos	Gina	Afrikaans
22*	Friday 11 December	2	Two elderly coloured women	De Doorns Oos	Gina	Afrikaans
23	Friday 11 December	1	Station commissioner (policeman)	De Doorns police station, middle of town	Philippa and Gina	English (permission to use this interview was not obtained)
24*	Monday 14 December	1	Farmer 2 - white middle-aged man	Veranda of Farmer 2's house	Philippa and Gina	English
25	Monday 14 December	1	Farmer 2's manager, a coloured man	Veranda of Farmer 2's house	Gina and Philippa	Afrikaans
26	Monday 14 December	1	Man from Lesotho who owned a tuck shop in Stofland	Inside the shop in Stofland	Gina	English
27*	Monday 14 December	5	Group of black and coloured people in Stofland (one of the men in this group was also	In Stofland	Philippa	English, Afrikaans and Xhosa

			present in interview 4)			
28*	Monday 14 December	1	Farmer 3 – white middle aged man	Farmer's office	Philippa and Gina	English
29*	Tuesday 15 December	1	CEO of Agri Wes-Cape	Agri Wes-Cape offices, Paarl	Philippa	English
30	Tuesday 15 December	3	First group of Zimbabwean men	In the Zimbabweans' camp	Gina	English
31*	Tuesday 15 December	4	Second group of Zimbabwean men	In the Zimbabweans' camp	Gina	English
32	Wednesday 16 December	1	Elderly white woman living in the 'white' suburb near the Zimbabweans' camp	In the woman's sitting room	Philippa and Gina	Afrikaans and some English
33	Wednesday 16 December	1	Middle-aged white woman living in the 'white' suburb near the Zimbabweans' camp	In the woman's sitting room	Philippa and Gina	Afrikaans and some English
34	Wednesday 16 December	1	Formal labour broker (white man)	De Doorns hotel	Philippa and Gina	English
35*	Wednesday 16 December	1	Elderly coloured woman living in farm accommodation near the farm where we were staying	In the woman's house	Gina	Afrikaans
36	Thursday 17 December	1	Mayor of Breede Valley Municipality	Municipal offices in Worcester	Philippa and Gina	English

37	Thursday 17 December	1	ANC Councillor for Ward 2 of Breede Municipality	Municipal offices in De Doorns	Philippa and Gina	English (this interview was not recorded)
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**Number of participants in 2009: 65**

### **Gaps and biases in the sample**

There are two main gaps in the 2009 sample. One is that we interviewed very few farm-dwelling general workers. We did interview a number of senior administrative or managerial staff, but almost all the ordinary worker interviews were with workers living in the informal settlements and Lubisi. Although in 2009 one of the farmers agreed that we could interview employees working on his farm, we decided not to because the work they were doing was piece-work and we would have been taking up their time. Also, although we visited the informal settlements, we could have interviewed more farm workers living there. A second gap is that other than the PASSOP director and the ward councillor – who refused to have the interview recorded – we did not interview any influential community leaders or representatives of farm workers' organisations.

### **Generalisability**

There are two levels at which issues of generalisability can be addressed. The first is at the level of the sample of individuals we interviewed among the whole population of De Doorns, and what the characteristics of this sample mean for the kinds of answers we received. This has already been discussed above in the 'gaps' section. The second level is about De Doorns as a whole town, or a case, and how it is comparable to other towns, and other events, of violent xenophobia- or labour-related conflict. This is an issue of 'transferability' (Lincoln & Guba, 1984, cited in Babbie & Mouton, 2005).

According to Lincoln and Guba, transferability means that the researcher should provide enough description of the research context that readers can decide how applicable the research is to their own situation. Hammersley (1992, in Silverman, 2005) also recommends comparing your case with other published cases of the same phenomenon. If we treat the De Doorns violence as a case of 'xenophobia', then this comparison has been done in Chapter 1. Misago (2009) pointed out that De Doorns bucked the trend of large-scale xenophobic violence because it was a small rural town, whereas the 2008 violence happened in urban centres; but, in other ways, the political and economic processes through which the De Doorns violence was incited closely followed the trend of other violent xenophobia around the country.

However, transferability also means that what the De Doorns violence is assumed to be a case of – xenophobia, labour conflict, political-ethnic conflict – needs to be considered and not simply presumed. At least four other masters theses written about the attack on the Zimbabweans in 2009 (Arends 2011; Mukwena, 2011; Botha, 2012; Hagenson, 2014) all started from the assumption that what happened in De Doorns was ‘xenophobia’ or ethnic/political violence, and approached it using literature on xenophobia, without locating this event in the specific history of agricultural and social change in the Hex Valley and the Western Cape over the last 30 years (an exception is the thesis by Davis, 2010). De Doorns being a rural farming community is not an incidental deviation from the norm of xenophobic violence in urban areas, but a central issue, and it is an example of how xenophobic violence as a widespread and repetitive phenomenon with recognisable patterns and forms intersects with local politics and dynamics to take on particular forms in particular places. For this reason, the De Doorns violence was probably unique in its combination of factors – its location in a particular moment of transition in Western Cape commercial agriculture’s history, its dynamics of labour migration, and its local politics – even while it followed in numerous ways the familiar pattern of local leaders inciting violence for their own political and financial ends (Misago, 2009; Landau, 2015; Misago, Monson, Polzer & Landau, 2010).

### **Data generation: Interviewing and questions**

In 2009 data generation was initiated by me and Gina, and the interviews were audio-recorded. Languages used were English, Afrikaans and Xhosa, and interviews were later transcribed and translated into English where necessary. In 2009, there were a few questions we repeatedly asked in order to initiate discussion in the interviews, but these by no means constituted a fixed schedule, so questions and conversation topics varied considerably within and across interviews. We asked some but not all participants to explain what ‘caused’ or started the violence or to explain why it happened; others we simply asked what they thought about ‘this stuff that happened with the Zimbabweans.’ Henry (1998) has argued that ‘predesigned and structured instruments blind the researcher to the site. If the most important phenomena...at work in the field are not in the instruments, they will be overlooked or misrepresented’ (p. 35). For this reason the lack of a fixed set of questions was useful. A high degree of flexibility in the interviews enabled participants to talk about things which were important to them which we would not have

known to ask about. However, it also meant a lot of discussion was generated which was costly to transcribe and translate but was not ultimately used in the analysis.

In interviews 2, 4, 9 and 27, some parts of the interviews were inaudible because they happened outside when the wind was blowing. Also, the translator battled to understand some of the conversation because of the speakers' accents. This amounted to a loss of potentially useful data.

### **Data analysis: Listening, transcribing and thematic analysis**

Analysis of the 2009 interviews progressed in different stages. The first was listening to and transcribing the recorded interviews and reading the transcripts produced by paid transcribers. This process began a few months after being in De Doorns. It was not ideal to wait this long before getting back into the interviews (Silverman, 2005), and some details of the interviewing contexts were consequently lost. It was only during this processes of listening, transcribing and reading the interviews that I really began to make sense of what we had heard in De Doorns, to see how these accounts were similar or different to the findings of Misago (2009), and to see 'themes' in the explanations for violence given by different participants. I narrowed these down to five different themes of 'causes of violence', which were: Local ANC politicians as trouble-causers; labour brokers as trouble-causers; white farmers as trouble-causers; South African workers' laziness and jealousy; and Zimbabweans bringing it on themselves. There were also some explanations which were 'deviant cases' because they did not fit into any of these categories. Thematic analysis was an important step in getting to grips with what was in the interview set. Ultimately, however, I decided it was inappropriate to present results along purely thematic lines, for reasons explained below.

### **Rhetorical analysis**

After battling for a long time to find something useful to say about the five causal themes I had come up with, I remembered that the central lesson of discursive psychology is that when people speak they are *doing things* (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). I also remembered Billig's emphasis on conversational rhetoric, and particularly on the two rhetorical tasks of criticism and justification (Billig, 1996; Billig *et al.* 1988). The interviews did indeed take place in a context of controversy in which accusations, blame, denials, justifications and

counter-accusations were circulating in the town and in the media in the wake of the violence (see the introduction and Chapter 1). Edwards and Potter (1992) have argued that 'factual reports of events appear in contexts of disputes, dialogues and conflicts of one kind or another,' and that they 'are designed for their adequacy in undermining alternative versions and, at the same time, resisting attempts, actual or potential, to undermine them as false, partial or interested' (p. 165). The implication of this is that the aim of the analysis then becomes to show how people made use of the interview as an opportunity to offer their own agenda or argue with alternatives. Realising the importance of this rhetorical context forced me to interrogate the initial 'favoured analytic story' (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 42) which was a thematic taxonomy of different causes of violence. The result was that I overhauled the 2009 results chapter and, informed by Billig (1988, 1996), divided the accounts into those that were criticising and those that were justifying. This was the origin of the 2009 results chapter as it now appears. It takes the general form of a conversation, in which groups take turns to blame others, and to justify themselves in response to accusations that were circulating. Explanations for the 'causes of violence' still feature, but they now feature for their rhetorical value rather than for their realist or descriptive value.

I have especially used Edwards and Potter's (1992) arguments about the nature of 'factual reports' in demonstrating how interviewees' talk was strategically put together to undermine 'actual or potential' efforts to make *their* accounts seem 'false, partial or interested' (*ibid*). In the analysis of these interviews, demonstrating how different speakers' accounts of the violence and issues surrounding it managed to pre-empt alternatives and make them seem implausible is a central concern.

### **Reliability**

Reliability of qualitative data relates mainly to the quality of the transcriptions (Silverman, 2005) and translations. If the conversation is poorly transcribed, the transcript cannot be relied upon to give an accurate account of what was said. Out of the 35 usable interviews from 2009, I transcribed 13 in full and smaller sections of two others. The rest of the English interviews were transcribed by a paid undergraduate student and the Afrikaans and Xhosa interviews were translated by a paid mother-tongue Afrikaans-speaking undergraduate student and a Xhosa-speaking master's student respectively. Of the 2012-2013 interviews I

transcribed all the English ones. The Afrikaans interviews were transcribed in Afrikaans by a paid undergraduate student but translated to English by me with the help of dictionaries and mother-tongue speakers. The Xhosa interviews were translated directly into English by a paid Xhosa-speaking PhD student. The translators were not trained in translating, however, and neither was there a back-translation process. There were some instances where translations were difficult to understand with the effect that some meaning was 'lost in translation'. Interviews transcribed by me had a higher degree of detail and accuracy, including overlapping speech, emphases, untimed pauses, some intonations of speech, run-on lines, and voice volume, which were indicated using a simplified version of the Jefferson transcribing conventions (given in Appendix 1). Those transcribed by the other transcribers mostly included roughly overlapping speech but otherwise included only spoken words. They were less detailed and sometimes less accurate; but if extracts were to be included in the results section, I went over them again adding more detail, correcting errors, and sometimes asking for clarifications from the translators. These extracts are now more accurate, and include subtleties of speech denoted by the Jefferson transcribing conventions.

### **Validity**

For Silverman (2005), a main threat to the validity of qualitative research is 'anecdotalism.' Silverman asks, 'how are they [qualitative researchers] to convince themselves (and their audience) that their "findings" are genuinely based on critical investigation of all their data and do not depend on a few well-chosen "examples"?' (2005, p. 211). At the same time, however, a defence of selectivity is necessary because of the very large volume of interview data that was generated, and the word-count limitations for this PhD thesis. Out of the 35 usable interviews from 2009, 21 have been quoted from in the results chapter. The ones that have been left out include business owners, white suburb residents, Sotho-speaking participants in the informal settlements and some other people in the middle of town of unknown occupation. In each section of the results chapters, two ways of countering anecdotalism have been employed. One, which contributed to 'comprehensive data treatment' (Silverman, 2005), is that deciding on the focus in each section of the results was an iterative process which involved going back and forth between different interviews and



comparing new sections of text. Once the focus was narrowed down, transcripts were re-inspected to see whether there were other instances of the same phenomenon or cases which contradicted it. The other way, then, is that 'deviant cases' are included which demonstrate variation in opinions within the 'same group', and give an indication of the extent to which a particular construction of group relationships was reflected throughout the data. For example, there were South African workers in 2009 who did not support the eviction of the Zimbabweans, and said that on their farms all workers were paid the same. It is important to include this variation to avoid giving an artificial impression of uniformity within a group's response.

Related to 'anecdotalism' is what Potter and Wetherell (1987) call 'selective reading', where the analyst chooses to focus on those sections of text that 'simply mirror his or her prior expectation. In this situation the data can be used to...buttress the favoured analytic story rather than being used to critically evaluate it' (p. 42). This challenge is answered by the process of changing the way I approached the 2009 interviews. The favoured analytic story in that chapter is no longer a taxonomy of 'causes of violence.' The turn to understanding the interviews as rhetorical was the outcome of a process of critical engagement with the data and resources from discursive psychology.

## **Ethics in the research process**

### **Informed consent**

In 2009, informed consent forms in either English or Afrikaans (whichever language the interviewees were more fluent in) were used for all conversations except those that took place in Stofland and Maseru, although I was given clearance to do this research on the understanding that these forms would be used in all cases. I did not use them partly because I was concerned that people in the informal settlements might not be literate, and therefore asking them to read a long form –sometimes in a language which was not their mother tongue – would cause embarrassment and/or be impossible. Of course, I should have considered this before going to De Doorns. Also, I was concerned that producing forms and asking people to sign them might rouse suspicions, since the violence of 2009 was still relatively recent and people might have felt coerced into signing something that they were not entirely sure of. This concern was confirmed on the second day of data

collection. On the first day, I went to Stofland and did not use forms for conversations 3, 4 and 5. After this, considering that I had not done so, I resolved to use them in our next informal settlement interviews. But the next place we went to was Maseru, the informal settlement where mostly Sotho speakers lived. We approached a woman there and I asked her if I could speak in English and she replied 'yes'. After explaining who we were and what we were about, I brought out the form, but it became increasingly clear that woman did not speak English or Afrikaans sufficiently to read the form or to understand our purpose. Neither did we speak Sesotho to be able to explain it. Although I think she knew we were interested in the recent violence involving the Zimbabweans, she eventually wrote 'I don't like it' in the signing space. I think she thought we were asking her to write her own opinion on the violence and whether she supported it. We attempted an interview and recorded it, but later I deleted it because the communication between us did not yield anything comprehensible. After this incident, I was put off using the forms in the informal settlements because of the embarrassment and it had caused (me) and the possible sense of coercion that the woman might have felt in being asked to commit herself in writing to something that she was not sure of.

In the four cases where forms were not used, then, I introduced us and said that we were from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, that I was doing research for my master's project at university, that we wanted to find out about the violence against the Zimbabweans, and asked if participants would be prepared to talk to us about it. I said that the interview would be recorded and that we may quote participants' words in a newspaper article or publication but would not ask for or use their names. The problem with not using forms is that these people do not have my contact details should they ever have wished to withdraw their data from the study. No participants who did take away a form have contacted me asking to withdraw their interviews. In 2012 and 2013, informed consent forms were used in all interviews.

### **Public disturbance**

One problem with research that is not done within an ongoing 'collaborative partnership' with members of the research community (Emmanuel, Wendler & Grady, 2008) is that one does not know the effects one's intervention has had on the people involved after one leaves. One interview in the informal settlements was conducted in a main thoroughfare

into Maseru leading from the place where the trucks were dropping people off at the end of the day. The speaker was virulently anti-Zimbabweans and a small crowd grew around us because I was conspicuously white and he was vociferous. I did not understand much of what this man was saying but nevertheless I ended the interview after a short time, as I was uncomfortable with the level of the man's antagonism and the way the people around us were agreeing with him. I was glad that there were no Zimbabweans left in the informal settlements because this situation had the feeling as if something could have happened had they been there. We actually drove past this man the next day in town and he greeted us enthusiastically. I do not know, however, what further effects that conversation may have had. This shows how doing research can itself change the research context.

### **Remuneration**

I did not pay or compensate participants in either round of fieldwork, except for one woman we interviewed in Stofland in 2009 who asked if we would buy her bread and milk after the interview, which we did.

### **Anonymity and voluntariness**

We approached potential participants by introducing ourselves and our aims and then asking them if they were interested in being interviewed but also telling them that if they did not want to this was no problem. Several people declined to participate, though I did not keep a record of how many. In interviews with official representatives of organisations (e.g. PASSOP, Agri Wes-Cape), the informed consent forms gave participants the option to indicate whether they wanted to speak as individuals and remain anonymous or whether they wanted to speak in their official capacity which would probably make them identifiable. In all other interviews we did not ask for names or details, and participants were assured of their anonymity. The participant names in the results section are all pseudonyms, with the exception of Owen Maromo, who indicated that he was happy to have his name mentioned. However, some of these interviews were conducted out in the open (for example, in the Zimbabweans' camp and in the streets of Stofland and Maseru) and consequently participants were not always anonymous to their neighbours at the time of the interviews. On the other hand, it could be argued that anonymity is not necessarily a good thing, because the people who provide the empirical substance of this thesis are unable to take credit for what they contributed.

### **Participation in racial fields and hierarchies**

Gina and I are white and were both called 'mevrou' by several coloured participants irrespective of their being older, in spite of having no contacts or history of previous relationships in the town, and in spite of introducing ourselves by our first names. Our whiteness was highly salient in such cases. A 'good' thing about this was that it showed me the extent to which race is still blatantly salient in De Doorns, and gave away something of the history and tone of racial relationships even though farmers' discourse in our interviews was largely non-racial. Also, my being white probably facilitated access to some participants, in the sense that, although I am English (not Afrikaans), the white Afrikaans people from whom I rented a garden flat in the Hex Valley in both 2009 and 2012 were very hospitable and they offered some help with introducing me to a few potential participants as well as with showing me around town. It is possible that this hospitality depended on my being white. This hospitality became somewhat problematic during the strike in 2012 (see chapter 8 below), and with hindsight it may have been better to stay in a more neutral venue such as a hotel.

### **Feedback**

Silverman (2005) says that one's job is not finished until one has made some effort to give feedback to the people who participated in one's project. However, I have not offered any feedback to participants in De Doorns so far. This is mainly because of a sense of being out of my depth and because I have not forged any long-term connections with participants or stakeholders there. It is thus difficult to judge what feedback would be appropriate or helpful. Since workers and farmers so obviously play by such massively different rules, for a time it seemed that it might be valuable to get farmers and workers together to listen to one another's side of the conflict. But some participants mentioned that they had already been interviewed by journalists and that this had not led to any visible intervention or improvement in their circumstances. I also later read in Wilderman's (2014) thesis that there had already had a big meeting back in 2008 attended by farmers, workers, representatives of the relevant government departments, the HTA, Agri WesCape and unions, but workers felt that nothing had come of it despite having made their grievances clearly known. The lack of a serious response to this was part of the reason some workers interviewed by Wilderman gave for deciding to protest in the way they did in 2012. Also, it

is possible that discussing these issues could set in motion processes whose direction would be beyond my control. Thus, the question of feedback is still unresolved.

## Chapter 7: Dilemmas of xenophobia and anti-xenophobia in De Doorns – Results of 2009 fieldwork

This chapter takes the form of a conversation on the topic of the eviction of the Zimbabweans, in which groups of speakers take turns to blame others, and also to respond to allegations that had been said about themselves (Billig, 1996). This chapter structure is intended to reflect the rhetorical context in which the interviews took place, and which speakers themselves (including interviewers) variously reconstructed and oriented to in their conversation. In particular, it shows how speakers ascribed dubious motives and interests to other actors and constructed themselves as having no such interests (cf Edward & Potter, 1992; Whittle & Mueller, 2010). As we saw in Chapter 1, one of the central criticisms which received the most publicity in the media was that farmers were employing Zimbabweans for less than the minimum wage. This was used as an explanation or justification for why South Africans in the informal settlements had tried to chase the Zimbabweans out. Farmers denied this outright. On the other hand, we also heard Misago's (2009) respondents accuse labour brokers and the ward councillor of actually inciting the violence for their own political and financial gain, while using complaints about exploitation to present themselves as victims. From the outset, then, blame was being apportioned in (at least) two different directions.

A rhetorical analysis of these two sets of contrary accusations, as well as responses from the Zimbabweans themselves, forms the backbone of this chapter. I will argue that, in their discussions about the violence and how it came about, black and coloured South Africans who were sympathetic to the violence accused farmers of using the Zimbabweans as a pawn or a tool for purposes which they construed as highly illegitimate. However, farmers accused (black) labour brokers and politicians, particularly, of exactly the same thing: using the Zimbabweans as a pawn in the service of *their* own highly illegitimate agenda. By contrast, farmers argued that their own relationship with the Zimbabweans was morally unproblematic because it was based on free-market principles. The Zimbabweans' position with respect to these two sides was not simply neutral or 'in the middle', however. They largely aligned themselves with farmers, and used many of the same stereotypes about South Africans to justify the farmers' preference for themselves (Zimbabweans) as the

farmers used. This is an example of the way power is struggled over through the construction and contestation of intergroup alliances.

However, as Billig himself pointed out, when people talk they are not *only* doing things – apportioning and deflecting blame, making counteraccusations and so on. Discourse also has *contents*, and thus, following the framework for studying intergroup relations and social change that was outlined in Chapter 4 above, this empirical chapter examines how participants construct the meaning of their relationship to other groups (cf Durrheim & Dixon, 2005a) in terms of their recommendations for and evaluations of change in their community. Thus, while the chapter does not itself plot change unfolding over time (unlike for example Drury & Reicher, 2000), the ideological imperatives by which groups judged their own and others' actions to be legitimate or not, and the actions and recommendations for future change that they consequently found to be necessary according to these imperatives, supply a key link in the unfolding history of change through intergroup interaction.

Part 1 contains farmers' explanations for how the violence came about. They explained it with reference to the 'rabble-rousing' and intimidation tactics of highly suspect or criminal labour brokers and politicians, and thereby wrote it off as an illegitimate project. Farmers and Zimbabweans featured only in passive roles in these accounts, with Zimbabweans as an almost incidental means by which the brokers could manipulate the market to get what they wanted. Part 2 provides an alternative account from black and coloured South Africans who accused farmers of using the Zimbabweans as a tool for *their* own gain: that is, getting out of paying their workers properly. The consequences for South Africans of this relationship were either the displacement of South Africans from their rightful places on the farms and in jobs, or the undermining of their bargaining power vis-a-vis farmers. The former was judged as illegitimate according to the imperative of white responsibility and the latter according to the imperative of black liberation. Speakers located this displacement in the context of a longer history of town relations that predated the arrival of the Zimbabweans. The displacement of South Africans by Zimbabweans was construed as only one way by which South African workers had been 'screwed over' by farmers during and since apartheid. This section also contains some 'deviant cases' of South African workers

who argued that evicting the Zimbabweans was wrong, and/or that as far as they knew, the Zimbabweans were earning the same wages as everyone else.

Part 3 contains responses of Zimbabweans to the accusations levelled against them in Part 2. In particular it focuses on how almost all Zimbabweans located the origin of South Africans' problems within South Africans themselves as morally and intellectually inferior people. In this way they essentialised South Africans' problems and justified the farmers' preference for themselves (Zimbabweans) as the logical choice given that they were more hard-working and reliable. Finally, Part 4 contains farmers' responses to some of the accusations levelled against them in Part 2. Farmers largely oriented to these accusations as if they were legal technicalities, which they could easily dismiss by citing audit procedures and statistics proving the high demand for labour. In doing so, however, they avoided addressing the moral and political *meanings* that these acts (paying of low wages etc.) had for the South African labouring community. When *asked* to respond to some of these meanings, farmers defended their preference for Zimbabweans as completely legitimate according to the imperative of free-market capitalism. As did the Zimbabweans, they also blamed black and coloured South Africans for being the cause of many of their own problems, and distanced themselves from responsibility for these groups. In this way they avoided having to question the foundations of the farming system and justified maintaining the status quo.

### **Part 1: Farmers' explanations for violence**

Farmers' explanations for how the violence came about serve to apportion blame and to pre-empt alternative explanations in which farmers were implicated. They centre on labour brokers and politicians who found themselves in a precarious financial and political position in De Doorns, and who instigated the violence as response to this situation. (These explanations emphasise the role of the labour brokers more than the role of the councillor and municipal council members in inciting the violence.) The analysis focuses on three ways by which farmers construed this violence as part of a project which was fundamentally illegitimate both in its means (violence) and its ends (personal political and financial gain for the instigators). Firstly, they characterised the instigators as a bunch of criminals, whose complaints and criticisms of farmers therefore need not be taken seriously. This included



references to criminal records and to collusion between politicians and labour brokers, which implied corruption or an abuse of political position for personal financial gain. This is unacceptable in a liberal democracy, but is a common trope in white discourse about black politics (Steyn & Foster, 2008). Secondly, in their explanations for the violence, farmers made use of labour market logic, by which they construed the violence as a result of labour brokers' efforts to manipulate farmers and the demand and supply of labour. Importantly, however, farmers construed their own role in this market as an almost entirely passive one. 'The market' was invoked to explain their role, which did not require accounting for, whereas the brokers were construed as active agents 'manipulating' the market. This second point is important because it contrasts strongly with how black and coloured South Africans construed the agency of farmers, which will be seen in part 2 below. Finally, farmers explicitly said that the violence was 'not a whole community thing.' In other words, they argued that it was a top-down or 'elite' project and did not represent a popular or wide-spread community grievance which might require farmers' remedial action or attention.

#### **Extract 1: Farmer 2 (interview 24)**

- 1 **Philippa:** So, first question, in your opinion, what do you think, I mean, we, we've  
 2 heard a lot of answers, but in your opinion what do you think started this,  
 3 this violence.  
 4 **Danie:** Well, what, violence is technically::, (.)  
 5 **Philippa:** j[a,]  
 6 **Danie:** [ja] but I mean the, (.).hh It's basically, u:h, seems to be, a power struggle,  
 7 >to a certain extent< or, people, losing power,=  
 8 **Philippa:** =ja, [ja]  
 9 **Danie:** [you know it's all about:t, u::m, money, 's number one, and I think uh the  
 10 main thing behind this is there's um, there's this what you know the, what  
 11 we, they, like to call them labour brokers,  
 12 **Philippa:** ja ja,  
 13 **Danie:** a:nd, a lot of the labour brokers are, kind of community leaders,  
 14 **Philippa:** ja,  
 15 **Danie:** and also some of them are even on the council. On, on the municipal  
 16 [council].  
 17 **Philippa:** [okay, okay  
 18 **Danie:** But a lot of them, also caused a lot of problems in the past, so a lot of them  
 19 are persona non grata on farms. So the, people, a lot of them are struggling  
 20 to find work on farms, for people, so they can earn money.=  
 21 **Philippa:** =okay.  
 22 **Danie:** U::m, especially with the Zimbabweans here there's not as much use for

23 labour brokers, because um you you can find work.  
 24 **Philippa:** oka::y  
 25 **Danie:** But, u:m if they could get rid of Zimbabweans, they create a labour  
 26 shortage=  
 27 **Philippa:** =ja kay  
 28 **Danie:** which would first of all mean that they will be employed again by  
 29 growers, which they have to, and secondly obviously for higher wages.  
 30 (**Philippa:** =mm) you know if you can create a shortage, .hh u::m then  
 31 [ you can push the ] then, then you have bargaining  
 32 **Philippa:** [then you have bargaining power]  
 33 **Danie:** power then you can push the wage.

## **Extract 2: Farmer 1 (interview 8)**

1 **Francois:** so I think there's contractors, there's a few, a, the policeman told me the  
 2 head of the police told me here that, there's a few contractors that's got  
 3 criminal records that's [coming out of the] jails and they are the ones that,  
 4 **Philippa:** [mm:: ]  
 5 **Francois:** that's instigating this whole thing, u::m, because they not getting, firstly  
 6 the-, we don't want to use them because they steal the peop-, the people's  
 7 [money],  
 8 **Philippa:** [money] ja  
 9 **Francois:** and uh, and now they not getting jobs because there is enough, labour  
 10 around. When there's too little labour around then they can manipulate the,  
 11 whole situation. And that's what this thing is about. [So they], so they, wanna  
 12 **Philippa:** [okay ]  
 13 **Francois:** get the Zims out, so then there's too little labour, and then they can control  
 14 the whole situation.  
 ...  
 15 **Francois:** so then you kind of, as a farmer as a employer you more desperate for, for  
 16 labour, (**Philippa:** ja,) and then, then you would, if you can't find labour, a-,  
 17 then, you start to look for labour brokers [to]  
 18 **Philippa:** [ o]kay okay  
 19 **Francois:** you know what [I'm saying]  
 20 **Philippa:** [okay ] okay  
 21 **Francois:** and they, and then they know 'okay I can ask, I can ask ten Rand now  
 22 [per head']  
 23 **Philippa:** [okay ]  
 ...  
 24 **Francois:** so it's a market, it's a market-related situation. So, so, to try and manipulate  
 25 this whole thing by trying to chase out a lot of people, e::y, man that's, that's  
 26 criminal man.  
 27 **Philippa:** ja ja ja  
 28 **Francois:** ((small humourless laughter in voice)) you hear what I'm saying

### **Extract 3: Farmer 3 (interview 28)**

- 1 **Gert:** my personal view [is that] my personal view is that, up until two years  
2 **Philippa:** [ja ]  
3 **Gert:** ago, there was a labour shortage.  
4 **Philippa:** mhm,  
5 **Gert:** and, labour brokers, uh, w- were the, (.) basically, had control of the labour  
6 market.=  
7 **Philippa:** =m.  
8 **Gert:** And farmers were dependent on, [labour] brokers f-, in order to get, labour.  
9 **Philippa:** [them ]  
10 **Gert:** Um, which was insufficient. And they, were therefore also able to  
11 manipulate, the market, by playing off one, farmer against the other  
12 **Philippa:** okay  
13 **Gert:** to pay higher wages, because there was a shortage.  
14 **Philippa:** okay  
15 **Gert:** (.) Then the Zimbabweans came and filled that vacuum. So that there was  
16 enough labour,=  
17 **Philippa:** =mm[m  
18 **Gert:** [around. Um in the meantime the labour brokers had, basically  
19 worked themselves started working themselves out of the system, cos, um,  
20 the::y, applied bad labour practices.  
21 **Philippa:** okay,  
22 **Gert:** in other words, the::y, not all labour brokers, certain labour brokers.  
23 **Philippa:** ja  
24 **Gert:** Um certain labour brokers would underpay, their, um, their employees,=  
25 **Philippa:** =mm, mm  
26 **Gert:** they would u:m, (.)  
27 **Philippa:** take more than their  
28 **Gert:** take more than their fair cut.  
29 **Philippa:** m  
30 **Gert:** U:m, not pay them overtime, that was due. And at, at the end of the day, the  
31 farmer, became or was responsible then,  
32 **Philippa:** for that  
33 **Gert:** to s- to to:, face the flack  
34 **Philippa:** m  
35 **Gert:** from the individual concerned.  
36 **Philippa:** okay  
37 **Gert:** So the, the the, individual employee, didn't go running back to his broker,  
38 **Philippa:** ja,  
39 **Gert:** he, would then come to the farmer and say listen I've been underpaid, or I  
40 haven't been paid for this and that.  
41 **Philippa:** ((wants to ask a question)) Is there=  
42 **Gert:** ((interrupts)) =So,  
43 **Philippa:** ja  
44 **Gert:** to continue, wi- the Zimbos then came in, farmers were tired of using labour  
45 brokers, they, (.) basically, destroyed their credibility,

46 **Philippa:** m  
 47 **Gert:** farmers then went directly to the labour market and employed people  
 48 directly.  
 49 **Philippa:** m  
 50 **Gert:** So, y'know if, what was found was a lot of disgruntled, labour brokers=  
 51 **Philippa:** =m,  
 52 **Gert:** who were generally or are generally the, leaders in the community.  
 53 **Philippa:** m  
 54 **Gert:** and they, then, rabble-roused, um, and caused the problem that we now  
 55 sitting with. Or that we now faced with.

One way that farmers presented the violence as part of an illegitimate project is by presenting the instigators as highly suspect individuals if not outright criminals. Farmer 1 explains that some of the labour brokers had criminal records and were 'coming out of the jails' (extract 2 line 3). Farmer 2 says they were 'persona non grata' on the farms (extract 1 line 19). Also, farmers 2 and 3 show that these (black) labour brokers are prepared to cheat other (black) South African labourers out of their full pay by 'taking more than their fair cut' (extract 3 line 27-28), 'steal[ing] the...people's money' (extract 2 lines 6-7) and not paying them for overtime (extract 3 line 30). These are presumably the same instigators who, as we saw in Chapter 1, were using complaints about exploitation, racism and low wages from farmers to justify the violence, but the farmers show that these labour brokers cannot be taken seriously as really having the interests of the South African labouring community at heart. Having received this picture of the labour brokers as dishonest, as being prepared to cheat other informal settlement residents out of their pay, as recently having been in jail, as applying 'bad labour practices' (extract 3, line 20) and as being prepared to use 'criminal' means to chase after money and political power, we hardly need to wonder whether this crew might be the vanguard of a legitimate community complaint that anybody with a conscience need take seriously. Instead, it is the farmers themselves who are being shown to have their workers' interests at heart. These accounts pre-empt and effectively dismiss the kinds of accusations against farmers which are coming in part 2 below. This is an example of Edwards and Potter's (1992) argument that factual accounts are 'designed for their adequacy in undermining alternative versions and at the same time, resisting attempts, both actual and potential, to undermine them as false, partial or interested' (p. 164).

A second way these accounts construe the violence as an illegitimate project is to present the labour brokers and politicians as the primary *agents* in the processes that led to the violence, and the farmers as relatively passive. It is the brokers who wanted to create a labour shortage (extract 1, line 25-26); who were engaged in a 'power struggle' (extract 1 line 6); who were looking for bargaining power in order to 'push the wage' (extract 1 line 33); were playing one farmer off against the other in order to manipulate the market (extract 3, line 11); worked themselves out of the system by applying bad labour practices (extract 3, line 19-20); were losing power (extract 1 line 6-7); and who consequently want to 'get the Zims out...and then they know, I can ask R10 now per head' (extract 2 line 13-22). It is they who finally 'rabble-roused' and 'caused the problem that we now sitting with' (extract 3, line 54-55). By contrast there are relatively few instances of farmer agency. Where farmers are mentioned at all, they are passive in two cases – 'desperate' for labour (extract 2, 15-16) and 'dependent' on labour brokers (extract 3, line 8). In two other cases farmers exercise agency: 'we don't want to use them anymore because they steal...the people's money' (extract 3, line 6), and 'farmers then went directly to the labour market and employed people directly' (extract 3 line 47-48). Both of these actions are still shown to be responses to or constrained by the labour brokers' acts, rather than determined by self-interest: we don't use them *because they steal*, (extract 1) and, we went directly to the labour market *because they were taking more than their fair cut* (extract 3). In this way the farmers explain the whole situation that led up to the violence in terms of the actions of the labour brokers, and not themselves. This construction assumes that the 'normal' (non-criminal) way that things happen does not require the actions of the farmers to be accounted for – indeed, farmers are hardly even presented *as acting*. For example, farmer 2 says 'especially with the Zimbabweans here there's not as much use for labour brokers' (extract 1, line 22). He does not say something like, 'we choose not to use labour brokers when the Zimbabweans are here so that we can lower our costs and maximise our profits'. Thus, the way the 'market' normally works (e.g. 'there's not as much use for labour brokers' when the Zimbabweans are around) *is not presented as being constituted by the actions of farmers*, whereas the things that the labour brokers did to *manipulate* the market are counted as intentional (and therefore potentially blameworthy) actions. In the next section we shall see how differently black and coloured South Africans construed the agency of farmers and instigators in these processes.

The Zimbabweans also barely feature in the farmers' accounts of the emergence of violence. They feature only as a passive pawn in the power struggles of the criminal labour brokers: 'they wanna get the Zims out, so then there's too little labour, and then they can control the whole situation' (extract 2 lines 13-14). Like the farmers they are not presented as agents, but simply as victims of the conniving brokers. As mentioned in Chapter 1, all the farmers, with the exception of farmer 3, explicitly said that the violence was not 'xenophobia' because it was done not out of a specific dislike for Zimbabweans *per se*. Rather, it was done for 'market-related' reasons. In barely mentioning the Zimbabweans in their explanations for the violence, and in arguing that the violence was not due to a dislike for Zimbabweans particularly, they deflected the possibility that there was anything particularly problematic in their relationship with their Zimbabwean employees. They were simply a group who filled a labour vacuum (extract 3 line 15).

The last two extracts in this section demonstrate a final aspect of the farmers' explanations for the violence. So far we have seen that labour brokers took most of the blame in these accounts. In the extracts below farmers explicitly argued that the violence was not an expression of the sentiments of most of 'the community.' Extract 4 below begins in the middle of a discussion about the court case which was opened when twenty-four people were arrested for crimes committed in the course of the violence. Farmer 1 located the violence against the Zimbabweans in a wider context of stayaways and intimidation tactics used in the town:

#### **Extract 4: Farmer 1 (interview 8)**

- 1 **Francois:** and then they toyi-toyed to get out the twenty-four, now no one must go to  
 2 work, the case is in Worcester the, ja but now it must be solidarity [so,]  
 3 **Philippa:** [ja ] ja ja  
 4 **Francois:** so no one is allowed to work, .hh it's ↑criminal! You know what I'm saying.  
 5 And it's it's, and it's n-, at the end, (.) I mean the guy- I mean you would, as  
 6 well if you stay in such a c-, I mean a- and you know you, you stand a chance  
 7 of losing your ↓house, ↑you would just, what [would you do!]  
 8 **Philippa:** [toe the line ] ja  
 9 **Francois:** ↑ja, you mos ja. ↓Okay so you stay at home then.=  
 10 **Philippa:** =ja  
 11 **Francois:** So fifteen thousand people stay at home, one thousand march down  
 12 maybe to the, police station to, deliver something, but the, fifteen thousand  
 13 is:::, ↑captive  
 14 **Philippa:** ((whispering)) hyew (.)[okay ]

- 15 **Francois:** [if you] hear what I'm say[ing ]  
 16 **Philippa:** [ja ja] ja  
 17 **Francois:** and that's what's happening. It's not a, it's not a, if I take if, my labourers, the  
 18 seventy here and the fifty or, down::, thereso probably, or, ja. But none of  
 19 them, they all wanna work. None of them are part of these, they if there's a  
 20 vergadering ((*meeting*)) they don't even want to go  
 21 **Philippa:** okay  
 22 **Francois:** but they get forced to go if y- because then you not part of the=  
 23 **Philippa:** =ja=  
 24 **Francois:** =and it's it's, (.) it's sad it's sad it's like ten per cent of the whole, I don't even  
 25 think it's ten percent it's=  
 26 **Philippa:** =exerting this, power over everyone else.=  
 27 **Francois:** =ja ja ja.  
 28 **Philippa:** okay  
 29 **Francois:** that's the point so it's not a, it's not a whole, community thing=  
 30 **Philippa:** =okay

#### **Extract 5: Farmer 3 (interview 28)**

- 1 **Gert:** someone said to me the other day, someone quo- said to me the other day,  
 2 u:h when I asked the person, reintegration would,  
 3 **Philippa:** ja be possible  
 4 **Gert:** possible or not. And he said, twenty percent of the community, don't want  
 5 the Zimbabweans back, eighty percent do.  
 6 **Philippa:** m  
 7 **Gert:** and that's twenty percent of the community that are keeping them out

Both these accounts from farmers present a powerful minority exerting influence over the rest of 'the community.' In extract 4, farmer 1 is explaining the violence against the Zimbabweans with reference to a wider context of intimidation tactics that operated in De Doorns. It was partially on this basis that he could argue that the violence was not really 'xenophobia' in the sense that threats of destroying houses had been used on South Africans as well. Farmer 1 undermines the legitimacy of these tactics by constructing the psychology of those who stay at home and, in a different way, those who exert power over them. First, he asks us to put ourselves in these victims' shoes (lines 5-7): 'I mean you would, as well if you stay in such a c-, I mean a- and you know you, you stand a chance of losing your ↓house, ↑you would just, what would you do!' Both of us provide an answer: 'toe the line' (line 8) and 'okay so you stay at home then' (line 9). This appeal to intersubjectivity or a common understanding about what we would do in the same position

is striking because of the unlikelihood of either this farmer or Gina and I, the interviewers, ever being in a situation in which someone might destroy our houses if we didn't stay away from work. Understanding invites sympathy. In this way the farmer demonstrates that he has had empathy with these workers, in spite of the massive class/race divide between himself on his farm and them in the informal settlements. He further demonstrates his empathy with his workers by showing he knows exactly how they feel about this state of affairs: 'none of them are part of these, they if there's a *vergadering* they don't even want to go...but then they get forced to go' (lines 19-22). By contrast, the acts of those who make them stay are not empathised with in the same way. Indeed we are not even told who these people are – farmer 1 uses vagueness and passive voice and thereby avoids reference to any particular actors: 'but now it must be solidarity... so no one is allowed to work' (line 2-4). Also, we are not asked to empathise with the instigators' situation. Rather, their acts are described as of questionable value: 'one thousand march down maybe to the, police station to, deliver something' (lines 11-12). This is a subtle way of undermining the value and comprehensibility of what the one thousand are up to. They do not *definitely* march down to the police station, they *maybe* march down and deliver '*something*' (if that). This suggests that stayaways such as this are not even always accompanied by some kind of constructive activity (if 'delivering something' – a memorandum, say – is understood as an act which might render such a demonstration or stayaway meaningful). Also, what exactly they deliver is not specified. This helps to further undermine the value of what they are doing because the contents of what they deliver – and hence the statement that they might be making – are presented as not really even being worth trying to understand. However, the consequences of their actions are serious: 'the fifteen thousand is captive' (line 13). The contrast between the vagueness of what the one thousand are doing and their nevertheless very serious consequences underlines how illegitimate it is for such a small minority with no clear agenda to be exerting such uncorrespondingly large influence over the whole town. In this extract farmer 1 does not actually make any reference to the Zimbabweans specifically, though in the first line he refers to the case in Worcester which was opened after the violence against them. But by constructing the psychology of the captive majority and the 'criminal' minority in these ways, the farmer undermines the legitimacy of the way power is exerted by a few in this situation, and concludes: 'it's not a whole, community thing' (line 29).



In extract 5 above, 'reintegration' refers to the possibility that the Zimbabweans were going to move from the camp on the rugby field back into the informal settlements (which they did not do). Farmer 3 gets his knowledge that it is only a small minority who don't want the Zimbabweans back from 'someone'. He does not specify who this someone is, but it could be read as someone with inside information, perhaps someone who actually lives in the informal settlement. *He* said, twenty percent of the community don't want the Zimbabweans back, eighty percent do. In both these extracts the farmers show that they get their knowledge from someone else other than themselves. In this way their accounts of the situation are likely to be valid and to reflect opinion 'on the ground' rather than being constructed to serve the farmers' argument and therefore potentially uncredible.

Running through the farmers' explanations of how the labour brokers were attempting to 'manipulate' the market, and also the last two extracts on the violence not being a 'whole community thing', is an implicit claim that in fact it is farmers, rather than the instigators of violence who were making accusations about farmer exploitation, who have the interests of all their South African *and* Zimbabwean workers at heart. Though length limitations preclude a thorough analysis of the Agri Wes-Cape media release which was cited in Chapter 1 (see Appendix 2), this document similarly pronounced that 'the attacks on innocent people and the destruction of their personal belongings and property is inexcusable'. Such moralising helps to demonstrate farmers' concern for the labouring community and to counter possible accusations of racism against themselves. At the end of this chapter we shall see how this moral imperative was selectively applied when farmers discussed the instigators and perpetrators of the violence but not when they were accused of failing to take responsibility for the wellbeing of their workers.

So far we have seen three ways by which the farmers undermined the legitimacy of the violence. Firstly, they showed that the instigators were a criminal and corrupt lot who cheated workers themselves, and therefore would not be likely to be genuine representatives of a legitimate community grievance. Secondly farmers showed themselves and Zimbabweans to be relatively passive victims on the receiving end of these instigators' efforts to manipulate the market. Finally, they showed that the violence was not a 'whole community thing.' These explanations had rhetorical weight because they were all very similar and provided a watertight, logical narrative which could account completely for the

origins of the violence (as they had constructed them). Of those quoted, only one farmer (farmer 2, extract 1) was asked directly to explain what caused the violence; the others provided such explanations – which turned out to be very similar – in the course of the conversation without being asked. This shows that they shared a common version of what had happened, which makes sense when one considers that all the farmers in De Doorns knew each other personally and were in some capacity involved with the HTA. It also shows that the point of the interviews was understood to be about explaining *who instigated the violence*. Also, in these accounts farmers demonstrated concern for their workers by emphasising the wrongness of violence and of the climate of intimidation in which it took place. In part 2, we hear another side of the story, which comes from black and coloured South Africans in the informal settlements, including labourers, unemployed people and a labour broker, and also an elderly black man and a coloured family living in De Doorns Oos (the ‘coloured location’).

## **Part 2: Constructions of the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship and its consequences for South African workers**

The black and coloured South Africans quoted in this section provide a challenge to the ways farmers presented themselves when they explained the violence, i.e., as playing a passive role in the processes which preceded it. However, Part 2 is not just a different explanation for how the violence came about; the origins of violence were not necessarily what these speakers were most concerned to account for. They do not provide an all-encompassing logic by which to explain the origins of the violence as the farmers’ accounts did. Rather, the focus is on how speakers construed the relationship between farmers and Zimbabweans, and the meanings and consequences this relationship, by turns exploitative and unfairly advantaging, had for the South African labouring community. We have seen how farmers construed the labour brokers as the primary agents and as bearing most responsibility for the violence. In Part 2, it is farmers who take primary responsibility: not for causing the violence, but for using the Zimbabweans as a tool by which to achieve *their* own illegitimate agenda. (This shows how different constituencies had different ideas about what the main problem in their community actually was.) This exploitative, abusive or collusive Zimbabwean-farmer relationship was shown to have two kinds of bad

consequences for South African workers. One is their displacement by Zimbabweans from their historical and rightful places on farms and in jobs (Part 2A), and another is that their bargaining power vis-a-vis the farmers was being undermined (Part 2B). These two consequences were judged as illegitimate by the imperatives of white responsibility and black liberation respectively. Whereas the farmers' explanations above served purposes of *blame*, these explanations serve purposes of *justification*, in that speakers construed the violence as a *response* or a *solution* to the two abovementioned problems, which were construed as the main problems in the town. This is a contrasting understanding of what constituted 'the problem' than in the farmers' accounts, in which *violence* or the resulting displacement of Zimbabweans was assumed to be the main problem.

## **Part 2A: South Africans' displacement as a result of the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship**

The first extract comes from a discussion with a coloured family (not farm labourers) who lived in De Doorns Oos. The opening question was posed in the context of discussion about the violence and can be read as a probe for suggestions about what should be done in its aftermath.

### **Extract 6: Coloured family (interview 20)**

- 1 **Philippa:** So what do you think, what do you think should be done then
- 2 **Wendy:** I think that people must go back to their, to their homelands man,=
- 3 **Philippa:** =okay
- 4 **Wendy:** go back to their countries
- 5 **Marco:** ((interrupts)) and, and the thing
- 6 **Wendy:** ((carries on)) we, we took, we are also very poor here=
- 7 **Philippa:** =ja=
- 8 **Wendy:** =here in De Doorns, we very very poor. Now they coming and take our jobs.
- 9 Most of the coloured people here don't have jobs here, the the farmers=
- 10 **Philippa:** =so you believe that
- 11 **Wendy:** ((loudly)) I believe that, I know that I be ↑ lieve ↓ that!=
- 12 **Philippa:** =okay
- 13 **Wendy:** Before before, um, this whole xenophobia,
- 14 **Philippa:** ja ja ja
- 15 **Wendy:** the ( ) the workers here, they were just full of Zimbabweans, during the
- 16 year, from January to January.=
- 17 **Philippa:** =ja
- 18 **Wendy:** they, it's season workers here, the coloureds.

- 19 **Philippa:** ja  
 20 **Wendy:** Now the coloureds don't get get get work because, there's there's always  
 21 workers on the farms,  
 22 **Philippa:** okay  
 23 **Wendy:** [the Zimbabweans always there ]  
 24 **Marco:** [and the famers don't have to put] uh-, they don't have to put their hands  
 25 deep in their pockets, because it's a (exscape gite<sup>32</sup>) for them, because  
 26 of where they was paying eighty, uh, eighty bucks for someone, uh on a daily  
 27 base, they have, they they have to pay they pay now forty bucks for the  
 28 Zimbabwean people [because they working for a lower rate. And  
 29 **Philippa:** [ja  
 30 **Philippa:** I've ne-, I've spoken to some farmers and some Zimbabweans and they s::ay  
 31 that that is absolutely not true [hey]  
 32 **Marco:** [the] the white people here I'm just telling you  
 33 straightly,  
 34 **Philippa:** mm,=  
 35 **Marco:** =the white people here are all the same, I'm just telling you, they are  
 36 all the same. As long as=  
 37 **Wendy:** =they f-, they for instance they feel sorry now for the Zimbabweans but what  
 38 about their own, the [people of their country  
 39 **Philippa:** [mm okay  
 40 **Wendy:** they don't feel anything, because people are jobless here,  
 41 **Philippa:** [ja]  
 42 **Marco:** [ja]  
 43 **Wendy:** there's no work for for for me, for the coloureds, [but] for the Zimbabweans  
 44 **Philippa:** [ ja ]  
 45 **Wendy:** there is work

Wendy gives an account of how before 'this whole xenophobia,' the seasonal jobs were all being filled up by Zimbabweans. In this account, coloureds are 'very very poor' (line 8) and this is the basis for why wanting to keep their jobs is a legitimate interest. However, she does not address why it is particularly wrong for Zimbabweans, who presumably also need jobs, to get them ahead of coloureds. In the next turn, Marco does this by constructing the intentions of the farmers (lines 24-28). The reason it is illegitimate is because farmers use the Zimbabweans to make money out of them: 'the farmers don't have to put their hands deep in their pockets'. My response to Marco's statement was to repeat an earlier challenge to this familiar accusation of low wages ('so you believe that'), though this time more explicitly, by citing my own conversations with both farmers *and* Zimbabweans in which

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<sup>32</sup> These words were unclear but 'exscape gite' is the closest I could get to making them out. Perhaps Marco meant 'scapegoat'.

they had denied the accusations of low wages (coming in Parts 3 and 4 below). However, Wendy and Marco both respond to this with reference to the psychology of whites only, rather than the Zimbabweans: 'The *white people* here I'm just telling you straightly...the white people here they are all the same' (lines 32-36). Marco does not say, 'the *Zimbabweans* here they are all the same'. Wendy then provides an instance of how the white people are all the same: 'for instance, they feel sorry now for the Zimbabweans but what about their own, the people of their country...they don't feel anything, because people are jobless here' (line 37). The farmers' integrity and responsibility, not the Zimbabweans', is in question here. That the Zimbabweans work for a lower rate is not the basis for indignation and accusations of being uncaring: rather it is the farmers' lack of sympathy for their own people. Farmers' apparent sympathy for the Zimbabweans (which on its own could be interpreted as a display of genuine concern and a demonstration of their being good people) is undermined here because it is shown to be inconsistent – they do not feel similar pity for the coloureds, even though the coloureds are 'their own people' and are 'jobless here' (line 40). Furthermore the possibility is raised that the farmers are actually keeping the coloureds in a state of unemployment: 'There's no work for for for me, for the coloureds, but for the Zimbabweans there is work' (line 43-45). This suggests that there is not actually a shortage of jobs in general, but that somehow coloureds do not get them – the reason already having been provided by Marco ('the farmers don't have to put their hands deep in their pockets'). Wendy assumes whites/farmers to have a responsibility to the coloureds as their failure to act on this produces her indignation.

In this piece of conversation the farmers are said to be exploiting *and* feeling sorry for the Zimbabweans. This should not be taken as proof that Wendy and Marco are in disagreement about what the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship is really like. Rather, variation in the content of talk should be analysed for the 'situated action it performs' (Edwards, 2003, p. 33). Saying that the farmers pay the Zimbabweans low wages and also that they feel sorry for them are discursive resources which Wendy and Marco put to use for particular rhetorical purposes. Showing that farmers pay the Zimbabweans less than what they pay South Africans is used to de-legitimise the farmers' preference for Zimbabweans and the resulting state of affairs (as described by Wendy) in which Zimbabweans have filled up all the seasonal jobs; whereas saying that the farmers feel sorry

for them but not for their own people is a way of showing that the farmers have failed in their responsibility to the coloureds. Ultimately, then, these two apparently contradictory states of affairs are both deployed to de-legitimise the farmers' preference for Zimbabweans and to show that they (farmers) are responsible for the displacement of coloureds from their places on the farms in De Doorns. Thus, Wendy and Marco construe the whites/farmers, rather than the Zimbabweans, as having primary responsibility for this displacement, even though it is the Zimbabweans to whom Wendy's suggestions for remedial action are directed ('people must get back to their homelands'), and even though the Zimbabweans do also exercise a degree of agency in 'working for a lower rate' (line 28). It is noteworthy that several people we interviewed who primarily held farmers responsible for the problems in De Doorns still directed their suggestions for how to deal with this towards the Zimbabweans.

The next extract comes from a conversation which took place during the day with a group of people in Stofland, the largest informal settlement:

**Extract 7: Group of black South Africans (interview 27)**

- 1 **Thabo:** The farmers they are cheating them. [They ]
- 2 **Philippa:** [Cheat]ing them
- 3 **Thabo:** They are cheating [them] they give them, eh less money.
- 4 **Philippa:** [ja ]  
...((5 lines omitted))
- 5 **Thabo:** Only, that, with the Zimbabweans [that,] why we want don't, want them.
- 6 **Philippa:** [okay]
- 7 **Philippa:** Okay, okay
- 8 **Thabo:** We we we chase them away
- 9 **Philippa:** Okay.
- 10 **Thabo:** Yes=
- 11 **Philippa:** =So do you agree with that stuff that happened.
- 12 **Thabo:** Ja! I- I agree!
- 13 **Philippa:** Yoh
- 14 **Thabo:** I I I agree
- 15 **Philippa:** yoh [yoh yoh.] Kay
- 16 **Thabo:** [I agree ]
- 17 **Thabo:** I agree. With that.
- 18 (.)
- 19 **Philippa:** So you=
- 20 **Thabo:** =That's why we chase them away.
- 21 **Philippa:** okay. So, so you believe these stories.
- 22 **Thabo:** ini? ((what?))

23 **Philippa:** .hh Have you s-, do you know for yourself for a fact that they take small  
 24 wages  
 25 **Thabo:** I know! [I work] with them.  
 26 **Philippa:** [okay ]  
 27 **Philippa:** okay. [Okay ]  
 28 **Thabo:** [I know.]  
 29 **Philippa:** Alright. ((to Mveleli)) Ja?  
 30 **Mveleli:** ((speaking in Xhosa)) For myself, my problem is that I'm not working.  
 31 **Philippa:** ja,  
 32 **Mveleli:** At the farm I was working on,  
 33 **Philippa:** ja,  
 34 **Mveleli:** I was fired from work and then Zimbabweans were put in.  
 35 **Philippa:** oka::y  
 36 **Mveleli:** mm

Three similarities between this account and the previous one from Wendy and Marco are highlighted. The first is how farmers are the primary agents in the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship ('the farmers are cheating them', line 1, rather than, say, 'the Zimbabweans are cheating us'). Thabo then elaborates, 'they give them eh, less money' (line 3). Giving Zimbabweans less money could be construed in various amoral ways, for example, cutting farmers' costs, but in this case it is given as an example of 'cheating'. Cheating is an explicitly (im)moral act rather than an amoral (that is, morally neutral) one. This will prove to be a crucial difference from how the farmers construed their own actions with regard to employing Zimbabweans in Part 4 below.

The second similarity with the previous extract is that although the farmers are construed as the primary actors in this relationship, directing remedial action to the *Zimbabweans* is presented as an obvious solution to this problem: 'Only, that, with the Zimbabweans that, why we want don't, want them... we chase them away' (lines 5-8); and again, '*that's why* we chase them away' (line 20, emphasis added). Thabo does not provide any further explanation for why the Zimbabweans should be chased away when it was the farmers who were cheating them.

The third similarity is that jobs lost to the Zimbabweans is provided as an illustration of the consequences of this relationship for South Africans, in particular for Mveleli, the second speaker: 'I was fired from work and then Zimbabweans were put in' (line 35). Mveleli has

provided an ‘ostensibly disinterested factual report which allows others to follow through the upshot or implications of the report’ (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 158). The implications are that this is a wrong act because it is unfair: no other explanation for his being fired from work is given, such as him doing things that justified his sacking, say, or because the farmer had gone bankrupt (the fact that Zimbabweans were put in afterwards shows that the farmer had not) which would have made it morally justifiable. If there is no sound reason for why he had been fired, the possibility is left open that it was for suspect reasons, which Thabo had already provided at the start of the extract when he said that the farmers pay the Zimbabweans less money. The emphasis on lost jobs and on demanding them back will be a common thread throughout many of these interview extracts, and will provide a crucial contrast to the ways farmers construed their own actions and their responsibilities (or lack thereof) to the South African labouring community.

The third extract is from the same interview that took place in Stofland but with another speaker. Here a link between South African workers’ displacement by Zimbabweans, and the hypocrisy of farmers, is made more explicitly. At the start of the extract we were talking about the *dopstelsel*, the apartheid-era system in which farmers paid their coloured workers in alcohol:

**Extract 8: unemployed black man in Stofland (interview 27, translated from Afrikaans)**

- 1 **Philippa:** So they paid them in wine=
- 2 **Dawid:** =Ja.
- 3 **Philippa:** the dop thing
- 4 **Dawid:** ja. ( ) money. Friday, and the people Mo- every Monday, a litre on
- 5 Monday Tuesday Wednesday
- 6 **Philippa:** a litre=
- 7 **Dawid:** =ja a litre of wine.
- 8 **Philippa:** sjoewh
- 9 **Dawid:** These white people who say today that we are bad ((*sleg*)),
- 10 **Philippa:** Oka:::y >okay okay okay okay.< [Okay.
- 11 **Dawid:** [Today they say we are bad, but during that
- 12 time,=
- 13 **Philippa:** =m=
- 14 **Dawid:** =in Apartheid, they gave us drink and so on.
- 13 **Philippa:** o[kay
- 14 **Dawid:** [We, we made them great,
- 15 **Philippa:** hyew=
- 16 **Dawid:** but today they say we are bad.
- 17 **Philippa:** Sjoewfh::!



18 **Dawid:** ja  
 19 **Philippa:** mm  
 20 **Dawid:** We can't work. Why do they then say today because these people are  
 21 here, we can't work. But all those years, we worked under them drunk.  
 22 **Philippa:** okay  
 23 **Dawid:** Then they take us ((wind blowing: 7 seconds inaudible)) not work. What  
 24 about today?  
 25 **Philippa:** ja  
 26 **Dawid:** ja  
 27 (.)  
 28 **Philippa:** So do you think .hh=  
 29 **Dawid:** =They chased us off the farms so that today we are sitting in squatter  
 30 camps.  
 31 **Philippa:** Sorry?  
 32 **Dawid:** The white people chased us off the farms [so] that we are now sitting in  
 33 **Philippa:** [ja ]  
 34 **Dawid:** squatter camps.  
 35 **Philippa:** okay  
 36 **Dawid:** and now they want to put other people from other countries in our place.

Here the hypocrisy of farmers is discussed explicitly. The extract reads like a historical list of the ways farmers have abused their workers, to which their recent displacement by Zimbabweans is added as a kind of last straw. These abuses are, in order: (1) the fact that farmers paid their workers in wine; (2) the fact that 'we' made them great, by working under them drunk for all those years, but now they do not repay the favour, and accuse 'us' of being poor workers; (3) consequently, we can't work; (4) they have chased us off the farms so that we are now sitting in squatter camps; and (5) finally, they want to put other people from other countries in our places. Dawid has highlighted the hypocrisy in this state of affairs: it is in fact partly the farmers' own fault that South African workers have an alcohol problem. Moreover, he points out that it was these very same workers who made farmers great by working for them all those years even though they were drunk, and that this drunkenness was apparently not a problem at the time (lines 14-21). Now, however, it has somehow become a problem: 'today they say we are bad' (line 16). The implication is that it is being used as an excuse to employ the ostensibly more reliable, but actually more exploitable, Zimbabweans. Furthermore, the implication is that farmers owe coloured workers something because of how they 'screwed' them in the old days (lines 20-21). But they are failing to make good on this responsibility, and instead 'they chased us off the

farms so that we are now living in squatter camps (line 21). Thus the kinds of thanks that workers can expect for years of service from their erstwhile ‘fathers’, the farmers. Though no interviewees used this exact phrase, I will argue that this displacement – being chased off the farms – is presented as having been a huge kick in the teeth for South Africans; and that being replaced by Zimbabweans adds further insult to injury.

The next extract comes from interview 21 with three women in De Doorns Oos, the coloured location. They are explaining why they don’t want the Zimbabweans here:

**Extract 9: Young coloured women (interview 21, translated from Afrikaans)**

- 1 **Sanna:** We don’t want them here.  
2 **Gina:** Why don’t you want them here?  
3 **Sanna:** We don’t want them here because we want to work.  
4 **Gina:** Tell me, do you work=  
5 **Sanna:** =The farmers don’t want to pay us as much as they used to. And those  
6 people are work-, taking our places.  
7 **Gina:** mm  
8 **Sanna:** And last year Christmas, those people worked, but we didn’t. We enjoyed  
9 ourselves, got drunk, we didn’t want to have anything to do with other  
10 people. We didn’t want to have anything to do with the farmers, we ( )  
11 **Maria:** Because they work for R5 and R10, that’s enough for them, and that’s why  
12 we can’t get our day’s wage.

As Dawid did with his historical narrative in the previous extract, Sanna invokes a historical context by saying ‘the farmers don’t want to pay us as much as they used to’ (line 5). Though she does not further spell out the sins of the farmers as Dawid did, Sanna explicitly says that ‘those people [Zimbabweans] are...taking *our places*’. Jobs on farms are thus construed as places belonging to ‘us’ (coloureds or South Africans), but which are being usurped by ‘those people’ (Zimbabweans). As in other interviews, this is explained by Maria in the final lines: ‘Because they work for R5 and R10, that’s enough for them, and that’s why we can’t get our day’s wage’ (lines 11-12). Again, this is a narrative of displacement, but it also relates to the extracts in the next part of this section, in which the farmers’ employing of Zimbabweans was construed as a means by which South Africans’ bargaining power was being undermined.

The final extract in this section comes from interview 2 which took place in Stofland with a black South African contractor (labour broker). In the first paragraph, though it is not very

clear because of the inaudible speech in line 6, Vuyo describes how, on the farms, South African and Sotho workers slowly get replaced/displaced by Zimbabweans:

**Extract 11: South African Labour broker and his companion (interview 2)**

- 1 **Vuyo:** Ja::, you see, you see the ( ) the other problem is that uh, sometimes, there  
2 are six uh Zimbabweans, six Xhosa or six Sesothos. (**Philippa:** ja,) you see. But  
3 at the end of the day or at the end of the week or at the end of:, the month  
4 (**Philippa:** ja) you will see there's nine, ha nc ((tiny laugh and clicks tongue as  
5 if he made a mistake)) there's maybe twenty Zimbabweans, some of the  
6 Sothos, or some of the Xhosas or some of the coloureds, they do ( ). (.) That  
7 is what is happening in our place. (**Philippa:** okay) You see. Nothing, that is  
8 just the only excuse that eh, Zimbabweans is hard work, they are hard work  
9 hard, .hh you know that is just an excuse.
- 10 **Philippa:** What is the real reason then, if that's not the real reason then what is the  
11 real reason.
- 12 **Vuyo:** No, the real reason is that the, the reason why they love Zimbabweans
- 13 **Philippa:** ja
- 14 **Vuyo:** is that, they they want to pay, out of Zimbabweans,  
15 (.) ((tiny pause))
- 16 **Philippa:** okay
- 17 **Vuyo:** ((becoming intense and louder)): They gain, every month maybe sometimes  
18 fifteen thousand, they gain!  
19 (.)
- 20 **Philippa:** o[kay
- 21 **Vuyo:** [JOEW!
- 22 **Philippa:** kay
- 23 **Vuyo:** They gain a lot of money. (**Philippa:** kay) See. So they know they can't gain  
24 out of a Sotho or Xhosa, they can't gain
- 25 **Philippa:** ((interrupts)) cos you won't agree,  
26 **Vuyo:** because I'm getting straight and say, ((**Itumeleng** laughs)) 'I want my fifty  
27 Rand or uh my UIF' or,
- 28 **Philippa:** o[kay ]
- 29 **Vuyo:** [you ] see, 'I want my, my blue card or my UIF, I want it I want to go'. You  
30 see  
31 ((several seconds inaudible – wind blowing))
- 32 **Philippa:** O::h, kay
- 33 **Vuyo:** So Zimbabweans they can't, uh, you see there's a, uh, permit, that work  
34 permit, there was a word, but I forget about that.
- 35 **Philippa:** mm?
- 36 **Vuyo:** And one day, I'm asking a Zimbabwean, 'what is the meaning of this word'.  
37 He say, 'the meaning of the word is, if you come in South Africa as a  
38 Zimbabwean, you must shut up you must close your mouth, you don't have  
39 complaints, you must just close your mouth.' So that's why the white people  
40 make, they abuse the Zimbabweans. Because, they know they must close  
41 their mouth, they can't complaining,
- 42 **Philippa:** kay.

- 43 **Vuyo:** you see.  
 44 **Philippa:** ↓ja:::  
 45 **Vuyo:** It was a Zim↑babwean ↓telling me=  
 46 **Philippa:** =told you that.  
 47 **Vuyo:** Three, three of them.

At the same time as apportioning blame to the farmers, Vuyo's account addresses the 'dilemma of stake or interest: how to produce accounts which attend to interests without being undermined as interested' (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 158). As Wendy and Marco did, Vuyo accuses the farmers of using – in fact abusing – the Zimbabweans in the service of their illegitimate project, that is, to make money out of their workers: 'every month, maybe fifteen thousand, they gain!' (line 17-18). Furthermore, in Vuyo's account of how the Zimbabweans explained to him what the name of the work permit meant (probably 'asylum' or 'aslam' as it is known in De Doorns), farmers are shown to do this gaining by taking advantage of the Zimbabweans' especially precarious position as immigrants: 'When you come in South Africa as a Zimbabwean, you must shut up you must close your mouth, you don't have complaints...So that's why the white people make, they abuse the Zimbabweans. Because, they know they must close their mouth, they can't complaining' (line 37-41). By making these scathing accusations of farmers and showing concern for the way they take advantage of the Zimbabweans, Vuyo's account *also* pre-empts accounts we heard from farmers, who accused the labour brokers of doing exactly the same thing: cheating workers out of their full pay (extract 1), using Zimbabweans as a tool by which to 'manipulate' the market (extracts 2 and 3) and 'push the wage' (extract 1), in the service of an agenda which was first and foremost 'all about money' (extract 1). We had already established near the beginning of this interview that this speaker was a labour broker, but after that he barely mentioned his role as a broker and largely identified with other South African farm workers. An obvious alternative reason why Vuyo might be concerned about Zimbabweans getting jobs before South Africans is because brokers largely brokered for people of their own group (Xhosas, Zimbabweans, Sothos and coloureds – Misago, 2009) and since farmers were starting to prefer Zimbabwean brokers and workers (Misago, 2009), it may be that Vuyo's job was on the line. His accusations of farmer abuse and exploitation can be read as deflecting this interpretation of his concern. Someone who shows that they are this

concerned about exploitation is presumably unlikely to be doing it himself. Furthermore, citing three Zimbabweans who told him about how farmers treat them is another way of ‘resisting attempts, both actual and potential, to undermine [this account] as false, partial or interested’ (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 164). If it came from three Zimbabweans themselves, then (a) it demonstrates that he is friends with Zimbabweans to the extent that they would confide in him with something like this – deflecting the possibility that he is ‘xenophobic’ – and (b) it is likely to be a credible version of the relationship between farmers and Zimbabweans and not merely one that he made up to serve his own agenda. It is difficult to rebut this version because to do so would amount to accusing him or the three Zimbabweans of lying. In the final lines Vuyo successfully co-opted my support for his version by saying ‘you see,’ to which I responded with a sympathetic ‘↓ja:::’ (lines 43-44). Ultimately, this thorough account of how farmers manage to make money out of their Zimbabwean workers (by referencing the Zimbabweans’ precarious position) provides a plausible explanation of Vuyo’s initial description of how a team made up of workers of several different nationalities and groups is eventually replaced by Zimbabweans only (lines 1-6).

So far, all these extracts which dealt with the displacement of South Africans by Zimbabweans have depended upon a construction of the relationship between Zimbabweans and farmers as in some way exploitative or unfair, involving accusations of low pay, or cheating, exploitation or abuse. The farmers were construed as the main exercisers of agency in this uneven relationship, but directing action towards the Zimbabweans was construed as an obvious way of trying to fix this state of affairs (‘people should go back to their countries’, ‘we don’t want them here’, ‘that’s why we chase them away’). In the next section, a similar farmer-Zimbabwean relationship is invoked, but here, the consequence for South Africans is that their bargaining power is undermined.

## **Part 2B: the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship undermines South Africans’ bargaining power**

### **Extract 12: Black South African labour broker (Interview 2)**

- 1 **Philippa:** Um, so, can you tell us, in Afrikaans or Engels or Xhosa ((small laugh)), uh,  
2 what-, what do you think, like what do you think about this stuff that

3 happened, why did it happen, who was involved, and what do you think? (.)  
 4 Ja  
 5 **Vuyo:** (.) uh can I start?  
 6 **Philippa:** (.) Ja  
 7 **Vuyo:** ((conversation changes to Afrikaans)) Okay, (can I) speak Afrikaans?=  
 8 **Philippa:** =ja=  
 9 **Gina:** =ja  
 10 **Philippa:** that's fine  
 11 **Vuyo:** I also feel very sorry fo:r, the people s- from Zimbabwe who now have to live  
 12 there, u:h, and the reason why it happened, u:h, is because they never stood  
 13 with us.=  
 14 **Philippa:** =a[:h  
 15 **Vuyo:** [if we, if we as South Africans have problems here in, in De Doorns, then,  
 16 then they never, stood with us. So, that's why the, the the the commu:nity  
 17 decided, there must be further steps taken. Uh, also so that people can lead  
 18 our [lives].  
 19 **Philippa:** [ka::y]  
 20 **Gina:** Um, tell me you say, um, they never stood with you in the past.  
 21 **Vuyo:** mm=  
 22 **Gina:** =with the problems. What kinds of problems have you had in the past.  
 23 **Vuyo:** Like I say, we are farm workers here in De Doorns, we all agree whenever  
 24 prices need to be raised. Well, true, the state also raises its prices. But we  
 25 felt, if we as, um, workers ((wind blowing – 9 seconds inaudible))  
 26 **Gina:** mm  
 27 **Vuyo:** But now that- at the end of the day if we go there, then then they d- they  
 28 won't stand together with us, farm workers, when we go to the farms and  
 29 go talk to the people to hear whether they can't give us a raise.  
 30 **Philippa:** okay, I think I understood that=  
 31 **Gina:** =Are you, are you a farm worker?  
 32 **Vuyo:** No, not here. I'm a contractor.  
 33 **Gina:** Oh are you?  
 34 **Vuyo:** (ja)

Two features of this labour broker's explanation of why the violence happened are highlighted. Firstly, though he did not use the word, the fact that Zimbabweans 'never stood with us' invokes a sweetened or softened version of the discourse of *igundane*, the 'rat' or scab who is a sell-out and undermines bargaining processes or even, at a broader level, the liberation struggle (Dlamini, 2010). This soft invocation of the 'igundane' trope is given in such a way as to present the perpetrators of violence in the best, most reasonable light and to deflect a possible accusation that they (and Vuyo, the speaker) were 'xenophobic' or otherwise on morally shaky ground. Vuyo prefaces his explanation for why

it happened by saying how sorry he also feels for the people from Zimbabwe who now have to live in the camp (lines 11-12). By saying he 'also' feels sorry for them he constructs a rhetorical context, invoking a stance taken by people other than himself who feel sorry for them as well, to which he is adding his voice. This other group may have been us, the white interviewers, whom he assumed to be on the side of the Zimbabweans; or farmers, who had already made a display of what could be 'feeling sorry' for the Zimbabweans by having them to stay on their farms. In this way Vuyo assures us that he is on our side and that the explanation he is about to give us for why the Zimbabweans were chased away did not come from malicious intent. With this preamble, the explanation which follows can even be read as an expression of regret over an unpleasant but necessary circumstance: 'I also feel very sorry for, the people s- from Zimbabwe who now have to live there, u:h, and the reason why it happened, u:h, is because they never stood with us' (lines 11-13). Vuyo also manages to present the process of wage bargaining not as a racially charged and violent power struggle (as the farmers did, calling it 'manipulation') but as a mild event in which workers would 'go to the farms to go and talk to the people and listen whether they couldn't give us a raise' (lines 29-32). Presenting this as such a gentle and polite process then serves to render questionable why the Zimbabweans would not want to join in this process. This is left to the listeners to conclude for themselves. The answer which was ready to hand in De Doorns, and which we have already seen was circulating widely, was that it suited the Zimbabweans to accept less than the minimum wage and therefore they had no interest in taking a firm stance against the farmers. In this way Vuyo constructs the honest South African workers as having the moral high ground vis-a-vis the Zimbabweans who would not show solidarity by standing with them.

The second important feature of the extract is the way Vuyo presents the violence as a *community* response to the Zimbabweans' failure to show solidarity with South African farm labourers: 'that's why the, the the commu:nity decided further steps needed to be taken' (lines 16-18) and again 'we felt, as, um, community...' (line 26). This is in direct contrast to the way farmers presented the violence in Part 1, as 'not a whole community thing', the result of a criminal element minority exerting power over the rest of the community and intimidating them into doing what they wanted. Vuyo himself identifies with South African farm workers, and in doing so he completely edits out the role of labour brokers as a

separate group of instigators in the violence. All the way through this account, he identifies with South African farm-workers: 'they never stood with us' (lines 12-13 and again in 16); 'we as South Africans' (line 15); 'like I say, we are farm workers here in De Doorns, we all agree when prices must be raised' (lines 23-25). By speaking as one of the workers, he can present the violence as a response to a legitimate or genuine community grievance, as opposed to a matter of the acts of a few greedy or criminal labour brokers for their own gain, accusations we heard in the literature as well as in the farmers' explanations. The editing out of labour brokers turned out to have been highly strategic when Gina asked him if he himself was a farm worker (line 34) and he replied that he was actually a 'kontrakteur' (contractor or labour broker, line 35).

The extract constitutes a deviant case in the sense that the emphasis is on Zimbabweans' actions, or failure to act, and not on the role of farmers, who were barely mentioned except as people to go and talk to and 'listen whether they can't give us a raise'. Later on in the interview, however, Vuyo went on to say that in fact it was not the Zimbabweans but the white people who were the main problem in De Doorns. One of these extracts (extract 11) has already been examined above. The other is examined below.

### **Extract 13: South African labour broker (interview 2)**

- 1 **Vuyo:** But uh, I'm asking, so, I'm thinking that why the Zimbabweans don't want to  
 2 go back to Zimbabwe, you see. If they can go back, I think, the problem will  
 3 be getting solved here.
- 4 **Philippa:** you do
- 5 **Vuyo:** I think so. Because now, uh, the farmers use, white- *ag* they use uh, uh  
 6 Zimbabweans against us. Zimbabweans now, it's like a remote controller
- 7 **Philippa:** ((smiling)) ja
- 8 **Vuyo:** you see, so, 'if you don't do that, we have people to do that'. [You see]  
 9 **Philippa:** [oka:: ]y
- 10 **Vuyo** ((forcefully)): But if they are gone, they [( )]  
 11 **Philippa:** [they have no other, bargaining  
 12 [tool
- 13 **Vuyo:** [Ye::s. Because, because here they they they, the grapes must be  
 14 getting ripe, they must fix everything,
- 15 **Philippa:** mm
- 16 **Vuyo:** for, Januar-, January, the grapes will be ripe and then they must,  
 17 **Philippa:** okay
- 18 **Vuyo:** you see, so now, they know, 'ayi, if they don't want to go- to come to job,  
 19 I take my truck, go the play[ground,] fifty Zimbabweans ((clicks fingers once))  
 20 **Philippa:** [ja ]



- 21 **Vuyo:** my job is finished. So now, they, they, they abuse, they abuse the  
 22 Zimbabweans against us, you see. The problem is not the Zimbabweans the  
 23 problem is the white people.  
 24 **Philippa:** ah haa, okay  
 25 **Vuyo:** So they they are not the problem the problem is the white people.  
 26 **Philippa:** okay=  
 27 **Vuyo:** =Because they they abuse the (the the Zimbabweans against us.)

Here Vuyo provides the perspective of someone at the other end of the bargaining table on the same issues that were raised by farmers in Part 1, that is, the way labour brokers ‘manipulated’ the market to get what they wanted. As the farmers did for themselves in their versions, Vuyo construes the part of brokers (his own group) in creating ‘the market’ as hardly even being actions; whereas the actions of farmers he construes not only as agentic but as deeply morally problematic. It is farmers who say, ‘if you don’t do that, we have people to do that’ (line 8); who can go to the camp and hire Zimbabweans instead (line 18-20); who use the Zimbabweans ‘like a remote controller’ (line 6); and finally who ‘abuse the Zimbabweans against us’ (line 21-22 and 26-27). Labour brokers and South African workers do not actually *do anything* in this extract. All three farmers quoted previously argued that the labour brokers were manipulating the market by trying to chase out the Zimbabweans (extracts 1, 2 and 3) and playing one farmer off against the other (extracts 2 and 3). Here, Vuyo accuses the farmers of doing exactly the same thing: playing off one group of workers (South Africans) against another (Zimbabweans). In fact, the acts he describes could be seen as perfectly normal: if South African workers will not come to work, the farmers can go to the camp on the sports field (‘playground’) and hire Zimbabweans instead. (The farmers did not mention this fetching of Zimbabweans from the field, presumably because they did not see the need to account for their own actions.) In Vuyo’s account, the labour brokers do not feature in the explanation, while the farmers’ action of fetching Zimbabweans from the camp is construed as ‘abusing the Zimbabweans against us’ (line 21-22). As Wendy and Marco also did, Vuyo thus constructs the farmers as the primary trouble-causers: ‘The problem is not the Zimbabweans the problem is the white people’ (lines 22-23 and 25).

The next extract is from an interview with an elderly Xhosa-speaking man living in De Doorns Oos:

**Extract 14: Elderly black man in De Doorns Oos (interview 5)**

- 1 **Philippa:** do you think, like people call, people said this is xenophobia, and other  
 2 people said it's not xenophobia. What do you think?  
 3 **Old man:** This this is not a xenophobia because it's a negotiations.  
 4 **Philippa:** Okay ((laughing slightly))  
 5 **Old man:** yes

The opening question here was posed after hearing farmers argue for why the violence was not xenophobia. This man also agreed that it was not xenophobia. By 'negotiation' I understood him to mean a form of wage bargaining with farmers. Farmers argued that it was not xenophobia because it was a fundamentally about jobs, wages, (bargaining) power and 'the market'. As Vuyo's account did in the previous extract, then, this man's construction of the violence as 'negotiation' instead of xenophobia provides the point of view of someone on the other side of the bargaining table to the farmers on the same issue. 'Negotiation' is a venerable word, however, much more respectable than 'manipulation' (extract 2) or a 'power struggle' (extract 1) or 'rabble-rousing' (extract 3) which is how farmers construed it. Also, 'negotiation' locates it as part of a historical and political struggle. This extract and also the labour broker's account above can be read as examples of what the PASSOP leader referred to in Chapter 1 as 'trying to make it a racial battle and a historic battle instead of an issue of greed in a small community and political gain'.

#### **Extract 15: Group of black South Africans in Stofland (interview 27)**

- 1 **Philippa:** So do you think, do you think the farmers have changed? Is there, is there a  
 2 difference between these farmers, and, fifteen years ago?  
 3 ...  
 4 **Dawid:** >How can I say<, there are some of them from that time who ( ), they are  
 5 still here.  
 6 **Philippa:** okay=  
 7 **Dawid:** =ja. But the other bunch is also, there's a big difference ( ) >how can I say<,  
 8 between them, but the ( ) worked under their parents.  
 9 **Philippa:** okay. How can you, can you describe this difference?  
 10 **Dawid:** The difference is that today they take those people, né,=  
 11 **Philippa:** =okay=  
 12 **Dawid:** =Ja, and pay those people under the belt.  
 13 **Philippa:** okay.  
 14 **Dawid:** ja  
 15 **Philippa:** okay  
 16 **Dawid:** If we ask for so much money, then they say we are too expensive

- 17 **Philippa:** hyewh:=  
 19 **Dawid:** =ja, we are too expensive, they say.  
 20 (.)  
 21 **Philippa:** mhh  
 ...  
 22 **Dawid:** They must, they, they must now take us and give us jobs.  
 23 (.)  
 24 **Philippa:** .hh °ja:° hh (.)

In this extract Dawid touches on both issues that have been raised in Part 2: displacement and the undermining of South Africans' bargaining power. The question about whether the farmers had changed over the last 15 years was asked in the context of our earlier discussion about the *dopstelsel* (extract 8). The difference, says Dawid, is that now 'they take those people' (Zimbabweans) and 'pay them under the belt' (*onder die belt*). I am not exactly sure what 'under the belt' means but I assume that it means that farmers pay Zimbabweans in a way which is 'shady' – implying low wages, but also through dishonesty or processes which are not above board. The consequence of these shady dealings for South Africans is that now 'they say we are too expensive' (line 16). Dawid is being ironic when he repeats 'ja, we are too expensive, they say' (line 19). This is shown once again to be a kick in the teeth for South Africans because such a conclusion (South Africans being too expensive) is not even based on proper open bargaining processes and adherence to the minimum wage. If it were, South Africans' requests for 'so much money' might be construed as too high, but at least honestly or reasonably so. But if the farmers have been paying the Zimbabweans 'under the belt' then the likelihood is that in fact the South Africans' demands are entirely reasonable and it is the farmers who are 'screwing them over', rather than the South Africans who are being unreasonable. Dawid concluded this discussion with a demand that 'they must now take us and give us jobs' (line 22).

#### **Extract 16: Elderly black man in De Doorns Oos (Interview 5)**

- 1 **Philippa:** What do you think can be, can be done [from now on?]  
 2 **Old man:** [can be done ] Ja. Maybe yes.  
 3 Those who have permission to stay, they must be employed,  
 4 **Philippa:** okay,  
 5 **Old man:** but, the farmers must follow the law. [Labour] law  
 6 **Philippa:** [Ja ]  
 7 **Philippa:** ja ja ja of mini[mum wage] you mean?=  
 8 **Old man:** [they mu- ]

9 **Old man:** =Ja they must not cause, they must not violating the democracy of this  
10 country.  
11 **Philippa:** Okay,  
12 **Old man:** Farmers, by so doing, cla- uh causing clash among the people, Africans, they  
13 are, violating the democracy of this country.  
14 **Philippa:** °okay.° So you're saying they [cau- ja ]  
15 **Old man:** [ We don't want blood among our children  
16 [we are] (charitising) our children here. (.) °What was your question?°  
17 **Philippa:** [ ja: ]  
18 **Philippa:** Um when you say they,...((1 line omitted)) when you say they um, they're  
19 violating democracy and they, causing troubles between, Africans are you  
20 saying because they pay people low-, they pay some people lower wages  
21 than others? How are they doing it=  
22 **Old man:** =Yes I can explain eh [by say]ing [vio]lating the democracy [of] this country,  
23 **Philippa:** [ja ] [ja ] [ja]  
24 **Old man:** e::m, paying, people, Africans, as a subworker, you are violating the country,  
25 eh, the the the democracy. Because, you are sending back where we come  
26 from.  
27 **Philippa:** °O::h° hh  
28 **Old man:** >You see?<=  
29 **Philippa:** =Okay. You're going back to, u- to how it was before? you mean  
30 **Old man:** The oppression was signed not to be done again here in this [land here]  
31 **Philippa:** [Okay ] okay.  
32 **Old man:** Now, cla- causing clash among the people=  
33 **Philippa:** =Ja,  
34 **Old man:** of this country  
35 **Philippa:** Ja,  
36 **Old man:** you are violating the democracy of this country  
37 **Philippa:** Okay but what I want to know is, how are they causing this clash?  
38 **Old man:** by causing this clash,=  
39 **Philippa:** =Ja,  
40 **Old man:** people of De Doorns were complaining=  
41 **Philippa:** =Ja  
42 **Old man:** that farmers are employing only Zimbabwean people because they need,  
43 lesser [**Philippa:** okay] less money

This speaker produces an extended version of the 'racial' and 'historic' narrative with which the violence was justified. Again it is farmers who are the primary agents in the town's troubles: they are 'causing clash amongst the people, Africans' (line 12). This is followed by an assertion from the old man that 'we don't want blood among our children' (line 15). The implication here seems to be that if there is bloodshed then this will have been the fault of the farmers, who caused the clash initially, rather than of the people who actually carried out the violence. This is in contrast to the farmers and PASSOP members who laid

responsibility squarely with the people who planned, instigated and incited the violence, which farmers had nothing to do with. Secondly, and most importantly, is the way this speaker construes the farmers' not following the law. This is described as 'violating the democracy of this country' (lines 9-10, 24-25 and 36) and as 'sending [us] back where we come from' (line 25-26). He goes on to say that 'the oppression was signed not to be done again here in this land' (line 30). Thus the speaker construes the farmers' present-day actions as reviving the oppression of the apartheid era. This will prove to be the crucial difference between how members of the South African labouring community, quoted in this section, and farmers in Part 4 below, construed the hiring of Zimbabwean and South African labourers. We shall see that for farmers, the issues about the payment of low wages were mere technicalities or else simply rumours which had been spread on purpose, which they were easily able to rebut. For this man, however, farmers' dealings with their South African and Zimbabwean workers are an extremely highly politicised issue. (We did not find out what this man's occupation was – doing so may have helped to explain his stance on the violence.)

In the extracts in this section we have seen how the farmers, rather than Zimbabweans, were construed as the main agents in their relationship and also the main cause of the bad consequences this relationship had for South Africans. This gives an alternative view of farmers to the one we saw them give of themselves in Part 1. Their part in the processes that could have led to violence was construed as non-actions because their explanations depended on the workings of 'the market' – an entity presented as (a) not in need of particular explanation and (b) independent of themselves – and thereby their agency was edited out of these processes. The accounts given in this section, by contrast, construct their role in De Doorns *as agents*. Also, they construe farmers' preference for Zimbabweans as a morally and politically loaded matter. Farmers' paying Zimbabweans less than they would have had to pay South Africans was construed as 'cheating' them, as 'abusing the Zimbabweans against us', as an example of farmers' hypocrisy, as a way by which they had 'screwed over' the South African labouring community or 'kicked them in the teeth' (my terms), as violating the democracy of this country and as reviving the oppression of the apartheid days. Also, farmers construed the violence as most definitely *not* a community or

popular project. By contrast, Vuyo the labour broker construed it as very much a community initiative and thus legitimated it.

## **Part 2C: Deviant cases from South African workers who did not support the eviction**

There were, however, also farm workers who did not agree with the allegations against the Zimbabweans, who did not support the effort to evict them, and who said that on the farms where they worked everyone was being paid the same wage. Some of these views are presented below.

### **Extract 17: Elderly woman living on a farm (interview 35, translated from Afrikaans)**

- 1 **Gina:** What- how do you feel about the fact that they are sitting in the tents and that?  
2 **Ina:** I also feel sorry for them, because I ( ) because it can happen to us as well,  
3 because we are all people. Now, because, the majority of the others want them out  
4 of South Africa, so they can return to their places.  
5 **Gina:** Do you think, uhm- who do you think are the people who want them to get out?  
6 **Ina:** Because they don't want to- majority of the Bantus doesn't want the Zimbabweans  
7 in Stofland. That's why they're carrying on like that.  
8 **Gina:** Why do you think they don't want them there?  
9 **Ina:** Because they say that the Zimbabweans are taking our money here. But it's not like  
10 that.

### **Extract 18: Young coloured man (interview 17, translated from Afrikaans)**

- 1 **Piet:** Like I heard once there in the meeting, I heard them, just so out of my mouth, I  
2 heard another girl saying, that the farmers are paying the Zimbabweans R50. And  
3 that's what I don't believe.  
4 **Gina:** You don't believe it?  
5 **Piet:** I don't believe it. Because another lady told me, our farm people and the  
6 Zimbabweans are paid the same. If I get paid R400 ((a week)), then he gets paid  
7 R400. He can't get paid R50 more than me, or less than me. He gets paid the same  
8 money that I get paid. (.)  
9 **Gina:** You think it's just a story?  
10 **Piet:** It's a story. That they are making up.  
11 **Gina:** Why are they making up this story?  
12 **Piet:** Because they want the people out, out of our country. That's why.  
13 **Gina:** What do you think, what do you think will happen now? What do you think?  
14 **Piet:** They still want the people to be gone, I can't say anything.  
15 **Gina:** Mm. You are sad about your friends?

16 **Piet:** Yes, all my friends who I've met, yes. (.) I actually broke my heart for their parts. (.)  
 17 Look, because they are also God's children, why do they chase, why do they chase-  
 18 we are one nation. They are also suffering. (.) We are one people.

**Extract 19: Two old women (interview 22, translated from Afrikaans)**

1 **Gina:** Mmm. (.) So the people- it's just stories that are going around- are people talking  
 2 like that, that they are asking too little money, or working for too little money?  
 3 **Sara:** I don't know!  
 4 **Mari:** Uh-uh, we have ( )  
 5 **Gina:** You haven't heard something like this? Mm  
 6 **Mari:** Our people are saying so, who, who want them to go away.  
 7 **Gina:** Who are 'our people'?  
 8 **Mari:** The coloureds here, and those who were born here, the Bantus. They say that they  
 9 are working for little money  
 ((5 lines omitted))  
 10 **Gina:** let's say it is like that. Let's say that they, they are working for less money. Do you  
 11 think it's right?  
 12 **Mari:** I don't believe it. Man, everyone is paying everyone through the bank. One price.

There are two ways that these extracts constitute deviant cases. The first is that the speakers oppose trying to evict the Zimbabweans, either on moral grounds or on grounds of not believing the allegations that the Zimbabweans were working for low wages. On moral grounds, Ina in extract 17 says that 'I also feel sorry for them, because I ( ) because it can happen to us as well, because we are all people'. In extract 18, Piet says 'I actually broke my heart for their parts. (.) Look, because they are also God's children, why do they chase, why do they chase- we are one nation. They are also suffering. We are one people'. All the speakers also question or oppose the allegations of the Zimbabweans working for low wages. Ina also says, 'they say that the Zimbabweans are taking our money here. But it's not like that'. Piet in extract 18 says that 'I heard another girl saying, that the farmers are paying the Zimbabweans R50. And that's what I don't believe...Because another lady told me, our farm people and the Zimbabweans are paid the same. If I get paid R400, then he gets paid R400'. Finally, one of the two elderly ladies in extract 19 also says 'I don't believe it. Man, everyone is paying everyone through the bank. One price'. In this way, it is clear that not every member of the South African farm worker community believed the accusations about low wages or was in support of trying to get the Zimbabweans to leave.

The second way that extracts 17 and 19 in particular constitute deviant cases is that the interviewer (Gina) asks the participants to spell out who exactly they think are making the accusations about the Zimbabweans working for low wages. One woman says it was the ‘majority of the Bantus [who] doesn’t want the Zimbabweans in Stofland’ (extract 17, line 6), whereas the speaker in extract 19 says that it was ‘The coloureds here, and those who were born here, the Bantus’ (line 8). Interestingly, neither of these speakers actually uses the designation ‘South Africans’, or makes reference to national identity, when describing who it was that wanted to make the Zimbabweans leave. Rather, both refer to race groups instead – black and coloured people. Thus, not only do these accounts oppose the evicting of the Zimbabweans; they also raise the question about the extent to which ‘South African’ is a meaningful identity category for farm workers in this context, and complicate the three-group analysis presented so far. While we have seen that there were certainly coloured people who supported the eviction (e.g. Wendy and Marco above), all the participants who opposed the eviction in our interviews were coloured (that is, there were no black interviewees who opposed the eviction, although the small sample sizes limit what inferences we can draw from this). The two different accounts in extracts 17 and 19 above – the first claiming that it was the ‘majority of the Bantus [who] doesn’t want the Zimbabweans in Stofland’ and the second claiming that it was both ‘the coloureds here, and those who were born here, the Bantus’ – suggests that residents themselves are not in absolute agreement about whether coloured and black South Africans were united in their opposition to the Zimbabweans. This question of divisions and groups *within* the ‘South African’ work force will be addressed further in the 2012 follow-up case study below.

In the next section, we hear how Zimbabwean participants constructed and responded to the accusations of low wages which were used to justify the attempt to expel them.

### **Part 3: Zimbabweans’ responses to eviction rhetoric**

Even though farmers were construed as the main agents in the accounts in Part 2 above, it was the Zimbabweans who were the target of violence aimed at getting them to leave. Like Misago (2009), several Zimbabweans we interviewed highlighted the role of the ward councillor in instigating the violence. However, this will not be the focus here. Rather, Part 3 shows how Zimbabweans responded to the popular rhetoric which accompanied the



attempt to get rid of them – namely the accusations about taking South Africans’ jobs by accepting low wages – by reconstruing and then ‘neutralising’ them. They did this by using commonly-circulating and crudely-expressed stereotypes of black and coloured South Africans as inferior (see also Singh, 2010), such as being uneducated, ignorant, often drunk and absent from work, dishonest, lazy, jealous and full of excuses for why they were losing jobs to Zimbabweans. By contrast, Zimbabweans presented themselves as reliable, educated and hardworking. Importantly, in almost every case it was the farmers’ or the white people’s opinion of Zimbabweans which was invoked as confirmation of this favourable comparison. Zimbabweans thus presented it as perfectly reasonable that farmers would want to employ them ahead of South Africans. They acknowledged South Africans’ complaints, but ‘neutralised’ these by presenting them either as *excuses*, or as personal, psychologised responses born of jealousy, frustration or feeling left out (rather than, say, as meaningful critiques of the social basis of the farming system). (To some extent, this ‘psychologised’ construction of South Africans’ responses to the three-way relationship between themselves, farmers, and Zimbabweans matches the way some South Africans themselves presented the effects of the Zimbabweans’ presence in Part 2. However, in this case it also works to counter the ‘politicised’ or historical version, in which Zimbabweans and farmers were presented as colluding or participating in an exploitative or suspect relationship, the effect of which was the unjust treatment of South African workers by farmers.) Overall, then, the Zimbabweans showed that, far from having a legitimate grievance, South Africans really had only themselves to blame for whatever losses and problems they claimed to be experiencing in De Doorns.

The first four extracts demonstrate this ‘neutralising’ of the accusations of low wages. Zimbabweans agreed that they were being employed ahead of South Africans, but denied that this was because they accepted lower wages. The next three deal more directly with relationships between Zimbabweans and farmers.

#### **Extract 17: Zimbabwean man (interview 13)**

- 1 **Tinashe:** those were, real xenophobic attacks.
- 2 **Philippa:** ↓ja:::
- 3 **Tinashe:** And they say they don’t like us. Why? Because they saying, since two
- 4 thousand and, eh six, two thousand and seven, when::: many Zimbabweans
- 5 eh started to come in Stofland,=

6 **Philippa:** =ja,=  
7 **Tinashe:** =they say that the money didn't go up.  
8 **Philippa:** Which money.  
9 **Tinashe:** From the farms.  
10 **Philippa:** okay.  
11 **Tinashe:** And they are saying we are the ones who are causing that, even the prices  
12 from the town, they are saying we are the ones Zimbabweans who used to  
13 stock so many things like, to buy bulk,  
14 **Philippa:** so that, the prices go up.  
15 **Tinashe:** That is what they say.  
16 **Philippa:** Do you think it's true?  
17 **Tinashe:** It's not true.  
18 **Philippa:** okay  
19 **Tinashe:** Because they don't know the definition of inflation.  
20 **Philippa:** ((laughing)) oka:::y  
21 **Tinashe:** they don't know!=  
22 **Philippa:** =okay  
23 **Tinashe:** you see.  
24 **Philippa:** So they [think it's you guys], meanwhile it's just [inflation. ]  
25 **Tinashe:** [we know, ] [Especially] f::rom, the  
26 experience of what happened in our country. (**Philippa:** mm) we know when  
27 things are like this, things will be like this. (**Philippa:** m) Like right now, if  
28 you::, you have a thousand Rand in your pocket, you ↑ can't buy, ten, ten  
29 plastic ↓ bags from Shoprite full of, w-, groceries. It's no longer like that.=  
30 **Philippa:** =°ja.°  
31 **Tinashe:** It is inflation. But they don't know they say=  
32 **Philippa:** =o[ka:::y ]  
33 **Tinashe:** ['you are] the Zimbabweans who are causing this.' (**Philippa:** okay.) That is  
34 why they chase us there by the location.  
35 **Philippa:** oka:::y.  
36 **Tinashe:** you see?  
37 **Philippa:** ja ja ja  
38 **Tinashe:** But the main reason,  
39 **Philippa:** ja  
40 **Tinashe:** they don't want to work for themselves. They are lazy.  
41 **Philippa:** ((whispered)) Hyew  
42 **Tinashe:** So, we are hard workers,  
43 **Philippa:** mm  
44 **Tinashe:** they say that we are working for (sick) money.  
45 **Philippa:** For what money?  
46 **Tinashe:** (.) fo:r cheap labour.=  
47 **Philippa:** =Oh oh. [Oh]  
48 **Tinashe:** [Ja ] cheap labour. They, [they]  
49 **Philippa:** [ja ] that's what we hear a lot.  
50 **Tinashe:** There is nothing like that.=  
51 **Philippa:** =↓ja  
52 **Tinashe:** I'm telling you I've been here, since, two thousand and five December. When

53 I come here, in::, two thousand and five, they were getting paid forty-five  
 54 Rands. Per day. By that time. And then by, two:: thousand, and, six, season::  
 55 starting from October, they started to get paid fifty-five, fifty-two Rand. Right  
 56 now the (gazetted) which I know, it is about fifty-five Rands. So, that sixty  
 57 Rand, which we are getting from these white people, it's their own, wish to  
 58 put, five Rand up. (**Philippa**: ja) So that it will be sixty. But there are some  
 59 who are still giving their workers fifty-five Rand.  
 60 **Philippa**: oka::[:y  
 61 **Tinashe**: [But, there is no Zimbabwean, who has been working for forty Rand=  
 62 **Philippa**: =↓ja=  
 63 **Tinashe**: =here.

### **Extract 18: Zimbabwean women (interview 18)**

1 **Philippa**: okay the the r- the common thing that we hear is that, South Africans are  
 2 jealous of Zimbabweans? [Is that t- ]  
 3 **Thelma**: [ye:::s yes ]  
 4 **Margaret**: [[Ye:s ] The the most important thing is] that  
 5 Zimbabweans are very hardworking people you know. So when we we came  
 6 here it was, we came here just because our economy was not right  
 7 [in Zimbabwe] that's why we came here in d- in thousands.  
 8 **Philippa**: [ Ja ja ja ]  
 9 **Thelma**: m hm  
 10 **Margaret**: You know, so when the when we came here the, the white people, they liked  
 11 us so much. More than, the South Africans. So, the South Africans were  
 12 jealous that maybe we are mm, e::h, we are taking their jobs,  
 13 **Philippa**: ja  
 15 **Margaret**: we are being offered less money than they were being offered before we  
 16 came. But that's not the case.  
 17 **Philippa**: mm  
 18 **Margaret**: We are we are being offered the same amount of money. But the thing is  
 19 that when they paid on Friday eh Saturday, Sunday they get drunk. [Monday]  
 20 **Philippa**: ((whispered)) [hyew ]  
 21 **Margaret**: they don't go to work.  
 22 **Philippa**: Okay ((laughing))  
 23 **Margaret**: Tuesday they don't go to [work.]  
 24 **Thelma**: [Ja ] They [don't go to ( )]  
 25 **Margaret**: [They only go to ] work on Wednesday  
 26 and Thursday and Friday.  
 27 **Philippa**: Okay  
 28 **Margaret**: So the white people don't like them because of that they are lazy. So the the  
 29 the job there, it i- no one would be working just because they, they would be  
 30 sleeping at home they say they've got babalaas ((a hangover)).

### **Extract 19: Young Zimbabwean man (interview 12)**

- 1 **Philippa:** So do you think it's, do you think (.) most people don't like Zimbabweans or  
 2 only a few  
 3 **Farai:** a:h it's only few, those young guys [especially] (.) eh, school boys  
 4 **Philippa:** [okay ]  
 5 **Philippa:** okay  
 6 **Farai:** Mm. Mm mm, some of the old mm, old people they say, we must stay with  
 7 them (.) but [eh ]  
 8 **Philippa:** [oh!] ja,  
 9 **Farai:** the young ones they say 'we don't like them because we, all the  
 10 Zimbabweans we are used to go to work, we we are eh not even employed.'  
 11 [Because,] eh some of the white men say those people they are used to,  
 12 **Philippa:** [a::h ]  
 13 **Farai:** drunk,  
 14 **Philippa:** mm  
 15 **Farai:** on Monday they don't come to work,  
 16 **Philippa:** ja,  
 17 **Farai:** Tuesday they just work for only two days or three days per week=  
 18 **Philippa:** =okay  
 19 **Farai:** mm

#### **Extract 20: Zimbabwean man (interview 7)**

- 1 **Tendai:** (Worse still) now it's like, eh, e- even Zimbabwean people we are also getting  
 2 I mean, that opportunity of being labour brokers,  
 3 **Philippa:** Okay  
 4 **Tendai:** you see.  
 5 **Philippa:** okay,  
 6 **Tendai:** So, eh, if I'm a labour broker the first preference if I'm recruiting people to  
 7 work here I take Zimbabweans. (**Philippa:** Okay) You see, leaving out the  
 8 local people. You see. And eh, because, I mean by virtue of I don't know  
 9 why but, a Zimbabwean I can tell you they are very hard-working. (**Philippa:**  
 10 Ja) So if you are a farmer today, you are c- you you have this contract I mean  
 11 which is, (mainly) consists of Zimbabweans, .hh they work very hard. The next  
 12 thing is you're going to tell the other farmer. Now if that farmer is contracting  
 13 a coloured guy who is bringing in coloured people or a Xhosa person who is  
 14 bringing in Xhosa people, .hh now the next thing he doesn't like that person.  
 15 **Philippa:** ah  
 16 **Tendai:** He's looking again for another Zimbabwean.  
 17 **Philippa:** Okay  
 18 **Tendai:** So, that was where the the whole s- thing st- started.  
 19 **Philippa:** Okay  
 20 **Tendai:** So it was the first preference especially this season, it was us Zimbabweans  
 21 who were getting spe-, I mean the the the preference of getting [the jobs.]  
 22 **Philippa:** [Oka:::y ]  
 23 okay okay [okay ]  
 24 **Tendai:** [you see?]

25 **Philippa:** ja

26 **Tendai:** So these people they end up getting frustrated.

Three aspects of these pieces of conversation are highlighted. Firstly, they all make use of pejorative stereotypes of South Africans as jealous, lazy, ignorant, or unreliable because of drunkenness, which serve as explanations for their bad behaviour. In extract 17, Tinashe provides two reasons that South Africans gave for trying to chase Zimbabweans away and then writes them off as emanating from such ignorance and laziness. The first reason, that Zimbabweans make shop prices rise, he explains away as 'they don't know the definition of inflation' (line 19 – unlike the relatively knowledgeable Zimbabweans who do understand this 'from the experience of what happened in our country'). The other main reason, which is that 'they say we are working for (sick) money...for, cheap labour,' he writes off as an excuse for their own laziness: 'they don't want to work for themselves. They are lazy...so, we are hard workers,...they say we are working for (sick) money' (lines 38-44).

Similar stereotypes are present in extract 18. I (the interviewer) suggested that South Africans were jealous of Zimbabweans. Margaret agreed and offered a reason for this jealousy: 'Zimbabweans are very hardworking people...so the white people, they liked us so much. More than, the South Africans. So, the South Africans were jealous that maybe we are mm, e::h, we are taking their jobs,...we are being offered less money than they were being offered before we came' (lines 10-16). However, like Tinashe, she deals with this by showing that such feelings can be traced to South Africans' own shortcomings: 'but that's not the case. We are being offered the same amount of money. But the thing is that when they paid on Friday eh Saturday, Sunday they get drunk. Monday...they don't go to work' (lines 16-21). Exactly the same stereotype is offered by Farai in extract 19: 'some of the white men say those people they are used to... drunk...on Monday they don't come to work...they just work for only two days or three days per week' (lines 9-17). The recycling of such stereotypes of unreliable South Africans serves to show that the origin of their problems is within themselves (rather than being a structural problem).

Out of all the interviews, there was just one instance when a Zimbabwean explained South Africans' problems and complaints as having their origins in structural issues outside of

themselves. This was Tendai, the speaker in interview 20. It is not quoted here, but he acknowledged that South Africans had also become 'frustrated' because the influx of large numbers of Zimbabweans into the informal settlement had 'more or less suffocated' these settlements, including the already barely-existent health and sewage systems. Notably, however, this exception did not have anything to do with relationships with farmers either.

A second and related feature of these accounts is that they psychologise the responses of South Africans who feel left out and whose responses thus emanate from feelings of exclusion or jealousy. We have already seen how Margaret, Thelma and I called South Africans 'jealous' in extract 18. Farai's construction of 'the young ones [who] say "we don't like them because we, all the Zimbabweans we are used to go to work, we we are not even employed"' (extract 19 lines 9-10) resembles the excluded and envious state described by Margaret and Thelma. Similarly, in the fourth extract Tendai constructs the psychology of the left-out South Africans: 'these people end up getting frustrated' (extract 20, line 26). This psychologising of the South Africans' responses serves to take the sting out of the accusations by depoliticising them.

A third aspect of these extracts is that it is the white people's or farmers' opinion which is invoked as the standard by which the inferiority of South Africans and the superiority of Zimbabweans is confirmed. Margaret and Thelma state that Zimbabweans are very hard-working and that 'when we came here, the white people liked us so much. More than, the South Africans' (extract 18 lines 10-11). Farai also says that 'some of the *white men* say those people they are used to, drunk' (extract 19 lines 11-13, emphasis added). In extract 20, Tendai argues that 'the whole thing started' because farmers preferred to use contractors who contract Zimbabwean workers, rather than 'the local people' (lines 6-18). (Interestingly, his account in lines 10-14 of how farmers who have had good experiences of working with Zimbabweans will gradually stop using coloureds and Xhosas matches with Vuyo's account of this same process in extract 11 above). Finally, Tinashe in extract 17 shows that 'that R60 which we are getting from these white people, it's their own wish, to put R5 up, so that it will be sixty' (extract 17 line 57-58). In all these cases it is the white people's opinion or action which is presented as the final word by which Zimbabweans can confirm their own superiority. This opinion is also the point on which intergroup relations turn in all extracts except extract 17, where Tinashe explained that South Africans were

ignorant of inflation, and did not understand that this is why shop prices rise. This is a deviant case as it did not have anything to do with farmers' opinions.

In extract 17, Tinashe goes further than blaming South Africans for their own exclusion. He actually turns the allegation of low wages on its head to imply that if South Africans are not getting the wages they want perhaps this is their own fault. First, he constructs a history of wages since he first arrived in 2005, which has the weight of personal experience behind it: 'I'm telling you I've been here, since, 2005 December' (line 52). This was before the time when South Africans began to say that wages were not going up – 2006 or 2007 (lines 3-4). Then, he shows that they *did* go up between the time he arrived, when the wage was about R45 per day (line 53), and the time when these accusations began, when they were at R55 or R52. Now, he says, 'these white people' are actually paying Zimbabweans at R5 more than the minimum wage: 'that sixty Rand, which we are getting from these white people, it's their own, wish to put, five Rand up.' This construction of the whites as *wanting* to pay Zimbabweans above the minimum wage, possibly without even being asked to, suggests that they do this simply because they like Zimbabweans; it is not thanks to the South Africans' bargaining or negotiation efforts. This undermines the whole argument that was given by Vuyo (the South African labour broker) in Part 2, whose problem with the Zimbabweans was that they would not stand with the South Africans in asking the farmers for a raise. If farmers' actions are not even determined by bargaining efforts, then Vuyo's complaint is obsolete and loses its rhetorical weight.

So far, in all these accounts, the tensions between Zimbabweans and South Africans have revolved primarily around their relationships with the farmers. In the following three extracts we hear from Zimbabweans who were asked specifically about their relationships with the farmers. A stereotypical positive relationship makes an appearance in all of them, but is also problematised.

#### **Extract 21: Zimbabwean labour broker (interview 19)**

- 1 **Philippa:** I wanted to ask what's your relationship with the farmers like? How do th-
- 2                   how are things between you?
- 3                   (.) ((short pause))
- 4 **Constance:** a, a good relationship.=
- 5 **Philippa:** =Okay=
- 6 **Constance:** =Ja. We have got a very good relationship with the farmers.

7 **Philippa:** okay=  
 8 **Constance:** =ja  
 9 (.)  
 10 **Philippa:** ((smiling)) hm, that's all you have to say  
 11 **Constance:** Ja ((laughs))  
 12 **Philippa:** Okay ((laughing))  
 13 **Constance:** Ja:, the farmers we have got a very good relationship with the farmers,  
 14 because eh if I give them people to work, (.) [they] will be happy. And,  
 15 **Philippa:** [mm ]  
 16 **Constance:** only the thing, they want an honest people.  
 17 **Philippa:** Mm::  
 18 **Constance:** If they pay you you must pay the people cor[rec]tly.=  
 19 **Philippa:** [ja ] =ja ja ja  
 20 **Constance:** ja

This account from a Zimbabwean labour broker of the relationship between brokers and farmers could hardly be more of a contrast with the account given by Vuyo, the South African labour broker who was quoted in extracts 11 and 13 above. In Vuyo's account, farmers were 'abusing the Zimbabweans against us'. In this account, Zimbabwean brokers 'have got a very good relationship with the farmers' (lines 6 and 13). Like the extracts discussed above, Constance also makes use of an implicit comparison between superior Zimbabweans and inferior South Africans: 'And, only the thing, they want an honest people....If they pay you you must pay the people correctly' (lines 15-18). This is a reference to the crooked South African contractors whom the farmers implicated in Part 1. They had become 'persona non grata on farms' for not paying the people correctly. There is an implicit comparison here between the honest Zimbabweans, and the dishonest South Africans. Also, once again, it is the *farmers'* requirements which are invoked as the judge of Zimbabwean superiority: '*they* want an honest people' (line 16, emphasis added). Hence, Zimbabwean superiority is equated with or operationalised as fulfilling what the farmers want.

The next extract in this section demonstrates how the Zimbabwean women quoted above depoliticised their relationship with white farmers in order to maintain the common representation of Zimbabweans as the farmers' favourites. It was a deviant case in the sense that no other speakers had the opportunity to make this kind of comparison between white farmers in South Africa and those in Zimbabwe.



## Extract 22: Zimbabwean women (interview 18)

- 1 **Philippa:** we talk about the terrible things that South Africans have done to foreigners  
2 like this like last year and stuff but then I remember like, remember what all  
3 the stuff that Zimbabweans did to white farmers (.) in two thousand you  
4 know those years
- 5 **Thelma:** A- a- actually the white farmers were resisting. It's not that th- it was a bad  
6 thing. You'd find that someone would own five six farms
- 7 **Gina:** mm  
...((13 lines omitted))
- 8 **Thelma:** Actually they wouldn't have been driven away but they were resisting that  
9 force 'please hand over' what what, they didn't like it. They wanted  
10 compensation when actually th- when they took I mean [soil ] that  
11 **Elizabeth:** [land]  
12 **Thelma:** land from our forefa[thers] they never paid them [any] compensation.  
13 **Elizabeth:** [ Ja ]  
14 **Philippa:** [ Ja ]
- 15 **Philippa:** ja  
16 **Thelma:** They just grabbed the land and they were ploughing the land they really  
17 wanted and [ih definitely ]  
18 **Elizabeth:** [They made profit] ja.  
19 **Thelma:** They wanted compensation from us but to our forefa[thers] [ they]  
20 **Gina:** [They] never [paid ]  
21 **Thelma:** never paid anything  
22 **Philippa:** ja  
23 **Thelma:** to get that land you know. So it was unfair. It wasn't fair for us.  
24 **Philippa:** ja  
25 **Thelma:** ja definitely. So actually i- i- it wasn't really that we did a bad thing they  
26 were doing also a bad thing. We appreciate what they were doing. Definitely  
27 th- th- they were productive but they didn't like to share  
28 **Philippa:** [okay]  
29 **Gina:** [mm ]  
30 **Thelma:** with us the black ones.  
31 **Philippa:** Okay  
32 **Thelma:** [They didn't want to share.]  
33 **Philippa:** [ Like what do you, ] what do you think about the white farmers here.  
34 How are the white farmers here  
35 **Thelma:** Ah they're o- okay.  
36 **Margaret:** Very [okay.]  
37 **Women:** [ They] they love us.  
38 **Thelma:** They [appreciate] our work.  
39 **Margaret:** [Very okay.]  
40 **Philippa:** Okay  
41 **Margaret:** They like eh even if you walk in the street  
42 **Thelma:** ja  
43 **Margaret:** they stop their cars, 'Hey Zimbabwean [how] are you?'  
44 **Thelma:** [ ja ]

45 **Margaret:** They just [they appreciate us.]  
 46 **Thelma:** [ 'How are you, ] are you alright?'  
 47 **Margaret:** 'Are things okay?' They like us very much.  
 48 **Philippa:** okay  
 49 **Margaret:** If you go to to to to a farm looking for a job the first question they ask is that  
 50 'are you a Zimbabwean?'  
 51 **Philippa:** okay  
 52 **Elizabeth:** If it's a yes [they say]  
 53 **Margaret:** ['Are you] a Zimbabwean?'  
 54 **Elizabeth:** 'I want Zimbabwean workers'. [Even] that farmer didn't want people that  
 55 **Philippa:** [Okay]  
 56 **Margaret:** time but if you say you are a Zimbabwean definitely [he'll take you.]  
 57 **Elizabeth:** [You'll get job.]

These Zimbabwean women present the relationship between black Zimbabweans and white farmers in Zimbabwe as highly politicised, whereas their relationship with white farmers in South Africa is completely depoliticised. The political argument is that those who evicted white farmers from their farms in Zimbabwe were not doing anything wrong; rather it was the whites who were wrong to want compensation for their farms because land was first expropriated by white colonists without compensation to black people (lines 19-23). They were then at fault for resisting, and did not want to share with 'us the black ones' (line 30). But when asked, 'what do you think about the white farmers here... How are the white farmers here' (line 33), the women produce a sharply contrasting and depoliticised account of this relationship. Indeed they provide a caricature, showing just how friendly their relationship with the farmers is: they're 'very okay' (line 36); 'they love us' (line 37); 'they appreciate our work' (lines 38 and 45) and then an example of how the farmers stop in the street and talk nicely to them (line 41-43). Exactly the same arguments about land expropriation, 'sharing', and compensation could be applied to white South African farmers as those that have just been applied to Zimbabwean farmers; but here these Zimbabwean workers strategically do not locate their own relationship with South African farmers in the same political history. This is because, as we have seen, the Zimbabweans' own eviction was accompanied by this same kind of highly politicised historical racism discourse (what PASSOP described as 'trying to make it a racial battle and a historic battle'). It is therefore in the Zimbabweans' own interests not to apply the same lens when viewing their own

relationship with the farmers, in order to maintain the image of friendly relations between them.

The penultimate extract in this section constitutes a deviant case in that it was the only time any of the Zimbabweans we interviewed entertained the accusations of low wages, and dealt with them as if they may have been true, rather than denying them outright.

**Extract 23: Group of Zimbabwean men (Interview 31)**

- 1 **Thomas:** Even if it was the c- the the case of the money that we were chased from  
2 Stofland, even if it was, you would you think that South Africans né, if they  
3 go to Zimbabwe there, when they get to Zimbabwe n- maybe they'll be  
4 working in the farms as we are doing right now né, then they'll be, they'll  
5 get there, they'll, w- w- where would they get the powers to be in front of  
6 Zimbabweans so that they can talk to the white man that 'you have to raise  
7 the money'? Where would they get that powers from? Isn't it they would be  
8 foreigners?  
9 **Gina:** mm

Here Thomas constructs it as a commonplace that Zimbabweans are relatively powerless because of their status as foreigners and thus defends them against a criticism of not joining in with wage bargaining. Zimbabweans lack 'powers' because of this foreigner status and consequently do not go and 'talk to the white man that "you have to raise the money"' (line 6-7). This is a similar state of affairs to what Vuyo the labour broker described in Part 2, when he said that the farmers 'abuse' the Zimbabweans because 'they know they can't complain' and they have to 'shut their mouth'. However, that accusation served to put blame on farmers, and also to demonstrate that Vuyo's own explanation of the violence was not entirely selfish: he demonstrated that he too was concerned for the Zimbabweans. Thomas's account similarly constructs Zimbabweans as being at a disadvantage or in a powerless position, but this is because of their structural position as foreigners, and the same would apply to South Africans if they were working in Zimbabwe (line 2-3, 7-8). This account thus also serves to undermine the allegations of collusion or an alliance between Zimbabweans and farmers, rather than to bolster them. In Vuyo's account, the fact that Zimbabweans did not go along with the South Africans to engage in wage bargaining was the main reason for their eviction (extract 12). In this account, Thomas asks South Africans

to consider that not going to talk to the 'white man' is a reflection of their disadvantaged, rather than their advantaged, structural position.

The final extract in this section explicitly problematises the good relationship between farmers and Zimbabweans. As we have seen, Zimbabweans acknowledged that the farmers preferred them because they were hard workers. This good relationship was thus explicitly based on their own usefulness. The speaker in the final extract below was the only Zimbabwean who reflected critically on this in relation to the farmers' 'generosity' towards the Zimbabweans after they left the informal settlements. He made a distinction between whether their support was genuine or whether it was only offered because farmers needed the Zimbabweans' labour:

**Extract 24: Zimbabwean engineer (interview 7)**

- 1 **Philippa:** how do the f-, how do the f- white farmers treated you as a worker?  
2 **Tendai:** Ja that's another thing. You know, you know these things they've got both  
3 sides of the coin.  
4 **Philippa:** ja  
5 **Tendai:** The, like I told you Zimbabweans they're hard-working. Farmers wouldn't  
6 like to lose someone who's as hard-working as a Zimbabwean. hh And eh of  
7 course they've been supportive, and again you can ask whether it was  
8 genuine support because (**Philippa:** mm) because he's now that's the pick of  
9 of of of the harvest whatever of the of [the] of ( ) so so the whole thing is,  
10 **Philippa:** [ja ]  
11 (.)  
12 **Philippa:** ja  
13 **Tendai:** You can't really tell whether someone is liking you or not ...((2 lines omitted))  
14 or they want your labour, [you see?]  
15 **Philippa:** [ Ja ja ] okay. Oh ja your la- money if it's in  
16 [Stofland or labour]  
17 **Tendai:** [ it's or labour ] if it's in the farm.  
18 **Philippa:** ja  
19 **Tendai:** You see so, you can't really tell but overall you've got to make your own, you  
20 know  
21 **Philippa:** decision or  
22 **Tendai:** your own ja [ decision ]  
23 **Philippa:** [judgement]  
24 **Tendai:** or g- your ow- acc- exactly your own judgement according to what you are  
25 seeing.  
26 **Philippa:** ja  
28 **Tendai:** So, so far from what I've seen, they've been very very supportive.  
29 **Philippa:** okay. Like taking people onto their farms to [stay and that stuff]  
30 **Tendai:** [ Yeah ja ] they've



above, including the accusations of low wages and that their relationship with the Zimbabweans was costing South Africans jobs. We also hear their version of their relationships with their Zimbabwean and South African workers.

#### **Part 4: Farmers' responses to criticisms against them**

This section has two focuses, each on a different way by which farmers constructed the origins and nature of the accusations against themselves. Firstly, they constructed these accusations as propaganda coming from the same people who instigated the violence, and as consisting of contraventions of technicalities over the minimum wage and job losses for South Africans. Farmers were then able to dismiss these easily in two corresponding ways: by showing that they were highly interested and therefore un-credible rumours that were being circulated in order to further certain malevolent agendas; and secondly by citing audit procedures, statistics, and personal experience of labour shortages to prove that no low wages were being paid and no jobs were being taken. This makes sense in light of the local rhetorical function of farmers' responses to the job-taking accusations, which was to demonstrate that at that particular time of the year (*uitkniptyd*) there was a *shortage* of labour, and therefore that it could not be true that South Africans' losing jobs to Zimbabweans was a real immediate reason for the eviction. However, by constructing their answers to address this particular and immediate concern, the farmers did not address the deeper relational significance and meaning that issues of low wages and job losses had for South Africans as expressed in Part 2 above, such as that farmers were failing to fulfil their responsibilities to the South African labouring community.

The second emphasis, then, is on how farmers responded when they were *asked directly* to consider complaints that were constructed as coming from ordinary members of the South African labouring community (rather than the instigators of the violence). On the whole, farmers acknowledged these complaints, but still justified their preference for Zimbabweans by appealing to the imperative of free-market capitalism and stereotypes about South African workers. These stereotypes were largely the same as those used by the Zimbabweans. Farmers used both these justifications to argue that, despite feeling concern for their workers, ultimately they did not have any responsibility to the South African labouring community, and that their preference for Zimbabweans was totally justified given

that they were more productive and reliable. Issues involved in running a business (such as who is employed) were thus not construed as politicised or moral matters, since they were dictated by the impersonal 'market'. As we saw in Part 1, 'the market' was not construed as something constituted by the actions of farmers.

#### **Part 4A: Accusations construed as coming from interested parties with a malevolent agenda**

The first four extracts come from farmers who showed that the accusations against them originated with the 'minority grouping' mentioned in Part 1. They cited statistics, audit procedures and personal experience to show that it was *not* the case that their preference for Zimbabweans was (a) due to being able to exploit them or (b) costing South Africans any jobs.

##### **Extract 25: HTA Chairperson**

- 1 **HTA:** And then the story started walking in the m-, newspapers. [And] they  
2 **Philippa:** [ja ]  
3 **HTA:** attacked us viciously.  
4 **Philippa:** ja? What did they say  
5 **HTA:** because, we underpay.  
6 **Philippa:** mhmm  
7 **HTA:** we pay Zimbabweans less::, so that's why we used the Zimbabweans,  
8 because we can pay them less. Than the, minimum wage=  
9 **Philippa:** =mm, that's what we read ja. [Or I read  
10 **HTA:** [and uh, it's cheap la[bour. That is so, un tru::e,  
11 **Philippa:** [mm  
12 **HTA:** you are not allowed by law to do that you have to give in your books, you get  
13 audits all the time. Then said what we underpay all the people. And um, so I  
14 phoned the Minister... ((name)), I said Minister... ((name)), please. Come, the  
15 Department of Labour and Department of, Agriculture. Come out and do a  
16 financial audit on all my farms. (.) .hh On ALL my farms. Now I guarantee you,  
17 that not one person, not one farmer will be caught not paying, not complying  
18 with the law.

##### **Extract 26: Farmer 2**

- 1 **Danie:** It's such a joke when everybody's [going up] about this:: [um  
2 **Philippa:** [°mm° ] [minimum wage  
3 thing.  
4 **Danie:** Minimum wage thing, because I mean, I don't know if you saw there was a,

5 .hhh some(thing) from UCT, there was a very good article in the Cape Times  
6 it's a, he's it's it's a guy from UCT, I can=  
7 **Philippa:** ((to Gina)) =did you read it?  
8 **Danie:** I can actually get you the, the ar- we have the article somewhere  
9 [on the farm]  
10 **Philippa:** [okay ] okay  
11 **Danie:** They basically stated that, last year I didn't even know about it they did a  
12 study...and, he actually wrote that he's actually he comes from he's got a  
13 background in, in in unions, and they did a study here and they said you know  
14 it's very surprising that the statement was made because they did the study  
15 last year and they found that when it comes to seasonal labour, the pay last  
16 year already was, on average ten Rand more than minimum wage.  
17 **Philippa:** huh!  
18 **Danie:** So I mean this thing is;  
19 **Philippa:** Ja. So do you think that's, I mean, do you think that's a story which is cooked  
20 up deliberately, I mean,  
21 **Danie:** Definitely, yes.=  
22 **Philippa:** =okay.  
23 **Danie:** No definitely. And it was a story that, I mean the municipality everybody was  
24 on that thing, and uh now they suddenly retracting and, u:m, cos we were  
25 taking a lot of abuse,  
26 **Philippa:** mm,  
27 **Danie:** and uh we threatened, and we said we will not we will um, move away  
28 from the process, we will leave the municipality and uh police on their own,  
29 [we wouldn't care, we, you know  
30 **Philippa:** [mm  
31 **Danie:** to be of any insistence whatever,=  
32 **Philippa:** =oka::y  
33 **Danie:** you know they continue, and suddenly, there there's apologies and  
34 **Philippa:** ah haa  
35 **Danie:** u::m, everything because they've got a seriously hot tomato, u::h, uh that  
36 they sitting with here.  
37 **Philippa:** °Ja:°

### **Extract 27: Agri Wes-Cape CEO**

1 **AWC:** I'll show you we did a count  
2 **Philippa:** m hm  
3 **AWC:** the people we ((noises of paper shuffling, then silence)) what have I done  
4 with it, (here's it) permanent workers, in De Doorns, 5337.  
5 **Philippa:** ja,  
6 **AWC:** Seasonal workers Zimbabweans, 1558.  
7 **Philippa:** uh huh,  
8 **AWC:** Locals, 5701. Sothos 630. Other. 894 that is local towns like uh, Touw's River,  
9 [Worcester]  
10 **Philippa:** [mm ]



11 **AWC:** and those. Total seasonal workers, 8783. 14120 ((the total with permanent  
 12 workers)). We need about seventeen thousand people.  
 13 **Philippa:** Yoh. So where, at the moment, where are the other people coming from,  
 14 other towns?  
 15 **AWC:** There's a, there's a [shortage] there's a shortage.  
 16 **Philippa:** [it's short]  
 17 **Philippa:** okay  
 18 **AWC:** we're trying to get hold of this of the labour brokers but we believe the  
 19 labour brokers cannot have more than maximum one thousand seven  
 20 hundred.  
 21 **Philippa:** okay  
 22 **AWC:** maximum.  
 23 **Philippa:** okay  
 24 (.)  
 25 **AWC:** Now, who's taking whose job here  
 26 **Philippa:** Ja ((laughing quietly))  
 27 **AWC:** It's the intimidation,  
 28 **Philippa:** mhm  
 29 **AWC:** selling a story, sitting in the shebeen buying a beer for somebody.  
 30 **Philippa:** mm

### **Extract 28: Farmer 3**

1 **Philippa:** we were, Stofland we've been in Stofland, and, like the, I mean Gina  
 2 and I split up so we didn't, we weren't talking to the same people and Gina  
 3 had a different, talked to different people but like, the overwhelming kind of  
 4 sense among the little group that I of guys that I talked to was just like, 'they  
 5 are taking our jobs, they are taking our jobs.' Like, at the end of the day,  
 6 there's n- there's, ja. I mean,  
 7 **Gert:** And are these people, do you interview during working hours? Or after  
 8 working hours because I'm short of labour at the moment, and I'd quite, like  
 9 to know who that those individuals are co- cos, [I've got,  
 10 **Philippa:** ((smiling)) [that they can come and  
 11 work  
 12 **Gert:** I've got about fifty positions open  
 13 **Philippa:** Ja I, I also wonder about that because these places are mostly empty,  
 14 during the day=  
 15 **Gert:** ja=  
 16 **Philippa:** =I mean Stofland is, pretty empty, so it's not like, it's not like a lot of people  
 17 are sitting around,  
 18 **Gert:** Whose jobs are being taken, that's what I wanna know.  
 19 **Philippa:** [ja]  
 20 **Gina:** [m]  
 21 **Philippa:** Well, hh (.) ja, what is, wha- what's  
 22 **Gert:** It's a conception that's been, built, or established by this minority grouping,=  
 23 **Philippa:** =m hm,

24 **Gert:** saying, [they s-, ]  
 25 **Philippa:** [they wo]rk for [lower wages ] or  
 26 **Gert:** [they spread rumours]  
 27 **Philippa:** m  
 28 **Gert:** and said, 'ja these people are prepared to work for lower than minimum  
 29 wage.'=  
 30 **Philippa:** =ja.  
 31 **Gert:** 'These people, are taking your jobs.'=  
 32 **Philippa:** =ja ja kay  
 33 **Gert:** everyone gets, all, in a in a panic

These accounts successfully deal with the accusations (as the speakers have constructed them) as interested and therefore un-credible, by suggesting that they were rumours started by the same people who had vested interests in instigating the violence. In extract 26, farmer 2 answers my question about whether they were a story 'cooked up deliberately' with an emphatic 'Definitely yes...No definitely'. The Agri Wes-Cape CEO writes them off as started by people who wanted to 'sell a story,' and/or were (more vaguely) the result of 'intimidation' (extract 27). Farmer 3 said they were 'a conception that's been, built, or established by this minority grouping' (extract 28). The result of this conception and the spreading of 'rumours' (line 26) is that 'everyone gets all, in a in a panic' (line 33). In this way farmer 3 is able to write off all the accusations we heard in Part 2 simply as everyone getting all in a panic, and therefore not reflecting a rational evaluation of the real state of affairs. The speakers in Part 2 *also* cited their personal experience of being fired and replaced by Zimbabweans (extract 7); they expressed indignation over the farmers' lack of care for 'their own people' while showing concern for the Zimbabweans instead (extract 6); Dawid in extract 7 argued that the farmers were guilty of hypocrisy; and the elderly man in extract 16 went so far as to accuse the farmers of 'violating the democracy of this country.' In these accounts from farmers, however, invoking the influential but suspect minority as an explanation for where these ideas come from constructs ordinary South Africans as not being able to discern the accuracy of the situation for themselves. If all these accounts can be written off simply as 'everyone getting all in a panic' or as 'a story cooked up deliberately' or as 'selling a story, sitting in the shebeen buying a beer for somebody' (extract 27) then the farmers are off the hook.

Farmers successfully constructed their own accounts as factual by producing detailed statistics (extract 27); or by stating the hard fact of personal experience of having 'fifty positions open' (extract 28); or citing corroboration from external, neutral sources – the 'guy at UCT' with a 'background in unions' (extract 26 – likely referring to Theron (2010)) and the Department of Labour (extract 25) – thereby demonstrating that the accusations of low wages and of South Africans losing jobs to Zimbabweans had no basis in fact. Having a 'background in unions' means that even someone who could be expected to side with the workers has in fact found in the farmers' favour. The HTA chairperson also argued that the accusations of low wages were false by saying that (a) farmers were regularly audited and (b) none of them would ever not abide by the law anyway (extract 25). Edwards and Potter observed that

reports will successfully manage the dilemma of stake only if they are either accepted to be factual or have a rhetorical organisation which makes them difficult to rebut or undermine. Indeed, in analytical terms, being accepted and being difficult to rebut will often amount to precisely the same thing. (1992, p. 160)

The accounts above are extremely difficult to undermine because the options open to the listener for trying to do this would basically be non-options. One would be to tell the farmers that their statistics were incorrect; or the study done by the 'guy at UCT' was flawed or its results inaccurate; or, in the last case, to tell the farmer that he did not really have a labour shortage. None of these are options available to someone who does not have an insider's knowledge of the farming situation. 'Whose jobs are being taken, that's what I wanna know' (extract 27) and 'Now, who's taking whose job here' (extract 28) are strong rhetorical questions given the facts with which they have been prefaced. In extract 28 I even agreed with farmer 3 – we *had* been in the informal settlements during the day and indeed they were relatively empty – though not so empty that we did not find some unemployed people to interview (interviews 2, 3, 4 and 27). The farmers' accounts were thus successful in constructing and then undermining an accusation against themselves that their preference for Zimbabwean workers was costing South Africans jobs. Of course, the very high demand for labour at this time of the year was not going to last more than a few weeks, and so the state of supply and demand would have changed later in the season.

Another look at extract 25 from the HTA interview gives a clue about how these accounts, though rhetorically strong, bypassed the substance of the complaints that came from speakers in Part 2 about displacement, lost jobs, and the undermining of South Africans' bargaining power. The HTA chairperson says in the last three lines, 'Now I guarantee you, that not one person, not one farmer will be caught not paying, not complying with the law' (extract 18, lines 16-18). She makes the issue to be about whether farmers are *law-abiding* or not, and she is prepared to back up her claim that none of them will be found not to be law-abiding by inviting the Departments of Labour and Agriculture to come and do an audit. The central issue is reduced to a legal technicality: whether farmers are law-abiding or not. In fact she abstracts the accusation, midway through constructing it, from 'not paying-' to 'not complying with the law' (line 18). This abstraction helps to divert attention away from the substance of the complaints (Wetherell & Potter, 1989). All the farmers' facts and figures also 'proved' that they had not done anything *technically* wrong. In Part 2, however, we saw that the issue of low wages was construed as much more than a mere legal technicality. It was bound up with accusations of unfair favouritism, changed loyalties, hypocrisy, abuse, cheating, a sense of being 'kicked in the teeth' (my term), and even a revival of the oppression of the apartheid era. The responses from farmers avoid almost all these meanings which were ascribed to 'low wages,' and reduce the accusations against them to technicalities which they were then easily able to rebut. This is perhaps because these accounts were geared towards undermining the accusation from interested parties that farmers had some responsibility for the violence, whereas not all the accounts in Part 2 were explanations for violence *per se*. In constructing their responses in this way, farmers were able to respond to the accusations without needing to revise anything fundamental about the farming system or their relationships with their various workers.

#### **Part 4B: Farmers' responses to accusations which were constructed as coming from ordinary members of the South African labouring community**

Part 4B shows how farmers responded when accusations or complaints were offered and constructed in the interviews as coming from 'ordinary' members of the South African labouring community rather than the instigators of violence. Some of these were cases where I presented farmers with other interpretations of the farmer-Zimbabwean

relationship, and then asked them to comment on them. With the exception of farmer 3, all the farmers conceded or agreed that they did prefer Zimbabweans. They justified this preference by invoking the requirements of running a successful business, and then showing that, within such a system, if South African workers were being passed over in favour of Zimbabweans it was their own fault for being belligerent and unreliable. Their reasons for preferring Zimbabweans were thus very similar to those given by the Zimbabweans themselves. Their choice of workers was thus rendered amoral and apolitical by the dictates of the market and the necessities of running a business. In these ways we see that the imperative of free-market capitalism was a powerful justifier of the status quo.

### **Extract 29: Agri Wes-Cape CEO**

- 1 **Philippa:** um, another thing that we, hear, which, people, which some people have said
- 2                   aloud and other people have said, quietly, is that the South Africans, the
- 3                   farmers really do prefer Zimbabwean workers because, they, for whatever
- 4                   reasons they, better educated, they well-spoken in English, they more
- 5                   hardworking, or whatever. Whe-, you know, whether individuals agree with
- 6                   that or not, whatever, but that's what some people have said. So, and then
- 7                   this one guy we spoke to in Stofland, said, he made a very interesting
- 8                   comment. He said, the farmers, have treated us, so badly, in like the whole
- 9                   history of South African, S-, South Africa, not particularly now but just in
- 10                  general, they, you know, peo-, you know farmers have beaten their workers,
- 11                  treated them badly, paid them by dop system, and now suddenly when we
- 12                  stand up, it's us who are like the bad criminals. You know what I mean. I mea-
- 13                  do you have a response to that.
- 14                  (.)
- 15 **CEO:** ((strongly)) Nobody forces them to work on the farm.
- 16 **Philippa:** mhm,
- 17 **CEO:** Is there a law that to say they've gotta work there.
- 18 **Philippa:** But they're stuck.
- 19 **CEO:** Now wait a minute!
- 20 **Philippa:** okay,=
- 21 **CEO:** =They stuck. [Is it, is it of- is it agriculture's problem that they stuck?
- 22 **Philippa:** [mhm
- 23                  (.)]
- 24 **Philippa:** °There's no law [to keep them there.°
- 25 **CEO:** [There's no law. So, nobody says is forcing him to work,
- 26                  [there.]]
- 27 **Philippa:** [mm ]
- 28 **CEO:** The second thing is why, why would we work with, with the Zimbabweans.
- 29                  Because the Zimbabweans, is there, every day, for the whole time that
- 30                  they've got to work.
- 31 **Philippa:** m

32 **CEO:** I cannot af- I cannot employ people, that is maybe not there on a Monday,  
 33 still babalaas on a Tuesday, and, by Friday if it was a if it was a All-Pay that  
 34 week you don't see them that week.  
 35 **Philippa:** m.  
 36 **CEO:** I've got to, put my cold chain going, the ships is in the port, the space that  
 37 I've bought, at Tesco, cannot be empty.  
 38 **Philippa:** Hmm.  
 39 **CEO:** So now I must say, to Tesco, 'just keep the space empty, because these guys  
 40 didn't come to work.'

### Extract 30: Farmer 2

1 **Danie:** to be quite honest, there's a work ethic issue. I [mean ] you have problems  
 2 **Philippa:** [°Mmm°]  
 3 **Danie:** on Mondays you have problems on Fridays, you have problems when  
 4 there's All-Pay being paid, u:m whereas the Zimbabweans that doesn't exist.  
 5 **Philippa:** ((low and quiet)) ja  
 6 **Danie:** so, ↑ja ↓to a certain extent I think Zimbabweans, I mean, uh were,  
 7 preferred.  
 8 **Philippa:** okay. [Ja.  
 9 **Danie:** [in in a lot of cases I mean, to give you an example, um the first time I, I  
 10 I had the Zimbabweans it was so funny I mean u:m, I was my my my lunch  
 11 hour is twelve-thirty to one-thirty, and I was sitting in my office in the shed  
 12 and they were working and I was doing emails and stuff, and I was looking  
 13 and it was, quarter to one, and I, and they were still working. And I went up  
 14 and say to George I said 'George what's going on here' ((adopts generic  
 15 'black' accent)) 'No boss you didn't tell us to go.' ((accent ends)) You know  
 16 that kind of, u:h, [( )  
 17 **Philippa:** [like a little, s-  
 18 **Danie:** Yes. Normally, they'd, the rest of you would be out by, twenty-five minutes  
 19 past if you don't stop them.  
 20 **Philippa:** okay=  
 21 **Danie:** =so, ja, they are tremendous and they're very nice people.

### Extract 31: Farmer 1

1 **Francois:** ja it's a difficult situation because the Zimbabweans are, it seems like they, (.)  
 2 they better, they are on the job, they there so the farmers started to [prefer ]  
 3 **Philippa:** [ja ja ]  
 4 **Francois:** them,=  
 5 **Philippa:** =ja  
 6 **Francois:** You see [what I] mean, an- and now, and there might be some of the others  
 7 **Philippa:** [ja ]  
 8 **Francois:** that's not finding work, and, I can understand their grievance-, grievances  
 9 coming from that, .hh u::m

- 10 (.)
- 11 **Philippa:** ((quietly)) ja=
- 12 **Francois:** =ja but like I said I mean it's:::, if-, i- it's, very much some of:: their own
- 13 making in a sense also because, in the past you've um=
- 14 **Philippa:** =whose own making sorry?
- 15 **Francois:** I mean some of the um, (.) the: the: Xhosa group=
- 16 **Philippa:** =ja,
- 17 **Francois:** I mean they, ey:::, they want the money but they don't wanna do the work.=
- 18 **Philippa:** =okay
- 19 **Francois:** You know what I'm saying  
... ((8 lines omitted))
- 20 **Francois:** they quickly run through the block and now they want pay for, want pay for
- 21 it, and it's:::, not done well=
- 22 **Philippa:** =okay=
- 23 **Francois:** =and it-, you know what I'm saying

These extracts show how farmers constructed reasonable requirements of running businesses and then showed how South Africans were not able to fulfil these. Each of these requirements is slightly different. The Agri Wes-Cape CEO shows the systems that are necessary to get the grapes to Tesco (a British supermarket): ships are waiting in the port and the cold chain is ready (extract 30). The hypothetical example he gives of saying to Tesco, 'just keep the space empty, because these guys didn't come to work' is powerful because it is absurd to the point of being amusing. We all know that business simply does not work that way. In such circumstances it is perfectly reasonable to work with the Zimbabweans instead, if South Africans sometimes do not show up for work.

In extract 32, the requirement which is presented as reasonable is that workers have a good 'work ethic' and do not try and skive off during working hours. Farmer 3 shows that 'you have problems on Mondays you have problems on Fridays, you have problems when there's All-Pay ((social grants)) being paid' (line 6-8). As we have seen, these common stereotypes about South Africans' recurrent failure to show up for work were also used by Zimbabweans to justify their own place on the farms. In telling the story about how the Zimbabwean team was still on the job five minutes into their lunch hour, farmer 3 constructs this event *as* an amazing and story-worthy event and thus heightens the contrast between Zimbabwean and South African workers.

Farmer 2 in extract 33 was the only farmer who acknowledged that farmers' preference for Zimbabweans may have been costing South Africans jobs: 'there might be some of the others that's not finding work...and I can understand their...grievance'. However, he immediately goes on to show why this is their own fault: 'it's very much some of::: their own making' (line 12-13). The thing which is invoked as a reasonable requirement for running a business is that the work that labourers do needs to be done thoroughly. Farmer 2 shows that some of the 'Xhosa group' do not do this; they 'quickly run through the block' (line 29) but then want pay for it (lines 17 & 30). The acknowledgement of South Africans' grievances is prevented from having too many serious implications by the argument that South Africans partly have themselves to blame for these very grievances.

The three requirements discussed above (getting grapes to Tesco in time, workers being present at work for the full day, and doing the job thoroughly) are all entirely reasonable given that they are paid employees in a business. Farmers do not construct themselves as asking things from their workers which are unreasonable (or exploitative). An exception to this is the account of farmer 2 when he showed that the Zimbabweans worked 15 minutes into their lunch break (extract 32). However, they are compared to South Africans who would try and get off five minutes early (line 23-24). In such a case it is reasonable to prefer workers who stay 15 minutes into their lunch break than workers who try and get off five minutes early.

On the whole, farmers acknowledged grievances from South Africans but responded to these by justifying their preference for Zimbabweans as perfectly legitimate given the shortcomings of South Africans and the necessities of running a business. In particular, in the interviews with Farmer 2 and the Agri Wes-Cape CEO, quoted above (extracts 30 and 33), this justification was given after I (the interviewer) asked them to comment on things we had heard other participants say which have been reproduced in Part 2 above. These complaints about the meanings that the farmers' preference for the Zimbabweans had for South Africans were not mere technicalities, but related to fundamental issues such as poverty and unemployment and the position of power which farmers occupied to allocate jobs to certain people and not others. In Part 4 we have seen how farmers argued (1) that if South Africans were losing out on jobs it was their own fault ('it's very much some of::: their own making' – extract 31) and (2) if they did not like the way they were being treated on the



farms, there was nothing forcing them to stay and work there (extract 29). When I offered a counter-argument to this – ‘but they’re stuck’ – the Agri Wes-Cape CEO responded by asking, ‘is it agriculture’s problem that they stuck?’ (line 21). The implied answer is ‘no.’ In this way he removed responsibility from farmers or ‘agriculture’ for the state in which South African informal settlement residents or workers found themselves. Of course, an historical argument could be made for why it was indeed partly agriculture’s problem that they were stuck; but this also reflects the dilemma of farmers being simultaneously interpellated by the government as businesses operating without assistance in a competitive capitalist system, while also being held responsible for rural unemployment. This refusal of responsibility by farmers is in direct contrast to the demands for jobs that black and coloured South Africans made of farmers in Part 2, and to the version which construed farmers’ relationship to the Zimbabweans as a way of failing to make good on their responsibilities to the South African labouring community.

The last two extracts in this section show how farmers responded when asked to comment directly on the poverty of the South African labouring community and the inequality of the farming system in which they participated. Once again, both of them used ‘the market’ and ‘business’ rhetoric to justify the status quo. At the beginning of the first extract, I was repeating something that Vuyo, the labour broker, had said to us previously, and then asked farmer 1 to comment on it:

### **Extract 32: Farmer 1**

- 1 **Philippa:** Um he was basically saying like, at the end of the day the farmers don’t care  
 2 about us because like, wh- what can you, how can you live on R300 a week or  
 3 whatever, when you’ve got [like a] whole family and you live in a [shack]  
 4 **Francois:** [mm ] [mm ]  
 5 **Philippa:** and like he was saying, .hh at the end of the day it comes down to money,  
 6 the whites don’t, they’re not interested in our problems they don’t want to  
 7 know how we live, they don’t wanna know how terrible it is, [um,] and, he  
 8 **Francois:** [mm]  
 9 **Philippa:** said, if we if, if we all earned, if we if we earned a better wage, none of this  
 10 stuff::, would ever have happened. But the whi[tes ] don’t care. [I mean]  
 11 **Francois:** [mm] [mm ]  
 12 **Philippa:** what do you say to that.  
 13 **Francois:** Ja ja I understand that people would feel like that, um, but there is a, there is  
 14 a market related thing in, in that be[cause] I mean, there’s, I mean people  
 15 **Philippa:** [mm ]  
 16 **Francois:** from the whole of Africa come, [here] to work, and for the Zimbabweans, this

- 17 **Philippa:** [here]  
 18 **Francois:** is, (.) fantastic. If you've got nothing then, something's, if you know what I'm  
 19 saying...and if it's, if it's, so low, um, I mean why don't you work  
 20 then, to get a full pay at least, y- [if you know] what I'm saying.=  
 21 **Philippa:** [ja ]  
 22 **Philippa:** =ja

Though it has not been quoted in this thesis, the explanation that 'if we all earned, if we if we earned a better wage, none of this stuff::, would ever have happened' (line 9-10) was an explanation we had heard from Vuyo the labour broker in which he had related the violence against the Zimbabweans to poverty, and how the dissatisfaction of South African workers contributed to making it possible. Though the ACMS literature has demonstrated that poverty is never a *sufficient* condition for xenophobic violence, Vuyo was arguing that it is a necessary one; and that there would be no need for violence such as this if South Africans earned a decent wage. However, Vuyo said, farmers do not appear to care about the poverty of their workers. Farmer 1 responds by acknowledging this: 'Ja ja I understand that people would feel like that' but immediately goes on to qualify the limit of his understanding: 'but there is a, there is a market related thing in, in that because...people from the whole of Africa come, here to work, and for the Zimbabweans, this is (.) fantastic' (line 13-18). The implication is that Zimbabweans, who 'have nothing', have contributed to a 'market' where they would not object to R300 a week. It is presented as self-evident that prices are to some extent dictated by the market, and that *this market* renders the paying of workers at R300 a week morally unproblematic. Invoking 'the market' trumps other concerns such as farmers' caring for their workers, and pulls the carpet out from under the complaints of South African workers who would argue that this amount is too low.

To close this section, a discussion with farmer 2 is cited below at length because it demonstrates how this farmer responded to a proposition about the vast inequality of the system in which he participated and a question about whether 'another way of doing life would be possible.' The long discussion which follows this shows that his answer to this question is 'no'. Again, this is in sharp contrast to the demands which were made by speakers in Part 2 about how farmers should give them jobs, and shows the difference

between the expectations of workers and of farmers about the extent of farmers' responsibility.

### **Extract 33: Farmer 2**

- 1 **Philippa:** Um, >now I wanna ask< like sort of, more, broad-, like, take our minds out of  
2 this particular situation that's happened in De Doorns and just think about  
3 like, I mean you're a farmer,  
4 **Danie:** yes  
5 **Philippa:** you have a nice place,  
6 **Danie:** yes  
7 **Philippa:** and you, own a farm or two farms or, more than that,  
8 **Danie:** yes  
9 **Philippa:** and others as well like, (.) ((having trouble getting the words out:)) and then  
10 you like, there's people living in Stofland, in their shacks, like do you think, for  
11 you, I mean obviously, obviously this suits, this system suits you fine, do you  
12 ever think of like, another, way of doing, life would be possible. I mean, prac-  
13 I mean practically, [and not ] practically.=  
15 **Danie:** [I understand,]  
16 **Danie:** =I understand what you're saying  
... ((20 lines omitted))  
17 **Danie:** hh as you say I mean there's a situation's not ideal and that's the problem  
18 with any country like ours.  
19 **Philippa:** Mmm.  
20 **Danie:** I mean yes I have a nice life. Yes I live on a nice farm but yes I have a shitload  
21 of stress.  
22 **Philippa:** mm.  
23 **Danie:** Yes I try and pay my workers as much as is physically possible. But I'm still a  
24 business,  
25 **Philippa:** ja  
26 **Danie:** I'm not a charity.  
27 **Philippa:** ja ja,  
28 **Danie:** Um, and, the problem is, I don't need a hell of a lot of highly skilled people. I  
29 mean um, you you what you basically need skilled is administrative staff, and  
30 and and your managers. And then maybe, supervisors  
31 **Philippa:** ja, sjoe hey  
32 **Danie:** Ja and tractor drivers and if you think about chemical uh operators and your,  
33 truck drivers. But, the rest 90% are just people who can do, handwork.  
34 **Philippa:** °ja°. Okay  
35 **Danie:** so um, it's always go- there's always gonna be social problems here.  
36 **Philippa:** mm=  
37 **Danie:** =I mean u:m, by the nature of people, want to earn, they want a nice life, I  
38 mean they see that you've got a nice car and they say shit I'd like one like  
39 that. I mean, that's just, uh nature. I mean, I also go to Hermanus and I look  
40 at some of those guys' houses and I think I'd want one as well but it's, you  
41 know, that's life.  
42 **Philippa:** ((laughing quietly)) ja

... ((10 lines omitted))

43 **Danie:** But, yes they still do not earn a hell of a lot of money, and I think the the  
 44 people who are the worst off are the people staying in Stofland,

45 **Philippa:** mm

46 **Danie:** who are not permanent workers, who are just working when there's work  
 47 available. And they definitely want, better.

48 **Philippa:** mm

49 **Danie:** But, they're not gonna find it here that is the problem...you'll find that the  
 50 work, on the farms, the amount of work opportunities will become less and  
 51 less in the:, in the, foreseeable future, cos we are all looking, there's, I mean  
 52 there's new varieties of grapes coming in the whole time and one of the  
 53 biggest premises of those grapes if you plant it's gotta be something that's  
 54 not labour-intensive.

55 **Philippa:** o::kay. [Sjoewfh!]

56 **Danie:** [The whole valley's switching over to seedless, uh seeded grapes, we  
 57 used to be seeded, uh, lot of work. U:m seedless grapes you can use chemical  
 58 means to, pre-thin it cos a lot of the work has to be done, when you take a  
 59 bunch of grapes:: it's tight, it's got [too many berries on you] have to pull out  
 60 **Philippa:** [you have to pull out the ]

61 **Danie:** and that's where most of the work was....Yes we'll always need labour to  
 62 pack and whatever but you will find that, I mean I myself used to, bring in,  
 63 hhh I used to have about four hundred people in in in s-, in pre-thinning  
 64 times, now I prob'ly work with probably about a hundred and fifty.=

65 **Philippa:** =mm:::

66 **Danie:** And that will get even less.=

67 **Philippa:** =Hyew.

68 **Danie:** So the situation is there will be less work here,  
 69 (.)

70 **Philippa:** more and more.

71 **Danie:** More and more, [ja.] You know. So,

72 **Philippa:** [ja ]

73 **Philippa:** So do you like, I mean, that sounds like disaster for this place.

74 **Danie:** I don't think it's disaster for this place, it's going to be I mean that's why you  
 75 have people migrating to where there's work I mean, these Zimbabweans,  
 76 they call themselves asylum seekers but at the moment they're just looking  
 77 for work. (**Philippa:** mm) Cos there's nothing, I mean yes there's persecution  
 78 going on in Zimbabwe but I think the main problem is not, uh physical  
 79 persecution I think it's economic, persecution. (**Philippa:** mhm,) There's  
 80 just no work there's just no money there's no food there. That's why they're  
 81 coming here. And that you'll see more and more, I mean especially with the,  
 82 uh porous borders we've got,

83 **Philippa:** ja ja

84 **Danie:** people can move.

85 **Philippa:** ja.

86 **Danie:** And you'll see people move I mean this people if there's no work here they'll  
 87 move to the city or whatever

In this conversation, farmer 2 constructs an 'ideological dilemma' (Billig *et al.*, 1988) in lines 22-26 between the moral imperative to care for one's workers and the amoral imperative of running a profitable business. The latter imperative ultimately trumps the former: 'Yes I try and pay my workers as much as is physically possible. But I'm still a business,...I'm not a charity.' This dilemma is produced and resolved in much the same way in lines 42-49. The farmer expresses his sorrow for those who only get work when it is available and shows he understands that 'they definitely want better'. However, the fact that 'they're not gonna find it here' is shown to be for reasons of profit such as the necessity of planting varieties of grapes which are not labour-intensive. There follows a justification of inequality (lines 28-41) and a removal of responsibility from farmers for the South African labouring community (lines 43-49 & 86-87). This dilemma was evident also in extract 32 above, where farmer 1 responded to my account of what the labour broker had said about farmers not caring about their workers. Farmer 1 responded thus: 'ja ja I understand that people would feel like that, um, but there is a market related thing in, in that, because I mean, there's, people from the whole of Africa come, here to work, and for the Zimbabweans, this is, fantastic' (lines 13-15). In the first part of this utterance the farmer shows his sympathy with workers: 'ja ja I understand that people would feel like that' – but ultimately 'there is a market related thing in, in that' (line 15). What 'the market' renders acceptable trumps what might be construed as acceptable by other kinds of acceptability yardsticks, such as a sense of responsibility for workers' wellbeing.

The accounts in this section demonstrate the enormous gulf between the expectations that farmers and the South African labouring community had about the responsibility of farmers to provide workers with jobs. The accounts in Part 2B revolved around a construction of the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship as a process by which South Africans were being displaced from their jobs and their places on farms. In particular, Wendy (extract 6) and Dawid (extracts 8 and 15) implied or demanded that farmers should have a responsibility to provide jobs for South African workers. Though it has not been cited, Vuyo the labour broker also made this demand in the course of his interview. Also, narratives of displacement and resulting demands for jobs were based on constructions of dishonesty or a suspect relationship between Zimbabweans and farmers. Thabo in extract 7 said that

farmers were 'cheating' the Zimbabweans, and Dawid demanded jobs from farmers after showing that the farmers were paying the Zimbabweans 'under the belt' or '*onder die belt*'. In extract 6, Wendy and Marco showed that South Africans and in particular coloureds being 'jobless' was questionable when there were apparently so many jobs available for Zimbabweans. The women in extract 9 construed the Zimbabweans as 'taking our places' which implied a sense of historic entitlement to these jobs. Vuyo the labour broker argued that farmers were 'abusing' the Zimbabweans' precarious position as immigrants, and the elderly man in extract 16 argued that farmers' actions were 'violating the democracy of this country'. We have seen that this moral element and sense of historically-derived responsibility were not present in farmers' accounts of their choice of workers. They defended this choice by appealing to the imperative of free-market capitalism, which was an amoral imperative. Employing the more efficient Zimbabweans was simply one of the necessities of running a good business (maximising productivity). This comparison shows that farmers and South African workers had very different expectations about the nature of their relationship, and about where responsibility for jobs lay – indeed, they were playing by two different sets of rules, which have very few shared premises. Ultimately, the farmers' appeal to free-market capitalism served to justify the status quo not only of their use of Zimbabwean workers but also inequality in South Africa more generally. Overall, none of the farmers interviewed in 2009 who, when presented with some of the grievances South Africans expressed in Part 2, considered whether there was something fundamentally wrong with the farming system which might require revising.

## **Discussion**

So far, this thesis has engaged with what I have called the 'two-group paradigm' in social psychology and its conceptualisation of group relations as involving unequal pairs of groups – one advantaged or powerful and one disadvantaged or subordinate. Chapter 4 showed how Social Identity Theory, the Contact Hypothesis and other fields of intergroup relations studies lean towards thinking about group relationships in these binary terms, sometimes even going to far as to re-construe relations among multiple groups in two-group terms (Billig, 1976; Van Laar, Levine, Sinclair & Sidanius, 2004; Bikmen, 2011). What we have seen in De Doorns is that none of the accounts of the xenophobic violence of November 2009 construed it as simply a binary conflict between Zimbabwean and South African workers

only. Rather, it was *the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship and its consequences for South African workers* which were at the heart of this controversy. In almost every explanation for the eviction, farmers made an appearance as the authority who had the power to select and adjudicate between Zimbabwean and South African workers, and in this way, they helped to constitute 'the social meaning and social reality' of the other two groups (Billig, 1976). In this way, Drury and Reicher's (2000) understanding of social identity as a model of one's position in a set of social relations, *along with the actions that are construed as proper or necessary given that position*, is once again illustrated. Understanding why farmers and South African workers responded so differently to the arrival of the Zimbabweans also requires first understanding the meanings that these two groups ascribed to their own relationship. We have seen that for at least some South Africans, labouring on white farms was a political act viewed through a historical lens, sometimes with deep relational overtones, and they therefore expected farmers to take some responsibility for their interests. And since South African workers construed their relationship with farmers in terms of a mixture of resistance and responsibility, the hiring of the allegedly compliant Zimbabweans and their accommodation on the farms after the eviction were construed as a way of undermining South Africans' efforts to bargain with and to resist whites. It was also construed as a way by which farmers were reneging on their responsibilities to their fellow South Africans (sometimes, particularly coloured South Africans), and thus as a kick in the teeth or a betrayal given the already long history of exploitative relations between farmers and South African workers. Getting rid of the Zimbabweans was construed as a response to this problem, rather than being the main problem itself. By contrast, farmers construed their relationship with South African workers in the ahistorical and amoral terms of employing workers in a business that simply ran according to the dictates of the free market. They showed that, up to a point, they cared about the wellbeing of their workers, but ultimately distanced themselves from taking responsibility for the jobs or poverty of South African workers. Running a business was construed as an apolitical enterprise in which pursuit of profits was treated as an axiomatic objective. Thus, for farmers, employing Zimbabweans in such a system was not construed as a particularly problematic moral or political issue. Rather it was simply a matter of good business. These two enormously different constructions of the Zimbabwean-farmer alliance, and the imperatives by which it was judged as legitimate or illegitimate respectively, can thus be understood first in terms of

*the two incompatible constructions of the relationship that already pertained between farmers and the South African farm worker community.* Indeed, it may be more appropriate to consider the eviction as a ‘proxy attack’ nested within a broader conflict between South African farmers and workers.

The two-group paradigm constrains what we can think and say about intergroup conflict in social psychology as it closes off the possibility that there can be conflicts producing subject positions that transcend the binary categories of dominant/subordinate or advantaged/disadvantaged. The point of this analysis of xenophobia in De Doorns has not been to adjudicate between the Zimbabwean or South African farm labouring communities about who is the more advantaged or powerful group and then to study this group’s stereotypes and prejudices of the other. Moreover, it would be circular and unhelpful to assume that because the Zimbabweans in De Doorns were the victims of the eviction, they are *therefore* the disadvantaged, powerless group. The Zimbabweans in De Doorns appeared to consider themselves superior rather than inferior to their South African counterparts, and in fact this was one of the *reasons* they gave for being victims of violence – that the South Africans were resentful of the farmers’ preference for Zimbabweans. Some Zimbabwean farm workers had left skilled and semi-skilled occupations after their country’s economic collapse (among those we interviewed were a former teacher, hairdresser, builder and metallurgist or mining engineer), and appeared proud of the narrative of their own superior work ethic. This is not merely an anomalous deviation from the two-group paradigm’s assumption that groups who are victims of discrimination or hate crimes must necessarily also be those who are disadvantaged materially and economically. Rather, the ambiguity about whether the Zimbabweans were more exploited or more advantaged than their South African counterparts gestures towards the conditions of current capitalism, in which ‘the only thing worse than being exploited is not being exploited’ (Denning, 2010, p. 79). To have a low-paying farm job is to be simultaneously blessed with employment and cursed with poverty wages and exploitation, and as we have seen, this paradox manifests in the two seemingly contradictory complaints of many South African workers that the Zimbabweans were being unfairly favoured by farmers while at the same time being even more exploited by them. In fact, opposite claims to those of low wages were also made: the Zimbabwean man in extract 17 above claimed that farmers were voluntarily paying



Zimbabwean workers better wages than South Africans, and we will see below that some South African workers claimed this too during the strike, complaining that farmers were paying the Zimbabweans as much as R100 a day and then wondering why they did not want to pay South Africans the same wage – even while they repeated the more common complaint about the Zimbabweans working for low wages in the same breath. We should not try and resolve this apparent confusion of exploitation and favouritism, or advantage and disadvantage, so as to be able to clearly decide who is really the more disadvantaged or advantaged group of workers and thus apply our social psychology models with greater accuracy. Rather, we should be on the lookout for the intergroup subjectivities that are attendant on the prevailing economic and political forms in our respective contexts (Billig, 1991).

In Chapter 5 above it was also argued that the two-group paradigm tends to import views of conflict which can edit out the role of third parties and naturalise a view of conflict which overlooks their agency. This argument can be applied to the ACMS report on the eviction of the Zimbabweans (Misago, 2009), which was used in Chapter 1 to construct a narrative of the events that took place in De Doorns in November 2009. This report took an anti-xenophobic position, which, in this context, had significant consequences for the way the intergroup dynamics implicated in the eviction of the Zimbabweans were analysed. First, the role of the farmers in the issues leading up to the violence was downplayed. The reasons Misago gave for minimizing the farmers' part were fairly explicit. One was that competition for jobs (which is how the tension between South African and Zimbabwean workers and brokers was construed), and 'longstanding social tensions' (*ibid.*, p. 12) related to this, were shown to be inadequate as explanations for why *violence actually occurred*. ACMS's xenophobia research always emphasizes the role of the instigators who tip a situation over from conflict into violence, as well as the 'institutional incentives' which encourage this (Landau, 2015). A distinction is made between 'popular frustrations' (Misago, Monson, Landau & Polzer, 2010, p. 10) or 'long-lasting social tensions' (Misago, 2009, p. 12) – which are not emphasized as much because they cannot actually account for why violence breaks out in particular places and not others even though they share these same longstanding problems (Landau, 2015; Polzer, 2010) – and those 'critical causal factors' (*ibid.*, p. 2) or 'immediate causes/triggers of violence' (*ibid.*, p. 12), which have been the focus of ACMS

research. Thus, in Misago's report the emphasis was on the role of the labour brokers and the ward councillor who actually *incited* the violence for their own ends, rather than on the preceding intergroup tensions or surrounding discourse which problematised the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship. Farmers may have contributed to such tensions in their capacity as employers and adjudicators of South African and Zimbabwean workers, but did not have anything directly to do with instigating violence.

A second, more overtly political reason why Misago (2009) minimized the farmers' role in this conflict was that arguments which drew attention to farmers were the same arguments with which the expulsion of the Zimbabweans was justified or rationalised. Misago (2009) argued that

[a]ddressing labour issues, and specifically farmers and labour brokers who exploit workers and break labour laws, is undeniably important. However, exclusively focussing on these issues risks casting the perpetrators as victims in ways that legitimise or justify the attacks on Zimbabweans. (p. 3)

Here, the problems presented are exploitation and breaking of laws. However, this concession risks missing the point of the complaints of those South Africans who had an objection to the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship. Of course, if the issues at hand *are* 'exploitation' and breaking of laws, then they can be universally condemned. As we have already seen, however, De Doorns residents themselves did not all agree on whether the Zimbabweans were being exploited. Thus, by not scrutinising lay explanations for violence which involved farmers, nor farmers' responses to these, and naming 'the problem' as *exploitation*, Misago (2009) thus risks misconstruing some of the central dilemmas of the De Doorns violence.

One of these dilemmas can be demonstrated by close analysis of the farmers' accusations and justifications in Parts 1 and 4. These showed that farmers took sides with the Zimbabweans, condemning the violence and making a display of generosity or goodwill in its aftermath by taking them onto their farms. When push came to shove in Part 4, however, they explicitly argued for the maintenance of an economic system that arguably reproduces the conditions for violent xenophobia (cf Kerr & Durrheim, 2013). Recall the words of

farmer 2, in extract 33. On being asked whether he thought an alternative social and economic system was possible, farmer 2 argued that inequality was inevitable because farms simply do not require many highly skilled workers; and consequently 'there's always gonna be social problems here' (line 35). I understand 'social problems' to include episodes such as the violence against the Zimbabweans (which the farmers did not call 'xenophobia'). Admittedly farmer 2 was the only farmer who made such an explicit connection between his own labour practices, inequality, and 'social problems' such as the violence against the Zimbabweans. (Not all farmers made this link, and farmer 2 was also not one of the farmers who took a strong moral stance against the violence – unlike, for example, farmers 1 and 3, or the Agri Wes-Cape media statement). Also, in extract 32, when farmer 1 was asked for his response on whether the violence was partially made possible by the fact that all labourers generally earn such low wages, he responded by rendering such wages inevitable because of the dictates of the market: 'ja I understand that people would feel like that, um but there is a, there is market-related thing in, in that, because...people from the whole of Africa come, here to work, and for the Zimbabweans, this is, fantastic' (lines 13-15). Thus, the 'alliance' between farmers and Zimbabweans was rendered completely legitimate by the imperative of free-market capitalism, but at the same time it was acknowledged that this very system produced fertile conditions for violence (see also Kerr & Durrheim, 2013).

A second and related reason why the anti-xenophobic position is dilemmatic in this instance is that farmers and Zimbabwean workers singing each others' praises and their stories of mutual appreciation – which were mobilized to rhetorically counter xenophobia – arguably help to gloss over or divert attention from the racism and racial hierarchy that still structure this community (and others in South Africa) and the inequality and black poverty that are normalised in it (c.f. Dixon, Levine, Reicher & Durrheim, 2012). Indeed, rather than being an exception to this racism, the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship is arguably one part of it, as we know now that favouritism among different groups of black people has always been a central feature of the white racism of apartheid race relations. This is a difficult argument to make, because it risks blaming the Zimbabweans for their own predicament. Indeed, the farmers, PASSOP members, ACMS, Zimbabweans themselves and other commentators who spoke out against this xenophobic violence are right to do so. The opposite danger is to end up blaming the Zimbabweans for the violence of which they were victims and, as Misago

(2009) was so aware, to treat the perpetrators as if they are victims in ways that simply legitimate xenophobic violence. But also right are those who would point out that while farmers no longer have the racial language of apartheid to justify inequality, they have the morally 'neutral' language and practise of free-market capitalism to do this work instead. Those who sympathised with the eviction have a point about the farmers' employment of Zimbabweans being experienced as yet another way by which farmers have managed to 'screw over' South African farm workers, even if everything they did was perfectly legal. This is why it is necessary to be cautious of the moral tone of the anti-xenophobic position, and to interrogate the alliances through which other parties show support for the victims. Commentators with a commitment to a human rights, peace-building or anti-xenophobic agenda must take an anti-xenophobic stance, and condemn the violence. But in doing so, they would be taking sides with farmers, who also condemned it; but it was these same farmers who were centrally implicated in South African workers' complaints about the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship and its consequences for South African farm workers which justified the forcible eviction. Thus, the ACMS report taking an anti-xenophobic position in this instance came at the cost of a deeper critical analysis of the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship and what was achieved and obscured by it (cf. Kerr & Durrheim, 2013). This is why I have called this chapter 'Dilemmas of xenophobia and anti-xenophobia in De Doorns.' In the following chapters, which describe the methods and findings of the second case study conducted during and after the farm workers' strike that began in De Doorns three years later in November 2012, we will see that this dilemma continues, as the absence of xenophobic violence against the Zimbabweans during the strike does not seem to be conclusive evidence that the anti-xenophobic imperative won the day in this community.

## **Chapter 8: The aftermath of the 2009 eviction and intergroup relations during the 2012-2013 farm workers' strike**

### **Introduction**

This chapter briefly describes the aftermath of the xenophobic violence of 2009, between the closure of the camp housing the Zimbabweans in October 2010 and the early isolated farm strikes that took place in the Hex Valley in late 2012 and then spread around the whole valley and then the Western Cape before coming to an end in January 2013. The chapter starts by describing my own experience of arriving and staying in the Hex Valley during the early days of the strike. Second, it outlines some of the conditions that enabled the strike – both at a broad structural level, and in terms of the immediate events which set it off (Wilderman, 2014). This includes some ways that the aftermath of the eviction in 2009 actually contributed to the conditions of possibility for the strike (Wilderman, 2014). Thirdly, the chapter addresses what other observers have said about intergroup relations between the Zimbabwean and South African labouring communities during the strike. Finally, it outlines the contribution that the following results chapter will make.

### **A perspective on being in the Hex Valley during the farm workers' strike**

My experience of being in the Hex Valley during the early days of the farm workers' strike in November 2012 is recounted here because in writing an academic thesis on intergroup conflict it is easy to lose touch with the physical and emotional experiences of being in a place that is in the middle of conflict. On the drive to De Doorns from Cape Town, I was in phone contact with the man whose guest flat I was again going to be renting for the duration of my stay (the same man I rented from in 2009). From Worcester, police road blocks appeared, diverting traffic off the N1 because the freeway was blocked with stones at De Doorns. I can't remember now how I got through the first few roadblocks, but at the last one, closest to De Doorns, my host told me by phone to tell the police that I was going to De Wet. I did not know what De Wet was – I thought it might be the name of a farm – and I felt uneasy about being asked to lie to the police. A cop came to my window and shouted at me for talking on the phone while driving, and then asked where I was going. I told him De Wet. He looked a bit surprised at this and repeated 'De Wet?' as if to make sure. I said yes, trying to look confident. He waved me on. Whew. When I passed the De Wet signboard a short

while later, I remembered it is a small district just on the Worcester side of De Doorns, which means that to get there one would not have to pass the road blockades at De Doorns. Then, as I was driving, I looked in the rear view mirror and saw that my host was already following me in his CW bakkie. This was both touching and slightly sinister – he had come out to make sure I got into the valley all right, but had managed to get behind me and follow me without my noticing.

The sense of foreboding created by the roadblocks continued as I came over a rise and saw the spectacular Hex Valley unfolding ahead. A sinister stillness hung over the picturesque farm houses and green vineyards, a stillness belied by marks of recently burnt tyres on the tar, police vehicles at every intersection and smoke still rising off piles of ash in the middle of destroyed vineyards. In the distance a heat haze shimmered off the roofs of Stofland. My hosts' house was on this side of the stones blocking the freeway, so we could turn off the N1 and get there without any further obstacle.

Although I was renting an outside flat with its own kitchen, my hosts saw that I was alone on the first night and so invited me to have supper with them. During supper, a man whom I assumed to be their employee came to the kitchen window and passed on a message that a group of protesting workers were on their way to the farms in that part of the valley. At that point my hosts went into battle stations mode. First they called their neighbours from the next door farm, who came over to wait with us. At some point I walked into the kitchen to discover two rifles and a revolver lying on the counter (I later discovered the neighbours had brought them). It was then that I became properly frightened. What made these firearms even more sinister was that no one ever mentioned them or said anything about what kind of a night they implied the farmers were anticipating. Also, nobody discussed what would be done if any protestors actually came to the house. When I asked my host about this, he said 'if they try to get into this house I will shoot them through the front door'. I thought that by that stage it would be too late to try and convince anyone about whose side I was on. The revolver then moved with us to the lounge and lay there on the coffee table as we sat anxiously waiting for something to happen. Wine was drunk, the news – including news of the strike – was watched, and regular phone updates were received from one of the neighbour's workers on the progress of the group of strikers supposedly approaching (a worker of whom it was said during the evening that 'sy is 'n goeie

informant'). I wondered where these workers were and who or what was protecting them while they passed their employers information. We sat and waited some more. After a while we heard some voices outside calling 'amandla!' and my hostess heard what she thought was a stone being thrown onto the roof. At that point all the lights were switched off. We went out to stand on the veranda to listen and watch in the dark, and the neighbour was told to put out his cigarette. The dogs ran out into the darkness and were not called back. I was now wondering seriously whether I should phone my family at home and tell them I loved them.

We waited for some time in the pitch dark and quiet; but in the end nothing happened. We eventually went to bed and woke up to tell the tale. But for the next three days until I left De Doorns I was full of anxiety and had difficulty eating and sleeping, because at night I was now attuned to every small sound coming from outside. This small and ultimately uneventful experience showed me how traumatising violent conflict can be for a community, and when Tony Ehrenreich of COSATU made a statement that the valley was in a state of 'low-level civil war' I could see that this was not an overstatement. The wife of a farmer I interviewed said that the experience of the strike was 'like the Zulu war'. Four people were killed in the informal settlements and RDP housing areas around De Doorns in confrontations with the police and private 'security companies' hired by the farmers (Andrews, 2012), and the police made mass arrests and deportations of especially foreign workers (Hanekom, 2012). Several farmers' wives and children left the valley and went to stay elsewhere while the strike was going on (an option presumably not available to many workers' families). One farmer I interviewed reported having received death threats by phone, and another told me about an (unsuccessful) attempt on another farmer's life by people who dropped rocks onto his car from a bridge. A farmer was also arrested for shooting (ineffectually) at protestors but as far as I know the charges were later dropped. Workers who tried to get to work during the strike were reportedly beaten by others, and a journalist's car was set alight. An armed helicopter belonging to the security company was doing patrol up and down the valley on the lookout for further fires, and the sound of it droning periodically in and out of earshot added another layer of menace to the whole (already surreal) experience. The following two retrospective accounts from Stofland

residents interviewed in August 2013 show something of the ordeal that protesting workers and residents experienced at the hands of the police during the strike:

### **Xhosa-speaking South African man and woman (Interview 21)**

Nqaba: Ok so ok tata let's continue, that was a big strike right [Man: mm mm] and then it didn't scare you, or what, like make you scared to think, 'won't the whites turn against us or won't the police turn against us?' Things like that, weren't you scared?

Man: We were very scared because this thing that you are saying, because we had turned back already [NN: uh huh] we had really turned back, we had turned back even the police were just beating people up. [NN: uh] Yes, it was very scary

Nqaba: You were scared

Man: Eh ((yes))

Nqaba: but you endured

Man: We endured

Nqaba: *Eke*, what happened to end it?  
((two turns omitted))

Man: It ended when everyone was being arrested on the street, to such an extent that they said the men who are running away, they will be arrested in their houses, taken out of their houses, arrested and put in the police van and locked away

Nqaba: mm, mm

Man: Eh ((yes)) That's how it ended.

### **Strike organiser (interview 17)**

O: certain things does make uh uh make me angry because, I, (.) like in the strike there was so many things that we didn't expect. [PK: okay,] The police shooting us, walking at night, and throwing tear gas, and our babies, some of our babies is still, till today, ((taps table)) [PK: mm,] their breath is not right [PK: mmmm] because they are coughing and stuff like that. [PK: okay] We, we we suffered a lot [PK: ja:::] because of this but we didn't, we didn't, we didn't strike to fight fight. [PK: okay] We were just striking [PK: okay] for our rights. [PK: okay] And we were just asking, the government, and our farmers, must help us. [P: mm] We were, it, the strike, (.) was not supposed to go like it did. You know if the police didn't shoot us like that, [PK: mm:::] some of the people, would not have burn off vineyards [PK: kay] would not have break in shops and stuff like that. [PK: okay] Because the police, first shoot at [PK: (made you like rrrr)] made us like we, like angry. [PK: okay] (.) This one day we were just, we just wanted to walk down to the other people in Sandhills. We said to the police 'no we will just walk down.' So the police said, 'no, you will just, not go there,' and they didn't even warn us they just started shooting. They didn't care if it's women if it's children, what what or what young people or what. [PK: kay ja]



They were just shooting us. [PK: ja] I was shoot my leg was just like that. [PK: hm. Shoh] My knee. Swollen up. And for nothing! Just for standing in the road.

As we now know, (poor, black) De Doorns residents are no strangers to violent conflict with the police, and although this thesis does not focus on the psychological consequences of continuous violence, the pattern that is emerging is of a community that has been involved repeatedly in violent and traumatising conflict. On the other hand, however, interviewees of Wilderman (2014) – mainly activists who participated in the strike in various organising capacities – spoke of the sense of exhilaration workers felt during the strike as they realised their own power to stand up against abuse and poverty wages on the farms.

### **Social change and macroconditions enabling a farm workers' protest**

Wilderman (2014) has posed the question of what made a widespread farm workers' strike possible at the time that it happened, even though poor wages and working conditions have been present for a long time in this region. His answer involves macro and micro factors. The macro factors include the shift towards a casualised and externalised work force – essentially those changes described in Chapter 2 above (see also Webb, 2017). Farm workers are overwhelmingly not part of formal trade unions, and trade unions did not initiate the strikes (Wesso, 2013), but the moving of workers off farms and the growth of the large informal and RDP housing areas around De Doorns and other farming towns has produced new spatial and thus social conditions, as workers now live in close proximity to each other rather than living spread out on isolated separate farms under the thumb of a farmer (Wilderman, 2014). These changes are 'leading to a breakdown or re-negotiation of two of the major impediments to overt, confrontational, and collective action, namely paternalis[m]...and farm worker isolation' (Wilderman, 2014, abstract). Trade unionists interviewed by Webb (2017) agree that the paternalism that does remain on the farms is the biggest challenge to organising workers, as farmers have an antagonistic approach to trade unions and often victimise or punish workers for being active in them. Workers who live close together in Stofland were therefore able to discuss, organise, and generate mass support (see also Wesso, 2013). Moreover, the geography of Stofland and Lubisi, which together only have two entrances linking them with town (one vehicle bridge and one pedestrian bridge over the freeway), also meant that strike organisers were relatively easily

able to enforce a stayaway by manning these bridges with people armed with knobkierries (Wilderman, 2014; also reported in interviews with farmer 1; Zimbabwean man in extract 17 below; and South African man in extract 1 below). It was thus farm workers living in the informal settlements and RDP housing, rather than those living on farms, who were the main driving force behind the strike, although farm-dwelling workers also participated (Wilderman, 2014). A report addressing the 'Future of agriculture and the rural economy' after the strikes observed that

It is inevitable that there will be very different perspectives as to the cause of the strikes. What does seem clear, however, is that it was not only or primarily workers in full-time employment at the time that were involved, but workers who were seasonally employed on farms, or looking to find seasonal employment. It is also likely that many of those involved were and have remained unemployed. These were not therefore strikes in the traditional labour relations sense, as much as protest actions. They do not simply concern income and conditions of employment in the agricultural sector, but more broadly the rural economy and its social dimensions. (FARE Panel, 2012, p. 1)

According to Wesso (2013), although most workers were not part of unions this does not mean that they were not organised. Workers had been organising themselves into farm worker committees in the years and months before the strike and these committees played an important part in the initial strikes. However, farmers refused to engage with these committees because they were not formal trade unions, and at that point COSATU and other formal unions stepped in both to negotiate on behalf of workers (who were not their members) and to direct the strike, thus wresting control of the process away from the farm worker committees, whose involvement and effectiveness then declined (Wesso, 2013).

### **Microconditions setting off the strikes in the Hex Valley in late 2012**

According to Wilderman (2014) there are a number of more specific factors which came together in late 2012 to produce a sense among farm workers of the possibility of launching a strike. First, shortly before the widespread farm strikes broke out in November, workers on a single farm called Keurboskloof in the Hex Valley had organised a strike in August and September 2012, with the help of, somewhat surprisingly, Zimbabwean members of PASSOP

(interview with Owen Maromo; see also Christie, 2012). Workers at Keurboskloof were from Zimbabwe and Lesotho as well as South Africa, and they went on an unprotected strike when the new company that had leased the farm from its owner announced it would be lowering their wages to bring them into line with other wages in the Hex Valley (Wilderman, 2014; Washinyira, 2012). The company management held some discussion with workers and then announced that it would dismiss any workers who went on an unprotected strike again. According to Wilderman (2014), Zimbabweans among the Keurboskloof workers then asked Owen Maromo of PASSOP, himself a Zimbabwean, for help with organising a strike, as they knew he had been an organiser with the MDC in Zimbabwe and also because PASSOP had been seen to be effective in advocating for the rights of the Zimbabweans in the camp after the 2009 eviction. The Keurboskloof workers slept at the entrance to the farm and blocked it so that when the farm management attempted to bring in replacement workers early one morning, the vehicles transporting them were unable to get in (Maromo, cited in Wilderman, 2014). At that point, 'the farmer called us for negotiations when he saw he would not succeed' (Maromo, cited in Wilderman, p. 33). Ultimately the Keurboskloof workers successfully achieved an unprecedented wage increase, in some cases up to R147 a day, which was far above the then-minimum wage of R69 a day and still significantly higher than the highest wages paid elsewhere in the valley. According to Knoetze (cited in Wilderman, 2014), other farm workers were initially sceptical of the Keurboskloof strike and even ridiculed the workers participating in it, but once the raised wage was achieved, word spread quickly and it became a powerful example to others of what could be achieved by workers who stood up for their demands (Wilderman, 2014).

The Keurboskloof strike was a watershed event not only as an instance of successful and peaceful worker organising and collective bargaining – according to Maromo in our interview, there had never been a successful wage strike in the Hex Valley like this before – but also in the sense that it involved workers of all different races and nationalities including Zimbabweans.

### **The aftermath of the 2009 xenophobia and intergroup relations before the strike**

Some reasons why PASSOP members became involved in facilitating the Keurboskloof strike in the first place can themselves thus be traced back to the aftermath of the Zimbabweans'

eviction in 2009. Indeed, the eviction is one of the 'micro-dynamics' Wilderman (2014, p. 34-35) identifies which made the strike possible:

The micro-dynamics...include a local experience in De Doorns of service delivery protests and a large xenophobic attack in 2009 which led to both the engagement of outside organisations and the development of leadership, networks, and a set of available protest tactics; this infrastructure and these experiences, coupled with long-standing grievances, made it more likely that a spark of hope such as the Keurboschkloof strike might ignite into full blown fire.

PASSOP gained wide visibility and a good reputation in the De Doorns farm worker community after the eviction through their effective fight for the rights of the Zimbabweans in the displaced persons' camp, their winning of the repatriation gratuity at the end of the Zimbabweans' stay, their continued work towards community cohesion in De Doorns in subsequent years (Wilderman, 2014),<sup>33</sup> and the fact that South Africans could see that PASSOP was assisting at least as many South African workers as Zimbabweans during the Keurboschkloof strike.<sup>34</sup> In the aftermath of the events of November 2009, PASSOP and other organisations including the Black Sash and the Scalabrini Centre (for whom Robb and Davis, cited above, wrote their 2009 report on the xenophobic violence) undertook intervention work in De Doorns, which was

aimed at both bringing people together across their differences and providing material support and advocacy for the Zimbabweans who had been attacked. The state also engaged with a range of initiatives aimed at ending the conflict and preventing further conflict from emerging later...These interventions around the xenophobic attacks also helped to build bridges across the different groups of farm workers and community members; *these bridges would be one important contributor to achieving the kind of large-scale protest that would later take*

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<sup>33</sup> Also interview with Braam Hanekom, June 2013.

<sup>34</sup> Further details of how the Keurboschkloof strike helped lead to the emergence of a valley-wide and then a province-wide strike can be read in Wilderman (2014). Wesso (2013) explains the organisational processes of how non-unionised but self-organised workers formed the initial impetus behind the strike, and were then demobilised and sidelined in negotiations as trade unions and other representatives took over the bargaining processes (see also Christie, 2012).

*place....In addition...interventions around the xenophobic attacks focused on the idea that Zimbabweans were not the enemy, which forced people to ask questions about who is the real enemy and who is responsible for the poverty and poor living conditions; in this way, these interventions pointed workers toward questions around working conditions and relationships to white farm owners (Wilderman, 2014, p. 35-36, italics added).*

In this way, the eviction of the Zimbabweans in 2009 and PASSOP and other groups' interventions thereafter seem to have had a direct effect not only on reducing conflict between the Zimbabwean and South African farm worker communities but also in helping to lay some of the conditions of possibility for the strike: 'In these ways, organisations, the history of service delivery protests, and the xenophobic attacks (or rather, the responses to them) helped develop community leaders, networks, solidarity, and a set of tactics that could be built upon' (Wilderman, 2014, p. 36).

Wilderman thus suggests that after 2009 workers began to address the issue of farmers' role in farm workers' problems, pointing out that the 'Zimbabweans are not the enemy'. We have seen, however, that South African workers already knew this in 2009, as the interviews in the previous results chapter showed how they construed farmers as being the main agents and the main source of trouble in the town even though their 'remedial' action was, somewhat inconsistently, directed towards the Zimbabweans. Nevertheless, a number of different sources seem to agree that group-based divisions among workers had thus lessened in De Doorns by the time of the strike. A similar report of moves towards community cohesion leading up to the strike is given by PASSOP itself:

In the weeks before the mass strike, we held several meetings and events, including a healing ceremony to reflect on the death of some Zimbabweans after conflict erupted between the local Sotho and Zimbabweans about 4 years ago.<sup>35</sup> The event included the slaughtering of a sheep and a feast for all Sotho, South Africans and Zimbabweans who attended. Thousands attended the event and integration was largely achieved. It is therefore our view that tensions between the Zimbabweans,

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<sup>35</sup> This refers to the killing of seven Zimbabweans earlier in 2009, mentioned in Chapter 2.

Sotho and South Africans were at an all time low when this mass strike began.

(Hanekom, 2012, n. p.)

In our interview, Maromo explained that although PASSOP had been instrumental in the Keurboskloof strike, it was never their intention to start a valley-wide strike. Their plans were simply for their own farm. But these intentions were superseded when other workers were influenced by the outcome of Keurboskloof and local councillors became involved. The Keurboskloof strike initially led to a number of other less successful single-farm strikes in the Hex Valley (Wilderman, 2014) which also involved cooperation between South African and foreign workers. One of these took place at on a mushroom farm called Royal Mushrooms, where South African and Lesotho workers went on strike for higher pay in October 2012 (Hweshe, 2012a, 2012b). A group of Sotho workers were walking from the informal settlements to join South African workers protesting outside the farm gates, and on the way thirty-five of them were arrested by the police, apparently without being told what they were being arrested for, though later, grounds of not having correct immigration documentation were given (Hweshe, 2012a). It was alleged that their farmer had phoned the police to arrest the undocumented workers before payday once they went on strike (Hweshe, 2012b). These Lesotho workers were locked up in the De Doorns police station, from where some were later sent to jail, some deported, and some released (Hweshe, 2012b). South African workers walked to the police station to show support for the arrested Lesotho workers (Hweshe, 2012a). Although these Lesotho workers were unsuccessful in their actual strike, again this is evidence of collaboration between South African and foreign workers. PASSOP further claimed that farmers were simply using the deportation tactic as a way of getting rid of foreign workers – some of whom had been working at the farm for several years – when they started to strike, though the police denied they had taken orders from any farmers (Hweshe, 2012b). But PASSOP and FAWU (Food and Allied Workers Union, the COSATU-affiliated union nominally responsible for farm workers) identified numerous instances of such collusion, and FAWU suggested that it was not uncommon for farmers to employ undocumented foreign workers and then blow the whistle on them on payday, when they would be arrested by the police without being paid (Masemola, 2013; cf Johnston, 2007). Although the Royal Mushrooms farmer himself was also fined for using undocumented workers (Hanekom, 2012), numerous arrests and deportations of foreign

workers during the rest of the strike<sup>36</sup> led PASSOP and FAWU to claim that there was an alliance between farmers and the state to ‘punish’ foreign workers for striking, and South African workers for ‘not being xenophobic’:

FAWU...has learned with disdain and disappointment that officials from the Home Affairs Department and the officers from the South African Police Services (SAPS) are on a concerted xenophobic which-hunt of farm workers [sic], who are mainly nationals from Zimbabwe and Lesotho, and in the process have ‘arrested’ more than 140 in the town of Ceres and surrounding areas....We are aware of an emerging alliance between farmers; labour brokers, who some masquerade as supporters of farm workers struggles; and some in government, be they police officers, home affairs officials or councilors [sic].

The purpose of this campaign is to mete out punishment to the farm workers, especially foreign nationals, for having engaged in historically unprecedented strike action in pursuit of their demands. Foreign nationals are punished for having part of the strike and local farm workers, punished differently, for not been xenophobic. This farm workers maximum unity [sic], and zero-xenophobia, surprised everyone, including FAWU (Masemola, 2012, n.p.).

These reports could hardly paint a more different picture of the role of Zimbabwean (and other foreign) workers in farm workers’ protests compared to what was being said about them in 2009. At that time, Zimbabweans were accused of not showing solidarity with South African workers, of accepting less than minimum wages, of being too compliant towards farmers, and of keeping themselves apart and not participating in community protests (Robb & Davis, 2009). By 2012, FAWU went so far as to suspect that there was collusion between farmers and the various arms of the state to persecute foreign workers for joining in with the strike and pursuing their demands. Yet another report of worker unity during the strike comes from Wilderman’s (2014) interviewees:

By most reports, when the large-scale farm worker strike broke out in November of 2012, participation ranged across the different groupings of migrants and locals. As one strike committee leader explained, “The people were all united—Zim, Sotho,

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<sup>36</sup> Also reported in our interview with Braam Hanekom.

coloured, Xhosa speaking—everyone was united...I was willing to give my neighbour something he doesn't have; the strike brought back the struggle culture [of] the 1980s and we were really united across the whole group" (Yanda, cited in Wilderman, 2014, p. 36).

### **How the strike played out**

The strike continued through November and December 2012, was called off over Christmas, and started again in January 2013. Strikes and protests spread to other Western Cape towns, with many workers deciding to join in when they saw footage of the protests on TV (Wilderman, 2014). In January, Nosey Pieterse of BAWUSA tried to get involved but was later accused by one of our interviewees of stealing a large sum of money that the Department of Labour had given BAWUSA to pay for food parcels for striking workers. COSATU tried to call off the strike several times, and was criticised for having a paternalistic attitude to workers by trying to contain, direct, control a strike which it did not have a mandate to do. Eventually, with violence and destruction of property not ceasing, the government stepped in when Mildred Oliphant, the Minister of Labour, announced that the minimum wage for agriculture (which had been set only the previous year) would be raised to R105 a day, an increase of around 50% from the previous minimum of R69 but a compromise on the workers' demands of R150.

However, Wilderman (2014) notes that the workers' use of disruptive tactics outside of the farms and on the streets (for example, blocking the N1 and in some cases shutting down the normal functioning of whole towns) meant that

the collective action and confrontations were more with police than with farm owners themselves....While the reliance on these types of power were effective at getting government to act, there might have been [sic] a "power mismatch" in the protests because many of the underlying power relationships are still defined between farm owner and farm worker *on* the farms...In other words, the use of disruptive power was less effective at changing many of the underlying power relationships defined by work and life on the farms. As evidence of this, we see that most farm owners never truly felt compelled to act or aggressively seek resolution of



the protest, beyond hiring private security to protect their property. In addition, in the aftermath of the strike, many worker interviewees suggest that the underlying relationship with the farm owner has not changed. (p. 101)

Indeed, the raised wage was not an outcome of bargaining with farmers or forcing farmers into a position where they had to negotiate or capitulate to workers' demands. The Hex River Table Grapes Association (HTA), representing farmers, repeatedly said during the strike that it was not an organisation that could bargain collectively on behalf of its member farmers or to impose a new wage on all of them, as farms are privately owned businesses, and that wage negotiations should be done on a farm-by-farm basis. The consequences of farmers themselves not engaging with or capitulating to workers' demands appeared later when workers we interviewed in Stofland in August 2013 reported that many things had got worse for them after the strike (see also Kleinbooi, 2013). For example, on some farms the raised wage was offset by charging workers for previously 'free' services such as transport and rent; some workers were fired for having participated in the strike; and on some farms the number of seasonal workers hired back at the start of the 2013 season was only half of what it had been in spring 2012. Some farmers apparently simply refused pay the raised wage, or only paid it until the end of the summer season and then went back to the old wage; other farmers applied for exemption from the new wage (see also Wilderman, 2014). However, some workers, including some Keurboskloof workers we interviewed, said that they were consistently being paid the new wage.

However, overall this backlash from farmers meant that the raised wage ended up being a largely 'empty victory' (Kleinbooi, 2013, p. 3), and that the strike had been in some ways a failure, as farmers were basically able to outmanoeuvre workers on all the gains that they had made: 'By relying on the government to force action through the sectoral determination process, farm workers never got the chance to bargain as equals with farm owners and reach agreement based on shared consent' (Wilderman, 2014, p. 84). Overall, Wilderman's participants had mixed views about the ultimate success of the strike, expressing pride in having carried it off, in standing up for themselves and in learning to organise, but also highly aware that it had many negative consequences for farm workers' material conditions afterwards.

### **Xenophobia resolved?**

To return to the question of intergroup relations during the strike, was the xenophobia of 2009 then resolved by the time of the strike? The observations above from PASSOP, FAWU, and Wilderman (2014) paint a positive picture of intergroup relations among workers during the strike: successful efforts at community reconciliation after 2009, a much greater sense of unity among workers of different nationalities, notable participation by Zimbabwean organisers and workers in the strikes, and the absence of any xenophobic attack. However, Wilderman (2014) also points to some of the more dilemmatic aspects of this picture of worker unity. First, he notes that anti-Zimbabwean sentiment was not completely absent during the strike, and some workers he interviewed believed that ‘immigrants – Zimbabweans in particular – undermined the work stoppage by working during the strike and then undercutting workers’ wage demands’ (p. 82). Indeed, ‘in a potentially scary sign’, these participants suggested that they were planning to ‘chase the Zimbabweans away’ again in the same way as they had tried to do in 2009 (p. 82). Although Wilderman notes that such claims did not appear in any interviews outside of De Doorns, ‘with most other workers indicating their excitement that they witnessed so much unity across the different groupings during the protests’ (p. 82), in our 2012 and 2013 interviews the familiar allegations of Zimbabweans’ undercutting wages and displacing South African workers appeared several times. Some of our interviewees agreed that Zimbabweans had gone to stay on the farms and work during the strike, where they were protected by private security – although Owen Maromo pointed out that it was by no means only Zimbabwean or foreign workers who had done so, and that critics should simply say that ‘workers’ had continued working on the farms, rather than specifying their nationality or race. Another group of workers I interviewed in November 2012 complained that the 2009 attack had actually had the unintended consequence of tipping the Zimbabweans into the lap of the farmers and into permanent, farm-dwelling positions, as many of those who were offered accommodation by farmers when they were evicted from the informal settlements simply ended up staying on there. This was galling for South African workers as they felt it was unfair for Zimbabweans to be given permanent posts ahead of South Africans who had been reportedly working at the farms for longer. Thus, for at least some workers, if anything the issue of South African workers feeling displaced by Zimbabweans had become even worse since 2009.

Wilderman (2014) also notes that some coercion of workers to stop work took place during the strike, and in this way implicitly questions the extent of a deep and shared commitment to the strike among all workers. For example, having reported how the geography of Stofland and its two entrances make it easy to close off the area and enforce a stay-away, Wilderman noted that men posted on these bridges would search workers' bags to see whether there were indications, such as a packed lunch, that they were going to work. Participants we interviewed said that some of these men who carried knobkerries had beaten workers who had tried to get out to work. Indeed, one of the farmers I interviewed in February 2013 said that he had been phoned by workers pleading for help to get out of Stofland and Lubisi. Other reports of coercion to stay away included strikers going through the De Doorns townships and breaking down the empty shacks of people they suspected to have gone to work; and strike organisers using whistles to wake up township residents and get them out of their houses early in the morning to join marches (Wilderman, 2014). Farmer 1 also told us about this example of whistles, but said it showed that the strike organisers were treating the people 'like a lot of sheep'. These suggest that, at the individual level at least, there was not total unity of purpose among all farm workers during the strike. Some South African workers we interviewed in November 2012 also expressed their disagreement with the violent way the strike was being carried out; and we will see that for Zimbabwean workers, with the exception of the Keurboskloof strike their decision to stay away from work was mainly informed by fear of such violence.

This brings us to a third way that the reports of unity among groups of workers can be interrogated. Such reports do not examine the discursive content or substance of this unity in any depth. The claim by FAWU that workers were 'united across the whole group' suggests not only that workers *acted* together during the strike, but also were of one mind in their reasons for doing so. What then of the *ideological gulf* between Zimbabwean and South African workers that was so evident in 2009? At that time, these groups were largely playing according to different sets of ideological rules, rules which they read one another's conduct as frequently violating. Zimbabwean workers were operating according to the imperative of anti-xenophobia, in terms of which they themselves were innocent of any actual wrongdoing, and South African workers were responsible for most of their own problems as well as for the violence that they meted out to the Zimbabweans. By contrast,

those South African workers who supported the eviction were playing according to the rules of black liberation and/or white responsibility, in terms of which the onus lay very much on Zimbabwean workers to show solidarity with and commitment to South African workers' efforts to resist their white bosses. Anti-xenophobia discourse suggests that the onus is on South Africans – farm workers, brokers, politicians, farmers, local authorities and so on – to abstain from or actively prevent and discourage violence against foreign nationals; whereas black or worker liberation discourse suggests that the onus lies on uncooperative sections of the workforce to act in solidarity in order to make gains and achieve demands. Thus, we can ask: what was the discursive substance of this reported unity in 2012 and 2013? Had Zimbabwean workers changed their earlier so-called stand-offish and superior attitudes, renounced their allegiance to farmers and decided to throw in their lot with South African workers? Or was it South African workers who had realised the error of their formerly xenophobic and intolerant attitudes and become more accepting of the more hardworking Zimbabweans? Or were some concessions made on both sides? Or had these older disagreements dissolved and become non-issues by the time of the strike – perhaps replaced by other, newer ideological dilemmas? Or alternatively, was the lack of anti-Zimbabwean violence simply a reflection of how there was no incentive during the strike for those in the local power structures of De Doorns to incite xenophobic violence with impunity (c.f. Landau, 2015)?

By way of an answer we can already make an observation about the way the resolution to the problem of 'xenophobia' in this community is being talked about by Wilderman's (2014) participants and other observers. The fact that 'maximum unity' is juxtaposed with, and treated as the solution to, 'xenophobia' suggests that the conflict of 2009 is, in fact, being treated as a problem of a lack of unity among the workforce, rather than as primarily a problem of the prejudices or resentments of South African farm workers. This is not surprising, because Wilderman's (2014) thesis approaches the strike from the perspective of a trade unionist interested in farm worker organisation, and presuming an imperative of worker resistance, whereas Misago (2009) approaches the 2009 conflict from the perspective of an organisation researching and combating *xenophobic violence*, and the fact that the De Doorns case took place in a farming community among workers in a labour force was treated as secondary to its similarity to other cases of xenophobic violence. In these

ways, the literature, also, imports two different understandings of what the main problem in this community actually is, in ways which quite closely resemble those of the actual participants on opposite sides of this conflict.

The 2012-2013 results chapter therefore examines the substance of South African and Zimbabwean workers' reports of improved intergroup relations and lessened conflict between their groups since 2009, as well as their discussions of the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike, and offers a slightly more complicated take on this narrative of conflict resolution. While both South African and Zimbabwean workers did agree that the tone of their relationship had improved since 2009 and that there had been no further attacks on the Zimbabwean community since then, in our interviews these reports of improvement were not accompanied by a closing of the ideological gap between the two communities. Rather, members of both groups continued to assert and refute more or less the same allegations relating to the 2009 violence as they had done at that time. With the partial exception of PASSOP organiser Owen Maromo – who was evidently trying to come up with novel ways of organising and speaking about farm worker intergroup relations that did not fall either into naively blaming South African workers for their own problems or xenophobically blaming Zimbabweans for them instead – neither side demonstrated having substantially changed their opinion or having taken up a revised account of the 2009 events. That is, South Africans did not express remorse or make apologies for the 2009 attack, and neither did Zimbabweans accept responsibility for the eviction by, for example, conceding that they were wrong to be aligned with farmers. Rather, to the extent that participants reported an improvement in the relations between their groups since then, they both largely ascribed such improvements to changes and adjustments made by *the other group*, not themselves, and thus avoided actually conceding any wrongdoing or taking any responsibility for change after 2009. For example, Zimbabweans mainly said the lack of violence was because South African workers had realised that the old allegations about low wages were false, whereas South Africans mainly said it was because the Zimbabweans had shown greater solidarity during the strike. However, with the exception of PASSOP members, the Zimbabweans simultaneously admitted that the main reason they participated in the strike was because of the very real threat of violence from South African workers if they did not, rather than because they believed enthusiastically in the value of

the strike; and in this way suggested that the memory of the 2009 attack was exerting an influence on the decisions they made about participating in the strike and staying away from work. In these ways, our interviews from 2012 and 2013 suggest that the absence of xenophobic violence against the Zimbabweans during the strike is not necessarily evidence of total unity among workers, nor is it a vindication of the anti-xenophobic imperative which implies that xenophobic South Africans are the ones to blame and on whom the onus to change falls. Rather, traces of conflict and disagreement can still be found in the discourse of resolution (cf. Billig et al, 1988).

## Chapter 9: Research methods for 2012 and 2013 fieldwork

### Deciding on research aims

This chapter describes research methods for the 2012 and 2013 case study. When I returned to De Doorns in November 2012 (for some of that time, with research assistant Mariza van Wyk), I was no longer new to the context as I had been in 2009. There were many themes in the 2009 results which could have been followed up on and developed in a second round of fieldwork, but, a few days before I was due to go back to De Doorns, a new curveball appeared in the form of the farm workers' strike. This meant that the Zimbabwean community and xenophobia were actually no longer the town's main priorities. People were now talking about the strike: why workers were striking, whether they themselves supported or opposed it, who (if anyone) they thought was leading it, what had happened to them during it, what they hoped or feared would come of it, and, later in the August 2013 interviews, what its consequences had been or would likely be. The Zimbabweans did not feature spontaneously in most of these interviews, although in some they did; however, in response to our questions participants did have things to say about the Zimbabweans and about group relations. Looking back I can see that I was probably not sufficiently prepared and committed to my initial research question, which was to find out whether 'xenophobia' was still an issue in De Doorns and whether the intergroup dynamics of 2009 had changed or not, and was too ready to rely on what people wanted to tell us, so that consequently, in some of the 2012-2013 interviews there is no discussion about the Zimbabwean community at all – as this was simply not a priority for many people during the strike. In engaging with the interviews and writing the second results chapter, I therefore had to decide whether I wanted to focus on what had become of the Zimbabweans, even though some of my interviews had nothing to say on this, or to ditch this issue in favour of the strike as an event in its own right (or to do both, but this was impractical for length reasons). In the end, I decided to keep the focus on intergroup relations involving the Zimbabwean community, because it seemed a more coherent way of developing the overall narrative of the thesis.

## **Sampling**

I spent only 4 days in De Doorns during the strike, and decided to leave when it got too hairy. I returned a few times in 2013, once in February to interview all the farmers and again for four days between June and August. In this fieldwork the sampling progressed in much the same way as in 2009. Farmer 1 and Braam Hanekom of PASSOP were approached for another interview and agreed. Farmer 2 and the HTA chairperson were also approached again but declined to be interviewed. The rest of the sample was generated from scratch. The rest of the 2012 farmers' sample snowballed from one farmer (Farmer 4) who was an acquaintance of a friend at UKZN. The participants accessed by snowballing were farmers 4-6 and the HTA executive director, the manager and water manager on farmer 1's farm, and an administrative staff member on farmer 6's farm. The remainder of the participants were found by approaching people in the centre of town, the coloured location, Stofland and Lubisi. I avoided Stofland and Lubisi during the strike, and visited these places only later in 2013. In the August fieldwork I was accompanied for three days by Nqaba Nkomana and Lionel Lottering as research assistants, who were mother-tongue Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers respectively. The full sample of this second round of fieldwork is given in Table 2 below. Out of the 33 interviews conducted, 13 have been quoted from in the 2012-2013 results chapter.



**Table 2: Sample of participants, 2012-2013. Interviews with an asterisk \* have been quoted from in the results section.**

<b>Interview number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Number of ppts</b>	<b>Description of participants</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Interviewers present</b>	<b>Main interview language</b>
1*	Thursday 8 November 2012	5	Group of bystanders (mainly coloured farm workers)	In the street, near N1, De Doorns Oos	Philippa	English/Afrikaans
2*	Thursday 8 November 2012	6	Group of coloured residents	In the street, outside a home in De Doorns Oos	Philippa	English
3	Thursday 8 November 2012	2	Young coloured woman and elderly man (possibly her father)	At participants' dining room table, De Doorns Oos	Philippa	English
4	Friday 9 November 2012	1	Shop employee (coloured man)	In a shop in De Doorns	Philippa	English
5*	Saturday 10 November 2012	1	Farmer 1	Farmer's sitting room	Philippa	English
6*	Saturday 10 November 2012	2	Two black (South African ?) farm workers	On the side of the road in De Doorns town centre	Philippa	English
7*	Saturday 10 November 2012	1	Zimbabwean shop assistant (ex-farm worker)	On the road outside the man's work, De Doorns	Philippa	English
8	Monday 12 November 2012	1	Central African business owner (man)	On the road outside the man's work, De Doorns	Philippa and Mariza	English
9	Monday 12 November	1	East African business owner	On the road outside the	Philippa and	English

	2012		(man)	man's work, De Doorns	Mariza	
10*	Monday 12 November 2012	1	Manager of farmer 1's farm	Farm office	Philippa and Mariza	Afrikaans (questions asked in English)
11	Monday 12 November 2012	1	Sub-manager on farmer 1's farm	Farm office	Philippa and Mariza	Afrikaans (questions asked in English)
12	Thursday 14 February 2013	1	Farmer 4	Farm office	Philippa	English
13	Thursday 14 February 2013	1	Farmer 5, CEO of the HTA	Farm office	Philippa	English
14	Thursday 14 February 2013	1	Farmer 6	In the garden at farmers' home, with tea	Philippa	English
15	Thursday 14 February 2013	1	Farmer 7	Farm office	Philippa	English
16	Thursday 14 February 2013	1	Farmer 4's office administer	Farm office	Philippa	Afrikaans (questions asked in English)
17*	Saturday 22 June 2013	1	Farm worker, strike organiser & former ANC ward councillor	Coffee shop in De Doorns	Philippa	English
18*	Monday 22 July 2013	1	Braam Hanekom, PASSOP	Coffee shop in Rondebosch	Philippa	English

19*	Saturday 8 August 2013	1	Owen Maromo, PASSOP	At interviewee's home, De Doorns Oos	Philippa	English
20	Saturday 8 August 2013	1	Elderly coloured woman	Outside home in Stofland	Philippa	English/Afrikaans
21	Saturday 8 August 2013	2	Xhosa-speaking man and woman, farm workers	Inside home in Stofland	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa
22	Thursday 8 August 2013	1	Young Xhosa-speaking woman, farm worker	Outside ppt's home in Stofland	Nqaba and Philippa	English
23*	Thursday 8 August 2013	3	3 young Zimbabwean men, farm workers	Outside a shop in Stofland	Philippa and Nqaba	English
24*	Thursday 8 August 2013	1	Xhosa-speaking man, farm worker	In the street, Stofland	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa
25*	Thursday 8 August 2013	2	Two Xhosa-speaking women farm workers	In a room in Stofland	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa
26	Saturday 10 August 2013	1	Xhosa-speaking woman, farm worker	In a shop in Stofland	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa
27	Saturday 10 August 2013	1	Xhosa-speaking man, farm worker	In the ppt's yard, Lubisi	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa
28	Saturday 10 August 2013	1	Xhosa-speaking man, labour broker	In the same yard as interview 26	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa
29	Saturday 10 August 2013	1	Xhosa-speaking man, farm worker	In the same yard as interview 26	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa

30*	Saturday 10 August 2013	2	Two Xhosa-speaking men	Inside a room, Lubisi	Nqaba and Philippa	isiXhosa
31*	Saturday 17 August 2013	1	Zimbabwean farm worker	In our car outside interviewee's house	Philippa and Nqaba	English
32	Saturday 17 August 2013	2	Afrikaans-speaking farm supervisor and his daughter, a farm worker	In interviewees' home, Stofland	Lionel and Philippa	Afrikaans
33*	Saturday 17 August 2013	2	Afrikaans-speaking labour broker and his wife	In the interviewee's sitting room, De Doorns Oos	Lionel and Philippa	Afrikaans

**Number of participants in 2012-2013: 51**

**Total participants overall: 116**

**Total interviews overall: 70**

### **Sampling from time**

In 2009, all the data was collected within two weeks. However, in 2012-2013, only eleven interviews were conducted in the four days I spent in De Doorns in early November, and the remainder were completed between February and August 2013. By the time I eventually returned to Stofland and Lubisi for three days in August, however, it was almost the start of the next season, and as we interviewed workers it became clear that we were not merely finishing the sample I had left unfinished the previous November but generating a new kind of data in which people were now talking about the negative longer-term consequences of the strike that workers were starting to feel, such as mass retrenchments, having to pay for previously free services on farms, and some farmers' failure to pay the increased minimum wage. This was a powerful lesson about how the world moves on whether or not your research keeps up with it. In these interviews, I remembered to ask South Africans about how things were going with the Zimbabweans, and in practice this usually took the form of a question about whether Zimbabweans had participated in the strike.

### **Gaps and biases in the sample**

A weakness in the 2012-2013 sample is the small number of Zimbabwean workers interviewed. There were only four interviews with a total of 6 Zimbabwean workers in this round of fieldwork, one of whom was also a PASSOP member, plus one other interview with the Director of PASSOP. It was relatively difficult to find Zimbabweans after the strike because they were now a minority living in the informal settlements, unlike in 2009 when they were all living in the camp and thus more easily accessible. This small sample makes it more difficult to draw strong conclusions from the second round of fieldwork about the Zimbabweans' perspective on conflict resolution since 2009.

A second important gap in the 2012-2013 dataset is that only one farmer out of the four who were interviewed was asked about the Zimbabweans and whether they played any role in the strike. In interviews with the other four, whom I interviewed on one day in February 2013, I only asked them about the strike. The question of how farmers responded to the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike is of course one of the crucial and now mostly unanswered questions in a project that has tried to show the texture of this three-way relationship and how it might have been altered (or not) by the strike.

A third gap (although this is not necessarily a weakness) is that I interviewed only one person who could be considered an influential community leader (interview 17). This woman was a member of the Women on Farms Project and a former ANC ward councillor. However, since other strike research is based mainly on interviews with people influential in farm worker organisations (e.g. Wilderman, 2014; Webb, 2013), the focus here on people who were not community organisers is a plus.

### **Interviewing and questions**

In 2012 and 2013, the emergence of the strike meant that I had to decide – both during data collection, and also in the analysis process afterwards – whether to bend the focus in this second case study towards the strike, which was now the town's new priority, or to try and stick to my original intention of following up on intergroup relations involving the Zimbabweans, even if this was no longer the most pressing issue for participants. Although we have seen that the Zimbabwean community did play a role in these strikes in a number of ways, much of the talk in our interviews now revolved around the demands and actions of protesting workers as a whole, and farmers' (and sometimes the police's) responses to these actions, rather than being about anything that the Zimbabweans had or had not done. I did not negotiate this unexpected change of focus particularly well, and in several cases simply did not ask interviewees anything about their relationship with Zimbabwean workers or the Zimbabweans' role in the strike, so focussed were we all on the other priorities of the moment. In this way, relying on the participants to take the initiative in what they wanted to talk about led to some reasonably serious omissions, and some weaknesses of the second case study that arose from these factors will be addressed in the next chapter. In the process I learnt that interviewing people about an event on which everyone has an opinion which they are intent on conveying to you is different to interviewing people about a 'non-event' where nothing may actually have happened – for example, the lack of xenophobic violence against the Zimbabweans during the strike – and which is not at the top of participants' list of rhetorical priorities.

However, another unexpected finding was that a different three-way configuring of intergroup relations emerged marginally in these interviews. This was a relationship between coloured and black workers and their different relationships to farmers. This is important because it contextualises the South African-Zimbabwean division that was to the

fore in 2009 in terms of an older racial division between coloured and black workers (cf Ewert & Hamman, 1996).

### **Analysis of the 2012-2013 interviews**

Just as in the interviewing process itself, in the analysis of the 2012-2013 interviews the main decision to make was thus whether to focus on the strike or on what had become of the Zimbabweans. Initially I tried to do the former, and earlier versions of the 2012-2013 results chapter involved farmers' and workers' different understandings of what the strike was about and their responses to it. However, partly so as to follow the lesson I learnt in 2009 about not only problematising events that involve violence, and partly because doing it this way seemed to fit best with the overall three-group social psychology theory I have been trying to develop, I decided ultimately to keep the focus on the Zimbabweans. I looked for cases in the interviews where people were talking about the three-way relationship between the Zimbabwean and South African workers and farmers as in 2009, but this was muddled by a lot of talk about the strike itself, and hampered by a number of interviews where the Zimbabweans did not come up. Also, there was not enough data from farmers to make up a whole section on farmers' views on the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike. Further, because I was not primarily focussing on the strike itself, it was not appropriate to construct another chapter in the form of a conversation shaped around this major local controversy.

Rather, the main focus is on the way Zimbabwean and South African workers talked about the 2009 violence, about the resolution of conflict since then, and about the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike. I realised that one significant thing about the strike interviews was the absence of any significant change in how either South African or Zimbabwean workers talked about the 2009 eviction. When remembering it, neither Zimbabwean nor South African workers offered any significantly revised account of that event or the reasons for why it happened. Both South African and Zimbabwean workers continued to tell essentially the same story about 2009 and their own role in it, levelling and rebutting the same allegations about whether the Zimbabweans had or had not worked for lower wages and whether they had been taking South Africans' jobs. This lack of any significantly new or revisionist retrospective interpretations of that conflict enables a critical reflection on the

extent of 'conflict resolution' between Zimbabwean and South African farm workers by the time of the strike – a reflection offered in the next chapter.



## Chapter 10: Towards solidarity? Results of 2012-2013 fieldwork

This chapter has two major themes which run through its four Parts. The first theme concerns questions of ‘conflict resolution’ as described at the end of the previous chapter and asks to what extent participants saw the intergroup conflict of 2009 between Zimbabwean and South African workers and farmers as having been resolved by 2012. The second theme considers other configurations of intergroup division and allegiance than the three-way one considered so far in this thesis, and especially the possibility that the ‘South African labouring community’ is itself an alliance among groups with somewhat different interests in change. Part 1 starts by showing how South African farm workers were speaking about the Zimbabwean community in November 2012 during the early days of the farm workers’ strike. Several groups of South Africans were still expressing the same grievances about Zimbabwean workers as we heard repeatedly in 2009 – concerns about working for lower wages, or even working during the strike, and displacing South Africans from their places on farms. However, what is highlighted in this section is the kind of relationship *with farmers* that these South African speakers presumed to be desirable, and which they said the Zimbabweans were spoiling by doing these things. For some workers, the Zimbabweans were a problem because they were disrupting the erstwhile *paternalistic* relationship South African workers claimed to have enjoyed with farmers in the past. These speakers harked back to the old days when farmers and workers helped and looked out for each other. For other workers, however, the Zimbabweans were a problem because they were undermining efforts to cultivate an *adversarial* relationship with farmers, by undermining South African workers’ bargaining efforts and contributing to the oversupply of work-seekers. This is important not only because it contradicts the reports in the previous chapter of ‘maximum unity’ and ‘zero-xenophobia’ during the strike, but also because the apparently widespread opposition to the Zimbabweans among South African farm workers that was evident in 2009 may conceal the fact that different workers have different reasons for wanting them to leave.

Part 2 examines reports of resolved conflict and improved relations between the Zimbabwean and South African labouring communities, which come mostly from interviews

conducted later in 2013, in which participants retrospectively discussed the strike and the Zimbabweans' participation in it. In these interviews, both South African and Zimbabwean workers did say that there had been a general improvement in the relationship between their groups since 2009 and even during the strike. However, they ascribed the lack of further overt xenophobic conflict to changes and adjustments that *the other group*, not their own, had made since then. For instance, Part 2A shows how Zimbabwean workers reported a qualified improvement in their relations with their South African counterparts since 2009, saying that South Africans had become more tolerant and accepting of them because they had realised that the old allegations about low wages and job-taking were false, and/or that perpetrating violence had ultimately served no effective purposes for them. In accounting for this improvement by referring to *South Africans'* realisations and changed behaviour, then, they avoided accepting responsibility for any of the problems of 2009, and continued to treat that violence as something South Africans were mainly guilty of, and South Africans as the group on whom the onus lay to effect change. In this way, they continued to presume the imperative of anti-xenophobia. The important exception here came from Zimbabwean members of PASSOP, who emphasised the importance of developing a shared class consciousness among workers across national boundaries while at the same time challenging the idea that all divisions within the workforce originated with the Zimbabweans themselves.

Part 2B then shows that the discourse of South African workers about this partially resolved conflict was essentially a mirror image of the Zimbabweans'. That is, when asked why there had been no conflict with the Zimbabweans during the strike, they mainly said that this was because *the Zimbabweans had changed* since 2009 and had shown greater solidarity with South Africans' wage struggles, including visibly participating in the strike. They did not say anything remotely resembling the Zimbabwean workers' claims that they (South Africans) had realised that the allegations about low wages and job-taking in 2009 were false. Rather, they continued to re-assert them. In this way, South African workers continued to place the onus to change on the Zimbabweans, rather than themselves, and thus continued to play by the rules of black or worker liberation, in terms of which the Zimbabwean community needed to (and often did) 'show solidarity' in the strike. This suggests that although both groups did report an improvement in the relationship between their groups, with the

exception of PASSOP members this did not appear to be accompanied by an actual closing of the ideological gap that was so evident in 2009, or the appearance of a common set of ideas about what constitutes right conduct for farm workers.

This ideological gap is further illustrated by the way the Zimbabweans accounted for their own participation in the strike, shown in Part 2C. As stated, when speaking in general terms about their relations with South Africans, Zimbabweans by and large said that things had improved because South Africans had become more tolerant and understanding. When asked specifically about their own participation in the strike, however, they mostly said that they had participated *because they were afraid of the violence that might be visited on them if they didn't*. In this way, they simultaneously conceded and did not concede to the demands of striking South African workers: they grudgingly showed that they had learnt their lesson from 2009 about what happens to workers who do not show solidarity, and thus practically, conceded to these demands; but simultaneously they refused to accept the *moral* onus to change, as they presented these threats of violence during the strike as an illegitimate way of bullying and forcing workers, which did not affect their beliefs about what actually constitutes right conduct in any significant way.

Part 2C contains an extract from farmer 1, the only farmer who was asked specifically about the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike. One of the crucial questions in this follow-up case study is the question of how farmers understood the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike and whether this participation challenged their expectation of the Zimbabweans' continued allegiance. Farmer 1 knew that Zimbabwean workers and PASSOP had been involved in the Keurboskloof strike, which he referred to as a 'riot' and as the 'first unrest this year'. He made a display of incomprehension about why Zimbabweans would 'riot' like this when they had previously always had such good relations with farmers. In this way, he took their participation in that strike as a possible interruption of their allegiance. However, he then offered a speculative reason for the Keurboskloof strike, which amounted to a suspicion that Braam Hanekom, leader of PASSOP, was being paid by the ANC. In this way, he partially 'redeemed' the Zimbabwean-farmer alliance from the threat of Zimbabweans' evident resistance, by supplying a dubious external reason for why they might have been striking.

Part 3 turns back to the theme of a new configuration of intergroup allegiance and division than that which has been mainly considered so far. The xenophobic violence of 2009 made salient the distinction among workers between South African citizens and Zimbabwean citizens, a distinction which we have examined at length and which at face value makes sense when viewing the 2009 violence as a case of 'xenophobia'. But as we saw, numerous references were also made in the 2009 interviews to identities other than national ones – workers were referred to as coloured, Xhosa, and Sotho as well as, and perhaps even more often than, 'South African'. As we also know, before the Zimbabweans arrived it was the coloured community who occupied the putatively 'favoured' position in the eyes of farmers relative to black South Africans, and thus, at an earlier time, it was racial rather than national divisions which were to the fore (cf Ewert & Hamman, 1996). In 2009 these other identities appeared to have been subsumed under an apparently widespread and shared opposition to the Zimbabweans from all sectors of the South African workforce; there was no mention in those interviews of conflict between black and coloured workers, for example. But in 2012, I heard for the first time a coloured South African man complaining about the Zimbabweans not mainly because they were non-citizens, but because they were black. He lumped all black people together and blamed them for the rise of violent crime in the Hex Valley. Black people were also collectively referred to as 'die nasies' (the nations) and 'inkomers' (in-migrants or outsiders), thus conflating racial and geographical identities in a way that may be unique to the Western Cape because of its peculiar history of racial influx control under the Coloured Labour Preference Policy (Goldin, 1984). This interview shows that the distinction between who is a foreigner and who is a citizen is not the only or inevitable way of understanding group divisions within the workforce. Thus, this chapter both extends the discussion about the dilemmas and limitations of the anti-xenophobia paradigm in questions of conflict resolution since 2009, and it also draws attention to the way configurations of intergroup allegiance and division can themselves shift and change strategically over time.

### **Part 1: South African workers complain about Zimbabweans at the start of the farm workers' strike**

Contra the claims that there was ‘maximum unity’ and ‘zero xenophobia’ among workers during the strike, South African workers interviewed in the early days of the strike (8-11 November 2012) mostly had the same kinds of grievances about the Zimbabwean community as we heard in the previous results chapter. Once again undercutting of wages and displacement from farm jobs were to the fore, this time in the context of the strike. However, as these are not new observations, what will rather be emphasised in this section is the subtle differences in the kind of relationship with *farmers* that South African speakers constructed as being desirable, and which they said the Zimbabweans were spoiling – either a paternalistic relationship, or an adversarial one.

**Extract 1: Three black South African farm workers (interview 6, November 2012)**

- 1 **Philippa:** um, and the Zimbabweans, so three years ago they were living in that camp,
- 2 **Sonwabo:** yes
- 3 **Philippa:** now they back in:: [the townships, Stofland
- 4 **Sonwabo:** [they back to the locations now ja
- 5 **Philippa:** okay and how are things::, (.) there d-
- 6 **Sonwabo:** Yeh things going all right there
- 7 **Philippa:** Except for the shops ((referring to looting of foreign-owned shops during the strike))
- 8 **Sonwabo:** Ye, the- they don’t have a shops.
- ((9 lines omitted))
- 17 **Philippa:** And do the farmers still like them? ((small laugh))
- 18 **Sonwabo:** They like them very much [P: kay ((small laugh))] Ja I can say that. I don’t
- 19 want to but I can say that they are very cheap.
- 20 **Philippa:** ja:: okay
- 21 **Sonwabo:** So they take that advantage. [PK: okay.] That’s why the people starting to
- 22 kick them out. Because they are very cheap.
- 24 **Philippa:** okay
- 25 **Bongani:** fifty Rand a day
- 26 **Philippa:** Ja:: this is what we hear
- 27 **Moses:** Us we want one fifty, ( ) ((few words in another language)) hundred ( )
- 28 one fifty, (su) sixty Rand a day.
- 29 **Philippa:** mmm
- 30 **Sonwabo:** Ja like now, people they are we strike there, they are hear some people say
- 31 some Zimbabweans they are working at the farm.
- 32 **Philippa:** O::h shoh
- 33 **Sonwabo:** ja
- 34 **Philippa:** okay
- 35 **Sonwabo:** that’s why they are walking around (any) while you are finding on the, on the

36 work they beat him.  
 37 **Philippa:** ((breathes in)) hl:::::: shoh  
 38 **Sonwabo:** Ja

**Extract 2: Coloured workers in De Doorns Oos (interview 1, November 2012)**

1 **Philippa:** Do you think that farm workers could orga-, could bargain with the farmers  
 2 without the organizers, or that-, or not, not, that's not possible?  
 3 **Joe:** No, you see in some situations I can explain you like this. When a farm  
 4 worker approaches his boss and to tells him about a more wage, he either  
 5 tells you, 'you take this, or you leave my farm'.  
 6 **Philippa:** Okay  
 7 **Andries:** You ha-, you don't-, an-, what they say? 'We don't have a right.' If you, if you  
 8 don't wanna work, you wanna strike about the wages, then the the boss tells  
 9 you [P: go] 'go, I don't have work for you'.  
 10 **Marcus:** 'There's other people that wants to work.'  
 11 **Andries:** If you, like that you don't have a right to strike.  
 12 **Philippa:** Oka:::y, [phoof!]  
 13 **Joe:** [That's where three years back the strike came about, that's where  
 14 the Zimbabweans people came in there, and offered the guy a lower rate [P:  
 15 ja] and he can take them on.  
 16 **Andries:** It's more about the xenophobia, it's more about the Zimbabweans and other  
 17 people from other countries coming into the country and taking [M2: Our  
 18 jobs over] the people, the citizens of this country's jobs.  
 19 **Marcus:** But they jeopardize our living style here [M2: Yes, (you see?)], because why,  
 20 they come here with the minimum wage of R20 a day. [M2: (R40)] We are  
 21 struggling for a higher loan, a higher average pay [M2 & P: higher wage] but  
 22 they come here, they say the larney ( ), ('we wanna) work R20 a day'. [P:  
 23 ja] Now what are the larneys, what is the boss gonna do? They gonna  
 24 take a Zimbabwean.  
 ((5 lines omitted))  
 25 **Philippa:** So are there, are there still Zimbabweans here?  
 26 **Joe, Marcus:** yes, yes, they still here  
 27 **Philippa:** A lot or a few  
 28 **Joe:** There lots of them, there are lots of them  
 29 **Philippa:** Okay, where do they mainly live?  
 30 **Joe:** here ( )  
 31 **Marcus:** Here, but since that strike, [P: ja] the last time, [P: ja] that xenophobia  
 32 thing, they went to the farms, the, the boers took them there.  
 33 **Joe:** The farmers took them there  
 ((fifteen lines omitted))

34 **Marcus:** Across the ( ), there's a farm here. [P: Okay] There's lots of them. [P: Shoh]  
 35 ( ) today. They took in the Zimbabweans ( ) ((unclear - windy)). They wanna  
 36 (spite) for us. They even give, they say, they gave the Zimbabweans R100 a  
 37 day but why don't you wanna give us that money? [Joe: Ja]  
 38 **Philippa:** Okay. But I thought you said that the Zimbabweans were working for twenty?  
 39 **Marcus:** Ja. They want to spite us  
 40 **Andries:** That was just an example that he made  
 41 **Joe:** It was just an example  
 42 **Marcus:** They wanna spite us.  
 43 **Philippa:** Oh, okay. The farmers?  
 44 **Marcus:** Ja.  
 45 **Joe:** The farmers they, offer R100.  
 46 ((few unclear words))  
 47 **Marcus:** People that been working on the farm for maybe five years already, he never  
 48 became permanent, a permanent farm worker. That Zimbabweans can only  
 49 go 3 months, 4 months, then they be-, they became permanent, [P: Yes, so-]  
 50 which is wrong.  
 ((20 lines omitted))  
 51 **Philippa:** Hmm. Some people, it seems like people, farm workers and coloured people  
 52 feel like the Zimbabweans are taking our places.  
 53 **All:** Yes, yes  
 54 **Philippa:** Is that it  
 55 **Marcus:** That is part of why the xenophobia and stuff like that come  
 56 **Joe:** Xenophobia uh, violence broke out uh three years back  
 57 **Philippa:** Okay  
 58 **Marcus:** Yes, against them. Because they, they don't care what you busy, doing or,  
 59 busy talking about to the, to the white people, they just do their thing you  
 60 see? And taking what we-  
 61 **Philippa:** Okay  
 62 **Andries:** They don't care about our lifestyle here. [Marcus: Ja]  
 ((eight lines omitted))  
 63 **Philippa:** I mean, did you guys support that xenophobia that happened, (some,  
 64 those times)?  
 65 **Marcus:** I can't say I did, but- [P: okay] But so-so, I can't say, I'm in between, you see?  
 66 [P: okay, ja, shoh] It's not right what, what they doing to the people, but it's  
 67 the right thing according to me it's right, because, we as citizens of this  
 68 country have to get first choice [P: okay] in the matter.  
 69 **Philippa:** Okay, shoh, hmm  
 70 **Marcus:** I don't know if it's right by you, but I think it's right that way.  
 71 **Philippa:** Okay. Sho, I don't know uh-  
 72 **Joe:** No, it's right, I agree with him. We agree with him. [P: Okay] I mean, we have,

73 we are the citizens of this town here, of De Doorns, why not, why, we should  
 74 get the first preference of everything that goes on here. But here in this town  
 75 you know, people come from outside to get jobs here first, [P: ja] but we that  
 76 stay here don't get the jobs first.

**Extract 3: 2nd group of coloured workers in De Doorns Oos (interview 2, Nov 2012)**

1 **Bettie:** Because uh, you see the people who are coming in De Doorns now like the  
 2 the Zimbabweans and Sotho's, they were prepared to-, they were willing to  
 3 work for that small amount before, [P: Mmm] that's why they chased the  
 4 Zims, a few years back. They were prepared to work for that money. And we,  
 5 the, the white people chose them, and they left us. Now they are fighting for  
 6 (these things).

7 **Philippa:** Okay, shoh. Are they Zimbabwe-, the Zimbabweans are still here?

8 **All:** yes, yes

9 **Piet:** A lot of them

10 **Matthew:** What we really wish for, né, our wish is that if the government had- because  
 11 it's mos because of the government of the day that these things are now  
 12 going on, because they let in all these unnecessary people. [B: Mm]  
 13 Understand? And our wish is, if, if the government can do that for us, that  
 14 they must go back, there to where they come from.

15 **Philippa:** Okay. They should go back to where they came from?

16 **Piet & Bettie:** yes

((two lines omitted))

17 **Matthew:** And then we will be able to go on in peace with how we used to live here in  
 18 De Doorns. [B: mm, peaceful life] And it was the best and the most lovely  
 19 place. [P: hmm] All the years we stood under the authority ((gesag)) of the  
 20 farmers.

21 **Philippa:** What's the-

22 **Bettie:** ((translating)) He say that um it's best for the foreigners to go back, [P: Okay]  
 23 the Sotho's and (Zims), go back because all the years we've been staying  
 24 together, we didn't have any problem, and we did listen to the white people.  
 25 [P: Okay] Because (at) the end of the day some, there is some farmers, when  
 26 you have a problem you can go to them, they (wish to) help you with a  
 27 funeral or whatsoever. [P: Okay] But now it's like, they destroying the farms,  
 28 [P: okay] they were-, the farmers, they, they won't trust us anymore. They  
 29 won't trust us anymore.

((24 lines omitted))

30 **Philippa:** So, alright. What do you guys think would be like a solution or a way  
 31 forward? Can you translate?

32 **Bettie:** What is the, what do we think will be the solution going for-



- 33 **Charl:** They must go back to their country.  
34 **Matthew:** No, what I say, they must go back.  
35 **Piet:** Ja, They must all go back. [B: They must go back.] They must go back.  
36 **Matthew:** That's the only way.  
37 **Bettie:** They must go back.  
38 **Philippa:** Shoh. Shoh shoh shoh.  
39 **Piet:** And we can live in peace. [P: Okay] And work in peace.  
40 **Philippa:** Okay. Hmm  
41 **Matthew:** That is all.

These extracts contain very similar complaints about the Zimbabweans during the strike as were expressed by South African workers in 2009, especially that the Zimbabweans were undercutting wages and wage bargaining processes (extract 1, lines 18-19 & 30-31; extract 2, lines 10-15, 20; extract 3, lines 1-5), and displacing South Africans from their rightful places in farm jobs (extract 2, lines 16-24 & 31-62; extract 3 lines 4-5). Also present are recommendations for the Zimbabweans to leave the country (extract 3, lines 13-14, 34-40) and ambivalent agreements that evicting the Zimbabweans in 2009 was the right move (extract 2 lines 63-76). In these ways, the speakers in these extracts appear to be in agreement in their opposition to the Zimbabweans.

However, despite this apparent agreement it is possible to discern slightly different reasons that the speakers give for wanting the Zimbabweans to leave, reasons that revolve around different constructions of the ideal farmer-worker relationship. Speakers in extracts 1 and 2 appear to aspire to an *adversarial* relationship with farmers rather than a *paternalistic* one, and they speak numerous times about the difficulty of cultivating such a relationship: 'When a farm worker approaches his boss and to tells him about a more wage, he either tells you, "you take this, or you leave my farm"' (extract 2, line 5); 'What they say? We don't have a right...if you don't wanna work, you wanna strike about the wages, then the the boss tells you "go, I don't have work for you"' (lines 7-9); 'There's other people that wants to work' (line 10); 'you don't have a right to strike' (line 11). It is in the context of this construction of impotence in negotiating power that the Zimbabweans are then spontaneously mentioned as a group who contributes to this process by adding to the oversupply of willing workers: 'That's where three years back the strike came about, that's where the Zimbabweans people came in there, and offered the guy a lower rate and he can take them on' (extract 2

lines 13-14). Thus, while these speakers still construe their problem with the Zimbabweans in terms of a three-way relationship with farmers, we can observe more specifically that the Zimbabweans are a problem for them because they undermine the possibility of cultivating an *adversarial* relationship with farmers in which healthy wage bargaining takes place.

By contrast, the speakers in extract 3 do not speak about their relationship with farmers in adversarial terms, and the Zimbabweans are not accused of undermining the development of an adversarial relationship. Rather, they are accused of spoiling the formerly *paternalistic* relationship between workers and farmers. First the speakers in extract 3 recall the events leading up to the 2009 violence in this way: 'the white people chose them, and they left us' (line 5). This suggests a sense of abandonment or betrayal by a group who used to be a loyal partner. Then after suggesting that the Zimbabweans should go back to where they came from, Matthew says 'And then we will be able to *go on in peace with how we used to live here in De Doorns....* And it was the best and the most lovely place. All the years *we stood under the authority of the farmers*' (extract 3 lines 18-20, emphasis added). No mention of wage bargaining is made here; rather Matthew suggests a nostalgic desire to return to a previous state of (supposed) tranquillity in which the hierarchy ordering workers' and farmers' interactions is stable and unchallenged. Bettie then translates and elaborates: 'He say that um it's best for the foreigners to go back, the Sotho's and (Zims), go back, because all the years we've been staying together, we didn't have any problem, and we did listen to the white people...Because (at) the end of the day some, there is some farmers, when you have a problem you can go to them, they (wish to) help you with a funeral or whatsoever' (lines 22-26). Here Bettie again harks back to the days of paternalism when workers related to farmers as obedient subjects ('we did listen to the white people'), but could also expect 'help' from good farmers with unusual expenses like funerals (cf du Toit, 1993). The speakers in extract 3 also assume that there is a degree of trust between workers and farmers, as evidenced by their worry that striking workers are 'destroying the farms' - presumably a reference to the burning of vineyards which had happened a few days before these interviews - and thus also the *trust* between farmers and workers: 'they won't trust us anymore' (lines 28-29). Hence, in the closing lines of the extract, the workers suggest that the Zimbabweans should go back to where they came from so that 'we can live in peace. And work in peace' (line 40). This construction of farmers as benevolent dictators

and workers as their contented subjects, bound together by mutual trust and help, is quite different from extract 2, where workers seemed to be trying to find a way to challenge to the absoluteness of the farmers' refusal to engage in wage bargaining. Thus, the workers in these extracts illustrate two different ideal constructions of the farmer-worker relationship, and therefore also two different reasons for wanting the Zimbabweans to leave: for some, their leaving would purportedly allow a return to a peaceful but subservient relationship with farmers, whereas for others, their leaving would allow workers find an adversarial way of engaging with farmers, in which workers' wage bargaining efforts have some purchase. These extracts thus gesture towards workers' different interests in change. Some workers who have been invested in paternalistic farm communities may feel that they have a lot to lose by the unravelling of these relationships, and may thus have different reasons for wanting the Zimbabweans to leave compared to those workers who have either never been invested in paternalist relations with farmers or who no longer see that their interests are served by them (cf Wilderman, 2014).

Another reading of these interview extracts is that they show the dilemma that is present for *all* workers about whether to see farmers as their adversaries or as their benevolent helpers. Such an analysis is supported by Webb (2017) who shows how two different trade unions working with Western Cape farm workers, Sikhula Sonke ("We grow together") and CSAAWU (Commercial Stevedoring, Agricultural and Allied Workers' Union), have two different approaches to paternalism and how farmers should be engaged with. Sikhula Sonke tries to maintain good relations with farmers and warns that antagonising them leads to the erosion of paternalistic bonds which can mean significant loss of benefits for workers. In the first instance they will try to solve farm problems internally before referring cases to the CCMA. Thus, 'paternalism' appears to be seen as something that, if handled correctly, can be used to workers' advantage (see also White, 2010). By contrast, CSAAWU, an independent, non-COSATU aligned union, is much more overtly confrontational and sees paternalism as an inherently violent, intimidating and silencing system which makes workers unable to express themselves or speak out about human rights abuses on farms. CSAAWU sees Sikhula Sonke as apolitical and too focussed on individual farmers, instead of challenging the system as a whole (CSAAWU, 2012, cited in Webb, 2017). Webb's analysis

thus supports the view that workers (or at least, trade unionists) have different ideas about how workers' own interests are served or not served by paternalism.

However, more can be said about the identities the speakers in these extracts claim for themselves, and implicitly what it is about the Zimbabweans that offends or runs counter to this identity. All the way through this thesis, I have been talking about 'the South African farm worker community' and contrasting this to 'the Zimbabwean farm worker community'. In this way, a *nationality-based* distinction was presumed to be the most salient line of division among workers. And this is indeed one way these workers talk about the conflict: 'It's more about the xenophobia, it's more about the Zimbabweans and other people from other countries coming into the country and taking...the people, *the citizens of this country's jobs*' (extract 2 lines 16-18, emphasis added). The group repeats this claim to citizenship later on: 'it's the right thing according to me it's right, because, we *as citizens of this country* have to get first choice' (lines 67-68). This is a textbook illustration of Neocosmos's (2006) claim that South Africa has 'ended up in the paradoxical position of justifying exclusion on democratic grounds' (p. 72); or, as Palmary (2017) has it, that 'the political transition that South Africa has undergone is used as a justification for excluding foreigners in the name of realizing freedom' (n. p.). New South African citizenship was supposed to be an inclusive category overcoming the racial divisions of the old South Africa, in terms of which only whites fully qualified for citizenship, and blacks were supposed to be citizens of the homelands. Now, the Bantustans may have been 'struck off the map' (Neocosmos, 2006, p. 19) thus dissolving pseudo-national divisions among black South Africans and also between whites and blacks, but the borders around this new 'inclusive' nation are simply extended to create a new line of division between who belongs and who does not, who is entitled to citizens' benefits and who is not (see also Palmary, 2017).

However, South African citizenship is not the only identity speakers claim for themselves in extract 2 – there are two others. The first is a racial identity, where the interviewer herself suggests to the group that 'it seems like people, farm workers and coloured people feel like the Zimbabweans are taking our places' (lines 51-52). To this there is enthusiastic agreement; although the fact that the speakers did not bring up coloured identity themselves limits what we can say about this in this instance. The second other identity that appears in the extract is as 'citizens of this town' rather than as citizens of the country. 'We

are the citizens *of this town here, of De Doorns*, why not, why, we should get the first preference of everything that goes on here. But here in this town you know, people come from outside to get jobs here first' (lines 73-75). At first glance there may not seem to be anything significantly different between being a citizen of the country and a citizen of the town; Zimbabweans are outsiders either way, and the speakers might have meant the same thing by both. But the trope of the 'inkomer' (literally 'incomer'; in-migrant or outsider), while being widely used in the Hex Valley to denote all kinds of 'outsiders' and thus having a regional or geographical meaning, is also used in particular to refer to black people, who in the Western Cape are still often spoken about as if they are not 'locals' because of the history of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy and the claiming of the Western Cape as a 'white' and 'coloured' province only (Goldin, 1984; cf Ewert & Hamman, 1996). In this way, and also given the earlier reference to coloured identity, it is possible that national, racial and geographical or regional identities are all conflated in the claim to having first preference to jobs: 'But here *in this town* you know, people come from outside to get jobs here first, but we that stay here don't get the jobs first (extract 2 lines 74-76). It may seem a speculative case to suggest that identities other than national ones are salient here, both because the participants did not make spontaneous reference to coloured identity and also because I might be overplaying the difference between being a citizen of the town and of the country. However, in the last section of this chapter some further examples of a different configuration of intergroup division and allegiance will be given, in which the Zimbabweans were seen as problematic outsiders mainly because they were *black* (as opposed to coloured), and not because they were *non-citizens* (as opposed to South African). In this way, the category 'South African' may not necessarily be 'South African' workers' primary identity, and may actually obscure the alternative divisions and allegiances which have pertained, and which to some extent still pertain, in this community.

## **Part 2: Narratives of conflict resolution between Zimbabwean and South African workers post-2009**

The above grievances and complaints about the Zimbabweans undercutting wages and displacing South Africans from jobs were by no means the only story we heard in the 2012 and 2013 interviews, however. Part 2 focuses on both Zimbabwean and South African

workers' reports of an improvement in the relationship between their groups since 2009, and especially on how they each accounted for this improvement. Such accounts mainly came from interviews in August 2013, several months after the strike had ended. Zimbabwean interviewees cited in Part 2A reported that there had been a qualified improvement in their relationship and a lessening of conflict since the eviction in 2009 (although they also said that xenophobia had not entirely gone away). When asked why there had been this improvement, they mainly said South Africans had realised that the old allegations about them working for lower wages and taking jobs had been false or misplaced, and had thus become more tolerant and accepting of Zimbabweans. As mentioned, an important exception came from Owen Maromo of PASSOP, who said that Zimbabweans did need to do some adapting in order to try and join in with South African workers' wage struggles and thus forge a class-based solidarity among workers that overcame racial and national lines. However, he also pointed out that they have to try hard to do this, because of the exclusion and divisiveness they typically face from South African strike organisers.

**Extract 4: Zimbabwean ex-farm worker (interview 7, November 2012)**

- 1 **Philippa:** Okay so, u:h, you weren't here at the time of that, xenophobia three years
- 2 ago
- 3 **Tom:** I was ((6 lines omitted)) But u::h, the only thing that had changed
- 4 from that time until now, is the, there were, there seemed to be a bit more
- 5 uh, acceptance or even I can say tolerance. [PK: okay] Towards, u::h
- 6 Zimbabwean nationals who are, who are staying here in De Doorns ( )
- 7 working on the farms. [PK: okay] Mainly because the most of the, the
- 8 community members had noticed that (basically) we come here we work,
- 9 and then we go back to our families. [PK: mm] We we we, we have no
- 10 intention of staying here permanently. We are taking their jobs and all (of
- 11 this)
- 12 **Philippa:** okay
- 13 **Tom:** ja
- 14 **Philippa:** okay. So, do you feel like xenophobia's still an issue? At all?
- 15 **Tom:** I think so ja. [PK: okay] Because there, there's still some very strong
- 16 sentiments within some members of the society because some of them,
- 17 make threats like when they are done with doing the toyi-toyi then they
- 18 gonna close the Somalian tuckshops and then they gonna, u:h go and out-
- 19 take the Zimbabweans and take their stuff and all that stuff. [PK: mm] They

20 they they still, there are others who are against it there are others- it's a  
21 mixed, u:h thing.

**Extract 5: Three Zimbabwean men in Stofland (interview 23, August 2013)**

1 **Philippa:** Okay, uh, were you here, in 2009 uh I was here when the Zimbabweans were  
2 all living, in the camp, [?: ja] on the field, were you guys there? [?: ja] Wo::w  
3 okay [?: ((small laugh))] So, um, so my question is, uh, how things have  
4 changed since then. Cos at the time everyone was accusing you guys of  
5 working for less than minimum wage and all that kind of stuff and obviously  
6 you guys said no we never were working for less than minimum wage, but  
7 now during the strike nobody seems to (.) have a problem with the  
8 Zimbabweans any more<sup>37</sup> do you know:: why that is, or

9 **Sam:** ja  
((4 lines omitted))

10 **Tafadzwa:** Ja, they accepted us in the community, hhayi it was a, it was a, it was a  
11 challenge, because most of the allegations, ah, they were false, [PK: ja] you  
12 see and that we took work from them [PK: ja] but, eh, there, the farmers, the  
13 work is plenty for everybody, everybody's got work, they are still needing  
14 people there by the farms but, [PK: mm]  
15 (.)

16 **Philippa:** okay

17 **Tafadzwa:** ja

18 **Philippa:** So, do you know, mm, what it was that-, how, how did it change? Like, what  
19 made it change

20 **Tafadzwa:** Ja, what made the change is that eh we rent from these people, [PK: O:::h]  
21 where we stay we rent from them, they also get- they know that the money  
22 that they pay is very few so if they don't accept us in the community, they are  
23 gonna lose also their bud[get you see

24 **Philippa:** [oka:::y okay their rent income

**Extract 6: Zimbabwean farm worker (interview 31, August 2013)**

1 **Joe:** But now it's different from what it was before in Stofland.

4 **PK:** Ok so that's what I wanna know why, what why has there been that change because

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<sup>37</sup> It is worth pointing out that the interviewer's opening observation that 'during the strike nobody seems to have a problem with the Zimbabweans any more' does not really match with what we have already heard South Africans saying in the previous section from November 2012. However, since November I had interviewed Braam Hanekom of PASSOP in July 2013, and so had recently heard for the first time a semi-official statement that there had been no xenophobic attack on the Zimbabweans during the strikes. Armed with this information of 'no xenophobic violence', I then returned to De Doorns to pursue why this was, although in doing so was possibly putting words into participants' mouths, as in this extract.

5 it seems like there's been nothing like that again, specially during the strike hey?  
 6 There were no threats against any Zimbabweans,  
 7 **Joe:** n-  
 8 **PK:** Nothing happened to you guys, so, why, has it changed.  
 9 **Joe:** You see-  
 10 **PK:** Do you think it's an improvement? Like  
 11 **Joe:** Ja, now it's an improvement. [PK: ok] Because, you can move from here to Stofland,  
 12 unlike the past time. [PK: mm] This, you know it was a problem, we could not, they,  
 13 these people I think I would use this word they didn't trust us. [PK: mm] Okay, and  
 14 we also we didn't trust them. We were afraid of one another. Until they, reacted the  
 15 way they did. Okay, so, and, as we were like the main cause, they say, we are taking  
 16 their, their jobs. [PK: mm] That was the other reason said we were taking their jobs,  
 17 we taking their wives, [PK: mm] which was not true. [PK: mm] Which was not true  
 18 because, even now if we were taking their wives, still today we should be doing the  
 19 same thing. [PK: ja] And they can still accommodate us in the same location in the  
 20 same, houses we were staying before. ((short pause, phone buzzes)) You see [PK: Ja]  
 21 So, during that time, ja they also didn't understand us. But after we staying in the  
 22 in the sports field, interacting with them, and some organisations coming, to,  
 23 join us together then they started to understand that 'ah no these people are just,  
 24 here to work and, do their stuff, let's not waste our time by, burning their houses,  
 25 [PK: mm] stealing from them,' [P: Shoh] because they were getting jailed when they  
 26 do, [PK: yeah] when they commit these crimes [PK: yeah ok] you see so it was, on,  
 27 hard on their part because, if you get jailed, then, you are far you are away from  
 28 your family your mother they- the family are starving. [PK: ja] So, they've (desist)  
 29 from doing that [PK: okay] and now, we are just working together.  
 30 **PK:** Shoh, so that's amazing. So what are some of the organisations that, that helped,  
 31 that you mentioned  
 32 **Joe:** Uh there was PASSOP, [PK: okay] led by Braam Hanekom, [PK: Yes I remember] and  
 33 there was another one ((five lines omitted)) Scalabrini was coming PASSOP was  
 34 coming, and, uh, there were this, Black Sash Human Rights [PK: okay, okay!] They  
 35 were coming also to help us.

### **Extract 7: Owen Maromo (interview 19, August 2013)**

1 **PK:** the farmers we interviewed ((in 2009)) also, were very f- like positive about the  
 2 Zimbabweans you know they show up, they, they there for all the hours that they  
 3 supposed [OM: ja] to do and this kind of stuff. But now, has that changed, because  
 4 now, I thought that Braam was saying, that the Zimbabweans had joined in with the  
 5 strike, so now, is that different because now, are the farmers, the Zimbabweans  
 6 were not always at work? Or, has that, has that changed like,  
 7 **OM:** hh U::h hh the only change which is there, is that, maybe they if there is



8 something like a strike or something like that, (there's) sort of, eh co-operation or  
 9 unity, eh between the locals and eh the foreigners.  
 10 **PK:** oka::y [OM: But ih] and where does that come from?  
 11 **OM:** E::h, we tried, to mobilise our countryfellows, something like that to tell them how  
 12 important, to unite with these people. Because we see the problem was, eh the  
 13 unity between themselves. Although we know that they don't want us on that,  
 14 although we know also that we don't have any say, on that on those meetings or,  
 15 those ih, plans or so something like that, but what we have to do is just to  
 16 participate. (.) So that we protect a lot of lives.  
 17 **PK:** oka:::y

These four interviewees all report a (qualified) improvement in relations between the Zimbabwean and South African labouring communities since 2009. According to Tom in extract 4, 'there seemed to be a bit more uh, acceptance or even I can say tolerance...towards, u::h Zimbabwean nationals who are, who are staying here in De Doorns ...[but] there's still some very strong sentiments within some members of the society...it's a mixed thing' (extract 1, lines 11-13, 22-24, 27-28). According to Tafadzwa in extract 2, 'Ja, they accepted us in the community, hhayi it was a challenge' (extract 2, line 16); and according to Joe in extract 3, 'Ja, now it's an improvement...Because, you can move from here to Stofland, unlike the past time...and now, we are just working together' (extract 3, lines 11-12, 29). Finally, according to Owen Maromo, 'the only change which is there, is that, maybe they if there is something like a strike or something like that, (there's) sort of, eh co-operation or unity, eh between the locals and eh the foreigners' (extract 4, lines 7-9). These are all reports of some positive change.

However, notice the way the first three speakers account for this change. They all reiterate that the allegations made against Zimbabwean workers in 2009 were false, and that *South Africans had finally realised this to be the case*. With the exception of Owen in the last extract, they do not account for the change with reference to anything that they themselves did. According to Tom in extract 1: 'Mainly because the most of the, *the community members had noticed* that (basically) we come here we work, and then we go back to our families....we have no intention of staying here permanently. We are taking their jobs and all (of this)' (extract 1, lines 14-18, emphasis added). In extract 2, Tafadzwa similarly states that the old allegations that Zimbabweans were taking South Africans' jobs were false, and

that farmers are still in need of labour, and he accounts for South Africans' acceptance of the Zimbabweans through reference to this self-evident fact: '*They accepted us*, hhayi, it was, it was a challenge, because most of the allegations, ah, they were false...you see and that we took work from them...the farmers, the work is plenty for everybody...they are still needing people there by the farms' (extract 2, lines 16-20). In this way he takes the same position on the question of job-taking as farmers and Zimbabweans did in 2009. Finally, Joe in extract 3 similarly accounts for the more trusting relations between the groups first by rebutting the old allegations – 'said we were taking their jobs, we taking their wives,...which was not true' (lines 16-20) – and then goes on to say that South African workers had also come to realise this: 'after we staying in the in the sports field, interacting with them, and some organisations coming, to, join us together then *they started to understand* that "ah no these people are just, here to work and, do their stuff, let's not waste our time by, burning their houses, stealing from them," ...So, they've (desist) from doing that...and now, we are just working together' (lines 20-29, emphasis added). In all these accounts, the speakers both re-assert their position on the allegations of job-taking and low wages in 2009, and show that it was South Africans who changed by realising this and then becoming more tolerant. In this way, the onus to change is placed on South Africans, rather than on Zimbabweans, who are still not said to have done anything wrong.

More than just claiming South Africans realised that the allegations about low wages were unfounded, however, the speakers in extracts 2 and 3 point out that violence also had a cost to the perpetrators, which is part of the reason why it didn't happen again. Tafadzwa in extract 2 points to the cost of losing rent income from Zimbabwean tenants: 'what made the change is that eh we rent from these people...where we stay we rent from them, they also get- they know that the money that they pay is very few so if they don't accept us in the community, they are gonna lose also their budget' (lines 26-29).<sup>38</sup> Joe in extract 3 also points to the cost of violence in economic terms: "'let's not waste our time by, burning their houses, stealing from them" because they were getting jailed when they do, when they

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<sup>38</sup> Although this extract is a deviant case in that it implicated a different kind of economic relationship among informal settlement residents – that between landlords and tenants, rather than that between co-workers on the same farms – in terms of its rhetorical value it is not a deviant case because it also locates the reason for the change that led to the Zimbabweans being accepted with a change of mind of South African workers.

commit these crimes...you see so it was, on, hard on their part because, if you get jailed, then, you are far you are away from your family your mother they- the family are starving' (line 26-29). Thus, South Africans realising that there are costs and consequences of violence is given as another reason for the absence of any further xenophobic attack since 2009.

A slightly different view constituting a deviant case among the (admittedly already small) Zimbabwean sample comes from Owen Maromo of PASSOP, in extract 4 above. First, Maromo's account of what constitutes a positive change in the relationship between the two groups is slightly different to the others': 'maybe they if there is something like a strike or something like that, (there's) sort of, eh co-operation or unity, eh between the locals and eh the foreigners' (lines 7-9). In this way, his idea of what constitutes positive change is not (only) greater tolerance from South African workers, but *greater unity between the groups when there is a strike*. In this way, he does not only place the onus on the South African labouring community to change – he concedes that it was Zimbabweans who needed to change: 'we tried, to mobilise our countryfellows...to tell them how important, to unite with these people. Because we see the problem was, eh the unity between themselves' (extract 4, lines 11-13). However, in a rhetorical turnaround the responsibility for this disunity is laid at the feet of the South African work force and strike organisers: 'Although we know that *they don't want us* on that, although we know also that *we don't have any say*, on that on those meetings or, those ih, plans or so something like that, but what we have to do is just to participate. So that we protect a lot of lives' (lines 14-17, emphasis added). In this way, Maromo rebuts the implicit accusation that the source of divisions in the workforce is the Zimbabweans themselves, who keep themselves separate and are reluctant to act in solidarity with South African workers (Robb & Davis, 2009). Rather, in this account Zimbabweans must swim against the tide of the exclusionary and divisive tactics used by South African workers and strike organisers.

The final extract in this section, below, comes from Joe, the speaker in extract 3 above. It is a deviant case because it suggests that despite the lack of overt xenophobic violence or conflict during the strike, and despite Joe's above report of an overall improvement in the relationship between Zimbabwean and South African workers, racial and ethnic divisions among farm workers are still the norm:

### **Extract 8: Zimbabwean farm worker (interview 31)**

- 1 **PK:** and what it's it like, where you work?
- 2 **Joe:** Uh it's, (.) of all the farms, this, I think we don't have that there is no problem like uh
- 3 to say 'this is from Zimba- you are a Zimbabwean, I'm a-' [P: okay] ay so it's, quiet
- 4 and cool the most of the people there they are friendly. [P: okay] We are like, you
- 5 have friends. [P: okay!] ja
- 6 **PK:** That's nice uh do you think that's, unusual for, De Doorns? O:r, [are there other far-
- 7 **Joe:** [Very unusual
- 8 **PK:** okay
- 9 **Joe:** Very unusual.
- 10 **PK:** Okay wh- uh what's it like elsewhere then
- 11 **Joe:** (.) Elsewhere like, if, we hear from other farms, to say, a group of South Africans
- 12 were saying they have a name for us like they call us Kwirikwiri [PK: mm] it's coming
- 13 from those farms. [PK: mm] To say 'these are Kwirikwiri, these are Sotho, these are
- 14 coloureds.' But on our farm ah no it's different.
- 15 **PK:** Shoh that's great. Um, d- do- why do you think that is does that have something to
- 16 do wi- ja why do you think that's different on your farm
- 17 (.)
- 18 **Joe:** ah it's different because of the, (.) eh m mainly it's because of the manager.
- 19 **PK:** okay
- 20 **Joe:** The manager of the farm he's strict [PK: a::h] he's saying 'everyone is a human
- 21 being, [PK: okay] You want money, this is a Zimbabwean he also wants money. [PK:
- 22 okay] I want my work to be done, if all of you combine, then, my work will be done.'
- 23 [PK: kay] And that's his policy.
- 24 **PK:** Shoh

In this account, divisions among Sotho, Zimbabwean and coloured workers, and derogatory name-calling of Zimbabweans ('Kwirikwiri'), were still the norm on farms around De Doorns. But when asked why he thinks his farm is different in this respect, Joe ascribes it (rather unexpectedly) to the style of the farm manager: 'mainly it's because of the manager...The manager of the farm he's strict he's saying "everyone is a human being...You want money, this is a Zimbabwean he also wants money...I want my work to be done, if all of you combine, then, my work will be done"' (lines 19-23). Thus, the language of running a business ('I want my work to be done') is used to encourage cooperation and to discourage animosity among workers. In this way the extract is also a deviant case compared to the discourse of farmers and Zimbabweans in Part 4 of the previous results chapter, where in almost every case, the language of capitalism and of running a business (the need to have

work done on time etc.) went hand in hand with a justification of 'preferential' treatment of Zimbabweans based on their superior work ethic and a denigration of South African workers, who were treated almost a lost cause, and written off for their chronic absenteeism and bad attitude. Here, by contrast, the language of running a business is used to encourage unity among the workers and to affirm the contribution of all parties: 'I want my work to be done, if all of you combine, then, my work will be done' (rather than, 'I want my work to be done, and if the South Africans don't want to come to work I will use Zimbabweans to get it done instead'). The experienced result for this Zimbabwean man is an absence of conflict among fellow workers: 'it's quiet and cool the most of the people there they are friendly' (line 3-4).

So far in this section, we have heard Zimbabweans speak about the state of relations between themselves and South African workers during and after the farm workers' strike, especially comparing to how things were in 2009. They reported that problems of overt conflict and violence had gone away, and insofar as improvements were reported, these were mainly ascribed to changes in the thinking of South Africans – for example by becoming more tolerant and realising they had been mistaken in their earlier accusations. However, ongoing divisions and antagonism, albeit non-violent, were also still reported (extracts 4, 7 and 8). Overall, with the partial exception of Owen Maromo who emphasised the need for unity among all parties, the Zimbabweans interviewed here continued to assume that they themselves were not responsible for the violence and hostility visited upon them, and thus the onus to change was not on themselves. In the following section, Part 2B, we will see that South African workers also agreed that conflict with the Zimbabweans was less, but they gave opposite reasons for this. They *also* continued to assert the same allegations about losing jobs to the Zimbabweans who were unfairly favoured by farmers as we heard in 2009, and they also continued to assume that it was the Zimbabweans rather than themselves who needed to change, and indeed, had done so by visibly participating in the strike.

## **Part 2B: South African workers account for the absence of violence against the Zimbabweans during the strike**

This section contains retrospective accounts from black South African workers in Stofland mainly in August 2013 containing reflections about the Zimbabwean community's participation in the strike, about whether relations between the groups had improved since 2009, and answers to the question of why there was no violence directed at the Zimbabweans during the strike. There was a range of responses to these questions, with some interviewees reporting that there was cooperation between the groups because the Zimbabweans had had the same wage demands during the strike as everyone else; others reporting that the Zimbabweans were undermining the strike by going to stay on the farms and continuing to work; and others saying that not all Zimbabweans had participated in the strike in the same manner (Owen Maromo pointed out that while it was true that some Zimbabweans did stay on the farms during the strike, much of the farmers' scab labour actually consisted of South Africans fetched from nearby towns such as Touws River). However, the analysis here specifically focuses on how, in a mirror image of the Zimbabweans' discourse above, these workers ascribed any improvements in their relationship to the fact that *the Zimbabweans*, rather than themselves, had adjusted and changed since 2009. In particular, they said that Zimbabweans had started to show greater solidarity when it came to wage bargaining processes. They did not say anything remotely substantiating the Zimbabweans' claim that they (South Africans) had realised that the allegations about the Zimbabweans working for low wages in 2009 were false. Indeed, they all continued to re-assert them when remembering what the 2009 eviction had been about. In this way, South African workers also continued to operate within the same ideological imperative as they had done in 2009 – an imperative of black liberation and resistance – in terms of which the moral onus to change lay squarely on the Zimbabweans, rather than themselves.

**Extract 9: Xhosa-speaking farm worker (interview 24, translated from Xhosa, Aug 2013)**

- 1 **Nqaba:** ok so another thing that I wanted to say, this thing that I just said that there
- 2 are people who are Coloured né, [Ppt: yes] there were people from
- 3 Zimbabwe so were they, in the strike, did they participate or what
- 4 **Dumisani:** yes, even them we were-
- 5 **Nqaba:** they didn't, they didn't I mean they were not forced to be if they didn't want
- 6 to or did they just come for themselves
- 7 **Dumisani:** No they came for themselves, still they also wanted money
- 8 **Philippa:** mm

((later in interview))

- 9 **Nqaba:** So what do you think made them join the strike, isn't it before you were  
10 accusing the people from Zimbabwe saying that they work for very little  
11 money, right  
12 **Dumisani:** ja they work for very little  
15 **Nqaba:** ja so you chased them away in two thousand and was this two thousand and-  
16 **Philippa:** nine  
17 **Nqaba:** ja you chased them away and then they left, and then now, so what made  
18 them join the strike?  
19 **Dumisani:** Them?  
20 **Nqaba:** uh huh  
21 **Dumisani:** They saw that no man, we are complaining about this thing that when we  
22 want money from the boers, they work [NN: uh huh] but now I see that they  
23 are also part of this local thing now, they want money  
24 **Nqaba:** okay, okay  
((five lines omitted as NN translates to PK))  
25 **Nqaba:** you don't think that they were afraid that you were going to attack them  
26 again, chase them away  
27 **Dumisani:** Chase them away?  
28 **Nqaba:** uh huh  
29 **Dumisani:** uh-uh ((no)) I don't know ( ) when we went to the meetings they went  
30 with us, the local ones, [NN: okay] there are the ones who stay on the  
31 farm. [NN: farm, uh-huh] They were the ones that continued working

**Extract 10: Two Xhosa-speaking men (interview 30, translated from Xhosa, Aug 2013)**

- 1 **Nqaba:** ok, so um, and according to people that stay here there are foreigners,  
2 people from, people from, there are even coloured people and so on. So in  
3 the strike, did they all participate, did you all participate in the strike, or  
4 what?  
5 **Siya:** The ones who took part for example it's nearly all of us. [NN: ok] And then  
6 others, even them, but then they tried to make us cry but it didn't go  
7 anywhere, people like those from Zimbabwe, they were able to contact the  
8 farmers and the farmers took them and lived with them on the farms. But  
9 the people that are of colour like the coloureds and others that are Bantu we  
10 were always together, mm.  
((5 lines omitted as Nqaba translates to Philippa))  
11 **Nqaba:** So do you think that in this one, in last year's strike the reason there was no  
12 conflict was because the Zimbabweans that were here participated in the  
13 strike and so that is why nothing happened to them? Do you think that's  
14 why?

- 15 **Philippa:** ( )
- 16 **Siya:** eh ((yes)), you see the one in 2009?
- 17 **Nqaba:** eh
- 18 **Siya:** The 2009 one was another problem, since as, since as, that one it was clear
- 19 that we were no longer being employed in the farms, [NN: yes] us people
- 20 from South Africa [NN: okay okay] we were not being employed. Because
- 21 they were using the foreigners mostly, with aslams ((asylum papers))
- 22 [NN: okay, okay] that's what caused us to get up and make them leave, if we
- 23 are going to lose and they are going to be- [NN: okay] that's what made them
- 24 leave but when they came back, they just did better things that showed that
- 25 they were with us.
- 26 **Nqaba:** oh okay so by working with [Ppt: eh] you there was no conflict
- 27 **Siya:** No there was no conflict

**Extract 11: South African labour broker (interview 10, translated from Xhosa)**

- 1 **Andile:** here [N: uh huh] there are people from South Africa [N: uh huh]
- 2 there are people from Lesotho [N: uh huh] there people from Zimbabwe [N:
- 3 uh huh] okay. The farmers what they do, they scare the people from Lesotho,
- 4 and the people from Zimbabwe that they must work because they are
- 5 foreigners, [N: uh] now we end up as people from South Africa wanting work
- 6 because now their work is carrying on in the farms. [N: uh] Then we also
- 7 reckon that now you won't stay hungry, rather you get up as well and go and
- 8 work. I mean now I don't believe that there will ever be another strike again
- 9 [NN: okay] because now hunger is really tough on our stomachs
- 10 **Nqaba:** okay
- ((23 lines omitted))
- 11 **Nqaba:** ((translating PK's question)) Oh she is saying now that it is surprising that,
- 12 that time right, the South Africans didn't attack the people from Zimbabwe
- 13 they didn't hit them during the time of the strike, why didn't they if that was
- 14 what they were doing on that other side. Why was that?
- 15 **Andile:** The difficult thing, we wouldn't have been able to reach them because the
- 16 police were holding us back, we couldn't get to the farms you see
- 17 **Philippa:** Oh
- 18 **Andile:** We wouldn't have been able to get to the farm [N: okay] to get the people
- 19 that were working
- 20 **Nqaba:** Okay, okay okay. So, so,
- 21 **Philippa:** The police were keeping them out?
- 22 **Nqaba:** The police were keeping them out ja and also-
- 23 **Andile:** And the soldiers were also there
- ((later in interview: PK asks again why was there no violence against the Zimbabweans))



24 **Andile:** The reason we didn't end up attacking people [NN: uh] was that there were  
 25 Zimbabweans there supporting us here in the location [NN: okay] there were  
 26 also Basothos also supporting us here in the location, [NN & PK: okay] there  
 27 were those who escaped, who took chances to go to the farms to stay in the  
 28 farms  
 29 **Nqaba:** okay  
 ((later in interview))  
 30 **Andile:** Before the strike there was something that happened here at De Doorns  
 31 between the amaXhosa and the Zimbabweans [NN: ja] ( )  
 32 **Nqaba:** ja ja ja here at De Doorns ja  
 33 **Andile:** Okay, the thing that used to happen, when you came to the farm in search of  
 34 a job, they say 'aslam', ((asylum papers)) when you don't have an aslam and  
 35 you have an ID they say 'no we don't want an ID we want an aslam'. Then we  
 36 fought as the different types of people. [NN: uh huh] After that they stopped,  
 37 it ended in the farms and then we brought the Zimbabweans and we came to  
 38 stay with them here in the location, [NN: okay] it never happened ever again  
 39 so all of the time we work together like even now, [NN: okay] Zimbabwe  
 40 Mosotho [NN: ja] whatever, we work together we stay in the same area

Three aspects of these extracts are highlighted. Firstly, contrary to the Zimbabweans' reports that South Africans had realised the old allegations about them working for lower wages and taking South Africans' jobs in 2009 were false, the South African workers here continue to re-tell this same story. In extract 9, Dumisani says 'ja they work for very little' (line 12). Siya in extract 10 also recalls that 'The 2009 one was another problem, since...that one it was clear that we were no longer being employed in the farms, us people from South Africa...Because they were using the foreigners mostly, with aslams' (line 18-21). He even says 'that's what caused us to get up and make them leave' (line 22) – there is no suggestion here of a revised or repentant retrospective view of the eviction. Andile in extract 11 also recalls about 2009 that 'the thing that used to happen, when you came to the farm in search of a job, they say "aslam", when you don't have an aslam and you have an ID they say "no we don't want an ID we want an aslam". Then we fought as the different types of people' (lines 33-36). Thus, no indication is given that South Africans have realised they were wrong in their allegations about 2009. Rather, the old reasons for that attack are still being taken for granted.

Secondly, similar allegations about Zimbabweans being used by farmers to undermine the wage bargaining process are again being made here about the more recent strikes: Dumisani says about the Zimbabweans that ‘there are the ones who stay on the farm. They were the ones that continued working’ (extract 9 lines 30-31). In answer to the interviewer’s question about whether different groups in the work force all participated in the strike, Siya in extract 10 replies, ‘The ones who took part for example it’s nearly all of us...people like those from Zimbabwe, they were able to contact the farmers and the farmers took them and lived with them on the farms’ (lines 5-8). Finally, Andile also recalls similar allegations of farmers using Zimbabweans to undermine the strike process: ‘The farmers what they do, they scare the people from Lesotho, and the people from Zimbabwe that they must work because they are foreigners, now we end up as people from South Africa wanting work because now their work is carrying on in the farms’ (extract 11, lines 3-6). Presumably this is a reference to the tactic used by farmers during the strike and reported by PASSOP in the previous chapter, of threatening to call the police to arrest undocumented foreign workers if they tried to go on strike. Thus, these speakers all continue to offer familiar, un-revised accounts of the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship – in which Zimbabweans are either victims of farmers or collaborators with them, but either way, are making life difficult for South Africans – not only in 2009 but also during the strike in 2012-2013.

Third, however, these speakers also give examples of greater solidarity shown by certain Zimbabwean workers during the strike, and a consequence of this change in attitude and behaviour on the part of the Zimbabweans was an improvement in the relationship between the two groups. For example, when Nqaba in extract 9 asks ‘So what do you think made them join the strike, isn’t it before you were accusing the people from Zimbabwe saying that they work for very little’, Dumisani replies: ‘*They saw that* no man, we are complaining about this thing that when we want money from the boers, they work...but now I see that *they are also part of this local thing now, they want money* (extract 9, lines 21-24, emphasis added). When Nqaba asks further ‘you don’t think that they were afraid that you were going to attack them again, chase them away?’, Dumisani replies, ‘uh-uh I don’t know ( ) when we went to the meetings they went with us, the local ones’. Siya in extract 10 also gives an account of the Zimbabweans changing their attitudes and actions

post-2009 leading to an improvement in this relationship: he recalls that after the Zimbabweans came back to the informal settlements after the camp on the sports field was closed, *'they just did better things that showed that they were with us'* (lines 24-25). Finally, when pressed for a reason why violence towards the Zimbabweans did not happen during the strike even though some Zimbabweans had apparently been working on the farms (lines 21-28), Andile in extract 10 gives a purely pragmatic answer at first: *'The difficult thing, we wouldn't have been able to reach them because the police were holding us back'* (lines 29-33). The second reason he gives is more similar to those of the previous extracts: *'The reason we didn't end up attacking people...was that there were Zimbabweans there supporting us here in the location...there were also Basothos also supporting us here in the location'* (line 38-40). He does not say, *'the reason we didn't end up attacking people was that we had realised that xenophobia was wrong'*. Thus, in these accounts the lack of anti-Zimbabwean violence during the strike, and whatever improvement there has been in the relationship between the groups, is ascribed not to a profound change of mind by South African workers about the ethics of violence or the truth of the allegations about the Zimbabweans, but to changes in the actions and behaviour of the Zimbabwean community themselves.

A final word can be said about how Andile in extract 10 describes the xenophobic attack of 2009. He explains, *'before the strike there was something that happened here between the amaXhosa and the Zimbabweans'* and goes on to give reasons for the 2009 violence we have already heard at length (lines 30-31, 33-40). He concludes, *'then we fought as the different types of people'*. Notably he does not say *'there was something that happened here between the South Africans and the Zimbabweans'*. Thus coloured farm workers are excluded from that fighting. This is a further suggestion that there are meaningful divisions among South African workers which may have been obscured by the analysis of the 2009 interviews, which took all participants' constructions of their opposition to the Zimbabweans (after they had already been evicted) at face value but was not well-placed to ask *'material'* questions about who actually carried out the violence that led to the eviction. If we take Andile's account seriously, it becomes a possibility that coloured workers were not involved in the actual eviction, but nevertheless supported it and thus their accounts of opposition to the Zimbabweans overlapped with those of Xhosa-speaking South Africans.

Indeed, below we will see that the opposition of some coloured workers to the Zimbabweans actually had less to do with the Zimbabweans undermining their bargaining power, and more to do with their being black and encroaching on an intergroup relationship which coloured workers nostalgically recalled existing in an idealised time before the end of the influx control laws.

The last extract in this section about the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike is a deviant case because these speakers did not give Zimbabwean workers any credit whatsoever for participating in the strike and did not report that things had improved since 2009. Rather, they continued to angrily rail against the Zimbabweans and said that the only Zimbabweans who stayed on in the locations and striked were those whom farmers did not have the time to come and fetch.

**Extract 14: Two farm workers (interview 25)**

- 1 **Nqaba:** okay, and then, I wanted- something I wanted to ask during the strike, isn't it  
2 here there are people from Zimbabwe né  
3 **Thembi:** mm  
4 **Nqaba:** then there are people of colour, like like coloureds  
5 **Thembi:** Coloureds  
6 **Nqaba:** so, in the strike, did they participate or-  
((4 lines omitted))  
11 **Thembi:** the coloured people they were fighting alongside us, the people from  
12 Zimbabwe they took their things and went to stay in the white people's  
13 houses. They were kept there by the white people, in the stores, the ones  
14 that we all work in  
15 **Nqaba:** In the farmers' buildings?  
16 **Thembi:** The time we are busy they are continuing with work  
17 **Nqaba:** The same time we are here, the stores are full there  
18 **Thembi:** Full, full  
19 **Nokuthula:** There at the ((farmer's surname))s  
20 **Thembi:** Full of these people  
21 **Nqaba:** uh  
22 **Philippa:** So the Zimbabweans went to stay on the farms  
23 **Nqaba:** ja  
24 **Philippa:** even this one ((looking at a Zimbabwean man walking nearby))  
25 **Thembi:** They were they were, the Zimbabwean that didn't, that were there at the  
26 toyi-toyi are the ones that the white people didn't have time for, or get the  
27 chance to come and get them  
28 **Nqaba:** to come and take them, uh

29 **Thembi:** to go and stay there with him but many of them, they were staying  
 30 **Nokuthula:** at the farms  
 31 **Nqaba:** at the farms  
 32 **Thembi:** Like how they are still staying there even now, some of them never came  
 33 back, like even now they can't come and take other people here, they are all  
 34 there. And if it is said that the white person is short of labour they phone  
 35 another person from Zimbabwe who is in Port Elizabeth, another person who  
 36 is in Cape Town, and they go and fill in that space. That is why the white  
 37 people have no chance now to come and take us hungry people from here.  
 ((ten lines omitted in which NN translates to PK))  
 38 **Thembi:** No the Zimbabweans have really shut down jobs for us here, straight. [NN:  
 39 uh] the Zimbabweans weren't even concerned about the R150 that we were  
 40 saying we want [NN: uh] whatever money they get, they take [NN: uh huh]  
 41 because even that R64 they had no problem with it.

This extract differs from the others in that the two speakers report absolutely no improvement in their relations with Zimbabwean workers. They offer instances of how the Zimbabweans undermined the strike by working on the farms while it was going on (lines 11-18) and were happy to carry on working for the old minimum wage (line 41). They also speak about displacement: especially that South African workers are now excluded from the labour recruitment networks that farmers use, which are dominated by Zimbabweans (lines 32-38), and that Zimbabweans have 'shut down jobs for us here, straight' (line 30). Thembi does not even give any credit to those Zimbabweans who did stay behind and strike: 'the Zimbabwean that didn't, that were there at the toyi-toyi are the ones that the white people didn't have time for, or get the chance to come and get them' (lines 25-27). In this way, the possibility that Zimbabweans exercised agency by participating in the strike voluntarily is negated. This was the angriest account from South African workers we heard about the Zimbabweans' (non)participation in the strike, and is included to show that not all South Africans felt that intergroup relations had improved since 2009, or that the Zimbabweans had demonstrated any meaningful solidarity during the strike.

## **Part 2C: Zimbabwean workers speak about their own participation in the farm workers' strikes**

In this section we hear how Zimbabwean workers talked about their own participation in the strike. The three participants cited here said they had joined in with the strike not because they believed in it as a means of addressing problems with wages and working conditions but because of the violence that was being visited on people who tried to go to work while it was on, and in one case, because they were afraid that something similar to the 2009 violence might happen again if they did not join in. The Zimbabweans acknowledged that they were adjusting their actions (under duress) to accommodate the demands and wishes of striking South African workers, but they again refused to concede that there was a moral imperative on themselves to make an effort to visibly be part of the strike. Rather, the violence that was used to threaten people away from work was presented as an illegitimate way of forcing people to comply. In this way, there appears to be something of a mismatch between the views of Zimbabwean and South African workers about the Zimbabweans' motives for participating in the strike and what this participation is interpreted as demonstrating. The Zimbabweans' accounts in this section challenge the greater 'solidarity' that South Africans in the previous section read into the Zimbabweans' participation in the strike. Again, the exception came from Owen Maromo of PASSOP, who made a distinction between the early strike at Keurboskloof, in which Zimbabwean workers participated willingly and strategically to achieve their own wage demands, and the later, widespread strikes in which Zimbabweans mainly participated because they were coerced.

**Extract 15: Three Zimbabwean men (interview 23, August 2013)**

- 1 **Philippa:** So uh, what was it like when you were, did you like participate in the strike,  
 2 for example when there were the huge crowds of people going along the N1,  
 3 were you there, like
- 4 **Tafadzwa:** Ah no we didn't like to participate in the strike [P: kay] but just because of  
 5 the situation that we stay in the same community, when we- if we were not  
 6 gonna go and participate, they (were finally) gonna chase us away again you  
 7 see, [P: oka::y, okay] ( ) they gonna blame us that 'you, you like small money'  
 8 what what what. [P: ok] Because just because of peer pressure. [?: Ja.] [P:  
 9 kay] Ja we were not gonna go, how can I strike in my in South Africa, (I field a)  
 10 strike in my country. [P: Ja] I can't ((small laugh))
- 11 **Philippa:** kay. So it was, it, did Zimbabwean people participate, but not really because  
 12 they wanted to
- 13 **Tafadzwa:** Ja they did participate but not really. [?: mm] It was just because we were  
 14 forced. Because of attention ja. Not that we were after the strike uh-uh ((no))

**Extract 16: Zimbabwean farm worker (interview 31, August 2013)**

- 1 **PK:** So, um, uh, maybe if we can talk about the strike, [Joe: yes] di- did on your farm did  
2 you guys participate in the strike? Did you stay away from work?  
3 **Joe:** It was not a voluntary strike [PK: mm:::] you were forced to do it whether you  
4 wanted to or not you were forced to do it.  
5 **PK:** Okay. Forced by whom, if you can say?  
(6 lines omitted – Joe names FAWU, COSATU and BAWUSA))  
13 **Joe:** These were the three unions that were there during the time we were on that strike.  
14 [PK: okay] Yes.  
15 **PK:** And what's, how do they force you. Like, with, like, like what will happen if you  
16 wanted to not participate in the strike  
17 **Joe:** If you didn't participate in the strike like you go and work [PK: ja] they will beat you  
18 [PK: shoh] on your way to work. [PK: shoh] No trucks were coming in to fe- normally,  
19 the farmers provide transport [P: yeah] ja so they stopped those transport from  
20 coming in. They said if your truck come in they will burn it. [PK: sh:::] There was a  
21 one truck which was burnt [PK: hl:::] on there in Stofland. [PK: okay] It was burnt so,  
22 **PK:** the farmers didn't-  
23 **Joe:** ja they didn't want to send in [PK: ok] trucks to be burnt. And there were people  
24 beaten there in Stofland. [PK: wow] Going to work. [PK: wow] So it was your choice  
25 whether you want to go, or, you stay safe at home.  
26 **PK:** okay  
27 **Joe:** yes  
(3 pages omitted))  
28 **PK:** So, it's not something that you supported, I mean  
29 **Joe:** No  
30 **PK:** the strike  
31 **Joe:** No.  
32 **PK:** Okay  
33 **Joe:** Because, (.) I think there should be some, other means and ways, [P: mm] of  
34 trying to solve a problem before you start marching or before you start destroying.

**Extract 17: Owen Maromo (interview 19, August 2013)**

- 1 **Nqaba:** But now I'm interested, the the Zimbabwean workers joined the strike,  
2 during the-  
3 **Owen:** This, this strikes last strikes [N: ja] they joined it, eh, but ih, the second strike,  
4 it was ni- like n::: they joined it, not because they like it. But ih because of [P:  
5 okay] the protection. Their protection.  
(30 lines omitted))

6 **Philippa:** So, are you saying that the Zimbabweans, mostly joined in with the strike, not  
7 because they wanted to, but just because for their own safety

8 **Owen:** M- Mostly for their own safety. They also want something good, in terms of  
9 money. [PK: okay] And I believe even if it is ih done in a good way- because  
10 even on that farm which, we have strike, eh, people, who work there they  
11 were not afraid of each other. [P: mm:::] The Zimbabweans there are a lot of  
12 Zimbabweans who work there. But they were cooperating in a good way  
13 because they want something good. [P: okay] But the thing is that, who is  
14 going to conduct that, even if he is a South African even if he is a  
15 Zimbabwean even he's a Sotho. Who is to, who is going to lead that  
16 thing. Must (lecture) everything to people. [P: okay] That they are same  
17 thing, on this thing. And they are fighting one thing. They are fighting one  
18 person, on this thing. But the thing is that somebody who is going to lead  
19 that thing, will act like, eh, there's a difference between themselves. [P: okay]  
20 While almost the all of them they are workers. [PK: kay] That is the problem.  
21 And when he is even ih addressing them, he act like he's addressing the  
22 South Africans. [P: hl::: okay] But the bad part of it is that, when ( ) maybe  
23 Zimbabweans decided to stand on the side, you see again after after talking  
24 about, or if, ((stammers)), they only complain when their plans failed. You  
25 see. If their plans failed, they will start to put a blame, on::: Zimbabweans.  
[P: 26 Zimbabweans] Like last, what they were trying to do last time on the strike,  
27 then I stand up there I go on the podium and telled them that 'no. It's not like  
28 what', because they were starting to blame 'some Zimbabweans are going to  
29 work' and so something like that. ((2 lines omitted)) I was not much  
30 interested on this strike because I have- don't have anything to do on this  
31 strike. But the thing is that, how many Zimbabweans are staying on the  
32 farms. And how many South Africans are staying on the farms. And everyone  
33 was agreeing with me except these, those leaders of that strike. ((4 lines  
34 omitted)) Then I told 'no no no it's not like that. If you say people, just say  
35 people, there are people who are going to stay, there are people staying on  
36 the farms they are working while we are having strike'. [P: ( ) South  
37 Africans] Not to mention other tribe or so something like that. [P: u::h okay]  
38 ((9 lines omitted)) And they know because of that thing which Braam and me  
39 was doing, on the, because we were helping- now, right now we are helping  
40 more South Africans than Zimbabweans. So it's like ih it will be difficult even  
41 for them to, start another sort of you know xenophobia or so, to go [P: mm]  
42 against ih, because now we have we have got a voice, and we have s:: some  
43 numbers.



Three points about these extracts are highlighted. First, all three speakers state their indifference to or disagreement with the purpose and value of the strike (in Maromo's case, the widespread strikes post-Keurboskloof). Tafadzwa in extract 15 says 'Ah no we didn't like to participate in the strike' (lines 4) and 'Not that we were after the strike uh-uh ((no))' (line 14). Similarly, when Joe is asked 'So, it's not something that you supported', he replies: 'No...no...Because, I think there should be some, other means and ways, of trying to solve a problem before you start marching or before you start destroying' (extract 16, line 69). Maromo's answer in extract 17 is more nuanced. He makes a distinction between the Keurboskloof strike, in which he and other Zimbabwean workers did intentionally and voluntarily participate, and the later, widespread strikes which they were mainly coerced to join 'for their protection'. Of the Keurboskloof strike he says, 'even on that farm which, we have strike, eh, people, who work there they were not afraid of each other. The Zimbabweans there are a lot of Zimbabweans who work there. But they were cooperating in a good way because they want something good'. But of the later strikes, he says 'I was not much interested on this strike because I have- don't have anything to do on this strike' (lines 29-31), and that Zimbabweans participated 'Mostly for their own safety. [But] They also want something good, in terms of money' (lines 8-9). As we know, it was not PASSOP's intention to start a valley-wide strike, and Maromo criticised some of the South African strike leaders or pseudo-leaders for being corrupt, divisive, un-tactical in the way they conducted the strike, and even, most shockingly, for supplying scab labour to farmers while the strike was going on.

A second aspect of these extracts to highlight is the reasons the speakers give for their own participation in the strike despite not really believing in it. They all state that they and other Zimbabweans were forced to join in order to avoid violence. In the first extract, Tafadzwa misunderstands the word 'like' in the interviewer's question 'did you like participate in the strike' and replies: 'Ah no we didn't like to participate in the strike but just because of the situation that we stay in the same community, when we- if we were not gonna go and participate, they (were finally) gonna chase us away again you see...they gonna blame us that "you, you like small money"' (lines 5-7). Later he repeats: 'It was just because we were forced' (line 13). Thus, the violence that is uppermost in his mind is not only generic violence directed at any and all workers who tried to work, but specifically the possibility of

a repeat of the eviction in 2009: 'if we were not gonna go and participate, they (were finally) gonna chase us away again you see' (lines 6-7). Joe in extract 16 corrects the interviewer's assumption that not participating in the strike was something workers could have chosen to do, with this reply: 'It was not a voluntary strike you were forced to do it whether you wanted to or not you were forced to do it' (lines 3-4). When asked how workers were forced, he gives two ways: 'they will beat you on your way to work' (line 17-18) and also 'they said if your truck come in they will burn it. There was a one truck which was burnt on there in Stofland' (lines 19-21). In the third extract, Maromo does not give details about how violence was used but just reports that Zimbabwean workers participated for their own protection and safety (lines 5 and 8). Thus, overall these extracts present the Zimbabweans mainly as unwilling participants coerced into joining the post-Keurboskloof strikes by threats of illegitimate violence.

However, Maromo goes further and responds to the allegations of Zimbabweans' non-participation in the strike. First, he establishes that Zimbabwean workers were, in fact, an important part of the impetus behind the initial strike at Keurboskloof: 'there are a lot of Zimbabweans who work there. But they were cooperating in a good way because they want something good' (lines 11-13). Then he further counters the idea that Zimbabweans were undermining the later strikes, by showing that this was merely a bleat from South African strike leaders who (a) were divisive and exclusionist in their own approach, sowing divisions among workers themselves, and (b) who simply trot out these kinds of statements which make the Zimbabweans their scapegoat whenever their own plans fail for other reasons (lines 15-20 and 22-29). In this way, similarly to how he did in extract 7 above, Maromo lays the blame for divisions among workers not with Zimbabweans, but in fact with the South African strike leaders themselves, who are obsessed with national and racial divisions (lines 14-15, 18-22) and cannot seem to get beyond these to realise the importance of solidarity among all workers *as workers* (lines 16-20): 'But the thing is that somebody who is going to lead that thing, will act like, eh, there's a difference between themselves. While almost the all of them they are workers. That is the problem. And when he is even ih addressing them, he act like he's addressing the South Africans'. Maromo also tells of his own struggle to counter these divisive tendencies by speaking up at meetings and countering the claim that it was particularly Zimbabweans who were working during the strike: 'there I go on the

podium and told them that “no...If you say people, just say people, there are people who are going to stay on the farms they are working while we are having strike...Not to mention other tribe” (lines 26-28, 34-37). In this way, Owen Maromo, as a PASSOP member, represents one of the few voices we have encountered in this fieldwork who was deliberately and positively calling for unity among all groups of workers. Although many South African workers used the discourse of unity and solidarity among the workforce, this was also used to justify the attempt to evict the Zimbabweans in 2009, and so the language of solidarity was ironically ultimately a way of further entrenching group divisions and mistrust. Instead, Maromo reports that it was *PASSOP*’s work in De Doorns that was ultimately successful in building real solidarity: ‘And they know because of that thing which Braam and me was doing, on the, because we were helping- now, right now we are helping more South Africans than Zimbabweans. So...it will be difficult even for them to, start another sort of you know xenophobia or so, to go against ih, because now we have we have got a voice, and we have s:: some numbers’ (line 38-43).

So far in Part 2, we have seen how Zimbabwean interviewees reported a qualified improvement in their relations with their South African counterparts generally since 2009 and ascribed this to the South Africans’ becoming more tolerant and realising the error of their past beliefs (Part 2A). In this way, they made it incumbent on South Africans, rather than themselves, to change; and their accounts also differed from those of South African workers, who placed the onus to change on the Zimbabweans (Part 2B). When discussing their own participation in the more recent farm workers’ strike, Zimbabwean interviewees said that they had joined in because of fear of violent retribution if they did not, as well as, to a lesser extent, because they also had the same wage demands as all other workers (Part 2C). This participation was read by South Africans in Part 2B as a positive thing, as evidence of the Zimbabweans’ showing greater solidarity and doing ‘better things that showed that they were with us’, but from Zimbabwean workers’ own point of view – at least those few we interviewed – the violence and threats of violence used to keep people from going to work were presented as something illegitimate, something which they (and others) were yet again potential victims of. In this way, they appear to have conceded physically but not morally to the demands of South African workers that they ‘show solidarity’.

## **Discussion**

Parts 1 and 2 of this chapter have examined the discursive substance or content of the 'unity' that reportedly existed among workers during the strike. It has complicated the accounts of 'maximum unity and zero xenophobia', and of workers being 'united across the whole group', in a number of ways. First, similar constructions of the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship and its consequences for South African workers – the undermining of wage bargaining processes and displacement of South African workers – continued to circulate during and after the strike. Second, South Africans' accounts of the improvement in their relationship with Zimbabweans since 2009 do not appear to have been based on a sense of remorse or repentance about the eviction. Thus, while this section has been based on very small samples and its conclusions are thus provisional, the lack of remorse for the 2009 violence, as well as the Zimbabweans' concession that they joined in with the strike under duress, suggest that not only that there had not been a significant closing of the ideological gap between these communities of workers in the three years since 2009, but also that the absence of violence against the Zimbabweans during the strike and the general lessening of conflict cannot be interpreted as a vindication of or triumph for the anti-xenophobic imperative among South African farm workers in De Doorns (cf Kerr & Durrheim, 2013). Importantly, the significant exception here was the leading organisers of PASSOP, who articulated a need for Zimbabweans and other foreign workers to become active participants alongside South African workers in their struggle for better wages and working conditions, not (only) as an expedient to prevent themselves being victims of violence again, but because they believed in principle in building a class-based solidarity among farm workers that crosses racial and national divisions.

### **Part 3: Farmer 1 speaks about Zimbabweans' role in the Keurboskloof strike**

One of the most important questions in a follow-up study about the three-way relationship between Zimbabwean and South African workers and farmers is about how farmers interpreted the Zimbabweans' participation or non-participation in the strikes – especially given the 'alliance' that had pertained between these two groups in 2009 on the basis of the Zimbabweans being agreeable and reliable workers. The following extract comes from an interview with farmer 1, one of the first interviews I undertook in this second round of fieldwork, shortly after the start of the strike in early November 2012. He reflects on

Zimbabweans workers' and PASSOP members' involvement in the Keurboskloof strike, which at that stage was still relatively recent:

**Extract 18: Farmer 1 (November 2012)**

- 4 **PK:** So, the Zimbabweans are still here. Uh is that, the case? Are th- and,  
5 **F1:** They started coming back, they, they,  
6 **PK:** ((interrupts)) did they come back immediately the next season after they (.) after  
7 [that 2009 stuff  
8 **F1:** [ja  
9 **F1:** ja  
10 **PK:** okay  
11 **F1:** So they worked, last year there was a lot of them working, so, but for me for  
12 instance, we let, because, because to have the locals, to save the work for the locals,  
13 [P: mm::] we sent them back, to Zimbabwe or wherever for, the, winter season. [P:  
14 ja] And then, now is the time that they come back from wherever. Because it's ki-,  
15 it's kind of a migrating migrant work [P: yes sure] so we trying to, go that way, to, to  
16 get the, community more stabilised for, not having the foreigners here all the time.  
17 **PK:** Okay shoh hey hh  
18 **F1:** So you see (why I'm/my) ( ) [P: Mmh] so  
19 **PK:** that's hard  
20 **F1:** and they just, starting to come back, um, but there's one guy, that's their union, he  
21 actually started the first, he's the guy that's representing them, he, at that time with  
22 the unrest, he's a white guy that's  
23 **PK:** Yes Braam, Braam Hanekom  
24 **F1:** Braam, he actually, I I he started the first riot. Here this year. ((PK breathes in  
25 sharply)) So we thou- we actually suspect that the ANC bought him in. Because we  
26 don't know that, we don't know of any income that he gets, fro-, so, I don't know  
27 who's paying him or what is:::  
28 **PK:** okay. Wow hey  
29 **F1:** ja (.) Because  
30 **PK:** He was always on the side of the Zimbabweans  
31 **F1:** He is still.  
32 **PK:** okay  
33 **F1:** But now he's, I mean we couldn't understand it's like, three weeks ago there wasn't  
34 even, the f- just the first Zimbabweans came in, and we all, 'welcome welcome' you  
35 know ((PK laughs a bit)) 'welcome back' and then the next thing they started to  
36 riot because, (.) I don't know what, because of what. [PK: oh] So (Braam-) but then,  
37 he uh he's two-faced (at the moment) so he [PK: okay] plays both sides. [PK: okay]  
38 So we not, we don't know what's happening.  
39 **PK:** shoh, okay. Hmm

In this extract, Farmer 1 reports and tries to account for the fact of PASSOP and Zimbabwean workers' involvement in the first 'unrest' of the season. Two aspects of his reasoning are highlighted. First, he makes a display of ignorance about what the strike at Keurboskloof was actually about. This is done by referring to it as a 'riot' (lines 24 & 36) – suggesting mindless, disruptive violence (which is far from how participants in this strike themselves spoke about it – see Chapter 7 above) and also by explicitly saying that he could not understand why they would do this: 'I mean we couldn't understand it's like, three weeks ago there wasn't even, the f- just the first Zimbabweans came in, and we all, 'welcome welcome' you know 'welcome back' and then the next thing they started to riot because, (.) I don't know what, because of what' (lines 34-36). In this way, he shows that he does not recognise the value of or intention behind the Keurboskloof wage strike. Of course, this arguably wilful failure to understand what seems to have been a fairly straightforward wage strike in response to changes made by the company that managed Keurboskloof is yet another way by which farmers can undermine the emergence of a healthily adversarial relationship between farmers and workers. Adversarial does not necessarily mean acrimonious or violent; indeed, Owen Maromo was insistent that what made the Keurboskloof strike different from the later strikes and protests, as well as more successful, was that it happened peacefully without any destruction of vineyards and also that it did not lead to a backlash from farmers because the state was not involved in negotiating or implementing the raised wage. However, if farmers expect that a 'good relationship' with workers means that those workers will willingly do whatever farmers want of them and never demand higher wages or withhold their labour, as farmer 1 seems to have expected from the Zimbabweans, then it is not surprising if farmers are eventually disappointed in this expectation. As du Toit (1993) pointed out long ago, farmers think that they are the only ones who can let go of their side of the paternalistic bargain without consequence, while not giving workers the same allowance. In other words, in farmers' eyes there is no such thing as legitimate collective bargaining, because it is always treated as a betrayal of their 'benevolence'.

Second, Farmer 1's display of incomprehension simultaneously shows an expectation of continued allegiance or at least goodwill from the Zimbabweans. 'Welcome welcome,

welcome back' suggests a greeting between old friends who have been separated for a while, an expectation which was then unexpectedly disappointed by the Zimbabweans starting to riot. 'Their union' (presumably PASSOP) being involved in the riot is read as evidence that Hanekom is 'two-faced...so he plays both sides' (line 37). 'Both sides' suggests that Farmer 1 thinks there are only two sides: the farmers' and Zimbabweans' side, and everyone else's side (likely including those who 'riot' and 'the ANC'). This shows that farmer 1 assumes that anyone who supported the Zimbabweans must also be on the side of farmers; he does not seem to consider that there may be Zimbabweans, or supporters of Zimbabweans, who are not on farmers' side and do not care to be aligned with them. Hence, Hanekom being on the side of the Zimbabweans but also stoking the riot is an anomalous situation that farmer 1 is unable to account for with what he knows of these groups' interests, and hence he supplies corruption as a possible external reason to explain this (line 25 – that Hanekom must have been bought by the ANC). Supplying corruption as a reason for why the Zimbabweans were rioting negates or lessens the possible challenge that Zimbabwean workers themselves were offering to farmers and thus to their erstwhile alliance. In this way, farmer 1 avoids the possibility that Zimbabwean workers and PASSOP members were exercising their own voluntary agency in resisting the management of Keurboskloof and striking for higher wages. Again, this follows the usual farmer and DA-aligned analysis of any protest or social upheaval as something orchestrated by the ANC to destabilise the Western Cape.

Indeed, Webb (2013) observed after the strike that

From the beginning, farmers and their associations attempted to divide the workers on the basis of their employment contracts by stating that permanent workers were adverse to labour militancy and had not joined the strikes —the implication being that permanent coloured workers were within the bonds of paternalism, while seasonal workers, primarily black workers from the Eastern Cape, Lesotho or Zimbabwe, were an unruly mob. Ethnic corporatism is clearly alive and well. (p. 67)

'Ethnic corporatism' is a reference to the title of Ewert and Hamman's (1996) paper on the quasi-alliance between farmers and coloured workers that was used to exclude black workers from the 'farm family' in the early 1990s. While Webb did not research

Zimbabwean farm workers' participation in the strike in any depth, if this passing observation is correct (see also Appendix 2 below) it suggests that for farmers during the strike, race-based distinctions among workers returned to the fore and displaced the earlier nationality-based distinction between Zimbabwean and South African workers that was so evident in farmers' discourse in the 2009 interviews. This suggests that perhaps the Zimbabwean-farmer alliance has been short-lived, and that, after Keurboskloof, farmers chose to abandon the Zimbabwean community in favour of trying to retain their ties with the coloured community, which may turn out to be the longer-lasting 'quasi-alliance' of the two. Of course, many black workers we interviewed said that coloured workers also played a central role in the strike (see above); and farmers' reports of race-based divisions in worker participation are more likely efforts to *forge* alliances with sections of the workforce than simply an accurate *description* of the intergroup dynamics in the Hex Valley. Certainly, from my limited knowledge of Western Cape trade unions and farm worker organisations, my impression is that many of the most radical trade unionists are coloured people. The final section of this results chapter, below, returns more directly to the question of race divisions in the work force, and the possibility that nationality-based identities are not the only or even the primary way that workers understand themselves and their relations with others.

#### **Part 4: 'Die nasies' ('The nations')**

This final section of this results chapter returns to a theme that was introduced at the beginning of the chapter and has appeared marginally throughout: the possibility that the 'South African labouring community' that was to the fore in the 2009 findings may itself be thought of as a strategic and temporary alliance of groups with somewhat different interests, and is a label which hides other divisions which may be salient at other times. In both the previous and the current results chapters, workers whom I have grouped together as 'South African' referred to themselves and others at least as often in terms of racial or ethno-linguistic group identities as in terms of their South African-ness *per se*. For example, in the 2009 results chapter, Vuyo the labour broker compared the over-compliance of Zimbabwean workers to the resistance shown by Xhosa and Sotho workers (extract 11); Wendy and Marco expressed their dismay and anger that farmers were not looking out for



the welfare of their own people, the coloureds, but seemed to be very sympathetic to Zimbabweans (extract 6); and farmer 1 said that some of the 'Xhosa group' were the workers who caused trouble on his farm by not doing the work thoroughly enough but expecting full pay for it. In this 2012-2013 results chapter, the workers in extracts 2 and 3 made references to coloured as well as South African identity as a basis for deserving first preference to jobs and other benefits that the Zimbabweans were said to be unfairly taking away; Joe the Zimbabwean man in extract 8 said that on most farms the norm is for workers to say 'these are coloured, these are Xhosa, these are Kwirikwiri'; and Andile in extract 11 said that 2009 had been a conflict between the amaXhosa and the Zimbabweans. When I was writing the findings section of the 2009 case study, however, an analytical distinction between the views of coloured and black workers did not seem to be empirically warranted, because the analysis focussed on the consequences of the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship that the speakers constructed, and these consequences – displacement from jobs on farms, and the undercutting of wages and bargaining processes – seemed equally prevalent among all those ('South African') interviewees who expressed opposition to the Zimbabweans and called for them to leave the area. What is important, however, is that either way, in all these cases the Zimbabweans were presented as a discrete group separate from the speakers' own group – either separate from coloureds, or separate from Xhosas, or separate from South Africans. The last two extracts in this chapter are thus properly 'deviant cases', because they show a construction of racial rather than national divisions among workers in which the *Zimbabweans were grouped together with all black people*, and blamed for various problems in De Doorns.

**Extract 19: Coloured labour broker and wife (interview 33, translated from Afrikaans):**

- 1 **Lionel:** Um, no one, no one is messing with the Zimbabweans any more, they are
- 2 always here, and it's now better than it was. Everyone, they work together,
- 3 and they, they, they actually also striked together, not so?
- 4 **Sarel:** Ja
- 5 **Lionel:** Okay
- 6 **Philippa:** So, why has that changed?
- 7 **Lionel:** ((translating)) Why did it change?
- 8 **Sarel:** Like what?
- 9 **Philippa:** Like-
- 10 **Lionel:** Like in 2009 a lot of people were opposed to them.
- 11 **Sarel:** We are actually still always opposed to them, because they get better

- 12 advantages than what we do in this place. [P: mm] Look, before the Xhosas  
 13 and the Zims and these types of nations, our place was (clear), [P: mm] was  
 14 nice. There weren't so many murders and rapes and all these hundreds of  
 15 things that happen here. [P: shoh] Understand?
- 16 **Philippa:** ja
- 17 **Lionel:** I understand what you're saying
- 18 **Sarel:** Many of us have been murdered. [P: shoh] For example my brother-in-law  
 19 was also murdered by their nation and they were never found. [P: shoh, I  
 20 understand that] That's what happened. That's why, we will (surely never be  
 21 able to change it), because it's mos the government that lets them in [L: I  
 22 understand what you're saying] to this country
- 23 **Philippa:** Hmm, ja. ((asks in English)) So, do people, especially coloured people, do  
 24 coloured people feel that it was, things have, things were better in the old  
 25 days?
- 26 **Sarel:** ((answers in Afrikaans)) Yes, a lot better. If I must now think, I grew up under  
 27 that mountain. [L: mm] I used to walk far, that time when I was still young,  
 28 the dances were there on the farms and I walked. I (used to show off that  
 29 time). But today you can't walk, you can't walk. [P: mm] You'll be killed
- 30 **Lionel:** So ( ) is dangerous now.
- 31 **Sarel:** Everything is dangerous now. No, in the old days it wasn't like that. [P: Shoh] I  
 32 used to walk through the bush at night and I was never scared of a bush  
 33 stirring. [L: Huh] But now never, never, I will never walk around

Although this participant is not speaking about farm labour relations, the extract is important because it shows an alternative view of the significant lines of intergroup division in this community. Here these lines are racial as opposed to national ones. The speaker's own category, which is initially not explicitly named, is contrasted with 'the Zims and the Xhosas and these types of nations' (line 12-13). Somewhat ironically, 'nations' is a racial reference to black people: Zimbabweans and Xhosa-speakers are individual 'nations' but grouped as part of the same broader category of blacks. The use of 'our' in 'our place' (line 13) seems to refer to coloured people specifically, which is confirmed when the interviewer suggests this in lines 23-24. This racial distinction between 'us' and 'them' is repeated when the speaker reports 'Many of us have been murdered. For example my brother-in-law was also murdered by their nation and they were never found' (line 18-19). 'Their nation' here is black people. This distinction between coloured and black people in a realm outside of farm

work is thus a deviant case compared to the way Zimbabweans have been constructed as a discrete group in almost all the previous extracts.

However, South African citizenship as an identity category also makes an appearance in this extract; though it is ambiguously conflated with race. Sarel himself introduces 'the Xhosas' who, along with the Zimbabweans, are given as an example of 'these types of nations' (line 12-13). After complaining about the increase in violent crime that these nations have caused, he then says 'we will (surely never be able to change it), because it's mos the government that lets them in...to this country' (line 20-22). This statement could be read as ambiguously including Xhosa speakers, implying that they are somehow not real citizens. Thus, similarly to the speakers in Part 1 of this chapter, he makes reference to a citizenship identity (distinguishing those who are entitled to be in this country from those who are not) as well as a racial one ('us' versus 'their nation'). The ambiguity about whether or not Xhosa-speakers are included in the category of citizens (people who have a right to be in this country), shows the conflation of racial, national and geographical identities which is the legacy of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy in the Western Cape. In this view, all black people are outsiders who originate from somewhere else – indeed, at one time, the Transkei was nominally another country (Neocosmos, 2006; Goldin, 1984).

This extract also gestures towards the possibility that different South African workers who appeared united in their opposition to the Zimbabweans in 2009 may actually have had different reasons for this opposition. When Lionel asks about why things with the Zimbabweans appear to have got better since 2009, and Sarel does not initially understand the question (lines 1-10), Lionel clarifies 'Like in 2009 a lot of people were opposed to them' (line 10). Sarel replies: 'We are actually still always opposed to them, because they get better advantages than what we do in this place'. This suggests that as a coloured person he did oppose the Zimbabweans in 2009, but for very different reasons to those of, say, Vuyo the labour broker (quoted in the 2009 results above), who was himself Xhosa-speaking and thus would have fallen into the same general category of 'nations' whom Sarel here has such a problem with.

The second extract in this section is also a deviant case, as it contains complaints about black in-migrants from coloured workers, but here Sotho people are mentioned. Unlike the

extract above where the racialised identity of the black inkomers was explicit ('die nasies') and the coloured identity of the speaker was implicit (and supplied by the interviewer), here the identity of the speakers as coloured is explicit, while the racial identity of the 'inkomers' is only implicit:

**Extract 20: 2nd group of coloured workers in De Doorns Oos (interview 2)**

- 1 **Matthew:** These people, the inkomers are for us a threat. How many murders have  
2 already happened here in this place, and were never solved ((agreement  
3 from all)) and murderers who were never found, in this place.  
4 **?:** Mm, and rape  
((six lines omitted as Bettie translates to PK, mentioning 'Sothos' specifically))  
5 **Bettie:** Our lives is in danger, there's nothing we can do, (we just)-  
6 **Philippa:** Okay. Are those, those Sotho people, or other people from outside, do they  
7 come here to work, or what  
8 **Bettie:** They work, (they work)  
9 **Philippa:** Okay  
10 **Matthew:** They come to work, but ( ), in the first place they have said to the farmers  
11 that they are prepared to work for that lower wage ((agreement from all)),  
12 while they said to the coloureds, to us coloureds, 'there isn't work for you'. [A  
13 & B: mm] Everywhere we coloureds are kept out ((uitverband)), but now they  
14 come first and they start this violence. Understand? [P: ja] What's wrong is-  
15 but th- now we come last, last again. (They say) it's us coloureds who do all  
16 this stuff. [P: ok] And we grew up in, in De Doorns, all the years we used to  
17 walk around safely, we walked far, [B: mm, ja] but we can't do that anymore.  
18 [B: M-m] [P: Okay] And our lives are threatened ((*in bedreiging*)) all the time.

This extract suggests that different categories of black, in-migrant workers are interchangeable to coloureds. Here, 'inkomers' – including Sothos particularly – are blamed for two things: the increase in violent crime and a lack of safety in one's own community (lines 1-3 and 17-18); and working for lower wages and displacing coloured people from jobs (lines 10-14). When the interviewer treats Sotho people as an instance of 'people from outside' and asks 'do they come here to work, or what' (line 6), Matthew responds: 'They come to work, but ( ), in the first place they have said to the farmers that they are prepared to work for that lower wage...while they said to the coloureds, to us coloureds, 'there isn't work for you'. Everywhere we coloureds are kept out, but now they come first and they start this violence'. Thus, despite these complaints sounding almost exactly the same as some of those made by coloured people of the Zimbabweans in 2009, it is now

Sotho rather than Zimbabwean workers who they are attached to. Also, this is in contrast to how Sotho workers were portrayed by Vuyo in extract 11 – as people who also resist farmers. Thus, there is a sense that different categories of black people might be interchangeable: even the interviewer asks ‘those Sotho people, *or other people from outside*, do they come here to work, or what’ (lines 6-7, emphasis added) – suggesting that Sotho people might not be the only (black) outsiders the speakers are referring to. The case for the interchangeability of categories of black workers in the eyes of coloureds is bolstered by the fact that almost identical complaints were made about the Zimbabweans in 2009.

A third and final extract in this section comes from the same interview with the group of workers in Extract 3 of this chapter above (in fact it comes from the 24 lines omitted):

**Extract 21: Second group of coloured workers in De Doorns Oos (interview 2)**

- 1 **Philippa:** when we were talking this morning, [M1: Ja] some, somebody was saying
- 2 that sometimes on the farms like, it’s still like apartheid, cos the white people
- 3 still want to keep the coloureds like, you know, like this ((makes a gesture of
- 4 submission))
- 5 **Bettie:** Ja. [M1: Ja!] [P: So-] On the farm is like that.
- 6 **Philippa:** So it sounds like some fa-, some people have a good relationship with their
- 7 farmers, other people, other people don’t have a good relationship with the
- 8 farmers, or-
- 9 **Bettie:** Ja, it is like that. [P: Okay] But you do get some good farmers, then we,
- 10 people make them bad, because we take advantage.
- 11 **Philippa:** Okay! shoh. [B: ((inaudible))] So, do you think racism from the farmers is a
- 12 problem, or not then?
- 13 **Bettie:** Not really. [P: Okay] A-, apartheid van die boere af is nie so erg soos die, as
- 14 die swartes nie. [P: & M1: Ja] The racism is worse between blacks and
- 15 coloured than with the whites and coloured.
- 16 **Philippa:** Oh, wow. Okay, okay. So, alright. What do you guys think would be like a
- 17 solution or a way forward? Can you translate?
- 18 **Bettie:** ((translates)) Wat is die-, wat dink ons sal die oplossing wees voor-?
- 19 **Charl:** Hulle moet net teruggaan na hulle land- ((they must just go back to their country))

This is the last case in the dataset where coloured-black divisions were to the fore. In answer to the question of whether racism from farmers is a problem or not, Bettie says not really, and then spontaneously observes that ‘apartheid from the farmers is not as bad as

the blacks' (line 13) which she self-translates as 'The racism is worse between blacks and coloured than with the whites and coloured' (line 14-15). Then when the interviewer asks 'what do you guys think would be like a solution or a way forward', Charl answers 'they must just go back to their country'. Since we had just been talking about black people and the racism between coloureds and blacks, it is possible that this is a generic reference to all black people which once again does not make distinctions between those black people who are non-citizens and those who are citizens (and thus presumably have no other country to go back to).

Overall, there are enough instances of such division in the dataset to suggest that despite the apparent unity of the South African workforce in 2009 in their opposition to the Zimbabweans and in their support for the strike, and despite many workers reporting that coloured and black workers acted in a unified manner during the strike, this unity may in some cases obscure an older racial conflict which has not been entirely patched over. It may also be that the coloured farm worker community has experienced a particular sense of loss and displacement associated with the 'externalisation' process, and so the arrival of migrant (and formerly migrant) workers whom they feel are replacing them on the farms is a particularly bitter pill to swallow (an observation also made by farmer 5). There have been numerous extracts where an aggrieved, excluded or abandoned coloured identity is to the fore: 'they are prepared to work for that lower wage, while they said to the coloureds, to us coloureds, "there isn't work for you". Everywhere we coloureds are kept out' (extract 20, above); 'the white people chose them, and they left us' (extract 3, above); 'there's no work for me, for the coloureds, but for the Zimbabweans there is work' (extract 6, chapter 7); 'now we come last, last again. (They say) it's us coloureds who do all this stuff (extract 20, above). This feeling of being excluded or abandoned by farmers might be different from the experiences of workers who were either never invested in paternalism and 'farm families', or who have already realised that these institutions do not serve their interests. As we saw in Part 1 of this chapter, some workers expressed a nostalgic desire to return to an 'ideal' time when workers' relationships with their farmers were supposedly in a state of peaceful, albeit unequal, stability and mutual help and trust; whereas for others, including some coloured workers, the more urgent question was how to cultivate an *adversarial* relationship with farmers that enabled healthy wage bargaining. For such workers, the

Zimbabwean-farmer relationship is still constructed as a form of displacement, but the tone and meaning of this displacement may be slightly different, more closely related to an unfair undercutting of the bargaining process than a deep personal experience of loss for oneself and one's community. This allows a retrospective case to be tentatively made that what appeared as unified opposition to the Zimbabweans among all 'South African' workers in 2009 was actually a point of convergence between different but partially overlapping sets of interests in change in this community. It may be that those coloured workers who felt particularly aggrieved that the Zimbabweans were usurping their places on the farms – but who may also sometimes treat them as interchangeable with other groups of migrant black people – were happy to support the eviction, even though for possibly different reasons to those both coloured and black workers who do not share the same investment in the institutions of paternalism and who obviously see a strong distinction between themselves and Zimbabweans. In this sense, what appeared in 2009 as 'the South African labouring community' is now readable as itself a temporary and strategic intergroup alliance among groups with a variety of slightly different aims and interests in this changing socio-economic landscape (cf Sherif, 1966).

### **Discussion: Complicating the three-group paradigm**

This chapter has complicated the three-group analysis that was used to make sense of the 2009 attack on the Zimbabweans' homes. As we can now see, there are not simply two groups making up the farm worker community in the Hex Valley – Zimbabweans and South Africans. Although this nationality-based distinction was salient in 2009, and, importantly, the contents of what these identities meant was constructed and used strategically in mobilising people to carry out the eviction (cf Reicher, Hopkins & Condor, 1997; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001), the discourse of De Doorns residents shows how many layers of identity are available to farm workers – racial, regional, national, class-based, and ethno-linguistic identities, *inter alia*. Alliances and divisions can be formed on the basis of any of them. These identities reflect how different divisions have been institutionalised at different points in Southern Africa's history. Apartheid tried to racialise citizenship and nationalise ethnicity (Neocosmos, 2006), and the democratic South Africa overlaid these old divisions with a new non-racial division between citizens and non-citizens. This citizen/non-citizen distinction is thus only the most recent way of dividing up the Southern African population.

Claims to preferential treatment on the basis of being deserving *citizens* – with the Zimbabweans being problematised on the basis of their *non-citizenship* – were indeed made repeatedly by South African workers in the interviews. However, this South African citizenship did not simply erase or eclipse all the older identities. Racial (black, coloured, white), ethno-linguistic (Xhosa, Sotho) and regional identities ('people from here', 'inkomers') were also invoked at different times. In 2009, the older racial divisions were subsumed by national ones, leading to a 'xenophobic' conflict that appeared not to implicate race *per se*. However, this second empirical chapter has shown that such racial-geographical divisions have not entirely disappeared. For some coloured people the Zimbabweans were a problem primarily because they were black and not from the Western Cape – a complaint levelled similarly at all black people, apparently sometimes including Xhosa-speaking South Africans.

Thus, despite the fact that there are so many groups referred to (farmers, coloured workers, Zimbabweans, Xhosa-speakers – or even five if one includes Sothos), there are grounds for maintaining that rather than a four- or five-group analysis, what we have are several lots of three-group scenarios, as different binaries are constructed among the work force (citizen/non-citizen, or black/coloured, or people from here/outside) which then have implications for relationships with farmers. However, if we consider the accounts of workers in Wilderman's (2014) research, and our own participants who spoke about the unity among groups of workers during the strike, this shows that an alliance among workers *as workers* has in some cases overcome racial, ethnic, geographical and nationality-based divisions. As Reicher, Hopkins and Condor observed, '[t]he histories of most if not all groups are marked by coalition, schism and recombination' (1997, p. 97). Thus, one way of thinking about social change in this framework is as a series of shifting configurations of intergroup allegiance and division. These alliances may change when the surrounding circumstances change; or indeed it can work the other way round, that changes in intergroup allegiance can change the surrounding circumstances.

Hence, it is not only *paternalism* discourse which can be likened to a palimpsest capturing layers of historical change (cf Ewert & du Toit, 2005; Billig, 1991), but *all* identity discourse, as references to racial, ethno-linguistic, and geographical or regional identities as well as citizenship reflect the legacy of the institutionalising of these identities at different points in



Southern Africa's history (cf Neocosmos, 2006). Moreover we can see how these identities are construed in such a way as to convey both 'a model of [the speaker's] position in a set of social relations *as well as the actions that are possible and proper (legitimate)* given such a position' (Drury & Reicher, 2000, p. 581).

### **The dilemma of the anti-xenophobia position continues**

At the end of the 2009 results chapter, the dilemma of taking an anti-xenophobic stance when investigating the eviction of the Zimbabweans was discussed. Working within the anti-xenophobia paradigm, Misago (2009) realised that a narrative of worker exploitation by farmers went hand in hand with a narrative of grievances against foreigners which legitimated xenophobic violence – violence which itself was taken for granted as a bad thing to be prevented and solved by South African local and national authorities. Farmers, too, saw the xenophobia as a bad thing, and in this way, the anti-xenophobic approach aligned easily with farmers' own analysis of that conflict. But in Chapter 9, which described the events leading up to the farm workers' strike in 2012, literature from a different perspective was used. Wilderman (2014), working within a paradigm of trade unionism and assuming an imperative of worker resistance, assumed that the farm workers' strike was a good thing, an expression of resistance to exploitation and oppression by farmers. Of course, this view was completely opposed to that of farmers, who mainly saw the strike, like the xenophobia, as an illegitimate conflict stirred up by trouble-causing elements in the ANC who once again used and abused workers for their own political ends (although these views were not given in detail in the 2012 results chapter). In this way, a worker liberation approach did not align easily with the views of farmers.

This chapter has shown how both South African and Zimbabwean interviewees continued to play by more or less the same ideological rules as they had been using in 2009, with neither side significantly revising their own position or accepting the moral onus to change. Hence, the absence of xenophobic violence during the strike was not attributed by South Africans who supported the 2009 eviction to their own realisation about the error of their formerly xenophobic ways. Rather, they ascribed it mainly to the Zimbabweans having shown that they were now participating in the strike. The Zimbabweans themselves gave a more complex response, saying that in general their relationship with South Africans had improved because these South Africans had realised that their former allegations and

complaints about low wages were unfounded, but also that they had stayed away from work during the strike because of fear of violent retribution against those who did not do so. In this way they both conceded and did not concede to the moral 'onus' to change. This presents yet further dilemmas for the anti-xenophobic position, because it suggests that the ideological underpinnings of violence against outsiders in this community have not been significantly challenged, even though there was no attack on the Zimbabweans during the strike. It is not as simple as saying that tolerance or a commitment to peaceful problem-solving won the day after 2009. Rather, PASSOP has at times had to work *with* rather than *against* discourses of liberation and worker unity – the same discourses that in another context justified xenophobic violence – in order to 'save a lot of lives'. In this set of interviews, PASSOP is the one voice attempting to build a bridge or a *via media* between these two moral universes – the universe of anti-xenophobia and the universe of black or worker liberation – a bridge which enables them both to be critical of the xenophobia of South African workers and strike organisers when necessary, but also to pursue their own agenda of worker resistance, for example during the Keurboskloof strike in 2012.

This dilemma is further illustrated by an observation from Wilderman (2014) in his thesis on the 2012-2013 strikes. Wilderman complicated the positive story of the strike by acknowledging not only that it involved some coercion of workers and that xenophobic sentiments were still circulating, but that part of the organising impetus for the strike and the networks that made it possible were actually a consequence of, and drew on, the same community energy and networks that were implicated in the eviction of the Zimbabweans in 2009:

We should note that these networks were complicated in nature, not only in their methods of emergence and composition, but also, at different points, in their conflicting roles within these communities. Prior to the farm worker protests of late 2012 and early 2013, informal social networks, constituted slightly differently and with different understandings and explanations for their grievances, acted as mobilising structures to coordinate and execute xenophobic attacks. (p. 91)

In this way, Wilderman (2014) gestures towards the possibility that the strikes and the xenophobia were actually an expression of the same impetus in this community. The

discourse of xenophobia and the discourse of resistance to farmers lie easily next to one another. Arguably, both events were expressions of a conflict for workers about whether an oppositional or a paternalistic relationship with farmers is desirable. But not only were the social networks that enabled both the strike and the xenophobia generically similar in their *form* (as Wilderman points out), but in fact some of the *same individuals* were part of the organising momentum behind both events. One of our 2012 interviewees, a former ANC councillor who called herself a 'community leader', openly acknowledged having played an organising role in the strike as well as having been part of the mobilisation to evict the Zimbabweans in 2009 (she referred to the Zimbabweans as 'xenophobians'). She did not appear to find any contradiction in these two events:

**Extract C: Community leader and strike organiser**

- O: I was involved there, by that xenophobians, but you know, that time 2009 ((1 line omitted)) it was this uh xenophobians né, we, as farm workers, I can say we as farm workers because, the farm workers said, on that time, the xenophobic people came, and worked for less
- PK: You mean the Zimbabwean people?
- O: Ja this Zimbabwe people, came to work for less than we was working on that time ((2 lines omitted)) And that was a problem for, for whole of the people who was working on the farms. And the people were speaking about that, uh uh uh, to the government. But the government that thing, uh uh was just felling on, on uh deaf ears. Ja. And, it's like, the government here, and they see and they didn't see and they didn't hear ((four lines omitted)) and um, like, the, I can say we call it, the (municipal), the government, we call them to set uh uh uh a, like, Labour for instance, Labour, we said to Labour, we are not happy. With this thing that this people work for less money. [P: mm] And even some of the people haven't got papers and stuff like that they was just working. Ok, and after that, they the people in De Doorns was so (hectic), that all the people was moving to like, to the soccer fields here, [P: okay] and all the people was staying in the, Zimbabwe people, was staying in this field.

Notice how this speaker constructs the Zimbabweans' presence and alleged working for lower wages as an issue for the Department of Labour's attention, and herself not as xenophobic for taking this issue up (although, strangely, the Zimbabweans are called 'xenophobians'), but as addressing a serious labour problem. She also glosses over the violence of the actual eviction by saying that 'the people in De Doorns was so (hectic), that

all the people was moving to the...soccer fields there'. Later in the interview she had this to say about the strike:

**Extract D: Community leader and strike organiser**

- PK: What was your role in the strike were you an organiser o::r, h- how did it work
- O: I was, yes I was part of the organisers. [P: kay ☺] And I'm not scared of telling that. I'm, I'm part and parcel of this strike. [P: okay] I was part and parcel of this strike because, ((starts banging the table lightly)) you know what and I will tell it, in the face of the, the farmers I will say it. [P: mm] (.) I was fourteen years old and I was starting, working, (.) hard labour. [P: mmm] Very hard labour. On the farms. [P: mm] And in, the kitchens. [P: mm] I was working in kitchens I was working on the farms, my whole life. [P: mm. Hmh!] And the money was little. [P: mm] And I also want to send my child to varsity. [P: mm] I can't even send my child to varsity ((banging on table)) because I'm a seasonal worker now!

Thus the dilemma of xenophobia in De Doorns continues. The logic of resistance to farmers and the logic of xenophobia have become indistinguishable logics. These extracts come from one individual who did not see anything wrong with trying to evict the Zimbabweans – indeed, who actually organised to have this 'problem' addressed – and who also later played an organising role in the strike, justifying both events with the language of exploitation, struggle and aspirations for a better life. Thus, the language of xenophobia – or at least the language that justifies the eviction of a whole community of foreign workers – and the language of struggle to overcome poverty lie easily next to each other; here, and indeed all the way through the results chapters, they have been promulgated uncritically by the same person. This presents a dilemma for proponents of the anti-xenophobic position who want to challenge xenophobia. When xenophobic violence against foreign workers is conflated with resistance to the exploitation of South African workers or workers in general, then proponents of anti-xenophobia will have to consider how their recommendations for change and intervention resonate with popular thinking. Challenging xenophobia may be an impotent strategy if it consists of ignoring the real racism in this unequal farming system, simplistically justifying the Zimbabwean-farmer relationship, or undermining the value of worker resistance. At the same time, those workers and organisers who use the language and actions of xenophobia in their mobilizations should realise that the more they do this the more they are driving a wedge between sections of the workforce, creating divisions

and mistrust, and possibly legitimating worker alliances with farmers, if foreign workers see that help is to be found with farmers rather than with their fellow workers. Indeed, it is a tragic irony that the discourses of resistance, black liberation and worker solidarity have been turned into a tool for justifying violence against non-citizens. PASSOP is one of the few voices in our data that has been trying to bridge the gap between the two paradigms, in order to de-link resistance from xenophobia and develop a sense of class solidarity among workers that overcomes national and racial divisions and xenophobia, while also taking seriously farm workers' struggles to improve their own lot, and strategising concrete ways of doing this.

## Chapter 11: The more things change the more they stay the same

So far, this thesis has been making a claim about how socio-economic circumstances in the Hex Valley have been changing, and how groups' constructions of their relations with others are oriented to different interests in these changes. In this way, the whole thesis presumes a context of ongoing change – even in the relatively quiet times between moments of protest and upheaval – rather than a context of stasis or stability. As seen in Chapter 3 above, the literature on the social dynamics of Western Cape commercial agriculture over the last 25 years all offers a narrative of such change (e.g. du Toit, 1993; Ewert & Hamman, 1996; du Toit & Ally, 2003; Ewert & du Toit, 2005; Kritzinger, Barrientos & Roussouw, 2004; Webb, 2017). Two more recent theses (Webb, 2013; Wilderman, 2014) have also engaged with these changes, with Webb (2013) asking how, if at all, those few trade unions that do operate among Western Cape farm workers have been able to organise the temporary and seasonal workers that now make up the bulk of farm labour, and Wilderman (2014) arguing that the farm workers' strikes were partly a product of those changes that lead to a greater reliance on externalised, non-farm dwelling workers whose relative independence from farmers and new living arrangements in informal settlements and townships enabled them to be the main driving force behind the strike. However, at the same time, much of this literature also suggests that alongside these changes there are continuities, and that many of the problems of the past persist into the present despite legislation designed to promote change. These include continuities with slavery, continued lack of effective collective bargaining power for workers, the persistence of suffocating paternalism, and *de facto* continued 'farmers' rule' which dictates outcomes for workers (Pahle, 2015; Munakamwe & Jinnah, 2014; Webb, 2013; Ewert & Hamman, 2005; du Toit & Ally, 2003).

In this short penultimate chapter, I will further develop the case for continuity in two ways. First, white commercial farmers continue to influence regional labour migration flows in the post-apartheid era as they did under apartheid. Second, I will argue that there is continuity between the intergroup dynamics that pertained in 2009 between groups of workers, and between workers and farmers, and those that pertained under the CLPP during apartheid. The Coloured Labour Preference Policy divided workers by law along race and migrancy status lines, and employers' preference for workers depended on the precarity of this status

(Goldin, 1984). While Chapter 3 showed how the intergroup dynamics in De Doorns in 2009 involving the Zimbabweans were in many ways an outcome of processes of change, in this chapter I will make the case that they can be read as but a variation on the hierarchies and stratifications produced in a partially migrant workforce whose members are differentially subject to legal, formal migration restrictions.

### **Farmers influencing Southern African migration flows**

White commercial farmers have been influencing Southern African migration flows since before apartheid began (Johnston, 2007; Posel, 1991; Rutherford, 2008). Posel (1991) shows that in the 1940s, before the National Party came to power, Afrikaner nationalists were divided along class lines about whether to pursue total apartheid – complete segregation of the races and white self-dependence – or ‘practical’ apartheid, in which white business would continue to make use of black labour. Farmers and the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU) were part of the lobby in favour of the ‘practical apartheid’ which eventually prevailed:

Thoroughly disillusioned with the policies of the current government, Afrikaner farmers therefore looked to Apartheid as a system whereby the state would intervene to ensure an equitable distribution of African labour between urban and rural areas, without farmers having to compete with the manufacturing sector for labour in an open market. (Posel, 1991, p. 54)

Rutherford (2008) and Johnston (2007) show examples of how farmers continued to influence both the content and enforcement of migration legislation during and after apartheid. For example, in the far Northern Transvaal, farmers’ demand for labour and the lack of a homeland in this part of South Africa led the apartheid government to create a ‘special economic zone’ which made it easier for farmers to employ Zimbabwean migrants on South African farms by waiving some of the legal restrictions on cross-border movement (Rutherford, 2008). Indeed, ‘there is a long history of the apartheid state tolerating illegal foreign workers on farms, to retain the political support of farmers facing labour shortages’ (Johnston, 2007, p. 518). In her case study of Lesotho migrants working on asparagus farms in the eastern Free State in the early 1990s, Johnston (2007) shows how farmers themselves did not simply follow the law when it came to choosing and recruiting workers but made

calculated decisions about whether to use legal or illegal, direct or indirectly recruited migrant workers according to the risks and benefits that each kind of labour would afford. By the mid-1990s, when immigration legislation was still extremely exclusionary, exceptions were being made for migrant workers in mining and farming as a kind of hangover from apartheid (Johnston, 2007). And when faced 'with the later closure of legal recruitment channels in 1998, Free State farmers banded together to protest at the highest political level and were successful in keeping such channels open' (Johnston, 2007, p. 517, citing Ulicki & Crush, 1998).

In these ways, restricting or facilitating the movement of black workers in Southern Africa has long been either enforced or waived according to how it could best service the labour demands of white commercial farmers (Goldin, 1984; Posel, 1991). Although the state is no longer engineering which workers are allocated to which industries in which places, we have seen how farmers continued to exert such influence not only by employing migrants, thus creating a demand for their labour and encouraging them to become established in the townships around De Doorns (albeit seasonally – see farmer 1, extract 33, chapter 7; cf farmer 2, extract 17, chapter 10), but more specifically by their efforts to open the short-lived Home Affairs 'satellite office' in 2009 to process Zimbabwean migrants' asylum applications in order to legalise their presence in the country. Also, as farmer 1 explained above, the seasonal nature of farm work and there being fewer jobs available in winter means that Zimbabweans were being encouraged to leave the Hex Valley during the off-season in order to 'save the work for the locals'. Meanwhile, as we have also seen, during the strike some farmers were accused of using the underhand tactic of employing undocumented migrant workers and then calling the police to have them arrested on payday, as a punishment for striking. As the comparison with cases in the Free State and Northern Transvaal/Limpopo show, there is a continuity in the way farmers still influence migrant labour flows, even though where exactly these migrants come from may be changing over time.

### **Stratified labour 'preferences' similar to those of the CLPP**

Another continuity or similarity with the apartheid past is evident in the intergroup dynamics that are produced by labour migration regimes that try to give legal preference to certain workers over others. A working paper by Goldin (1984) shows how the intention of



the Coloured Labour Preference Policy was to cultivate an alliance between coloureds and whites, as it allowed only coloured people and a small minority of black people to live and work permanently in the Western Cape. Other black workers were allowed to be present on year contracts from the homelands, in particular the Transkei and the Ciskei; while still others were present 'illegally'. However, Goldin's (1984) interviews with white employers and representatives of the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Cape Chamber of Industry show that these employers knew that how much trouble-free labour they could get out of their workers was a direct consequence of how precarious their legal migrancy status was. Thus, the most preferred workers in a range of industries were the 'unregistered blacks, the illegal ones, [who] provide many advantages. They work like hell. They're not under contract and they know you can fire them at the drop of a hat' (ibid., p. 25). Next preferred were black workers on year contracts from the homelands, who 'provide the most reliable source of legal labour for Cape employers and generally are preferred by employers who require obedient, unskilled and easily retrenched workers. They are thus particularly suitable for seasonal employment such as construction and agriculture' (p. 25). As one employer remarked, 'contract blacks give...less trouble than local blacks because they're so scared of getting sent back to the Transkei or Ciskei and starving to death' (p. 25). Next desirable were those few 'local' black people who had permission to live permanently in the Western Cape, known as 'section 10' blacks. They were seen as less disciplined and hardworking than contract blacks – but still better than coloured workers, whom employers saw as 'troublesome, lazy, unmotivated,' unwilling to do heavy manual work, and having 'a high rate of absenteeism...unpunctuality [and] greater interest in time off than in working and earning' (Goldin, 1984, p. 22).

While this situation seems not to have been applicable to fruit and wine farming, where almost the entire labour force was coloured until at least the early 1990s (e.g. du Toit, 1993; Ewert & Hamman, 1996), a similar hierarchy of preference existed among workers in De Doorns by 2009 once the work force had become more heterogeneous. The Zimbabweans, as non-citizens least-favoured by South African law, having the most precarious migrancy status, and needing permission of various kinds to work in South Africa, became simultaneously 'favoured' by farmers *but also accused of* (rather than sympathised with for) accepting less than the minimum wage. There is an eerie similarity between the way the

representatives of the Cape Chamber of Industry and the Cape Chamber of Commerce talked about 'labour' in the early 1980s and the way farmers in the Hex Valley were doing in 2009 – as something that must revolve around, and be judged according to how best it fulfils, employers' needs. Recall farmer 2's description of the Zimbabweans as 'tremendous' and as eager to continue to keep working through their lunch break, in contrast to the others – South Africans – who were now described as being chronically absent, drunk and slack. Hence, both under apartheid and now, the regimes that were supposed to give 'preference' initially to coloured workers over blacks and latterly to South African citizens over foreigners ended up having, in some ways, the opposite effect. Ironically but not surprisingly, the *least* prioritised workers become the most preferred by employers. This is why I have called this chapter 'The more things change the more they stay the same'.

## Chapter 12: Conclusions, cautions and recommendations for further research

This thesis started out as an investigation into an episode of xenophobic violence in De Doorns in 2009, violence perpetrated by members of the South African informal settlement and farm labouring community, and directed at the Zimbabwean farm worker community. However, it has ended up as a historical study of changing intergroup allegiance and division in a racially unequal community; especially alliances between different sections of the workforce; between sections of the workforce and farmers; other workers' attempts to break such alliances; and the ongoing dilemma for farm workers about whether their interests lie in cultivating an adversarial or a paternalistic relationship with farmers. Group alliances have shifted partly as a response to changes in the surrounding socio-economic conditions (see Chapter 3 above). Before the Zimbabweans it was the coloured, farm-dwelling community who had a 'shared consciousness' with farmers about why black people should not be part of the 'farm family' (Ewert & Hamman, 1996); by 2009 it was evident that the Zimbabweans had acquired this shared consciousness about their own superior work ethic relative to South Africans and their consequent justified status as preferred workers. However, Zimbabweans' acting in terms of this alliance led to a reaction from South African farm workers – the attempt to evict them – which in turn had consequences for the emergence of conditions of possibility for a farm workers' strike in 2012 (Wilderman, 2014), for how the Zimbabweans chose strategically to participate in that strike (see Chapter 10 above), and ultimately for the many negative consequences for workers that were the outcome of the strike (Wilderman, 2014). Moreover, it seems that different sections of the South African labouring community may have been more or less united at different times in this history, as they appeared united in their desire for the Zimbabweans to leave in 2009 but possibly had different reasons for this opposition, reflecting different interests in change. From this brief history, we can see the reciprocal relationship between structure and agency: socio-economic circumstances change – often because of changes in distant systems which nevertheless have trickle-down effects onto this particular community – leading people to respond in new ways, but these responses can produce yet further changes in circumstances, necessitating further action, and so on (cf Drury & Reicher, 2000).

### **A social psychological account of xenophobia and racism**

One way of trying to explain the content of group discourse that has accompanied these conflicts is, of course, in terms of psychologised ‘xenophobia’ and ‘racism’. Xenophobia and racism may be carried out by and directed to different groups, perhaps, but in general they would be seen by social psychologists as variations on the more general phenomenon of ‘prejudice’ (Brown, 2011). This kind of explanation immediately raises a number of problems, however. First, it divides the Hex Valley community artificially into a series of pairs – South African-Zimbabwean, South African-farmer, Zimbabwean-farmer, coloured-white, coloured-black, and so on. We could say that the Zimbabwean community were victims of South African workers’ xenophobia; but we would also have to say that South African workers are victims of racism from farmers; we would have to puzzle over whether Zimbabweans as workers were also victims of racism from farmers, despite being favoured by them; and whether the Zimbabweans themselves were also ‘racist’ towards South African workers given their often derogatory attitudes towards them. We would also have to ask whether there is racism in the relationship between coloured and black South Africans; and how to account for the fact that the Zimbabwean workers in extract 18 of Chapter 7 above appeared to love white South African farmers while appearing very critical of white Zimbabwean farmers.

Thus, in addition to its many other weaknesses as an explanation for racism and group conflict (Wetherell, 2012; Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Leach, 2005; Reicher, 2007; Dixon, Levine, Reicher & Durrheim, 2012), the concept of psychological ‘prejudice’ turns out also to be an inherently *binary* construct, something that operates in the mind of one party and is directed towards another. Analysing the intergroup scenario in the Hex Valley in terms of several sets of pairs would be clumsy and it would obscure how these relationships all operate simultaneously and with reference to one another – indeed, each pair derives its meaning precisely from the fact that there are other comparable relationships operating in parallel (Kerr, Durrheim & Dixon, 2016). In both Zimbabweans’ and farmers’ accounts in the 2009 results chapter above, the Zimbabweans’ value for farmers as ‘good workers’ always depended on a discursive comparison with a third party of relatively unreliable South Africans. From South African workers’ perspective, their complaint was not with the Zimbabweans in isolation, but rather with how the Zimbabweans were being used as a tool

by farmers, and the consequences of this for themselves. Hence, although the meaning of the farmer-Zimbabwean relationship, the South African-farmer relationship, and the South African-Zimbabwean relationship were construed very differently as legitimate or illegitimate according to different ideological imperatives, what is similar is that from all perspectives these pair-wise relationships were seen to derive their meaning from their location in a wider relational context (Kerr et al, 2016).

A second problem with trying to understand group conflict in De Doorns in terms of 'prejudice' means we would have to puzzle over the fact that farmers sometimes praised their workers' positive characteristics highly – they did not always denigrate or insult them – and it is difficult to know whether to classify such speech as 'racist' or not (cf Dixon, Levine, Reicher & Durrheim, 2012). For example, farmers had a lot of positive things to say about Zimbabwean workers in 2009, as well as a lot of negative things to say about South African workers (including coloureds) – their chronic drunkenness and unreliability, for example – despite having favoured the coloured community at other times (Ewert & Hamman, 1996). If we are thinking in terms of 'prejudice', these inconsistencies appear as anomalies that are difficult to know what to make of.

A third problem with the prejudice account of the content of xenophobia and race discourse is that it cannot explain the *changes* and shifts in the configuration of intergroup allegiance over time that have been described above. A psychologised 'xenophobia' or 'racism' account does not get adequately to grips with the context of socio-economic change in which groups are embedded and which their actions also help to reproduce or take forward. How can 'racism' explain the fact that farmers have not always displayed the same degree of hostility or affection towards different groups of workers? How can we explain the observation that farmers in the early 1990s had a 'loyal' or 'paternalistic' relationship with their coloured workers, but by 2009 had apparently ditched them in favour of the Zimbabweans – but then later, during the strike, behaved again in such a way that one observer could see that 'ethnic corporatism [was] alive and well' after all (Webb, 2017)? To answer this, we have to consider both the material, circumstantial changes that form the socio-economic context in which groups interact, as well as how groups' actions themselves can remake this context in unpredictable ways.

Thus, a more parsimonious explanation for why speakers construe their relationships with other groups as they do is to say that groups have different interests in the direction their society is changing towards, and that some of these interests are aligned with or opposed to those of other groups. Hence, groups' accounts of their relations with others are *strategic* in that they are geared towards rendering certain recommendations for or evaluations of change in their community sensible and defensible, while dismissing others as impractical or immoral. This account has three main benefits, which address the problems with the 'prejudice' account of xenophobia and racism raised above. First, it has the benefit of being oriented from the start to the material contexts in which groups are operating and living and to the reality of social change in these contexts (Durrheim & Dixon, 2005b; cf Durrheim, 2014; cf Leach, 2005). Psychology and materiality are closely intertwined, and the danger of studying forms of prejudice or xenophobic or racist attitudes (even in a discursive way) by themselves – that is, without reference to actual living intergroup relationships – is that they become divorced from the context that produced them and which they in turn are part of reproducing (Durrheim & Dixon, 2005b). As was argued in Chapter 4 above, social change is both a process and an outcome of intergroup interaction, in which groups read one another's conduct as violating important ideological and historical imperatives – '[c]hange originates in an asymmetry between ingroup and outgroup perspectives' (Drury & Reicher, 2000, p. 596). The discourse of groups in conflict about the nature of their relationships thus looks both forwards and backwards historically: speakers remember the past when talking about current intergroup relationships, and they invoke different historical and ideological imperatives from that past (Billig, 1991, Sherif, 1996), but they also make different recommendations for change according to their 'future goals and designs' (Sherif, 1966). In this way they become part of an ongoing process of socio-economic change, and thus, as Sherif observed, 'history enters into the very definition of the problem of intergroup attitudes'.

A second benefit of focussing on the rhetorical relationship between constructions of group relationships and recommendations for or evaluations of change is that this releases us from the constraints of the two-group paradigm but does not limit us to any particular number of groups (cf Kerr, Durrheim & Dixon, 2016). Although Chapter 5 argued that in postcolonial contexts a three-group conceptual framework has many benefits, the overall

argument is not that we should always include a particular number of groups in our theoretical and methodological frameworks. A three-group paradigm for studying intergroup relations would quickly come to have as many limitations as a two-group one when applied in contexts where it did not really fit. As we have seen, the intergroup scenario in De Doorns is itself more complicated than the three-group picture that was proposed in the 2009 findings, as older racial divisions within the South African workforce which were not to the fore in 2009 made an appearance later on during and after the strike. Indeed, group relations here consist of a series of interests which converge and diverge over time, and 'groups' themselves may exist only for as long as the varying interests within them are served by the same course of action (Reicher, Hopkins & Condor, 1997; cf Drury & Reicher, 2000). As Reicher, Drury and Stott have argued in a slightly different context, crowds engaged in protest are typically made up of subsections with different interests who may develop a greater sense of unity through their experience of mistreatment by the police. Hence, analysing groups' accounts of their relations with one another in terms of interests in change is an acknowledgement of the way society as a whole is fractured into many kinds of groups and subgroups, who are caught up alongside each other in these processes of change, and whose interests may align for a while. In De Doorns, developing this thesis from a single case study masters' thesis into a longitudinal two-case-studies-plus-historical-context PhD – while having shortcomings such as small samples for some groups and initial uncertainty about what I was really studying in 2012-2013 – has afforded a historical view of how intergroup allegiance in this community has shifted and reconfigured over time, both in response to changing historical circumstances and in ways that helped produce new change. Indeed, this process of shifting intergroup allegiance is an ongoing process which is not going to stop happening now that my thesis is finished.

A third benefit of this approach is that it does not lock us into thinking about racist and xenophobic discourse in terms of insults and negativity only (Dixon, Levine, Reicher & Durrheim, 2012). Dixon et al's (2012) paper is called 'Are negative evaluations the problem and is getting us to like one another more the solution?'. The authors argue that one of the weaknesses of the 'prejudice' paradigm is that it detracts attention from kinds of exploitative and oppressive relationships that are not necessarily characterised by negative or derogatory evaluations. Indeed, 'paternalism', for example in gender relations, is one of

the classic examples they give of a kind of relationship that involves the unidirectional transfer of benefits while being characterised by affection and love between the parties. As was argued at the end of the 2009 results chapter, the flattering way that farmers and Zimbabwean workers spoke about one another does not mean that all is necessarily well between them. Although it has not been cited, elsewhere in his interview Tom from extract 4 in Chapter 10 above described his experience of working on farms as ‘terrible’, with long, strenuous hours remunerated by pittance wages that were worsened by crooked labour brokers, and thus showed that being Zimbabwean did not mean that his experience of farm work was ultimately any more pleasant or any less exploitative than anyone else’s. Thus, rather than wondering about whether the farmers were or were not being racist when they praised the Zimbabweans as ‘tremendous’ and ‘very nice people’ (cf Durrheim, Mtose & Brown, 2011), we can interrogate the functions that were achieved by this relationship in this particular economic and social system. The Zimbabweans and the farmers singing one another’s praises in 2009 helped match willing workers with willing employers, and, importantly, was a resource for opposing the xenophobia that the Zimbabweans were victims of at the time, but it also helped to obscure the racial inequality of this system and the way black poverty – including the Zimbabweans’ own poverty – is normalised within it.

Hence, obviously, to argue against conceptualising the events in De Doorns in terms of two-group psychologised ‘xenophobia’ or ‘racism’ (as variations on ‘prejudice’) is not an argument that there is no racism and xenophobia in this system. Even apart from obvious cases of abusive and exploitative treatment that black and coloured workers experience directly from the white farmers or managers they work under, and with a very few exceptions of farms that are owned collectively by workers, almost the entire commercial farming industry is still structured in such a way that white labour needs are serviced by black people earning poverty wages. This means that even if all farmers were model employers abiding by the basic conditions of employment and treating their workers fairly within the guidelines of this system, the system would still be one of entrenched racial inequality. Also, it is not an argument that there is no xenophobia, which is a good word for describing this genre of violence and the widespread antipathy towards foreign migrants that make it possible. Indeed, xenophobia denialism – the inability to concede that South Africa is an extremely xenophobic country – has been an unhelpful response from the South



African government to the crisis of xenophobia (Crush & Ramachandran, 2014). Chapter 2 showed how the attack on the Zimbabwean community followed the pattern that numerous cases of xenophobic violence have followed, especially the corruption behind the ward councillor's actions and the way he used the eviction for his own personal and political gain and those of others (labour brokers) with whom he was in cahoots. However, what I have discovered is that xenophobia and racism intersect in this community. The elephant in the room when studying *xenophobia* in De Doorns is that these events were all taking place within an overall *racist* and racially unequal system. This is part of the dilemma, because to highlight an overall racist system under which all black workers suffer (South African and foreign alike) appears to be taking attention away from the crisis of *xenophobia*, and once again presenting perpetrators of xenophobia as victims 'in ways that legitimate and justify the attacks' on Zimbabweans (Misago, 2009). The difficulty, then, is in how to balance a critical analysis of xenophobia with a critical analysis of a racist or at least racialised labour system, in such a way that neither is excused or minimised.

### **The more things change the more they stay the same**

Having emphasised the ongoing reality of social change and the embeddedness of group relationships in this process of change, one of the apparently opposite discoveries I have made in the course of writing this thesis is a framework for thinking about the old and the new South Africa in terms of continuities between the two. The political economy view saw apartheid as a form of capitalism and not only as a form of state (Legassick & Wolpe, 1976), and thus it encourages us to think of the transition as a transition between two forms of capitalism (Bernstein, 1996, 2013): one largely state-protected and the other not; one dependent on highly formalised migrant labour recruitment systems and the other on informal migrant labour flows (Munakamwe & Jinnah, 2014). This view leads us to *expect* continuities within the transition, rather than seeing continuities between the periods as an anomaly. Borders have been reconfigured so that it is workers from Zimbabwe and Lesotho rather than the Transkei and Ciskei who now have to seek permission to be in the Hex Valley (cf Neocosmos, 2006), but similar intergroup dynamics in De Doorns were evident in 2009 to those produced in the Coloured Labour Preference period (Goldin, 1984), even though significant changes had occurred in the interim – the end of apartheid, the homelands ceasing to exist, the inclusion of farm workers in the new labour law regime, the arrival of a

new Zimbabwean migrant worker community, and so on. In these ways, continuity in the form of the economy appears to have recreated similar structural positions which are simply filled by new groups, who speak about their relationships with one another in remarkably familiar ways. This once again shows how psychology and materiality are closely intertwined.

While this realisation has been new for me, in fact the argument of Neocosmos (2006) introduced at the beginning of this thesis – that South African went through a transition between ‘two forms of xenophobia’ – was partly already a critique of the political economy view. Neocosmos argues that the dominance of the political economy critique of the migrant labour system as something bad that needed to be dismantled after apartheid meant that not enough attention was paid to *forms and definitions of citizenship*, which were largely inherited from the old regime and not critically interrogated. Neocosmos thus emphasises the ‘centrality of *citizenship* in understanding the phenomenon of xenophobia’ (p. vi, emphasis added), and not only the centrality of economics. Thus, despite many notable changes, we can think about the transition between the apartheid and post-apartheid periods as involving continuities in both the form of economy – in which differentiated classes of migrant workers are once again produced – and in the form of the state – in which differentiated classes of citizens and non-citizens (and ‘infra-citizens’ – Monson, 2015) are produced. Indeed, Sichone (2008) has argued that

the South African system [of apartheid] came to an end just as the rest of the world was reinventing it in new forms. Global apartheid, policed by the regime of visas and passports in a manner that African migrant workers who used to have to carry their *vitupa* and passbooks to gain access to employment would easily recognise as colonial, still does the job of keeping wealth and poverty apart. (n. p.)

### **Continuity within change: Implications for social psychology**

To what extent do social psychologists study the presence of continuity in processes of change (cf Reicher & Haslam, 2013; Subasic, Reynolds, Reicher & Klandermans, 2012)? One way that the question of continuity versus change has arisen is in a debate about the utility of the distinction between new and old-fashioned racism as ways of explaining how racial attitudes respond to socio-political change (Leach, 2005; Durrheim, 2014). Leach (2005)

argues against the claim that there is a 'new racism' which can explain the persistence of racial inequality in post-racial regimes in the global North, suggesting that this new-old distinction is essentially empty:

'old-fashioned' formal expression of racism was not especially popular before de jure racial equality and is not especially unpopular now. I also show that there is nothing new about formal expressions that criticize cultural difference or deny societal discrimination. Thus, there is greater historical continuity in racism than the notion of a 'new racism' allows (p. 432).

Leach goes on to argue that

a contemporary denial of racial discrimination does not indicate a dramatic change in the formal expression of racial ideology as is claimed by the 'new racism' notion. This is simply the continuation of a long-standing trend that is central to the operation of democracies that fail to live up to the principle of equality...This means that the 'new racism' of a denial of societal racial discrimination is likely to be as old as democracy itself (p. 440-441).

However, Durrheim (2014) responds to Leach by asking how racism may, then, be said to change, even if not by a straightforward transition from old to new. Do we conclude that there is simply no change? Durrheim agrees with Leach that there are continuities between the pre- and post-Civil Rights eras and between apartheid and post-apartheid, but that changing expressions of racism are intimately tied up with the new lived realities that emerge in these contexts. He thus argues for two ways that racism and racial attitudes can be seen as new. First, a changed rhetorical context produced by major socio-political events such as the end of apartheid means a new set of norms that speakers must orient to in expressing their 'attitudes'. Hence, in Durrheim and Dixon's (2005a) study of desegregation and white flight on a KwaZulu-Natal beach, the enactment of policies of desegregation meant that local controversies were now about how to implement desegregation rather than about the principle of segregation (apartheid). White South African beachgoers had to adapt their reasoning for keeping themselves separate (if they did so) to a new political

climate in which desegregation and racial contact were a daily reality legitimated by a new political and social regime – something they did not have to do before apartheid ended. Thus, second, Durrheim (2014) argues that race attitudes can be seen as ‘new’ insofar as they are useful in rationalising new forms of conduct in a changed material context of how intergroup relations are organised. In this way, Durrheim is arguing (against Leach) that changes in how racism was expressed before and after the end of apartheid *did occur* in response both to the new normative rhetorical context of black majority rule and to the lived reality of everyday desegregation and racial contact.

However, Durrheim (2014) also sees that ultimately the self-segregation enacted by white South Africans fleeing KZN beaches ended up producing a ‘new’ form of segregation which was in some ways but a variation on that of the past: ‘When people began interacting with each other in ways that were rendered intelligible by these new attitudes, these emerging forms of prejudice began to constitute the “new South Africa” in ways that resembled the past’ (p. 222). In this way, change sometimes brings us back, if not to exactly where we were before, then at least to social forms in which there is recognisable continuity with the past. Subašić, Reynolds, Reicher and Klandermans (2012) have cautioned that there is a big difference between, on one hand, essentialising social continuity and stability by claiming that they are more natural to the human mind than change, and on the other showing how stability is *maintained* by powerful groups who have interests in the continuity of the status quo. However, these are not the only ways that social stability can be said to occur. Change *itself* involves continuity with the past, and is often made out of familiar elements (see also Stewart, Leach & Pratto, n.d.). This claim resonates with the arguments of Billig: as discourse always contains the seeds of what came before, we should not expect ‘change’ to be something unrecognisable, but to contain recognisable traces of the past. Thus, ultimately deciding whether something is evidence of change or of continuity depends on the scope of our overall frame of historical reference. Like in climate science, perhaps the challenge is to decide whether observed changes are cyclical variations that are part of a longer, regular pattern or whether they constitute something decisively new. While this thesis has shown how the intergroup dynamics in De Doorns were clearly located in a history of socio-economic and political change since the end of apartheid, it has also shown that there are recognisable continuities with the apartheid era, which can be explained by

the persistence of a fundamentally unreformed system of racialised capitalism in which a white-owned commercial agricultural industry is still being sustained by an often divided and partially migrant black labour force.

### **Cautions and limitations**

Is it problematic to explain the way groups construe their relationships with others through references to their 'interests' in change? Discursive psychologists have hesitations about treating 'interests' as something outside of or pre-existing discourse which can explain the content of discourse, preferring to see interests as something that are visibly attended to by speakers in discourse (Whittle & Mueller, 2010; Edwards & Potter, 1992). Also, what is in farm workers' interests is obviously a matter of debate among farm workers themselves: not all workers supported the strike and the eviction, and not all workers agree on what kind of ideal relationship with farmers should be cultivated (Webb, 2017). In an ideal world, it would not be in the Zimbabweans' (or any workers') interests to work for farmers at poverty wages, even if these wages were above the minimum and even if they and the farmers liked each other as much as they claimed to do. But out of the possible options that were available to them in a context of constraint, aligning themselves with farmers in order to get jobs is the one they chose. Of course, one of the main points of this thesis is that groups' sense of where their allegiance lies can shift over time (cf Subašić, Reynolds & Turner, 2008), and there was tentative evidence in the second results chapter of a shift in both farmers' and Zimbabweans' thinking about whether their interests were still aligned. Also, the claim that groups have interests in the direction their society is changing towards does not mean this in the sense of a rational actor model – that people have an absolute or God's eye view of what results their actions will ultimately produce and whether these will be 'in their interests'. Speakers' recommended courses of action can have unexpected consequences down the line, which may not turn out to be good for them. But the results chapters have simply demonstrated, as Sherif (1966) observed, that people do have 'future goals and designs', and that the ways they talk about their relations with significant other groups are intimately rhetorically linked with such recommendations for change.

### **Recommendations for further research**

The examples of literature going beyond the two-group paradigm used in Chapter 5 offer a number of different starting points for further social psychological research and theorising

on intergroup scenarios involving more than two groups. Some researchers, like Billig (1976), may wish to focus on how powerful third parties can play a role in fuelling intergroup conflicts where they are apparently neither victims nor perpetrators of violence. Others, like Bonilla-Silva (2004), may wish to focus on the strategic functions that intergroup alliances between dominant and middle-status groups serve, and the differential consequences this alliance has for each group as well as for those excluded from the alliance. Others, like Mamdani (2001) with his notion of 'subject races' and Adhikari (2005) in his study of coloured identity in South Africa, may wish to consider the dilemmas of solidarity, aspirations of assimilation, and dangers of becoming victims of a violent backlash for middle-status groups in post-colonial contexts. Others, like Bikmen (2011) was so close to doing, may wish to focus on the questions of solidarity and division between low-status and middle-status groups when the latter must decide whether they are going to throw in their lot with the former or preserve their good relationship with the dominant group. Others, like Drury, Reicher and Stott, may wish to investigate the processes by which group alliances and boundaries shift, *producing* two groups where there were previously more (Drury & Reicher, 2000; Drury, Reicher & Stott, 2003). Speaking methodologically, Glasford and Calcagno (2012) and Dixon, Durrheim, Thomae, Tredoux, Kerr and Quayle (2015) show how a three-group scenario can be reflected in quantitative research designs. Obviously, the most important thing is not to invent a new three-group framework which we now doggedly adhere to in place of the two-group one. The most important thing is to employ a 'theoretical imagination' (Silverman, 2005) and generate theories that speak to our contexts. Power operates through co-opting, resistance, division and allegiance, and these produce kinds of intergroup psychological dynamics which are not well captured by the usual binary framework.

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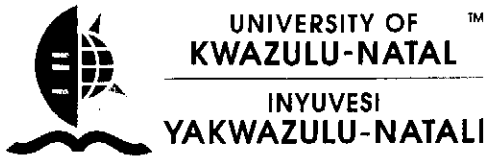
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## Appendix 1: Transcribing conventions (adapted from Silverman, 2005)

.hh	audible intake of breath (number of hs indicate length of breath)
hh	audible exhalation (number of hs indicate length of breath)
>okay okay<	words between > < signs were said quickly
[um]	words or parts of words aligned in square brackets were said at the
[o   ]kay	same time by different speakers
You know= =ja ja	Equals signs denote no discernible pause between the end of one utterance and the beginning of another
<u>absolutely</u>	words or parts of words underlined were said with emphasis
sh-, she	a dash denotes a word cut off abruptly
I KNOW	words in capitals were said loudly
°ja°	words between degree signs were said quietly
oka:::y	colons denote that the previous vowel or consonant was extended. The number of colons indicates the length of the extension.
So, ↑ja ↓to a	arrows up and down denote rising or falling pitch respectively on the following syllable.
(.)	a pause
((laughs))	words within double round brackets are transcriber's comments or descriptions rather than words said by the speaker
(    )	empty round brackets denote an inaudible utterance
(they abuse)	words in single round brackets denote the transcriber's best guess at an unclear utterance
ja.	full stop denotes ending intonation, not to be taken as denoting the actual end of a sentence
okay,	comma denotes continuing intonation on the preceding word
?	denotes rising, questioning intonation rather than an actual question
!	denotes excitement in the preceding utterance
<i>meeting</i>	words in italics are translations
...	An ellipsis shows that spoken words have been omitted from the reproduced extract.



12 November 2012

Professor Kevin Durrheim 23379  
School of Applied Human Sciences – Psychology  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

165 471  
P. Mahu  
15.11.2012

Dear Professor Durrheim

Protocol Reference Number: HSS/0067/010M

Project Title: Working models of contact South African Labourers, foreign labourers, farmers and labour brokers in De  
Dooms, Western Cape

*doms*

**Full approval notification— amendment**

This letter serves to notify you that your application for an amendment has been granted full approval. Following changes have been approved.

- Revised Questionnaire and informed consent forms.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

.....  
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
/pk

cc Ms Philippa Kerr  
cc Academic leader Professor JH Buitendach  
cc Mr Mondli Ngubane

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## AGRI WES-CAPE MEDIA RELEASE

Date issued: 20 November 2009  
Issued by: Agri Wes-Cape  
For immediate release

### **Agri Wes-Cape reaction to allegations in De Doorns**

"The situation in De Doorns is disgusting and distasteful," Agri Wes-Cape CEO, Carl Opperman said this morning.

Farmers in the area have been blamed for employing illegal immigrants, paying workers below the minimum wage and employing workers without legal contracts, but no proof of these allegations are forthcoming. Agri Wes-Cape wants to make it very clear that farmers are allowed to legally employ workers in accordance with the country's laws and the free market system we have in South Africa. Agri Wes-Cape farmers are also bound by a strict code of conduct and we have found no transgression of either the law or the code of conduct by any Agri Wes-Cape member in the Hex River Valley.

The current situation seemingly resulted from reports of a fight between locals and foreigners last weekend and erupted into a xenophobic attack on foreign nationals that was further encouraged by instigators that allegedly had political support. The attacks on innocent people and the destruction of their personal belongings and property is inexcusable and could have been prevented if the police reacted immediately to the first complaints. We insist that the police identify the real perpetrators and that immediate legal action be taken against them.

Agri Wes-Cape believes that the local Municipality failed the residents of the informal settlements by not providing them with proper infrastructure and service delivery, which contributed to their disgruntled behaviour.

Producers that are contributing in a major way to the economy, prosperity and employment in the area are being targeted and threatened to steer the attention away from the criminal element that apparently created this situation in the first place. Nearly fourteen thousand (14 000) workers are employed in the Hex River Valley during peak season time and in these challenging economic times producers need reliable, effective and productive workers. Producers in the area maintain a high value system on the farms and workers are employed accordingly.

With regards the allegations that workers are paid less than minimum wage, Agri Wes-Cape would like to challenge the organisations and individuals that are making these allegations to provide the Department of Labour with the necessary proof so that those

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allegedly responsible, can be investigated. Farmers are not the only direct employers of workers in the Hex River Valley and yet they are the only ones accused of unlawful conduct.

End

Enquiries : Carl Opperman, Chief Executive Officer (082 944 0799) or Porchia Adams, Corporate Communications Manager (082 4412 510), Agri Wes-Cape

## Appendix 4: Western Cape government media release on strikes

Western Cape Government is doing everything to restore peace and order in De Doorns

Date: 6 November 2012

Body: The Western Cape Government is very concerned about the current illegal protest action ongoing in De Doorns. Three Western Cape Ministers are currently in De Doorns: Van Rensburg, Agriculture and Rural Development; Meyer, Cultural Affairs and Sport; and Plato, Community Safety. The Western Cape Government is urgently looking for ways in which to restore calm and order in the area. Intelligence estimates that approximate 8000 protestors are mobilising to march on De Doorns today.

Van Rensburg said the Western Cape Government considers agriculture to be the backbone of the Provincial economy. The table grape season has recently started in De Doorns. There are approximately 16 000 farm worker job opportunities, of which 8000 are seasonal, available in the valley. Van Rensburg said the Western Cape Government will work very hard with the Police and all local authorities to normalize the situation.

Van Rensburg said he is confident that it is not traditional Western Cape farm workers who are behind the illegal protest action. "We believe this to be politically motivated action, and not a labour protest. Van Rensburg said there are very good relations between farmers and farm workers in the area, and that he is saddened to learn of farm workers who are intimidated to partake in the protest. "It is at this stage very difficult to identify the leadership of the protest, and therefore impossible to engaged in dialogue with the protesters".

The Western Cape Government met with the police and farmer representatives this morning. At this meeting it was decided that dialogue with the protesters is the number one priority, and the local mayor, Basil Kivedo, will address the protestors later today. The police has requested for reinforcements as well as a helicopter to help with monitoring the situation.

The Western Cape Government will also bring in the services of an experienced negotiator to assist in resolving the situation. Minister Meyer said a solution can be found through dialogue. He urged all to remain calm and for all people to refrain from breaking the law.

The N1 highway is closed for all traffic outside Worcester and De Doorns, and an alternative rout via Ceres needs to be used at present.

Contact: Wouter Kriel, 021 483 4700, 079 694 3085, [Wouter.kriel@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Wouter.kriel@westerncape.gov.za)

## Appendix 5: Informed consent forms

### School of Psychology

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7 December 2009

Dear participant

I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus) and I am doing some research for my Psychology master's project. I have come to De Doorns to interview various people who were involved or implicated in the 'xenophobic' violence and conflict here last month, or who represent the interests of involved people. This research is supervised by Prof. K. Durrheim from the School of Psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I would like to interview you for this project, and to obtain your written informed consent to be interviewed.

My research assistant and I would like to ask for your opinions about the conflict last month, specifically your opinions about its causes, about the accusations that were made by various people and parties against other people and parties, about what has happened in the aftermath, and about what (if anything) can or should be done from now on.

If you agree to speak to us, the interview will be recorded so that it can be transcribed (written down) and analysed later. We understand that this is a sensitive topic and therefore we are concerned about your remaining anonymous. If you would like to remain anonymous please tick the 'anonymous' box on the next page. If you do, every care will be taken to ensure that you remain anonymous throughout the study. We will not ask for your name or identifying details. If these come up in the course of the conversation, they will be left out when we transcribe it and they will not appear in the written project. However, if you would like to speak in your official capacity and/or to be identified and have your name mentioned, please indicate that on the next page.

Pieces of the interview will be quoted in a research project which will be available to be read by the public. We may also write an article for a newspaper in which you may be quoted. Again, however, your name will not be used unless you give us permission to use it. If you would like to read the results of the study, it will be completed by the end of 2010 and you are welcome to request a copy of the final thesis.

If you agree at first but later (for example, during the interview, or afterwards when the interview is finished, or even later in the year) you decide you no longer want to be a participant, then you are welcome to tell us, either face to face, by phone, or in writing. If you decide this, we will delete your interview and leave it out of the study. [sentence deleted here] You are also free not to answer any questions in the interview that you do not want to answer (please just tell us), and you are free to end the interview early if you want to. You do not have to explain your reasons for doing so.

If you have any more questions about the study, the interview, or this letter, please feel free to ask me. If you would like further information about the research study after we have left, do contact either myself or my supervisor (Prof. Kevin Durrheim) (our details are on the following page).

You are welcome not to participate, and if you do not want to, that is fine. If you are happy to participate, we thank you in advance for your time, and ask you to read and sign the form on the next page.

Philippa Kerr philkerr@hotmail.com 082 710 4501	Supervisor: Prof. Kevin Durrheim 078 14646 05 durrheim@ukzn.ac.za
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Consent to participate in University of KwaZulu-Natal research project:

-If you do not wish to participate in the study, please do not sign this form

-Note that signing the form does not mean that you are committing yourself to participating. It means that you understand that this is voluntary and that you can leave the study whenever you want to, if you want to.

I (the participant) agree to participate in an interview for this piece of research. I know that I will remain anonymous throughout the study if I have said that I want to be anonymous. I also agree to the interview being audio recorded so that it can be accurately transcribed and to ensure an accurate analysis of the discussion. I know that I can stop the interview at any time and that I can ask for my interview to be withdrawn even after the interview is finished.

I would like to remain anonymous ☐

OR

I would like to speak in my official capacity which will make me identifiable ☐

(Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_)

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## School of Psychology

P/Bag X01 Scottsville  
PIETERMARITZBURG, 3209  
South Africa  
Phone: +27 33 2605371  
Fax: +27 33 2605809



7 Desember 2009

RE: Toestemming om deel te neem aan navorsingsprojek

Ek is 'n student by die Universiteit van KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg kampus) en ek is besig om navorsing te doen vir my meestersgraad projek in Sielkunde. Ek het De Doorns toe gekom om onderhoude te voer met verskeie mense wat betrokke was by, of verbind was met, die 'xenofobiese' geweld en konflik wat verlede maand hier plaasgevind het, of wat die belange van die mense wat daarby betrokke was verteenwoordig. Die navorsing word gedoen onder toesig van Prof. Kevin Durrheim van die Skool van Sielkunde by die Universiteit van KwaZulu-Natal. Ek wil graag 'n onderhoud met jou voer vir hierdie projek. Ek mag egter slegs 'n onderhoud met jou voer as ek jou ingeligte toestemming op skrif het.

My navorsingsassistent en ek wil jou graag vir jou opinies oor verlede maand se konflik vra, veral jou opinies oor die oorsake, oor die aantygings wat deur verskeie mense en partye gemaak is teen ander mense en partye, oor wat sedertdien gebeur het, en oor wat (indien enigiets) nou kan of moet gedoen word.

As jy instem om met ons te praat sal die onderhoud opgeneem word sodat dit getranskribeer (neergeskryf) en later geanaliseer kan word. Ons verstaan dat dit 'n sensitiewe onderwerp is en daarom is ons besorgd oor jou anonimiteit. As jy anoniem wil bly, maak asseblief 'n merkie in die 'anoniem' boksie op die volgende bladsy. As jy dit doen, sal elke voorsorg getref word om seker te maak dat jy dwarsdeur die studie anoniem bly. Ons sal jou nie vir jou naam of inligting wat jou mag identifiseer vra nie. As dit in die loop van die gesprek genoem word sal dit uitgelaat word wanneer ons die onderhoud transkribeer en dit sal nie in die geskrewe projek verskyn nie. Maar as jy in jou offisiële kapasiteit wil praat en/of geïdentifiseer wil word en wil hê dat jou naam genoem word, dui dit asseblief aan op die volgende bladsy.

Dele van die onderhoud sal aangehaal word in 'n navorsingsprojek wat beskikbaar sal wees vir die publiek om te lees. Ons mag ook 'n artikel vir 'n koerant skryf waarin jy aangehaal mag word. Jou naam sal egter nie bekend gemaak word nie, tensy jy ons toestemming daarvoor gegee het. As jy die resultate van die studie wil lees sal dit teen die einde van 2010 voltooi wees en jy is welkom om 'n kopie van die finale projek te versoek.

As jy oorspronklik instem maar later (byvoorbeeld gedurende die onderhoud, of na die tyd wanneer die onderhoud afgehandel is) besluit jy wil nie meer deelneem aan die projek nie, dan is jy welkom om ons in kennis te stel, of in persoon, of per telefoon, of op skrif. Indien jy so besluit sal ons jou onderhoud uithaal en nie in die studie gebruik nie. Jy hoef ook nie vrae in die onderhoud te beantwoord wat jy nie wil antwoord nie (sê ons net asseblief) en jy is vry om die onderhoud vroeër te eindig as jy wil. Jy hoef nie jou redes daarvoor te gee nie.

As jy enige verdere vrae oor die studie, die onderhoud, of hierdie brief het, voel asseblief vry om my te vra. As jy verdere inligting oor die navorsingstudie wil hê nadat ons weg is, kontak my of Prof. Kevin Durrheim (ons kontakinformasie is op die volgende bladsy).

Jy is welkom om nie deel te neem nie, en as jy nie wil nie, is dit in die hak. As jy gelukkig is om deel te neem, bedank ons jou vroegtydig vir jou tyd, en vra dat jy die vorm op die volgende bladsy lees en onderteken.

Philippa Kerr philkerr@hotmail.com 082 710 4501	Prof. Kevin Durrheim 078 14646 05 durrheim@ukzn.ac.za
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Toestemming om deel te neem in Universiteit van KwaZulu-Natal navorsingsprojek:

- As jy nie wil deelneem aan hierdie studie nie, moet asseblief nie hierdie vorm onderteken nie.
- Neem kennis dat die ondertekening van hierdie vorm nie beteken dat jy jouself verbind om deel te neem nie. Dit beteken wel dat jy verstaan dat deelname vrywilliglik is en dat jy die studie enige tyd kan verlaat indien jy sou wou.

Ek (die deelnemer) stem in om deel te neem aan 'n onderhoud. Ek weet dat ek regdeur die studie anoniem gaan bly, tensy ek toestemming gegee het dat my naam gebruik mag word. Ek stem ook in dat die onderhoud opgeneem mag word sodat dit akkuraat getranskribeer kan word om 'n akkurate analise van die gesprek te verseker. Ek weet dat ek die onderhoud enige tyd kan stop en dat ek kan vra dat my onderhoud onttrek word, selfs na die onderhoud voltooi is.

Ek wil anoniem bly ☐

OF

Ek wil in my offisiële kapasiteit praat en my naam mag gebruik word ☐ (Naam van deelnemer:

\_\_\_\_\_)

Handtekening van deelnemer: \_\_\_\_\_

Handtekening van navorser: \_\_\_\_\_

Datum: \_\_\_\_\_

**Information sheet for research in De Doorns**  
**November 2012**



I am Philippa Kerr, a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. I am doing research about (a) how things have changed in De Doorns since the Zimbabwean community was evicted from the informal settlements in 2009, and whether those problems have been solved or not; (b) the current protests and what these are about; and (c) the history of De Doorns and how this town has changed in the time you have lived here.

The interview might take between 20 minutes and an hour, but can be flexible according to how long you are happy to speak for. If you agree to be interviewed, the conversation will be recorded with a tape recorder. This is so that I have a record of what we talked about. This recording will not be played in public; however, I may quote your words in publications, newspaper articles or at conferences. If you are speaking in your personal capacity, I will not use your name or other identifying details. If you are speaking in an official capacity and are happy to be identified as such, please indicate this on the next page.

Although we do not expect there to be any risks involved in being interviewed for this project, you might experience the remembering of violent events as upsetting. In this project we will not provide counselling for this, but if you would like to speak to someone in this regard you can contact FAMSA in Worcester, 023 347 5231.

Please feel free to say no if you don't want to be interviewed. If you agree but later decide that you don't want me to use your interview, you can contact me and I will be obliged not to use it.

This research is being done for my PhD project. It has been approved by the university's Research Ethics Committee. If you have any further questions about this research, you can contact me, Philippa Kerr, at [kerrp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:kerrp@ukzn.ac.za) or 082 710 4501, or my supervisor, Professor Kevin Durrheim on 033 260 5348 or [durrheim@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:durrheim@ukzn.ac.za). If you feel you have been badly treated in this research and want to contact the Research Ethics Committee (independent from the researchers), you can contact Phume Ximba on 033 260 3587 or [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za).

Please turn over

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Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

If you agree to be interviewed, please sign below. Please be reminded that you are not signing to commit to the interview, but to show that you understand the above information. You can still withdraw at any time.

Thank you very much for your time. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them.

Participant's signature:\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

Please tick if you are happy to be identified in your official capacity: \_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

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Founding Campuses:  Edgewood     Howard College     Medical School     Pietermaritzburg     Westville





My naam is Philippa Kerr, ek is 'n PhD student by die Universiteit van Kwazulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. Ek doen navorsing oor (a) hoe dinge in De Doorns verander het sedert die Zimbabwe-gemeenskap in 2009 uit die informele nedersettings gesit is, en of daardie probleme sedertien opgelos is of nie; (b) die huidige optogte en waaroor dit gaan; en (c) die geskiedenis van De Doorns en hoe die dorp verander het in die tyd wat u hier gewoon het.

Die onderhoud sal ongeveer 20 minute tot 'n uur duur, maar dit hang van u af hoe lank u met ons wil gesels. Indien u instem om met ons te gesels, sal die gesprek opgeneem word op 'n bandopnemer. Ons doen dit sodat ons 'n rekord het van wat gesê is. Hierdie opname sal nie in die publiek gespeel word nie, maar ek mag dalk u woorde aanhaal in publikasies, koerantartikels of by konferensies. Indien u vanuit u 'n persoonlike hoedanigheid inligting verskaf, sal ek nie u naam of ander persoonlike besonderhede gebruik nie. Indien u vanuit 'n amptelike hoedanigheid inligting verskaf en instem om so geïdentifiseer te word, dui asseblief so aan op die volgende bladsy.

Alhoewel ons nie verwag dat daar enige gevare verbonde is aan u deelname aan die onderhoud nie, is daar die moontlikheid dat herinneringe aan gewelddadige gebeure vir u ontstellend mag wees. Ons verskaf nie berading vir dit in hierdie studie nie, maar indien u met iemand wil praat oor hierdie gebeure, kan u vir FAMSA in Worcester skakel by 023 347 5231.

Dit staan u vry om nee te sê vir die onderhoud. Indien u nou instem, maar later besluit dat u nie wil hê ek moet die onderhoud gebruik nie, kan u my kontak en ek sal nie verplig wees om dit te gebruik nie.

Hierdie navorsing word onderneem vir my PhD projek. Dit is deur die universiteit se Etiese Komitee vir Navorsing goedgekeur. Indien u enige verdere vra het oor die navorsing, kan u my, Philippa Kerr kontak by [kerrp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:kerrp@ukzn.ac.za) of by 082 710 4501, of my promotor, Professor Kevin Durrheim by 033 260 5348 of [durrheim@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:durrheim@ukzn.ac.za). Indien u voel dat u sleg behandel is in hierdie navorsing en die Etiese Komitee vir Navorsing wil skakel (onafhanklik van die navorsers), kan u vir Phume Ximba skakel by 033 260 3587 of by [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Blaai asseblief om

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Indien u instem tot die onderhoud, teken asseblief hieronder. Let asseblief daarop dat u nie teken om deel te neem aan die onderhoud nie, maar om te wys dat u die voorafgaande inligting verstaan. U kan steeds enige tyd u deelname onttrek.

Baie dankie vir u tyd. Voel vry om enige vrae te vra wat u mag hê

Deelnemer se handtekening: \_\_\_\_\_ Datum: \_\_\_\_\_

Dui asseblief aan of u in 'n amptelike hoedanigheid geïdentifiseer wil word: \_\_\_\_\_

Navorsers se handtekening: \_\_\_\_\_ Datum: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix 6

### List of acronyms

ACMS – African Centre for Migration and Society

ANC – African National Congress

CLPP – Coloured Labour Preference Policy

COSATU – Congress of South African Trade Unions

CSAAWU – Commercial Stevedoring, Agricultural and Allied Workers Union

DA – Democratic Alliance

ESIM – Elaborated social identity model of crowd interaction

ESTA – Extension of Security of Tenure Act

FAWU – Food and Allied Workers Union

HTA – Hexvallei Tafeldruiwe Assosiasie (Hex Valley Table Grapes Association)

PASSOP – People Against Suffering, Oppression and Poverty (Refugee rights activist group)

RDP – Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP houses are low-cost government houses)