Domestic work in private households is, together with prostitution, the most significant employer of newly arrived female migrants. This thesis examines the phenomenon of the racialisation of paid domestic labour in the European Union, and begins to outline the challenges this poses to feminism, political theory and community organisations. At an empirical level it begins to map the employment of migrant women in domestic work in Europe, to describe the work they perform, their living and working conditions and their employment relations. At a theoretical level it is necessarily concerned with the inadequacy of conceptual tools designed to describe more "traditional" forms of employment (i.e. traditionally of concern to white male sociologists) or to describe the experience of "women" within the domestic sphere (i.e. the experience of white middle class women). The paid domestic worker, even when she does the same tasks as the wife/daughter/mother, is differently constructed, for she is expressing and reproducing the female employer's status by serving as her "foil". I argue that it is the worker's "personhood" rather than their labour power, which the employer is attempting to "buy". As well as labour cost and supply, racist stereotypes and the reproduction of such stereotypes are important in determining demand for domestic workers, and this results in a racist hierarchy which constructs some women as being particularly "suitable" for domestic work. Migrant domestic workers' relation to the state encourages and reinforces the racialisation of domestic work and personal dependence on employers. While the applying of employment contracts to domestic workers may seem to offer some way forward there are many difficulties associated with applying employment contracts to the private domain, both theoretically and in workers' real experiences.
"JUST LIKE ONE OF THE FAMILY"?
MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

by

BRIDGET ANDERSON

(1998)

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Leicester
CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE
POLITICAL FICTIONS AND REAL OPPRESSIONS 1

CHAPTER TWO
METHODOLOGY 10

CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW: DEFINING DOMESTIC WORK 36

CHAPTER FOUR
THE SOCIAL ORGANISATION OF PAID DOMESTIC WORK IN EUROPE 62

CHAPTER FIVE
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: GREECE, SPAIN AND ITALY 93

CHAPTER SIX
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: FRANCE AND GERMANY 115

CHAPTER SEVEN
COMMODIFICATION, MIGRATION AND DOMESTIC WORK 138

CHAPTER EIGHT
RACISM AND DOMESTIC WORK: THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OTHER 160

CHAPTER NINE
STATUS AND CONTRACT 192

CHAPTER TEN
"YOUR PASSPORT IS YOUR LIFE": DOMESTIC WORKERS AND THE STATE 212
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION: POLITICAL FICTIONS AND REAL OPPRESSIONS

Domestic work in private households is, together with prostitution, the most significant employer of newly arrived female migrants. This thesis examines the phenomenon of the racialisation of paid domestic labour in the European Union, and begins to outline the challenges this poses to feminism, political theory and community organisations. At an empirical level it begins to map the employment of migrant women in domestic work in Europe, to describe the work they perform, their living and working conditions and their employment relations. At a theoretical level it is necessarily concerned with the inadequacy of conceptual tools designed to describe more "traditional" forms of employment (i.e. traditionally of concern to white male sociologists) or to describe the experience of "women" within the domestic sphere (i.e. the experience of white middle class women).

There has been a tendency among feminist theorists to regard domestic work as the great leveller, a common burden imposed on women by patriarchal capitalism, and remarkably little problematising of paid domestic work with respect to such an analysis. Paid domestic labour may be "necessitated" by ideological, cultural and practical requirements, i.e. it is not the "fault" of the individual employer concerned that she takes on a paid worker, but that does not change the fact that it is not only men who benefit from paid domestic labour. The relationship between female employer and female worker is critical, and the use of paid domestic labour enables (predominantly) middle class women and men to avoid the conflicts of interest inherent in the gendered division of labour. To omit paid domestic labour is to ignore the divisions of race and class in reproductive work.

Following a chapter on methodology, in Chapter Three I review the literature on women's unpaid work in the home and on paid domestic work, and argue that the paid domestic worker, even when she does the same tasks as the wife/daughter/mother, is differently constructed. The domestic worker, whether "cleaner", "nanny" or "servant" is fulfilling a role, and crucial to that role is her reproduction of the female employer's status (middle-class, non-labourer, clean) in
contrast to herself (worker, degraded, dirty). Chapter Four outlines the social organisation of domestic work and suggests that workers’ immigration status (relation to the state) and whether or not they live-in with their employer (relation to employer) are key variables in determining their living and working conditions. Chapters Five and Six describes their living and working conditions and tests this hypothesis. Chapter Seven examines what is being bought and sold, what is being commodified in the case of paid domestic work, and I argue, with particular reference to the caring function of domestic labour, that it is the worker’s “personhood” rather than their labour power, which the employer is attempting to “buy”, and that the worker is thereby cast as unequal in the exchange. Chapter Eight looks at why racialised groups are employed in domestic work, and argues that, as well as labour cost and supply, racist stereotypes and the reproduction of such stereotypes play a crucial role in determining demand, and result in a racist hierarchy broadly constructed along national groups, which constructs some women as being more “suitable” for domestic work than others. While the applying of employment contracts to domestic workers in private households and the professionalisation of domestic work may seem to offer some way forward and counter some of the abuses associated with all these factors (the selling of “personhood”, overt racist discrimination) Chapter Nine looks at the difficulties of applying employment contracts to the private domain, both theoretically and in workers’ real experiences. Chapter Ten uses the position of domestic workers in relation to the formal sense of citizenship in terms of what passport a person holds, to throw light on the broader debates on citizenship and to argue that the relationship of domestic workers to the state encourages and reinforces the racialisation of domestic work.

An analysis of the experiences of migrant domestic workers demonstrates the inadequacy of many of the conceptual tools developed by liberal political theory. I wish to draw attention to two political fictions that are revealed as problematic: that of property in the person, and the public/private divide. One must tread carefully when dealing with these and other political fictions: on the one hand they are constructed, they are not real, but on the other, they order social relations thereby forming the basis for real oppressions. “Race” for example is not a real category, but this does not deny that the experience of racial oppression and exploitation is real.
To understand it one must work with the political fiction and move beyond it. This thesis battles with many such fictions.

PROPERTY IN THE PERSON

"every man has a property in his own person. This nobody has any right to but himself. The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his."


This idea, that there is an intimate relationship between the body, property and labour has proved crucial for Western political philosophy. But there is a profound tension in the idea of property in the person, despite its "obviousness". Locke signalled this in his acknowledgement that a man does not stand in the same relation to his body as he does to any other type of property (contra Pateman 1988: 56) because the body is sacred:

"For men being all the workmanship of one omnipotent and infinitely wise maker, all the servants of one sovereign master, sent into the world by his order and about his business, they are his property whose workmanship they are, made to last during his, not one another’s pleasure."

(Locke 1689 in D. Wootton (ed.) 1993: 264)

So a man does not have the right to kill himself, or put himself into slavery, because he is the work of God. Put another way, there is a contradiction between the idea of the body as an integral part of personhood and the idea of the body as property. But this tension has not been properly explored. Feminists have called for women’s ownership of their own bodies to be recognised. At the time of Locke’s writing of the Second Treatise of Civil Government for example, married women were chattels, the property of their husbands and European women’s continuing demands that their rights over their own bodies be recognised, particularly around questions of control over physical reproduction and male violence against women, may be seen as a struggle to apply the concept of property in the person equally to women and to men. But the migrant domestic worker slips into the analytical space between body as personhood and body as property. For as I argue in Chapter Seven, the domestic worker is selling, not her “labour power” (the property in the person), but her
personhood. I illustrate this with particular reference to the payment for “care”, which strains the political fiction of property in the person to breaking point. But it is property and its disposition by contract that from Locke onwards have formed the foundation of civil rights for Western political theorists. Those who lack even the property in the person it follows have no rights.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

It is not new to point out that the public and private are inextricably connected. As Pateman put it:

“the dichotomy between the public and the private is... ultimately, what the feminist movement is about”.


But despite this there continues to be an assumption, both in sociological theory and in “common sense” that there is in reality a sharp divide between the regulation of the public and the private. The private/public polarisation implies and relates to other dualisms. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>traditional</td>
<td>modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paternalistic/authoritarian</td>
<td>bureaucratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personalistic</td>
<td>materialistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customary relations</td>
<td>civic relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affective</td>
<td>instrumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primitive</td>
<td>civilised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irrational...</td>
<td>rational......etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But it must be remembered that this division is a fiction. Indeed the experiences and employment relations of migrant domestic workers suggest that the commonly accepted transition from traditional to modern, from unfree labour to free labour is incomplete. Migrant domestic workers are, I will argue, defined in a very real sense by their social relations, characterised by personal dependency on the employer re-enforced by immigration legislation. Like individuals in Marx’s pre-capitalist world “their subjectivities are inseparable from their social position” (Sayer 1991: 18). But
the relations of the private are more than a blip, a feudal remnant, for the work of the private has a crucial relation to capitalist production. It "produces" people who make choices about and consume the commodities produced in the public (see Chapter Three). Moreover migrant domestic workers are increasingly taking on the privatised responsibilities of the welfare state (see Chapter Seven).

Just because the public and the private are not real, does not mean that one cannot be caught in the gap between them. Indeed it is the very imagining of them as two separate spheres that creates the gap. The domestic worker, like the prostitute, occupies the imaginary space between the two worlds, symbolically ordered and imagined in very different ways. Female employers on the other hand, have their movement between the public and private facilitated by the domestic worker, she is their bridge between the domains. The employment of the paid domestic worker is one of the means by which some women are able to adopt the increasingly "masculinised" employment patterns that now characterise the work histories of so many European female workers (see Chapter Seven). It is by slipping between the two imagined domains that the employer consolidates much of her power: the worker may be treated as "part of the family" (i.e. governed by customary relations) when it is a matter of hours and flexibility, and as a worker (i.e. governed by civic relations) if she becomes too sick to work.

The private/public divide has been recognised as highly gendered, with women predominantly responsible for the private and consequently often unable to participate in the public (see Chapter Nine). Feminism has done much to challenge the divide, and authors such as Pateman have shown how these dualisms reflect, support and reinforce patriarchal power. However, when one considers the case of migrant domestic workers one must deal with the fact that women can move into the public (for there is nothing fixed about these categories) if they make alternative arrangements covering the loss of their reproductive labour. In tying women to the private and men to the public many feminists have assumed a homogeneity of oppression, and ignored the other kinds of power reproduced by such dualisms, not just patriarchal, but class, racialised, national etc. For the case of migrant domestic workers it is particularly useful to examine the concept of citizenship, tightly tied to
participation in the public, with an emphasis on the formal exclusive meaning in terms of what passport one holds and where one can work (see Chapter Ten).

WOMEN AND POWER

We must first acknowledge differences between women in order to make connections. This is particularly important given the tendency among white middle class feminists to universalise their experiences which has effectively erased the experiences of most women. bell hooks' observation is as applicable to Europe as to the USA:

“In America, white racist ideology has always allowed white women to assume that the word woman is synonymous with white woman, for women of other races are always perceived as Others, as de-humanised beings who do not fall under the heading Woman.”

(hooks 1982:138)

This erasure has meant exclusion and privilege rather than unity, but it has also led to serious defects in the analysis of women's oppression and struggles - so the cultural, economic, political struggle around reproductive labour which surely contains the seeds of profound, revolutionary and anti-racist feminist change, is resolved for some middle class women by employing a domestic worker. It is important to acknowledge differences between women. Our theory must allow that some women hold power (and exercise it) over other women (and men). These differences are extremely complex (though immigration and citizenship legislation does a lot to simplify them!).

Orlando Patterson (1983), following Marx, distinguishes between the pre-modern, personalistic idiom of power, and the materialistic idiom of power under capitalism. In the personalistic idiom, power is openly exercised, its unequal distribution and created personal dependencies acknowledged, but an attempt is made to humanise power relations through social strategies such as gifts and fictive kin. In the materialistic idiom, relations of dependence are concealed, the power relationship is depicted as power over commodities rather than power over persons. The employer of the migrant domestic worker exercises both forms of power: the materialistic because of the massive discrepancy in access to all kinds of material resources
between the European Union and the countries of origin of migrants, the
personalistic because the worker is located in the employer’s home - and often
dependent on her not just for her salary but for her food, water, accommodation, and
access to basic amenities of life. The employer uses both these idioms of power, and
both idioms are given to employers and re-enforced by the state. The materialistic
idiom is an expression of global capitalism, the global exploitation of the poor by the
rich, the personalistic by the dependency of domestic workers on the employers,
enforced by the immigration legislation of the European Union states, and by the
refusal of the state to intervene in the private to protect the living and working
conditions of those confined there.

In unravelling the complexities of the relations between female workers and
employers, one must also acknowledge differences in workers’ experiences. While
some endure slave like conditions, rape, beatings, others get on well with their
employers and have no complaints about wages, work or treatment. I have attempted
to analyse some reasons for these different experiences (Chapter Four), but one also
has to allow for the different psychobiographies of workers. This was a source of
much discussion among workers themselves: to what extent could they improve their
situation by being, not just politically organised, but more personally assertive. This
was also a point made by community organisers:

“But it’s still very important for migrant workers or domestic workers to really
assert themselves to their women employers, maybe by attending assertiveness
seminars. It’s still very important that change should come from us as migrants”.
(Debbie Valencia, Kasapi organiser speaking at seminar of migrant domestic
workers, Brussels, 5th June 1996).

This research is “messy” in the same way that work on prostitution is - there are
contradictions and tensions in individual experiences as well as theory. Domestic
workers are as influenced as the rest of us by prevailing discourses on the public and
private, domestic work, immigration. While some feel their work is honourable,
many more feel degraded and ashamed. O’Connell Davidson has cited EP
Thompson’s appreciation of the tensions within “social consciousness” that give rise
to:
"experience - a category which, however imperfect it may be is indispensable to the historian, since it comprises the mental and emotional response, whether of an individual or of a social group, to many inter-related events or to many repetitions of the same kind of event… experience is valid and effective but within determined limits: the farmer ‘knows’ his seasons, the sailor ‘knows’ his seas, but both may remain mystified about kingship and cosmology”

(Thompson 1978 cited in O’Connell Davidson 1998: 115)

The contradictions around domestic work, paid and unpaid, are expressed in the “social consciousness” within which domestic workers and their employers struggle and negotiate. The polarities and pairings of private and public, of “Madonna” and “Whore” are not isolated or autonomous. Each contains the other within it, and each refers to and implies other dualisms.

So difference does not necessarily mark separation. Throughout this work I have emphasised the role of female employers in exploiting and oppressing “their” domestic worker, how the female employer raises her own status by degrading her domestic worker. But it should always be borne in mind that ultimately it is men and capitalism that benefit. It is easy to scoff at the employer who complains in her list “What she does, what he does”:

“Me: hire and manage cleaner
Him: Grumbles when shirts not ironed
Me: Hire and manage nanny
Him: Tells me to tell the nanny what not to do”

(“The things men do (and don’t)” The Independent 13 May 1998: 16)

but, as an Ethiopian worker in Athens put it:

“men do not share household tasks. They will not accept that. Ethiopian and Greek men are the same. If the Greeks can afford they will hire, otherwise the woman will do it.”

We need to acknowledge and recognise constructed “difference” as binding as well as separating us. The realities of power are complex. We need to recognise
difference in order to heal fractures between us and in order to know where to insert our crowbars!
CHAPTER TWO
METHODOLOGY

This thesis has its roots in Britain’s Secret Slaves (Anderson 1993). This research into the lives of undocumented migrants working as domestic workers in the UK was commissioned by Anti-Slavery International and the overseas domestic workers support and campaigning group, Kalayaan. I had been approached to write it as someone known to the workers and the organisation, having worked in various capacities, paid and unpaid with migrant communities in London, and having been the chairperson of the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers (CFMW), one of the founding organisations of Kalayaan. I was asked to include a chapter on Europe since several of the domestic workers currently in London had also spent time in other European cities. I therefore gathered together as much information as I could find on the lives of migrant domestic workers in other European Union states. This was largely anecdotal, but it seemed to me that domestic work constituted a significant but hidden area of employment for migrant women in Europe and that their living and working conditions were often, as in the UK, extremely harsh and compounded by an “illegal” immigration status.

A general report on the situation of black and migrant women in the European Community (European Forum of Left Feminists 1993) confirmed this impression:

“black and migrant women’s organisations point out that as white women improve their situation through campaigning and social change, some of the roles that they are leaving behind are being filled by black and migrant women - instead of being taken up by publicly funded services. As a result, many white women across a range of EC member states, have black and immigrant women as nannies, maid servants, cleaners and domestics.”

(European Forum of Left Feminists 1993, Summary: iii)

Although domestic work in private households was acknowledged as an important area of employment for migrant women there was very little known about the living and working conditions of migrants in this sector, and what had been done was localised and not comparative (see Chapter Three). The need for further research was recognised by Kalayaan and CFMW, which supported the research project. They
wanted quite simply to know of the experiences of migrant domestic workers in other states within the EU, and, more specifically:

1. was domestic work in private households an important area of employment for migrants in other EU countries?
2. what nationalities were working in this sector and what was their immigration status?
3. what were their living and working conditions (wages, contract etc.)?
4. were they organised as domestic workers?

From the outset therefore the research project was concerned with practical matters. Kalayaan wanted to know if there were other organisations that they could work with at a European level and if there was a basis for some Europe-wide action. In this respect, (though I was not aware of it at the time!) the research was "feminist", an application of what Liz Stanley has described as "feminism outside of the academic mode", which:

"has insisted on the crucial need for useful knowledge, theory and research as practice, on committed understanding as a form of praxis ('understand the world and then change it'), and also on an unalienated knowledge."


Funding applications were duly made and rejected, and when I started work in October 1994 the project was still unfunded. However, the Equal Opportunities Unit of DGV, the European Commission's Social Affairs Unit, released approximately £24,000 for expenses, and the University of Leicester provided a year's salary. This was enough to cover three of the five cities originally proposed, but funding problems were to be a constant problem. Data from Berlin and Emiglia Romagna is more sketchy than Athens, Barcelona and Paris because funding difficulties and uncertainties meant I only visited those places once with a view to making contacts for consultations and interviews that never materialised.

It became apparent from reviewing the literature there was a relative abundance of material on migrant domestic workers in Italy and Spain, but nothing on the countries of Northern Europe other than the UK. I wanted to examine the situation in both North and South Europe. If I was to be researching in several countries, for
reasons of practicality I had to restrict myself to one city per country. The contacts I had with migrants’ associations in Greece, Italy and Spain were already well established. I knew that there were many women working as domestics in Athens, Bologna and Barcelona. In northern Europe the situation was more uncertain, but I knew of a Filipino organisation in Paris, and of several women’s groups working, not with domestic workers, but with women trafficked in the sex industry in Berlin, who might be able to offer “leads” to domestic workers in that city. I discussed these choices with migrants’ groups in London, and they passed on their contacts in each city.

METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS
Domestic work belongs to the informal sector and usually takes place away from other workers and in close personal contact with the employer. Whoever it is performed by, waged or unwaged, domestic work is invisible work. This clearly leads to methodological problems, compounded when one focuses on migrant domestic workers, particularly when one wishes to include undocumented migrants - invisible workers for invisible work.

1. Definitions

*Domestic work*

Domestic work is notoriously difficult to define (see Chapter Three). This problem of definition, experienced by the workers as a lack of job description with serious implications for their working conditions, was returned to again and again in the course of the research. I knew from my work with Kalayaan in London that the International Labour Organisation definition was not sufficient to encompass all the work done by domestic workers. Crucially, while British nationals may define themselves as cleaners or nannies, for migrant domestic workers in London “domestic worker” includes “caring” work. I therefore decided not to tie the research to any fixed definition of what constituted domestic work, but to act on self-definition, and to encourage participation by “domestic workers” both live-in and live-out. In fact those who participated in the project were often caring for an old person or for children in a private house, and, as with workers in London, did not distinguish this as being a different type of work from doing domestic chores. Women moved from cleaning to caring and back, they did not see
themselves as principally a "cleaner" or a "carer". Indeed it could be fairly said that the distinction between caring and domestic work was not one recognised by employers either, since many of the workers complained at being taken on to do one of these, and actually having to do both.

**Migrants**

The project was focused on first generation migrant workers who were “Third Country Nationals” i.e. from outside the European Union. I did not include migrants from within the European union, although migrant women from Spain, Portugal and Greece used to work in the private households of Northern Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. Almost all of these women now work in hotels or as concierges, those who continue to work in private households are living-out. As European Union citizens these workers have rights that Third Country Nationals do not (see Chapter Ten). “Migrant” is an extremely elastic term, and the complexity of different national definitions and legislations make comparative work on migrants in the European Union a complex matter (Salt, Singleton and Hogarth 1994) So for example, while in France until 1996 all those born in the state were automatically French citizens, in Germany a third generation German born baby of “Turkish” parentage, counts as a migrant of one day’s stay. Although my original interest arising from the situation in the UK was in the relationship between immigration legislation and domestic work, this could not easily be disentangled from the racialisation of domestic work in the European Union. I therefore decided that the emphasis of the project would be first generation migrants irrespective of their immigration and citizenship status.

I was particularly concerned that there was some representation of undocumented migrants because immigration status in the UK had proved so crucial to the continuing dependence of workers on their employers. Domestic work is largely “undocumented” in that, when paid for, it is usually on a cash in hand basis undeclared by worker and by employer (Gregson and Lowe 1994). However, I use the term “undocumented” to refer to migrant workers who are working without a work permit (see Chapter Ten).
2. Access

Access was the principal methodological issue in this research project. Fear of exposure and deportation is an understandable preoccupation of undocumented workers, while workers with settlement are often working off the books and anxious not to compromise their immigration status. The personalised relationship domestic workers often have with their employers also posed a problem - workers might fear they were jeopardising their job by making unauthorised contact with an outside researcher. Employers too were likely to be reluctant to admit to employing a domestic worker when evading tax, national insurance, minimum wage, benefits etc. particularly since employing an undocumented migrant is in some countries a criminal offence punishable by a prison sentence. Even if this were not the case, employers are clearly not a reliable source of information on the living and working conditions of their employees. There was also a problem of logistics - given that Kalayaan’s interviews found that migrant domestic workers worked an average of 17.2 hours a day and 90 per cent of them complained that they were denied time off from their duties (Kalayaan 1996), however would they find time to participate in a research project? Given the sensitive nature of the topic and the problems of negotiating access for interviews, would the presence of an interpreter be acceptable to workers who did not speak a common language with the researcher (English, French, Spanish), and how might an interpreter affect the information given? These kinds of problems compounded a third difficulty, that of representativeness. Given that there is no way of knowing the answers to such basic questions as the gender and nationality breakdown of either undocumented workers or domestic workers in general, it would clearly be impossible to attempt to interview a “representative sample”. Access would inevitably be biased towards the less isolated, to those who had contacts with organisations and who therefore may be in a slightly stronger position than more isolated workers.

I did have some headstart with the problems of access to workers thanks to my previous work with migrant organisations in the UK. This had entailed working with migrant and refugee organisations not just in London but also in Europe. It was not simply a question of being known, however, but also of knowing at first hand the concerns and issues likely to be raised for grassroots groups when approached by an
academic researcher. I had an appreciation of the importance of relevance, of consultation, and of the lack of organisational resources, both financial and personnel, that make co-operating with research extremely difficult for such groups.

In the light of this I determined that the methodological challenge of access should in fact be used to good advantage: if the research project was relevant and useful it should attract participants. But this was not simply a question of the aims and final outcome of the research, since again I knew from personal experience that the promise of a lobbying document however useful, is not enough to motivate hard-pressed individuals and organisations to participate in research, particularly if participation involves an element of risk, as it does to undocumented migrants. Rather there must be tangible benefits to participation in the research process.

Migrant groups in London and Athens suggested that group interviews would maximise participation. They felt that many workers would be more likely to contribute and feel less vulnerable in a group situation, and it would also provide a valuable opportunity for them to discuss living and working conditions not just with each other, but also with other national groups. I was guided by their assessment of how to maximise participation because of their direct and personal knowledge of domestic workers and because the immediate practical usefulness of the research was of concern. Group discussions would facilitate participants making connections between their personal situation and wider social structures and conditions. This would, therefore, be a useful and interesting exercise as far as potential participants were concerned, and a legitimate and productive use of research resources. The work of Colectivo Ioe had demonstrated that group interviews with migrant domestic workers could produce useful - and usable research data (Colectivo Ioe 1991). Group interviews are generally suggested with vulnerable and powerless populations (Morgan 1993; Stewart and Shamdasani 1990; Reinharz 1992). Having decided that they would be an appropriate method of research I found the work of Morgan (1993) extremely useful in thinking about how to conduct them.

While a range of research methods were used it was the use of group interviews, as suggested by migrant groups that made the research a collaborative exercise that in
turn facilitated and maximised participation. The project methods were largely determined by discussions with organisations and by a relationship grounded on many years of working with such associations. Having now some knowledge of feminist methodology, I can say that the research methods have aspects of those feminist methods outlined by Reinharz under Feminist Change-Oriented Research (Reinharz 1992: 180ff). However, it would not be honest to say that I was guided by such work from the outset, but rather by concerns that the research should be useful and empowering.

METHODS
In each city I worked through migrants' associations. It was clearly not possible for me to adopt the methods used by LIFE (1991) in approaching migrants' "cold" on the street, particularly since I wanted to include undocumented workers. There was some sensitivity required in dealing with the relations between migrant groups, particularly since an outside researcher is unlikely to appreciate the organisational histories involved, as well as more obvious difficulties such as the potential conflict between e.g. Eritrean and Ethiopian groups. Their enthusiasm for the project meant that most organisations were keen to participate despite such difficulties.

The problem of working through organisations however was that migrants who are in contact with such groups are less isolated, more able to make demands and to take advantage of employment networks than many. Of course they had usually not always been in contact with organisations, and one way of working around this problem was to discuss their personal histories, what had happened to them on arrival, when most workers are extremely vulnerable and alone. I also decided to follow up any possible contacts with unorganised workers, while being unable to anticipate how these would manifest themselves in any particular city.

Methods used were:
1. Group interviews
These were key to the research, not simply because of the information they elicited but also because they helped inspire confidence and ensure the participation of undocumented workers who are particularly difficult to reach. A total of eighty
people participated in group interviews held in Athens, Barcelona and Paris. Participants heard about the interviews through organisations and friends and I encouraged all domestic workers that I met in the course of my stay in each city to attend. It was made clear that no names would be required and that participation would be anonymous.

I drafted talking points (see Appendix 1) and piloted them with migrant domestic workers in London. These related to key elements of workers’ experiences, and were framed to help participants share common experiences (see Krueger 1994). They remained the same for each city for reasons of comparability. Group interviews were taken in two sessions, each lasting between one and a half to two hours. The first session was run along the lines of a workshop, with same nationality groups of four to eight people speaking in their mother tongue. There are three methods of facilitating such discussions: totally facilitated, semi-facilitated, and internally facilitated (Morgan 1993). Language and personnel meant that only the last was feasible, and in fact this worked extremely well. I prepared ground rules for the discussion groups, but in the event abandoned them since I felt that they were patronising. Instead, having introduced the research, I simply emphasised the importance of ensuring that everybody had a chance to speak and in particular, those who found it hardest to assert themselves and who were in the normal run of things least likely to be heard. Of course, I cannot say that this is what happened, but from the transcripts of the internally facilitated discussions it seems that there was wide participation. Occasionally one person took it upon themselves to act as a facilitator and while they could have dominated the discussion they in fact worked at encouraging everybody to speak. No attempt was made to discourage friends from participating in the same group, since it was generally felt that the priority had to be to establish an atmosphere of trust, where people felt free to talk.

The second session was a “plenary” session, consisting firstly of a report back from the morning. This was held in English and one other language. Catering for more than two languages would have made the discussion unwieldy. It was informal, and comments from the floor were encouraged. This enabled different nationalities to observe similarities and differences in their situations. It also gave me a summary of
the morning discussions to be sure that they had indeed covered the research priorities as well as those of the participants - since I usually didn't speak the languages I otherwise would not have known what had been discussed until the transcriptions had been translated, far too late to rectify any problems. In fact there was never a difficulty with this. After this summary there was a more general discussion, again in English and one other language, around the points outlined in Appendix 1. Originally I had imagined that more potentially sensitive issues could be addressed in the smaller group discussions, but in fact it was the larger groups where difficult questions such as sexual harassment and abuse seemed to be raised more naturally, with workers often encouraged to speak by other participants:

“A: But colour discrimination is not only shown by this. One time... the Greek... some people putting the black mask... (starts crying).

General discussion...

G: ... no, just keep on....

A:...(crying)... being black is not bad....

General discussion. 'she's right', 'I remember...'

A:... putting the black mask on and shouting, get out of our country...

C: It's true, it's very true...”

(Group discussion in Athens)

The logistics of the group sessions were complex. The first difficulty was language. It was impossible to be sure of the numbers of participants, which called for access to large numbers of tape recorders - I carried eight. Arranging a suitable venue, easily accessible, well known and cheap was difficult without knowing the city well. Since the sessions took an entire day, lunch, tea, coffee also needed to be provided. In all of these logistical aspects I was greatly assisted by participating organisations. One serious shortcoming was the lack of funding for a crèche, which meant that on occasion I had to look after young children as well as ensuring that tapes were being turned over, answering questions about the sessions, helping the people providing food etc. While realising the theoretical advantages of group interviews, I had not appreciated the practical realities entailed! The sessions were always held on weekends to coincide with whatever were the workers’ most common days off. Transcribing group interviews was also problematic: one could never be sure who
was speaking - only that they were a different person from the previous speaker. Since the sessions were usually held only in one hall each discussion took place against a general hubbub that occasionally made it difficult to follow what was on the tape.

2. Questionnaires
Questionnaires were for basic demographic and employment information (age, sex, nationality, marital status - see Appendix 2). When designing the methodology I had initially discounted questionnaires thinking that workers would be reluctant to complete them. However, I decided to distribute them at the end of group interviews - when people would be more likely to understand the research aims and objectives. I stressed their anonymity, and was surprised at the response rate - seventy one out of eighty questionnaires were completed. The questionnaire was written in two languages, English, and the language of the country visited. It was designed to be very simple, since it was anticipated the majority would be completed after the group sessions, when people would be anxious to go home. In retrospect the questionnaire should have been restricted to demographic information and was not a suitable tool for eliciting information on employment. This was because it was not possible for a simple questionnaire to be the same for both live-in and live-out workers, and despite changes made following the pilot and as the project progressed, this difficulty continued. Moreover, I did not ask for people's legal status, though this was important information to have, because the sensitivity of the question is such that I judged it risked making workers suspicious of the whole research project.

3. Interviews with workers
These were semi-structured and took between one and a half and two hours. In this one to one situation the questionnaire and talking points served as a suitable interview guideline, since I was able to adapt it to fit the interviewee, live-in or live-out. It also meant that if the worker was unable or unwilling to spend the time being interviewed there was a sure-fire way of obtaining basic information. The shortcoming of group interviews was the lack of continuity - it was impossible to be sure from the transcripts if, for example, the person who was invited to come to Europe by a particular employer, was the same person who, some time later
remarked that her employer had promised her that she would regularise her immigration status. In the interviews therefore I focused on migration and employment histories, and it was also, in this more personalised situation, possible to openly address issues around immigration status.

Workers who were interviewed were introduced to me by organisations, or had attended the group interviews and volunteered to be interviewed personally. Some were introduced to me by friends of friends - and this proved extremely useful, since I wanted to not be restricted to workers who were in some respects activists in their organisations. They were interviewed at their convenience in a place of their choosing, sometimes their home, an office or a bar, and usually in the evenings or at weekends.

4. Diaries
As the research progressed it became clear that the kinds of work performed by domestic workers was an important issue, and that it would be useful to build up a detailed picture of exactly what they did in the home. To this end I asked some workers to write diaries for one week, to be filled in at the end of each day, giving an hourly account of their time. This required some commitment on the part of the worker, since having finished an extremely long day filled with tedious work, the last thing one wants to do is sit down and write a detailed description of what one has done! Moreover, it would take a week, after which I might well have left the city i.e. the workers would have to post the diaries to me, again requiring some commitment. I therefore decided to ask small numbers of Filipinos to write diaries, because they are organised and therefore contactable if the diaries were not sent to me, and because they would write the diaries comfortably in English. Seven diaries were completed: four in Paris and three in Barcelona.

5. Meetings with associations
These provided an important source of information on the history of different national groups and their associations in each city, numbers, gender breakdown, estimates of numbers of undocumented and the importance of domestic work as a source of employment. These interviews were unstructured but written information -
leaflets, organisations' records were often made available to me and proved extremely useful. On several occasions it became evident that groups kept records of domestic employment requests from employers and employees which were an invaluable source of information.

6. Interviews with employers
Following some chance encounters with employers in Athens, I realised that employers' perspectives on their domestic worker, and in particular on why they were employing third country nationals for household work, were extremely important. Contacting employers was a very different matter from contacting workers, and proved quite difficult without devoting significant research resources to it - and as mentioned previously, resources for this project were limited. While there was no difficulty in obtaining employers' details from employment requests made to organisations or from advertisements asking for workers in local newspapers, there were ethical and practical problems about using these means to access employers, who would, in any case be unlikely to answer questions if telephoned cold. To have asked workers to put me in contact with their employers may well have jeopardised research results, since confidentiality would have been in question. When possible therefore employers were contacted through their own networks (see Paris below). These were individual interviews, conducted face to face or on the telephone (see Appendix 3). Nine employers were interviewed.

7. Interviews with employment agencies
Employment agencies may be formal or informal, and in some instances migrants associations or support agencies such as church groups may act as placement agencies. Whenever possible therefore recorded information about placements was obtained from migrants' and other associations. In Barcelona it was possible to interview employment agencies (see Appendix 4 and below for discussion)

8. Other material
Official immigration statistics and statistics on domestic labour were used, and in some cases more localised official information on these subjects was available. Newspapers were often extremely useful. They listed job advertisements placed by
prospective employers and employees which indicated wages, supply and demand for
domestic labour, and often carried articles on domestic labour. I collected as much
background material as possible on the migrant groups represented in domestic work
in each city.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS
As the research developed it became apparent that methodological flexibility was
crucial. Different cities meant different types of organisations, different relations
between groups, different types of domestic work available, different approaches to
migrant issues. Some of the methods listed above were more suited to certain cities
than others, and while keeping to the same basic methods they would have to be
differently adapted to each context. Even if this had not been the case, each new city
provided an opportunity to put into practice some of the methodological lessons
learnt from the previous place visited, and to allow for some previously unanticipated
issues, so the methodology developed along with the research. It is necessary
therefore to give a city by city account of methods used, and the following is in the
order in which they were visited.

1. Athens (1st - 16th June 1995)
A preliminary visit to Athens was made in November 1994 to attend a conference on
migrant women in Europe organised by the Migrants' Forum, a European wide non-
governmental organisation. This proved very useful, particularly since one of the
groups attending, Caritas -Hellas, had the placement of migrant women in domestic
jobs as one of its major tasks. It also gave me an opportunity to have discussions
with Kasapi, the Filipino migrant workers organisation based in Athens about
methodological issues. They agreed to co-operate with the research, and passed to
me names and contacts of other groups I might ask to participate.

The Filipino community is one of the best organised of the national groups in Greece,
despite being largely comprised of domestic workers. This was partly because the first
Filipino arrivals in the early to mid 1980s often had legal status, and there is also a
tradition of Filipino organising throughout Europe, networked by the Europe-wide
Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers. The situation in Greece was further helped by
having two Filipinos with refugee status, who had the security and funding to devote
to themselves to organising the Filipino community. Good access was gained to the groups
with which they networked, principally the Pan-African Association and the Ethiopian
Refugee Association. The former as its name suggests is an umbrella group for women
and men of all African countries, mainly from West Africa, but also including Mauritius
and Seychelles. The Ethiopian Refugee Association (ERA) is a member of the
Pan-African Association, but its membership regard themselves as in rather different
circumstances, defining themselves as political refugees. There are also increasing
numbers of Ethiopians in Greece who are not asylum seekers and who do not belong to
this group.

In Greece the main route to unorganised people was through Caritas. Most of its work is
taken up with placing domestic workers with private households. In 1990 alone it dealt
with 4,017 requests to find work. Between October 1989 and May 1991 the principal
organiser of Caritas kept a detailed monthly breakdown by nationality of numbers of
people looking for jobs. She stopped keeping figures because, she said, she was
concerned about the police raiding the office.

D from Eritrea was a key contact. He attended the consultation organised for domestic
workers, having heard about it through Caritas. He was one of a small community of
Eritreans, mainly from Asmara, numbering an estimated 800. Although himself
undocumented and temporarily without employment, so in a very difficult personal
situation, he spent all of his time in his unpaid work as a pastor with the Eritrean
Evangelical church. This took him to pray with people in psychiatric hospitals, prisons
and on the street and he introduced me to many of the young women that he prayed with.

While I made contact with a large number of people from a wide variety of nationalities
there were two large groups of women who work as domestic workers that were not
contacted in the course of this research: the Polish and the Albanians. Neither of these
groups have organisational links with the networks I had access to and gaining good
access to the Polish and the Albanians would have required more time than was available
within the confines of the project. Both communities have large numbers of members
working as domestics.
Two consultation sessions were held. They were both fixed for Sundays as being the day most domestics were likely to have off. The first was 6th June 1995, and was attended by fourteen members of Kasapi, eight members of the Ethiopian Refugee Association, and five people from Caritas, three Eritreans, one Rumanian. The second session on 13th June was attended by members of the Pan-African Association and others from Caritas and other contacts from Africa and Asia. The total number attending both group interviews were forty four people (seven men and thirty seven women) Mid-morning in the second session, fourteen South Asian men arrived, having heard of the consultation and thinking that it was for all undocumented workers. They were mainly farmworkers and described living and employment conditions that the domestic workers found very shocking. However, I have only included the points they made when relevant to the issue of foreign domestic workers and when this is the case it is indicated, since their contribution might be said to be outside the research remit. D. mentioned above made a particular contribution to the second session by using his talents as an evangelical preacher to involve everybody in the plenary. The attendance of both Ethiopians and Eritreans at group interviews was potentially fraught because of the conflict in their countries of origin: Eritrea was fighting Ethiopia for independence for many years. This conflict was to some extent mirrored in the refugees from each community. However, although they continued to differ in their analysis of what was happening in their home country these differences were very publicly set aside at the first consultation, when leaders of both communities embraced and shook hands.

Migrant groups in Athens were concerned that participation in the group sessions might be limited by workers spending their day off doing additional cleaning jobs, either hourly sessions or overtime with their full-time employer, in order to earn extra money. We therefore decided to offer some payment in lieu of the money they might otherwise have earned, as well as covering travel expenses. This was not a large amount (approximately £5 per person), but it did seem to encourage participation. However, the complexity of administering it on an individual basis meant that on later occasions I gave a fixed sum to all participating organisations to cover travel, food, venue and participation and asked them to administer and receipt it.
Seven domestic workers were interviewed in depth, two from the Philippines, one from India, one from Mauritius, two from Ethiopia and one from Eritrea. The workers from India and Eritrea were introduced to me by church groups and were not members of organisations. I also had the opportunity for several long, informal discussions with domestic workers thanks to the warmth and hospitality of all groups. I attended two parties given by Filipinos and was taken out to restaurants run by Ethiopians and Eritreans.

Community organisers from Kasapi were interviewed as well as the pastor from the Eritrean Evangelical Church, an activist in the Pan African Association, and other committee members of the Ethiopian Refugee Association. The worker at Caritas allowed me to examine their employment books and introduced me to an employer who was a personal friend. She also introduced me to an Albanian domestic worker and asked me to accompany her to an interview with a potential employer. I did so, and doubtless it was extremely interesting, but since I speak no Greek it was rather wasted on me! The Missionaries of Charity have a house in Athens working with migrants, and Sister Grace introduced me to one of the domestic workers interviewed as well as offering her insights into the conditions of Sri Lankan women in Athens in particular.

Other people interviewed were Maria Zervou, a government statistician and member of the then newly established Research Centre for Equality Issues, Ioanna Kourtuvic, a lawyer who deals with many migrant workers, and three employers.

2. Paris (14th - 28th January 1996)

A preliminary visit to Paris revealed that it would not be possible to duplicate methods used in Athens. Immigration and citizenship legislation in Greece are such that the majority of workers contacted were undocumented, and migrants' associations are composed principally of undocumented workers. Matters of citizenship and documentation are held in common interest and there is some co-operation between groups on this. In Paris on the other hand membership of the associations that I had access to seemed to be predominantly documented, and access to undocumented workers other than Filipinos was likely to be difficult.
The particular weakness that I had was lack of access to Maghrebian groups, and this was compounded by a police crackdown on Algerians that coincided with my visits. There was a large armed police presence in public places, and North Africans were the subject of identity and documentation checks. Many were only leaving their homes when absolutely necessary. I interviewed two predominantly Maghrebian groups, the Femmes de Framoisins and Nanas Beurs, both, while agreeing that domestic work was a major area of employment for their membership, did not regard organising around this issue as a priority and were therefore not prepared to encourage attendance at group interviews. I found the same to be true when I met with a personal contact, an Algerian woman who worked as a domestic worker.

I therefore decided to limit the research to the Filipino community and to one area of Paris, the 17th arrondissement, an area that combines a large proportion of wealthy French residents with a substantial migrant and immigrant population. It is also an area where mechanisms for linking the latter with employment in private households are well developed, and during the preliminary visit some of these agencies had indicated that they were prepared to assist with the research.

The seventeenth arrondissement

Cefia is a voluntary association that runs French classes for migrants and immigrants living in the 17th arrondissement. It is particularly popular with women since it has a crèche. Cefia gave access to a French class and permitted short interviews with some of the participants: two Moroccan, one Senegalese, one Gambian and one Algerian women. Although picked at random, all of these women had experience of working as domestic workers in private households. All except one were undeclared. Cefia will sometimes recommend people to the AGF and the Emploi Daubigny (see below) so providing a source from which the latter associations can draw workers.

The nation-wide Associations General de Familles (AGF) belongs to the national federation “Familles de France” which lobbies on matters such as taxation and social security, providing help and advice to families, and offering various services including domestic work and “travailleuses familiales, aides ménagères”. The AGF
of the 17th arrondissement offers services ranging from legal advice and marriage guidance counselling to bookbinding and flower arranging courses. They are in a wealthy district of Paris and have no difficulties with funding, making their money principally by renting out tennis courts to their members. The AGF facilitated interviews with six employers, four telephone and two face to face and also gave me access to their records of employment for domestic workers. Unfortunately these were only available for the current year, since they are destroyed annually because they illegally note whether or not an employer is willing to employ a black worker (see Chapter Eight).

The Emploi Daubigny (ED) is based in the premises of the Parish of Saint Francoise Salle in the 17th arrondissement. It belongs to Secours Catholique a national Catholic organisation. Its objective is to find work for unemployed people, and employment is almost all household work. The Emploi Daubigny also gave me access to their records, though not to their register of employers.

*Paris-wide*

The Filipino community in Paris is organised around the Filipino chaplaincy, based in the Exalmans area of Paris. There are no other facilities, and the only space the group have to meet is outside the church and the small flat used by the Filipino priest. Mass is clearly an important social event, attracting between five and six hundred people, about 90 per cent of them women. Although the chaplaincy does do some social work, it focuses more on the congregation’s spiritual needs. However, sister Victoria, who works at the chaplaincy had set up an organisation for Filipino women concerning itself with all issues of female migrant workers and with a strong educational focus. It is affiliated to the European wide Babaylan Filipino women’s network. Sister Victoria helped to organise a group interview, held in the evening after Mass which was attended by nine women. It also arranged for four diaries of workers to be completed. The church is shared between the Filipino and the Polish communities. Although the Polish, like the Filipinos, work mainly in domestic work, there is animosity between the groups associated with the church, so I was unable to use my contacts with the Filipinos to meet any Polish migrants.
A broader context was given by the Federation Nationale des Groupements d'Employeurs de Personnel Employé de Maison (FEPEM). This organisation was founded as a national level organisation in 1948 by groups that had been working at a regional/provincial level for over ten years. It has formed several other related associations and groups and is an important lobby group representing the interests of private employers to the French government. The FEPEM worker interviewed was from the l'Ile de France branch, rather than the national office.

I also interviewed workers from two trades unions organising domestic workers. The CFDT has been working with domestic workers since the beginning of the century. Although not focusing on migrant women, they do have good relations with the Filipino chaplaincy and had assisted in legalising some workers. The UGT has an office for concierges and domestic workers in private households, and there were several domestic workers queuing outside the office for advice, but the official said that although workers in private households often came to her for help, they rarely joined the union.


Domestic workers in Spain tend to come from four nationalities: Filipinos, Peruvians, Moroccans and Dominicans. In Barcelona I was fortunate in having the support of the Centro Filipino, an umbrella group whose offices serve as a base for different Filipino organisations, including Amistad, an organisation for Filipino women in Barcelona. Thanks to this contact, and to the fact that in general migrants in Barcelona are well organised, I was able to arrange group interviews without a preliminary visit to the city. This was useful, as by this stage in the project funding was becoming a serious problem.

The central meeting point of the Filipino community in Barcelona is the church of San Justo. Situated in the centre of the old city its congregation was minimal until it was offered to the Filipino community to celebrate Mass. Sunday Mass is now regularly standing room only. It is an important focus for the community, a means of
people sharing information and coming together. The priest is a Filipino, and there are also two Filipina nuns working with the congregation. These are key workers in the Filipino Centre, a Filipino umbrella group which has a meeting room, two small offices and a kitchen in the old quarter of Barcelona, where migrants are concentrated. Thus the Centro Filipino, and through them the smaller Filipino organisations, have access to rooms, some personnel resources and also to the wider community through its religious connections. Clearly these are important assets in organising the community.

Contact with the Moroccan community was arranged through Bayt Al-Taqafa, an organisation established in 1974 to support Arabic Muslims immigrants to Cataluna. They have some 3,000 members, approximately 70 per cent of them Moroccans. Other nationals include Pakistanis, Algerians and Iraqis. Their activities include educational and cultural work (Castilian/Catalan literacy; Arabic language and culture for children), legal services and a meeting place. They have a worker dedicated to women’s organising. Bayt Al-Taqafa organised a separate group interview with Moroccan women since many could not attend a Sunday consultation session because of family commitments. This was attended by nine women.

Dominican women in Barcelona were generally considered to be an unorganised group. However groups of up to a dozen women share flats for their days off and use this as a base for mutual support including childcare and employment networks. While these many not be formally constituted organisations they should not be underestimated as a means of self-empowerment. Ten Dominican women were visited in their flat and discussed their living and working conditions.

Asomipex was the association for Peruvian women in Barcelona. Many of its membership were undocumented. They were based in a women’s centre in Barcelona, but had few resources other than access to a room and telephone.

Twenty seven women attended the group interview, sixteen Filipinas, five Peruvians, three women from the Dominican Republic, one Brazilian, and two who did not state their country of origin.
Qualified informants from the above mentioned migrants' associations were interviewed, as was Caritas Barcelona. Caritas Barcelona deals with many employment requests for domestic workers, and since they are an important source of support for undocumented and unorganised workers their information was extremely useful. However, unfortunately there was not the time available to work with them at encouraging participation in group discussions by their clients. I also interviewed the representative for migrants and youth at the ayuntamiento (town hall) and Maria Elena Bedoya, a lawyer based in Barcelona who specialises in immigration cases. SOS Racismo gave access to their documentation centre. Colectivo Ioe, a sociological research centre in Madrid, also gave access to their resources and background information on domestic work in Spain. In-depth interviews were conducted with twelve migrant domestic workers: seven Filipinas, one Moroccan, one Dominican and three Peruvians.

Lack of time and contacts meant that no employers could be interviewed. The small ads columns of two newspapers Primerama, the Catalan edition of the national daily of 15.2.1996 and Los Clasificados, an advertising publication for the week 14-20 Feb 1996 yielded 105 requests for employment as domestic workers. Twelve employment agencies were contacted through telephone numbers given in small ads. Of these three refused to be interviewed. There were nine employment placement agencies interviewed, six on the telephone and three face to face. Their numbers were obtained from advertisements in local newspapers. I did not interview them since from the original telephone calls it seemed that several of them were concerned that I would be on the domestic workers' "side", rather suggesting that they perceived their interests as different from those of the workers. They were interviewed by a man since it was thought that they would find this less intimidating. I was helped in this and many other aspects of the work in Barcelona by my brother, who lives in Spain and his Spanish friend who translated, cooked and typed for me.


Only one visit to Bologna was possible. At the time I had hoped that this was a preliminary visit to make initial contacts for a second longer visit. Unfortunately
funding problems were not solved and this second trip was not possible. I visited several places around Bologna to meet with different groups to invite them to group interviews. I was greatly helped by personal contacts made through involvement in anti-deportation campaigns in the UK, and these were my primary networks in Italy. They put me in touch with a Filipino trade unionist working with the CGIL organising domestic workers in Parma. She introduced me to seven workers with whom I had some discussions. I also met workers in Modena through Donne n’el Mundi, an organisation of migrant women of many nationalities. In Ferrara I met a pastor who worked with Filipina domestics, who introduced me to two workers. I also met twelve workers in Bologna through a Protestant service organised in one of the churches there.

5. Berlin (2nd - 9th September 1996)

My visit to Berlin was made possible with funds from Stichting Tegen Vrouwenhandel (STV) a group working on issues around trafficked women. They had undertaken a research into trafficked women in Europe, and had wanted to include information on domestic workers, but they had no contacts with the relevant organisations. They needed research on the situation in Germany and so offered to fund one visit to Berlin and passed on their contacts. There were no resources available for group interviews.

On arrival contact was made with the Antirassistische Initiative e.V (Anti-Racist Initiative), a non-profit organisation working in support of refugees and immigrants. They have a documentation centre and run a telephone line for people who have experienced racist violence and discrimination. They did not have any specific information to offer, but provided contacts in organisations that would come into contact with domestic workers. Background information on migration patterns to Germany, statistics etc was largely obtained from the library and documentation centre of the Berliner Institut Fur Vergleichende Sozialforschung.

For information on Thai and Filipina women in Berlin Suteera Nittayananta and Sigrun Katins of the Ban Ying Coordination Centre were consulted. “Ban Ying”
comes from Thai for "House of Women", and the Centre is largely concerned with new manifestations of transnational trafficking in women. It works at policy level, carrying out research and discussion with Berlin’s Ministry of Labour and Women’s Affairs, and it also does campaigning, lobbying and educational activities. As well as publicity and research it also offers counselling and support to trafficked women and runs information evenings on legal and social matters, and courses for migrant women.

The Polnischer Socialrat was particularly helpful. This organisation was founded in 1982 to unite and represent the interests of Polish people in Berlin. It does social, cultural and advice work, and also acts as a referral agency. As the most organised of the groups from Eastern Europe it also has some dealings with other Eastern Europeans, people from Rumania, the former Soviet Union, Hungary and the Czech Republic. It is currently considering opening a separate project for Eastern Europeans, a group they consider to be particularly marginalised.

Barbara John, director of the Auslanderbeauftragte des Senats von Berlin gave information about the situation of different national groups in Berlin. This office has as its concerns the situation of Auslander (foreigners) in Berlin and makes policy and administrative recommendations to the Senate as well as undertaking publicity work directed both at educating German citizens and at informing Auslander of their rights, making public cultural events etc. Mrs John believed that domestic work is an increasingly important area of employment for Auslander, particularly those without papers, but said that little is known about this sector.

Babaylan, the Philippine Women’s Network in Europe, was holding a congress in Koln and I was invited to attend. I met Filipinas working in several European countries, but it was notable that those in Germany, unlike France, Spain and Italy, were not employed as private domestic workers.

Forschungs und Dokumentationszentrum Chile-Latinamerika (FDCL) was also visited. The FDCL is a documentation and research centre that was founded in 1974
by Chilean refugees. It has now broadened its remit to work with all Latin Americans. As well as information and documentation work it offers counselling, advice and other support for people from Latin America.

As well as talking with organisations individual contacts also gave useful information:

**RS** a Pakistani woman living in Berlin spoke about the problems of being an Asian woman and living in Berlin.

**YC** a young woman, born in Germany of Turkish parents. She had returned to Turkey for some years, and now is undocumented in Berlin. She had worked as a domestic worker in private houses.

**TZ** an Iranian woman, now with papers, who had worked for some years as an undocumented domestic worker.

Advertisements for and from domestic workers appear in many Berlin newspapers, particularly the local papers. On the 4th September 1996 the Berliner Morgenpost, Berliner Kurier, Zweite Hand and TIP were collected for these advertisements.

**TWO FURTHER THOUGHTS ON METHODOLOGY**

1. If one of the purposes of this research project is to make domestic work and our dependence on it more visible, then the methodology must include how I organised my domestic work and care of my three children during the course of the project. At the beginning of the research I had two children aged two and three, the third child was born in 1997, the day after I completed the report for the European Union funders.

Childcare has presented serious problems. My male partner works and earned significantly more than me (even for those periods when the project was funded). I had principal responsibility for childcare. At first my children attended a private nursery, but we withdrew them when it became clear that, profiting from the desperate need for affordable childcare, they were operating illegally, physically abusing some of the children and evading local authority checks. There are no other
nurseries in our area, and a serious shortage of registered childminders meant that there was no one available at short notice to take on two children. I therefore went into a nanny share with some neighbours. Although this ostensibly worked well I found the conflict between being an employer and my research subject nearly impossible to negotiate. The more I researched and thought about the subject, the more problematic I found employing a worker in the home - but I could scarcely sack the worker to save my conscience! I was relieved therefore when the nanny found a single full time employer, my oldest child moved into full time schooling, the second was part time at the state nursery, and the flexibility of writing up meant that I could combine work and childcare. I stopped my research work completely for three months when I had the third child. Since taking it up again I have relied on my mother for two and a half days a week childcare, and share one day with another mother. As for domestic chores, I manage the house and do a large part of the daily chores, but my partner works hard at them, I tolerate more mess than I am happy with, and we all work, including the two children, for one morning of the weekend at tidying and cleaning the house.

2. Although impossible to specify, I am convinced that much of my work on paid domestic work is informed by my personal experience, both unpaid work at home, and when I worked as a live-in domestic worker for one year in exchange for my accommodation. As a middle-class citizen I would not at all equate my experiences with those of the workers I have met in the course of my work. However it has enabled a certain shared perspective, on the irritating hypocrisy of employers - mine was a television presenter and editor of a well-known socialist weekly, and there was something very galling about cleaning up the vomit of Labour party MPs after their social evening! In particular it gave me an understanding of the emotional demands required of live-in workers, the cups of tea and descriptions of marital problems.

I also have experience as an employer. I would in my dealings with the person who worked for me from time to time realise that I was “turning into an employer!”, exhibiting the kinds of attitudes that I found so objectionable in other employers. Many of my friends employ workers (usually white working class citizens) to clean their homes or look after their children, and talking to them and my own personal
experience has convinced me that, when employing somebody in the home, it is impossible not be drawn into personal relations of status. It is a relationship that it is impossible to negotiate with justice.

This project has continued to evolve. Following on from the group interviews and using the contacts established in the course of the research, Kalayaan with a Brussels based collaborator, Solidar organised a seminar in 1996 on overseas domestic workers in the European Union. I have drawn on some of the testimonies given by domestic workers in that seminar for this research. It was a real excitement and privilege to be able to facilitate the coming together of research participants from different countries. These developments have helped me keep in touch with some of the women and organisations I worked with during the course of the research, and have helped me to continue developing my understanding of paid domestic work.

The original intention of this research project was to provide empirical data to support the organising work of domestic workers in the UK and throughout the European Union. With the help of academic colleagues it has become also an attempt to refine and develop theory on the basis of this empirical data. In the summer of 1998 the British government will announce the regularisation of undocumented domestic workers in the UK. The thousands of domestic workers who are members of Kalayaan will have permission to work. I hope that this thesis will help the organisation and others like it in their planning of how to continue their struggles for the rights of all paid domestic workers.
CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW: DEFINING DOMESTIC WORK

There are two distinct literatures around domestic work. The first focuses on women's unpaid work in the home, and the second on paid domestic labour. Following Romero (1992) I intend to draw on both to come to an understanding of what, if anything, distinguishes paid from unpaid household labour, in order to explore in later chapters what is being bought by employers of migrant domestic workers and the racialisation of domestic work in Europe. I hope to begin to address this serious gap in the European literature on domestic workers as well as contribute to the global perspective on domestic workers while recognising, along with Colen and Sanjek (1990b) the specificities of the complexity of interactions of "race", class, gender, and citizenship status.

There is a large literature on women's unpaid work which received attention from the turn of the century (Perkins Gilman 1903; see Glazer Malbin 1976). However, it was in the 1970s that domestic labour became a key feminist issue and the relationship of women's unpaid work to production and to capitalism was the subject of much debate in particular, "wages for housework" and women as an economic class (Benston 1971; Berk SF 1980; Gardiner 1975 and 1976; Gardiner, Himmelweit, and Mackintosh, 1975; Mariarosa Dalla Costa 1972; Gerstein 1973; Vogel 1973; Harrison 1973; Seccombe 1974; Coulson, Magas and Wainwright 1975; Himmelwiet and Mohun 1977; P Smith 1978; Fee 1976). This debate continues (Delphy and Leonard 1992) and the importance of domestic work to the economy is now receiving some attention from European governments (Murgatroyd and Neuberger 1997; Dares 1995).

The literature on paid domestic work is voluminous, but fragmented and multi-disciplinary. Historians, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, to name but a few disciplines, have all covered some aspects of domestic work. There are also primary sources, descriptions by domestic workers themselves (Brooks 1986; Buechler and
Buechler 1985; Grosvenor 1972; Harrison, Rosina 1975; Keckley 1868; Brown 1984; Workman 1985 Also 1933 domestic workers' correspondence with the Roosevelts and with the Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins, referred to in Palmer 1992.). These autobiographical accounts are both historical and contemporary. One of the most useful historical autobiographical sources are the diaries of Hannah Cullwick (1833-1909) (ed. Stanley 1984) who began working as a lower servant when she was eight years old and worked as a maid of all work for much of her life. She recorded her daily activities for Arthur Munby, a middle class man with whom she had a relationship for many years and whom she married in 1873. These diaries are one of the few autobiographical records of working class women of that time. The fact that they were written not for herself but for Munby a man who was undoubtedly titillated by degradation and servitude arguably makes them a less reliable source for descriptions of the daily life of a Victorian domestic worker, but they are extremely revelatory of the expression of social and in particular gender and class relations through the institution of domestic service.

Domestic workers autobiographical and biographical accounts, or at least those that are easiest to locate, are notably from Europe and the US. Indeed, historical explorations of domestic work in general have focused on the US and western Europe (Fairchilds 1984; Katzman 1978; Davidoff 1974 and 1983; Maza 1983 to name but a few), though there has also been some historical work on Latin America (Turkovic 1981), Asia (Ooi Keat Gin 1992) and Africa (see Colen and Sanjek's collection 1990). The USA's historical work in particular is often concerned with issues of race, ethnicity and immigration (Dudden 1983; Sutherland 1981; Katzman 1978). Palmer's Domesticity and Dirt (1989), for example, takes the relationship between employers and domestic workers between 1920-1945 to examine women's complicity in maintaining the gendered construction of housework and of women's different experiences of domestic work, and the meanings associated with housework depending on their "race". Glenn (1986; 1992) challenges what she calls the "additive model of race and gender oppression" through her examination of the racial divisions of reproductive labour and the light it throws on both the hierarchy and interdependence of women. She demonstrates a continuum between domestic service
in private households in late 19th century USA and contemporary domestic work in public settings - in both cases “black women do heavy, dirty, ‘back-room’ chores” (Glenn 1992: 20). The historical interest in these questions has continued to inform analyses of domestic labour, both in the US (Dill 1988; Colen 1984; Palmer 1987; Romero 1992; Rollins 1985; Glenn 1992) and Canada (Bakan and Stasiulis 1995; Cohen 1987), but constitutes a serious gap in the European literature.

The relationship between migration and domestic work has been explored in the American literature both US and Canada (Cohen 1989; Katzman 1978; Arak-Koc 1989; Bakan and Stasiulis 1995; Macklin 1992; Ruiz 1987; Romero 1992) and it has also received some attention in Asian literature, which has tended to focus on the situation of domestic workers as female migrants - perhaps unsurprisingly since the area is such an important source for migrant domestic workers both within Asia and to Europe and North America (Lycklama et al 1994; Lim and Oishi 1996; ILO Equality and Human Rights Co-ordination Branch 1995; Gulati 1993; see also Anderson 1997(a)). The role of paid domestic work in African countries seems to be the most meagre - though perhaps it is rather the most difficult to locate (the three articles in Colen and Sanjek 1990 have useful bibliographies). The exception has been in South Africa, where the interlacing of racism, sexism and pass laws under Apartheid has been explored most thoroughly by Cock, though other studies include Preston-Whyte, (1973), Whisson and Weil (1971) and Gaitskill et al (1984).

Cock’s (1989) well known study of South African domestic workers demonstrates the need for more international exchange on the subject, for while it draws many comparisons between the situation of domestic workers under Apartheid and Victorian domestic workers in the UK, it is not at all informed by the living and working conditions of contemporary migrant domestic workers, with which, because of their racialised experiences and the role of immigration laws and lack of citizenship rights, it is in fact far more comparable. Immigration policies in for example Canada, Greece, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, the Gulf States and the UK (Bakan and Stasiulis 1995; Anderson 1997(a)) reinforced dependence of migrant domestic workers on their employer through employment and settlement restrictions, with
deportation as the final control, and this is very similar to the system under which domestic workers in Apartheid South Africa worked, subject to pass laws and one year renewable contracts.

With some notable exceptions (Rollins, Glenn, Palmer, Davidoff), the literature on women’s unpaid work in the home, and on paid domestic labour are largely uninformed by each other. By drawing on both and applying them to the experiences of migrant domestic workers in the Europe of the 1990s I hope to give some insight into why paid domestic labour seems to be on the increase in Europe and why it is that such a large proportion of the workers belong to racialised groups.

WHAT IS DOMESTIC WORK?

Neither of these sets of literature really addresses the question of what paid domestic work is. What is being paid for? Why employ a domestic worker? There has been some work done in terms of examining the unpaid work of the housewife though attempts to describe what domestic work actually is have been very problematic. In its essence it is very difficult to describe what domestic work is in terms of tasks performed. As Glazer-Malbin pointed out, “shopping” for example, can include drawing up the list, purchasing, putting things away, throwing out old food etc. (Glazer-Malbin 1976). Shopping can also involve childminding (taking the baby along with you, dropping the children off at school on the way), taking the dog for a walk etc., for it is characteristic of domestic work that it often involves performing several tasks simultaneously - caring for a child, washing up, cooking lunch may all be done at the same time. Rather than a series of tasks then domestic work is better perceived as a series of processes, of tasks inextricably linked, often operating at the same time (Schwartz 1983). But domestic work is more than the sum of these processes, for it is not just physical work (which may in itself be highly skilled) - cooking lunch, but may also involve mental and emotional work: what do I cook that is nutritious, enjoyable,

---

1 I am conscious of the limitations of this sexist and ethnocentric term. For example, many women may do all the work of the household, with another older woman managing her even though the younger woman is married to a man in the house. However much of the literature on women’s unpaid domestic work is cast within this framework, and it is the dominant European paradigm.
ready in ten minutes and uses the ingredients in the cupboard? It is worth emphasising that domestic work is highly skilled both in terms of time management and what is actually done - a friend of mine recently commented that she can always tell when a man has hung out the washing! (Galvez and Todaro 1984 have explored the notion of domestic work as craft-like). It is often difficult therefore for men, untrained as they usually are, to be able to take over. Which is not to say that men cannot be trained, or that they do not use a deliberate hopelessness about the house to escape household work, but if we are to allow that domestic work is skilled work, then the handing over of it is not simply a question of men doing their fair share, they must be taught how to do it - and women teaching men how to do something as lowly and “un-skilled” as housework is often difficult to negotiate. When men do unpaid household work, they, like children “help” by task (Hartmann 1981; ONS Omnibus Survey 1995), it is women who manage the process - again making it difficult for men to insert themselves into the domestic labour of the household. The management of processes is crucial to ensure that they all run smoothly. The housewife has a dual role, as manager and as labourer.

The unproductive/productive/reproductive debate
Many of the 1970s debates around the relationship between domestic work and capitalism were concerned with housework’s productivity. Clearly the notion that domestic work is unproductive downgrades its social and economic contribution and excuses its invisibility (Gardiner 1975; Seccombe 1974; Gaitskell et al 1984). In order to centralise domestic labour some feminists have argued that it produces a commodity which is absolutely central to capitalism: labour power itself (Dalla Costa 1972). Marx signalled this critical relation between unpaid work in the home and capitalist production in his theory of surplus value.

“What, then, is the cost of production of labour power?
It is the cost required of maintaining the worker as a worker and of developing him into a worker”

(Marx Wage Labour and Capital, 1847 R. Tucker (ed.) 1978: 206)

Engels interpreted this:
"According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a twofold character. On the one side, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species."

(Engels 1884: 4)

The notion of "production of human beings themselves" is broader than simply the production of labour power, and is a more accurate description of household work. After all, not all household members can exchange labour power: children may grow up to be unemployed, the elderly are no longer working. While some domestic work may be necessary to survive, much of that basic survival work is in Europe now done outside of the home - clothing manufacture, food growth. The confinement of tasks to those merely necessary to survive would enable most productive workers to service themselves. Reproductive work is not confined to the maintenance of physical bodies; people are social, cultural and ideological beings not just units of labour. Clothes washing is not necessary to survive, but most human beings find wearing unwashed clothes after a long time unpleasant - though precisely how often one changes one's clothes is very much culturally determined. How a house is ordered, what food is cooked, how children are brought up, the elderly cared for, is a personal expression of the household, and particularly of the (female) household manager. Reproductive work, mental, physical and emotional labour creates not simply labour units, but people (Brenner and Laslett 1989; Glenn 1992; Ehrenreich and English 1979; Rubin 1975; O'Brien 1983; Chabaud and Fouceyrollas 1984). Domestic work is "reproductive work", necessary for social reproduction, defined by Brenner and Laslett as including:

"how food, clothing, and shelter are made available for immediate consumption, the ways in which the care and socialisation of children are provided, the care of the infirm and elderly, and the social organisation of sexuality. Social reproduction can thus be seen to include various kinds of work - mental, manual, and emotional - aimed at providing the historically and
socially, as well as biologically, defined care necessary to maintain existing life and to reproduce the next generation”.

(Brenner and Laslett 1989:382-383)

It is important to emphasise that social reproduction is not confined to the family. It refers also to the perpetuation of modes of production and social reproduction with their associated class, “race”, gender, generational etc. relations. Education and the media for example are clearly socially reproductive institutions. Production and social reproduction in this broad sense are bound up with one another (Colen and Sanjek 1990a; Kelly J. 1979; Lamphere 1987; Rapp 1978) It is not just that reproduction is a necessary prerequisite to production, but that much of what is produced has labour added and is used/consumed in the home. As Delphy and Leonard (1992) point out, in the First World at least, the objective of production is no longer just survival, it is consumption.

Domestic work therefore may be seen as having two interrelated functions: it is necessary work in that without domestic work humanity would not continue. We need to accommodate the raising of children, the distribution and preparation of food, basic cleanliness and hygiene, in order to survive individually and as a species - which is not to say that domestic work cannot be collectively organised. But domestic work is also concerned with the reproduction of life-style, and crucially, of status - nobody has to have stripped pine floorboards, hand-wash only silk shirts, dust-gathering ornaments, they all create domestic work, but they affirm the status of the household, its class, its access to resources of finance and personnel, and the adequacy of its “manager” almost invariably a woman. These two functions cannot be disentangled. To take the example of clothes washing, even at the most basic level one could argue that e.g. washing clothes is not really necessary for survival, but that most people across cultures would agree that stinking clothes can constitute an offence to human dignity, but then exactly how often they are washed, whether they are ironed etc. can quickly become issues of status.

Domestic work as social reproduction is profoundly rooted in community. Through the doing of domestic work we literally reproduce our communities and our place.
within them. In the doing of domestic work, particularly matters involving care of children and the elderly, we may forge our communities, the organisation of our homes and their accoutrements demonstrates our position within wider social relations. As reproductive work is concerned with the social and cultural reproduction of human beings, the actual doing of the work, who does it, when and where is a crucial part of its meaning (Romero 1992). More than a reflection, it is an expression and reproduction of social relations, and in particular of relations between genders.

WHAT IS PAID DOMESTIC WORK?
The International Labour Organisation’s (ILO) job description for a ‘domestic helper/cleaner’ is as follows:

**Domestic Helpers and Cleaners**

Domestic helpers and cleaners sweep, vacuum clean, wash and polish, take care of household linen, purchase household supplies, prepare food, serve meals and perform various other domestic duties.

Tasks include -

(a) sweeping, vacuum-cleaning, polishing and washing floors and furniture, or washing windows and other fixtures;
(b) washing, ironing and mending linen and other textiles;
(c) washing dishes;
(d) preparing, cooking and serving meals and refreshments;
(e) purchasing food and various other performing related tasks;
(f) performing related tasks;
(g) supervising other workers."


But this completely fails to describe the jobs done by migrant domestic workers in Europe. When I asked them what they did, workers frequently responded “everything”: 
"We have to do everything, do the garden, clean the garage, clean the car, take the goats out for work, the children, there is nothing we are not told to do."

(Sri Lankan in Athens)

Their work covered all household chores, and more, including cleaning their employers' workplaces, cleaning the houses of friends and relatives of their employers, chopping firewood, fetching water and tasks too many to list (see Chapters Five and Six). But the crucial omission as far as migrant domestic workers in Europe is concerned is caring work. Childcare and care of the elderly are often the principal responsibilities of such workers (see Chapter Seven). The ILO definition should alert us to the fact that "domestic work" when paid is commonly not held to include such caring work, which is more likely to be professionalised as nannies and personal nursing assistants (see Chapter Nine). But it in fact is an important component of the jobs of migrant domestic workers in Europe and elsewhere (see e.g. Bakan and Stasiulis 1995; Cock 1989; Colen 1985; Anderson 1997(a)). Many women of all classes for instance, are faced with the problem of how to combine paid employment with caring for young children when state-provided services are minimal. True, one reason they may want to do so is because domestic work is low status and unpaid, but women continue to wage a legitimate struggle to escape the confines of the private. The problem is that the imagined domains of the public and private are kept apart and the huge tasks of social reproduction are invisible, and arrangements often privatised (see Chapter Seven). The employment of a domestic worker is presented as a strategy for enabling middle class women to enter "productive employment" (Hertz 1986). In Europe many employers needed to employ a woman for childcare while they were working, picking up children after school, or for an elderly relative. Caught between a declining Welfare State, families that are increasingly nuclear with kinship networks unavailable for support, and a growth in middle class female employment outside the home, with a pool of cheap, flexible labour available, it is scarcely surprising that the employment of a migrant domestic worker is regarded as a suitable strategy for families who need full-time carers. In terms of jobs done, paid domestic workers may do much the same kind of work as their female employers would do if they did not have a worker to do it.
"with my employer the only thing I cannot do is go to bed with her husband. If only I can go to bed with her husband maybe she will ask me to because I am doing everything. She is sleeping in the morning, and she wakes up at one o’clock. She doesn’t work since I was there I do everything. She doesn’t go out. She is sitting, drinking, smoking, telephone...if only I can wash her peepee maybe she will ask me for her”.

(Filipina in Paris)

Employers often refer to domestic workers as their substitute, both in the European research and other studies:

"the domestic worker is a double, the other self one leaves at home doing those things that traditionally you, as a woman, should be doing... I felt it in my own flesh, this other self who freed me so I could perform my other roles”.

("Leila” quoted in Pereira de Melo 1984)

However, workers do not simply substitute for the work of their female employers. In terms of work performed they often do tasks that it is unlikely that any woman with a choice would be prepared to do. Take Irene’s employers for example:

"They have a very big house, and everywhere, white carpet. They have three dogs. I hate those dogs, with long, long hair. Even one hair will show on the white carpet...They have another working for them. She is a Filipina and she comes in twice a week to clean the big big mirrors"

(Indian woman in Athens)

Would her employers have both white carpet and dogs if they (or, most likely, the female employer) had to clean the house themselves? One suspects that only if the husband were particularly brutal or oppressive would this be the case. This kind of pointless work is typical of the demands made of migrant domestic workers:

“Every day I am cleaning for my madam, one riding shoes, two walking shoes, house shoes, that is every day, just for one person... plus the children, that is one rubber and one shoes for everyday school, that is another two...And that is other shoes for the children. Fourteen shoes every day. My time is already finished, I’m cleaning the shoes. I said, ‘Why don’t you buy like this, the machine?’ but they said it’s very expensive... You will be wondering why she has so many bathrobes, one
silk, and two cotton. I say, 'Why madam has so many bathrobe?' Every day you have to hang up. Every day you have to press the back because it is crumpled.'
(Filipina in Paris)

The servicing of European life-styles that would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible to sustain form an important component of migrant domestic work, and this was reflected in workers’ sense that they were being required to do work that employers themselves would never consider doing.

"It’s not fair, you wouldn’t tell your fellow human to do something you would not be happy to do. But they don’t respect"
(Ghanaian woman in Athens)

This clearly brings us back to issues of status, domestic work as an expression and reproduction of social relations. Placed within this context, paid domestic work poses a serious challenge to some of the analyses of women’s unpaid work which has analysed domestic work as a common burden shared between women, and tended to treat the challenge posed by paid domestic labour to such an analysis as an irrelevance:

“When wives have servants, even part-time cleaners a few days a week, they may appear to do less domestic work, and they are certainly often reviled as lazy parasites when they rely on paid help with childcare and housework even if they are in full-time employment. But women are actually only given servants or au pairs when their workload simply cannot be carried by one person…or when their husbands want their time to be shifted elsewhere.”
(Delphy and Leonard 1992: 235-236)

Waged domestic labour constitutes a significant challenge to such arguments, indicating that women have different experiences of housework, mediated by class, age “race” etc. (Palmer 1989). Indeed, as was apparent in Europe, domestic labour may also be undertaken by men, effectively de-gendered by “race” and citizenship (Hansen 1990; Pereira de Melo 1984). The employment of a domestic worker is not only a coping strategy, and it often not necessarily to free up a worker from the demands of caring and housework to take on productive employment. Cock’s South African study (1989) for example, found that just over one quarter of the married female employers
were employed outside the home, and for the majority the employment of a domestic worker facilitated leisure activities and a high status life-style. Unlike Cock’s study, the majority of workers interviewed in the EU were working for dual income families, but this was not always the case. Moreover, while one could argue that childcarers for example, “free” women for the labour market, could one really say that of cleaners working for a few hours a week? Time-consuming as cleaning a house may be there are not many women forced to make a decision between for example employment outside the home, and housework, and whether their employers were working or not domestic workers often worked at sustaining an otherwise unsustainable life-style.

There are clear parallels between the servicing of life-styles by migrant domestic workers in Europe, and the work of domestic servants in Victorian times. Davidoff’s work on the role of domestic workers in reproducing gender identities in Victorian households (1974) throws new light on the role of migrant domestic workers in European households. She explores how 19th century divisions and polarities - male/female, middle-class/working-class, urban/rural etc. were played out in the household. At a time when reproductive work multiplied, not just because of demands made of wives to be good companions and mothers but also because of the increased size of houses and objects, middle class women could, through managing the labour of domestic workers be “domestic” without being “dirty”. The employment of domestic workers meant women could negotiate the contradiction between domesticity, requiring physical labour and dirtiness, and the cleanliness and spiritual virtue of “feminine virtue”. The idealisation of white middle-class women as the pure, pious, moral and virtuous centre of the household, required a splitting of women and their functions into two mutually dependent, but antagonistic stereotypes: pure/dirty, emotional/physical, madonna/magdalen, each drawing their identity from their opposite, and these stereotypes were expressed and reproduced in the employer/domestic worker relationship. Servants met manual demands, “freeing” wives to meet emotional demands of husbands and children. Once established this only works to maintain difference, as workers proved their inferiority by their physicality and dirt, and female employers proved their superiority, by their femininity, daintiness and managerial skills (Palmer 1989). Male employers proved their superiority by never
having to consider domestic drudgery and enjoying the home as a refuge, a well-deserved rest from the stresses and strains of productive work.

This division of labour continued beyond Victorian times (Castro 1984; Palmer 1989). Gregson and Lowe’s finding in English households in the 1990s that the employment of a cleaner was often justified by the parents’ wishes for “quality time” with each other and their children to assist in their social, emotional and educational development implies a similar duality - non-gendered for the employers, but not for the cleaner, inevitably female. The issue is often one of gender relations: unwilling or unable to argue with a male partner and children over sharing domestic chores, and unable to manage the house to everybody’s satisfaction, the household employs a domestic worker. So gender and generational conflict over domestic work is averted (or often transferred to relations between female employer and female worker). There is another option of course which is to lower standards, to tolerate untidy rooms and dusty shelves, but there is pressure to maintain acceptable standards both from relatives, friends and others who visit the household, from standards internalised by the woman herself, and crucially, from the husband.

“she doesn’t do ironing, because she’s particularly slow, I’m particularly quick and my husband is very fussy about his ironing, he likes his shirts ironed just so... If I wasn’t working at home I’d have to ask her to tidy up because my husband couldn’t bring back his client if there was mess everywhere, but because I’m around I can tidy up.”

(Employer in Paris)

It is women who bear the brunt of the public/private distinction, as housewives, confined to the “private” and unrecognised workplace, as workers who must juggle the “double day” working around childcare and domestic duties. The employment of a paid domestic worker enables the negotiation of contradictions, not just the public/private divide, but gendered identities and the consequent tensions and demands placed upon women. Victorian polarities have 1990s resonances and accretions. For example:
"MADONNA"                           "WHORE"
  clean                                dirty
  spiritual                            physical
  moral                                immoral
  placed on a pedestal                doer of dirty work
  companion                           servicer

The employment of a paid domestic worker therefore facilitates status reproduction, not only by enabling the silver to be polished, clothes to be ironed etc. i.e. not only by maintaining status objects, but also by serving as a “foil” to the lady of the house. The hired reproductive worker is reproducing social beings and sets of relationships that are not her own, but more than that, are deeply antagonistic to her own interests. Her presence emphasises and reinforces her employer’s identity, as a competent household manager, as middle class, as white, and her own as its opposite. Perhaps Leila is right - her domestic worker is her “other self”, but rather than a mirror image the worker is the Mrs Hyde to her Dr Jekyll, the two woven into mutually dependent female stereotypes. It is true that women’s unpaid household work in general reproduces sets of relations antagonistic to housewives because it is gendered, but a European “housewife” does not just labour, she (usually) has some control over the management of the process an emotional stake in household, often economic benefits etc. The well-kept house, children and husband are a tribute to her managerial skills. While wives may gain status and privileges from relations with their husband, domestic workers do not (Glenn 1992).

A household may employ a domestic worker whose principal function is a carer, or they may employ a domestic worker whose principal function is to service a “life-style”, though in practise the two are difficult to disentangle - so for example while female employment may create a demand for childcare, it may also be presented as women citizens of the Union opting for higher status paid employment in the labour market, rather than low status reproductive labour:

"Now the girls, the Greek girls, they want to be secretaries. They go to university. Who will go to university and then clean homes?"

(Caritas volunteer worker)
While a family may “need” a worker to look after their children, they do not need a worker to clean the children’s shoes every day. But the relation between a domestic worker and her employers, and in particular her female employer is inevitably one of relative status, while men’s ultimate control over the household remains unchallenged. As one French employer put it:

“My husband has been well brought up by his mother to be sensitive to dust and to notice that kind of thing, so... he’ll say, ‘Here’s a cobweb, when you see Madam C you must tell her to clean there’. Then I pull the cobweb, and he says, ‘No, you don’t do it, that’s for her to do. That’s her job’.

The very hiring of a domestic worker lowers the status of the work she does - the employer has “better” things to do with her time. Moreover, while the housewife is acknowledged as manager and labourer, the domestic worker is simply a labourer, the “hands” (Davidoff 1974) (though in reality she, like the housewife, is constantly managing processes) who is managed by her female employer. The hard work of the domestic worker redounds to the credit, not of herself, but of the household manager, who has demonstrated her skills in such a marvellous find. What women have in common is the management of the processes of domestic work, but most women have to both manage and labour, while some predominantly manage. This makes for very real conflicts of interest between women as household managers and household workers as the manager seeks to extract maximum hours and minimum wages - thereby having an interest, in her capacity as household manager in devaluing household work.

A domestic worker is not just a person who does a job, but, like the “mother” and the “wife” she is performing a role within the family. This was clearly apparent in the Victorian practice of giving workers new names (in one house the kitchen maids were always called “Jane” etc.) and this practise continues for many migrants in Europe.

“My first experience of working in Spain I arrived at my employer’s and she asked me my name ‘Ay! That name is too difficult’, she said, ‘I will call you Manoli’. And from that time on, that is what she called me.”

(Dominican woman (I can’t give her name for reasons of anonymity!) in Barcelona).
Domestic workers are thus stripped of their identity. In the final analysis domestic work is not definable in terms of tasks but in terms of a role which constructs and situates the worker within a certain set of social relationships. Even when her tasks are ostensibly the same as those performed by the "mother" or the "wife" - though often not, they are cast as such - but her role is different, she affirms a household's status, and in particular affirms the status of the woman of the household.

HOW TO VALUE DOMESTIC LABOUR?

One of the difficulties that comes to the fore when one considers paid domestic labour is the valuation of domestic work. Domestic workers were clear that there was no such thing as a "fair wage" (see Chapter Seven) and this is part of a broader issue of how to value domestic work. Domestic labour is not included in national accounts. So if a meal is cooked in a restaurant then it is reflected in GDP, but if it is cooked at home then it is invisible.

The justification given for the omission of household production from the UK system of national accounts in 1993 was:

i) that household services have limited repercussions on the rest of the economy, and the decision to produce a household service entails a simultaneous decision to consume that service.

ii) there are no suitable market prices that can be used to value such services because they are typically not produced for the market

iii) imputed values have a different economic significance from income available in cash. So if a household member could choose between producing services for themselves and producing the same services for another household in return for cash, they would probably choose the latter because of the greater range of consumption possibilities it affords.

However, in 1997 the UK Office for National Statistics attempted to produce a Household Satellite account:

"the term satellite is a unfortunate analogy. By almost any measure the household industry is probably larger than that of any of the main single digit heading industries within the production boundary. The accounts could be seen
more as twin planets rather than earth and moon. Nonetheless, difficulties in valuation outweigh these concerns and justify the use of a satellite.”
(Murgatroyd and Neuburger 1997: 65)

As is apparent, the report rebuffed the claim that household services have limited repercussions on the rest of the economy. Indeed it found that, depending on how one values domestic work in the UK it accounts for between 40 per cent and 120 per cent of GDP. However, the practical problems of valuation outlined in points ii) and iii) pose real difficulties. Moreover, point iii) is far from being as simple as it purports to be - there are all kinds of reasons why one would prefer to bake a cake for oneself and one’s loved ones rather than sell it on the market. Consumption possibilities are far from the only or indeed principal consideration and this is of the essence in domestic work (see Chapter Seven). Should we attribute the same value to housework in all households irrespective of the earning potential of their members and of the level of household capital equipment? Or should, for example, a barrister choose not to work in chambers but to look after her children, should it be valued at £250 an hour, since that is what it is worth to her?

The issue becomes even more complex when we attempt to recognise the value of paid domestic labour. If we allow that domestic workers enable the employment of female household members, should we argue that the domestic worker who facilitates the employment of the barrister should earn half the hourly wages of her employer, since without her the barrister could not go to work? Rates of pay then depend directly on the status of the employer and are completely independent of the worker’s skills, needs, costs, and the domestic worker who works for a primary school teacher would earn substantially less than the barrister’s worker for doing the same job. Calculating the monetary value of domestic work is even more complex when one includes caring work. While motherhood is priceless, when we pay for childcare we are eager to explore the cheapest options as if mothering and nurturing were separate functions (Rothman 1989). Since many women work for nothing in the home, why should anyone be paid to do it?

“I had a helper. She said she was coming at 8am. She comes at 9.30am. I have already started to do the work of course. I am afraid to give her a machine
because maybe she doesn’t know how to use it, so I do that. Then I clean out the fridge - together. So I do half the work. So half the money is mine. So if we take foreigners it is because we want to help them.”

(Employer in Athens)

MIGRANTS AND DOMESTIC WORK IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Paid domestic work then is constructed as low status and is badly paid. In the European Union low status low paid work is often dominated by racialised groups and in particular by migrant workers, yet in contrast with the USA and Canada there has been very little on the racialisation of domestic work. There has been a limited interest in domestic work in the field of migration studies. This has often acknowledged the importance of domestic work, but only in passing.

“the only work they have access to is usually of a type which allows them to combine their productive and reproductive functions in the least disturbing way i.e. work that can be done at home.. work in the family business, domestic service and other activities which are the least visible in terms of a ‘formal economy’.” (Morokvasic 1984)

“A considerable proportion of immigrant women find domestic work the only offer they get on the job market. This holds true not only for Europe, but also for other parts of the world.”

(Dumon 1981)

“Working women in the community countries eschew employment in domestic and servile jobs in preference for service occupations in which a greater number of openings has become available. There is thus room at the bottom of the ladder for the women immigrants to tackle the ‘women’s work’.”

(Delcourt 1975).

Domestic work as an area of employment for migrant women is in a similar way singled out in individual country studies with reference to women migrants (Black 1992; Psimmenos 1996; Leonetti and Levy 1978; Abadan Unat 1984). The importance
of domestic work as a sector in legalisation data is notable (Groenendijk, K and Hampsink R 1995; Marie 1984), suggesting that it is an important employer of undocumented female labour. There were also intimations of low pay, abuse and exploitation in this sector:

“The most humiliated and ill-treated are foreign domestics”

(Morokvasic, 1984).

However, despite its obvious importance, studies on the living and working conditions of migrants working in private households were extremely limited, and depended very much on which European country they lived in. So, in Greece for example, there had been no study on migrant domestic workers, though I knew from my work with CFMW which had an office in Athens that there were many Filipina domestic workers in Greece who were enduring extremely poor conditions. Similarly in Germany domestic work was not an area of migrant employment that had received much attention, although again there had been reports of Filipina workers employed by US soldiers stationed in West Berlin (Die Zeit, 13 October 1989).

This contrasted with the situation in Italy. In 1983 Arena had analysed statistical data from the Ministry of Labour in Italy, finding visas for domestic labour the most prominent category, and she estimated 90 per cent of employed African and Asian women worked in domestic service. Domestic work in private households was an acknowledged area of employment for migrant women from the late 1970s (Crippa 1979). Andall’s work examined the living and working conditions of migrant domestic workers (Andall 1992), and highlighted the difficulties of dependence of domestic workers on their employers and the restrictions of family life, while Campani (1993) examined the hierarchy of labour among migrant domestic workers, the importance of social networks and problems with children. Campani (1992) also picked up on the concept first introduced by Pugliese (1991) of the “archaic mentality” of employers of domestic workers. Pugliese suggested that not only did employers of domestic workers want their labour, but also a particular type of master/mistress-servant relationship.

“From one hand, the recourse to maids is a necessity, determined by the lacking of social services in our country: families with just one parent or with
both parents working are forced to look for this type of service. On the other 
hand, nevertheless, the preference for the archaic relationship with the maid, 
available all day long, expresses a certain type of mentality or the will of 
reaffirming old habits which, with the civil development of our country during 
the sixties, seemed largely overcome”.
Campani links this mentality with individualism, and non-migrant women’s avoidance 
of challenging the state for social services and of negotiating with a male partner for a 
different division of reproductive labour. She also remarks in a footnote:
“We can also wonder about the impact the presence of Third World maids 
(being forced often to leave their own children) can have on children’s 
education, getting used to the image of a racialised labour force, even at home”.
(Campani 1992)

As noted above this has been of concern to other writers tackling more explicitly 
issues around the racialisation of domestic work in non-European countries. In fact, 
more than any other studies on the situation of domestic workers in Europe, Campani 
and Andall have touched on issues observed by other researchers in very different 
contexts. This is developed in their more recent work. Andall in 1996 examined the 
historical development of the domestic work sector in Italy, and in particular the 
influence of the Catholic church on it through the Catholic association ACLI-COLF. 
Until the 1970s ACLI-COLF promoted “harmonious” labour relations and the 
subordination of the domestic worker to their employer as being “part of the family” -
“Domestic workers were not selling their labour but collaborating with a family 
and thus facilitating the implementation of God’s plan”.
(Andall 1996: 6)

Nevertheless, the very fact that the association existed meant that paid domestic work 
could not, as in other countries, be ignored. Campani (1997) has done the only 
comparative study on migrant domestic workers in Spain and Italy. She finds their 
situation one of discrimination and exclusion, but also proving the migrant women’s 
capacity to cope with difficult conditions in order that the migratory project succeed. 
It is one of “gains and losses” in contrast with the sex business and prostitution, where
the situation is uniformly bleak. She believes that the “archaic mentality” on relations with domestic workers is common to Southern Europe

"can be seen as the survival of old habits, but it is also the product of a too fast ‘modernisation’, without the progressive interiorization of the values expressed by what we could call the ‘social democratic’ model of the industrial society”.

(Campani 1997: 6)

However, this demand for a certain type of relationship with the domestic work is not restricted to Southern Europe and has been observed in many other countries (see Chapters Seven and Eight).

In 1991 LIFE (Lega Italo-Filippina Filippini Emigrati), a support group for Filipinos working in Italy were commissioned by the ILO to undertake a case study of domestic workers in Rome and Milan. This was following a review of the literature on foreign female domestic workers in Europe, Latin America and the Middle East (Weinert 1991), which highlighted the need for further research. The Italian study surveyed 101 Filipino migrant workers, eighty one in Rome and twenty in Milan by means of a questionnaire and found that they were relatively happy and satisfied with their work, despite the fact that 49 per cent were college graduates. This seems surprisingly high, but is perhaps partly a consequence of the study methods, which were based on a randomised sample of Filipinas in different locations, who were given a questionnaire to fill in in their own time. Moreover, both Andall and Campani found that in the hierarchy of labour operating in Italy, Filipina domestic workers earned more, experienced better conditions and were more “prestigious” than other nationalities.

As part of the same ILO programme, Colectivo Ioe, a Madrid based group of sociologists, also undertook a study of overseas domestic workers in Madrid (Colectivo Ioe 1991). Colectivo Ioe had in fact already produced research both on domestic work in general in Spain (Colectivo Ioe 1990), and more specifically in Cataluna (Colectivo Ioe 1987). The 1991 study contextualised the living and working conditions of migrant domestic workers in Madrid within immigration and labour legislation in Spain as a whole. Issues such as wages, hours and contracts etc. were covered in a questionnaire submitted to qualified informants in the main reception and
welfare centres for migrant women of the nationalities making up the domestic work sector. In order to explore the attitudes of the workers and their relationships with employers and wider Spanish society, Colectivo Ioe held a group discussion with twelve workers of various nationalities (but not including Filipino), six with residence permits, and six without. They found that dependence on the employer meant that:

"What is at stake for foreign live-in domestic servants in looking for work is something more important than just the remuneration: they are putting their own individuality on the line, whether they are to be treated as persons or as something inferior"

(Colectivo Ioe 1991: 44)
supporting the notion that, more than a job, the domestic worker is fulfilling a role which involves her very identity. Interestingly, the women interviewed remarked on class differences in the way they were treated - that the upper-class were more likely to treat their workers "along inhuman, master-to-servant lines", this contrasts with their earlier findings in Cataluna that some informants preferred to work for upper class employers rather than middle class because they do not need to reinforce their social position. The symbolic aggressions around matters such as food were remarkably similar to those experienced by workers in London, apparently designed to emphasise the employer's control and the worker's inferiority (Colectivo Ioe 1991; Anderson 1993). As in Italy a hierarchy of labour was observed, with Filipinos and Portuguese finding it easier to get work than Moroccans and Black African women. Spanish women were not working in the live-in sector, but by hours.

This shift had already been observed in the earlier Catalan study, which found that while in the past live-in workers had been migrants from the poorer areas of Spain - Andalucia, Aragon and Galicia, now

"native Spanish women have other aspirations, they have their own family to think of, and they demand certain working conditions; in contrast, foreigners do not have family in Spain, and their objective is to save, so that they prefer to live-in their employer's house".

(Colectivo Ioe 1987: 3)
This study found different types of domestic work: *internas* (i.e. live-in), increasingly the province of migrant workers; *externas fijas/interinas*, workers who live-out, but who work for one family only; *asistentas por horas*, live-out, working for several employers and doing a variety of jobs; baby-sitters; and *trabajadoras familiares* ("family workers") caring for older people in their own homes who have attended a recognised course and are paid for by the social services. However, Colectivo Ioe noted that this was becoming more informal, often with no contracts, with the state payment being made, not to the worker but to the person being cared for, and with the hours worked being greater than the hours paid for. They also observed that this kind of employment, currently rare, was likely to increase - as indeed has Ungerson (1995) in a discussion of caring arrangements in Europe in general (see Chapter Seven). In all types of domestic work, contracts were the exception rather than the rule and conditions of work were poor, with long hours, isolation, low pay and employer-employee relations characterised by paternalism ("paternalismo"). Workers characterised their situation as "put up with it so you don't get thrown out". Although brief and working with only one group of domestic workers, and two in-depth interviews with domestic workers (nationalities not specified), this study is interesting for the light it throws on the sector and conditions experienced by all workers, Spanish and non-Spanish. It is only marred, despite its excellent analysis, by certain reflections of those racist attitudes that it is concerned to criticise. So, for example, writing of Filipinas:

"the lack of legal protection of these women, together with their docile attitude and good capacity to work, has favoured a 'boom' in the last few years."

(Colectivo Ioe 1987: 2)

"What is known about Mozambican women in domestic service indicates that they are very faithful and hard workers."

(Colectivo Ioe 1991: 38)

The research project of Yakuta Sayd (1993) in contrast, focuses on only one group, Moroccan women in Barcelona. Its aim was to uncover the situation of Moroccan women in Cataluna, i.e. not a study of domestic workers, but in fact they work almost
exclusively as domestic workers in private households, mostly live-in, and those who do not work as cleaners in restaurants or bars. Sayd interviewed 175 women, some who had entered Spain accompanying husbands and children, who were now settled, and those more recent entries, who had often left Morocco to escape their marriages (more than half of her interviewees were women who were divorced or who left their husbands in order to get divorced). Most women did not work legally on arrival, and many continue to live-in Spain with no residence permit. She found that it was relatively easy to find live-in work, but women, especially new arrivals, were often badly treated, with no contracts, very long hours, low salaries, racism and lack of respect:

"The majority of Moroccan women are agreed that they can tolerate the work, but what they cannot tolerate are the employers, for the majority what is difficult is not the work neither is it the fact that employers want to see the employee working day and night, the problem is that they treat them as if they were slaves they do not let them keep their dignity nor do they accept cultural differences" (Sayd 1993: 57)

"Those who work live-in do not use the word ‘racism’, but they speak of the impossibility of watching the television with the employers, of resting on days off. They speak among themselves of plates reserved for ‘the servant’, of clothes which have to be washed separately from the family’s, the majority speak of a kind of disgust that they (the employers) show towards Moroccan domestic workers.”
(Sayd 1993: 61)

She also found some women working for Moroccans, either cleaning for a household of single men - with problems of sexual assault, harassment and rape - or taken in by a family following marriage problems or pregnancy, not only having to work without pay, but also closely watched for “bad morals”.

---

2 "The vast majority of Moroccan women work in domestic service. Some work in restaurants or bars, but they are a minority" (Sayd, 1993: 3)
In France domestic work is more regulated by the state than in other European countries, perhaps partly because the sector was organised in the early part of the 20th century through the socialist union the CFDT. Since 1982 the sector has officially been regulated through the Convention Collective Nationale des employeurs particuliers d'employés de maison, negotiated between unions and the employers' federation, FEPEM. However, although there is some recognition of the need for live-in domestic workers, particularly because of the ageing population, there has been little comment on the racialisation of domestic work. Brigitte Croff in her examination of “emplois familiaux” (1994) notes:

“We have identified four types of women working in this sector. The first is composed of African women...the large numbers of foreigners can be explained by the fact that the public sector is not open to them...they are forced into the private sector, whether it be private households or private retirement homes. These women know the working conditions in these establishments, the underpayment and racism which ensures that they have to do the most menial tasks. This state of affairs reinforces the attraction of the private household which holds the illusion of independence and less heavy tasks, since they have to care for two people maximum”.

(Croff 1994: 56-57)

(The other three types are: French women with no training who are over 45; students; and women on state sponsored employment programmes). There is no further exploration of this in the entire book, despite its interest in the “servitude and oppression” that attaches to being a domestic worker.

Similarly many studies of migrants in France mention the importance of working in private households as an area of employment for migrant women (Rahal-Sidhoum 1987; European Forum of Left Feminists 1993). In studies of the data from regularisation in 1981 (Marie 1984; French Ministry of Social Affairs 1984; Wihtol de Wenden and de Ley 1986), 62 per cent of women regularised were in personal service employed by individuals, suggesting that domestic work is an important employer of undocumented female labour, particularly, at least according to the regularisation data, women from Portugal, Asia and Morocco. Yet despite the importance of the sector
there is little written on the living and working conditions of migrant women, though there has been a spate of journalistic interest in the plight of women working for non-French families (see for example O'Dy 1995). Historically there has also been some interest in the situation of Portugese workers (Caspari and Giles 1986).

So, although domestic work in private households is acknowledged as an important area of employment for migrant women in Europe there has been very little empirical work about the living and working conditions of migrants in this sector, and what has been done has been localised and not comparative. At a theoretical level paid domestic labour and its relation to women's unpaid household work has been insufficiently problematised. In particular the challenges posed to feminist analyses, not just to domestic work, but to the public/private dichotomy, patriarchy and capitalism have been ignored.
Migrant domestic workers are a heterogeneous group. Their experiences vary from city to city and depend on their immigration status, racialised group, individual employer and psychobiographies. But to dwell on such fragmentation does not help us in the broader question of why such a large proportion of this work is being done by racialised groups. To negotiate our way around such differences we need to pick out the key variables that order the experiences of migrant domestic workers and to examine how the social organisation of domestic work allows these variables to operate.

Migrant domestic workers come from a wide variety of class backgrounds. Many are middle class professionals, including teachers, nurses, university lecturers, lawyers, others are farmers, vendors, mothers, domestic workers, rural/urban unemployed. Reasons for leaving their countries of origin varied too, but the main reason for emigration was poverty. Women wanted to earn money for their children, their parents, or extended family, and often described it in terms of bare survival. Several stated a clear link between politics and economics:

“In the first place you have to recognise the economic conditions of countries, and since I for example am from a South American country the political and economic situation is very poor, and gives rise to a situation which still exists even today in countries of ...what we could call dictatorship, because there is only one political party and each day the situation is getting more and more precarious.”

(Dominicana in Barcelona).

Some were unrecognised political refugees:

“I came in 1988. Mengistu was in power then. You were forced to be a member of the party. Unless you were a member of the party you couldn’t work or talk. I was told I would be fined and jailed unless I joined the party so I was running around bribing and fixing my passport to get out - very fast. My father was imprisoned and my brother was killed... at the time I just
wanted to save my life... I had a tourist visa for 15 days. The UN would not accept my claim. I cannot leave. I work as a domestic

(Ethiopian in Athens)

It is interesting to note in the light of current debates over whether states should grant refugee status to women on the grounds that they are persecuted as a “particular social group” within the terms of the 1951 Geneva Convention, (Joly et al 1992: 15) that Sayd has observed that more than half of the 175 Moroccan women that she interviewed were either divorced or had left their husband in order to obtain a divorce. Women who are divorced by their husbands must leave their homes to stay with their parents or brothers who often refuse to accept them and:

“There are large numbers of women who do not accept their marriage and ask for divorce but are not able to get it. Some decide to escape, but as the police can chase them if the husband reports it some of these women decide to emigrate from Morocco, to Spain for example, because it is the nearest country... and so because they are outside their country Muslim law has no validity, and they cannot pursue them.”

(Sayd 1993: 7)

Escaping unhappy or forced marriages is not confined to Moroccan women. Domestic workers often gave personal problems, escaping abusive relationships, family breakdown or to join husbands as being reasons for migration while some women were forced to leave to break up relationships - one Filipina for example described how she had been sent abroad by her family because she was in love with someone of the “wrong” religion.

The distinction between “economic migrant” and “political refugee” becomes even more blurred when one looks at the case of Eritreans in Athens. They had been given some status as a group by receiving a “blue card” from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in Greece. This card, recognising them as a refugee was withdrawn in 1991. Several Eritreans were interviewed informally at an Eritrean cafe. They very much wanted to return to the new, independent Eritrea but were unable to. Because they had been confined to extremely low paid, undocumented work they had barely managed to survive in Greece. They did not have the money to return to Eritrea, one of the world’s poorest countries. So they had to remain in Greece, thereby running up ever increasing
fines as overstayers, and making their return to Eritrea even less likely. So, although once "political refugees" they are now "economic migrants", trapped in Greece because of economic circumstances.

This variety of reasons for migrating was common in all cities visited. However, some nationalities tended to head for specific European countries, while others were working in a particular city by accidents of chance. For some migrants (Albanians to Greece; Polish to Germany; Moroccans to Spain) geography was a factor in their presence in a particular European state. For others it was colonialism (Peruvians to Spain; Algerians to France) or the immigration policy of receiving states (Turkish to Germany). To some extent the networks that facilitate immigration are initiated, whether or not intentionally, by the European state:

"It's not our fault that we've emigrated. The Spanish came over to our country first, and they bring us to Spain. They're the ones responsible for the immigration, not us".

(Dominicana working in Barcelona)

RECRUITMENT

There are currently four basic routes for migrants to enter employment as domestic workers in private households in Europe.

1. Individuals with no contacts

Women may come without a work permit, either as a tourist or evading immigration controls, in order to work, but with no fixed position or even occupation in mind, and no contacts in their city of destination. On arrival they find that they must choose between domestic work in private households or prostitution. They are often extremely vulnerable, with nowhere to stay, and no money and risking deportation. These women are those who seek employment through organisations such as Caritas (in Athens and Barcelona).
2. Informal networks

These are the most common means of arranging entry to Europe. Women may be sent for by specific employers through personal contacts: an employer will ask a worker if she can recommend someone to be employed by a friend. So for example

"My sister said, if you want to come to Barcelona, come to Spain and I have got a job for you. So, I came and the next day I was working.... I came with a friend as well.... Then came the sister of my friend and then came my husband, her husband and her mother,...and we had another house, a bigger one. Then I called everybody and my sister and my cousin she was a secretary and we found her some job,- it was easy to find work very quickly, then my son came and then my other sister and so the same with others. In nine months everybody was here."

(Peruvian working in Barcelona),

The migrant's relative/friend may lend her the airfare and offer help with employment and accommodation, or simply offer to help support her while she is looking for work, enabling the worker to take out a loan to cover initial expenses of the flight etc. In Barcelona it was not unusual for contacts to arrange "false" employers for their friends: asking Spaniards to offer a job to a friend back home to enable them to get a visa, but with both parties understanding that, on entry to Spain, the migrant will look for work elsewhere. There is considerable scope for misunderstanding here! This has become much more unusual since the Spanish state now checks potential employers' bank balances, tax returns etc to ensure that they can afford the worker they are proposing to employ.

Even when women are entering to work for specific employers, they usually work illegally, although in Spain some might fall under the *cupo* quota system (see Chapter Five). Women were often told that their employers would arrange their papers, only to be let down after they had arrived - though given the difficulty if not impossibility of arranging work permits employers may have originally intended to do so, but found the bureaucracy too much. V. was told to come as a tourist to Athens and her papers would be arranged later. Having been maltreated by her first employer she left after one year, and spent years trying to regularise her status.
"The employers there took my passport and my papers and they said they were going to make me a nursing aide. My salary was low 60,000 (drachmas = £170) plus 15,000 (drachmas = £42) allowance for food, but even though it was low, because they said they were going to sort out my papers I was happy. But after two years they still hadn't sorted my papers and I said, 'well, it's enough'...Since then I was searching for someone to process my papers, but now it's hopeless."
(Filipina in Athens)

"L: ...you will find me a job there?' I said, 'Yes' he said, 'but you cannot come with a working permit only as a tourist... even though I'm... so as tourist it's OK.... And so I'm illegal for so many years."
(Filipina in Barcelona)

3. Agencies

There are agencies which specialise in arranging for workers to enter Europe, sometimes to work in a particular job, but more often than not they simply bring the woman to a particular city and leave her. Such agencies were referred to by workers in Paris, Athens, Barcelona and Berlin, but the most detailed information was given by Peruvian workers in Barcelona. They described how different agencies have different means of operation: some obtain false documents, false passports, visas etc or a false offer of employment signed by a Spanish citizen. Such assurances cost approximately $3,000 but there is in fact no job at all - sometimes to the worker's surprise. Some agencies arrange bribes for consular officials to give visas - apparently some $3,000 - A group of Peruvian women describe how agencies work:

1 “look, in Trujillo there are international travel agencies, and some of the people who work there know the ways out of Peru, they know the levels of need and that many people are taking this as an option.....and what I do is offer tickets to Europe, specifically Spain, which is where I know most people want to go. Then I say, ‘Look, I’ll take you to Spain in a roundabout way.’....Then you give him the money...but if you can’t get in, and the police deport you, you can’t get your money back....They charge more or less $3,800, $3,500, $5,000 in many cases. Then you go to an EU country, you
take a tour, then they pass you to some smugglers who bring you by land to Spain. So what they do more or less is give you a sort of orientation and take all your money...If you don’t have money they’ll accept that once you’ve arrived you’ll repay them, because to enter any European country you have to have travel money that you can use to justify your stay there as a tourist....And what happens, when you arrive in Europe they don’t accept you for x reasons. Nobody is master of the world and I think that people should be free to live where they want, there shouldn’t be borders, we have needs and they ought to give us our chance to be able to earn enough to live....But they return you, simply and purely because they don’t want you to stay.

2 - Yes the majority of agencies are like she says but there are also clandestine agencies. These agencies also charge you huge amounts and then they dump you.

3 - They get you a map and say to you, go to here, arrive here, here here, and finally here you are.....

4- ...for example they said they could get me a tourist visa to other countries, so I could be a tourist travelling to different places. But I was refused a visa, so in the end he said, ‘I won’t send you to that country, because this country doesn’t need a visa, so they sent me to the back of beyond...

3 - We Latin Americans are very watched, considered very suspicious, and when we showed our Peruvian passports they looked at us from head to toe...we were three. Then we had to show everything in our suitcase. And when we had got out of all that we had to look to see how to get here spending as little money as possible or none at all....they told us that for $500 you can go to the furthest part of Spain. But the reality was very different.”
4. Accompanying employer

Workers may also enter Europe accompanying their employer. Although quite clearly entering to work, it is the practise to give them a tourist visa, or a visa forbidding them to take up employment except with the employer they are accompanying who may even be named on their passport. This practise has been most thoroughly exposed in the UK through the work of Kalayaan, (Anderson 1993) but it also is operating in Spain, Germany and France.

"They have you know one of the ...like me like my situation, they take their chance and they run away. People come here for their holidays. *(They bring with them)* not only Filipinas, Sri Lanka, Marruecos. Because usually tourist places because in Malaga it's all Arabic people there, they all have big houses there, it all belongs to Arabic people. It's a tourist visa not a working visa you get when you come here with a family here. Me I have only working visa in Kuwait, otherwise I have only tourist visa, in Germany and in Spain.”

(Filipina in Barcelona)

A compatriot who was working for the family in Germany (the female employer was German) had to run away:

"she cannot do anything because she does not have her passport and her employers say that she is a visitor with them. For two years a visitor! It doesn't go.”

Depending on which route she has used a migrant domestic worker may be documented i.e. with permission to reside in an EU state, or undocumented - an "illegal", whose very presence constitutes a criminal act. Immigration status is a crucial variable in determining living and working conditions, particularly since those who are undocumented or who are dependent for their immigration status on their employer risk deportation if they make any complaints about their treatment or try to leave.

HOW TO FIND WORK IN EUROPE

Newly arrived migrants are often under particular pressure to find work. The major expense for people who had recently arrived (i.e. in the previous two years) was repayment of the debt accrued for entry to Europe, either to agencies or to family and
friends. Repayment of this debt is a priority and the strain that it places on new arrivals is considerable:

"Many come with debts from their country because they have borrowed for the ticket, and that's money you have to pay back, if you know what I mean.....a majority come from my country with money they have borrowed, relatives have mortgaged their house or sold them...Then you arrive in a country with a debt hanging over you, in an illegal situation..so that if you go to the police they can put you in prison. You don't know anyone who can get you out of there, they can deport you to your country, which is where you have the debt..and they can put you in prison there as well".

(Peruvian working in Barcelona).

Pressure to repay this debt forces workers into live-in domestic work, and can make them very vulnerable. In addition to the debt incurred on arrival, domestic workers may add to their debt in their efforts to obtain residence and working permits. Having paid back the debt the worker is then free to send back all spare money as remittances - which is usually one of the main reasons for leaving their country of origin in the first place. So the response to "What are your major expenses?" was commonly:

"Remittances. Almost one half of the salary is sent to the family or more.
Some send monthly and the others by lump sum every three months..."

"My debts, my house, my children...and my country"

B contrasted the expectations of life abroad with the reality:

"There is a lot of disinformation..many people say that you go to Spain..you earn a thousand dollars..you pay back your debt in one year...and finally you get here and it's not like that. It takes you six months to find work, your debt is increasing because of interest. You don't earn a thousand dollars ...and you spend rent, food and all this and your stay, which was going to be one year, becomes two, three, and you are still here....."

(Peruvian working in Barcelona)
Informal networks

Once arrived in Europe, migrants may use several means to find employers. These do not vary according to their legal status (except for some agencies who demand to see passports). Advertisements in newspapers for example are just as likely to be placed by undocumented as by documented workers. Migrants' may use their own, personal networks, taking up additional work offered by employer's friends for example, or by their friends' employers. This has advantages for workers, who do not have to pay for the service, and for the employers since, unlike agencies, tapping into relatives and friends of domestic workers employed by acquaintances is free and there is some guarantee that they are trustworthy. One employment agency in Barcelona admitted:

"you have to realise that employers only go to agencies when it is difficult to get a girl any other way."

"Direct hire" as it is known, often seems to operate very efficiently. There are problems with this kind of networking though, particularly for women who are relying on contacts they have made by chance. Of course in some cases these are reliable and provide real support and assistance, but there are other examples of downright exploitation and abuse. Moreover, these networks do not in fact give any real guarantee to the worker that conditions and work will be satisfactory. While the employer often has the added "insurance" of a reference from a previous employer, the worker must simply take it on trust that the friend of her friend's employer will not abuse or exploit her. Furthermore, use of these networks can shade into commercial transactions with individuals charging for their contacts.

Churches and NGOs can be extremely important as informal placement agencies. In Barcelona the Catholic Church mission of La Bonanova coordinates employment placement for Peruvian domestic workers. Angeles Escrivá has analysed some of its records and found that an average of ten new people a day used its work placement services in 1995, 80 per cent of them women.
Table 1 Legal status of Peruvian women looking for employment as domestic workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>legal status</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>9/95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doc.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undoc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepar*</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: * this abbreviation is not explained in the original. I assume that it means those whose legal status is in transition.

Moroccans too will call churches and church agencies for work (though not those mentioned above which clearly work with particular national groups). The women’s worker in Bayt Al Taqafa said that their being Muslim did not make them reluctant to use Christian networks:

"In North Africa the church is very present, and people go to it to find work and support even if they’re not Christians, so they’re used to that form of work and support. In fact many of the women who come to Spain have learnt to read and to sew through church organisations in Morocco so that isn’t a problem."

Caritas Barcelona does some placement work, often for Moroccans. Like its counterpart in Athens it is often the refuge of the most desperate:

"Basically our problem is that, of course the people who come to us are the most marginalised. Because the others can go to the town hall or use other
services....So people who come to us are those who don’t have documents, some because they have only just arrived or who have been here a while but have lost their jobs and haven’t been able to renew and find themselves in this situation.”

Although they do not offer any formal placement service, they do have employers contacting them with offers of employment, but often very poorly paid, or even not paid at all, simply offering accommodation in exchange for looking after an old person for example. Caritas refuses these employers:

“Here, if we offer a job, it has to have certain standards, and the salary even if it is low, it must be decent. But the fact is that there are people who, as they know that we are working with people who don’t have anything, well they offer below the odds...we reject this because it isn’t right...It’s one thing for the salary to be low, but it has to be human. And so often you have to reject these telephone offers.”

In Athens the Caritas office also works with domestic workers, indeed their main focus is on placing workers with employers. Among the domestic workers interviewed it was regarded as offering very low paid jobs, and only to be visited if desperate. For new arrivals, however, and people with no network of friends to pass on jobs, it is clearly an important employment clearing house and it deals with a wide range of nationalities. More informally, women of all nationalities and religions attended Mass in large Catholic churches in downtown Athens as a way of meeting each other and potential employers. Protestant evangelical churches too were important access points for Protestant workers and employers. In 1995 the Missionaries of Charity in Athens were beginning to work with Sri Lankan women, one of the most marginalised of migrant groups in Athens and were already being contacted by potential employers. As one of the sisters told me:

"I have three jobs at the moment. They might not pay more, but at least there is some connection and they won't maltreat them....the people are related to us so we know they will not abuse".

Migrants' organisations may also be important points of contact for employers and domestic workers, though it is rarely the associations' priority. So in Barcelona the
Filipino Centre had stopped responding to these requests as they found that it took up too much time and not to any good end since “the real relationship was between the women and their employers”. They still do this work, though not in an organised way, and estimate that one or two potential employers contact the Centre every day looking for Filipino workers. Employers expect the Centre to vouch for them, which the group is unwilling to do: “all we can say is that they are Filipinos”. Their details are taken on scraps of paper and may be picked up by women who attend the Centre. During one of the interviews I was shown the current employer list - four requests for live-in, one live-out and two offering unspecified work. In Paris the Femmes de Framoisins simply posted up requests on the board. The organised placing of domestic workers tends to be undertaken by church rather than migrants’ organisations (though Kalayaan is a notable exception to this).

As well as the informal networks France is unique in that it has a government promoted system for putting prospective workers and employers in touch with one another. The promotion of “associations intermédiaires” began in 1987. These are voluntary associations, often locally based, which liaise between unemployed people and those needing household workers, not just putting them in touch with each other, but acting as the employer. So the individual employer pays, not the worker but the association. In 1994 the government estimated such agencies dealt with 27 per cent of all employers and 41 per cent of those employers aged over 70, disposing of 35-40 million working hours. The Emploi Daubigny is one such association.

Although not an officially recognised agence intermédiaire, the AGF offers a similar service to residents of the 17th arrondissement in terms of introducing employers and workers. In general it seems that the AGF deals with more requests for work and employers than the Emploi Daubigny. So between September 4th 1995 and January 19th 1996 they registered 408 workers and 257 employers. The employer does not come into the office, but phones in their request, hours, duties (but not rates of pay) and this is recorded in an employment book. The worker is then shown the employment book and an attempt to match both demands is made. If this is possible, the worker is given the employer’s number, and may have no further contact with the AGF since unlike the ED system, workers are paid direct by their employers. A
further significant difference between the AGF and the ED is that the majority of jobs offered through the AGF are full time - or more.

Placement agencies
As well as informal networks and contacts there are also employment agencies for domestic work. These are a broad grouping ranging from the upmarket and professionalised to the downright illegal. There was considerable resentment at the costs of agencies. In Spain for example they typically charge the worker 1,000 pesetas (£5.50) for registration every three months but there are also those that take a cut of the workers' wages every month:

"and she told me with this condition, that I had to pay the agency 10 per cent of what I earned....then I went to the interview and the senora paid me 100,000 (£550) then I had to pay the girl from the agency 10,000 (£55) each month.... at first I refused to do this, then my cousin, because it was my cousin who arranged all this, my cousin knew her and she said this is what happens with agencies, they take this and if you get into problems with them then they don’t give you any more work”.

(Dominicana working in Barcelona)

Of all the cities visited, agencies were most commonly made use of in Barcelona. In Athens they were given a wide berth by those workers interviewed, who felt that they were fronts for the sex industry, while in Paris they tended to be very up-market and for professionalised domestic workers. In Barcelona twelve employment agencies were contacted through telephone numbers given in small ads. Of these four refused to be interviewed.
Table 2: Employment agencies and migrant domestic workers in Barcelona

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>% Spanish workers on books</th>
<th>% non-Spanish workers books</th>
<th>Breakdown of nationalities on books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Moroccans 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peruvians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Colombians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El Salvadoreans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>60% all live-out</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Moroccans 50%+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dominicans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peruvians also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Polish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Russian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>South American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Filipinas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Filipinas 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dominicans 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moroccans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peruvians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Africans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>Dominicans 50%+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peruvians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moroccans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Filipinas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOS</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>South Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>no detail</td>
<td>no detail</td>
<td>Dominicans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Apart from MBS agency there seems to be some specialisation in Spaniards or “foreigners”. But all agencies have a large proportion of foreign workers on their books even if they are not particularly encouraging of them. There also seems to be some “specialisation” according to country of origin. Thus Agency BS claimed that it did not attract Filipinas because “they do other kinds of work, less honourable, massage parlours, prostitution...”. In fact there is no independent evidence of any number of Filipinas working in the sex industry in Barcelona and this would seem to be based on plain prejudice. Agency S offered only Filipina workers, and Agency E principally Filipinas. Agency J only included Filipinas as one of the nationalities they placed, remarking in response to the question, which nationalities are easiest to place that:

“Beforehand it was the Filipinas because of their character and their elegance, but now they have to compete with other nationalities”.

However, the Filipino Centre had been approached by them shortly before they were interviewed for this project, and asked if they would send Filipinas who were looking for work to Agency J as they could find them some very good jobs.

Of the agencies interviewed, two were run by Filipinas, agency E and agency S. The Filipino Centre claims to know of a total of five agencies run by Filipinas (including E and S). One of these, agency S, run by a Filipina and her German husband, seems to be operating as a de facto introduction agency. The Filipino Centre was sent by a German group a letter circulating in Germany purporting to come from the Filipina director, saying that she wished to extend to others the happiness she had found in being married to a German and giving a Barcelona contact number. Agency S

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>MBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no Spanish</td>
<td>no response</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filipinas only</td>
<td>no response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filipinas only</td>
<td>no response</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S Americans 30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moroccans 20 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
refused to give a face to face interview and only offered the most cursory information on the telephone. However, whether or not connected with this group there are reports suggesting that Germans are coming to Barcelona to be introduced to Filipinas - one Filipina told me how she and some friends were waiting for a bus when they were approached by a group of male German tourists who were expecting to meet up with a Filipina group at the bus stop for an excursion to Andorra. They informed them that they were the wrong people and later saw the Germans join up with another group of Filipina women and gathered that this must be the party they were supposed to be meeting.

Agency E, the other agency interviewed run by a Filipina director, presents itself as a “happy family” kind of agency. The interview took place, not in the office, but in a flat shared by a group of Filipina domestic workers and the director had gathered a group of these clients to support her claims to offer a good service. Throughout the interview she was having her nails manicured by one of the domestic workers. The director says that she can recruit workers “through the informal network - my contacts put recently arrived girls in contact with me” and she will try to iron out any difficulties with the employer. She also worked as an agent for an life insurance company and encouraged her workers to take out loans and make use of her financial help.

Agencies were reluctant to discuss how they operated. Those advertising in newspapers tend to advertise both as agencies and as if they are individuals looking for or offering work. So agency PO advertises in Los Clasificados 14-20th Feb 1996 “Live-in girl, 60,000 pesetas (£333)” (a very low wage for a worker to be suggesting); agency J: “Wanted couple for Andorra. Her for the house, him for the garden, vegetable patch and chauffeur. Legal with references. No Moroccans. 180,000 +SS (£1,000)” (Primerama 15.2.1996). The usual rate quoted by workers for registration with agencies is P1,000 (£5.50) for three months, though only one of the agencies quoted this rate, Agency R. The others claimed that it was the employers who paid the agency or, according to Agency PO “there are no norms about who usually pays the agency”. None admitted to taking a regular percentage of the workers’ salary though some workers claimed that they had experience of this.
One of those workers present at the interview of Agency E claimed that Agency F takes the first month’s salary from the worker. Agency F had previously refused to be interviewed. Of the nine agencies interviewed, four offered a guarantee of between two months and one year to the employer. There was no mention of any such guarantee to the worker, but this could be covered in the three months registration.

Workers were extremely hostile towards agencies. Their registration fee did not guarantee a job, and to increase chances of work women had to register with three or four agencies, a significant outgoing when a worker is unemployed.

Advertisements

In all cities visited workers could broaden their opportunities for employment by responding to or placing a small ad in local newspapers. Personal advertisements tend to be used by people who have been working in the city for some time. There are always far more requests for work in these columns than there are jobs offered. In Barcelona personal advertisements in two publications were analysed: Primerama, the Catalan edition of the national daily, of 15.2.1996 and Los Clasificados, an advertising publication for the week 14-20 Feb 1996. There were 163 requests for employment and seventeen offers of employment (not including agencies), eleven of these offers were for live-in, and of these three specifically wanted Spanish workers. Those looking for work only rarely gave their nationality - ten stated that they were Spanish, eight gave other nationalities (four Moroccans, one Dominican, one Polish, one Peruvian and one Uruguayan) the remaining 145 simply described themselves as “chica” or “señora”. It is impossible to extract precise data on overseas domestic workers from personal advertisements. However, it seems that many of those advertising in Spain for example are not Spanish - of five picked at random and contacted by telephone, only one said that she was Spanish. More revealing perhaps are the numbers of employers who state that they want (or don’t want) a particular nationality (see Chapters Five, Six and Eight).

Migrant domestic workers interviewed had used personal advertisements with varying success. E. who arrived in Spain from Peru in 1991, had considerable
success with personal advertisements, though admittedly that was at a time when jobs were more easily available:

“I found a job as an *interina*, and I was working for one man on his own and then I was working for a very rich couple. I have got all at those jobs by put a job in *Primavera (Primerama)*, the foreigners here use that a lot and it’s good to put an advert in there, because then they call you. They called me and at the time you could take your choice. There were so many people who called, more than you would want and you just ask and you listen to them, and then you decided which job you wanted to go for.”

B. also from Peru, was less sanguine:

“I put in an advertisement looking for work in a magazine called *Primerama*, but I didn’t have any luck, in fact people kept calling me making indecent propositions.”

When M. from the Dominican Republic related her experience of responding to an advertisement in the *Vanguardia* and discovering that the employer was only ever taking on employees for a probationary period of one month with no contract and then sacking them, thereby avoiding paying them a salary, her description of the job was immediately recognised by L from Peru:

“I know him, he was always looking for somebody. I always saw his advertisement in the newspaper, ‘senor solo con Nina en Fiches...’. I never went for an interview with him because I wanted to know why he was always looking for a chica...”

The difficulty of personal advertisements is clearly that they are unregulated, and while this makes them useful, particularly for undocumented workers, they offer no guarantees or safeguards. In Berlin it was particularly noticeable that domestic workers advertising in newspapers stipulate “No Sex”, suggesting that those who placed them believed that an offer of “housework” could be misinterpreted.

Although domestic work is atomised and workers are very isolated, networks (of kin, friendship, nationality, religion) are extremely important for placement. Agencies and advertisements are not about to replace “direct hire”, which saves both workers
and employers the agency fee. Employers tap into their female friendship networks to find a worker, workers use their female friendship networks to find employers. This is true for both live-in and live-out work. When the arrangement is not commercialised, belonging to a network/community can be an important reference for an employer who is looking, not simply for a worker, but more often than not for a certain type of person (See Chapter Three). It may operate the other way round - as the nun from Athens suggested - in ensuring a community check on employer abuse: as the worker is an equal member of the church community, so the community will reprimand another member who abuses her. I have no proof however that workers are regarded as equal within the church communities, and was offered no example of such sanctions being used. Indeed in general it seems that networks are used to the employers’ advantage, while the employer is looking for a guarantee of a “good” worker, the worker is simply looking for a job. Instances where workers have used networks to attempt to sanction employers suggests that it can work. In Kalayaan for example, a note is made in the employment request book against the name of employers who do not pay workers or mistreat them, and this means that other workers can avoid them - or at least those workers who are organised. This process may also be done more informally when workers come together on their days off and exchange information.

TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT
Domestic workers classify their employment, not by type of work done (whether caring for children or cleaning a house), but by whether it is live-in or live-out. Live-in is often though by no means always associated with caring for children, the elderly or the disabled, live-out usually means working for several employers and is generally more task-orientated, involving cleaning, collecting children from school, ironing etc. Live-in work was more common in Athens, Bologna and Barcelona. Workers in those cities visited felt that live-out work was becoming more scarce and the expansion in domestic work was for live-in workers.

Living in - advantages and disadvantages
At first sight, live-in domestic work may seem a reasonable option for a newly arrived migrant. Problems of accommodation and employment are solved in one, the
worker minimises her expenses and can acclimatise herself to a new language and culture. The Caritas volunteer in Athens explained:

"It’s easy to find live-in if you don’t ask too much. Fifty thousand a month, and you can find work, maybe an old lady, she just wants small work and the company. So you don’t have to work hard, and that is good money, it is money in your pocket. You don’t have to spend, the lady will give you your clothes, will take you to the hospital, give you good food. You don’t have to spend money...The foreigners don’t think about it. Rent, electricity, food, that can easily be 90,000 (£253) a month.”

Newly arrived workers are often under intense pressure to pay off high interest migratory debts as soon as possible, so will take the first job offered, more likely than not to be live-in. Live-in work minimises expenses and provides urgently needed shelter. Accommodation is more than a place to live, it is shelter from the police, and many newly arrived migrants are now undocumented and terrified of deportation. Of course there are long term migrants who are also in this position. Workers in Athens described how a police crackdown on undocumented migrants in 1993 meant that they worked unpaid on their days off because they did not want to go outside and risk being caught by the police.

Live-in work is not a good financial arrangement for the worker in the medium term however. While she seems to incur no expenses, employers will often excuse paying her a low wage because she is being paid “in kind”. The Caritas volunteer again:

“I heard one Ethiopian say she left because there was no food in the house.
Of course, if you ask 130,000 (drachmas = £366) you will not get food, but if you get 30,000 (£85) then you will get food”

If rent, electricity and food come to 90,000 (£253) drachmas a month as she claimed, then it seems “the foreigners” have made excellent calculations in preferring live-out work! Paying in kind makes no allowance for the fact that migrants have come to earn money, usually to send back to families in their countries of origin. As one woman put it:
"You go to work, you need the money to feed your children, and in place to pay you they give you old clothes. 'I give you this, I give you this'. They give you the things, but me, I need the money. Why come? I am a human being."

(Zairian working in Athens)

These sorts of "payments" are much more common among live-in than live-out.

Pay seems even lower when one acknowledges that the live-in worker is almost invariably "on call" twenty four hours a day. This was the most common complaint among live-in domestic workers, whatever city they lived in, whether they worked for "good" or "bad" employers.

"From the morning and you’re working the minute you open your eyes and the minute you close your eyes, you keep your strength and your body going so that you will finish work...you will keep on waiting to your employer till they get sleep because although you finish your work, example you finish ironing, everything, putting the children to bed or the elder person in bed, even you put them in bed at ten o’clock still there are other members of the family. So you keep on observing, oh, can I sleep or maybe they will call me to give them food or to give them a yoghurt...And even if you are sleeping if you are already sleeping still you can feel that you are still on duty isn’t it."

(Filipina in Athens)

Workers commonly complained of having to be available both ends of the day, early in the morning for children and late at night for entertaining guests. But it is not simply a question of long hours as the above quotation makes clear, for live-in workers are permanently available, which is particularly arduous when the work involves babies or elderly people who can be demanding at night, as B. working in Barcelona put it:

"I think that they can never pay you enough for working twenty four hours a day...for a job involving such sacrifice as living twenty four hours a day with a person who has Alzheimers, who has senile dementia, that work is very demanding."

This is compounded by some employers’ apparent dislike of seeing their worker rest. This again was commonly referred to by workers living in, that if their employer caught them sitting down, they would immediately find them a task to do. Clearly
this is particularly difficult when workers are spending not just a few hours, but all their time in their employers’ house. Many employers seem to resent their live-in employees taking a break, and, unlike live-out work, it was not possible for the workers to control their time so they could make their own breaks.

The more common daily exploitation of live-in domestic workers is illustrated by Diary A kept for six days by a Filipina working in Paris for a family with two school age children whose parents both work full-time. Although supposed to work 45 hours a week in fact she worked for 69 hours and 25 minutes. She worked between 10 hours 10 minutes and 17 hours 30 minutes a day. On Thursday and Friday she finished at 12.30am and 1.30am having been at work since 8am with no break even for lunch. After finishing preparation of dinner for her employers she routinely travelled for one hour to an elderly relative of the employers, gave him a meal, cleaned and made his bed. Scarcely surprising that she complains about her hours:

“Too much hours and unfortunately God knows if she’s going to pay me for that, even if she’s the one who said she will pay extra hours I never receive the right price for the hours I had for them...well for how many years that’s life working- few hours for yourself. Anyway got used to them. They’re better than what I had before. So wait for Monday and the ball rolls again with the same routine”.

Live-in workers do usually (though not always) have one day off a week, but even this can present problems. Complaints of “day off swapping” were common, when employers unilaterally decided to change the worker’s day off to suit their own convenience, or restricted free time unreasonably - for example requiring that the worker give breakfast to the children before she left and be back in time to give them their tea. In Athens and Barcelona it was usual for workers to spend one night away from the employing household as part of their day off. This could be at the worker’s initiative, to ensure that they could not be available for their employer, or at the employer’s insistence on the grounds that they should not have to provide accommodation for their worker when they were not available to them. No thought was given by the employer as to how the worker was to provide for herself in this
"time off" - usually workers shared flats with large groups of compatriots as an insurance against sudden unemployment and for days off.

Long hours therefore are a serious problem for live-in domestic workers. N. in Athens put the employers' point of view:

"She kept asking me, how many hours must I do my housework? I explained that in a house there are no hours...so I told her, until 2pm just to keep her quiet. One day, she was with a dustpan and brush. She heard the clock, two o'clock, she put the brush down.. and then said, 'It's time for our lunch'. I asked her, 'Why did you leave the brush?' 'Because at two o'clock I finish'. That girl had a problem with her mind."

"In a house there are no hours" may be true for the household manager. It is particularly true for the care of young children and older people and no one would deny the importance of breaks from caring work, whether it is performed by relatives or paid carers. The problem for the worker is that as her work is not definable in terms of tasks performed, nor is there any objective standard - of cleanliness, tidiness etc. that she must meet, the standard is imposed by the household manager, and the standard can always be raised. It is one thing to be employed to do specific tasks, or to be paid for a set number of hours to do an ill-defined job, but to have to work twenty four hours at an ill-defined job risks serious exploitation (see Chapter Nine). The difficulty for the worker is that, as "domestic worker" is a role, living in she has no rest from that role, but is living it twenty four hours a day. The employer is buying, not just her time, but her very identity (See Chapter Three).

Another common complaint among live-in domestic workers is lack of privacy, sometimes they are not even given their own bedrooms, or they must sleep with open doors:

"they told me my door must always be open because the children might cry, but the children were fifteen, and the visitors' bathroom was next to my bedroom, and I am afraid, and I said, please, this is my privacy".

(Filipina in Athens)

This lack of privacy means that the worker has literally no time to herself, and, as indicated above, leaves her vulnerable to sexual abuse and rape:
“she drove me away because I quarrelled with her son because her son entered my room at 12.30 at night...He entered, but when the door squeaked I woke up and then I saw the door open...and he was there, standing there by my bed looking at me.”
(Filipina in Barcelona)

Live-in domestic workers have no private life, except for those hours snatched on her day off. This has profound consequences for her as a human being. I have already mentioned the problems faced by domestic workers who have children but who cannot care for them. Also devastating is the realisation that when you are working live-in you cannot have children:

“My biggest sacrifice is that I cannot have children, if I did I would have to leave my job. You can’t have anyone to stay with you - relatives or friends”
(Cote d’Ivoirean in Parma).

Workers are generally in the prime reproductive years, between twenty and forty, but there was no worker who thought that pregnancy would end anywhere else but on the streets, and for those workers who did fall pregnant, this was borne out:

“My wife she was here fifteen years, she come for a Greek woman, brought her here fifteen years ago...She sacked her away from the home because she was pregnant. So after she deliver she don’t want her again. To work for somebody for fifteen years you become family, but she do nothing for us. Nothing. Nothing she gave to her.”
(Ghanaian man in Athens)

It is very difficult for live-in workers to sustain relationships other than with the employing family because of her lack of control over her own time, which is why “day off swopping” is such a problem. The day off is the only time when the worker can “be herself”, quite literally. It is her chance to meet friends and compatriots.

“Sunday is the day all the Filipinos meet and they have basket-ball, they eat Filipino food and it’s so nice, it’s all I ask, once a month. Saturday and Sunday and the basket-ball court. I am very, very lonely because I live far from Athens, and I want to have Sunday off and my employer just said, ‘we’ll see’...Because they out on the boat at the weekend and the house is lonely so I am in the house and maybe somebody will break in or something like that,
so I just have to be there and it’s so quiet. And all the time I’m thinking, ‘Oh
now they’re in the basket-ball, they’re talking’, and I have to put on the
television or the radio, because it’s quite as if I’m going mad.”

(Filipina in Athens)

Domestic work is isolating even when it is the responsibility of a person who is living
with family and friends nearby. How much more so when the worker is in a foreign
country with such limited access to those she can enjoy an equal relationship with?

For live-in domestic workers the employer can control all aspects of her life, not just
her work, and even exceeding control over her time. The clearest example of this is
the many arguments live-in workers had with employers over food surely one of the
most basic of human requirements. Baths, sleeping arrangements, letters from home,
clothes worn, there is no aspect of the live-in worker’s life that cannot be potentially
scrutinised by the employer.

Living Out - Advantages And Disadvantages

Live-out work is almost universally preferred to live-in. Employment placement
agencies interviewed were clear that while demand from employers was for live-in
workers, the demand from workers was for live-out placements as the following
table illustrates:
Table 3 Requests for live-in and live-out work in Barcelona

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>employer requests</th>
<th>worker requests</th>
<th>comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>live-in</td>
<td>live-out</td>
<td>live-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBS</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>no details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>no details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>foreigners live-in</td>
<td>Spaniards live-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOS</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>foreigners want live-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>no details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: This table is drawn up from responses to questions to agencies: "what is the proportion of employer demand for live-in vs live-out domestic workers" and "what is the proportion of employee supply for live-in vs live-out". "Comments" are drawn from other relevant responses.*
The pattern among migrant domestic workers in Europe is usually to work live-in on
arrival but, after some years, when debts have been paid off and the worker is more
accustomed to the country she is living in and is integrated into networks that can
help her find employers, to work live-out. Many of the difficulties experienced by
more settled people arise partly as a result of the transition from live-in to live-out
work. According to Caritas in Barcelona this was a common source of difficulty:

“Our worker in Rabal district says that of the situations she finds, many
domestic workers find work quite quickly, but it’s live-in work. Then straight
away they bring their family and that causes many problems...because now
she’s brought her children she can no longer carry on working live-in because
she has to have a flat and to look after her children. She thought because she
has found live-in work, she would be able to find live-out, hourly work but
she hasn’t found it. So the situation deteriorates. And our work in Rabal has
found many cases like this...Because it’s not the same as I said before, you
can find work as live-in but hourly work is super, super full.”

Living out usually means working for several different employers, though it was not
unusual in Paris and Barcelona for workers to work for only one family full time and
live-out. In Spain, where it is most common, this arrangement is called “interina”. As
was apparent from the AGF’s employment books there is some considerable demand
for workers who live-out but work full time for a family, particularly by people with
young children. The long hours offered were confirmed by two interviews with
French employers who employed foreign workers on this basis: BC described her
worker as doing

“everything: she looks after the children, does the ironing, the cleaning and
the shopping”.

Her hours were 8.15am-7.30pm daily. CT’s worker works from 9am to 9pm daily:

“She basically takes care of the children: feeds them, helps them with their
clothes, washes them. She also does the ironing and the cleaning of the
house. She sometimes does the cooking and the shopping”.

Diary B, written by an undocumented worker employed full time by a family of four
in Paris demonstrates that those who live-out but are employed full time do not
necessarily only work for one family. The writer is supposed to work for her full time employer for 40 hours a week, 1.30pm - 9.30pm daily. In fact in the week she kept details of her hours she worked a total of 44 hours and 40 minutes. Although unpaid overtime this is clearly not as excessive as diarist A. The increased control she has over her time means that she also works for two mornings a week, cleaning a business premises and one morning a week with a part time private employer. The former may sound more formal than it really is, since when the company president is in town she must wash his clothes (by hand). It also means that she usually has time for lunch - which is just as well since when at her full time employers she has only one chance to eat - the fifteen minutes while they are eating their dessert. The family diarist B works for is more formal than diarist A: she wears a uniform, serves at table and washes by hand all porcelain, silver and crystal following formal dinner parties. However, the tasks she performs are very similar, with the addition of serving at table. She is not expected to iron, but does so “to help the Saturday part timer”. It takes her between forty five minutes and one hour to travel to her employer’s house i.e. she spends one and a half to two hours a day travelling. She earns 1,500 francs (£206) a week, i.e. roughly the French minimum wage, but with no taxation or benefits since she is undocumented.

Diarist B lives in the same apartment block as a former employer, and in the six days recorded in her diary she visits them twice.

Monday 15.1.96 9.30am: Went down to my former employer in the same building and cooked/prepared for them lasagne for their dinner with some invited visitors free of charge because they’re my very first employer and as if I’m part of their family already....
Saturday 20.1.96 6.00pm: I have to visit my former employer with the three kids, which the eldest was the first took care here in Paris...I had to cook for the children and play for them afterwards. This is free of charge.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to find live-out work in Athens, Barcelona and Bologna. Workers in all three cities felt there was more competition for live-out work from the mid-90s onwards, and consequently women who would have expected to have moved out are still working at living in jobs.
The advantages of live-out work are clear. The personal control exercised by the employer over the worker tends to be much less. The worker is less dependent on the employer, partly because she has several employers at any one time and to lose one does not entail the loss of her entire livelihood, and also because she has her own accommodation and is not dependent on her employer for her living space. One must beware of painting too rosy a picture though, for those who live-out are often juggling their own family commitments and domestic responsibilities with those attached to their employers’ households. LP is a 42 year old Algerian woman living in France for fifteen years with three children aged 8 to 13. She works as a domestic worker for four hours every morning, tidying up, hoovering and washing clothes. Her hours are not fixed so making it easy for her to combine it with her own responsibilities:

"That is the reason why I can take my children to school in the morning because if I have to start work, I normally start it at 9am to finish at 1pm; I also have free time to go and collect the kids from school in the evening."

However LP is not paid any money. She is cleaning her landlord’s flat for a rent reduction - though the rent, at 4,500F a month is still expensive. CR, a Moroccan woman who came to France in 1990 works taking a child to school at 8.30am and collecting her and giving her tea in the evening. She earns 40 francs (£5.50) for a six hour day, considerably below what she could earn if she were declared:

"For taking a kid to school you get 10 francs (£1.35). For looking after kid work, I earned 40 francs (£5.50) per day. Not much, but I was not complaining because not only it was a job in ‘dark’ in other words without paper but also easy work itself."

- “easy work” because it was possible to combine with having to collect and feed her own children aged 6, 5 and 4.

The daily difficulties of part time employment are exemplified by diarist C. She works for five employers. Her most regular employer employs her for twenty two and a half hours (mornings Monday-Saturday, except Wednesday). She is undocumented and undeclared. She is married and lives with her husband. They have no children. She worked 52 hours and 5 minutes during the Monday-Saturday that
she kept her diary. However, if one adds the time spent travelling to work and between jobs (13.45 hours) this becomes 65 hours and 50 minutes - nearly as long as live-in diarist A. Travel time (amounting to nearly one and a half days a week) is not paid. Diarist C eats with her husband in the evening and prepares lunch for both of them to take to work in the morning. It is noticeable that she spends far more time on her own domestic chores than the other two diarists even though she has no children. However, her husband is also available to help her at her fifth employers on Saturday afternoon meaning the job is completed in two rather than four hours. In general the tasks she performs are similar to those outlined by the other two diarists, including taking children to school, ironing, preparing food, washing. Her time is far more tightly managed than the other workers - principally because efficient time management is clearly crucial to her work:

"Monday 15.1.96 1.20-1.30pm: I put the shoes of the little boy and took him down with me to give him to his grandmother waiting at the garden.
1.30-1.40pm: I run to my afternoon job...."

Wednesday 17.1.96 12.10-1pm: clean the bathroom, toilet, wash 4 pieces of brassiere clean the salon.
1.00-1.05: I run to my semi-fulltime job for baby-sitting and cleaning...." etc.

Live-out work then is highly demanding in terms of efficient time management, finding work, travelling between jobs etc.

CONCLUSIONS

Migrant domestic workers in Europe are an extremely varied group. They come from all continents of the world, from a wide variety of background and experiences, though where they come from and what their immigration status is depends very much on the policies of the receiving European states. Their experiences vary widely too: while some workers feel that they are happy in their work and are well treated by their employers, many felt exploited and demeaned by employers' demands. Speaking very broadly, there are two factors which can have a significant impact on the living and working conditions of domestic workers: whether or not they are live-in (i.e. their relation to their employer), and whether or not they have papers (i.e. their relation to the state). This could be represented diagramatically thus:
Those workers who are in sector “D” are likely to be more independent of employers and to enjoy better living and working conditions than those in “A”, “B” and “C”. Those in sector “B” are particularly vulnerable, since they are dependent on their employers for accommodation, must be permanently available, and, should they come to the attention of the state, are liable for deportation. I posit this only as a rule of thumb. Some documented workers may be dependent on their employers for their immigration status for example (see Chapter Ten), and each worker comes to their situation with their own history, personality and psychobiography, which can make all the difference in managing the intensely personalised relationship with their employer (see Chapter Eight). Having given an overview of the social organisation of domestic work for migrants, I will go on to examine the migrant domestic workers’ living and working conditions in the different European cities visited, giving some indication of their variation from city to city.
CHAPTER FIVE
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: GREECE, SPAIN AND ITALY

Whether workers are documented or undocumented, live-in or live-out depends to a large extent on immigration policy and employers’ demands. There are workers in all cities who fall into each sector of Figure 1. However, live-in predominates in Athens, Barcelona and Bologna, live-out in Paris and Berlin, and there were at the time of the fieldwork large numbers of undocumented workers in Athens, Berlin and Barcelona. Does this model help to explain some of the variation in workers’ experiences across Europe?

GREECE

One of the crucial factors in appreciating the situation of migrant domestic workers in Athens is that, at the time of interviewing, the majority of them were undocumented. It will be interesting to observe whether the current (1998) legalisation process that covers many migrant domestic workers will change this. The fieldwork for this research was conducted prior to that exercise.

At the time of interviewing most immigration to Greece was undocumented. This has been so since immigration to Greece from Eastern Europe began soon after the Second World War. In the late 1970s people came from Poland and the Third World to work in construction, agriculture and domestic work, usually overstaying tourist or student visas. It is particularly difficult to estimate the numbers of undocumented migrants in Greece because approximately half of them are Albanians, many of whom stay only temporarily, for months or two or three years, before returning to Albania, and perhaps re-entering Greece some time later (Psimmenos 1996). Church and migrant organisations interviewed estimated that the largest other single nationalities are the Poles (80,000-100,000) and Filipinos (40,000). The 1995 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) argued that about one in twelve employed persons is a foreigner in Greece but that

"Most foreigners who work in Greece do so illegally. ... Immigrants without work permits can find jobs despite high unemployment. Their wages, perhaps
three to six times more than they can earn at home, are about half the market rate in Greece” (OECD1995 :93).

The report states that “foreign labour is used by many households for care of small children and older persons, as well as for house maintenance and repairs, where it provides low-priced and flexible labour. The large size of the informal economy (estimated at 30 per cent of the total) and established networks that assist newcomers with information and accommodation contribute to the continuing flows” (OECD1995: 93).

It goes on to argue that this state of affairs is regarded by many as beneficial to the Greek economy and society. This finding was confirmed when in 1996/97 the government began to consider legalisation, and the Ministry of Labour was sent sixty two reports and letters in response to a draft decree. Of these, fifty seven emphasised the usefulness of migrant labour (Fakiolas 1997: 5).

The reason for the widespread illegality among migrants in Athens lies in the 1991 new “Law for Foreigners”. Under this law priority for employment goes to Greek nationals, “ethnic Greeks”, nationals of other EU countries and foreigners granted refugee status by the Greek government. Only if an employer cannot fill the post with an applicant in one of these categories can they apply for a work permit for a foreigner (OECD1995: 92). This must be renewed annually for a maximum of five years. In 1993 30,000 work permits were issued but 17,400 of these were to nationals of other EU countries. In 1975 52.5 per cent of work permits were issued to non-Europeans, and in 1992 this was down to 17 per cent. Similarly in 1975 16.5 per cent of work permits were issued to non-European women, and in 1992 this was down to 7.1 per cent. There is a clear relationship between gender and sending country, so, for example, of the non-European men in receipt of work permits in 1992, 69 per cent were from Egypt - with whom Greece had a bilateral immigration agreement, and of the 1,200 women, 79 per cent were from Asia - with the caveat that it is people given work permits, ie not necessarily representative of actual migration flows so a Ghanaian woman might just be less likely to get a work permit than a Filipina, not that there are fewer of them. Commentators on Greek migration claim that the difficulties experienced in acquiring either a work permit or a residence permit mean
that the majority of migrants who are Third Country Nationals are undocumented (Psimmenos 1996). Between January 1991 and August 1994, 764,000 illegal entrants were deported. The purpose of the 1991 legislation was allegedly to link entry and residence very much to the needs of the Greek economy but the continuing demand for migrant labour and the dependence of the Greek economy on undocumented migrants has made this a demonstrable failure.

In fact the adoption of a "tough" stance on migration by Greece has not meant that it is controlled. I was reliably informed of methods, routes and prices for entering Greece without passing through immigration, and met people who had indeed recently succeeded in crossing the border in these ways, though many of their companions had died or otherwise been lost along the way. Many also enter the country as tourists. As well as people continuing to enter the country the numbers of undocumented workers are swollen by the difficulty in leaving the country. The 1991 Act gave large powers to the Minister of Public Order to pass rules on matters of immigration and asylum. These include passing heavy fines and prison sentences on people who have overstayed or entered the country illegally. Those who enter without documents are subject to imprisonment for a minimum of three months (the lawyer who was interviewed told of a case of a young man imprisoned for fifteen months). This resulted in such a large increase in the prison population that the penalty was suspended in 1995, to be implemented only if the person re-entered the country. Those who overstay have to pay a penalty of 500,000 drachmas (£1,400) for every year that they have overstayed. This sum represents a small fortune for migrant workers, and the impossibility of paying means that they have to remain in the country even if they want to return home.

"We are living in a big prison. Nowhere to go. We stay here in this country simply, no recognition. We don't have a chance to go to school, a chance to work, or a chance to have medical care. We are living in a big prison, a big prison."

(Ethiopian in Athens.)

Almost all the women spoken to were undocumented, overstayers or of uncertain legal status. Some, like the Eritreans had previously had some status. Even those who do manage to regularise their status are not secure. J came in 1974 in response to an
advertisement for a babysitter placed in a newspaper in Mauritius. Unbeknownst to her, her immigration papers were falsified by her employers, who told her to destroy all documentation on entry:

"I had no knowledge of cheating. I had lived a very neat life until then, so I did what I was told".

So began long years of being an undocumented worker. In 1981 her then employer, a government official, managed to get her a work permit. This enabled her to bring over to Greece her husband and children and it seemed that her situation would end happily. But in 1991 her permit was taken away from her. She did not understand why other than "it was because of Maastricht". Her children could not renew their residence permits:

"My daughter was ten when she came. Then when she was seventeen they took the papers from her. She's twenty one now and still no papers. My son was trained to be a mechanical engineer. He finished, he got his diploma here in Greece, then lost his papers. He applied to go to Michigan, they accepted him but he could not get a visa to go to USA because he did not have a permit for Greece. I begged them here to give him a visa, just for a month. Because he didn't want to stay here, he wanted to go, but they wouldn't."

J, her husband and her children continue to accrue fines of millions of drachmas because they are unable to leave the country. She, like many of the women I spoke to, felt they were trapped in Greece, brought over by unscrupulous employers and agencies, losing any employment opportunities in their home countries, and in Greece paid such low wages that they could not afford the fine payable on leaving.

The majority of domestic workers had never had any legal status in Greece other than a tourist visa although many had entered to work for specific employers. Two had entered with foreign employers, one Indian, and had been given a tourist visa, and one with Lebanese employers. Several domestic workers interviewed had not passed through immigration at all, crossing land borders by foot or in trucks, or swimming from Turkey. One person spoken to had spent two days in the sea underwater, breathing through a tube, to cross the Graeco-Turkish border safely. Some of the Filipinas who had lived in Greece for a while had entered with a "nursing aide permit". In the late 1970s and early 1980s this was commonly given to live-in domestic workers as a means of circumventing the problem that employers had to prove that they could not get a Greek worker for the
job they wanted to employ a foreigner. They then either did not have their papers renewed by their employer or had stayed longer than the statutory five years. According to Kasapi, those who overstay tend to come to Athens, as they are more conspicuous on the islands, and it is easier to find work as an undocumented worker in the capital. The nursing aide permit was effectively ended under the 1991 Act.

As in other European Union states domestic work in private households was said to be the only work available to migrant women in Greece apart from prostitution. When I explained to an official from the General Secretariat for Equality that I was interested in the situation of foreign women in Greece, she took it for granted that I meant private domestic workers. When I pointed this out, she replied simply that that is the work that foreign women do. None of the women I spoke to had had any employment other than domestic work, apart from one woman who worked in a shipping company, and another who was working as a live-out cleaner in the days and was a waitress in the evening. Notably this was in a restaurant cooking her national food - "Because if you are working without papers you have to go under cover". Many of the women held degrees and skills which they could not use. The standard of English of the majority of domestic workers in the consultation was extremely high, and it was often the women's fourth or fifth language.

The extent to which domestic service in Athens is dominated by non-citizens is striking, and there was a wide range of nationalities working in the sector. I met women from Ghana, Zaire, Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Mauritius, Eritrea, Albania, Sierra Leone, Chile, Ethiopia and Rumania. In her recording of employment requests the volunteer at Caritas listed Poles, Albanians, Rumanians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Yugoslavians, Russians, Czechs, Ethiopian, separately, as well as “Arabic” “African” and “South American” - to give some idea of the range of nationalities involved. Her records indicate that certain nationalities predominate at different times. In January - June 1990 for example, 425 Ethiopians requested work from Caritas, and this dropped to 249 in January - June 1991. In June - December 1990, 138 Albanians were listed, and one year later, in June - December 1991 this had increased to 456. While one cannot extrapolate from such figures beyond Caritas, it does give some idea of the range of nationalities involved in domestic work. It was also striking how many workers had not intended to
stay in Greece, but to use it as a stepping off point for Canada, the USA or other
Northern European countries, and had found that it was not possible to get a visa for the
country they wanted to enter, so remained in Greece by default.

Almost all the workers interviewed were living in, often with responsibility for care of the
elderly or of children, but with this extended to include a wide variety of household
chores such as chopping firewood, gardening, cleaning the garage, ironing, doing the
housework of employers' relatives, looking after animals etc. Hours were commonly
stated as a source of grievance:

"we as a live-in are working almost sixteen hours, or twenty hours a day"
(Filipina in Athens)

Salary varied between 50,000 (£140) to 150,000 (£420) drachmas a month, with some
women earning 300 (£1.50) drachmas per hour and others over 1,000 (£2.80). Pay
depends to a large extent on the nationality and skin colour of the worker (see Chapter
Eight). Those who had found work through Caritas were earning the lowest wages. All
nationalities complained of the widespread problem of non-payment. Some employers
seem to bring in a domestic worker for a "spring clean" and,

"you work hard for one month and at the end of the month they tell you, 'No, I
can't pay you'. Why you come here, you clean their home, and you don't get
paid?"

(Indian in Athens)

In the consultation women discussed the practise of "holiday employment" when families
employ domestics for the summer, to take with them to the islands on holiday for two or
three months, and then discharged them without pay. Irene described how she had gone
on behalf of a friend to find out about a job she had seen advertised in the paper. The
house was in Kifissia, a very exclusive area of Athens and it was being decorated.

"The woman said, 'I have something to do, if you are free'. So I said, 'yes, if you
will pay me'.... So I cleaned the stairs, I took the paint off, and I put the carpets to
wash. It was from 12.30-6.00pm. I didn't eat because I am ashamed to ask. I
didn't even get one glass of water. Then I wanted to leave, and she said, 'I'll drop
you at the gate'. Then I asked her for the money - she had promised 2,000
drachmas (£5.60). She said, 'I don't have anything on me now'. But I had seen in
her bedroom 12,000 drachmas (£33.80) because sometimes they do that, they
leave money out to test, to see if you will steal. She said, 'call me tomorrow'.
Next day I am calling her - she is not in. She is never in. What kind of people are
these?".

(Sri Lankan in Athens)

Non-payment is not only a problem with employers picked on a casual basis. It is also a
problem for some workers who enter Greece to work for a particular employer: T. came
believing she had a permit to work in an office, but when she arrived, her sponsor made it
clear, "I came to be on the bed". She refused his advances, so he put her to work in the
house, refusing to return her passport and return ticket and not paying her any money.
After three months he cashed her return ticket. She continued in this position until she
found other work, unable to go home because she had no ticket. W came with a
Lebanese family who maltreated her until she begged them to give her a return ticket
home. They refused to do this, and did not pay her. This forced her into running away,
because her children at home were completely dependent on her income and were
starving. She found another job, but sent money to her former employers until she had
covered the cost of her return ticket to Greece.

Paid holiday and regular days off, usually considered rights to which an employee is
entitled, are, for the domestic worker, often considered as favours. Everybody consulted
had a regular day off, though this might be because obviously those who had no day off
would be unable to attend meetings and interviews. Some complained that in the past
they had had no day off:

"For one year I never went out of the house. I had no day off and I worked for
nothing"

(Indian in Athens)

Most people had some hours off on Sunday - though they would often be expected to
work before they left and to return on Sunday evening. Some had an entire day off, while
others - almost all Filipinas - had one and a half days off.

If a worker falls sick or has an accident, she loses her job. There seems no question that
employers will pay for medical care. L. was seriously injured by a motorcycle in a hit and
run accident. I interviewed her six months later, when she still could not walk and had her
right leg in plaster, with no idea of when she could return to work - "little by little the doctor says". Her employers of that time had found another worker, and L. was surviving on money collected by her church and contributions from other domestic workers. Neither are employers responsible for accidents at work. One woman, for example complained of serious asthma induced by the chemicals she was required to spray on her employers' plants:

"So finally in the morning I went to the doctor and they asked me to make X-rays. There was some problem, they ask me I have to pay, you know. Then they say I didn't pay the X-ray and then they ask me do you have insurance and I said no, he said to me the medicine is very expensive. So I asked him, he was nice, please can you give me a paper for my boss. So my friend called my boss and said I'm sick, really I couldn't breath, without the pot, I can't breath until now because of the chemicals, and all those things and the trees and right now she called my boss because I am sick, the next day she was having visitors, you know, for dinner and the next day I went there, I went there and I called her she say that she doesn't want me no more because of that, I get sick because of her stuff and she say stop working."

(Ethiopian working in Athens)

This lack of responsibility is not only a problem with physical illness. Mental illness is a serious problem for foreign workers in Greece and mental illness was a problem that domestic workers returned to again and again:

"D: Because so many have sickness, mental deteriorated, so many people we know".

"G: Some Filipinos with problems with their employers also, sometimes they commit suicide. They jump from the fourth floor to the ground".

"N: There were two Ethiopian girls in the mental hospital. I went to ask for a doctor so I could pray with them. He told me I could not and I would have to pay for them to leave the hospital. He said, 'if you do not, we will deport her to Ethiopia'. But she was sick and she had no one in Ethiopia. She had worked here for five years, and she had one shirt only. ..I told them, the hospital has authority
over the police, so they can stop deportation. But the hospital said, that's only for Greeks, and we don't know what happens to her in Ethiopia. It's not our business. So she was sent back to Ethiopia. The other girl was also sent back."

Workers believed that mental problems stemmed partly from immigration status: constant fear of the police; rejection of claims for asylum; being trapped by economic and circumstances in Greece. These problems were compounded by the drudgery of domestic work, insecurity of employment, physical and sexual abuse and being cut off from strong community networks that supported them in their home countries. Domestic workers also claimed that pregnancy meant dismissal, even in cases where the woman was pregnant by her male employer. M was raped by her employer, became pregnant and was thrown out. She delivered her baby on the streets. Some weeks later, while still homeless, the child was taken from her by some officials, she did no know who they were. When I met her she was clearly mentally ill, living on the streets and still unemployed. Women who became pregnant commonly lost their jobs, even when, as with H's case, she had been brought to Greece by her employer fifteen years ago. H had a difficult pregnancy since she had twins, and had to have a hospital birth. This was extremely expensive, but her employer contributed nothing towards these costs nor gave her anything for the baby.

SPAIN

Unlike in Athens there was not a wide range of nationalities working in private households in Barcelona. Although many workers were undocumented, there were a significant number holding permits. The reasons for these differences are to be found in the history of Spanish immigration legislation. There has been considerable undocumented immigration to Spain since the 1960s when it was relatively easy for a non-Spanish citizen to enter Spain and work even if they did not have the necessary papers to do so legally. Moroccan and Portuguese workers in particular were encouraged to come and work on large-scale infrastructure projects and of these, many of those who did obtain work permits lost them through later unemployment but continued to stay in Spain. The tightening of European Community border controls in the 1970s when Spain was still outside the fortress meant that many immigrants who had originally thought of Northern Europe as their destination
remained in Spain. By the 1980s these were being absorbed by the ever increasing informal sector which, according to the Ministerio de la Economía accounted for one third of all jobs by 1985.

The 1985 Ley de Extranjería enacted in 1986 required foreign workers to have a residence and work permit before they could apply for citizenship. No visa was required for citizens of South America in recognition of Spain’s historical ties with the continent, but this was not applicable to the crucial female labour exporters of Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Peru. In order to obtain permits a formal work contract is necessary - clearly a potential problem for the many migrants working in the informal sector, but particularly difficult for domestic workers. These restrictions meant that from then on new migration to Spain was predominantly undocumented, and that large numbers of people who had lived in the country for many years could not be regularised. By the end of the 1980s the Spanish government was forced to acknowledge the existence of large numbers of undocumented workers in the country, and in 1991 a regularisation process was undertaken with the participation and support of voluntary organisations and Trades Unions. There were 132,934 applications. By March 1992 103,675 had been granted a one year residence permit. Work and residence permits were granted under the restrictions of the Ley de Extranjería outlined above. The most important sector in this regularisation process was the service sector. Several of the workers interviewed were regularised in 1991. Others missed it for administrative reasons or because their employer would not give them a contract.

The continuing demand for migrant labour in certain sectors of the economy - notably agriculture and domestic work, was acknowledged by the introduction of a quota system in 1993 (quota = “cupo” in Castilian). A maximum of 20,000 work permits for non-EU nationals were to be granted annually. Work permits for domestic service were to be granted to Filipinos, Dominicans and Peruvians, for agriculture to Moroccans. This occupation by nationality was much criticised by community groups as racist and has since been abolished, though domestic workers continue to be almost always from those countries and from Morocco. Quotas continue to be set by geographical area and applications far exceed numbers granted.
In 1995 for example the *cupo* limit for Catalonia was set at 1,000, and there were some 5,000 applications. Although directed at ensuring newcomers enter legally many of those interviewed used the *cupo* in order to regularise themselves. So a worker who has been working for an employer illegally will return to their country of origin in order to present papers - formal offer of employment etc to the Spanish Embassy there and then re-enter Spain legally.

There are many undocumented women working in this sector: all community groups interviewed said that there continued to be women entering without papers to work in private households, and I met currently undocumented women from Philippines, Dominican Republic, Peru and Morocco. However, unlike in Greece, where it was highly unusual for a domestic worker to have a work permit, the 1991 regularisation and the continuing *cupo* system have meant that a significant proportion do have documents, and that those who are currently undocumented have a clear means and ambition to regularise their situation in the medium term. The "*cupo*" system, and the visa requirement for women from certain countries accounts for the concentration of women from Philippines, Dominican Republic and Peru in domestic work.

Filipina domestic workers
The Filipino community is one of the oldest migrant communities in Barcelona. It began in the 1960s with women migrating to work as domestics, predominantly in the homes of the very wealthy. Most of these women entered on tourist visas and many were regularised under the 1991 regularisation. In the Town Hall’s report on immigrants in Barcelona an estimate is given of 15,000 Filipinos in Barcelona (December 1995) mainly single women. The Centro Filipino on the other hand, estimates 8-10,000 Filipinos, with up to 40 per cent male since the introduction of the 1991 *cupos*. This is a surprising discrepancy - official bodies tend to underestimate relative to community organisations.

Almost all Filipino women work as domestic workers. The men too work in private households, as gardeners, chauffeurs and cleaners, often as part of a couple. This is easier for Filipinos than for other groups, partly because they tend to work for wealthier households. There has been some movement out of live-in work to hourly
work by Filipinas, particularly since the 1991 regularisation exercise which has facilitated family reunification. However, this is generally felt to have stopped, not because it is undesirable, but because live-out jobs are so scarce. Live-in work as a couple is one way of resolving this problem. It is also common for Filipinas to rent flats together where they spend the nights of their time off.

In general Filipinos are perceived by other nationals to be better off than other groups: they command higher wages and better conditions, are well organised, comprise a larger proportion of documented workers and are generally thought to be well regarded by Spanish society.

"It is a little bit different situation between Filipinas and other nationalities, firstly because you are a large group, you are a majority, and you have been here for longer than other nationalities. Also you are very united"

(Peruvian in Barcelona)

While one should not underestimate the considerable achievements of the group, and their level of organisation, it is as well to remember that they share many of the problems of all domestic workers and many, particularly the undocumented, are badly paid and exploited. Despite their high levels of education it is extremely rare for them to move out of domestic work, and they are one of the communities least likely to undertake any course of study or training despite the fact that many of them have work and residence papers. This is perhaps partly because language (Castilian or Catalan) is a serious barrier for the Filipino community, although the Filipino Centre has attempted to encourage attendance at Castilian classes.

Dominican domestic workers

The Asociación Dominicana estimates there are some 7,000 Dominicans in the Barcelona area, 85 per cent of them women, the majority of them in domestic work. Some women work in the sex industry. The men work in private households, gardening and chauffeuring, and also in manufacturing and agriculture. The majority come from the provinces bordering Haiti, the poorest and most deprived areas of the Dominican Republic. Their education is often minimal, and many are illiterate. While this is in keeping with general information on Dominican women in Spain it by no means applies to all Dominican women in Spain.
“lots of people think that they are better than us because we haven’t got qualifications or because we’re not professionals, but many of us are, and here you can often see a professional scrubbing dishes the same as anyone, because people from here won’t give a foreigner a job unless it is in domestic work, and there are many people here with good qualifications, who have no choice but to do this work.”
(Dominicana working in Barcelona)

The Dominican workers interviewed were very conscious of their image as uneducated, and were keen to challenge the resulting stereotypes:

“speaker 1: The Dominican Republic is a country where, like it or not, women yes they have been oppressed, but women are not silent....
speaker 2....we struggle, we work hard...
speaker 1...we are not silent....”

Peruvian domestic workers

In 1993 there were 7,620 Peruvians officially registered with the Peruvian Consulate in Barcelona, just over 50 per cent of them women (Escrivá 1996). This is likely to be an under-representation, since although undocumented migrants can register with the consulate, people without immigration papers avoid contact with officials. The La Bonanova church mission, which offers a work placement service registered 80 per cent women, suggesting that there are at least significant proportions of women who are not registering with the consulate. Most Peruvians in Barcelona are in domestic work, and they are particularly concentrated in caring for the elderly, with both women and men in demand. They are a hidden community, partly because they are recent arrivals, because they are not immediately recognisable as ethnically different and because of their affinity with the “Spanish cultural heritage”.

Moroccan domestic workers

The Moroccan community, like the Filipino community, began in the 1960s. However, unlike the Filipinos, this early immigration was predominantly male. Many were attempting to travel to other European countries, but from 1967/8 onwards found the Spanish/French border closed. Spain at this time, and Cataluna in particular, was experiencing economic development and an improvement in
infrastructure, and Moroccan men found ready employment in construction and low paid low status jobs abandoned by the Spanish at a time of high employment. It was at that time relatively easy for Moroccans to travel to Spain and to work without a permit, and coming and going between the two countries on a tourist visa was quite common. The women who entered Spain in the 1960s and 1970s were principally coming to join their husbands, often themselves with no particular desire to live-in a foreign country. At this time they rarely entered the labour market but worked in their own homes supporting children and husbands. Like their husbands they tended to enter on tourist visas. This group often have very little education. From the mid 1980s onwards young Moroccan women began to enter Spain, not to be with their husbands, but to work, mainly as domestic workers in private households. Like the other migrants they came predominantly but not exclusively from the North of Morocco and from rural backgrounds. This movement continues to this day, with the women entering on tourist visas. They are more likely to be well-educated, with secondary education and higher. If they have settled for a while they may well share a weekend flat with other young Moroccan women.

Workers of all nationalities interviewed were clear that domestic work in private households was the only employment available to them apart from prostitution. E. from Peru put it succinctly:

“Well, all foreign women...or at least the vast majority, end up working as domestic workers because it’s the only chance this country gives us”

This was echoed time and time again. Of the twenty nine questionnaire respondents only two had done work other than domestic work in Spain, one as a translator for her compatriots, and one as a secretary. Most had been in Spain for over three years. Of course, the questionnaire was aimed at domestic workers, but it is clear that, once working as a domestic worker, it is almost impossible to leave that sector. According to the Filipino Centre a small number of Filipinos have managed to do so, but they continue to be employed in the personal service area, either as nurses or secretaries.

Of those who attended the consultation, sixteen were live-in, nine were live-out and three did not state. Tasks performed were strikingly similar to domestic workers in
other European cities. Workers were usually caring for children or an elderly person, but were commonly expected to do all the household chores as well, and they complained that they had to clean employers’ relatives houses free of charge, clean employers’ cars, wash clothes by hand even when there is a washing machine, look after pets etc. The following quotations give some idea of the range of work that is expected:

"Z (Moroccan): I work from morning to night. She knows that I’m always there... I just do it if there are things to do... I do the sewing”

"M (Filipina): My madam she wants me just to work and work the whole day. In the morning I had to get up at quarter to six I had to start to clean the whole house, until third floor, and then I had to cook, after lunch I had to iron the clothes. Then after ironing I had to prepare the dinner, and then after dinner maybe I will finish until 12 o’clock. My senor always have visitors in the house, they will have dinner at 1 am and then I will finish washing the dishes at 4 am. And then I have to get up at 6 am to prepare the breakfast of the children because they are working. And then every day I have to clean their car, they have three cars, and every day I had to clean the cars”

"M (Dominican Republic):... in my country an animal is an animal outside in its cage, but here they are much better treated... I had to make it food which was double work for me, but they didn’t pay me for it... I had to take care of it, give it food, take it for a walk. I think that’s work, it’s like a child... And in this cold I had to take it out....

Hours of employment followed a similar pattern to those in other European cities. While live-out often work long hours they have some control over hours - though not always as M pointed out:

“For some jobs 1,000 pesetas (£5.55) per hour is very little. Sometimes they expect you to clean three floors, it takes you three hours and they pay you 1,000 pesetas - and this isn’t taken into account.”

In general workers with papers who live-in can expect 1.5-2 days off a week, though these may not run concurrently. For new undocumented arrivals there can be no days
off at all. Those who work by hours try to arrange for 1.5 days off, usually Saturday afternoon and Sunday.

From the questionnaires, of those who lived in, salary per month varied between 90,000 (£500) and 160,000 (£890). Of those who lived out earnings were between 1,000 (£5.55) and 2,750 pesetas (£15.30) an hour. Both these maximums are unusually high when compared with other sources. Moreover, it is notable that there is no marked relationship between country of origin and pay, although this was frequently alluded to by workers, their organisations and agencies. One can only suggest that this group were unusual in that they were all members of organisations, and so with some support. Generally the better paid all had contracts that were always or usually followed. But although the pay was higher the number of hours worked were still excessive: “twenty four hours”, “all the time”.

Table 4  Wages and data sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type of work</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>lowest wage</th>
<th>highest wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live-in</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>90,000 (£500)</td>
<td>160,000 (£888)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>agencies</td>
<td>50,000 (£277)</td>
<td>100,000 (£555)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>1,000 (£5.50)</td>
<td>2,750 (£15.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>advertisements</td>
<td>700 (£3.80)</td>
<td>850 (£4.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>agencies</td>
<td>700 (£3.80)</td>
<td>1,500 (£8.33)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of advertisements of employers and employees confirms that these are unusually high wages. One agency offered live-in for 60,000-80,000 pesetas, (£333 - £444) an employer offered 80,000 (£444) for 8am-6pm Mon-Sat. One person offered a job to a Spaniard only for 115,000(£547) live-in. Hourly rates offered by workers were often 700-850 an hour (including assurances that they were “legal” with references and experience). Interviews with agencies again indicate the questionnaire results are rather high - and it should be borne in mind that agencies
have an interest in not suggesting to an interviewer that their wages are too low. Of seven interviewed, three gave 100,000 (£555) as a typical wage (two of these dealt mainly with Filipinas), and three cited between 80-95,000 (£444 - £527). Two of these latter had no Filipina clients. Agency R stated that:

"a recently arrived Moroccan woman could earn 50,000 (£277). Like doctors who have just left college don’t earn the same as doctors with ten years experience. Filipinas and Dominicans can earn more”.

Hourly wages by agency ranged between 700-800 (£3.80-£4.44) an hour, according to Agency B which deals almost exclusively with Moroccans, and 900-1,500 (£5 - £8.33) an hour for Agency S which deals mainly with Spanish.

One of the key issues in terms of payment of domestic workers who have their legal status is that of social security. So, although E, a Peruvian, was earning a relatively low wage of 70,000 pesetas (£388) a month, she thought this was satisfactory because her employer paid her social security. A, a Filipina working in Barcelona for nearly sixteen years with excellent references and contacts as well as a residence and working permit, described her recent negotiations with an employer. This clearly demonstrates the importance of social security, and the extent to which a worker in a position to demand her rights will insist on it:

“They came here to talk to me, they wanted me to look after their mother. The agreement is 110,000 pesetas (£611) per month and I asked them to pay the SSS, and they told me ‘yes’...... They said yes, everything, yes.... and after two weeks, I asked them again, ‘Hey señor, you have to send already my security’...They were liars, I’ve never seen a man lying like that......their mother told me. ‘They are earning very little, Ana’. So I understand them also......so that’s why I told them that if they paid me 100,000 pesetas (£555) I will pay my SSS, but they didn't like it, so I said no, for 70,000 pesetas (£388) I will go back to Barcelona and earn more.”

Living expenses in Barcelona are heavy. Accomodation is a particular problem, and, as has been seen, while workers may live-in to solve this poblem most of the better established will also share a flat with friends as an insurance against unemployment and a place to meet and sleep on off days, providing a minimum of social contact in
an otherwise extremely isolated job. For those who have family or are working in live-out jobs the bills for household costs and food are high. E. expressed succinctly the way in which all expenses are felt:

"an immigrants' expenses are very complicated to explain, but I will give my own experience...live-in has its advantages...The advantage is that you have hidden expenditures...you need a room for the weekends, that's not major but it can cost you 12,000, 15,000 pesetas (£66-£83). Now you don’t pay for electricity, water and food for the weekends is minimal. Now if you work live-out......you have more expenses you can earn more but this has its disadvantages...We can say a room is 15,00-20,000 pesetas, (£83-£111) travel card 15,000 pesetas, (£83) food..."

Remittances can account for a substantial amount of income. This, for the Filipinos at least, was confirmed by an interview with SPEED, an agency of the Far East Bank and Trust that arranges for money to be transferred from Barcelona to the Philippines (40 per cent of their clients send to Manila, the other 60 per cent to the provinces). SPEED opened an office in 1990 and sends their clients money by banker’s draft to offices all over the Philippines at a cost of 1,300 pesetas to Manila and 1,600 pesetas to the provinces. Of their 200 clients, most sent $150-300 a month. They are all domestic workers, if one includes men working as chauffeurs, drivers, gardeners etc. Given that the bank sets the exchange rate, and, at the time of interviewing it was at 125 pesetas to the dollar that means that their clients are remitting 18,750-37,500 pesetas (£104-£2208) a month, a large tranche of the 100,000 (£555) average wage.

ITALY
In January 1996 there were 991,419 third country nationals residing legally in Italy. One of the largest nationality groups with work permits are Filipinos who at the end of 1993 numbered 46,332 of whom 70 per cent were female (Iris di Rimini 1995 statistical annexe: 7). The migrant labour force in Italy is heavily segregated by ethnicity and gender, for example Filipinos are predominantly women and predominantly domestic workers, whereas Moroccans (the largest non-EU national
group in Italy with work permits) are predominantly male and clustered in construction and agriculture.

Andall's historical analysis of the migrant domestic workforce in Italy traces the demand for such workers back to the late 1960s. She argues that Italian domestic workers had become increasingly reluctant to work as live-in domestics and by the early 1970's were working largely on an hourly basis;

"This left a specific gap in the market for live-in domestic work which migrant women would be forced (institutionally) and encouraged (informally) to fill".

(Andall 1996:10).

Andall's argument is that while the Italian government aimed to discourage the employment of migrant domestics by the late 1970s, its earlier decision to confine migrant domestics to full-time work probably contributed to the attractiveness of non-Italian national workers for the Italian employer (they were not allowed entry to work on an hourly basis like Italian nationals). In 1979 their employment situation was limited further by tying their entry to a specific employer.

In 1986 the Italian government suspended the issue of labour permits for domestic workers altogether but provided for a regularisation of undocumented immigrants. During the regularisation period that lasted until 1988 approximately 118,000 non-EU citizens received a residence permit. Another “amnesty” took place in 1990 leading to a further 204,000 non-EU citizens being regularised, the largest numbers being from Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal and the Philippines (Groenendijk and Hampsink 1994: 48). Of the Filipinos regularised the overwhelming majority were female domestic workers. In 1991 a special decree was passed allowing for the hiring of foreign domestic workers on a temporary basis and in 1993 the majority of the 20,000 non-EU citizens granted an employment permit were domestic workers (Ibid: 51). In addition the Martelli Act 1990 eased restrictions on working hours for migrant domestics and to their being tied to a specific employer.

It seems that the presence of migrant women in domestic work is an accepted part of life. The local newspaper in Bologna carries many advertisements from women
seeking domestic work and those offering work. Potential employers openly specify national group choices such as: “Family looking for permanent Filipino domestic” (Secondamano, 18 April 1996). Those searching for work also feel it incumbent upon them to give their nationality: “Domestic from Sri Lanka offers fixed or part-time hours…” (Ibid).

As in many other countries immigration policy has increasingly become a political football. In November 1995 the caretaker government of Lamberto Dini gave in to pressure from the Northern League and introduced a decree (usually referred to as “the Dini decree”) which allowed for the deportation of “illegal immigrants” and made employers who hire them liable to a six year prison sentence. It also introduced provisions for the regularisation of immigrants currently in Italy if their employer declared that they had been in the same job for four months and was prepared to pay social insurance contributions in advance for them (European Race Audit 17, January 1996: 14). Not surprisingly by the middle of December the police reported real difficulties in deciphering the decree, and said that few employers were taking the steps to regularise their employees (European Race Audit, 18, March 1996: 11). But despite the initial confusion by November 1996 (when the Dini decree could no longer be renewed) it was estimated that 220,000 foreigners had received a residence permit under the decree criteria. The regularisation process indicated that about 25 per cent of Italy’s foreign population was undocumented with Filipinos representing the largest nationality group (Migration News Sheet, June 1996 and January 1997).

In April 1996, migrant domestic workers were interviewed in Bologna and Parma as well as a number of representatives from migrant and community organisations. One of the group interviews was held with Filipinas after a church service. The majority of the Filipinas were live-in and caring for old people, and there was general agreement that this was the area of work where Filipinas were concentrated in order to avoid the expenses of accommodation and bills. There was concern about dependence on the employer and the hours worked, but it was felt that it was becoming more difficult to find work and workers had to demand less. Problems they alluded to included: their dependency on their employer for the renewal of their work permits - “that’s alright if you have a good employer”; contracts not being kept to -
indeed several women did not even know that they had a contract until informed that it was the paper they had to have when they applied for their work permit. Despite the forty hours set out in the contract most worked for at least six days a week, some for seven: “your employer has visitors, you must stay up until midnight serving them”.

As well as Filipinas women from Morocco, Somalia, Nigeria, Peru, Ivory Coast and Eritrea were also interviewed. Apart from the Moroccan women virtually all had received a secondary education before migration. Only five out of sixteen had come to Italy to work for a specific employer but half said that they had always had a contract of employment whilst working in Italy. Eight were single, three were married with a husband in their home country, four had a husband in Italy and one was divorced. All the married women had children but only those who had a husband in Italy also had their children resident. Relatives cared for the children in the home country.

Six of the women cared for elderly people, in some cases staying with the same employer for up to four years. Only nine of the women offered information on monthly wages and these varied between 1,200,000 and 1,800,000 lire (£510 - £765) a month but for very different hours per day. Local informants suggested that 1,500,000 (£638) a month for a six day week would be the going rate for a migrant domestic worker but undocumented migrants were paid less.

“One person phoned me up was offering 800,000 lira (£340) and a free day every Sunday”

African workers were expected to work for as little as 700,000-800,000 (£297-340) a month. For 1,300,000 lire (£553) a month a domestic worker from Cote d’Ivoire described her day:

“I do everything. I don’t have time to sleep or eat. I do everything in the house. I’m even their carpenter and its been like this for four years with no pay rise - 1.3 million lire and that’s it….its not a fair salary, how can they compensate you for your sacrifices.”

Other complaints included violence and sexual harassment and the intense personal relationship with their employers:
“My old woman is very difficult. The person before me only stayed with her fifteen nights before she left. I want to leave sometimes, in the night I think that’s it, I’m going. But I am fond of her and by the morning I’m staying again”.

(Migrant worker in Parma).

Most of the workers interviewed in Athens, Barcelona and Italy were living in and working for one family. Almost all workers in Athens were undocumented, and there were also significant numbers of undocumented working in Barcelona, though the latter often were hopeful that they would eventually be able to work with a permit through the “cupo” system. In Italy my impressions - and that is all I was able to glean because of funding difficulties - were that there were undocumented domestic workers, but that in general most women had a work permit - though one that made them dependent for their immigration status on their employer.
CHAPTER SIX
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: FRANCE AND GERMANY

Live-in domestic work is far less common in France and Germany than it is in the countries of Southern Europe. Those who do live-in are usually undocumented workers, but undocumented workers also work live-out. There have been some attempts to regularise the sector, particularly in France, though Germany is looking to her neighbour for lessons in how to extract tax and National Insurance from employers and workers. These attempts have been fraught with difficulties (see Chapter Nine), and do not seem to have improved the conditions of migrant workers, particularly those who live-in.

FRANCE

Domestic work has long been an area of employment for migrant women in France. A 1968 study found that over 35 per cent of female migrants were working as domestic workers, and several surveys after a regularisation exercise in 1981 revealed that this was the most important sector of employment for undocumented women. As many as 53.8 per cent of undocumented female migrants were working as domestic workers (Marie 1984). Both Fepam and trades unions representing domestic workers said that in Paris and other large cities in France domestic work is increasingly the provenance of immigrant workers.

In my own fieldwork in the 17th arrondissement I found that as in Athens, migrant women from a wide variety of nationalities and immigration statuses were working in this sector. There were those who worked part time as domestic workers because it had a flexibility that enabled them to care for their own children and do the reproductive work of their own household as well as earn money. This was particularly true of women with husbands and children who had legal status - though these women were usually working undeclared. There were full-time live-in workers, who were often undocumented, the Filipino community in particular falling into this category. There were also people with a residence permit who were working full-time, either live-in or live-out usually with at least some of their hours declared.
Figures on domestic work in France are relatively available. However the picture is complicated by the fact that many of the French women registered as searching for this kind of employment are naturalised French citizens but not French “d’origine”. That is they may well be first generation migrants and belong to racialised groups, but this is not represented in the official figures, where they are simply listed as French citizens. That this group is significant is apparent in the employment register of the Emploi Daubigny.

The Emploi Daubigny (ED) is recognised by the government as an “agence intermédiaire” i.e. officially placing unemployed people in part-time work. Its statistics are passed on annually to the French national statistics agency and thereby contribute to government figures on paid household work. Its objective is to find work for unemployed people, and employment is almost all household work. According to their official annual report of activity in 1994 they dealt with 22,215 working hours for 514 “fournisseurs d’ouvrage” as employers are termed. Eighty per cent of employers (412) were private individuals, the remainder, small businesses and associations. The employers were mainly based in the 17e, wanting childcarers, people to do household tasks or look after elderly relatives. Again according to its 1994 report, 60 per cent of those looking for work were women and 40 per cent men, and 56 per cent of those asking for work (273 out of 489) were foreigners and 44 per cent were French (216). This official breakdown followed the French practise of not distinguishing between those who are French “d’origine” and those who have acquired French citizenship. However the ED’s 1995 employment register, an unofficial document with a purely practical purpose of listing who was available for work so they could be placed with employers, indicated that many of the French people who approached them looking for work were not French d’origine. Although 1995 figures had not been analysed at the time of the interview in January 1996, their 1995 registration book showed that 74 of 171 workers registered (43 per cent, as in 1994) were French. But 24 of these 74 workers had a different “pays d’origine” noted, two had years of entry noted against their names and two were simply Française étrangère, Française noire. Including these four as not being French d’origine, a maximum of 46 workers were French d’origine though it is likely to be
even less. As the Emploi Daubigny volunteer interviewed revealingly put it when asked about the proportion of those applying to them who were French *d’origine*:

“The real French people? very small. It’s difficult to know, but very very small.”

Although I was not allowed to see to the Emploi Daubigny employment book, they stated quite openly that they asked potential employers “whether or not they are against employing foreigners in their house”. One volunteer there told me that it was really impossible to find work for the “really black people” like the Congolese because “they are too lazy” and “just sit around all the time”.

It is worth noting that this process of noting country of origin for at least some of the French citizens in their registration book, but eliminating it from their annual report which is used to compile official figures illustrates that despite the state’s anxiety to deny difference between French citizens, it is in reality very important to employers. This was also true of the AGF whose volunteer explained with some discomfort that they asked employers whether or not they would be prepared to accept a black person. If they are not then the employer’s details are marked “PPC” “Pas Personne de Couleur”. Numbers so marked are alarmingly high. From September 4th 1995 to January 19th 1996 out of a total of 257 employers, 54 or 21 per cent indicated that they would not accept a particular group, usually black people and/or Maghrebians, sometimes a string of people:

“No blacks, Maghrebians or Asians, prefers English speaker”,

or indicating a preference for one groups while rejecting another:

“Prefer EU or Senegalese. No Maghrebians”

The volunteer knew that this was illegal and the organisation’s records are destroyed every year because of this illegal and recorded discrimination.

Unlike the workers registered with the ED, those on the AGF’s books are almost exclusively women. Again there are a surprising number of French citizens registered, but there is a similar confusion over the proportion of those who are French *d’origine*: so in the AGF’s employment book from 4.9.95 - 12.1.96, 90 of the 347 women were French (25 per cent), the second largest national group after Morocco, which was 92. However, of these 90 French women, 32 had a different
pays d’origine noted down. Given that different AGF volunteers did not always note the same information, there is no guarantee that the remaining 58 French women (17 per cent of the total number of women) were all French d’origine. Though that being said, it still remains the case that women who are French d’origine do look for employment as domestic workers through the AGF.

From the employment books of ED and AGF it is clear that, although the majority of those looking for domestic work are not French, even in the cities there are significant numbers of French people willing to do this kind of work, though many of these are naturalised French citizens. However, one must remember that both these associations check that those coming to them have a legal right to work, and are therefore unlikely to attract large numbers of undocumented foreigners. So, for example, although most of the Filipino and Mauritian community work in this sector not a single Filipina and very few Mauritians figure in the employment books. The effect of informal networks and word of mouth should also be borne in mind - perhaps accounting for some of the concentrations of particular nationalities in each associations. For example, fifty of the AGF registered workers were from Cote d’Ivoire and 92 from Morocco, but the ED had only 7 Ivoireans and 18 Moroccans registered. So it is not possible to draw any conclusions about the situation in Paris as a whole from their books, other than that domestic work is an extremely important area of employment for migrant women and that their contribution to the sector is not recognised in the official data.

What is striking about the third country nationals represented in the AGF and ED employment books is the wide range of nationalities, in particular Africans, both Maghrebians and French sub-Saharan colonies. In this respect Paris was similar to Athens and markedly different from Barcelona. Although immigration to France is far more controlled than immigration to Greece, domestic work in those countries, unlike in Spain and Italy, has not been officially recognised as employment for immigrant women. So, unlike Spain and Italy it has not been possible to get a work permit for domestic work and there has been no governmental control over what nationalities work in this sector. It is not clear if any nationalities predominate. The
employers' federation, FEPEM confirmed that Maghrebians were a significant proportion of Parisian domestic workers, but claimed domestic workers from other African countries were unusual. According to the AGF however, they equal the number of Maghrebians, numbers have been growing over the past seven or eight years and if trends continue will outnumber them, at least in the 17th arrondissement. It may be that the discrepancy between the experiences of the AGF and FEPEM may be partly because FEPEM workers are all declared, while those employed through the AGF may well be working off the books, since the AGF takes no responsibility for ensuring the law is complied with other than checking immigration status.

The major nationalities represented in the AGF employment book from September 1995 to mid January 1996 were 92 Moroccans, 90 French (but not all French d'origine), 50 Cote d'Ivoireans, 26 Algerians, 21 Tunisians, 18 Portuguese. There were also people from Cameroon, Colombia, Congo, Mali, Mauritius, Peru, Senegal, Spain, Sri Lanka, Togo, former Yugoslavia and Zaire. The main national groups registered by the Emploi Daubigny for the year 1995 were 74 French, 35 Algerians, 17 Moroccans, 7 from Cote d'Ivoire, 6 from Zaire, 5 from Haiti. Other nationalities were Sri Lankans, Iranian, Egyptian, Portuguese, Polish and Bosnian. There are few Eastern and Central Europeans and few Asians apart from Sri Lanka.

The ED also keeps a record of the year of entry. This reveals that while some workers were very recent arrivals, there were women who had entered France in the 1950s and 1960s who were looking for employment. A similar variation in length of stay was also found in interviews with domestic workers, ranging from under 1 year to 20 years. From this it seems firstly that even those who have been in France for a long time continue to work in this sector, and secondly, that there continue to be women arriving in Paris looking for employment as domestic workers.
The AGF and ED employment books indicate that non-French nationals are likely to be younger than French nationals\(^1\), and give a younger average age than that of the DARES report commissioned by the French government.

Table 5 Age and nationality of women looking for employment in domestic work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total ED</th>
<th>French (ED)</th>
<th>French (AGF)</th>
<th>Non-French (ED)</th>
<th>Non-French (AGF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up to 20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-39</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note  The AGF did not record ages of 54 people whom they registered. These have not been included.

Age differences are more clearly apparent when one looks at percentage of people within a certain age range looking for work as domestic workers

\(^1\) The AGF in particular did not appear to be consistent in noting whether or not applicants were ‘francais d’origine’ so we have simply distinguished between French and non-French nationals. Interestingly, the figures kept by the Emploi Daubigny indicate that the age of those who are French nationals but not Francaise d’origine are broadly similar to each other.
French nationals are more concentrated among older and younger workers, while non-French tend to be in their 20s and 30s. To some extent this may be supported by the findings of the Direction de l'Animation de la Recherche des Études et des Statistiques which in 1995 produced a report on the development of the employment of domestic workers between 1992 and 1994 (Dares 1995). Based on official data this found that 99 per cent of employees were women and their average age was forty. Their employment broke down as follows:

Table 6  Age range of people looking for employment as domestic workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% French nationals ED</th>
<th>% French nationals AGF</th>
<th>% non-French nationals ED</th>
<th>% non-French nationals AGF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up to 20</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-39</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

French nationals are more concentrated among older and younger workers, while non-French tend to be in their 20s and 30s. To some extent this may be supported by the findings of the Direction de l'Animation de la Recherche des Études et des Statistiques which in 1995 produced a report on the development of the employment of domestic workers between 1992 and 1994 (Dares 1995). Based on official data this found that 99 per cent of employees were women and their average age was forty. Their employment broke down as follows:

Table 7  Tasks and age of domestic workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Average age</th>
<th>Average hrs/wk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household work</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care of the elderly</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source  DARES (1995)
Crucially, there is no breakdown by nationality, or even by French/non-French citizen.

Educational levels of domestic workers varied considerably. The general impression given by agencies and associations was that the academic qualifications of foreign women working as domestics were very low and that was why they were working in such numbers in the sector. Of the five women interviewed at the voluntary association Cefia, only one had been to school, and that had been between the ages of seven and thirteen. She was the only person to have been employed other than as a cleaner/domestic worker, having come to Paris originally to study and work as a dressmaker. However, her maths and French were not proficient enough, and this combined with poor health made her leave the company and take up work as a carer for the old, the sick and the disabled. She is also the only one of the five to get all her work (160 hours a month) through an agency. She had previously worked as a dressmaker in Morocco. The other four women (from Morocco, Senegal, Gambia and Algeria) had no experience of working outside their own homes. This was in contrast to the nine Filipinas interviewed, who had left education between 17 and 27. All had been employed outside their homes in a wide variety of occupations - Bureau of Internal Revenue, secretary in advertising company, snack bar proprietor etc. However, none had done anything other than domestic work while in France, unless one includes ‘sewing’ and ‘sometimes cooking and cleaning cars’. This is in keeping with findings in other European cities, where generally Filipinas tend to be among the most well educated of migrants. However, notably very few Filipinas spoke any French at all - though generally speaking English very well. As elsewhere Filipinas were prized for their English. Employers usually spoke to them in English and stipulated they use English to their children. The nature of their work means that it is very difficult for them to learn French.

This is not to say however, that the education level of non-French domestic workers is uniformly low apart from Filipinas. The ED, unlike the AGF, keeps a note of the educational levels of workers registering there. These are not the same as the educational levels of women working as domestic workers, and may be particularly
distorted by there usually being no indication as to the gender of the worker except in the total numbers. However, it is possible to make out some useful figures. In 1995 there were 7 registered who were illiterate, 50 who had education up to primary level, 38 secondary, 30 technical qualifications, 21 baccalaureate and 14 degree and over. Eleven did not have their educational qualifications noted. Proportionately these educational levels coincide with those given in the ED 1994 report:

Table 8 Educational level of those applying to ED for employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>1995</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no gender breakdown of these figures, but using the grammatical gender of previous occupation given one can conclude that the seven people who described themselves as “illiterate” were all women working in the home. Thirty seven of those fifty whose educational level was up to primary level were women, and thirty five of them had previously worked as domestic workers. Eight were French if not French d’origine. So over half of the women registering with ED had education up to primary level. There were women who had baccalaureate who were working as domestic workers - women from Congo, Malaysia, Cameroon, Poland and Zaire. The largest area of previous employment represented was “femme de menage” - thirty four or 31.5 per cent, followed by “employé(e) de maison” seventeen or 10 per cent. Of the latter eleven were women. With another five women describing themselves in related terms it can e deduced that at least 66 per cent of the women presenting themselves for employment to the ED had previously worked as domestic workers.
workers in private households. Some of these women are highly educated, including for example, a teacher from Cameroon and an accountant from Sri Lanka. Only four of those (men and women) who had French nationality with no *pays d'origine* described themselves as “*femme de menage*” or “*employé(e) de maison*”.

Work in Paris seemed predominantly live-out. Of the many nationalities spoken to the only group where live-in full time work was relatively common was the Filipino community. However, this was also the largest group of undocumented workers that I had access to. It may be that, as in other cities, there is some correlation between immigration status and live-in work. The group interviews held with Filipinas brought out many of the employment problems expressed in Athens and Barcelona. Excessive working hours, working with animals, working for no extra money in the homes of employers’ families, having to provide free “trial” labour, and often not employed at the end of it, sexual harassment and false accusations of stealing, were all mentioned as difficulties experienced by workers. There were some complaints too about the quality of the “service rooms” offered, often not in the employer’s flat, but on the top floor of the apartment block:

“Filipina: Though my room is not so nice as you can say. Others they have studios and mine is something just for to sleep, there is no facilities for maintaining a bath or anything, just a little lavabo, that’s all.

Interviewer: So where do you take a bath then?

Filipina: I go to her place, I go to their place. If I have time, I have my small babybath there....I was allowed to use the bath for the children, but the problem is I have no time, because the moment I enter the house I don’t know what to touch, I don’t have time to take a bath.”

It was generally felt that among the Filipino community wages for undocumented were not significantly lower than for those with papers, indeed they could even be higher, particularly since neither employer nor worker are paying tax/social security. It must be emphasised that this is not necessarily so for all undocumented workers: NR from Morocco worked for eleven francs an hour taking care of two children, and doing housework. For the Filipinos however, the principal problem is that undocumented workers are not protected, have no sick pay etc. This led to a lively
discussion between documented and undocumented as to whether undocumented workers were exploited more because of a lack of assertiveness rather than being in an intrinsically weaker position. Several points came out of this discussion, including, importantly, the particular difficulties of those entering France as domestic workers with their employers, who are not given work permits. This situation in fact is at the root of the beginnings of the Filipino community in France, concentrated in Paris and Cote D’Azur, areas where Middle Eastern employers settled following the outbreak of civil war in Lebanon (1975), the fall of the Shah of Iran (1979), and the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980. With them these wealthy refugees brought their Filipino domestic workers, often on tourist visas.

“I was not allowed to leave the house. I was only able to get out when my employer brought me to the police Préfecture together with his lawyer. The lawyer took care of all my papers and I didn’t know what these papers were.”

(Quimpo 1993: 3)

Other workers accompany their employers on holiday, as they do also to London and Southern Spain. Of course, this is not the only way Filipinos enter France, and as the community has been established so familiar patterns of chain migration have set in, though this continues to be largely clandestine. The employment situation described by these workers has much in common with that outlined by similar workers in other countries of exploitation, impossible demands and brutal treatment. Maria accompanied her Saudi Arabian employers to Paris:

“eighteen hours of work a day, seven days a week; badly fed, badly treated, hurt, beaten... Maria begged her mistress to let her return to Manila to no avail. After seven months she fled. Alone, undocumented, without money, in a strange city”.

(O’Dy 1995)

But the consensus was that difficulties do not disappear once workers left their original employers. French employers too may be cruel, as is well documented by the case of Veronique Akobe, a young woman imprisoned for the murder of her wealthy French employer and the wounding of his son. Medical evidence confirmed that the two men had violently sexually assaulted, raped and sodomised her several times:
"They killed something in me, something of my real self".

(Quoted in Liberation Feb. 1990 p.42)

GERMANY

The most visible area of paid domestic work in Berlin is working as live-out cleaners with some babysitting or other caring work, but only on a part time basis. Compared with other European cities it seems that there are few migrant women working as live-in childcarers. This may be partly because there is some remuneration (though very modest) for mothers who care for their own children, and because privatised childcare is often provided by "tagsmutter" - "day mothers", much like UK childminders. These women offer day care within their own homes, not in the homes of their employers, and therefore they are beyond the scope of this research. It is worth noting though, that although such work may be - and is - undertaken by non-Germans settled in Germany, it is not suitable for undocumented workers whose living conditions are often extremely poor. From interviews and advertisements it is also clear that in Berlin care of the elderly is not the hugely expanding area of employment that it is for migrants in other European cities, chiefly because it is far more regulated than elsewhere:

"You don't work so much looking after people who are ill, because there is a special law about that and you have to do it officially. Illegals used to do this work, but not any more."

(Iranian working in Germany)

In 1994 compulsory social insurance, already covering unemployment, accidents at work, health and pensions, was extended, after much controversy to include long term nursing care costs, whether at home or in a nursing home. This Pflegeversichening, or care insurance means that those who are paid under it need to have documentation.

Live-in domestic workers were less visible in Berlin than any other city visited. It seems from those who have had recourse to support groups that they are mainly from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and are extremely vulnerable.

"The problem is when they stay with the families, they are very badly paid and very badly treated. I don't have much contact with them, because the
Polish people are mainly live-out. A lot of people do live-in but it is difficult to contact them. As far as I know this is a closed story, they have no contact with other people, no information, they don’t know where to get help for their problems”

(Volunteer with the Polnischer Socialrat)

The speaker went on to detail some cases of live-in domestic workers that she had come across (see below) which suggest that there is serious but hidden abuse of live-in domestic workers in Berlin. Unfortunately there is as yet no means of estimating numbers or proportion of live-in domestic workers in Berlin. Advertisements for and from domestic workers appear in many Berlin newspapers, particularly the local papers. In the publications I had access to, in the first week of September 1996 58 out of 254 domestic workers advertising for employment (23 per cent) were not German.¹ One cannot draw any conclusions about numbers from this particularly as I have assumed that those who did not stipulate their nationality were German, so the actual proportion of non German domestic workers may be higher, but it does suggest that non-Germans account for a significant proportion of workers in private households. This is confirmed by employers' advertisements: in Zweite Hand, of thirty six advertisements under “Hauswirtschaft Reinigung” offering work, four stipulated that they wanted a German speaker, one wanted only German nationality, and one said that foreigners were “welcome”.

¹ On the 4th September 1996 Berliner Morgenpost carried twelve advertisements from domestic workers under “Hauspersonal”. Four stated their ethnic origin (three Polish and one African). In the Zweite Hand edition beginning the week of 31st August 1996 under “Hauswirtschaft Reinigung” there were a total of 148 jobs. Of these 12 stated that they were Polish, 6 that they were South American and 5 indicated that they were foreign (e.g. “speaks good German”) but did not say where they were from. Under “Baby-sitting” there were 43 advertisements of which 7 said that they were foreigners. Under “Sonstige Stellengesuche” (“other jobs”) were included three foreign domestic workers, one African man, one Brazilian woman, and one Portuguese man, and there were four foreign domestic workers (one Polish, two South American and one “foreign”) under “Mehrfachgesuche” (others). The edition of TIP, a Berlin weekly arts and culture magazine, for the week beginning the 5th September 1996 contained 63 people looking for household work, cleaning and baby-sitting, and 28 mentioned that they were foreigners.
Although Polish women have been working in small numbers in this sector since 1980, most of those interviewed believed that the practise of hiring a domestic worker to clean one’s house was relatively new in Berlin, really beginning only in the early 1990s, but that it is becoming increasingly widespread, perhaps for some of the reasons outlined above:

“until recently there has not been a culture of employing domestic workers, but this has changed since migration from Eastern Europe”.

(FDCL volunteer, Berlin)

Domestic work seems to be concentrated among the Polish and national groups who are more recent arrivals. There is, as elsewhere in Europe, a hierarchy of nationality operating, whereby some national groups can expect to earn more than others (see Chapter Eight). The salary range for domestic workers is between seven and fifteen deutschmarks (£3.10 - £6.70) an hour, with Polish women commonly earning fifteen. This is of course, somewhat misleading, as not all workers are paid by the hour, and those who live-in might have to be available for twenty four hours a day. The Polska Rada put the situation well:

“Pay for domestic workers depends on nationality. Polish get more money than Ukranians and Belorussians. Polish can get fifteen marks an hour, Soviet Union ten marks and under. Or they are paid weekly or monthly which is not so good, because then you can be working for someone more hours but don’t get paid as much as fifteen marks, maybe five marks an hour, so people prefer to be paid by the hour.”

There are certainly domestic workers who are being abused, physically, mentally and sexually, as well as low level abuse and exploitation. However, the extent of it is extremely difficult to gauge:

“I am shocked at a lot of the women’s stories, but the problem is they do not speak out. They are ashamed and afraid”.

(Volunteer at the Polnischer Socialrat)

This is chiefly because there has been no organising around this issue at all. It is a new area for many nationalities, except for the Polish, who often have the support of family in Poland if they run into difficulties:
“Live-out domestic workers have problems too they live here with no insurance, if they are sick then they get no help. For the Poles they can go back to Poland if they get a problem, but for Ukraine, Bulgarians this is a problem.”

However, one issue around domestic workers that is particularly striking in Berlin is the sexualisation of domestic work. Many domestic workers who advertise their labour stipulate “no sex” or that they are looking for “serious work”. This was only rarely observed in any of the advertisements placed by domestic workers in other European city newspapers. This is not to say that sexual abuse and harassment does not occur in those cities, or occurs any more often in Berlin, but that the link between domestic work and sexual exploitation is particularly explicit in Berlin.

Because the development of migrants working as paid domestic workers in Berlin is relatively recent, and because recent migrants from Eastern Europe, apart from the Polish, are not organised, one cannot gauge the range of nationalities working in private households, nor the extent to which they live-in. The following however are some of the nationalities who work in private households.

South Americans
The largest group of South Americans in Berlin are the Brazilians (1,233 legally resident), followed by Cubans (779) and Peruvians (773). The community began with the migration of thousands of Latin Americans escaping military dictatorships in the early 1980s. In 1981 there were 8,900 Latin Americans legally resident in Berlin, the four largest groups being Chileans, Brazilians, Argentinians and Peruvians. There were also some 1,000 Chileans in East Berlin and thousands of Cuban contract workers. Although many of the refugees of the 1980s returned to their countries of origin following an ease in the political situation, some stayed on. There are also increasingly large numbers of undocumented Latin American migrants, particularly Latin American migrants, particularly women from Brazil. However, this migration is very heterogeneous, and there are also women from Mexico, Chile, Nicaragua, Peru and Bolivia. Many of them are working as domestic workers, but little is known of their hiring and working conditions. Illegal placement agencies for domestic workers from Peru do have
contacts in Berlin, however, since undocumented Peruvian women are smuggled to Spain via Berlin by agents operating in Berlin.

Of the advertisements offering work as domestics in private household examined, South Americans were the largest group after Polish. Although usually saying they are Latin or South American, several were more specific, including Bolivians, Peruvians, Argentians, and Brazilians. Six of the twenty one were men - unlike the Polish who were all women. This suggests that in Berlin, as in Barcelona, Latin American men, unlike African or Eastern European men, also work in this sector.

Filipinos
There is a small Filipino community in Germany. However, unlike in UK, France, Spain and Italy, very few of them work as domestic workers. Many are married to German men. In fact there is a marriage agency operating in Barcelona owned by a German husband and Filipina wife. While ostensibly working as an agency placing Filipina domestic workers with local employers it doubles up as an introduction agency. German men fly to Barcelona for a “holiday” and while they are there they are taken on trips with and introduced to the domestic workers on the agency’s books. The men pay US$1,000 on top of the cost should they take a woman back to Germany and a further US$1,000 on marriage. For many women it is regarded as the only way for legalisation or to escape the drudgery of domestic work. It may well be a case of “out of the frying pan into the fire” but more research is needed on what happens to those Filipinas who take this option, and if there are similar agencies operating. In 1996 there were 736 Filipinos legally resident in Berlin. There were in Berlin in the 1980s significant numbers of Filipino women, many without documents working as domestics and nannies in the households of US servicemen. In 1990 the Southeast Asia Information Center estimated there were up to 15,000 Filipinas working illegally in Germany. Recruiters charged between £1,700 and £3,400 for jobs in Germany and promised high wages which never materialised. The employers were largely families of the US Military forces, and there was a large demand for Filipinas on the grounds that “the Filipina was the only thing we could afford”. Wages as low as £17 a month were supplemented by duty free goods at the supermarket. At the time of the US withdrawal there was some media interest in
what would become of these women whom their employers had left, and whether they would transfer to domestic jobs in German households. This does not seem to be the case. There are in Berlin virtually no Filipinas working as domestics in private households, and those who do work a few hours a week as an extra job. According to the association Ban Ying, those women who stayed on are now working as maids in hotels, in office cleaning agencies, or as secretaries and clerical staff, i.e. in the more formalised service economy. Many of them have also married German men.

Thais

There are estimated to be some 8,000 Thais in Berlin, approximately half of them are undocumented and almost all of them are women. The most significant area of employment for Thai women in Berlin is prostitution, many have been trafficked, and owe large debts averaging some 20,000 Marks (£8968) to the traffickers.

As with Filipinas, no Thai women advertised for employment as domestic workers, and Ban Ying does not know of any Thai women who have moved from prostitution into private domestic work - though some have moved to cleaning agencies. This seems to be for two main reasons. The first is economic: in prostitution they can earn fifty marks (£22.40) per customer, twenty five marks (£11.20) for themselves and twenty five marks to the pimp, averaging maybe some 3,000 marks (£1345) a month. These figures should be treated with caution, as only indications. Earnings of Thai women working in prostitution in Berlin vary according to the area worked, the age and physical appearance of the woman, and what she is prepared to do etc. This is substantially more than a domestic worker, who can expect to earn between one and two thousand marks (£448 - £896) a month if she is in “full” employment. Moreover, Thai women have been trafficked to Germany since the early 1980s, and are now, whatever their employment, closely associated with the sex industry, to an extent that renders them unsuitable for domestic work. As the Ban Ying worker put it:

“Thai women are so sexualised now by Germans that they would not let a Thai woman touch their grandmother.”
However, Thai women do work as domestic workers as one facet of their exploitation during the trafficking process. This work is unpaid and in slave like conditions. The women who are trafficked often come from rural areas of Thailand. Not used to a city they are easier to control and exploit. They may be approached by someone well known locally, or a relative whom they trust, and offered the opportunity to work in Germany, - in a restaurant perhaps, with the opportunity to marry a nice German man. They are rarely told that they are to work in the sex trade. They are brought to Germany, indebted to the person who pays their fare and their living expenses, the trafficker or a money lender back in Thailand. When they arrive in Berlin they are told there is no job, but still there is the debt to be paid off, so young women have little option but to turn to prostitution. Most are on three month tourist visas and so must work illegally, though prostitution in itself is not illegal in Berlin. Some women are trafficked into enforced marriages, the traffickers advertising them or responding to advertisements in the personal columns of newspapers. While they are waiting they stay in the houses of the traffickers and often must do the household work. According to Ban Ying such a situation is quite usual and:

"Physical abuse in these households is common, beating, physical and mental abuse, calling them names, treating them as less than human. This experience is very traumatic, although the women are poor, they have until now had their dignity".

Their traffickers may also force them to work in the houses of friends and relatives, again unpaid, without even the opportunity of slightly reducing their debt. Ban Ying also drew attention to the cleaning work undertaken by Thai women who work as prostitutes. Unlike German women, Thais must clean and prepare the brothels where they work as a part of their duties. This enforced domestic labour is clearly only one facet of the gross exploitation and abuse of Thai women, and cannot be taken from this broader context. However, the broader context does indicate a relationship between sexual exploitation and domestic labour that seems to be closer, or at least more apparent than in other European cities.
Polish migration to Germany began in the mid-1970s following the 1973 official end of the Gastarbeiter (Guestworker) policies, when the federal government signed bilateral treaties with Central and East European countries as part of its new policy with Eastern Europe. An important component of this policy was freedom of exit for Aussiedler who were welcomed to the FRG. Aussiedler are “ethnic Germans” from Eastern Europe, constructed as being German “by blood”. In 1976 numbers of Polish Aussiedler jumped from 7,040 (1975) to 29,366. In 1989 numbers reached 250,340. At that time Poland accounted for the largest number of Aussiedler, 365,234 (1968-1984), followed by Rumania 147,528 and the Soviet Union, 72,664. There were also significant numbers of Polish refugees from 1980 onwards, reaching 29,023 in 1988. However, this too has seen a sharp decline, and in 1994 accounted for only 498 people. While Polish long term immigration has declined, there continue to be large numbers of Polish workers in Germany. This is largely because since 1991 Polish citizens with valid documents have been allowed into Germany as tourists for three month periods without visas. They are not permitted to take up employment - i.e. they are not, except in particular circumstances given a work permit. This has resulted in “pendular migration”, that is migrating for “illegal” work for short periods, particularly attractive in Berlin because the distance is so short. There are strong social Polish networks in Germany, and a profitable exchange rate.

The living and working conditions of Polish domestic workers in Berlin should be seen within this context. There are some 27,000 Polish citizens legally resident in Berlin, and 80,000 Aussiedler. The main employment for men is in construction and for women is domestic work in private households. The majority of Polish domestic workers in Berlin are “pendular migrants”, working in Germany but living in Poland. Because of Berlin’s geographical proximity to Poland, women are able to travel to Berlin to work and stay for the week, returning to Poland for the weekend. This arrangement means that Polish women rarely live-in, working instead as cleaners on an hourly rate for several different employers and although working without legal protection or insurance. Because Poland and their families are close by, these difficulties do not loom as large as with other nationalities.
It was not possible to carry out group interviews in Berlin because of funding problems. However, from the following case studies I would argue that there is evidence of physical, mental and sexual abuse experienced by women migrants working in private households as domestic workers in Berlin.

PT was brought from Rumania to work as a domestic worker for a couple. She lived in their flat, did all their domestic chores, and was regularly beaten and sexually abused by both the man and the woman. They also forced her to have sexual intercourse with their friends, and finally forced her to work as a prostitute so they could “earn” money to pay for their apartment. The woman had no documents and was illegal in Berlin. She met a man who offered to help her, and escaped from the couple to live with him. She loved him, and kept house for him and slept with him for four years, unmarried and still undocumented. When she returned from shopping one day he presented her with her passport, told her he didn’t want her any more, and refused to let her enter the house again, even to collect her clothes. PT approached an association for help, but has since disappeared.

RZ came to Berlin in 1981 from Poland. She was 24 and well educated, but had no work permit and could only find work as a domestic worker. Although she feels that most of her employers were polite and she cannot complain about her treatment, she is clear that the work is difficult and demeaning, and that employers’ attitudes and demands can put an intolerable strain on their domestic workers. Her first employers were doctors with three children, two dogs and a house of fifteen rooms. The worker had to do the domestic chores and feed, exercise and clean the dogs. “Although she was very polite, the woman was very finicky” and insisted on sixteen different cleaning cloths, each with its own purpose, one for cupboard edges, one for inside cupboards etc. “She was always watching me which made the work stressful and claustrophobic”. After nine years with this family as her continuous and sole employer she had to take several weeks off because she had hurt her back at work, and her employer telephoned her to complain that she had to employ someone else to cover her. By mutual agreement she left their employment. Her experiences with other employers were no more happy, to the extent that RZ feared for her own
sanity: "Some women called me their 'good fairy', but in the end I was only ever the cleaner". RZ finally managed to move out of domestic work and to get office work: "I came to life again. I liked going to work. I got my dignity back".

RZ's description of employment as a domestic worker is typical of the 'lucky' women who escape abuse and gross exploitation, but nevertheless have to endure a stressful and unsatisfactory employer-employee relationship, and work that is demeaning and at times reflective of the employer's neurosis.

KN came to Berlin from North East Thailand. She had a sister in Berlin who had married a German and she hoped to do the same. She started working in the sex industry, but could not cope with it - there is high competition between Thai women working in prostitution in Berlin and women are often in the position that they must take all clients whatever their demands. Her sister helped her to find a job with a very wealthy Thai-European family, working both in their highly exclusive shop and in the household. By this time KN had been in the country over three months and was an overstayer. She was treated very badly by the employing family, but was completely dependent on them because of her legal status. After some months she became sick and weak. Her employers were only concerned that she continued working and did not help. She was too frightened to go for help elsewhere. Finally her sister persuaded her she had no choice but to seek medical attention. By then it was too late. She had inoperable cancer and died in hospital in Berlin. Her employer offered no help and did not visit her. Until she died she only wanted to leave hospital so she could work to send money to her family.

OU is a Bosnian woman who lives in Germany with her husband and two of her school age children. They have been told that she must return to Bosnia in 1998, and are extremely reluctant to do so, partly because, as Bosnian Serbs, they feel they have no home to go back to. Neither partner has permission to work, but OU works cleaning private houses - many of her employers are settled gastarbeiter from former Yugoslavia who have some sympathy for her plight. She earns 10 marks (£4.48) an hour. She would like to move into other work, but this is the only area that is available to her.
CONCLUSIONS

From the fieldwork carried out, Figure 1 may be represented as

Figure 2

- Bologna
- Barcelona
- Athens
- Barcelona

documented ________ undocumented

live-in
live-out

Berlin
Paris

Significant proportions of domestic workers can be found working in each sector in each city. There are undocumented workers living-in in Berlin and Paris. The exception is Athens where, at the time fieldwork was conducted with only one exception workers were all undocumented and living in. Long hours and abuse were particularly prevalent in Athens. This does suggest that immigration status (workers' relation to the state), and living place (workers' relation to the employer) are key variables in the living and working conditions of migrant domestic workers. These axes - relations with the state and relations with the employer, may vary in other ways e.g.:
Such variations all have a combined impact on the workers living and working conditions which partly in consequence vary widely. Life is not as neat as a diagram! The areas are related, so as mentioned in Chapter Four, immigration status and live-in/live-out are not independent of each other - people may live-in because they are undocumented. Theoretically issues around immigration status and employer/worker relations may be related through discussions of contract. Before going on to this, however, one must first deal with the question of what is being contracted for. Specifically, what is being commodified when employers pay migrant domestic workers?
The migrant worker is framed by immigration legislation as a unit of labour, without connection to family or friends, a unit whose “production” costs (food, education, shelter) were met elsewhere, and whose reproduction costs are of no concern to employer or state. In this respect, the worker who moves across continents may seem the logical result of capitalism’s individual subject, the juridical person, torn from all social context, selling their labour power in the global market place. But while states and capitalists want workers, what they get is people. This tension, between “labour power” and “personhood” is particularly striking with reference to migrant domestic workers, but I believe it has broader repercussions for migrants and for women (see O’Connell Davidson 1998; Pateman 1988).

WHO PROFITS FROM MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS?
As well as individual capitalists, the receiving state might be said to profit from migrant workers, since their labour power has been produced without any outlay from this state and, theoretically at least, they are to return to their countries of origin in their old age, thereby saving the receiving state any expenses associated with their old age. Again, theoretically, they do not bring their children with them saving the host state associated costs, particularly to do with education. In practice immigrants are less likely to draw on social provisions than citizens (Harris 1995: 205). Yet they do pay taxes: a US Federal Department of Labor study of undocumented workers in the early 1980s found that 73 per cent had income tax deducted from their pay, 77 per cent paid social security, and 0.5 per cent received benefits (cited Harris 1995: 206).

Migrant domestic workers and state provisions
But what of the migrant domestic worker? Like most domestic workers in private households whether migrants or citizens, she and her employers are unlikely to be paying tax. In this respect then migrant domestic workers differ from Harris’ general
picture of undocumented migrants, though of course, like all inhabitants of a state they must pay indirect taxes on food, clothes etc. Moreover, the migrant domestic worker, in common with other migrants, makes few demands on the state - other than those spent in searching and deporting “illegal immigrants”\(^2\). Indeed, increasingly the provision of those very social benefits that are the right of citizens rests on the labour of migrant domestic workers, and without a radical overhaul of the organisation of European economies and welfare systems, this is set to continue.

While women’s participation in the labour force is rising, provisions for childcare and care of the elderly remain extremely limited. All European Union countries have demonstrated a feminisation of their labour force over the past twenty years. So in France for example female participation in the labour force in 1996 was at 60.2 per cent, in 1975 it was 50.9 per cent (Bernard Brunhoes Consultants 1997). Women’s employment patterns are increasingly “masculinised”, remaining in the labour market after marriage and returning to it soon after the birth of children, rather than dropping out of the labour market after the first birth and returning, if at all, when their children have left home. This is the case in France (Bernard Brunhoes Consultants 1997), Italy, (Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini 1996), Greece (Athens University of Economics and Business 1996) and Germany (ifo Institute for Economic Research 1997). Indeed in Spain it is married women, even those with young children at home, whose participation in employment rates have increased the most (Toharia et al. 1997). Yet there is a desperate shortage in publicly funded service for children. France is the only EU state which makes any accommodation for children of three and under (20 per cent of those children will find a publicly funded place). In Greece, Spain, Italy and Germany publicly funded services were available to between 2 and 5 per cent of three year olds and under (European Commission Network on Childcare 1996). Childcare is not simply an issue that stops being a problem when children go to school. Short school days and school holidays make it

\(^1\) This comment has stuck in my mind for years, but I can find no reference to it. I only know that I did not originate it.

\(^2\) The cost of enforcement and the bureaucracies it sustains should not be underestimated. For asylum seekers in the OECD receiving countries alone the total cost of determining their legal status in 1990 was an estimated $7 billion i.e. twelve times the total UN budget for refugee assistance worldwide and one-seventh of the OECD’s development budget to the third world (Collinson 1994: 21).
difficult for both parents to be employed full-time, and school-age childcare has been identified as a growing need by the European Commission Network on Childcare (1996). Given the lack of public provision for childcare the majority of those women remaining in the labour market following the birth of their first child are clearly having to make private provision, often paying for childcare out of taxed income (Germany and France have some tax relief, Spain, Greece and Italy have none).

But it is not only children who need to be supported. The population of Europe is ageing and an increasing proportion of older people are living alone. As people live longer and are more often living alone there is a “caring gap”, often even with relatives nearby and visiting they do not or cannot undertake basic domestic chores or provide the necessary physical assistance. This gap will widen: according to a report published by the European Commission in March 1996, Europe is set to experience a massive demographic shift, with a 50 per cent increase in the number of people over sixty in the next thirty years and an 11 per cent decrease in the under twenties. At the same time as this demographic change, European states are pursing policies of decarceration and “care in the community”, not just for older people but for others with special needs such as the mentally ill. The reduction in residential care has not resulted in expansion of domiciliary care (Walker and Maltby 1997) and personal social services, like public expenditure in general throughout Europe has been subject to fiscal retrenchment. According to a 1992 Eurobarometer survey relatively small proportions of older people (60+) were receiving regular help with personal care and household tasks (excluding those people in institutions), and this was a smaller proportion than those suffering some form of incapacity (an indicator of the need for care). The survey found that spouses were important care providers, and when a spouse died the public sector did not fully compensate for this loss of care and pointed to a consequent “care gap”, particularly since women were more likely to provide care for husbands and to outlive their partners (Walker and Maltby 1997). Long-term care continues to be predominantly family orientated i.e. dependent on women in private households:

“This raises a dilemma for policy makers, since declining birth rates combined with the rise in labour force participation of women and higher incidence of divorce has led to a reduced potential source of care for older people in poor
health. A new system of long-term care is urgently required in many countries of the Union, since the predominant forms of care based largely upon filial obligation may soon be impracticable.”
(Walker and Maltby 1997: 93)

So, there is an increasing need for care services to be provided for the elderly, partly because of an ageing population, and partly because of social welfare policies which are cutting available public services. This is at a time when, as noted with childcare, there are fewer women at home, and when marriage breakdown and geographical mobility are making the “kinship” obligations - insofar as they ever existed, more and more difficult to enforce. Changing family structures and the withdrawal of state support mean that families, and more specifically, women within families, are finding it more difficult to carry out the basic reproductive work of the family. This is in part to do with women’s entry into the labour market, but it is also part of other profound changes to intergenerational contracts - so not only are grandparents less likely to be near children to be cared for, they are also not available for caring for grandchildren.

As women citizens are increasingly unable or unwilling to provide unpaid care for the elderly, the young and the disabled, it is individual migrant women, rather than the “welfare state” that is filling in the gap.

“the foundations are apparently being laid for the effective demand for unregulated caring labour. This will not only affect women, but also, particularly in the context of an EU-wide international labour market and the great migrations of labour and refugees arising out of the break-up of the old Communist regimes, ‘outsiders’ will inevitably be brought into this pool of unregularised workers. Hence there are issues of race and nationality embedded in these developments as well as gender”.
(Ungerson 1995: 48)

The demand for “caring” work was one that was recognised by formal and informal placement agencies. Five out of the eight employment agencies interviewed in Barcelona mentioned care of children and/or elderly people as offering the principal employment for migrants - one of the remaining three was called SOS - Hombres
Solteros SOS Single Men, and catered specifically for single men "unable to cope" with household responsibilities. Providing services to older people was felt to be the growth area. In Paris the AGF dealt with forty requests for childcare workers between 4th and 19th January 1996, out of a total of forty two employers. The reason for this heavy preponderance is clearly partly in the nature of the AGF, which is specifically set up to help local families. However the age breakdown of the children requiring care is illuminating. In France some 95 per cent of pre-school children aged 3-5 attend publicly funded "écoles maternelles", but the available provision for under that age and for after school care, although significantly better than most EU states, is still limited. So, of the forty employers requesting childcare through the AGF, twenty three were requiring care for at least one child under three, and eight for children when they came home from school i.e. 78 per cent of requests were specifically to fill those acknowledged gaps in provision, and of the remainder, six were unclear about the age of the children to be cared for, and only two were for childcare for children aged three to five.

Workers themselves were clear that privatised caring constituted an important part of their work:

"Filipina: We can be a nurse, inside job with old ladies, caring the old ladies, pampering the old ladies (general agreement and laughter)
Zairian: Why can't we go work in the hospital? The hospitals are looking for these people?
Ethiopian:. They wouldn't allow you to go and work in the hospital, even if they didn't allow you to work in the household."

(Athens consultation)

In some instances European families may be said to be profiting from the low value accorded domestic labour: if a female barrister pays the going rate - say £4.00 an hour - for childcare, and is herself earning £250 an hour, she/the family is profiting from a discrepancy in the low cost of reproduction and the high cost of the bar. The household income is greater than it would be if the female employer were to do the childcare herself. But not all employment situations fit this model so neatly, and I have already discussed the difficulties around the valuation of domestic work. To ask
which individuals financially profit from domestic labour is not the real issue, there is a broader question: what exactly is being commodified in the case of paid domestic labour? And what is the employer buying?

COMMODIFICATION AND DOMESTIC WORKERS

According to Marxist theory, workers sell their commodified “labour power” (i.e. their property in the person). Marx’s theory of surplus value claimed that capitalists profit from this exchange: the value of labour power is determined by the value of the labour time socially necessary to produce it and

“If their working day or week exceeds the labour-time embodied in their wage, they are creating surplus value: a value over and above the variable capital investment, for which they will receive no recompense...Profit can thus arise...Its premise is exploitation of labour.”

(Sayer 1991: 3)

However, as Pateman (along with Marx) has pointed out, labour power is a political fiction:

“Labour power, capacities or services, cannot be separated from the person of the worker like pieces of property. The worker’s capacities are developed over time and they form an integral part of his self and self-identity...Moreover, capacities or labour power cannot be used without the worker using his will, his understanding and experience, to put them into effect. The use of labour power requires the presence of its ‘owner’, and it remains as mere potential until he acts in the manner necessary to put it into use...The fiction ‘labour power’ cannot be used; what is required is that the worker labours as demanded.”

(Pateman 1988: 150-151)

This might be said to be a re-working of the Lockean tension around property in the person: a person does not stand in the same relation to the property in their own person as they do to other types of property because that property is “sacred” and integral to personhood.

“Contracts about property in the person inevitably create subordination”

(Pateman 1988: 153)
What the employer is really buying is not labour power but the “power to command” apparently limited by, in the case of the worker, the employment contract. But the fiction of labour power is useful to distinguish between those functions/aspects of the self that can be “bought” and are allegedly not integral to personhood, and those that are integral to personhood and cannot be sold without volunteering oneself for slavery. Labour power can be commodified, exchanged for money, and the two parties, worker and capitalist, are, like their products, apparently socially equated in the act of exchange, both are equal subjects of exchange:

“Living labour capacity belongs to itself, and has disposition over the expenditure of its forces, through exchange. Both sides confront each other as persons. Formally, their relation has the equality and freedom of exchange as such. As far as concerns the legal relation, the fact that this form is a mere semblance, and a deceptive semblance, appears as an external matter.”


Labour power is, in this fiction, not integral to the person and can be traded in the marketplace with buyer and seller constructed as equals.

Are migrant domestic workers selling their “labour power”? I have already explored the question of what domestic work produces and broadly concluded that it is concerned with the physical, cultural and ideological reproduction of human beings (see Chapter Three). Paid domestic workers reproduce people and social relations, not just in what they do (polishing silver, ironing clothes), but also in the very doing of it (the “foil” to the household manager). In this respect the paid domestic worker is herself, in her very essence, a means of reproduction i.e. it is not just her “labour power” that is being harnessed to the cause of her employer’s physical and social reproduction, but it is the very fact that she, the domestic worker, and not her employers, is doing this work, much of which seems invented especially for her to do (see Chapter Eight). The employer is buying the power to command, not the property in the person, but the whole person (see Chapter Nine). It is this power to command that is manifest in ordering a worker to stand in the same position all day, in calling a person “dog” and “donkey” (Anderson 1993: 3), in making her clean the floor three times a day with a toothbrush. So, while domestic workers are usually
attempting to sell their labour power (itself a political fiction) within an employment relation, they find themselves frustrated:

“because you are a black, because you are doing domestic work, therefore, you are nothing. Always they look down upon us as a hungry people. We are not here to put our hand into their pockets, we are not here to do any bad thing to them, but rather to help them to clean their houses. But they don’t give that respect to us”
(Ghanaian woman in Athens)

“you need the money to feed your children, and in place to pay you they give you old clothes. ‘I give you this, I give you this’. They give you things, but me, I need the money. Why come? I am a human being.”
(Zairian working in Athens)

Employers want more than labour power. They often openly stipulate that they want a particular type of person (Gregson and Lowe 1994:3) justifying this demand on the grounds that they will be working in the home. So employer AM was emphatic that she would not accept an employee who “smells too strong”, because “I cannot stand strong body smells”. Or if the worker is to have responsibility for caring work she should be “affectionate”, “like old people” or “be good with children”. The worker wants to earn as much money as she can with reasonable conditions, but the employers’ wants are rather more complicated. This is an oversimplification of the differences between what is being bought and sold by employer and worker, but I think it is an adequate description of how many employment situations begin before more complex interpersonal relations develop.

CAN MONEY BUY LOVE?
The contradictions and tensions involved in paying for domestic labour are most clearly apparent when the function of that labour includes care. The political fiction of “labour power” is strained to breaking point - can one pay a care worker for their labour power and be unconcerned with whether they are a “caring person”? Can one pay a person to “be” caring? Can money really buy love?
Women and care

It is widely accepted that there are two meanings conflated in the term “care”: care as labour and care as emotion, and it can be very difficult to disentangle the two. So Finch and Groves (1983) in the introduction to their edited volume write that caring cannot be reduced to “a kind of domestic labour performed on people”, but that it always includes emotional bonds. In her contribution to the volume, Graham states that affection and service “can’t be disentangled”, and Waerness (1984) argues that caring is about labour and feelings, about relations, and that we all need to be cared for. Much of the labour of care is basically domestic chores. It would be difficult to care for a child and not include cooking her food, washing up her dishes, wiping her face and the table, changing and throwing away her nappy, tidying up her toys, washing her clothes etc. But once one allows that caring does include some measure of domestic work it is difficult to draw the line – how much of the domestic work is part of caring for ones charge, and when does it become general servicing of the household? And could not domestic work in general be seen as “caring”, as looking after one’s loved ones, making sure they are comfortable, at ease. As Rose puts it:

“It has been both a theoretical and an empirical problem that even where we tried to separate housework from peoplework, they continually merged”

(Rose 1986: 168)

Indeed, much of the female directed advertising is encouraging us in this perception - show your husband how much you love him by buying NM brand of powder and washing his shirts really white.

The problem is that while X doing something for Y may demonstrate X’s love for Y, it may also demonstrate Y’s power over X - and these two are not mutually exclusive. And of course, this is heavily gendered. The labour of care for men is usually manifest in the labour involved in “providing for” the family - few are primary carers either of their children, or of their parents. Eighteen per cent of older women are cared for by their spouse, as compared with 53 per cent of men (Walker and Maltby: 103). As for household chores, in Europe there has been no significant change in men’s participation in domestic work despite female employment rates (Rubery et al 1998). The labour of care, whatever proportion of it is domestic chores, is chiefly women’s work.
This gendered relationship between care, labour and power in the private sphere, and its relation to status and the public sphere can be seen in “The good wife’s guide”, taken from a women’s magazine in the 1950s. This is advice on how to prepare for your husband’s homecoming:

- “Have dinner ready. Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal ready, on time for his return. This is a way of letting him know that you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs.
- Prepare yourself. Take 15 minutes to rest so you’ll be refreshed when he arrives.
- Be a little gay and a little more interesting for him. His boring day may need a lift and one of your duties is to provide it...
- …you should prepare and light a fire for him to unwind by. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order, and it will give you a lift too. After all, catering for his comfort will provide you with immense personal satisfaction.
- Take a few minutes to wash the children’s hands and faces (if they are small), comb their hair and, if necessary, change their clothes. They are little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part. Minimise all noise. At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet...
- Listen to him. You may have a dozen important things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first - remember, his topics of conversation are more important than yours.....
- Your goal: Try to make sure your home is a place of peace, order and tranquillity where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit....
- Don’t ask him questions about his actions or question his judgement or integrity. Remember, he is the master of the house and as such will always exercise his will with fairness and truthfulness. You have no right to question him.
- A good wife always knows her place".
Such advice should serve as a warning for an uncritical acceptance of the care as
labour/care as emotion conflation. The particular danger of viewing care as labour
and care as emotion as indistinguishable is that it can lead to an argument that care is
not exploitative because women want to do it ("After all, catering for his comfort
will provide you with immense personal satisfaction") and because they are doing it
of their own free will. It also can lead to an argument that informal care is
necessarily better care because it is guided by love, which as Ungerson has pointed
out (1995) has serious implications for unpaid women carers.

The negotiating of labour and emotion poses particular problems for women then.
Much of the literature on care in the 1980s focussed on this, and in particular on
women's experiences as unpaid carers in the home (Stacey 1981; Waerness 1984;
Dalley 1988). Issues around paid care in the home and its relation to gender continue
to be unexplored. One of the most influential recent works on care is Bubeck’s Care,
Gender and Justice (1995) which examines how and why caring work is exploitative
of women, and renders women peculiarly and structurally vulnerable to exploitation.
Bubeck’s definition of “care” emphasises the difference between doing something for
someone who cannot do it, and doing something for someone who will not do it,
(which she calls “servicing”) rather than distinguishing caring from other types of
domestic work in terms of tasks performed. So cooking a meal for a bedridden
person is “caring”, cooking a meal for a husband/able bodied employer is “servicing”.
No matter that they have not got time to cook, it is possible for them to cook it in a
way in which it is not possible for someone who is bedridden. Her definition also
seeks to elucidate both why caring work is necessary and its peculiarly human quality

“Caring for is the meeting of the needs of one person by another person
where face-to-face interaction between carer and cared for is a crucial
element of the overall activity and where the need is of such a nature that it
cannot possibly be met by the person in need herself”

(Bubeck 1995: 129)

So even if it were possible for the need for care not to be met by face to face
interaction, but by machine, it is unlikely that this would be deemed desirable, - the
prospect of totally mechanised old people’s homes seems a nightmare rather than a utopia. But this does seem to miss the point though that it is only human to show one cares through meeting such needs whether or not the object of our affections can meet them themself, and, from time to time at least, to meet them in an “excessive” way. This is evident from Bubeck’s own example of “care” according to her definition, “cooking her favourite dish for a sick child” (Bubeck 1995: 130). But why “favourite”? Cooking food for a sick child is caring according to her own definition, cooking her favourite dish suggests labour beyond the strictly necessary. But then if one’s only consideration is the most suitable, easy and economical dish for the sick child, and what she likes to eat doesn’t enter into it, is that really showing “care”? The central difficulty around care as labour/care as emotion has not been resolved. Human beings can labour to demonstrate affection - for the able bodied and powerful as well as the weak and vulnerable. Community and human relations, with their ties of power and of affection are lived and are created through care. To offer totally mechanised old people’s homes is literally inhuman.

Care as labour/care as emotion and paid domestic work
What implications does this have for when one woman pays another to do caring work? Is it valid to see this as adopting male behaviour, i.e. is the woman employer now caring for her family in the sense of “providing for” them?

“Now there is a sense of caring that applies specifically to men, namely that of ‘providing for’....a caring son would not be expected to care for his frail parent himself, but rather to provide the material resources to pay for care if needed”
(Bubeck 1995: 162)

It is clearly the case that “providing for” by no means specifically applies to men. When a woman is working, salary for paid carers is often taken out of the woman employer’s wages (Gregson and Lowe 1994). Migrant women are themselves usually “providers for” their family, often “providing for” their children back home, who are themselves cared for, paid or unpaid, by another:

“you have to look at it from the point of view of necessity, because what they were paying you there (in the Dominican Republic) for doing a job was not
even enough to pay for your children's upkeep, let alone pay for someone to look after them for you. On the other hand, when you emigrate to a country, they give you double what you were earning there, you have enough to send back money to your children there, to pay someone else to care for them, and on top of that to live yourself”.

(Dominicana working in Barcelona)

“The problem in our country is that before men emigrated. Men were going to the US, but the women were staying in the house. Then what happened was that the man emigrated and did not send anything back, he sent back no money. So the woman was a single mother with children, so if she got the chance to emigrate, she emigrated too...because she didn't have any other option to find a better future for her children. So it's terrible for her, very difficult, because they are here, they can only send money back home and there children are being brought up and cared for by another, by their relatives...”

(Dominicana in Barcelona)

While most migrant domestic workers relied on unpaid care by female family members, it was not unusual for domestic workers to themselves employ workers, often rural migrants. Polish women working as domestic workers in Berlin for example, reportedly often employed Ukrainians to care for their children in Poland (see Chapter Ten).

Yet for the majority of migrants interviewed, being a “provider for” rather than carer of their immediate family was not experienced as a liberation, as it is for European female employers, but as another level of exploitation. While the female European employer may continue in her emotional and supportive role, migrant women can have no emotional and moral input into the upbringing of their children. They do not enjoy care as emotion freed from physical labour, rather the opposite, their care for their children is demonstrated in the fruits of their hard labour, in remittances, rather than the cuddles, and “quality time” that provide so much of the satisfaction of care.

“It's terrible for us, because we are far from our children, but we are giving them food, education, we are giving them everything, although staying here
you are dying because everything depends on you... for this I am saying, I’m spending three more years here, then I’m going back to my children, whatever happens, because like it or not I am keeping my children going, even though it is with this pain and lack of love."

(Peruvian in Barcelona)

It would seem at first glance that in the case of female European employers, the hiring of a carer reflects those distinctions highlighted by Davidoff (1974) of mutually interdependent female stereotypes being worked out in the domestic worker/employer relationship, in this case of the work of servants, (the physical labour of care), and the work of wives/mothers, (the emotional labour of care). Could it be argued then, that the hiring of carers facilitates some privileged women buying into Rose’s “care-giving myth” (1986), that care involves only emotion and no love, and like men, enjoying care as emotion freed from the labour of care? In this case, to take up a point mentioned above, it would be possible for someone to care emotionally for a child and do no physical caring work. Female employers therefore are, like men, divesting themselves of the physical labour of care, but are still the “mother” in terms of their responsibility for and involvement in the emotional and moral development of their child. As Rothman (1989) has pointed out, the exultation of genetic links which has its roots in patriarchy and which has now been “modified” to allow for the equal importance of “male and female seed” has led to a downgrading of nurturing, which includes the labour of care. The privileging of the genetic link, and of care as emotion over care as labour has rendered the importance of the labour of care invisible and unacknowledged, this is work that anyone can do, as opposed to emotion which is ultimately dependent on some genetic relationship.

This constructs paid domestic labour then as simply that, labour. It sometimes seems as if employers are adopting this model, particularly those who hire and fire easily (the carer is “just” a labourer, and the relationship between the carer and the care for is of no consequence). It is also made use of when the worker oversteps the mark and gets “too close” to the cared for. Very occasionally workers too attempt this emotion/labour divide:
“I’m telling you, on top of what they are paying you for, the physical work, there is also psychological work, that’s double work... double pay. Sometimes, when they say to me for example, that I should give her lots of love, I feel like saying, well, for my family I give love free, and I’m not discriminating, but if it’s a job you’ll have to pay me...”
(Dominicana working in Barcelona)

Those who were more experienced and who had a greater choice of jobs sometimes refused to work as carers or limited themselves to a particular period with any one family. But it was often a hard lesson to learn:

“...I cared for a baby for his first year... the child loves you as a mother, but the mother was jealous and I was sent away. I was so depressed then, seriously depressed. All I wanted was to go back and see him... I will never care for a baby again, it hurts too much.”
(Cote d’Ivoirean in Parma)

But in practise this separation is not maintained. Employers are not only looking for a labourer when they are looking for carers, they want somebody “affectionate”, “loving”, “good with children” etc. One employer in Italy even remarked that she was anxious that her worker was considering leaving her, and so had another baby, because a small child was the best way to hold on to a worker! Sometimes employers attempt to keep workers by appealing to their “finer feelings” (rather than offering an increase in salary):

“...it’s too much. I said, ‘Madam I am very sorry, I cannot stay here, I have to find another...’, ‘why L., you cannot leave me like this’. I said, ‘Yes, I can, I don’t like.’ ‘Where is your heart, you will leave me like this? I have no worker’. I said, ‘I’m very sorry. I have to leave you.’ I cannot stand it. Otherwise maybe I will kill her!”
(Filipina in Paris)

One of the reasons that an employer seeks out a domestic worker for a private household may precisely be that she offers something that is lacking in, for example, a nursery or an old people’s home, one-to-one care and a “special” relationship.
Gregson and Lowe (1994) found that the reason that middle-class English families chose nannies rather than childminders was because they offered a "mother substitute":

"In a sense, then, whilst the employment of the nanny form of waged domestic labour enables middle-class households with both partners in full-time service class occupations to combine paid work and parenthood, such employment is, at the same time, reproductive of very traditional ideas about the care of young, pre-school-age children."

(Gregson and Lowe 1994: 120)

However, when necessary employers can make use of the labour power fiction so that any relationship between carer and cared for is not "real", or if it threatens to be, it can be immediately disrupted without responsibility to the worker.

For workers on the other hand it can prove impossible to disentangle care as emotion from care as labour:

"What they say at the beginning of the job and then what happens, are very different things... with old people like it or not it is a job where you have to get to know this old person and take care of them".

(Dominicana in Barcelona)

For not only may affection be expressed through labour, as has been discussed in the literature, but labour may engender care, and this is particularly true in the case of childcare. As anyone who has been intimately involved with a child can tell, it is often through interaction on the level of basic physical chores - nappy changing, feeding, cleaning, that one develops a relationship with a young child. Workers who are involved in such a relationship with a child and who are deprived of their "own" children may love the child intensely. The difficulty for the worker is that, as Bubeck allows, caring requires "face to face interaction" i.e. at the very least, relating. If this face to face interaction is repeated on a daily basis in the kinds of conditions experienced by many domestic workers, particularly live-in, it is almost inevitably develops into a relationship. The paid worker loves the child, the child loves the worker, and jealousy and family friction result. Even worse when the relationship is between a worker and an old person and financial settlements are involved!
Care involves the whole person. It is bound up with who we are. A worker is not only a worker, she is a woman, a human being, and caring is, as Bubeck puts it a “deeply human practise”, with a particular resonance for women for:

“Caring as an activity, disposition, and attitude forms a central part of probably all cultural conceptions of femininity”

(Bubeck 1995: 160)

Employers of domestic workers acknowledge that care involves the whole person in the personal requirements that they demand of domestic workers, but they also take advantage of the fiction of labour power. When money does buy care, i.e. when care is explicitly commodified then it is not real care because real care cannot be commodified - “Money can’t buy love”, so workers’ feelings for their charges are not important. The domestic worker is not socially equated with her employer in the act of exchange because the fiction of labour power cannot be maintained: it is “personhood” that is being commodified. The worker’s “caring” function, her performance of tasks constructed as degrading, demonstrate the employer’s power to command her self. The worker who had to stand by the door when her employers left for the evening and remain in the same position until they came home could not really be constructed as selling her labour power. Having allegedly sold her “personhood” the domestic worker is both person and non-person. Such an exchange further dishonours her before her employer:

“I can say that they think about themselves, how to take more money, better conditions for them. They offer because they have to, not because they feel sympathy. Love is silly for them.”

(Employer in Athens)

The contradictions in the concept of property in the person, apparent from Locke onwards, trap the worker between being a labourer without emotions, selling commodified labour power on the one hand, and a dishonoured person on the other. The resulting tensions are experienced by workers and employers as part of EP Thompson’s “experience”, a sense of these contradictions, even if not explicitly articulated. So B. expressed the contradictions implicit in the attempt to commodify that which cannot fully be commodified:
“Live-in, what are they paying for? Freedom. It’s emotional work, and physically you have to be there twenty four hours, you have to give them your liberty. That is what they are paying for. To be there all the time. Even if they pay you, give you free time, I think a young person is worth more than the money. There is no amount that they can pay you that can justify you being imprisoned.”
(Peruvian in Barcelona)

“MEMBER OF OUR FAMILY - OH REALLY?”
In order to negotiate the contradictions inherent in the attempted commodification of domestic work, and the tension between the affective relations of the private, and the instrumental relations of employment, many employers and some workers made use of the notion of the family.

“we are treated as a servant...like my employer, they say, ‘Ah Teresita, we used to treat you as a member of our family’ Oh really? But try to observe..they will introduce you to their friends as a member of the family, and then they are sitting down, eating with crossed legs, and you will be the one who is running for their needs. Is that, can you consider that a member of the family? It’s very easy to say, but it’s not being felt inside the house.”
(Filippina in Athens)

“Part of the family”. This phrase appears time and again in the literature around domestic work as it did in my own fieldwork with domestic workers. It is used whether or not they do caring work. This is in part precisely because of the elision between domestic work and caring work that I have attempted to tease out (but which employers clearly have no interest in unravelling!) which allows for what Bubeck would count as “servicing” to be portrayed as “care”. For employers can argue that domestic workers “love” their employers and show it through action. So while they hire a labourer, gradually the labourer becomes incorporated into the family and has the same kinds of relationship with family members as the kin do.

But which part of the family are they, one is tempted to ask? It is true, some workers may actually become part of the family, by marrying a male employer and becoming wives and mothers. Until the 1960s white European women were preferred as domestic workers
in Canadian policy, because they were also potential Canadian wives and mothers. The idea that domestic workers may really become “part of the family” and reproductive workers in all senses of the word is confirmed by the immigration policies of some countries such as Singapore and Malaysia which explicitly forbid domestic workers from marrying their employers. In some European countries - notably Italy and Spain, this move, from domestic worker to wife, was not unusual. In Barcelona one domestic worker placement agency was, it was alleged, doubling up as a marriage bureau, advertising in Germany that they offered holidays in Barcelona for men who wanted to meet potential Filipina brides.

However, this is not what is generally meant by becoming part of the employers family. Rather it suggests a “special relationship” i.e. that the relationship is not an employment relationship, that the worker will be loved and cared for, enter into a network of rights and obligations. For the employer there are clear advantages to the obfuscation of the employment relationship, since it seriously weakens the worker’s negotiating position in terms of wages and conditions - any attempt to improve these are an insult to the “family” and evidence of the workers’ moneygrubbing attitude. The worker risks forfeiting “good” relations with her employers by making too many demands. It must be remembered that in the highly individualised work situations, good interpersonal relations can be extremely important, to the extent that workers will often consider a lower paying job if she feels happier with the family:

“the best kind of employers are the Andaluscians, they are more humanitarian, they are kind, they treat you more kindly although the pay is not that much, you can earn about 60,000 with them and they treat you kindly”

(Peruvian in Barcelona)

For employers of carers, describing a worker as part of the family facilitates the myth that caring is untainted by the market place. They can imagine that the worker may, as Bubeck’s unpaid carers may, be fulfilled and empowered by a “real” relationship with the person cared for - while retaining the possibility of terminating the relationship because it was contracted on the labour market and, therefore can be deemed unreal if necessary. Workers who described themselves as part of the family
tended to use the term to emphasise that their employers were "good" employers, not like those being described by other workers - though some were more sanguine:

"the problem is, they don't treat me as a slave or anything. The problem is they treat me as a family. I think being a family, you stay in the family, I say, if you in the family you are there from morning to night, doing the same as they are."

(Filipina in Paris)

What the "part of the family" rhetoric obscures is that relations in paid care are, to use Waerness' (1984) term "asymmetrical". While the worker is expected to have familial interest in the employing family, this is not reciprocated. Cock (1989) found in South Africa that employers were simply unwilling to consider their workers' private lives and similarly very few employers I spoke to had any idea about the lives of their domestic workers - indeed they resented it if their worker "talked too much". Relations within the family are typically asymmetrical, with women doing more "caring" than men. But paid workers, unlike "wives", "mothers", "daughters" are not part of a network of obligations and responsibilities (however unequally distributed), all obligations are discharged in cash (see Chapter Eight). Because care is being paid for, it cannot be acknowledged that the worker is expressing and forming human relationships and community (which is not to say that unpaid care may not be expressing and forming oppressive human relations), her caring brings with it no mutual obligations, no entry into a community, no "real" human relations, only money. So a worker who has cared for a child over many years, who has spent many more hours with her than her "natural" mother, has no rights to see the child should the employer decide to terminate the relationship, because the worker is paid. Money expresses the full extent of any obligations.

This reduction of human relations to cash is rendered easier because the emotional relationship is typically not between the carer and the person who is paying her wages (who is in the final analysis, her employer) but between the carer and the cared for, and both are relatively powerless before the financier of the care. The growth of this emotional relationship renders the carer vulnerable to exploitation, and the cared for vulnerable to the whims of the person holding the purse strings. As
Bubeck points out, some unpaid carers may find themselves empowered by care, their self-esteem enhanced by making others happy and well:

"it is this sense of power that underlies the peculiar logic of care, whereby the more one gives the more one is given in return"

(Bubeck 1995: 148)

This is strikingly inappropriate for paid carers, where even on the level of the individual relationship between carer and cared for, a genuine affectionate relationship does not bring “empowerment” but rather its opposite. The care financier is able to manipulate the relationship between the carer and the cared for to their own ends, to extract more labour from the carer for lower wage for example, safe in the knowledge that the carer will want to do her best for the cared for. So in Paris, Diarist A., a live-in carer, worked on her day off:

"Exceptionally today I will take C with me... for a birthday party - no one is available and for a child it's a pity to miss the party, his old friends - so I did it."

Becoming “part of the family” is not only a means of maximising labour extracted from the worker. It is an attempt to manage contradictions. For the employer it helps to manage the contradictions of intimacy and status that attach to the role of the domestic worker who is at once privy to much of the intimate details of family life, yet also their status giver, their mythmaker (see Chapter Eight). It emphasises the common humanity of employers and workers, and explicitly rejects the commodification of human relations sustaining an illusion of affective relations - and in some instances, encouraging their formation. The situation of a Moroccan woman working in Barcelona reveals the vulnerability of carers and the problems for them of being regarded as part of the family. Zenaida cared for an old woman, and had done for five years, doing domestic chores as well as caring work and paid for by the woman’s sons. She lived in, was “part of the family”, and felt she was treated with respect by her employers, whose sons even took a holiday in her house in Morocco. Yet she could spend only one night a week with her five children who lived in Barcelona, and the rest of the time had to leave them to fend for themselves because she lived in. Their father was in Morocco, although he could have obtained a residence permit for Spain because the two oldest children were too old to be
admitted to Spain under family reunification. The youngest child was six, and she had left her when she was only a baby, for six days a week in order to be the old woman’s carer. There was no question that she could sleep with the baby: “You can’t do these things. No. Everyone thinks, I don’t know, about themselves. You can’t do that.”

Zenaida’s terrible situation points to one of the greatest advantages to the employer of regarding the worker as part of the family, which is the erasure of the worker’s own family. While being part of the family may be perceived by the employer as a great favour, for the worker it may be experienced as a denial of their humanity (Palmer 1992), a deep depersonalisation, as being perceived only in their occupational role, as a “domestic” rather than as a person with their own needs, their own life, and their own family outside of the employers’ home. By incorporating the worker as “part of the family” employers can not only ignore the worker’s other relationships, but can feel good about doing so - for it is an honour to be part of the family.

CONCLUSIONS
I have highlighted the caring function of domestic work because it brings out the contradictions and tensions in paid domestic labour. But the slippage between “labour power” and “personhood”, and the employer’s power to command the whole person of the domestic worker applies whatever function of domestic work the person is hired to perform. It is this slippage that can help us begin to understand what Bubeck sets out to explain, but never fully accounts for: how it is that some women exploit others within a general theory of care as women’s work.
CHAPTER EIGHT  
RACISM AND DOMESTIC WORK: THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OTHER

In examining the role of the domestic worker in status reproduction (Chapter Three) I have indicated the importance of the domestic worker in acting as a foil to the female household manager, and in particular how the former facilitates the negotiation of the contradiction of woman as pure, moral and clean, yet also charged with dealing with dirtiness and the physical labour of reproduction. Two mutually dependent but antagonistic stereotypes, each drawing their identity from their opposite are expressed and reproduced in the employer/domestic worker relationship. The operation of this process is apparent, as will be discussed, in the rituals of difference and of superiority/inferiority imposed by the employer, and in the persistent rejection of difference and insistence on common humanity by workers. This clearly feeds into wider conceptions of “the Other” and its importance in questions of race and gender, and in particular the role of “the Other” in managing dirt, death and pollution (see McClintock 1995; Davidoff 1983). The treatment of migrant domestic workers by their employers and their responses to this treatment both illuminate and challenge such discussions. The role of the domestic worker in the reproduction of a gendered status hierarchy means that differentiation between female employer and domestic worker is essential, and “race” can be crucial in marking this.

EMPLOYMENT OF RACIALISED GROUPS

Domestic work in private households is increasingly being done by racialised groups in Europe, but it is not exclusively the work of such groups. In the UK in particular it is still common for white working class citizens to work as cleaners, and white middle class citizens to work as nannies (Gregson and Lowe 1994). In Athens, Paris and Barcelona, older white female citizens also work as domestic workers, either because they can find no other work, or because they have worked in the sector all their lives. However, for migrants, domestic work and prostitution are the only work available on arrival. For those who do domestic work, when they have a settled immigration/citizenship status, though they may work live-out, they generally
continue to work in private households, and it seems that they are accounting for an increasing share of the market. Why does domestic work figure so prominently in the employment of migrant women?

The most obvious reply would be cost, that migrant domestic workers are cheaper, and undocumented workers can be employed off the books. Certainly when there are figures available, it seems that citizens are likely to command higher salaries than migrants (see Chapter Nine). However, it is a characteristic of paid domestic labour that with the exception of professionalised work (see Chapter Nine), a large proportion of it is done off the books whether the worker is a citizen or an undocumented migrant. Thus avoidance of tax and national insurance on its own does not explain the proliferation of migrants in this sector. Neither does their "cheapness". Despite the relatively high wages of Polish workers in Berlin, they still account for a significant proportion of domestic workers (see Chapter Ten). Filipino workers are the most "popular" and they are also the most expensive. This suggests that wages are not the only consideration for the employer. One advantage of migrant labour is its "flexibility". When the child of a live-in domestic worker is sick, if that worker is a citizen, she will leave her employing family to care for her child; not so the migrant worker for whom home and family may be thousands of miles away. A live-in migrant worker with limited access to life outside the employing home is less likely to form relationships that intrude on the employing family. As seen in Chapter Seven, paid domestic workers are often constructed as "part of the family", and migrants, removed from their own communities and relationships are "free" to become a part of the family in a way in which a citizen is not. For the undocumented migrant worker there is not even the possibility of family reunification. One could also argue that, because personalised networks and word of mouth, are so important for finding employment in domestic work, once a group has made its connections it is very difficult for outsiders to make headway in a system that relies on personal recommendations (see Chapter Four).

But if this explains why migrants work as domestic workers, it does not explain why many continue to work in private households, even when they are well established in the country with rights to family reunification etc. Many of the Filipinas in Emiligia
Romagna and Barcelona had settlement status and were highly educated with experience as teachers, midwives, telecommunications etc., yet continued as domestic workers. Similarly, evidence from placement agencies in Paris suggests that naturalised French citizens are disproportionately represented in domestic work. One of the problems faced is non-recognition of professional qualifications. This is turn is part of more general labour market racism. For migrant domestic workers are members of racialised groups. It is not only their status as (im)migrants that determines their opportunities (or lack of them) in the labour market, but also their “race” and gender.

RACIALISED HIERARCHIES
Domestic work is “naturalised” as an extension of women’s reproductive work - women do it naturally. Women from racialised groups, being closer to nature, are “naturally” good at domestic work. Bakan and Stasiulis (1995) have examined how the racialisation of domestic work means on the one hand the construing of a “fictive, universal, nonwhite, female, noncitizen Other” who is in some way naturally suited for domestic work, but on the other the hierarchising of women by distinctions such as skin colour, ethnicity, religion, nationality, as being appropriate for different types of domestic work and as meriting different levels of wages. Rina Cohen (1987) too refers to the “racial division of labour” among employers of domestic workers in Canada, with the “lighter” women being employed for childcare and cooking, and black women for housework. So while on the one hand the Other is constructed as a homogenous creature, well suited for domestic labour, on the other a 19th century type hierarchy operates in which one “race” is very clearly differentiated from another “race”.

This invidious hierarchy was very much in evidence in Europe. To some extent it is a recognised hierarchy among both employers and workers, with Filipinas generally at the top, and black Africans at the bottom, and it is most clearly manifested in pay. In Athens for example salaries ranged between 50,000 to 150,000 drachmas (£140-£422) a month, but Filipinas (and, it was reported, Polish) generally earned more than other nationalities. In the Greek questionnaires twenty five respondents gave specific hours and
pay per week. Of these, nine were Filipinas, one from Sri Lanka and the remaining fifteen from different black African countries.

Table 9 Wages in Athens by country of origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pay per hour</th>
<th>Less than 450</th>
<th>450-500</th>
<th>500+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filipina</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Filipina</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest paid of the sample was not a Filipina but a Ghanaian, earning 2,500 (£7) an hour - quite exceptionally high. Way above the 1,400 (£3.94) which was the second highest pay, cited by a Filipina. Given this and the remarks made by Caritas that pay was "about 1,500 drachmas (£4.23) an hour maximum. The Polish get 1,200-1,500 (£3.40–£4.23) an hour because they're fast"

(Caritas volunteer, Athens)

it is reasonable to class this as a one off. The lowest paid was a Zairian earning 200 drachmas (56p) an hour - 72,000 (£202) a month. Although the two lowest paid workers had both been in Greece under five years, so had the highest paid worker, and there is no apparent relationship between the number of years in the country and pay. The sample seemed to bear out the estimates given by some community groups of wages. However, pay per hour is not a precise marker. It has already been seen that hours worked are not fixed (see Chapters Five and Six). Several of those who filled in the questionnaires wrote "all the time" in response to the question “How many hours per week do you work?”. It does indicate the wide variation in pay for domestic work and that, as several participants in the research indicated, Filipinos are more in demand and command better wages than other nationalities.

This was not just true of Athens, but also in Barcelona and Paris (even though in Paris most Filipinas were undocumented):
"It is a little bit different situation between Filipinas and other nationalities, firstly because you are a large group, you are a majority, and you have been here for longer than other nationalities. Also you are very united."
(Peruvian in Barcelona)

Notably, although Filipinas generally earned higher wages than others, they were still "in demand":

"Even in Athens we notice sometimes, Filipino, Filipino, Filipino, Filipino. But for Africans there is very little opportunity of getting job... You do not see in Athens News advertising for Ethiopians or Africans. When they are advertising the work job, they always say, Filipinos or Europeans. They never advertise Africans."
(Ethiopian in Athens)

This observation was confirmed by that week’s edition of Athens News and supports the position that low wages alone do not explain why employers choose non-citizens to work in their homes.

"The basic salary for domestic work is 72,000 pesetas (£400) and something, but in general Filipinas are paid more. They have a choice, they are considered very high class, they are like a status symbol"
(Worker at the Filipino Centre, Barcelona).

The racist stereotype of Filipinos has them eminently suitable for domestic work:

"Interviewer: So it seems that the Filipinas have a slightly different experience...
Dominicana: Because they’ve got light skin!
Interviewer: Is it because they’ve been a long time here, they’ve had more time to...
Dominicana: I don’t think so. The African women have been migrating here for a long time, particularly Moroccans... but even if a Moroccan woman is beautiful etc., they prefer to employ a Filipina for racial reasons because she’s Asia, rather than hire a Moroccan.....
Filipina: And they more trust us..
Peruana: You are very clean, all day, water, water!

Laughter"
With the exception of Filipinos the position of national groups in the racist hierarchy varied from city to city. Broadly speaking, as the woman quoted above indicates, the lighter one’s skin the better one’s wages and the easier it is to find work:

“One African woman I met. Her fingers were very scratched and raw. She said her woman didn’t let her have gloves. She was working for an old lady. When she dirtied herself she had to clean he and she had to pick the dirt with her hand. I said, ‘But why don’t you leave her after she did that to you?’ . She said to me, ‘You are lucky you are light skinned, it is easier for you to find employer’.”

(Barcelona consultation with domestic workers)

While employers and agencies generally expressed their preferences in terms of “nationality”, this often seemed to be code for the precise shade of skin colour. So the volunteer in the Emploi Daubigny in Paris explained that it was difficult to place “the really black people like the Congolese” because they were very lazy. Placement agencies, whether voluntary, like the Emploi Daubigny, or commercial, like those interviewed in Barcelona, played an important role in perpetuating such racist stereotypes. Their racism was overt and unashamed:

“The Ethiopians are very sweet. They are not like the African Africans, they are ugly… Black means without light, and if the old woman does not see so well, if she has mental problems, then that person like that colour can cause psychological problems. For a mental person or an old person, someone who will not take their medicine, if they see black they see darkness and they are afraid. It is not because they are ugly…but black become more black if you cannot see properly”.

(Ethiopian working in Athens)

“Moroccans are difficult to place…Their religion is very different, they observe Ramadan,… They are very different, though like Peruvians they are brought up to be servile… Filipinas are easiest to place. They are cold (an advantage), efficient (but not affectionate, they don’t care about anything, hardworking, they speak

(Caritas volunteer, Athens)
English, are discrete, they have integrated to some extent. But they are disloyal… They only care about money”

(Agency R. Barcelona)

“You know the black people are used to being under the sun, and the people in France think they are very lazy, they are not going very quick, and you know, another breed. But they are very good with children, very maternal.”

(AGF volunteer Paris)

Employment gatekeepers therefore, formal and informal, play an important part in the perpetuation of the racialisation of domestic work in Europe as elsewhere (Bakan and Stasiulis 1995).

But the hierarchy is not only based on skin colour: Albanians and Ukrainians in Greece were “low” on the hierarchy although white skinned:

“It is not only a matter of the skin colour. We are white, we are not black, but we are discriminated in the same way, as foreigners”

(Rumanian working in Athens)

In Paris, many employers expressed a preference for Haitians, generally darker skinned than people from Morocco and Algeria, who were often expressly not wanted. The particular racist stereotype attached to particular nationalities in different European states also therefore seems to have an impact (thus for example in France Algerians in particular are often associated with terrorism). Religion and “culture” can also play its part. Employers and agencies in Barcelona and Paris explained that it could be difficult to employ Muslims because of this different “culture”. AM in Paris explained that her worker was a Muslim:

“She observes Ramadan. One day she came to work looking and feeling sick because her clock hadn’t rang before the rising of the sun and she hadn’t had anything to eat since the day before. She didn’t work properly that day. Ramadan days are very difficult days.”

J. from Mauritius believed that her religion counted against her:

“The Greeks don’t want Catholics to work for them. They will ask you, are you a Catholic? Before you work for them. Catholics are not well regarded. If you are a black Catholic it is the worst.”
Physical appearance too mattered. Clearly this intersects with racism, but it also included factors such as weight (generally workers felt employers didn’t want them to be “fat”) and “prettiness”. One agency in Barcelona explained that levels of pay depended “por aspecto” - on the way you look.

“So one senora looking for a worker, they will ask you for your cv of course, but first they look at her. It depends on what colour she is, if she is pretty, or if she is ugly, that is all important. The agencies look at her, the product, to see if such a person is suitable for the employer”

Sometimes when a senora wants to employ someone she says, ‘Do you know someone who could work in my home? But I want someone very presentable”

“Because they said I am very small…. Maybe they are thinking that I cannot do the job because I am too small. I am thin before, now I am very fat... The employer says I am too small”.

“Race”/nationality however, seemed to be the crucial factors in determining the desirability of workers. The position of national groups in the racist hierarchy did not only vary from city to city, but also from household to household - one might display an “eccentric” liking for Zairians for example. Household myths about different nationalities assumed an almost folkloric character. A “bad” experience with a domestic worker would be used to extrapolate the “bad” characteristics of her nationality.

“I have a problem with women from Ethiopia: they are lazy, have no sense of duty, though they are good-hearted...I have a lot of experience. I have ten girls from Ethiopia. They like to be well-dressed, hair, nails, for that they are good... Then the Albanians - that was terrible. They are liars, always telling lies. And telephone maniacs because they have never had. And they have no
knowledge of electrical appliances. For seven months I had that girl.... Then I had from Bulgaria. They are more civilised, more sincere, more concerned about work. But they are very unhappy. They have so many problems, they cannot forget their families who suffer. I had two girls from Bulgaria, one was here for ten months.”

(Employer in Athens)

Employers thus commonly moved from nationality to nationality until they found one that suited them. In some ways this is an extension of the naturalisation of domestic work - to find a good worker one has simply to find the right genes. Moreover, as the worker is doing the work in a style (allegedly) that the employer attributes to some perceived “racial” identity so “racial characteristics” become self fulfilling prophecies: my domestic worker is smiley because Haitians are smiley, and I know Haitians are smiley because my domestic worker is a smiley Haitian. The employment of migrant domestic workers thereby both enables the perpetuation at a household level of the myth of racial characteristics and expresses and reproduces the subordination of non-Europeans to European households. Skills or attitudes which have very concrete reasons are racialised: Bakan and Stasiulis (1995) have given the example of the shift from Caribbean to Filipino domestic workers in Canada and the move from the stereotype of black mammy to cunning criminal which coincides with the organised resistance of domestic workers at the time predominantly from the Caribbean. In a similar vein the commonly expressed notion that Filipinas are “good with children” may have more to do with the fact that American colonisation of the Philippines means that education is in English and the majority of Filipino domestic workers speak excellent English and can consequently be prevailed upon to give free English lessons.

REPRODUCTION OF RACISM

The notion of the construction of the Other is a useful tool in examining and analysing the living and working conditions of migrant domestic workers in the EU and in understanding the relationship between domestic workers and their female employers, because, as previously argued, domestic work is not simply a job, it is a gendered role which in the European context is heavily racialised. A very specific socially constructed and inferior identity is made use of in relating to the migrant
domestic worker. In Europe domestic work is women's work. It is not just that women do it, but that it expresses and reproduces gender relations between women and men (see Chapter Three). In the case of paid domestic work it reproduces class, gender and "race" relations. So it is not only gender but "racial" identities that are reproduced through household labour. As different meanings are assigned to different jobs, so notions of what is "appropriate" in terms of gender and "race" are played out, and the "identities" of workers and employers are confirmed. As one woman put it:

"they give every shit work to you as the black in the house"

(Ghanaian in Athens)

So the employment of a non-European Union domestic worker enables the expression and reproduction of the "proper" role of racialised groups, and their "proper" relations to European households, as servers, doers of dirty work that citizens are too important to do.

Racism both reinforces and gives a new aspect to social divisions and debasement of the worker, and when the worker is charged with looking after children these "identities" are quite literally reproduced. Cock (1989) has commented that:

"Many white South African children are socialised into the dominant ideological order and learn the attitudes and styles of racial domination from relationships with servants"

(Cock 1989: 8)

A similar process can be observed in Europe, where, as in South Africa, a domestic worker may well constitute the sole interpersonal relationship for the employing family between white and black. As a Filipina in Athens described:

"I heard children playing, they are playing house. The other child said, 'I am a Daddy', the other child said, 'I am a Mummy', and then 'She is a Filipina'. So what does the child mean, even the child knows or it's already learning, that if you are a Filipina you are a servant inside the house."

McClintock (1995) and Davidoff (1983) have examined the historical position of the domestic servant in terms of their dealing with dirt. The nineteenth century obsession with the elimination of dirt and disorder as representing the transgression of social boundaries and its association with nature, with being out of control, led to a notion,
now well entrenched in the dominant culture, of the body being dirty. The privileged are disembodied to the extent of feigning alienation even from their own bodily functions - though of course this is really impossible. The "Others" are trapped within their bodies, defined by them and cast out by them. So women and certain "races" are closely associated with bodily functions, while bourgeois, white men are disembodied, and rarely have to deal with their bodily detritus. Spelman (1981) critiques those feminists who have identified women's bodies as the source of oppression and who consequently attempt to disassociate women from bodies as failing to challenge somatophobia, "fear of and disdain for the body". Somatophobia is one of the mechanisms which oppresses women, and Black people, and in particular, Black women. It denies dignity to the work of the body, much of which is reproductive work. Those who would disassociate themselves from the body and its work inevitably leave the work to be done by somebody else (see Chapter Three):

"For example, if feminists decide that women are not going to be relegated to doing such work, who do we think is going to do it? Have we attended to the role that racism (and classism) historically has played in settling that question?"

(Spelman:53)

And not just historically, for this is precisely what is being "settled" in the European Union. So, the relationship between hatred of women (misogyny), hatred of the body (somatophobia), hatred of racialised groups (racism) is played out in the use of racialised female labour to do the work of servicing the body, and in the treatment of domestic workers by their employers.

The fact is that women, though classed as the embodied Other, may themselves make other women into objects. To rid themselves of the hated characteristics of pollution and embodiment, they load them on to another/an Other group of women. While "Other" women may be appropriate to do this servicing work, there is often an overt fear of contamination from the bodies of these "Others". So typically workers clothes have to be washed separately while black African workers in Athens had to take an Aids test (at their own expense) every time they changed employer. The domestic worker is embodied by virtue of her gender, her "race" and by her enforced association with (the employer's) dirt, and the employer's reaction is one of disgust:
"the daughter was very rude to the extent that she wouldn’t even accept water from my hand simply because I am black, and it intimidated me a lot”

(Ghanaian woman in Athens)

“Race” is not the only means of managing this complicated relationship, but it can play an extremely important role. I do not mean to suggest that the employer consciously sets out to employ a worker from a racialised group in order to manage such tensions, but that she draws on Thompson’s “social consciousness” to do so, and that this is an important factor behind the racialisation of paid domestic work.

“Race” can de-gender the domestic worker. The worker, unlike the employer, is somehow not a real woman. Like the slave woman labouring in the fields of colonial America, she can be called upon to do work that a real woman would not be expected to do (hooks: 22). Workers were acutely conscious of the fact that, when they describe themselves as having to do “everything” this includes gendered tasks usually undertaken by men:

“yes, I see many women on the road washing car, it is true. But that’s not women’s jobs....”

(Mauritian in Athens)

“after winter ...we women are being asked to take the carpets out and scrub carpets…which is supposed to be taken to the laundry, or call people, men, to come and take it from the floor. We women are made to remove this carpets from the floor”.

(Ethiopian in Athens)

(italics mine)

Indeed, it is racism that allows the employment of male workers, who are de-gendered by their “race” such that they can do work that would not be considered possible for white men. This was particularly true of Asian men, and of Peruvian men in Spain. Racism permeates the perception of migrant domestic workers as unequal in exchange, as less than women, less than human, unnatural (though still “natural” enough to do domestic work!).
Workers are not simply degendered then, for, if they are not proper women, they are certainly not men, and they cannot be proper people at all. F. had to bathe her (young) male and female employers and then towel dry them:

“my employer would ask me to prepare the bathroom and come and help with washing them. After I cleaned them it was expected from me to dry my employer with the towel from head to toe. All that work is done in such a humiliating and abusive manners, where you do not have the right to complain, if you do you will be bombarded with insults. That sort of treatment I have never come across in my entire life, but because of my children I have to tolerate all of this and get on with it. The way I feel whilst doing that is that I am no better than an animal”.

(Moroccan in Barcelona)

Her employers need feel no embarrassment about their nakedness in front of a subordinate because, as F observes, she is not a person to them. Indeed it is striking how often workers referred to themselves as feeling like animals - or even lower:

“Pan-African member (woman 1): The animals can sleep on their sofas… but the maid have no right to sit on the sofa.

Pan-African member (man): The animals are more respected, even I don’t know about the other colour. I’m talking about the blacks. The blacks are not treated as animals. If the blacks are treated as animals they will say, ‘thank god for that’. You can see a Greek kissing a dog, but he cannot kiss a black man. He feels that when he sees a black, he is dangerous, and that is how is must be treated.

(Pan-African member (woman 2): This is true, because I work in the house before the ladies were having a dog, and this dog had about eight towels. Nine dishes, and all this. The dog don’t want me to touch them… If they would treat us like their dogs and animals, like that, we would be happy”.

(Athens consultation)
POLICING BOUNDARIES AND MANAGING CONTRADICTIONS

Once one has allowed for a category of people who are not proper people one must make sure not to fall into it, particularly if one is a woman. In the days of American slavery it was often observed that the white wives of plantation owners fell easily under the influence of slaves, and adopted their lazy vulgarity, for of course women are always prone to the promptings of their baser nature (hooks 1981: 32-33). While today it is generally regarded as unacceptable to say openly that certain groups of humans are not proper people, the fact that such categories are not acknowledged, and consequently the boundaries between “them” and “us” are poorly articulated make it more important to have means of demarcating boundaries (Young 1990: 130ff). To deal more specifically with the situation of domestic workers, it is important for the female employer to police boundaries. If she does not, she may lose her privileges (or she might find “her” domestic worker usurping “her” place in the affections of her children and the sexual attention of her husband). To this extent the employer must “overcome” their common gender and shared experiences as women. Different employers have different strategies for doing this, and workers’ experiences are very varied. While some use the extremes of violence and physical coercion, others use kindness and charity.

Unreasonable demands

While domestic workers enable status reproduction by showing the “lady” of the house to good feminine advantage, by being her opposite, they are also dealing with the household detritus. So, at the same time as demonstrating the household’s status, and specifically the status of the female employer, they are also faced daily with the evidence of common humanity - they are privy to their employer’s dirty washing, literally and figuratively. How then to maintain one’s sense of superiority before the person who cleans your toilet, washes your underwear and is exposed to all that is most physical and commonly human about you, particularly when their physical privacy is maintained? How to maintain one’s sense of superiority before the person who knows that your disembodiment is a myth? While the worker can perpetuate the myth for outsiders’ consumption, between the worker and the employer it is another matter.
Some employers deal with tension between intimacy and status almost perversely by demanding the most intimate of tasks of their worker:

“I had one employer and after I had cleaned the toilet with a brush she wants me to clean with window cleaner and a towel. For the first time I am angry about that. But now it is usual. Even they will ask me to wash their pants”.

(Ethiopian in Athens)

In Athens it was the practise for employers not to flush the toilet, but to cover their waste with toilet paper. The domestic worker then had to remove and dispose of the toilet paper (because it blocked the sewage system), and then flush the toilet -

“that is the job of the maid”

(Ethiopian in Athens).

This kind of job is not labour-saving, rather it creates work; neither is it concerned with the presentation of the household to “outsiders”, rather it is the presentation of the household to its members. It regulates and defines the relations between the domestic worker and other members of the household. There is no job too “low” for the domestic worker. She can expect no remission from her duties from employers wishing to preserve their privacy. So it is not the production of waste that is undignified but its disposal, and the employer is freed from association with waste while the domestic worker is burdened with it. The fact that this was common practise in Athens indicates the extent to which social norms are constructed to associate the worker with dirt - regardless of whether individual employers are “good” or “bad”. Like the Moroccan woman drying her employers, shame is unnecessary because the workers is not a human being, and another self-fulfilling prophecy is set up: my domestic worker can do this job because she is not a proper human being and because she does this work then she is not a human being.

There are a wide variety of demands made by employers to regulate status between workers and their employing households. Not all are physically intimate:

“Yes, oranges, you have to peel the oranges and then take all the white pieces off and open the fruit. Even the fish you have to take all the bones out and then put it together as if it’s whole. I really began to regret why I came here”
The worker may have to do jobs with inadequate tools, indeed there were in all cities visited workers who complained that they were not allowed to use machines but had to do all domestic chores, including clothes washing, by hand. Some employers mentioned their concern that workers would not know how to use machines or would break them. "Natural" women, genetically suited to domestic work, are not suited to machines. Workers were at the whim of the employer's "standards".

"She's very attached to her sheets. One day, for example, a week ago, she: 'Hey Fili (derogatory shortening for 'Filipina'), you have to take these sheets and iron them again'... When you were doing the washing machine, you'd put in the soap. She only wanted us to put in a little soap - a tiny amount of soap. And when the clothes weren't washed well, she: 'Hey, why is this like this?'"

The worker may have to do work that is needlessly and perpetually undone, with no regard for her labour, accommodating several changes of clothes in one day, cleaning ash from the carpet while ashtrays go unused. Her labours are those of a "non-person" and so can be unacknowledged - unless of course she does not perform.

Workers' needs

Workers' basic human needs are not acknowledged or they are directly repudiated. One of the most frequent complaints by domestic workers is that they are not allowed to rest, that they are treated "like machines". One woman, who herself had no money because she was not paid anything, was not even given sanitary towels. One of the most common problems faced by workers was control of food. Food consumption of course is evidence of common humanity and eating arrangements were an important means of enforcing distinctions between workers and family. Workers were typically expected to eat on their own in the kitchen, separate from the family. This separation was often extended to the utensils used by the worker. This was a particular complaint of African workers, that they were given separate cups, plates etc. to use. Sometimes a person's need to eat was denied completely, so one woman described how she was given no food at all, but stole bread and ate it in the toilet, while another had to beg food from a neighbour. More usually workers were
allowed to eat leftovers from their employers’ plates. Other food was often closely
monitored and marked to ensure it was not stolen by the domestic workers. Indeed,
the descriptions of employers’ attitudes towards food verged on the neurotic.

“They say, ‘don’t throw anything away, and when the girl comes to clean
we will give it to her’. And when I say ‘Give this to the dog’, she says, ‘No,
no it is reserved for you’.”

(Filipina in Athens)

For the employers these differences were often rationalised in terms of money. The
Caritas volunteer in Athens explained:

“I heard one Ethiopian say she left because there was no food in the house. Of
course, if you ask 100,000 you will not get food, but if you get 30,000 then you
will get food.”

Domestic workers in Paris joked that employers don’t like “fat” workers because they
think they will cost too much to feed. This financial rationalisation extended to the other
physical requirements of workers such as heating and lighting:

“I worked with a woman who used to order me out to buy an egg, half for her
and half for me… I wasn’t allowed to sit on the bed for a moment, because it
would use up the mattress and make it soft…and at ten o’clock the lights went
out and you had to walk like this, feeling your way. It was ridiculous!”

(Brazilian woman in Barcelona)

While workers then are responsible for their employer’s reproductive needs and demands,
some employers resent any “cost” associated with their worker other than their wage -
sometimes it seems resenting even that. It is striking that these costs may be for amounts
of money that are likely to mean very little to a middle class European family - the cost of
a hot shower for example. Money is not really the issue, rather it is an expression of the
attempt to completely commodify human relations, and human beings:

“If you don’t remove your shoes or slippers they will use embarrassing words,
and it’s no good saying ‘sorry’. They just say, ‘In what bank are we going to
deposit your sorry? We are spending money. We are paying you to do a job. Why
are you not working properly?’”

(Filipina domestic worker cited in Anderson 1993: 14)
Such employers are demonstrating their power, personalistic and materialistic, over the worker. The message was well understood by their employees, who rejected protestations of financial prudence and were clear that such restrictions were rejections of common humanity:

“We are not happy. How can you tell somebody in wintertime, in wintertime, if you use my hot water I will be very annoyed with you. Meaning, you should always use cold water, even in winter. We all need good health. How can you clean balcony when it’s cold, when she’s not going to use the balcony...It is not fair. You wouldn’t tell your fellow human to do something you would not be happy to do. But they don’t respect”

(Ghanaian in Athens)

Here it is expressed it in a nutshell: making domestic workers do things that you would not do yourself or under conditions that you would not tolerate yourself is underlining the message, you are not the same, you are different, you are “Other”, and not worthy of respect.

In the construction of boundaries outlined above racism clearly plays an important role. Workers commonly complained that they were regarded as ignorant, with no knowledge of the world, removed from technology and finance, belonging in the “jungle”. So for example, R.s employer became extremely suspicious when R. reminded her to take her cheque book, for how did R. know it was a cheque book! It was often assumed that workers were uneducated and stupid, and some workers felt this is precisely what employers wanted:

“I studied law in my country, and my employer for example has no idea of that, and neither has her family, imagine if she did!... I told her, I didn’t go to secondary school in my country, because they want submissiveness, because not knowing how to read and write, not knowing anything, that means you are more submissive, more servile, and all that ‘Yes senora, yes senora’. That’s what they want, that kind of humiliation”

(Dominicana in Barcelona)
VIOLENCE

It is in the context of the racism of the construction of “the Other” that one can begin to analyse the violence perpetrated on domestic workers by their employers. Domestic workers may experience violence as women, as racialised groups, and as domestic workers. Violence may be psychological abuse, calling of people by racist or animal names for example, constant remarks on appearance - one woman I met was compelled by her employer to stand in front of a mirror with her every day and say how ugly she was. In the UK a worker was told by her female employers, who intercepted her mail, that her son had been killed in a motorbike accident. It was two years before she discovered this was untrue. Violence may be enforced working to the physical detriment of the worker - for example compelling her to wash clothes by hand and forbidding her to wear gloves even when her skin is raw and bleeding from detergents. Violence also covers a spectrum of physical acts. Blows are, for some, part of the job -

"They will kick us if we say anything"

(Ethiopian in Athens)

Others have experienced more extreme abuse. T, an eighteen year old Ethiopian woman had been in Greece for two months. She worked looking after a six year old boy and cleaning the house. The female employer had beat her from the outset, and she had burns on her arm that she said had been inflicted with an iron by the six year old. Her face was swollen from a beating several days before which forced her to flee the house and leave all her belongings, including her passport. At the time she was penniless and relying on an uncle for a home. As well as violence as punishment for some alleged offence, domestic workers could be subject to an almost ritualised violence used overtly to demonstrate the employer’s control over the worker, similar to the degradation expressed through work:

"we were three Filipinas, she brought us into the room where her guests were, she made us kneel down and slapped each one of us across the face”

(domestic worker interviewed at the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers and quoted in Healy 1994: 42)
The physical violence is usually perpetrated by the female employer, or occasionally by the child sanctioned by the mother. Male employers were often removed from this and sometimes portrayed as the more reasonable of the two:

"The family like this, children and the husband they are OK, the woman is like a lion. Sometimes she is good, some she behave not say thank you, she will not say bravo. You will do every good thing, but when she go crazy, or when she annoyed with child or mother, she will end with you and tell you you’ve done nothing."

(Pan African member consultation 2)

The use of domestic workers as scapegoats for conflict experienced by the adult woman with other members of her household, but which she cannot express to them, is an extension of the role of the domestic worker as an avoidance strategy for conflict between women and men over domestic chores. In one consultation women also expressed their sense that female employers were in some way "jealous" of their worker, that they didn’t want to do the domestic work, but then they didn’t want anybody else to do it either. One can see that, for those female employers for whom "home making" is very bound up with their gender identity, this would result in precisely the kind of jealousy described by the workers. But more than this, it is the female employer who must establish difference, superiority and inferiority. It is the female employer who "relates" directly to the worker, the male employer is at one remove.

But while the women may be responsible for physical violence, men are the perpetrators of sexual violence. Some expect the domestic worker to be sexually available to them:

"Sometimes when some girls want to go to work, especially when his wife is not around, he will come for you naked, expecting you to take to bed. That’s the way they treat you."

(Ethiopian in Athens)

The expectation that domestic workers will be sexually available to the men of the house has been historically well documented. As sex, being associated with the body, is natural and degraded, so it needs an embodied and degraded object. The domestic worker is dehumanised by her role, so the men of the house can have sex with a
human body, but not a human person, like sex with a prostitute (O'Connell Davidson 1998). Indeed male employers will often offer the worker money in exchange for sex. Sexual abuse was a real danger for domestic workers in all cities visited, compounded by her physical circumstances when living in, and often by her immigration status (see Chapter Ten). Advertisements in newspapers were often associated with men allegedly in search of a domestic worker, but actually looking for sex and workers advertising often stipulated “No sex”. Domestic work and sex work were elided by those who looked to the worker to do the cleaning with no clothes on, or wearing certain types of clothes. Workers in both Athens and Paris described going for interviews with potential male employers and finding that their employer had no clothes on:

“A friend of mine went for a job, and he opened the door and he was totally naked. She didn’t want to show how she felt, so she said, ‘Do you want me to clean your house or watch your body?’ He said, ‘What’s wrong? It’s only natural’.”

(Ethiopian in Athens)

One worker in Paris was furious when her friend passed on a male employer who liked to watch her clean when he had no clothes on. When she complained, her friend told her that she had worked for him for years under these conditions.

One of the most striking aspects of workers’ experiences of sexual abuse was that, if it was discovered, the female employer invariably sided with the male offender. Female employers blamed their workers for “stealing” their husbands, when they were raped by them. In Barcelona Teresa was sacked when she complained about her employers’ son coming into her room at night, on the grounds that she was “interfering in the mother/son relationship”! Issues of sex serve to further divide domestic workers and female employers, rather than unite them - even when it is the employer who is objectified:

“The Greek men have a big problem with sex. I found a fourteen year old watching his mum through the keyhole in the bathroom. I didn’t tell her because she wouldn’t believe me.”

(Ethiopian in Athens)
This violence against migrant domestic workers is socially tolerated in that it receives
light or no punishment at all, supporting Young's notion of violence as a social
practice rather than simply an individual moral wrong (Young 1990:62). Notably,
should a worker retaliate the response is very different to the complacency that
attaches to employer violence. Veronique Akobe was employed as a domestic
worker by an extremely wealthy French family in the South of France. She was
regularly sexually abused by her male employer and his son. Alone and with no
possibility of going to the police since she had no immigration papers, she finally
killed the father and wounded the son. Two weeks later she gave herself up. Her
lawyer (now the Front National mayor of Nice) argued in "mitigation" that her rape
"fantasies" proved that she had become unhinged under the stress of being an "illegal
immigrant". She was found guilty of murder and sentenced to twenty years in prison
with a recommendation that she be deported when her sentence was completed

Workers often cannot report abuse because of their immigration status, meaning that
perpetrators can get away with abuse simply because it is practised upon non-
citizens, people excluded from the community. The Eritrean pastor, D introduced me
to an Eritrean young woman living on the streets of Athens who had been raped by
her male employer over several months and was thrown out when it was clear she
was pregnant. She delivered the baby on the streets, and after some weeks the child
was taken from her by Greek officials - she didn't know who they were or where the
baby now was. She was clearly mentally ill. From this type of case I think that it is
clear that violence against domestic workers is socially sanctioned. It is not simply
that workers have no redress because of their vulnerable immigration status - though
that too is a factor, but that the violence is compounded by those in positions of
power. Indeed it was notable that workers in Athens consistently referred to the
wider context of racism in Greece, not just the racism of employers. So, when
discussing the issue of food for example, mention was made of butchers selling
rotten meat to foreigners and shopkeepers trying to deceive them over the cost of
goods. On the matter of health care, and its non-provision by employers even in the
case of accidents incurred on the job one man told of how an ambulance was called for a sick (African) friend:

"And the man said, 'Why you call an ambulance because a black man is not well?' He turned back. So the man too he accept, because he is a Greek man, so the ambulance go away, they didn't take the boy."

(Nigerian in Athens)

Workers talked about racist demonstrations, about a recent opinion poll where 61 per cent of respondents had said that they didn't want foreigners in the country, -

"Imagine, sixty one per cent, almost everybody wants us out of Greece"

(Ethiopian in Athens)

They talked of being accused of stealing, not just by their employers, but in public places. Racism on buses was singled out, with claims that conductors only checked the tickets of "foreigners", accusations of theft by other passengers, and people refusing to sit next to them.

"And one woman said, (on a bus), 'When the foreigner come, lots of thieves and a lot of things are misplaced and foreigners change our country.' That is the way they are pointing. And they are pointing at you, 'Black, you are the one that make our country miserable'. They will not even be together with you in the toilet, if there is any place they see you they will go away."

(Pan African member in Athens)

Confronted by such racism it is not surprising that there was, according to the domestic workers themselves and migrants' associations, a high incidence of mental illness among domestic workers. This was confirmed by D. who was a regular visitor to the Daphne psychiatric hospital in Athens. He claimed that the majority of patients there were non-Greeks, and that those who were unable to pay for their treatment were deported, with no attempt to contact friends or relatives in their country of origin, simply cast adrift:

"Miss Figisti Demseur from Ethiopia, she is a good example. She worked about five years like domestic worker live-in, when she had mental effect she was fighting with her employer, police came and took her to hospital. They deported her. When I asked her about money or other thing she had nothing
in her hand only crying. Also I asked for the doctor to stay for some days.

His answer was she must have to pay money for staying in hospital.”

The life-threatening consequences of the deportation of Miss Figisti Demseur make it an act of violence against her person. While those who want to leave cannot, those who have nothing further to give are simply abandoned.

SLAVERY?

The combination of personalised dependence and the de-humanising attitudes of employers towards domestic workers caused workers to make frequent comparison between themselves and slaves:

“There is no respect at all for us, they see us as slaves, but we are human beings and not slaves.”

(Rumanian in Athens)

This comparison is also drawn by campaigning groups, academics and others interested in paid domestic labour. Kalayaan describes overseas domestic workers in the UK as “now so deprived of rights that they are in a situation of virtual slavery, in which they must endure abuses and exploitation far beyond their, and our, notions of contractual labour”

(Kalayaan 1996: 1)

They claim that fourteen out of thirty Articles in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights are directly contravened as a result of the UK Home Office’s policy on Overseas Domestic Workers, including Article 4 against slavery. Colen and Sanjek (1990b) on the other hand have criticised the notion of slavery as applied to domestic work on the grounds that workers retain kinship ties and status outside their household of work; that working as a domestic entails an element of “voluntary” choice for the worker and that sexual and biological reproductive capacities are not controlled. But migrant domestic workers in Europe often do not retain kinship ties nor control over their reproductive capacities, and immigration status may mean that employment is not a choice for the worker, nor even for the children of some workers, who may be born with no citizenship rights and, like their mothers, find that work in private households is the only employment available.

Notably, while “slavery” may be used to describe the living and working conditions of domestic workers, it is also a recognition of the racialisation of domestic work.
The contrast between being a slave and being a proper human being made by the Rumanian woman quoted above, is one explored by Orlando Patterson (1982). He defines slavery as

"the permanent, violent domination of natally alienated and generally dishonoured persons"

(Patterson 1982: 13)

I have already argued that domestic workers are dishonoured by the attempt to commodify that which cannot be commodified. By “natal alienation” he understands someone who is alienated from all claims of birth, who is outside the legitimate social order, who is “socially dead”. This concept has obvious resonances with the situation of migrant domestic workers, who, because of their immigration status may well be, quite literally, outside the legitimate social order as “illegals”. Their position in their country of origin is of no interest, all are workers, their relations with their families and communities are generally disregarded - except when these networks facilitate finding more workers. As with slaves in the USA, parents’ relations with their own children receive neither recognition nor support. This causes particular hardship for the children of undocumented domestic workers. In Greece the community groups Kasapi and Pan-African Association had recently established creches to try to address some of the difficulties they faced. When I visited them Kasapi’s creche had been running for two months with its maximum of twenty four children. Many of the children there were clearly disturbed. The creche workers explained that they did not know how to play or to relate to other children. One five year old girl sat silently on a chair throughout the visit. Her mother had not been able to take her to work with her and had left her with a neighbour. She had been told to sit on a chair and not make a noise, and had sat on a chair not making a noise for six days a week for three years. Another child of three and a half screamed as soon as he woke up from his nap. The creche worker explained that he had been kept locked in a room since he was a baby, and now suffered from claustrophobia. Although obviously desperately needed the creche was proving extremely difficult to finance because most of the mothers had no surplus income with which to finance childcare. Janet Golden (1987) has written of the tragedies of impoverished wetnurses in the USA at the turn of the century who had to send their own babies away, often to infant boarding homes -
"baby farms" - with an alarmingly high mortality rate which some reckoned to be as high as nine in ten:

"All too often a poor woman's temporary abandonment of her healthy baby in order to feed a well-to-do woman's child amounted to a trading of lives"

(Golden 1987: 129)

There are other aspects of "social death" that seem particularly applicable to migrant domestic workers. Patterson makes use of the concept of "liminality". As a socially dead person a slave is in a state of "institutionalized marginality", an alien insider, inhabiting a sort of border shadow land. It is from this that the "master" gained his authority:

"for it was he who in a godlike manner mediated between the socially dead and the socially alive"

(Patterson 1982: 46)

One cannot help but be reminded of the structural confirmation of domestic workers' dependence on their employers by European immigration laws (see Chapter Ten). While they cross nationally constructed borders, and are physically present in a state, migrant domestic workers do not enter into the public domain, but are confined to the private (see Chapters Nine and Ten). Some slaves had their usefulness in their liminality:

"In this liminal state he could cross boundaries prohibited to other persons and could perform the vital task of preparing the master's food, which if done by a mortal would result in certain spiritual and possible physical death"

(Patterson 1982: 51)

So employers may reveal their humanity, their physicality to their domestic workers without compromising their status. They do not have to be embarrassed because the workers are socially dead, thereby facilitating the management of the contradictions between intimacy and status.

Some workers feel that the only escape from this social death is in physical death:

"Let's say you are maltreated, and although you wanted to take it out what you have in your heart, what you feel, you cannot say it, so you keep it within you. And at the same time it's homesickness altogether then. When you have
a family and away from you, especially those who have children and the children are far from you, it just come altogether and that person she commit suicide."

(Filipina in Athens)

According to those domestic workers attending the consultations, there have been several cases of suicide among domestic workers in Athens. Indeed when talking about a particularly bad employment situation women would often say that they themselves contemplated killing themselves.

"Slavery" is often used as a metaphor to depict poor employment conditions and very low wages but it is particularly appropriate for migrant domestic workers, whose employers have the "power to command" aspects of the worker's self constructed as integral to personhood (see Chapter Seven). One of the peculiarities of the work of migrant domestic workers is that the nature of the employment relation means that domestic workers are often exclusively dependent on one person who gains honour from their dishonour. They are a means of reproduction of status. Africans have stood in this role to Europe for centuries. Fryer (1984) points out that the first slaves were brought to England in the late 16th century as household servants, prostitutes and court entertainers. By the eighteenth century there were some 10,000 black household servants in the British Isles:

"Associated in many English people's minds with the immense riches of Africa and India...black servants conferred on their masters and mistresses 'an air of luxurious well-being'. They were at once charming, exotic ornaments, objects of curiosity, talking points, and, above all, symbols of prestige".

(Fryer 1984: 72-73)

Fryer draws attention to the convention of including a black child in portraits of aristocrats "as foil, or status symbol or both" (Fryer 1984:25). In the nineteenth century, Arthur Munby photographed Hannah Cullwick, with "black" skin dressed as a slave.

"Hannah's pet name for Munby was Massa, that is, what they took to be the Negro slave's word for Master. Three years after they met she began to wear a leather strap around her wrist and a chained collar with lock around he neck
to which Munby held the key. He particularly enjoyed seeing her face and arms blackened - in his phrase ‘in her dirt’.”

(Davidoff 1983: 44)

The association between black people, slavery domestic work and power was clearly etched into the English “social consciousness” before the twentieth century.

The migrant domestic worker then is both status symbol and degraded. She is a slave in that she is not a full human subject.

“In the slave relation, he (the slave) belongs to the individual, particular owner, and is his labouring machine. As a totality of force-expenditure, as labour capacity, he a thing belonging to another, and hence does not relate as subject to his particular expenditure of force, nor to the act of living labour”


The domestic worker is, like the prostitute, a person who is not a person, someone for whom all obligations can be discharged in cash (O’Connell Davidson 1998). So, particularly for those jobs which necessarily demand some human interaction, an employer can purchase the services of a human being who is yet not a real human being with likes and hates, relations of her own, a history and ambitions of her own, but a human being who is socially dead (O’Connell Davidson, 1998; Patterson 1982). As a Zairian woman working in Greece put it:

“you feel like dead…. A lot of us foreigners here, they afraid to talk with the boss. And anything the boss will tell, ‘yes, yes’. We are not free to talk. And this is a big problem. And why the boss show you you are a slave, she can do anything.”

There are of course limitations to the applicability to the concept of slavery to domestic work. As emphasised in Chapters Four, Five and Six domestic workers have a wide variety of experiences - live-out are less likely to endure slave-like conditions than live-in. There are workers (though surprisingly few) who are happy with their situation:

“Since the beginning we find employers who are kind, who are nice, who treat us as somebody they know, not like slaves. So we are happy. That’s why we stayed.”
The individual employment situation depends on a multitude of factors - not all equally weighted of course. But the power of the employer remains paramount. It was the subject of much discussions in all cities whether workers encouraged abuse by not being assertive. The following speakers are all undocumented Filipinas working in Paris:

"L: I said, 'OK, if you don't want to pay I will not work. So I lose her.
R: If I can add that it depends on the person. Because I have friends who have papers who are also doing the same work as she's doing, because they cannot express themselves, they don't know the laws, they don't know where to turn to, so they just go on like this...
M: ...but in my case, if I have the papers because I know I can do it whatever I want...but the problem with me, I don't have my paper, and the first thing where am I supposed to go if I don't have my work. So I have to take care”.

Workers are talking in terms of the power to leave their employer. It is ultimately up to the employer whether they are a “good” or “bad” employer, the worker has no control or sanctions over them. A “good” employer has the power to be a “bad” employer, even if she never uses it.

HUMAN PARASITISM AND MATERNALISM

Domestic workers are located within a relationship of personal dependence on employers. However, as Patterson points out, the dependency of the “slave”1 camouflages the dependency of the slaveholder in a relationship which he characterises as “human parasitism”, a useful term in understanding the role of migrant domestic workers, encapsulating their importance both economically and culturally - like the slaveholder the employing household has a private source of mythmaking in the domestic worker, who generates “honour” in her own “dishonour”.

“Parasitism emphasizes the asymmetry of all such unequal relations: the degree to which the parasite depends on the host is not necessarily a direct measure of the extent to which the host is exploited in supporting the parasite. A parasite may be only partially dependent on its host, but this partial dependence may entail the

1 Although domestic workers often referred to themselves as being treated “like slaves”, they objected very strongly when the term was used to describe them because they understood it to mean a denial of their full humanity. Hence the quotation marks.
destruction of the host. Or the host may be totally dependent on the parasite, but the parasitism may only partially influence the host - or may have no effects beyond being a minor nuisance.”

(Patterson 1984:335)

Healy (1994) also applies Olive Schriener’s concept of “female parasitism” (Schreiner 1911) to those women who have no productive activity, “waited and tended by the labour of others” thanks to the “subjugation of large bodies of other human creatures, either as slaves, subject races or classes”.

One of the ways of camouflaging parasitism, according to Patterson, is by defining the slave as dependent. Take N. for example. She had employed dozens of migrant domestic workers to care for her mother. She offered, she said, exceptional conditions and a loving household, only to find that her employees were goldiggers. Indeed, N’s presentation of herself and her relations with her worker is quite typical. According to N she responds to the lamentable situation of other nationalities by employing them. She was genuinely hurt by the ingratitude of her employees:

“But there is no feeling for what I offer I give you an example of the last woman from Bulgaria… I had a bright thought, ‘she needs to see her friends’. Because I was tired of all the girls changing so many times I gave her Sunday off. Now, every morning, including Sundays the girl wakes, helps grandmother to the toilet and changes her pamper… Then she goes, but she must be back for seven pm …. Then, after all I do for her, the girl says every Sunday she would like to be back at midnight and not to do any work - that is not to change pamper in the morning.”

So, she employs workers because she pities them, she treats them kindly, but in return is simply taken for granted.

N. exemplifies Rollins’ notion of “maternalism”, the attitude that she believes characterises the relationship between domestic workers and their employers, and which she distinguishes from paternalism:

“Paternalism is one aspect of a political-economic-ideological power base, the aspect that relates to the exchange of patriarchal protections for service and loyalty; maternalism, on the other hand, is a concept related to women’s
supportive intrafamilial roles of nurturing, loving and attending to affective needs”.

(Rollins 1985: 179)

Maternalism is based on the superordinate-subordinate relationship, with the female employer “caring” for the worker as she would for a child or a pet, thereby expressing, in a feminised way, her lack of respect for the domestic worker as an adult worker. It is encapsulated in the use of the term “girl” to describe the adult woman. It is an overpersonalisation of employment relations and a refusal to properly acknowledge the employment relation, but presenting this overpersonalisation as a benefit, as “friendship”. It is clearly an important component in the “part of the family” stance discussed in Chapter Seven. Unlike Rollins I would not characterise maternalistic relations as fundamentally different from paternalism, for like paternalism, maternalism ultimately serves to reinforce patriarchy, though it does so indirectly, by reinforcing differences between women. As paternalism offers protection in exchange for work and obedience, so too does maternalism. Domestic workers, now as in the past, are often offered employment as a kindness or in exchange for a room and board. Maternalism is particularly insidious because it seems to offer some kind of equality between domestic workers and employers as women, whereas in fact it is precisely that commonality which it works to deny and it reinforces superiority and inferiority. So rather than giving the domestic worker a day off as a worker’s right, N. does it as a consequence of her “bright thought” thereby actively demonstrating her kindness. The worker’s insistence on a full day off is presented as a rejection of this kindness, proof of her heartlessness and emotional inferiority.

Maternalism manifests itself in many ways. The domestic worker may be a confidante, an emotional release, since employers can be safe in the knowledge that their social worlds do not touch, that the worker will not pass on information to her (the employer’s) friends. She may also be a “window to exotica”, as Rollins terms it. Since a domestic worker may well be the employer’s only contact with a “third world” lifestyle, she may elicit details of her worker’s personal life, not from interest in the same, but in a verbal voyeurism, using it to confirm racist stereotypes and assert her own superiority and kindness:
"I have a good personal relationship with her. When she was in hospital she phoned me to say how grateful she was because the symptoms she had had, I had had, because I'd lost a baby and the experience was very similar... I made her feel much better. She tells me her problems and I've also told her of experiences that I've had with the baby... she told me about the woman she lives with who's desperate for work, and she told me about her mother-in-law who practises voodoo and puts pins in dolls. She's got some strange ideas."

(Employer in Paris)

Here is maternalism as described by Rollins, a friendly relationship between women that works to confirm the employer's kindness and the worker's childlike inferiority. While the experiences of migrant domestic workers in Europe were often very different from the ostensibly benevolent maternalism that Rollins found so common in the USA, nevertheless it is a concept that can usefully be applied to the situation of many workers in Europe. Maternalism is also expressed through gifts, giving domestic workers cast off household goods, often unwanted. The meaning of such gifts is loaded, and becomes clear when one tries to imagine a domestic worker giving her cast offs to an employer! For maternalism is an asymmetrical relationship in which the domestic worker can never be equal to the employer. Although ostensibly bringing the "female" characteristics of nurturing and kindness to the employment relationship, this nurturing does not facilitate development, but sets the domestic worker in permanent inferiority, to be pitied, helped, but never viewed as an equal.
CHAPTER NINE
STATUS AND CONTRACT

Domestic workers' organisations and their supporters have called for the recognition of rights of domestic workers as *workers* in their campaigns. In her MA dissertation on migrant domestic workers, the then Kalayaan worker, Margaret Healy wrote:

"For me one of the most startling aspects is the complete non-comprehension by the employer that these women are workers first and foremost needing to earn a living wage. The fact that they live-in on the job should not detract from that reality. Many of the employers in this survey are business people and professionals themselves who wouldn't dream of treating their business staff in the same way."

(Healy 1994: 32)

This is the position I have adopted myself - I have throughout this thesis chosen to call the research participants, "domestic workers" rather than "servants", "maids" etc. While I have consciously chosen the term however, I accept that it is not unproblematic. There are difficulties, both practical and philosophical in applying the notion of the employment contract to domestic workers in private households. In recent negotiations with the British Home Office, despite its emphasis on its members being workers, Kalayaan, with support from domestic workers, lobbied for migrant domestic workers to be admitted to the UK on the basis of their "special relationship" with the employer. This points to a deep contradiction embedded in the application of employment relations to domestic work.

To begin to understand this contradiction one must first examine the notion of contract itself, what are its origins and the implications of this for women, for workers and for women workers.
GENDER AND CONTRACT

Social contract theories originate in stories told to explain the formation of civil society and why citizens submit voluntarily to the state. The basic story tells of how inhabitants of the state of nature, each motivated purely by self-interest, agree to a social contract whereby civil society is created and the behaviour of each is regulated for the benefit of all.

"If man in the state of nature be so free as has been said; if he be absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest, and subject to nobody, why will he part with his freedom...to which 'tis obvious to answer that, though in the state of nature he hath such a right, yet the enjoyment of it is very uncertain, and constantly exposed to the invasion of others...This makes him willing to quit this condition which, however free, is full of fears and continual dangers. And 'tis not without reason that he seeks out, and is willing to join in society with others who are already united...for the mutual preservation of their lives, liberties, and estates, which I call by the general name property."

(Locke The Second Treatise of Government 1689, D. Wootton (ed.) 1993: 324)

While there are many versions of the story, Hobbes, Kant, Rousseau, patriarchal subordination is central to all of them (Pateman 1988). For consistency and because I have referred previously to his concept of "property in the person" I shall refer to Locke.

Between Locke's state of nature and civil society lies a "mistake: monarchies" (Locke 1689, Wootton (ed.): 314). Monarchies arose as an extension of paternal authority, this being the form of government all men were accustomed to. But men do not accept such "natural" subjugation:

"For there are no examples so frequent in history, both sacred and profane, as those of men withdrawing themselves, and their obedience, from the jurisdiction they were born under, and the family or community they were bred up in, and setting up new governments in other places...All which are so many testimonies
against paternal sovereignty, and plainly prove that it was not the natural right of
the father, descending to his heirs, that made governments in the beginning”
(Locke 1689 Wootton (ed) 1993: 320)

So patriarchy (i.e. relations regulated by birth and status, as under monarchies) is
incompatible with civil society, where relations are regulated by (voluntary) contract.
Social contract theorists then are charting the movement away from the relations of
status in which identities are given to individuals through their position within a
community and in which social identity and individuality are the same:

“Everybody is somebody’s kin, somebody’s slave, somebody’s client, and these
relations establish individuals’ very being. Such sociality is internal to personal
identity, and subjectivity is experienced as immediately social. Personal
dependence is the groundwork of society and individual identity”.
(Sayer 1991: 57)

What is emerging is the juridical subject, the property owner, the individual who
contracts.

But where do women figure in this? For Locke “conjugal society” pre-dates civil society
and may be present in the state of nature:

“But the husband and wife, though they have but one common concern, yet
having different understandings, will unavoidably sometimes have different wills
too; it therefore being necessary that the last determination, i.e. the rule, should
be placed somewhere, it naturally falls to the man’s share, as the abler and the
stronger.”

(Locke 1689 Wootton (ed.) 1993: 302)

For Locke then women are constructed as “natural subjects”, unlike men, who will not
accept such subjugation. The gendered nature of the social contract however, remained
Pateman has examined the notion of social relations as regulated by contract, and
critiqued social contract theorists’ ignoring of the “sexual contract”. She builds on and
significantly develops the work of social contract theorists, providing a feminist reinterpretation of modern political theory. In her version of the story:

"The sons overturn paternal rule not merely to gain their liberty but to secure women for themselves. Their success in this endeavour is chronicled in the story of the sexual contract. The original pact is a sexual as well as a social contract: it is sexual in the sense of patriarchal - that is, the contract establishes men's political right over women - and also sexual in the sense of establishing orderly access by men to women's bodies"

(Pateman 1988: 2)

She argues that the relations of domination and subordination between men and women are assumed by the social contract. According to her story, the original contract was a social-sexual contract, and the women were the subjects of the contract, not the parties to the contract. So while the original story describes the emergence of the public sphere of civil society, indeed it constructs civil society, it cannot account for the relations of the private sphere. Neither does it allow for the dependence of the public on the private. Its character as a story about domination (by men) and subordination (of women) is forgotten, and instead it is a story only about male freedom:

"The social contract is a story of freedom; the sexual contract is a story of subjection. The original contract constitutes both freedom and domination. Men's freedom and women's subjection are created through the original contract - and the character of civil freedom cannot be understood without the missing half of the story that reveals how men's patriarchal right over women is established through contract."

(Pateman 1988: 2)

Patriarchal relations do not just dominate in the private. At the time of Locke women were not juridical subjects, wives belonged to their husbands under the common law doctrine of coverture. The "individual" who enters into contracts, who is freed from relations of status, who owns the property in his person, who roams the public, is not
gender neutral, he is a man. The “worker” who enters into employment contracts is also a man:

“the construction of the ‘worker’ presupposes that he is a man who has a woman, a (house)wife, to take care of his daily needs. The private and public spheres of civil society are separate, reflecting the natural order of sexual difference, and inseparable, incapable of being understood in isolation from each other. The sturdy figure of the ‘worker’, the artisan, in clean overalls, with a bag of tools and lunch-box, is always accompanied by the ghostly figure of his wife” (Pateman 1988: 131)

But although Pateman argues that a woman cannot become a worker in the way that a man can because the construction of “worker” presupposes that he is a man who has a woman to take care of his daily needs, to do his reproductive work, women citizens of the EU are becoming workers in the same sense as men, but it is the ghostly racialised figure of the domestic worker/nanny that accompanies them.

DOMESTIC WORKERS AND THE SEXUAL-SOCIAL CONTRACT

If both the public and private spheres depend on an original sexual division of labour in which women are subordinate to men, as Pateman stipulates, what happens when paid domestic labour is introduced into this equation? In social/sexual contract theory terms, given that the private sphere is ultimately governed by the sexual contract it is women/wives who have responsibility for domestic labour. This explains why, when a household employs a domestic worker, she is managed by the woman of the household. But what governs relations between domestic workers and their (predominantly female) employers, the sexual contract, with its relations of status, or the social (i.e. employment) contract?

Wives and servants

It is occasionally noted that contract is not a device for “servants” (see Baier 1986 cited in Pateman 1988: 62) but this is rarely problematised. Wives were commonly classed together with “servants” in the 17th century: both came under the authority of the male
householder, together with the household’s children (Kussmaul 1981). Pateman takes the point of view of the wives and early feminists such as Mary Astell, Lady Chudleigh and Mary Wollstonecraft that a wife was “the chief menial of the household” and contemporarily the “sole servant of the household” (though numbers of employers in Europe suggest that this is not really so). Both wives and servants are subordinate to the man. But though both subordinate to the man, they are not themselves equal. While wives considered they were treated as servants:

> "Wife and servant are the same,
> But only differ in the name."

(Lady Chudleigh 1703 cited in Pateman 1988: 125)

servants were not treated as wives. The wife/servant comparison was more apparent to the wives than to the servants. Domestic workers today are not struck by Pateman’s comparison:

> “You don’t feel you have anything in common, not too much, because you work for them. I feel a little different to them because maybe if I have what she has, she’s not going to stand on my back saying ‘do this’ or ‘do that’.”

(Anderson 1996: 3)

While Pateman cites American suffragists such as EC Stanton who compare the situation of women to slaves (Pateman 1988: 121; 124; 154), bell hooks (1981) criticises those same suffragists for expressing

> “outrage that inferior ‘niggers’ should be granted the vote while ‘superior’ white women remained disenfranchised....White suffragists felt that white men were insulting white womanhood by refusing to grant them privileges that were to be given black men. They admonished white men not for their sexism but for their willingness to allow sexism to overshadow racial alliances. Stanton, along with other white women’s rights supporters, did not want to see blacks enslaved, but neither did she wish to see the status of black people improved while the status of white women remained the same.”

(hooks 1981: 127)
Similarly "wives" equation of wives with servants does not necessarily have as a corollary wives' demands for the rights of servants.

What are the similarities and differences between wives and servants? According to Pateman the wife does the same tasks as a household servant, works the long hours of a servant, in exchange, not for a wage, but for the protection of her master.

"What being a woman (wife) means is to provide certain services for and at the command of a man (husband). In short, the marriage contract and the wife's subordination as a (kind of) labourer cannot be understood in the absence of the sexual contract and the patriarchal construction of 'men', and 'women', and the 'private' and 'public' spheres."

(Pateman 1988: 128)

This elision, between being a wife and labouring in the home is not justified however: some wives only manage, most wives both manage and labour, while domestic workers/servants only labour (though they may manage their time). She holds that contracts like the marriage contract, which are about property in the person (rather than labour power), take the form of obedience for protection. So the wife puts her personhood at the disposal of her husband in return for his protection. But this is not simply a question for wives, for as has been seen, the domestic worker "contract" too is about property in the person (see Chapters Seven and Eight). Employers of live-in domestic workers will often attempt to strike the bargain of obedience for protection:

"for example, talking of people who live-in sometimes people offer a room for the worker to look after an old woman, and in exchange they won't pay anything."

(Caritas volunteer Barcelona)

According to Davidoff' (1983) at the turn of the century in the UK the payment of a domestic worker had to be stipulated in the contract, if not it was assumed that the worker was working for nothing. Palmer (1989) too found full-time work was demanded in return for housing. When I worked live-in for a year in London I was not paid a wage for my six hours a day, five days a week plus babysitting but this was "in
exchange” for my accommodation and bills. My “socialist” employer explained that this was not exploitative because there was no money involved! In June 1998 it was revealed that the UK Low Pay Commission was seriously considering allowing the “cost” of providing live-in accommodation as part of a worker’s wage. (This could mean a handsome profit for employers living in expensive parts of London who could reasonably demand that workers pay the difference between their wages and the cost of renting their room!). Obedience for protection is a “family” relation and underlies the worker becoming “part of the family” (see Chapter Seven).

But despite these similarities (in tasks performed; in subordination to the man of the house, in exchanging personhood) wives and domestic workers are differently constructed. Pateman states:

“Housewives see freedom from control as their great advantage; they stress that they can decide what to do and how and when to do it, and many housewives have strong, internalized standards of what constitutes a good job of work….Discussions of housework often overlook the expectations and requirements of the husband. The demands of his work largely determine how the housewife organises her time”
(Pateman 1988: 130)

But this analysis fails to appreciate that housewives are right, “freedom from control” is management. Wives manage households. While women are oppressed and confined within the private sphere, they may also be affirmed and can express themselves and their affective relations within the private sphere. As Bubeck (1995) explains, some women can be empowered through caring for example, and it does offer the opportunity for some for non-alienated work. This is to be contrasted with the situation of migrant domestic workers who do not manage households, and are not empowered by caring. As men’s “identity” is reinforced and confirmed by the public sphere, so women’s can be by the private. “Wives” can have an interest in not relinquishing control of the private sphere, particularly when they are not fully accepted by the public, or have a sense that the alienated labour of the public sphere is ungratifying. The decision to “go out” to
work after having a baby is not an easy one for many women, because of the pleasures and responsibilities of the private sphere. "Wives" may therefore hold on tightly to the private sphere, through internalised standards, expertise and professionalisation, as tightly as men will to the public sphere. The "identity" of servants in contrast is constructed as degraded. Some migrant workers continued to be able to affirm themselves through maintaining a sense of the dignity of their work. Gisela from the Dominican Republic for example, who worked in Barcelona felt domestic work was:

"Good work, honourable, you can hold your head up high, because it is a worthwhile job".

Notably she described her employers as "humanitarian":

"They treat me very well, as if I were a worker".

But more usually workers felt that they were treated as less than human (see Chapter Eight)

"No reasonable, hours, no employers and their children treat us with respect. No, none of them. No domestic workers we know are treated with respect by the employers. None of them. Nobody cares. If you work, work, and that's it. You don't get respect. No respect you: they pay you, so you work."

Clapping.

(Consultation, Athens)

It is not simply that domestic workers are subordinate to wives, but that their role as "domestic worker" to "wife" is to act as a foil, to enhance status, to give honour through dishonour (see Chapters Three and Eight). As has been previously discussed, domestic workers are reproducing a status hierarchy which is profoundly antagonistic to their own interests. This is less clear in the case of the housewife/wife, whose status is bound up with her husband and with the management of her own household. The housewife unlike the migrant domestic worker is not "natally alienated". She is bound up in a network of responsibilities and rights around the household (as a description of kin relations), while for a worker all responsibilities are discharged through cash. There are "economic and social advantages" to marriage, as Pateman acknowledges, but there are
only economic advantages to domestic employment. Marriage to a male employer is undoubtedly a move up for many domestic workers.

The relations between female employer and worker are not simply governed by the employment contract but by relations of status, and the confusion between the two benefits the employer. As seen in Chapter Seven the possibility of slippage from affective to instrumental relations i.e. from sexual to social contract increases the employer’s control over her worker. The fact that she (the employer) is a woman facilitates this slippage. The domestic worker/employer relations is not a “real” employment contract because it is between women about women’s work in the home:

“I ask my senora, ‘There is no year in the contract. I can leave any time I want.’ And then my employer told me, ‘Adel, I think the contract is only paper. The most important thing is the one between us.’”

(Filipina in Barcelona)

An employment contract cannot capture female relations. Of course to the extent that domestic work is about status and status reproduction and hierarchies between women, then this is true. For there is a third element to the sexual-social-contract that Pateman touches on only briefly:

“The men who (are said to) make the original contract are white men, and their fraternal pact has three aspects; the social contract, the sexual contract and the slave contract that legitimizes the rule of white over black.”

(Pateman 1988: 221)

The notion of a “slave contract” at first sight seems a contradiction in terms. Contract is about freedom, about individual subjecthood, so surely slavery, when a person becomes a thing, is its antithesis? But, although Pateman does not discuss this, I suspect that in her analysis “slaves” are the subjects of the slave contract, as women are the subjects of the sexual contract - neither women nor “slaves” are contractors. Like the sexual contract, the slave contract is assumed by the social contract - Locke himself was secretary to the “proprietors of Carolina” and in this capacity drew up the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, a clear outlining of his political ideas in which he was given
free rein to draw up any constitution on which the proprietors could agree and for which they would obtain royal consent. Article 110:

“Every freeman of Carolina shall have absolute power and authority over his negro slaves, of what opinion or religion soever.”

(Locke 1669 Wootton (ed.) 1993: 230)

None of these aspects to the original contract are discrete - and negotiation is always possible. But Pateman does not explore this third element. Rather, her discussions on the “slave contract” are concerned with the contract of “civil slavery”. This refers not to the original slave contract, but is used to shed light on the employment contract.

THE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

The work of organisations such as Kalayaan then is in part an attempt to assert the relations of the employment contract over the relations of status that regulate domestic workers and their employers. For the relations of the employment contract to hold, the domestic worker must be constructed as selling her labour power rather than her personhood - but this is extremely difficult within the private domain as it is currently imagined. This manifests itself in all kinds of practical difficulties in applying employment contracts to the private sphere and in the ideological problems around constructing reproductive work as work at all. More concretely, tasks, hours and value all very basic conditions of the employment contract, delineating limits to employers’ power are all very difficult to set with reference to domestic work. I have already discussed the difficulties around a task based definition of domestic work. Very specifically, when domestic workers were shown the International Labour Organisation definition of domestic work they were unequivocal in saying that this was not an adequate definition of their work, that they did “everything”.

But there are also particular problems around the notion of “hours of work” as applied to the household (see Chapter Four). As employer N. in Athens expressed it:

“in a house there are no hours”.

202
This is partly because so much of the skill around domestic work is concerned with time management, with doing the work associated with several different processes at once, so there is no simple clear relationship between hours and tasks. In France, where they have made some attempts to regulate domestic work in private households, working conditions are (allegedly) determined not by the French code du travail but by the Convention Collective Nationale de Travail du Personnel Employé de Maison. This Convention Collective enshrines the notion of “présence responsable”, defined as:

“les heures de présence responsable sont les heures de garde à caractère familial auprès d’une personne physique sans travail effectif”

(Article 6).

For example, when a child is asleep and not in themselves requiring any attention but nevertheless requiring an adult’s presence and with the possibility of waking up at any time - often referred to by workers as being “on call”. The Convention distinguishes between this time and time of “travail effectif” and sets payment at two thirds of the minimum wage. “Présence responsable” is not a peculiar French invention, but an attempt to deal with a very real problem in applying the employment contract to domestic work. So in Spain this kind of time was described as “tiempo de presencia” and the employer is entitled to require the worker’s presence in the house (but not to “work”) for up to sixteen hours a day unpaid. This fails to recognise that women working in the house very rarely have time off other than when they themselves are asleep. Time is a precious resource and there is always a job that could be done as a response to one’s own or imposed standards. So “présence responsable” time is often used as an opportunity to finish household chores. The diaries kept by domestic workers provided many examples of this. L. is an undocumented Filipina working in Paris:

“Monday 15.1.1996
9.00-11.10am: I prepared the orange juice of the little boy, change his clothes and diaper, clean his room and put him on the bed to sleep. I started to clean the kitchen then the rooms, toilet, salon and the bathrooms.
11.10-12.00: while the baby is still sleeping I wash the windows and put all the clean clothes from the suitcases to their cabinet.”

Now theoretically of course, and assuming L fell under the Convention - which in reality of course she does not because she is undeclared, - she could deem this présence responsable time, and put her feet up and read the paper while the little boy was sleeping, saving the cleaning until he was awake. But anybody with experience of tidying up with a young child knows this is a sisyphean task and she would thereby only be creating work for herself. Or she could not tell her employer about the boy’s sleep and count it as travail effectif, for enforcement of contracts poses particular difficulties in the private sphere, as will be discussed below. But the employment contract is instructing her to do the former, which is simply not realistic. It is evident from many interviews with domestic workers that présence responsable is not time for oneself, nor is it rest time, it is even not rest time at night for those caring for small children or the mentally confused, because one can always be interrupted by something that must take priority. Indeed it is precisely the element of présence responsable that accounts for much of the bind of domestic work, one’s freedom and time completely subsumed to another’s. Unable to use the time as one would “free time” because of the priority of the other person’s needs, it is only to be expected that, unless it is the middle of the night présence responsable is spent doing interruptible household tasks. Présence responsable then exemplifies the difficulties in applying the employment contract to the private sphere. These difficulties have an important impact on the relations between domestic worker and female employer.

PROFESSIONALISATION

Professionalisation may be seen as the way forward, clearing the muddied waters of maternalism by stating the domestic worker is a professional thereby improving her status vis-a-vis her employer and allowing for the application of an employment contract. This seems to benefit everybody, but leaves the sexual contract undisturbed: men continue to benefit from female domestic labour, it gives domestic workers status and limits the employers’ powers of command, while allowing employers to expect the
scientific standards of the public sphere applied rigorously to the private. This “solution”
is advocated by the French employers’ federation, Fepem, and they portray a
coincidence of interests between women, between the domestic worker and the
housewife:

“Préservez vos droits en respectant les siens”
(Fepem leaflet).

They argue that professionalism benefits both parties - the employer (assumed to be
female) can be sure of a trained and competent worker, while the worker is respected,
and may chose to enter the profession rather than viewing it as a last resort.

Now this of course begs several very important, questions - crucially, professionals
come very expensive! And who is the professional, the wife/housewife, or the domestic
worker? If the domestic worker must be trained for her employment, how can domestic
work continue to be a natural ability of women in general? In substituting a trained
professional for herself, is a wife/housewife getting in someone who is better at “her”
job? It is not as straightforward as it would appear then to “professionalise” domestic
work and maintain the current gender and class ideology.

The implications of professionalisation become clear in the Convention Collective which
divides domestic work into specialisms and hierarchies, though notably leaving the
specifics of the job description to individual employers. So from October 1 1995
(previously a slightly different classificatory system had operated) workers were divided
from “Débutant” (beginner) through different levels to level five. Minimum salary for the
débutant was 36.98F (£5.10) an hour, and for level five, 42.56F (£5.87) an hour (see
Appendix 5) The classification however represents a basic two tier system, with levels
débutante and one being unqualified workers “sous responsabilité de l’employeur” and
levels two to five qualified employees with “employeur présent ou non”. Caring
responsibilities are taken on only by level two upwards. At this stage workers are said to
occupy “Postes d’emploi a caractère familial” when, as well as working, they provide a
présence responsable. The specific responsibilities of workers become clearer as one
progresses “up” the scale - so while a débutante has no specific jobs, level two can help children with homework, while level three includes sewing, ironing (qualified) and private secretary. Difficulties in applying public sphere categories to the private sphere realities are immediately apparent or rather the private sphere reveals the inherent shortcomings of the industrial mode of production characterised by the division of labour into precisely specifiable and timeable tasks. While workers at the “bottom” may well be multi-skilled, that militates against them being considered specialised professionals. The Convention Collective also enshrines the contradiction that one’s work becomes more specialised and defined as one’s status and salary increases - chauffeurs, chefs etc. are level five. The classification may be appropriate for reflecting distinctions between cuisinier qualifié (level three) and chef cuisinier (level five), but all unqualified workers are grouped at the bottom of the scale. The difficulty with a hierarchy based on specialisation is that workers who are concerned exclusively with looking after children are paid more than those who have to care for children and do the housework. It could be argued then that in its encouragement of recognition of “professionalism” the Convention in fact validates a two tier system which does not recognise the skills and experience of a large group of workers in which would be included the vast majority of foreign domestic workers.

The vast majority of domestic workers interviewed, not just in Paris but in Athens, Bologna, Barcelona, Berlin and London have no formal qualification in domestic work. Such qualifications, when they are available, only apply to certain aspects of domestic work, usually those with a caring function. In general domestic work is constructed as unskilled, - one cannot to my knowledge be “qualified” in dusting, only experienced. Although, migrant domestic workers may be technically sous responsabilité de l’employeur the employer is, more often than not, not actually present while they are working. It is those who are at the bottom of the hierarchy who have to do everything, and who in reality often have the greatest responsibility, for very rarely are they supervised by their employer. Professionalised domestic workers are extremely expensive, not only are their wages higher than non-professionalised, but they are also
likely to be declared, meaning the employer must pay tax, national insurance etc, and give them certain employment rights such as sick pay. Professional workers are less “flexible”: so for example, a person who employs a professionalised carer will not get the cleaning thrown in, and may well “have” to employ a cleaner in addition. An unprofessionalised carer on the other hand will combine care and the household chores, which are in reality a daily part of care. Professionalised domestic workers may be financially out of reach for many middle class families, particularly those needing a full time carer for children or the elderly. Yet this is precisely the sector that is growing. So, while citizens may take advantage of training and professionalisation, to enable them to take up better paying and higher status jobs, migrants continue to fill the main area of need. The professionalising of domestic work can end up as its “whitening” -

“we do all kinds of household chores…unlike the European like the British that come here. If they hire a baby-sitter they just do the baby-sitting and not even wash their plate that they are eating. They don’t even know how to wash their spoons.”

(Filipina in Athens)

WORKERS’ CONTRACTS

Despite the difficulties of applying the relations of the employment contract to domestic work, and the slippage between affective and instrumental relations most workers did have individual contracts with their employers, even when they were undocumented. Given the difficulties that workers had in extracting official documentation from their employers if the latter did not want to register them I would hypothesise that these contracts were at the instigation of the employer. But what is the point of having a contract that is in many cases invalid in law (such as when the worker is undocumented)? The majority of workers said that their contracts were not kept, and that what was important in determining living and working conditions was whether or not one had a “good” employer, not the existence of a contract. Notably a “good” employer was typically characterised as someone who left you alone, suggesting a certain freedom from both supervision and intrusive affective relations! For the employer
an employment contract maintains the fiction of consent, while also providing a psychological, if not in the final instance a legal means of enforcing requirements beneficial to the employer such as a minimal period of notice for example.

Some workers did not think much of contracts:

"B: I think sometime most of the people that sign contracts, the employer have you on paper. This is a big mistake.

R: Once we sign contracts in Africa it's like you sign to be a slave."

(Pan African members, Athens)

There are three aspects to the contractual relation that account for this negative assessment.

a) coercion

Citing Buchanan, Pateman's description of the civil slave contract has uncomfortable resonances with the situation of migrant domestic workers in Europe:

"The strong - in their own interests - will conquer, forcibly disarm and seize the goods of the weak, and then make a contract in which the conquered agree henceforth to work in return for their subsistence or protection. The strong can present the contract as being to the advantage of both: the strong no longer have to labour and the weak now can be assured that their basic needs will be provided for”.

(Pateman 1988: 61)

People are forced to migrate for reasons of poverty and violence that arguably often stem from the interests of the global strong, including the states of the European Union. Some of the benefits of such plunder are reaped, albeit often unintentionally, by the middle class of those states, who are also counted among the employers of migrant domestic labour. These employers may then (as in Chapter Seven) offer employment in the household as a kindness, labour for protection, being part of the family. Statements such as that of employer N in Athens encapsulate such a contract:

"when there was a war in Ethiopia I pitied them".
There are different degrees of coercion, some of which one might not want to count as coercion at all. So a woman who is debt bonded to her employer, living in with an immigration status dependent on her employer, is in a very different position to a woman working live-out with settlement rights in the host state. A worker who is emotionally manipulated into remaining with her employer along the lines of “how can you leave me, have you no conscience?” is in a very different position to the worker who was told:

“I will cut your face. I will kill you and scatter your pieces in the desert if you ever disobey an order. You are my slave. You will do exactly what I say..... If the police find you, you will be deported to where you came from. And, if you are, you will be killed - if I do not manage to kill you first. Don’t forget - there are plenty more where you came from.”

(Anderson 1993: 50)

On the face of it, if someone has been coerced into a contract, it is not really a contract - though clearly many people, not just domestic workers, could be said to be forced into “employment contracts” through poverty. The flip side of coercion is the freedom to retract from a contract. It is the freedom to retract that is legally denied to so many migrant domestic workers through immigration legislation and regulation (see Chapter Ten).

b) specification

The employment contract specifies time and tasks to be done. It is this that limits the employer’s power to command. The looser the contract the easier it is for the powerful party to exploit the worker. The difficulties around specification of domestic work are significant, hence the contract is in practice always being negotiated to the detriment of the worker:

“OK Greeks take an advantage sometimes. You feel that they are giving you a little respect or sometimes you feel happy to help them. They tell you to feel at home. She ask you once to help ironing. I happy to make one change. The next day they will add trousers. The next day add another one. Another time, a full
bowl. They taking advantage, if you give them a little chance they will use you as a donkey”.
(Pan-African member, Athens)

c) enforcement
Given the weakness of the position of workers, while “good” employers may keep to the contract, “bad” employers may ignore it with no effect on themselves. In the UK some domestic workers, supported by Kalayaan and other groups, have taken employers to court over physical abuse and non-payment of wages. Some, but not all, of these cases have been successful. The first step has always been to win the worker’s right to stay even though they have left their employer while their case against their employer is being heard. While this has been won in some cases - with legal support and campaign mobilisation - they are extremely unusual. Moreover, the fact that, the case having been heard and won by the worker, the worker can be, and is deported because she has left her employer, means that women are extremely reluctant now to demand through the courts that most basic of employment rights, to be paid the agreed wage. If this is the position of well organised women who have political support, then clearly that of the majority of domestic workers is likely to be far weaker.

Yet what is being recognised by the attempted imposition of these public sphere concepts is that the boundaries between the private and the public are not real, they shift, they are negotiable. The boundaries are culturally specific (Yuval-Davis 1991) but even within a dominant culture where boundaries are drawn by the state depends on gender/class/‘race’/sexuality/age and other variables. For example the ban on gays serving in the army, or the scrutiny directed at the private life of the poor in determining access to benefits (see Lister 1990). The most intimate details of a person’s life may be publicly explored in an immigration appeals tribunal - I have heard home office lawyers inquiring in such circumstances for example at what age a woman “lost her virginity” who to and under what circumstances (of course the woman asking the same questions to the Home Office lawyer is a total impossibility). Domestic workers are caught within these shifting
boundaries. This is a particular problem for live-in workers because they have no escape; the boundaries are constantly indeterminate. While the precise relations governing live-out domestic workers and their employers are still unclear, at least there is an enforceable distinction between work time and private time.

Domestic workers in private households exemplify the problematic nature of employment contracts in general, and the importance of gendering contract. They also indicate that contracts are racialised. So, while Pateman demonstrates the workings of the sexual contract she does not sufficiently allow for its complexities, negotiations and trade offs, which are given an added dimension once one allows for the "slave contract". Contracts are constantly up for renegotiation, new bargains may be made, new alliances formed, the relations between them are complicated. It is not simply that the sexual contract has an "opt out clause" on the labour of domestic work (though not the management), but that it enables some women, as women, to command other/Other women. Pateman touches on this:

"His (the employer's) task is much easier if the wage includes protection that binds the subordinate more closely to the contract. Extra-monetary benefits, or, in the case of the marriage contract, 'generous' housekeeping money or 'help' around the house are obvious examples."

(Pateman 1988: 148)

Women, or at least some women, this suggests are not only the subjects of the original contract. To facilitate the reproduction of the sexual-social contract at a time of "equality" between certain groups of women and men, the slave contract is renegotiated.
CHAPTER TEN
"YOUR PASSPORT IS YOUR LIFE": DOMESTIC WORKERS AND THE STATE

The fact that domestic work in private households is often being undertaken by third country nationals is not only evidence of the racialisation of reproductive work but presents a serious challenge to notions of citizenship. Much of the reproductive labour of Europe is now being done by non-citizens, that is, "racialisation" is not simply an indicator of employer preference and attitude of Europeans in general, but this segment of workers have a certain relation to the state. Debates on citizenship have focused on differential access to the rights of citizenship (of the poor, disabled, and women in particular); but have rather taken for granted the right to citizenship in the formalised sense of what passport a person holds and an individual's right to be present and work in a particular nation state. This meaning of citizenship may be more narrowly defined as the formal ascription of membership through nationality laws. This formalised sense of citizenship demonstrates that citizenship is inextricably linked to particular nation states which have different grounds for entitlement to membership. In particular some nation states grant citizenship by descent, "ius sanguinis" (the "law of blood"), others by place of birth "ius soli" (the "law of land"). It also demonstrates that citizenship is exclusive. In this chapter I want to use the position of domestic workers in relation to this formal sense of citizenship to throw light on the broader debates on citizenship and to argue that the relationship of domestic workers to the state encourages and reinforces the racialisation of domestic work.

DOMESTIC WORKERS AND IMM Migration STATUS
It is important to distinguish immigration status from nationality. While nationality defines the country of which people are citizens, and how individuals can become citizens, immigration is the system of laws, regulations and practises by which a state sets out who can live within its territory and under what conditions. A person's immigration status refers to how they are positioned within that system, and in particular whether they are "regular" i.e. have a legal right to be present (though not necessarily to work) in the country, or "undocumented" i.e. their presence in the
country constitutes a criminal act. Although distinct, immigration and nationality are related since in some EU countries migrant workers can take out citizenship after a period of residence and become “naturalised”.

Speaking very broadly people who end up working as domestic workers in Europe may enter legally as tourists (who then go on to work, thereby becoming liable to deportation) or as workers in Spain and Italy where it is possible to get a work permit as a domestic worker. Workers who enter on a work permit may overstay the fixed period of time allotted them, in which case they become undocumented. People may also enter illegally by evading immigration controls. It is also possible for some people to enter as the spouse of a migrant (usually a “wife”). In this case they are usually prohibited from working and from having recourse to public funds. Those who have entered legally may in some states have the right after a certain period, to naturalisation and formal citizenship. However this right does not apply to all European states, and the law may be so formulated as to make it impossible to exercise.

As is clear from Chapters Five and Six the immigration status of migrant domestic workers varies from state to state. There are two aspects of domestic workers’ immigration status that are common however. Firstly that those who have legal status are often dependent for that status on their employer, and secondly that a large proportion of domestic workers are undocumented.

Dependence

In the countries visited where it is possible to get a work permit for domestic work i.e. in Spain and in Italy, workers are legally bound to their employer. It is their employer who must apply for the permit, prove that they have the income to pay for their worker, that they can accommodate her etc. It is also the employer who renews the permit - should there be a problem in the fraught domestic worker-employer relationship, the employer can simply refuse to renew the permit, and the worker must leave the country. A change of employer or of type of employment is not permissible. This dependence on employers to renew work permits has been true historically - in Greece for example under the nursing aide system of the 1970s and 1980s, and in the
UK when work permits were available to resident domestic workers in the 1970s. Dependence is not restricted to domestic workers. Currently in the UK work permits are available, mainly for employees in high level posts, and these too are granted to employers not to workers. If a person changes jobs, even within the same company, the employer must apply for a new work permit. This work permit system is allegedly a means of tying workers to the national economy. So in Britain for example Dudley Smith, then Under-Secretary in the Department of Employment said of the special quotas of work permits given for unskilled and semi-skilled work in 1971:

“There was considerable pressure on the Department from hoteliers and from people in the catering industry crying out for people to be imported to do certain jobs, largely because they could not get white people to do them. All right, I accept the responsibility, because my party was in government at the time, that inevitably, although not on a wholesale scale, the Department and the Government gave way on this and allowed a certain number to come in, and that position remains today.”

(Parliamentary Select Committee 1977)

The system also however, ties workers to their employers. Annual renewal effectively gives the employer the sanction of the annual possibility of deportation should they be dissatisfied with their employee. However, although work permits ostensibly impose the same restrictions on employees, whether board members or domestic servants, they have different implications for a person who is an executive in a multinational company than for those who have indebted themselves in order to migrate.

Being formally dependent on their employer has particular implications for domestic workers. It is in the nature of the type of employment that domestic workers are cast in a status relation with their employer. Live-in domestic workers are dependent on their employers for accommodation and food. I have argued elsewhere that domestic work is not only a job but a role. The domestic worker, unlike the executive, cannot return home after a difficult day with her employer, but must continually negotiate her relationship with her. This is legally sanctioned through her permit: she cannot change jobs, she, quite literally, is a domestic worker, those are the grounds on which her presence is tolerated. But she is also a domestic worker attached to a particular named
person, a person whose status she is expressing and reproducing in part by herself being of “lower status”. A migrant domestic worker’s legal dependence on her employer for her presence in a particular European state gives the employer direct control over every aspect of the migrant’s life. The worker’s physical presence in Europe is a personal favour which may be withdrawn at the employer’s whim by non-renewal of the work-permit. Unlike deportation by the state, the worker has no possibility for appeal against this deportation by default, but must return to her country of origin. The presence of domestic workers is tolerated by the state for as long as it is wanted by the employers. The immigration status of migrant domestic workers therefore reinforces the status relations that oppress and exploit them within their employment, legally sanctioning such relations and weakening the workers’ position still further.

The difficulties this can cause have been well documented in the UK, where, although it is not possible to get a work permit for domestic work, workers’ dependence on their employers has nevertheless been institutionalised in the Immigration Rules. Immigration Rules regulate the entry and stay of visitors, students, workers and dependants, setting out the administration of the Immigration Act. They detail the “general considerations” which should be borne in mind by immigration officers in their work. The Rules are of vital importance, but they are what is known as secondary legislation. They are law made by the Secretary of State and simply presented to Parliament where it can only be voted on in its entirety with no opportunity for amendments. Although since 1977 it has not been possible for non-Europeans to enter the UK as resident domestic workers, wealthy individuals and returning British nationals are allowed to be accompanied by domestic workers under a special concession within the Immigration Rules. Under this concession the employer can bring in their domestics under one of two categories, as “visitors” or as “persons named to work with a specified employer”. Immigration officials were issued with the following guidelines:

“A person engaged abroad as a domestic servant, who has been in the service of the employer for more than twelve months abroad may accompany the employer to the United Kingdom to continue the employment. The employer
must undertake to provide maintenance and accommodation for any dependants and the Immigration Officer must be satisfied that the person intends to continue in the employment. Domestics may be allowed to benefit from this arrangement even if they are outside the normal age limits or have dependent children. Leave to enter should be given on Code 4 for up to twelve months. *(Code 4 gives leave to enter on condition that the holder only engages in employment for a particular named person; the holder is required to register with the police).*

Domestic servants, chauffeurs, private secretaries and other employees who render personal service may be allowed to enter with their employers if only a visit is intended in which case leave to enter as a visitor on Code 3 for the period of the employer’s authorised stay is appropriate. *(Code 3 gives leave to enter for a specified period on condition that the holder does not enter employment paid or unpaid; again, the holder has to register with the police.)* If the employer is to remain in the United Kingdom other than as a visitor e.g. for settlement or to set up in business, such employees require work permits.

In practice, since there are no clear guidelines for immigration officials, the stamp given was found by the migrant domestic workers’ support and campaigning group, Kalayaan to be a matter of chance, and many domestics were given a stamp under Code 5N, namely “Leave to enter, employment prohibited”. Domestic workers therefore were not given an immigration status independent of the household they work for. As the then Home Office Minister, David Waddington stated in a letter to Lord Avebury:

“Admission in such cases is on the basis that the employee will be expected to leave the country with the employer, or on prior termination of the employment.”

*(Cited in the booklet accompanying Kalayaan’s Open Space film Domestic Slavery, broadcast on BBC2 16th November 1987)*

Importantly, although applications for extensions to remain with the original employers are usually granted, applications to change employers are routinely refused on the basis
that no work permit was held on entry. Despite some tinkering with entry clearance rules in 1991 (the entry clearance officer is to check the “bona fides” of the arrangement, the worker has be at least seventeen and to have worked for the same employer for a minimum of twelve months), the system of entry for migrant domestic workers has remained the same until the time of writing (June 1998). The government is currently considering implementing a change which, while not bringing them under the work permit system, this will enable workers to change employers providing they remain domestic workers i.e. do not attempt to change the category of their employment.

This possible change follows intensive campaigning by domestic workers and their supporters demonstrating the abuse that this enforced dependence on their employers facilitated. Issues of citizenship and nationality reflect the relative power of employer and domestic worker. Migrant domestic workers’ relation with the state is mediated by the person who dominates them. In 1990 Kalayaan began to keep statistics detailing the kinds of difficulties faced by workers they interviewed who had escaped from the employers whom they had accompanied to the UK. Kept annually these figures are more or less constant year to year. In 1996-1997, of the 195 workers coming to them, 84 per cent reported psychological abuse, 34 per cent physical abuse and 10 per cent sexual abuse. Fifty four per cent were locked in, 55 per cent did not have their own bed, and 38 per cent had no regular food. Workers coming to Kalayaan do not necessarily constitute a representative sample - they are workers who have run away from abusive employers, so it could be argued that they are in particularly bad situations; though equally one could say that they are workers who have succeeded in running away, that those who are under the harshest regimes or particularly isolated can never come to the group’s attention. Cases of abuse have been brought to the attention of the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the Department of Employment. The latter has held that domestics who are abused should have recourse to industrial tribunals and civil and criminal litigation. However, as was pointed out in a Debate in the House of Lords in 1990, the Department of Employment’s stand is:

“totally unrealistic. Few resident domestics will dare to use those procedures while they are still in employment. If they leave or are sacked, they immediately
breach their conditions of entry and become liable to deportation. Again, in that situation few will risk embarking on proceedings for which legal aid may not be readily available. Rights are a pure illusion unless they can in practice be full exercised.”

(Lord Hylton. Hansard column 1039 28th November 1990. House of Lords Debate on Overseas Domestic workers.)

This is illustrated in the case of Mahesh Kumari Rai, who left her home in a Nepalese mountain village at the age of thirteen to avoid an arranged marriage. After work as a carpet weaver in Kathmandu she made her way to Delhi India where she found domestic work. She accompanied the family to London, promised an easy life with good pay and a chance for education. The reality was very different, long hours, imprisonment, no pay at all, no education and constant physical and psychological abuse. Two years later, she escaped, and with the help of a law centre she took her former employer to court for compensation and her unpaid wages. The matter was settled out of court. Mahesh received £1,349, the equivalent of £13 a week. For the two years Mahesh was with them her former employers had neglected to keep her visa in order, she was therefore liable for deportation. In April 1991 she was picked up by the police and detained. In August 1992 Mahesh was finally deported to Nepal where she had neither family nor friends and had not been for more than fifteen years. Mahesh was supported by a large campaign, including twenty five MP’s, several peers and other public figures, Cardinal Hume and organisations such as Kalayaan and Anti-Slavery International, yet this did not protect her from deportation. It is scarcely surprising then that most of those in her position should avoid the risk of drawing the attention of the authorities by the exercising of their civil rights.

It is worth pointing out that many domestic workers have entered Europe legally as “wives” to men who are settled. Because they enter as a spouse they are often forbidden from taking up employment and having “recourse to public funds”. Of course the truth is these immigration laws tell us nothing about the intentions of women entering under them, women entering as “wives” may well have every intention of working on arrival. As was evident in Paris and in Barcelona, live-out domestic work is
seen as useful employment having flexibility to cater for women who also have to do their own reproductive work, caring for young children in particular.

"Illegality"
There are significant numbers of undocumented domestic workers in all European Union cities visited, both in countries where work permits are available, and where they are not. Immigration restrictions do not stop movement, and once migrants have entered a country only a minority are deported. In June 1998 a delegation of UK immigration lawyers were given access to the “Removals Desk” at Heathrow airport. Immigration officials told them that on a typical day, of twelve people scheduled for deportation, two could be expected to present themselves at the airport (and those two would be those detained i.e. unable to do otherwise), the remaining ten would be passed to “enforcement”, and the likelihood is that they would not be found1. The difficulty with stringent and restrictive immigration laws is that since they cannot stop migration, they mean that migration is forced to come through irregular channels and that state control over patterns and directions of migrant labour is relinquished rather than increased (Collinson 1994: 14). This is clearly apparent when one contrasts Spain where it is possible for domestic workers to enter legally, with Greece and France, where this is not so. In Spain the nationalities working in domestic work are clearly demarcated - even those working illegally since they have usually come through networks established by migrants before them. This is not to say that there are not women of other nationalities working in the sector, but the state has had a significant impact on the nationality of groups deemed “suitable” to be domestic workers. This is to be contrasted with Greece and France, where the state has ignored the existence of migrant domestic workers, exercised no control over who will fill the demand for domestic labour, and consequently the nationalities doing this work are far more varied.

Unlike workers in this sector who are undeclared (who may or may not be citizens) being undocumented never serves the workers’ interest. Undocumented workers are

1 From informal discussions with friends on the ILPA (Immigration Law Practitioners Association) delegation 30th May 1998.
extremely vulnerable. If they are sick they cannot get health care, they must continue to
work or they risk losing not just their wage, but accommodation too - even if their
sickness is a direct result of their work. They are subject to constant fear and insecurity
which can make it difficult to sustain personal relationships, even if the opportunity to
make friends is there. If their rights are abused they have no recourse to authority since
they are likely to end up in prison. As women they face particular problems with
pregnancy, often losing their job in consequence, and with no rights to state health care
during their pregnancy and birth. When born their children often have no rights to
health or education. Being undocumented does not mean that workers are independent
of their employers, indeed it gives the employer a direct hold over the worker, if she is
dissatisfied with them may simply report and deport them, or may even do so to avoid
paying their wages.

“I know some friends who work about two months in this country. Later on
they say to them, go away from our job, not giving any money. Because they
know we are illegal here, we are not going to police. Because immigration will
deport us. I cannot go nowhere. When somebody is holding your passport,
where do you go? Your passport is your life. I know places will not give you
any money because they know we will not go to the police because police will
deport us”.

(Eritrean in Athens)

Some undocumented workers who have been living in Europe for a while have the
confidence to use their position to threaten their employers,

“my first employer threatened me with the police. ‘I will call the police and tell
them you don’t have a working permit’, and I said, ‘And I will tell them you
didn’t arrange my papers and you will have to spend money.’ Then the
employer said, ‘I am only joking’, and I said, ‘I am only joking also, but if you
tell, then I will tell also.’”

(Filipina in Athens)

But this is not easy, for in reality the worker has much more to lose than the employer.
Although employing undocumented workers is a criminal offence in many European
countries including France and Greece I came across no examples of employers
incurring any problems as a result, though there were many instances of domestic worker being deported and imprisoned.

Live-in domestic work seems to offer some advantages to undocumented women. It solves problems of employment and accommodation at one go and enables them to maximise their savings to repay loans incurred in their travels to Europe (see Chapter Four). Crucially, although living and working in the home places them directly and constantly under the authority of their employer, it also protects them against the state - so while the state is not available to protect them from abuse, neither will it remove them from the country. However, being undocumented means that domestic workers, already engaged in low status work, are cast as needy and victimised, requiring benevolence and charity from those kind enough to offer it. This latter point has been demonstrated in the responses to publicity around the issue of migrant domestic workers put about by Kalayaan. Margaret Healy, former worker with the organisation, has observed that the typical public reaction was to contact the organisation offering accommodation in return for work (i.e. employment as a favour) rather than supporting demands for the right to change employers.

Naturalisation
In some European states Third Country Nationals who have fulfilled certain criteria (usually language and a minimum number of legal years stay) may apply for citizenship of the state where they have been resident. Naturalisation is extremely difficult for migrants in general and depends on many factors - the state within which they are working, the state they come from and its historical links with the state where they are working. One of the easiest routes (at least in legal terms) to citizenship is through marriage - the fact that so many domestic workers in Barcelona were reported to be interested in going out with Germans in search of brides suggests that citizenship is actively desired by many. For domestic workers whether or not the state recognises domestic worker as legitimate employment and their relationship with their employers can be crucial.
My research was on migrant domestic workers i.e. it implicitly targeted those who do not have citizenship, but I think a measure of the problems of access can be gauged by difficulties experienced in regularisation procedures:

"I tried to deliver my papers to the Ministry of Work, but they would always say, this piece of information's missing or that bit of information... Then one night she (employer) just told me to get out of the house, that she was tired of me. And I said, 'why Senora, I haven't said or done anything, why are you doing this to me?' 'I'm tired of you and your papers'. And we're going, of course, she doesn't want anything more to do with us."

(undocumented Filipina in Barcelona)

It is worth pointing out that the French data suggests that naturalised French people are still likely to work in domestic work, so access to citizenship does not mean that racialised groups are able to move out of domestic work (see Chapter Eight).

INTERACTION OF IMMIGRATION STATUS AND EMPLOYMENT: THE GERMAN CASE

For migrant domestic workers immigration status is important in determining employment. This is tautological for those holding work permits, but as mentioned above, undocumented women may actively seek live-in domestic work. Notably when domestic workers have an independent right to stay they often try to move out of live-in to live-out work. This bears out the workers' point of view, that it is not their "race" (as the employers would have it), but their immigration status that pushes them into domestic work.

Germany now has four means of entry for labour migrants: project-linked employment (Werkvertragsarbeitnehmer) mainly in the construction industry; guestworker contracts (Gastarbeiterbeschäftigung) designed to encourage the exchange of young skilled labour between Germany and former Eastern Europe countries, eighty per cent of the workers are male; seasonal workers (Saisonarbeit) for agriculture, forestry, construction and vineyards. Eighty per cent of these workers are men; and commuters (Grenzgangerbeschäftigung), work permits for people who live up to fifty
kilometres from the German border. Those who work under this system are mainly male Czech workers in Bavaria (Rudolph 1996). It is striking that these legal means of working in Germany are all for areas of work dominated by men, and that the majority of migrants taking them up are male. The single exception to this is the employment of nursing staff for the sick and elderly. However, in 1994 these accounted for only 412 people, 390 from Croatia and 22 from Slovenia. So, as with the earlier gastarbeiter system, Germany’s attempts to regulate foreign labour are principally directed at male migration. This does not of course mean that women do not migrate but that women migrants are likely to be undocumented and to work in unregulated sectors such as domestic work.

The most visible paid domestic workers are the Polish who work as cleaners. Domestic work in private households is said by migrants’ organisations to be the chief employment of Polish women in Berlin. Although no visa is needed for Polish citizens for a stay of under three months, working is forbidden. So many workers, although residing legally, are working illegally. However, employers in private households do not require that their worker has a working visa, particularly since Polish women are likely to live-out and work for several employers a few hours a week. The short distance between Berlin and western Poland mean that they are often “pendular migrants” working in Berlin for short periods, sometimes on a weekly basis, with weekends spent back in Poland. So workers regularly renew their three month stay in Germany and minimise their social costs: since they can still have family and community support, they are not faced with the difficulty of learning a new language, and can return if in difficulties. Although working illegally, Polish domestic workers do have the right to be present in Germany, and this coupled with the advantages of geography accounts for Polish women’s relatively privileged situation (though still they are confined to domestic work). They seem to escape many of the abuses and exploitation of other migrant domestic workers. Although they cannot pursue cases of abuse through the courts because they are working illegally they are less dependent on individual employers since they are not live-in and can leave particular employers should there be any difficulties. Notably they are the best paid among the migrant domestic workers in Berlin.
The impact of immigration legislation goes beyond Germany. According to the Polnischer Socialrat in Poland many Polish families employ Ukrainians as domestic workers to cover them while they are away working (as domestic workers) in Berlin. Unlike Polish, Ukrainians have to have a visa to enter Germany. They do not, however, need a visa to enter Poland. The "Northern route" for migrants from Ukraine and Belorus through Poland to Germany is now receiving full attention from immigration officials (Forschungsgesellschaft Flucht and Migration 1998: 63). Those Ukrainians who are caught are deported to Poland as a buffer state i.e. a state which has an agreement with the European Union to readmit foreigners rejected by the European Union member state. Work in Poland is less remunerative, but is a fallback for those who are unable to enter Germany. The wage differential between Germany and Ukraine is 100:1, and between Germany and Poland is 10:1 (Forschungsgesellschaft Flucht and Migration 1998: 62):

"The new border regime and the amended legislation on aliens not only cement the economic hierarchy between states but, as 'black' labour markets expand in all countries, also give rise to a whole continuum of exploitation, which leads to the 'illegalisation' of people from more distant countries."

(Forschungsgesellschaft Flucht and Migration: 62)

Ukrainians and other women from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are thought to be mainly working live-in. The Polnischer Socialrat at the time of interviewing were attempting to extend their work to this group, very much a hidden population in Berlin:

"The problem is when they stay with the families, they are very badly paid and very badly treated... A lot of people do live-in but it is difficult to contact them. As far as I know this is a closed story, they have no contact with other people, no information, they don't know where to get help for their problems"

What little information has surfaced about their situation suggests that there is serious but hidden abuse of live-in domestic workers in Berlin (see Chapter Seven).
Although settled and maybe even born in Germany most of those who came to the country under the Gastarbeiter system are not eligible for German citizenship, which is based on the principle of *ius sanguinis*. A new-born baby born in Germany of “Turkish” parents (who themselves were born in Germany) is not represented in official statistics as a birth, but as a migrant of one day’s stay. Under current legislation were the baby in fifteen years time say, to commit what the German government deemed an offence, the child and parents would be liable to deportation. Indeed, the birth of the baby itself might constitute a reason for deportation since migrants have to prove that they occupy a minimum number of square metres per residence. However many years those of “Turkish” parentage work, even if they are born in Germany, they do not have the right to German citizenship. Yet “Aussiedler”, those of “German” descent may become German citizens on the grounds of descent, even if their family left Germany hundreds of years ago. Aussiedler prove their “Germaness” and hence right to citizenship by presenting papers in which they are defined as Germans, papers which derive directly from the Nazi period. The “Volkslisten” which, were drawn up after the occupation of Poland registers the population according to their “German blood”.

“the wheel has come full circle, only now it is the Social Democrats who reproduce the purely biological construction of German citizenship that was first enacted by the ‘Nurnberger Reichsgesetze’ in 1934.”

(Rathzel 1991: 42)

Although they too are migrants, specific attempts are made to integrate them into Germany public life, with German classes and priority access to housing. Aussiedler from Poland, Russia etc do not work in private households, but they do operate in employment networks in informal but commercialised arrangements. An Aussiedler from Poland or from Russia will travel back to Poland or Russia and bring non-Aussiedler Polish/Russians to work for families in Berlin. Of course, while they can arrange employers they cannot arrange work permits, so this work is almost always illegal. Although ostensibly done as a favour, these middle people earn well from this work - and cannot offer any support or security to the woman once she has a job.

According to one informant:

“Aussiedler go to Poland regularly and bring Polish people to Berlin to find work because they want to help them. For example, a woman from Belorussia
comes with a visa to Germany because she has friends who are Aussiedler here. She stays here and organises work as a domestic worker. She must earn money for herself, her husband and her sick child. She was paid very badly, and sexually abused a lot over three months. It was not just by her employers - the man and the woman - but they used to bring in people they knew and make here have sex with them. This was a German family. I knew this woman. She ran away, but I don’t know what happened with her in the end, because she didn’t contact us any more.”

Aussiedler then can use their contacts in the communities where they grew up, their knowledge of their language and culture, their personal relationship etc to access potential domestic workers. Their German citizenship means they can move freely across borders, enabling them to maintain and develop their networks with potential migrants while being based in Germany. They do not have to work as domestic workers themselves then but use their dual access to contacts to act as mediators. Aussiedler, as citizens have privileged access to and knowledge of the market and can travel in and out freely. They can use this to profit from non-citizens. They have the best of both worlds - access to employment networks, and freedom of movement.

WOMEN AND THE CITIZENSHIP DEBATE

Discussions around the rights and obligations of the citizen often ignore the legal sense of citizenship. In political theory citizenship is often talked about as if it was fundamentally concerned with issues of belonging and equality, a universal concept through which societies recognise that they have a duty to meet basic human needs. Citizenship is treated as an inclusive concept: everyone has citizens’ rights even if they are more difficult for some to exercise than others. The current debates on citizenship take as their classic text TH Marshall’s analysis of citizenship and social class. He developed a theory of citizenship which attempted to accommodate class differences within a liberal democracy, allowing that people may be equal citizens despite the inequalities generated by capitalism. He argued that while feudalism offered rights and duties subject to status, under capitalism everybody is equal and free within the market
- even if this equality and freedom is simply expressed in the ownership of one's own labour. Marshall defined citizenship as having:

“three parts, or elements, civil, political and social. The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom - liberty of the person, freedom of speech and thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice... By the political element I mean the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body... By the social element I mean the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society”.

(Marshall 1950:10-11)

Marshall put the development of these rights within a historical context: civil rights were developed in the eighteenth century, political rights in the nineteenth century, and social rights in the twentieth century. Although rights were thus steadily built up, he does not deny that there can be conflicts between these rights, in particular between social and civil rights. So, in the UK at the end of the 18th century there was a conflict between pre-capitalist social rights deriving from membership in local communities and finding expression in for example the Elizabethan Poor Law, and burgeoning civil rights - to work, make contracts, own property. However he argued that through exercising civil rights workers were able to re-establish entitlement to certain social rights, and that these social rights were incorporated into the status of citizenship.

Marshall’s analysis has had a profound effect on the framing of debates on citizenship - and continues to have resonances today (see for example Bulmer and Rees (eds) 1996). Patricia Hewitt writes of the conflict he perceived between social and civil rights:

“Two hundred years later, we find ourselves engaged in a latter-day version of the same battle. On the one side, the neoliberals - the champions, in Marshall’s terms, of civil rights - who argue that Europe can only survive in the modern global economy by slashing its social costs, deregulating its labour markets and dismantling its welfare institutions. On the other, social and Christian democrats
alike who believe that an extension of social rights must go hand-in-hand with the expansion of the market, if economic efficiency as well as social justice is to be served.”

(Hewitt 1996:250-251)

However, while the division of the rights of citizenship are generally found useful in analyses of citizenship, his generalisation of three stage attainment of citizenship has had many critics. In particular it is clear that this is not an adequate description of women’s achievement of citizenship. So, as Walby points out (Walby 1997: 168) women in Britain before 1928 did not have many of the rights associated with either political or civil citizenship, and she argues that for most first world women political citizenship (specifically the right to participate in elections) is achieved before civil citizenship (e.g. the right to bodily integrity, the right to all forms of employment, the right to terminate a marriage etc.). Women citizens still lack some aspects of civil rights, such as the right to justice from male violence (Walby 1997: 175), and women’s participation in formal political process is restricted because of the obligation of the private sphere. For women of the third world, political citizenship was often achieved at the same time as men, at national independence:

“in many countries citizenship did not arrive at one moment for all people; rather, different groups gained different aspects of this in different periods. Countries vary as to whether White men, White women, men and women of minority ethnic groups, gained citizenship at the same time or not.”

(Walby 1997:171)

That Marshall’s model does not work for women is an indication that he has failed to understand that women’s relationship to the state is fundamentally different to men’s, or rather, that he has not problematised this different relationship. Women’s access to the rights of citizenship is different from men’s, and mediated by men. The social rights of citizenship (the right to unemployment benefit, pensions etc) are tied to the individual’s position in the labour market and generally to male patterns of employment. Women’s responsibilities in the private sphere make it difficult for them to participate equally with men in the public sphere, including in the labour market.
Pateman argues that as the social contract is gendered, so is citizenship, for citizenship is what is attained by men under the social contract.

"The social contract brings the public world of civil law, civil freedom and equality, contract and the individual into being"

(Pateman 1988: 11)

Citizenship is participation in the public arena that presupposes and depends on the private. In order to have access to the public - the world of official employment, political meetings etc., one must have ones reproductive needs catered for. This demonstrates that in liberal democracies people have differential access to citizenship, and this is not simply a question of gender. Along with a broad stream of other groups (disabled, elderly, children and more recently, "the poor") some feminists have sought emancipation through struggles conceptualised in terms of participatory citizenship (Doyal and Gough 1991; Morris 1992). As Lord Hylton said, quoted above on page 218 with reference to overseas domestic workers in the UK, rights are useless unless one can exercise them. So citizenship has moved from Marshall's essentially passive conception towards a participatory model - to gain access to the rights of citizenship, i.e. to exercise those rights, one must be able to participate, directly in the social, civil, and political spheres.

Women have a very particular relation to the political order however. As Pateman puts it:

"Women’s political standing rests on a major paradox; they have been excluded and included on the basis of the very same capacities and attributes"

(Pateman 1992:19)

While women are excluded from the public because of their role as reproductive workers, it is precisely this role that allows for their formal incorporation into the political order, so women are not completely excluded from citizenship, rather they have an ambiguous relationship to it through their participation in the private sphere. So the Beveridge Report of 1942 which formed the basis of the British welfare state and the rights of social citizenship recognised that
"the great majority of married women must be regarded as occupied on work which is vital though unpaid, without which their husbands could not do their paid work, and without which the nation could not continue"
(Beveridge 1942 para 107)

Women’s distinctive contribution was therefore recognised and formalised as subordinate to men’s and married women were to have access to the social rights of citizenship only mediated by their husbands. Women citizens therefore have a particular role in the political order, their rights and duties are different from those of men. This role is encapsulated in the importance attached to women citizen’s literal reproductive role. In the late 19th and early 20th century in France for example, feminists argued motherhood was a duty that should be supported by the state, and in return for which mothers should be given the rights of citizens. Notably this particular duty of citizenship is associated with “quality” of “racial” reproduction. It is the responsibility of female citizens to reproduce the “race”.

"In the next thirty years housewives as mothers have vital work to do in ensuring the adequate continuance of the British race and the British ideal in the world."
(Beveridge 1942 para 117)

For citizenship is not only gendered, it is also racialised. Who “belongs” and who is excluded from a particular nation state is a matter of “race” and ethnicity.

NATIONALITY AND RACIALISATION
Citizenship has been a particular issue in the UK because unlike for example in Germany where immigrant workers were non-nationals, “immigrants” were on the whole British subjects exercising their citizenship rights to live and work in the UK (until 1948 the UK had no citizenship legislation). The British government therefore had to redefine citizenship rights rather than immigration legislation in the first instance, in order to render some British citizens subject to immigration control. Consequently there are currently six categories of British nationality of which only one has an absolute right to enter the UK. The British citizens subject to immigration control are almost always racialised groups. Concern about the social and political
impact of “coloured” immigration led to the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 which gave preferential treatment in the form of “right of abode” to Commonwealth citizens with a UK born grandparent (previous to that all Commonwealth citizens were free to enter the UK). Although not cast in terms of “race”, what this meant was that in general Australians, New Zealanders and Canadians continued to have residence rights in the UK, while black British subjects were excluded. This replacement of *ius solum* with *ius sanguinis* culminated in the 1981 Nationality Act, which took away the automatic right of children born in the UK to UK nationality. The notion of citizenship by descent is similarly illustrated in the case of Germany.

The point is that, while it is agreed that the citizenship concept is predicated on a notion of community, the notion of community is not problematised, as Yuval-Davis puts it:

“It does not approach it as an ideological and material construction, whose boundaries, structures and norms are a result of constant struggles and negotiations, or more general social developments. Any dynamic notion of citizenship must start from the processes which construct the collectivity and not just assume it”

(Yuval-Davis 1991:59)

Nation states are not natural communities. Their historical development in some cases involved processes of assimilation of non-dominant groups, as for example in France, where the citizenship project was allied to assimilation - all citizens were French and equal, difference was reactionary. In other cases it involved processes of rejection - the development of the nation state in Spain was tied to the expulsion of the Moors and the Jews. Indeed, within Europe the historical development of particular nation states continues to have implications for the granting of citizenship today (Anderson 1997: 126-129). It is not possible to divorce how nation states developed from how they are currently constituted, and the histories of nations have a direct impact on their immigration laws. In the UK for example, its history of free movement of capital and labour within the Empire and post war interest in maintaining good relations with the Commonwealth, lead to the 1948 Nationality Act which affirmed that all colonial and Commonwealth citizens were British subjects and could hold British passports. Once in
the UK Commonwealth "immigrants" had full citizenship rights, including the right to vote. In France, the 1947 "statut organique de l'Algerie" conferred French citizenship on all Algerians and confirmed the principle of free movement between Algeria and France itself. The imperial histories of Spain and Italy are also reflected in the presence of migrants from former colonies.

Membership within the constructed community of the nation state is constantly being negotiated. Yet it is surprising how the natural community of the nation state is assumed. So Walzer (1983) in his famous Spheres of Justice can state that

"the link between people and land is a crucial feature of national identity"

(Walzer 1983 : 44)

as if it were a self-evident truth, rather than a highly controversial not to say dubious assertion. He also states that, if immigration were left to the market the communities within the state would become hostile and exclusionary and that this is true "historically", whereas the evidence is that restrictive immigration controls are the precursor of xenophobia (Harris 1995). This is a complex argument not appropriate for here, but it does illustrate that much of what Walzer considers to be self-evident is in fact highly contentious, and depends on a static and uncritical notion of community, in which nation states are discrete and autonomous - so one's moral obligation to take in refugees for example is entirely dependent on one's humanity, and not on any political and economic links with the dictator of the state that produces refugees.

It is within this racialised framework that one must understand the role of women citizens in the political order. The political duty of motherhood is racialised. Gisela Bock (1992) for example, has shown that National Socialist Germany combined the pro-natalist measures for those women who were suitable for "race regeneration" with anti-natalist policies, including enforced sterilisation for those deemed eugenically inferior.

"The state has been interested in the 'quality' and not merely the quantity of the population. If women have had the duty to give birth for the state, not all women have been seen as fit to be mothers. Middle-class white women, above all, as 'superior' genetic stock, have been seen as undermining the nation by
limiting the extent of their service, or avoiding service altogether by 'unnatural'
means. Other women have been subject to measures to prevent them from
fulfilling their duty; women from indigenous, migrant or black minority
populations in western countries have been sterilised without their consent, and
arguments surface regularly about the deleterious effects of differential birth
rates of women classified according to IQ or class.”
(Pateman 1992:25)

In Italy the Labour Minister Carl Donat Cattin called on Italians to have more babies
“to keep away armadas of immigrants from the southern shores of the Mediterranean”
(Anderson 1993: 77).

MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS AND THE CITIZENSHIP DEBATE
The relevance of migrant domestic workers to this debate is clear. For, particularly in
their role as welfare providers, as carers for the elderly and young children, they are
directly facilitating some members of the marginalised collectivity of women to exercise
their citizenship rights. Thanks to the hidden labour of migrant domestic workers some
middle class women gain access to the public sphere. They are able to participate like
men in the labour market - not forfeiting pension rights, national insurance etc (i.e.
social rights) because of “withdrawal” to the private. Migrant domestic workers
therefore enable some middle class women citizens to participate in the labour force as
men’s equals, because they are liberated from the home. The fact that they are migrants
is important: in order to participate like men women must have workers who will
provide the same flexibility as “wives” in particular working long hours and combining
caring and domestic chores. For it is the woman’s responsibility otherwise to cover
when a child is sick to do the housework etc. As seen in Chapter Eight migrants are far
more flexible than citizens. Through their labour women citizens have “male” access to
the public sphere, but they continue to fulfil female citizens’ role of motherhood.
Migrant domestic workers enable women citizens to fulfil the political duty of
motherhood at the same time as participating in the labour market. Notably
motherhood as a political duty, the birthing and upbringing of citizens, does not
necessarily include motherhood as work. While a woman with good European genes
must pass these on to the next generation, and should be involved in the moral and
social upbringing of the child, this has been de-coupled from the labour of care, as explained in Chapter Seven. In the light of this Signor Cattin’s remarks seem rather ironic - it is precisely the immigrant armadas that are facilitating the reproduction of the Italian “race”: in 1991 a special decree was passed in Italy allowing for the hiring of foreign domestic workers on a temporary basis and in 1993 the majority of the 20,000 non-EU citizens granted an employment permit were domestic workers (Groenendijk and Hampsink 1994: 51), while in February 1997 Italy’s General Accountant declared that over the next fifty years Italy would need at least 50,000 immigrants per year to balance the social security budget and support the economy in the face of a stagnant birth rate and an increasingly ageing population (Migration News Sheet March 1997:5). As has already been noted migrant women facilitate this reproduction of citizens but are directly prevented from becoming mothers themselves. This is not just because of the nature of their work, it is also because of their immigration status and access to citizenship. Undocumented workers have no possibility for family reunification under European immigration regimes, and even for those who are documented it is extremely difficult for children to enter. Women migrants’ access to possibilities of their own reproduction are directly influenced by the state. So while female citizens reproductive role is driven by political duty and there is at least lip service paid to the importance of women’s reproductive role when performed by citizens, when it is the provenance of non-citizens, this reproductive responsibility simply disappears.

This brings a new dimension to the notion of the reproduction of status. Migrant domestic workers are enabling female citizens to participate in the public, thereby taking full advantage of the rights attached to their citizenship status, but they themselves are often formally denied citizenship rights. Immigrants are popularly presented as a threat to a way of life - and this may be uncritically repeated by political theorists:

“The distinctiveness of cultures and groups depends upon closure and, without it, cannot be conceived as a stable feature of human life. If this distinctiveness is a value…then closure must be permitted somewhere. At some level or political organisation, something like the sovereign state must take shape and claim the
authority to make its own admissions policy, to control and sometimes restrain
the flow of immigrants.”
(Walzer 1983: 39)

But migrant domestic workers are engaged in the support and reproduction of the
European way of life, not least its families. Migrants are presented as a drain on the
welfare state, again supported uncritically by some political theorists:

“wealth and resources... too, can be superfluous... Are those inhabitants morally
bound to admit immigrants from poorer countries for as long as superfluous
resources exist?.. Once again there must be some limit, short (and probably
considerably short) of simple equality, else communal wealth would be subject
to indefinite drainage.”
(Walzer 1983:47-48)

The case of migrant domestic workers demonstrates that this is by no means one way
traffic. Not only do migrant domestic workers, documented and undocumented,
contribute to rather than drain the state (see Chapter Nine), they are also providing the
welfare that is the social right of citizens, but to which many of the workers have no
right, however necessitous. By providing welfare, one of the crucial social rights of the
citizen, they are helping to give meaning to the notion of citizenship status while
themselves being denied any of its rights.

Contemporary debates around citizenship in the UK are increasingly framed in terms of
duties and obligations rather than universal rights (Lister 1990) and in particular the
citizen’s obligation to work at whatever is available. That this political obligation
overrides the political duty of motherhood is clear in the current Labour government’s
attitude to single mothers who must be given the “opportunity” to take up paid
employment. But what the position of migrants in Europe demonstrates is that, while
citizens’ rights are increasingly cast by the state in terms of fulfilling obligations to be
available for work, work itself is not enough to gain access to citizenship. It does not
matter how many years a “Turk” has worked in Germany or Greece, this is not a
sufficient criterion for membership. While citizens have an obligation to work - and
may be denied social rights if they are regarded as not fulfilling this obligation, non-
citizens who work are not thereby proving their suitability for citizenship, but are
"stealing" jobs. Neither is motherhood a sufficient criterion for membership. So in the
UK for example, being the mother of a citizen is not a guarantee against deportation let
alone a reason for granting citizenship. In France the mother of a citizen does in
consequence have some rights, including, in general, not to be separated from her child
by deportation, but she does not have a right to citizenship.

This emphasises a broader question in the debate around citizenship: there is a danger
that in focusing all attention on the legitimate point of the importance of participation
and access to rights, that one becomes taken in by the rhetoric of citizenship. Because
it seems that citizens have certain basic, fundamental and inalienable rights and duties,
citizenship is represented in some discussions as an inclusive principle, which appears
to cut through material inequalities and to offer some way forward. This is particularly
true with references to discussions around care - so Bubeck for example suggests that
caring should be a citizens’ obligation:

"one might conceive of care as part of a citizen’s obligation to contribute her
share to one of the most, if not the most important function any self-governing
society has, namely to ensure the well-being of its members. Citizenship would
be redefined to comprise care as much as, or even more importantly than,
defence, as every citizen’s obligation”
(Bubeck 1995: 260)

Yet this is precisely the labour that is increasingly being carried out by non-citizens.
While it is important to look at new ways of social organising and of arranging access
to rights and participation, there are dangers in casting it within the framework of
citizenship. In emphasising that citizenship is allegedly universal, while in practice many
groups cannot avail themselves of the rights of citizenship one risks forgetting that as
long as citizenship is tied to the notion of belonging to a particular nation state and as
long as some states are richer and more powerful than others, citizenship will be
formally exclusive. As Walzer puts it:

"Since human beings are highly mobile, large numbers of men and women
regularly attempt to change their residence and their membership, moving from
unfavored to favored environments. Affluent and free countries are, like elite
universities, besieged by applicants. They have to decide on their own size and character”.
(Walzer 1983:32)

EMPLOYERS AND CITIZENSHIP
In this respect the UK exemplifies an interesting aspect of the intersection of citizenship, racism and domestic work. In my discussion of the situation of migrant domestic workers in other EU countries it has been assumed that the employers are predominantly citizens - as indeed they are. Much of the employers’ power derives from their citizenship and the domestic workers’ dependence as an immigrant - their power to report and deport, to not renew work permits, to call the police if there’s a dispute. The fact that employers are citizens and the workers are not citizens formalises their unequal power relations - even outside of the employment relationship, workers and their employers are not equal before the law. This facilitates the persistence of the master/mistress-servant roles. In the UK also the majority of employers of migrant domestic workers known to me are UK citizens, since the pattern is for workers to leave the employers that they entered the UK with, and to “go underground” working for other employers, predominantly UK citizens, illegally. However, in the UK original employers are often not citizens but wealthy visitors or businessmen, bringing with them their domestic workers. In fact this is also true, though less common in other EU states (mention was made of it in Spain, Germany and in Greece). Both employer and worker are non-citizens, but they are not equal before the law, since the worker is still dependent for her immigration status on the non-citizen employer. If the worker brings a case against her employers for abuse they too may be deported, but this sanction does not help the worker. So for example, when Helen Samuels, a Nigerian woman was maltreated and exploited by her Nigerian employers she was successful in her case and won damages. However, she herself was deported, while her employers, were imprisoned for two years, to be deported having served their sentence. But deportation is used extremely selectively against employers. Laxmi Swami, born in India, came to Britain via Kuwait under the Home Office Concession as the servant to two half-sisters of the Emir. The princesses regularly spent six months of the year in central London taking their workers with them. They subjected these women to extreme cruelty, both
physical and mental: beatings whether with a broomstick, a knotted electric flex or a horsewhip, were routine; Mrs Swami’s eyes were damaged when they threw a bunch of keys at her face; they yanked out two gold teeth. She slept rarely for more than two hours a night on the floor outside the locked kitchen. She was regularly denied food for days at a time. On one occasion she managed to escape and hailed a taxi to take her to the Indian High Commission. The officials there sent her back to the princesses because she could not afford the airfare home. Mrs Swami did eventually manage to escape and gain some support to take her former employers to court. They were ordered to pay damages, but Mrs Swami was deported, the princesses were permitted to remain.

Wealth and political influence as well as citizenship, must be taken into account. When defending the concession in 1990 Lord Reay, speaking for the government said:

“Looking at our national interest, if wealthy investors, skilled workers and others with the potential to benefit our economy were unable to be accompanied by their domestic staff they might not come here at all but take their money and skills to other countries only too keen to welcome them.”

(Hansard col. 1052, 28th November 1990, House of Lords Debate on Overseas Domestic Workers.)

This continues to be an issue. In the 1998 negotiations between Kalayaan and the Home Office the government put forward Foreign Office concerns that wealthy people entering the UK should not have to leave their domestic workers behind because that would discourage them and their money from coming to the UK. So it is not just citizenship but wealth that gives the employer control over their worker.

The fact that these employers are not citizens has ensured the campaign for domestic workers to be given an independent immigration status has had a surprising breadth of support, partly because the employers whom they accompany often belong to racialised groups from the Middle East. Employers were commonly portrayed both in the media and by parliamentarians as “importing” slavery. Maltreatment and abuse of workers was presented as a consequence of allowing people with no understanding of what constituted civilised behaviour to bring in their domestic servants. There was a need to teach people that what was acceptable in “their” countries was not suitable behaviour in the UK. This intersected with racist stereotypes of misogynistic, cruel Middle
Eastern men, and victimised (pretty) Filipinas - the two groups most commonly portrayed. There has been no public interest in the fact that, having been forced into illegality by non-citizens, domestic workers are then exploited by British employers. Margaret Healy interviewed ten women before and after their change of employer. She found that two months after the first interview, six had left their British employers.

Problems included:

"the negotiated salary was not adhered to. Likewise with the hours of work. For example when asked to change a day off or to do overtime, if the worker said she had an appointment with the doctor, the employer would say, 'well I can always call the Home Office'.... The treatment of the employers ranged from shouting at them, insults to their person, passing derogatory comments; constant complaints. One woman said she was treated 'as if I'm nothing'. One of the six had to sleep on the living-room floor and wasn't given any place to put her personal belongings. She had to keep everything in her bag. One of the women experienced overt racism by the employer making personal derogatory remarks about her, not allowing her to sit on the settee n the sitting room.... Another of the women complained that he male employer was constantly sexually harassing her by making suggestive comments and even offering her money for sexual favours."

(Healy 1994: 29)

CONCLUSIONS

When rights are cast in terms of access to citizenship rights, the implication is that if a person is not a citizen, it is legitimate to deny her certain rights, even if those rights would be considered basic human rights by citizens. So while citizenship rights guarantee that citizens’ basic human needs are met, these rights do not derive from humanity but from membership of the community. As well as a guarantee of rights then, citizenship therefore becomes a device by which demands on the state are controlled and is perceived as legitimately being such. Historically class inequalities may have been ameliorated through citizenship, but at the expense of other non-citizens. So the access to social rights that much of Marshall is concerned with, was facilitated by the post World War 2 development of the welfare state. However, this
development was largely financed by the exploitation of Britain's colony Malaya (T. Kaplan 1990). The labour for the tin and rubber that earned the British state so many dollars was predominantly migrant and first generation Chinese and Indian. The majority of the members of these groups were deprived of their entitlement to citizenship by the Constitution of 1948.

While citizenship is tied to notion of the nation state, these states are bound to each other in particular economic and political relationships which have direct implications for citizens' rights or lack of them. So while the question has been posed of how to apply the universal principle implied in concepts of citizenship, when different people have such different access to resources in different societies (Jones 1990) what remains unexplored is how the rights of citizenship in one state can be gained precisely because these are denied in another. The case of migrant domestic workers might be said to describe this process within a single state, and how this process is eased by what is perceived as the legitimate denial of rights based on ascription of nationality. For a potential conflict between the rights of two groups of citizens (men and middle class women) to participate in the public sphere is resolved without requiring restructuring of the public and private, by using the labour of non-citizens.
The living and working conditions of migrant domestic workers are in a large part determined by the intersection of the relations workers have with their employers and the relations they have to the state. Citizenship and immigration status are crucial factors in this. In Europe the power of the state is often used to enforce the worker’s dependence on their employer and to institutionalise master/mistress-servant relations, so the worker may be subject to their employer twenty four hours a day. Citizenship and immigration are areas where there are at least possibilities of organising for change, they offer specific improvements and unifying organising principles. As someone engaged in a minor way in supporting such struggles I know that they are not easy, but the winning of them and the struggle itself offers material gains. I would also put forward for consideration to the workers and the activists, that live-in domestic work, for all the benefits it apparently offers the worker, binds her into a relation of status and dependence mediated by racism. How to organise for rights, justice and equality within that relation - if it is possible at all - needs some serious thought.

Immigration status is not the only reason that migrant women are in domestic work, and it is not the only factor in their abuse and exploitation. The treatment of migrant domestic workers and the “demand” for them in the first place is symptomatic of fundamental contradictions and tensions with capitalism which is both racist and patriarchal. The public/private divide, desperate poverty and ostentatious wealth, underpinned by a history of ferocious imperialism and plunder: herein lie the roots of the problems confronted by women who work as migrant domestic workers. I began this thesis by noting that domestic work in private households is, together with prostitution, the most significant employer of newly arrived female migrants. The expansion and racialisation of prostitution, paid domestic work, and the “mail order bride” phenomenon are a function of the expansion of global capitalism. This is disheartening and encouraging: disheartening because the forces to be confronted are so powerful, and
encouraging because it offers the possibilities for alliances with other groups, fighting the same enemy on different grounds.

The theoretical challenges posed by migrant domestic workers demand that we re-centre reproductive work, and examine critically how and what we are reproducing, not just to make the personal political, but to make the political personal. There is a need for empirically based theory to help promote such alliances, to understand what binds some women together and drives others apart. Such theory must be located in the real, lived experiences of workers. I hope I have demonstrated that workers and employers have a sense, a social consciousness, of the contradictions they are attempting to manage. Unlike the workers I have had the opportunity to listen to people from many migrant communities talking about domestic work in different European cities; I have had the opportunity and access to read about domestic work and paid domestic work throughout the world; I have had time to think and colleagues to talk to. It is these opportunities that help me to hope I have something to offer, food for organisational thought. It is largely an unpacking of what workers and their employers have told me, for it is grounded in their experience. As Josee said:

"We, the third world, don't diminish them, rather it is they who diminish us."
APPENDIX 1

TALKING POINTS (am)

Underneath each topic I have put some ideas to help your discussion. Do not feel you have to use them.

1. Introductions: first name and where from.

2. How did you come to be in Greece/Spain/France/Italy/Germany
   - why leave home
   - agencies and recruitment
   - why come to this country (why not USA, Asia, etc.)
   - why do migrant women become domestics

3. What kind of work do you have to do? How do you feel about the work that you do?
   - cleaning
   - childcare
   - caring for elderly
   - caring for pets
   - other responsibilities

4. Do you think that you are paid enough for the work you do?
   - do you work reasonable hours
   - are you paid overtime
   - do you have days off

5. How do your employers treat you?
   - how do your employers' children/friends/relatives treat you?

TALKING POINTS (pm)

1. What is the cost of living and what are your major expenses?
   - housing
   - food
   - having fun
   - money back home
   - health
   - education/childcare
   - other

2. If you had one wish to make your life better, what would it be?

3. Do you think there are many people in similar situations to yourselves?
APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Are you
   woman
   man

2. What country were you born in?

3. How old are you?

4. How old were you when you left education?

5. What work did you do before coming to (name of EU state)?

6. What kinds of work, other than domestic work, have you done in (name of EU state)?

7. Did you come to (name of state) to work as a domestic worker for a named employer?
   Yes
   no

8. Are you
   single
   separated/divorced
   married, husband/wife in (name of state)
   married, husband/wife overseas migrant
   married, husband/wife in country of origin
   widowed.

9. Do you
   have no children
   have children in (name of state)
   have children in country of origin
   have some children in country of origin and some in (name of state)
10. If you have children, who looks after them?

11. How many employers do you have currently?

12. How many of your employers are single men?

13. How many of your female employers work? (give details of full time or part time)

14. How many of your employers are retired?

15. What is the longest period you have spent with one employer?

16. Do you have a contract with your employers
   always
   usually
   sometimes
   never

17. If you have a contract, is it followed
   always
   usually
   sometimes
   never

18. How many hours do you work a week?

19. How much are you paid per week?
   Total
   maximum per hour
   minimum per hour

20. Any other comments you would like to make.
APPENDIX 3
EMPLOYERS' INTERVIEW

1. When and why did you start employing a domestic worker?
   Did it coincide with a particular state in life e.g. having a child, full-time employment, sickness etc.

2. Could you give a brief description of the work your employee does?
   are there any jobs you ask her to do on an occasional basis

3. How many hours does she work for you, and how much do you pay her?
   (if appropriate)
   Do you take advantage of the tax concession
   would you employ her if it were not for the tax concession

4. How do you find having a stranger in your house

5. When and why did you first employ a foreigner?
   Are French domestic workers available? If not, why not?

6. What are the advantages of hiring a foreigner?

7. What are the disadvantages of hiring a foreigner?

8. What nationalities have you employed?

9. How long has your current worker been in (name of state)? Why did she come here?

10. How do you find new workers?
    Are there informal employment networks operating
    what do you think of commercial agencies

11. Which domestic worker have you been happiest with and why?
    what qualities do you look for in a worker

12. Which domestic worker has been most problematic and why?
    What constitutes unacceptable behaviour

13. Do you like to have a personal as well as an employment relationship with your domestic worker?
APPENDIX 4

AGENCY INTERVIEWS

1. Name of agency
2. Name of contact and position
3. Address and telephone
4. Date and type of interview (telephone or face-to-face)
5. What nationalities are presenting themselves for employment as domestic workers?
6. Are there particular nationalities in demand?
7. Are there particular nationalities difficult to place? Why?
8. What changes have been observed in the above trends over the last five years?
9. What characteristics (other than nationality) make a worker easy to place?
10. What is the proportion of employer demand for live-in vs live-out?
11. What is the proportion of worker supply for live-in vs live-out?
12. How much can domestic workers expect to be paid? Does this depend on factors such as nationality, age, legal status etc.?
13. What is the profile of the typical employer?
14. How does the agency operate? (Recruitment, fees, contracts, guarantees etc)
15. Other information.
APPENDIX 5

Article 25 — CLASSIFICATION (avenant n°10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Niveau</th>
<th>Critères</th>
<th>Emplois polyvalents tâches ménagères et familiales</th>
<th>PECF(*)</th>
<th>Emplois spécifiques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Débutant</td>
<td>• Moins de six mois dans la profession</td>
<td>• Employé de maison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niveau 1</td>
<td>• Exécutant</td>
<td>• Employé de maison</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Repasseuse familiale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niveau 2</td>
<td>• Compétences acquises dans profession et capacités d'initiatives</td>
<td>• Employé de maison qualifié</td>
<td>• Assistant(e) de vie I</td>
<td>• Homme et femme toutes mains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sens des responsabilités</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dame de compagnie</td>
<td>• Soutien scolaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Employeur présent ou non</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Garde d'enfants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Diplôme reconnu par la branche professionnelle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niveau 3</td>
<td>• Responsabilité</td>
<td>• Assistant(e) de vie II</td>
<td>• Cuisinier qualifié</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Autonomie</td>
<td>• Garde-malade de jour à l'exclusion de soins</td>
<td>• Femme de chambre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Valet de chambre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Lingère</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Repasseuse qualifiée</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Secrétaire particulier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niveau 4</td>
<td>• Responsabilité entière</td>
<td>• Employé de maison très qualifié avec responsabilité de l'ensemble des travaux ménagers et familiaux</td>
<td>• Garde-malade de nuit à l'exclusion de soins</td>
<td>• Maitre d'hôtel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Autonomie totale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chauffeur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chef cuisinier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niveau 5</td>
<td>• Haute ment spécialisé</td>
<td>• Nurse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Gouvernante d'enfant(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* POSTES D'EMPLOI A CARACTERE FAMILIAL (PECF)

Définition générale : Les salariés occupant un poste d'emploi à caractère familial (PECF) ont pour mission de veiller au confort physique et moral d'adultes et d'enfants. Ils assurent dans le cadre de l'horaire défini une présence responsable ainsi que le travail effectif afférent à la fonction particulière. Les heures de pré...
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Asian Migrant Centre (1994) Nowhere to Turn to: A case study on Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong, Hong Kong: Asian Migrants Centre.


Bakan, A and Stasiulis, D (1995) 'Making the Match: Domestic placement agencies and the racialization of women's household work', Signs Winter 1995: 303-


Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Spanish Galician Peasant Woman. Cambridge.
The example of Self-Employment and of Domestic Work’ for International
--- (1995b) ‘Women migrants: from marginal subjects to social actors’ in Robin
University Press.
Non military aspects of Security in Southern Europe: Migration, employment
and labour market, conference of Institute of International Economic Relations
and Regional Network on Southern European Societies, 19-21 September 1997, Santorini, Greece.
Caspari, Andreas and Giles W (1986) ‘Immigration and the Employment of
Portuguese Migrant Women in UK and France: a comparative analysis’ in C.
Brettell and R. Simon (eds) International Migration: the Female Experience.
Castro, Mary Garcia (1984) ‘What is Bought and Sold in Domestic Service? The
case of Bogotá: a critical review’. Elsa Chaney and Mary Castro (eds)
Muchachas no More: Household workers in Latin America and the
Caribbean.
Chabaud D and Fougeyrollas D. ‘A propos de l’autonomie relative de la production
et de la reproduction’ in Le Sexe du Travail. Grenoble: Presses Universitaires
de Grenoble.

Clark-Lewis, Elizabeth (1985) ‘This work had an end: the transition from live-in to day work’ Southern Women: the Intersection of Race, Class and Gender Series Working Paper no. 2 Center for Research on Women, Memphis: Memphis State University.


Colen and Sanjek,(1990b) ‘At Work in Homes 1: Orientation’ in Colen and Sanjek (eds) op.cit.


the Feminist Movement' in Chaney and Castro (eds) Muchachas no More.


*European Race Audit*, London: Institute of Race Relations.


Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, (1996) *Labour Market Studies: Italy*, Luxembourg:


Gálvez, Thelma and Rosalba Todaro ‘Housework for Pay in Chile: not just another job’ in Chaney and Castro (eds) Muchachas no More.


Gerstein I (1973) ‘Domestic work and capitalism’, Radical America 7(4-5).


Grosvenor, Verta Mae (1972) Thursdays and Every Other Sunday Off: A Domestic Rap by Verta Mae, New York: Doubleday.


ILO Interdepartmental Project on Migrant Workers Equality and Human Rights.
Katzman, David (1978) Seven days a week: Women and Domestic Service in Industrialising America, New York: OUP.
Keckley, Elizabeth 1868. Behind the Scenes. Or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four


Quimpo, D. (1994) "‘We serve, we exist, we merit respect’: a history of the Filipino Community in France’, Paris: Kayumanggi Network.


Romero, Mary (1988b) ‘Sisterhood and domestic service: Race, Class and Gender in


--- (1987) Essays on women's work and leisure and 'hidden' work, Manchester: Sociology Department, University of Manchester.


Vogel 1 (1973) 'The earthly family', Radical America, July-Oct.