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Greek immigrants in the fur manufacturing industry in New York City, 1887 to 1943: Class and ethnicity at the workplace

Karvonides Nkosi, Joanna Electra, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1991

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A

"GREEK IMMIGRANTS IN THE FUR MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY IN NEW YORK CITY, 1887 TO 1943: CLASS AND ETHNICITY AT THE WORKPLACE"

by

Joanna Karvonides Nkosi

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1991

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1991

JOANNA KARVONIDES NKOSI

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

April 30, 1991
Date

Chair of Examining Committee

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The City University of New York

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Abstract

Class and Ethnicity at the Workplace:
Greek Immigrants in the Fur Manufacturing Industry
in New York City, 1887 to 1943

by

Joanna Karvonides Nkosi

This dissertation has examined Greek immigrant penetration of and concentration in both the ownership and the labor force of the fur manufacturing industry during the first half of this century. It has focused on: [1] the geographic and socio-economic backgrounds of Greek American immigrant furriers; [2] the economic factors which made fur manufacturing a business and employment opportunity for Greek immigrants; [3] how "cultural baggage," kinship networks and bonds, and the availability of coethnic labor facilitated business opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs; [4] the role of ethnicity in shaping the relationships between coethnic employers and workers; and [5] how ethnicity shaped class solidarity among the workers.

The study found that the highly competitive economic structure of fur manufacturing facilitated immigrant enterprise in the business. The first Greeks in the industry had emigrated from Kastoria, already skilled in

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certain aspects of furriery. They had been able to penetrate the industry as a tightly knit group with strong communal bonds and networks and with the requisite technical skills and business experience needed to carve a niche for themselves. Their coethnic community provided a pool of cheap labor through which to survive the industry's extremely competitive conditions.

So long as the workers shared their employers' regional origins and could aspire to become businessmen, tensions between them could be resolved informally within the bounds of the community. Following the expansion of fur manufacturing during and after the First World War, the composition of the labor force in Greek-owned businesses broadened to include women and coethnics from diverse regional backgrounds whose conditions of employment and prospects for the future had changed. The ethnic community was no longer able to mediate tensions. Class considerations surfaced and the workers were open to collective action against employers in concert with other workers who shared the problems they faced at the workplace. Ethnic sentiment and allegiance also influenced the process of class unity among Greek fur workers. But ethnicity did not supplant class solidarity. Instead it became a medium through which ethnic workers could be effectively organized into a working class organization.

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Grants from the Society of Colonial Dames in New York City and from the Hellenic University Club and a sabbatical leave from the Department of Special Programs at the City College made research in New York and Europe possible. The Wertheim Study and the New York Public Library became a second home as I struggled to collect material on fur manufacturing, on Ottoman Greeks, and on fur workers and their bosses.

My children, Mandla and Thenji Nkosi, have grown up with their mother's dissertation. Oddly enough, Mandla even thinks he might become a historian despite my prolonged preoccupation with preparing this work. They both have provided me with pleasant diversion and joy as I researched and wrote about the furriers.

While many offered ideas and information, the shortcomings in this work are not theirs, but mine.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Interpreting the Immigrant Experience

With relatively few exceptions, before 1965, the immigration to the United States of people from areas other than north western Europe which began in the 1880s, the so-called 'new immigration,' was presented by writers as a dislocating, alienating and disorganizing experience which resulted in anomie and social disorientation in the host country. A good deal of the literature[1] was produced by sociologists who had little understanding either of the immigrants' backgrounds or of the social forces which had shaped them in the old world and which had pushed them to emigrate from their countries to centers of capitalist expansion. Some social observers believed that these immigrants were unsuitable for membership in American society and their entry should be either strictly regulated or prevented. Others acknowledged that the foreign born had a role to play in American society, but believed that they had to be carefully assimilated. Without a doubt, these writers had little understanding of how people confronted change in their lives or that they even managed this change.

The immigrants of the period after 1880 were assumed to

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be an undifferentiated mass of peasants who came from uniformly closed and disintegrating agricultural economies and traditional and unchanging cultures. While distinctions were drawn among the cultures of people from different countries, each nationality group was presented as a homogeneous ethnic and class bloc. In this view, the immigrants emerged as an agrarian people arriving in the United States with no modes of behavior applicable to life in an industrial society.

One voice which stood out during those years advocating a closer examination of the diverse premigration backgrounds of the immigrants was that of historian Marcus Lee Hansen. In a classic article published in the American Historical Review in 1926-1927,[2] Hansen made it very clear that to understand the immigrants' experiences in the United States, the historian had to know what kind of world they had left behind. He systematically outlined the kinds of topics which researchers had to explore. Yet, for the next forty years, his guidelines were mostly ignored.

A major work of synthesis appeared in 1951 which ignored Hansen's approach and concerns. Instead it adopted the notion that social disorganization had been the norm for immigrants. In The Uprooted,[3] historian Oscar Handlin portrayed emigration as a traumatic uprooting which tore the migrants away from all that was familiar and that gave their lives cohesiveness. The process of leaving and moving left them ready to be passively remolded by the powerful and

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impersonal forces of modern America into industrial, deracinated men and women. Once in the United States, their peasant cultures quickly disintegrated under the impact of conditions of life in the urban environment. While a few symbols of the old ways of life survived, the immigrants were forced to adopt entirely new ways of conducting their personal and community affairs. In 1964, Rudolph Vecoli initiated the effort to redefine such long accepted and problematic interpretations of immigration. In his well-known critique of The Uprooted, he challenged Handlin's "overarching interpretation of European peasant society and of the adjustment of emigrants from that society to the American environment."[4] Vecoli carefully compared the peasants of The Uprooted to the contadini who had come to Chicago from the Mezzogiorno of southern Italy. He found that the contadini in no way resembled Handlin's 'ideal type,' uprooted people, neither as Europeans nor as foreign born Americans and that continuity rather than change characterized their lives in America.

Vecoli's article set the stage for a reconsideration of Handlin's theoretical formulation.[5] Perhaps the most important contribution to the development of immigration history has been made by Herbert Gutman.[6] Gutman was certainly not a specialist in this field. In fact, he shunned the compartmentalization of history which such a label would have assumed.[7] But his focus on the history of 'America's working people,'[8] as broad a concept as that is,

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encompassed immigrants, migrants, free and enslaved workers, men, women, artisans and other dependent people. Gutman began to question not only the methodological errors Handlin had made in the Uprooted, but to challenge the 'ideal type' of immigrant that he had created in the book. Gutman encouraged his students to reevaluate the experiences of ethnic groups in the light, not only of Vecoli's methodological approach, but by reassessing the social model of "breakdown" which lay behind Handlin's work.

Gutman argued that, not only immigrants but all other working people were far from being 'passive recipients of their fates.'[9]

Instead they were active agents in shaping their lives on plantations and in the urban industrial society of the cities. He wrote that "an inadequate 'breakdown' model has prevented us from understanding the diverse ways in which migrant and immigrant groups-new and old immigrants, blacks and whites-have dealt with the problems imposed upon them in new and strange settings..."[10] He understood full well that working people were not entirely 'free' agents in determining their destinies since they lived in or migrated to societies which placed constraints and limitations on the exercise of will and since they also embodied the past in their being. He called for an approach to history which looks at " 'not what 'one' has done to man, but what man does with what 'one' has done to him'... [and which] redefines the important questions we should ask in studying

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the history of dependent American social classes... What such men and women experienced (that is, what "one" has done to them) retains interest, but how they interpreted and then dealt with changing patterns of economic, social, and political dependence and inequality becomes our major concern. Studying the choices working men and women made and how their behavior affected important historical processes enlarges our understanding of 'the condition of being human.'"[11]

Gutman's insightful article on "Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America, 1915-1919," published in 1973, changed the way researchers would study immigrants. Gutman contended that since the second quarter of the nineteenth century, mass migration into the United States must be seen as the repeated infusion into a developing industrial economy of men and women fresh to the factory and machine production. Such workers "brought ... ways of work and other habits and values not associated with industrial necessities and the industrial ethos..." Yet, he emphasized that while this transformation was accompanied by tensions and strains, it did not cause what had been termed 'cultural breakdown' and 'social anomie.' Instead, "tough familial and kin ties made possible the transmission and adaptation of European working class cultural patterns and beliefs to industrializing America..."[12]

During the twenty to twenty-five years since Vecoli and Gutman began the process of revision, an enormous literature

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has emerged on immigrant and ethnic history , of course, as part of the social history of the country. In the past decade, at least two works of synthesis have appeared: Alan K. Kraut's The Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880-1921 (Arlington Heights, Ill., 1982) and John Bodnar's The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America (Bloomington, 1985; 1987). These books, written from differing perspectives, draw on this vast literature to survey the complexity of the immigrant experience. They provide useful surveys of and guides to the major works in their text, notes, list of sources, and in a bibliographic essay at the end of Kraut's book.

While there is no consensus in the literature concerning the degree to which the premigration cultures were preserved and in what ways they changed or on the nature of the relationship between cultural forms and social and economic structures, all concur that to understand how and why various ethnic groups have behaved as they have and to interpret their experiences in the new society requires first, knowledge of the old world and second, an acceptance of the idea of agency on the part of those ethnic groups. From the new generation of immigrant and social historians, we have learned that immigrants were active participants in the processes shaping their lives in the new society. More specifically, we have learned from that immigrants made choices within the parameters set by the new society and that by their presence and their actions helped to define

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the parameters for social interaction along with the 'native born.' The new society was not always so new and alienating as some, like Handlin, would have had us think. Some immigrants had had contact with capitalist institutions and social organization in their own countries or in other countries they had visited prior to emigrating to the United States. It is also evident that once they were in the United States, they set about building new lives, drawing on the support and solidarity provided by their family, relatives, friends and and coethnics. Those who could not, or would not, returned home or perished.

What they built depended partially on where they had come from, who they had been there, what they had done or known there, why they had left, on what they expected from their emigration and, very importantly, on what they encountered in the host society. Some came with the intention of staying temporarily, with short-term objectives, just to accumulate some capital with which to return or to send money home; others to avoid military service; to earn money to pay off debt on mortgaged land or to buy land; etc. Of these, some would return home or make the journey repeatedly as seasonal workers or even settle permanently in the land they had only intended work in temporarily. Others came with the intention of staying from the outset. They either came alone initially to be followed by relatives within a year or two or they came as families in the first place, having made the crucial decision to move

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to a different country for good, hoping they would find better opportunities for themselves and their children there. As they lived and worked in the new society, they were confronted by an increasingly urbanized, industrialized, capitalist society which increasingly shifted and delimited the choices available to people. But, the fact is that they adapted, though in many different ways.[13]

Problem Being Studied

One of the areas of the immigrant experience which has received limited attention from historians is ethnic enterprise. Various histories of ethnic groups have reported the participation in business of Chinese, Greeks, Japanese, Jews, Lebanese, and other highly entrepreneurial groups.[14] Others have focused on the role of immigrant entrepreneurs as members of the ethnic middle class within their larger communities and their relationship to its working class members in general. Some have shown that those businessmen whose establishments were located within the ethnic community often performed critical services for their less educated and mobile coethnics.[15]

The attention historians have given to how immigrants got into business and why they chose the ones they did has focused on old world cultural and economic baggage. Stress has rightly been placed on the importance of coethnic mutual assistance, familial and kinship cooperation, and the

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raising of capital and the recruitment of inexpensive labor within kinship groups and ethnic communities. Premigration business experience has been said to have "...facilitated the transition to such ventures in industrial America. The greater the premigration experience the more likely the newcomer would engage in entrepreneurial activity in this country..."[16]

But, three critical issues have received only superficial treatment from historians. No examination has been made of the economic environment of the businesses immigrants entered.[17] Very importantly, scant attention has been paid to the significance of the availability of a pool of coethnic workers, relatives as well as of other members of the same immigrant group, to the success of ethnic business. At most historians have acknowledged that the ethnic community offered ethnic employers a readily accessible source of cheap labor and that their workforce was often drawn from the family. Equally neglected has been the question of the relationships which developed between ethnic entrepreneurs and their coethnic labor force.[18]

Over the last two decades, several sociologists have again turned their sights to the topic of ethnic entrepreneurship as large numbers of people from Asia, the Caribbean, Europe and Latin America have entered the United States following the Amendment of the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965.[19] They were initially puzzled by the swiftness and adeptness with which some Latinos, East

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Indians, Chinese, Koreans, West Indians, Greeks and others had ensconced themselves as business people in garment manufacturing, food services, newsstands, laundry services and so forth. Essentially, they have attempted to explain the prevalence of certain immigrant groups in some areas of small business. Some studies have attempted to draw contrasts, as their authors have perceived them, between these immigrants and African Americans.[20]

Various models have been developed to analyze and explain both the business successes and failures of these groups. Emphasis has been placed on one or a combination of social, cultural and, less commonly, economic factors to explain how immigrants get into business and why they succeed. Increasingly, these researchers have turned to the history of the older group of 'new immigrants' to confirm processes and patterns they see in the experiences of the current 'new immigrants. Roger Waldinger, who has written on ethnic business in the garment industry, has termed two of three major theories: (1) 'the middleman-minority theory' and (2) 'the entrepreneurial-values and collective-resources perspective.' The third theory is Waldinger's, what can be called 'the conducive economic environment theory.'[21]

Briefly, 'the middleman-minority theory' has most often been used to explain the status and role of certain business-oriented and socially separated ethnic or religious minority groups in what are termed 'precapitalist' or

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traditional societies. Members of the 'middleman group' possessed certain unique traits which were used to concentrate the group in a narrow range of economic specialization, in particular in trade, petty finance and money handling rather than in production. Typically, middlemen held positions others in the society disdained and therefore were socially separated from both the dominant elites and the masses, encountering hostility from the surrounding society. This encouraged the development of a subculture characterized by an intense ethnic solidarity which reinforced the group's concentration in their economic specialization in the host society. The groups usually cited for such analysis are Jews, Chinese, Lebanese, Greeks, and Japanese. It has been suggested that this theory can be used to explain immigrant ethnic enterprise in the United States despite the advanced capitalist character of the economy.[22]

The 'entrepreneurial-values approach' essentially looks at an immigrant group's culture to find pre-existing values appropriate to entry and success in business within a capitalist society.[23] As Roger Waldinger has noted in his succinct review of these theories, "the starting point for this argument is Max Weber's ... The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. ... Somewhat modified, [Weber's] line of thinking can be extended to explain immigrants' success in business; to wit, that immigrants advance through business because their culture favors those attributes

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needed for entrepreneurial success -- discipline, hard work, risk taking, and so on."[24] This approach also emphasizes the importance which immigrant entrepreneurs place on their independence and their preference to work for themselves.

A variation on this view, what Waldinger calls the 'collective-resources approach,' has looked for the existence among immigrant groups, prior to emigration, not only of the requisite values for success in business enterprise, but also for formal institutions, based on an entrepreneurial ethos, which can enhance or facilitate business activity in the host society.[25] The best known exponent of this approach is sociologist Ivan Light. In his Ethnic Enterprise in America: Business and Welfare among Chinese, Japanese, and Blacks published in 1972, Light argued that Japanese rotating credit associations, transplanted to the United States from the old country, were a critical factor accounting for Japanese business success. Moreover, other ethnic resources, like family associations, contributed to their entrepreneurial proclivities. In a more recent work done in collaboration with Edna Bonacich, Light found evidence of what the authors termed 'ethnic facilitation' which involves the entrepreneurial utilization of other collective resources such as the ability to appeal to ethnic solidarity in the interest of regulating competition, the availability of intra-ethnic business information channels, a common cultural orientation to hard work, an ethnic willingness to accept low wages, and

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nepotism and chauvinism in hiring -- which are seen as resources because of the diligent labor force they provided at low search cost.[26] Similar studies documenting the role of traditional credit associations and business institutions and the role of kinship have followed Light's work.[27]

A third approach has been advanced by sociologist Roger Waldinger in his book, Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades (New York, 1986). His focus in this book is on contemporary Chinese and Dominican immigrant entrepreneurs in the garment industry in New York City. Two of his interests were to find out "how and why immigrants become garment-factory owners ... [and how they] distinguished, if at all, from the older ethnic groups that had been active in the industry..."[28]

Borrowing from the major published works on the garment industry and on Jews and Italians in New York,[29] Waldinger proceeded to demonstrate how the 'economic environment' of the garment industry beginning in 1880 was favorable to immigrant penetration. He noted that just as the immigrants began arriving in New York City, the demand for ready to wear clothing was expanding rapidly. Secondly, there was no real competition from native born entrepreneurs for the business opportunities which were opening up in contracting. The production of most types of clothing in the United States could not easily become mass production and distribution industries since the demand for clothing was

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subject to uncertainty and instability. The general state of the economy at any given point in time, the frequent changes in fashion, the seasonality of demand, the variation in function and use of garments, and the conglomeration of variety of small markets for clothing, subdivided into types by gender and age of consumers, by price, style, etc. were all factors making the production of clothing a rather unstable and uncertain enterprise.

In a discussion of the various models used to analyze ethnic enterprise, Waldinger reviewed and criticized the above two theories before positing his own.[30] Acknowledging the usefulness of cultural and middleman-minority approaches to the analysis of immigrant economic behavior in a host society, he demonstrated that by examining the economic environment of the business in which immigrants gained a foothold, a more incisive understanding of the process of ethnic enterprise emerges. He argued that "... culturally bound phenomena will facilitate the business of setting up a new firm and making it a success ... [but] structural barriers -- technology, capital needs, the level of competition -- define the contours for the emergence of new firms; hence a culturally induced propensity for business may be a necessary, but is not a sufficient condition of entrepreneurial success."[31]

Waldinger's model calls, first, for expanding economic conditions specific to a particular industry as well as to the general economic environment. Then, drawing on the work

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of neoclassical economists,[32] he identified two economic conditions which must preexist in an industry in order that the business be attractive or open to penetration by immigrant entrepreneurs: "(1) access to ownership positions and (2) a niche in which the small firm can viably function."[33] These conditions occur in industries which are highly competitive, where barriers to entry into business are low and where there is little interest shown by native born entrepreneurs.[34]

Waldinger has argued convincingly that the garment industry as a whole has been open to penetration by immigrants since its inception in the nineteenth century. The reasons for this are related to the structure of the industry where techniques of mass production and distribution, large institutions with bureaucratic organization, and economies of scale do not pertain. In fact, because of the uncertainty and instability in the demand for most of the industry's products, (due to the seasonal character of demand for garments, to the sensitivity of demand for apparel to the overall state of the economy, to the frequent and often deliberate changes in fashion, to the variety of function and use to which garments are put and of the consumer market, etc.) the small, versatile firm with low capitalization and minimal overhead and administrative costs is better able to adjust to fluctuations in demand and thereby survive to compete for business. Since such firms are labor intensive, they are

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able to 'trim' or 'shed' their workforce during slow periods and expand them in the busy season. Moreover, the low level of mechanization and of technology in most of the garment industry, relative to other industries in the United States, have kept the barriers to entry very low. A would be entrepreneur can pick up the skills needed as an employee and then, by renting or buying used some sewing machines and other tools from firms which specialize in providing such equipment, is ready to open shop, of course once the labor has been procured.

Much of the writing on ethnic enterprise has focused only on how immigrants have become entrepreneurs. The issue of the role of a coethnic labor force has been touched upon only superficially. Coethnic workers have been presented as the cheap labor force which gave ethnic entrepreneurs the competitive edge to get into business; that is, they were complementary to that enterprise. All acknowledge the importance of the availability of cheap labor in the ethnic community to the ethnic entrepreneurship. They also note that the labor which family members supplied, either at nominal wages or entirely without payment in the case of very close kin, provided these ethnic businesses with a competitive edge in the market place. The nature of the relationships between immigrant entrepreneurs and their coethnic workers has either been ignored or presented as largely harmonious and consensual, mediated by ethnic bonds and customs as well as by a sense of solidarity among

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minorities within a majority society. They describe the immigrant labor force which is employed by coethnic bosses as essentially docile and highlight the role which a ethnic sentiment, community norms, networks and bonds play in suppressing class conflict and in preventing antagonisms from emerging between coethnic workers and bosses. In assessing the likelihood of immigrant workers to organize themselves or to be organized into unions, sociologists Edna Bonacich and Lucie Cheng wrote that immigrants will protest low wages but not conditions of work since they are not interested in future generations. In their view, the "immigrant petite bourgeoisie can keep immigrant workers controlled and thereby divided from the locals..."[35] Bonacich and Light reaffirmed and expanded this view in their joint work. They wrote: "The immigrant petite bourgeoisie plays a role that is analogous to the role of Third World ruling classes: it keeps ethnic labor cheap and docile, using 'nationalistic' sentiments, ultimately for the benefit of corporate capital."[36]

Waldinger included a chapter in his book on "ethnicity at work." In it, he explored the ways in which common ethnicity might mediate the relationship between employer and worker. He assumed that trust developed and persisted over time between immigrant employers and their coethnic workers. In the immigrant firm, owners mobilized direct connections to the ethnic community to recruit workers through kin and friends. He said that "ethnicity might also

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serve as a mechanism for mediating the strains in the workplace and providing the normative basis on which the rules ... might be established ... and negotiated ..." He added that "...the key to [the immigrant entrepreneur's] success lies in a special ability to get other immigrants to work hard ... there may be a measure of self-exploitation in the newcomer's willingness to work long and hard for his or her immigrant boss, [but] what is learned at low wages today might be what is needed to go into business on one's own tomorrow..." This factor also appeared to mute tensions in Waldinger's view.[37]

Waldinger's understanding of the worker/employer relationship was derived from nonparticipant observations, in-depth interviewing of key informants [all of whom were employers], a series of surveys of garment contractors and various secondary and industry sources in the garment industry.[38] The main weakness in this approach is that he did not consider the workers' perspective at all.[39] There were no interviews with workers or with union officials who might have given his analysis of this issue a different slant. Nor did his discussion reflect the considerable literature on worker organization in the garment industry.

Where conflict between ethnic workers and their employers has been studied, it has been between workers and employers of different ethnic backgrounds and usually in large-scale, mainstream industry.[40] Until fairly recently, immigrant workers have, more often than not, been presented

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as impediments to the organization of the working class in the United States.[41]

More importantly, it has often been assumed that class divisions and discordance within ethnic communities, at the workplace or elsewhere, were nonexistent or unimportant. Consensus, either explicitly stated, or implicitly assumed, has been the overwhelming characterization of the work environment. It seemed to be an adaptive mechanism perhaps because researchers have juxtaposed immigrants against a host society which was not, nor is, usually hospitable. But consensus was not always there. Moreover, since most work on ethnic enterprise has focused on the importance of the coethnic workforce for initial penetration into an industry or other economic niche, attention has not been given to the development of relationships over time. Divisions within ethnic communities have frequently been attributed to religious factors, regional factionalism, or friction between newcomers and older generations of immigrants within the same ethnic group.[42]

John Bodnar, in his survey of immigrant communities, has drawn attention to the need to examine the class basis of those divisions.[43] He said that "older views of American ethnic communities suggested that they were simply 'decompression chambers' or transition zones where newcomers temporarily stayed and acquired the necessary values and behavioral patterns to move inevitably into the middle-class American society ... The widespread divisiveness which

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pervaded immigrant communities was ignored as was the constant tension ... And most significantly, class distinctions did not exist in this view in either immigrant communities or the larger American society."[44] While Bodnar has rightly drawn attention to a neglected question, he has discussed class divisions, not at the workplace, but in the broader sense of the larger community, between workers and the 'immigrant middle class.'[45] The question of conflict between coethnic workers and bosses has been overlooked.

Thesis Statement

This dissertation is about immigrant adaptation at the workplace. It examines that adaptation from the perspective of three concepts: [1] 'immigrant entrepreneurship or ethnic enterprise,' (or how did some of the immigrants became bosses in this workplace); [2] 'coethnic labor force,' (or how did others become and largely remain workers employed by their fellow, coethnic immigrants); and, [3] the 'interplay of class and ethnicity' at the workplace among workers and bosses belonging to the same ethnic group rather than from differing ethnic backgrounds. In that sense, it is concerned with how these immigrant, coethnic workers and bosses got along.

The focus is on Greek immigrants in the fur manufacturing industry in New York City during fifty-five years, from 1887 to 1942. Over the course of those five and

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one-half decades, the fur manufacturing industry was transformed from a minor handicraft into an important part of the garment industry in New York City. Although Jews comprised the largest part of the workforce and owned most of the businesses in the industry during these years, Greeks became the second most important group in it, both as owners of firms and as workers. In 1887, the first Greek appeared in the industry in New York City; by 1942 there were well over two thousand workers and bosses engaged in fur manufacturing among another 10 to 12 thousand, mostly Jewish, furriers. Until the end of the First World War, Greek furriers remained largely marginal participants in the industry. Greek shops, which employed Greek workers exclusively, were located on the fringes of the industry. With the tremendous growth and expansion of fur manufacturing at the time, their numbers and their role became increasingly important. Until then, a few of the workers, employed in non-Greek shops, and none of the employers were organized into the increasingly important institutions of the industry which mediated class tensions. But in November 1925, Greek workers as a group joined the furriers' union and changed the character of their relationship to their coethnic employers and to others in the industry. Between 1925 and 1942, the relationship between Greek workers and their coethnic employers was fraught with tension and conflict. Concurrently, the workers were pulled between ethnic loyalties and class

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allegiance. By 1942, the workers were solidly organized into a single union body with a very clear, ethno-class character.

The approach used here is a departure from most of the literature on immigrant entrepreneurs and immigrant workers. While this study has examined ethnic enterprise and has borrowed from the work of the sociologists discussed previously, it has given special emphasis to the role which a coethnic labor force played in helping a group of ethnic entrepreneurs penetrate and establish themselves in an industry. It has argued that, at least in the fur manufacturing industry, despite the Kastorian furriers' preexisting skills, their establishment in the fur manufacturing industry in New York City would not have gone very far had Kastorian and other Greek workers not been available to work in their shops.

This study has also emphasized the emergence of class tensions and conflict between coethnic workers and employers. Although, initially, Kastorian, and other Greek fur businessmen, could rely on the bonds of kinship and common ethnic background to manage their coethnic workforce and to mediate tension, eventually they were insufficient to prevent the emergence of collective working class action against them.

Organization of the chapters

Three related questions have guided this study. First, who were the Greek American immigrant furriers in terms of

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their geographic and socio-economic backgrounds? Secondly, how did they become furriers in the United States? Specifically, the answer to that question required an understanding both of their premigration experiences and of American conditions. Finally, what types of ethnic and class experiences and relationships emerged among the Greek American furriers at their workplace? Chapters Two through Eight have been organized to elaborate on these questions.

Chapters Two, Three and Four cover the 'old world.' Chapter Two reviews the extant literature on Greek immigrants and the image of the 'typical immigrant' that emerges from it. It then proceeds to establish that the regional origins of the furriers differed from those of the stereotypical Greek immigrant and to identify where most of them came from. Chapter Three is about the homeland. It sketches the society which the furriers left and emphasizes that the emigrants who became furriers in New York City had come from urban worlds where their work experiences had been as craftsmen, apprentices, laborers, traders, shopkeepers, and their children. Having learned that some of the Greek American furriers had been furriers in the old country, Chapter Four examines the fur manufacturing industry in Ottoman Macedonia. Since the largest number of Greek American furriers had come from Kastoria, a city in south west Macedonia, the chapter details the history, organization and technology of fur manufacturing there. Clearly, it shows that many Kastorians left the old country

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specifically skilled in fur manufacturing while others, at least, had had exposure to the trade.

With Chapter Five, the focus shifts to New York City. It surveys the development of the fur manufacturing industry there and then reviews the factors which made it accessible to immigrant entrepreneurship. Chapter Six is concerned with explaining how Greek immigrants became fur manufacturers and fur workers in New York City. Chapter Seven explores the relationships that developed between coethnic workers and bosses and the ethno-class organizations they formed to mediate their interaction. Chapter Eight, the epilogue, examines the persistence of ethnicity among class conscious Greek American furriers - both workers and bosses.

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ENDNOTES

1.Two useful bibliographies which include the immigration scholarship of that period can be found in Maldwyn Jones, American Immigration (Chicago, 1957), pp. 325-41 and Philip Taylor, The Distant Magnet (New York, 1971), pp. 238-30.

2.Marcus Lee Hansen, "The History of American Immigration as a Field for Research," American Historical Review, 32, 1926-27: 500-518.

3.Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (New York, 1951).

4.Rudolph Vecoli, "Contadini in Chicago: A Critique of The Uprooted," Journal of American History, 51, 1964: 404-17.

5.See Timothy Smith, "New Approaches to the History of Immigration in Twentieth Century America," American Historical Review, 71, 1966: 1265-1279.

6.Gutman's influence on the writing of American history is discussed by Ira Berlin in his "Introduction: Herbert G. Gutman and the American Working Class," in Herbert G. Gutman, Power and Culture: Essays on the American Working Class, ed. Ira Berlin (New York, 1987), pp. 3-69 and by several historians in the special issue on Gutman in Labor History, vol. 29, no. 3, Summer 1988.

7.See Gutman's "Introduction" to: Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History, (New York, 1976), pp. xi-xiii.

8.Phrase used by Eric Foner in an evaluation of Gutman's stature as a historian and appearing on the book jacket of Power and Culture.

9.From Berlin's "Introduction" in Power and Culture, p.69.

10.Herbert Gutman, "A Note on Immigration History, 'Breakdown Models,' and the Rewriting of the History of Immigrant Working-Class Peoples" [1974], Power and Culture, 255-9.

11.Gutman, "Labor History and the 'Satre Question,'" Humanities 1, 1980: 1-2; reprinted in Power and Culture, 326-8.

12.Gutman, "Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America, 1815-1919," American Historical Review, 78, 1973: 531-588.

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13.In his book, The Transplanted, John Bodnar has followed the revisionist literature quite meticulously and has presented a survey of several of the forms of adaptation.

14.Josef Barton, Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City, 1890-1950 (Cambridge, Mass., 1975); Edward P. Hutchinson, Immigrants and their Children, 1850-1950 (New York, 1956); Moses Rischin, The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914 (New York, 1962); Theodore Saloutos, Greek Immigrants in the United States (Cambridge, Mass., 1963).

15.Bodnar, pp.120-38.

16.Ibid., p.131.

17.In his section on the immigrant business experience, Bodnar, for example, acknowledges that "immigrant businessmen ... could only function in sectors of the economy open to them," p. 131. However, none of the sources which Bodnar cited explored the economic environment of those 'sectors.'

18.One exception is to the work on Jews in the garment trades in New York City. See Rischin, pp. 171-94.

19.This phenomena has also received a great deal of attention in Great Britain where West and East Indians, Pakistanis, Cypriots, and West Africans have penetrated small business there as well. Bibliographies can be extracted from: Edna Bonacich and John Modell, The Economic Basis of Ethnic Solidarity (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1980); Ivan H.Light, Ethnic Enterprise in America: Business and Welfare Among Chinese, Japanese and Blacks (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972); Mark Stolarik and Murray Friedman, editors, Making it in America: The Role of Ethnicity in Business Enterprise, Education, and Work Choices (Lewisburg, 1986); Roger D. Waldinger, Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades (New York, 1986); and Ivan Light and Edna Bonacich, Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Koreans in Los Angeles, 1965-1982 (Berkeley, 1988).

20.The aim of some of this research has been as much to try to explain the absence, or perceived absence, of African Americans from ethnic enterprise by comparing them to other ethnic groups in the United States. Most of such works emphasize the perceived 'cultural deficits' of African Americans in comparison to other immigrant groups which have suffered discrimination in the United States, most notably the Jews, Chinese and Japanese. Two of the best known writings are Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot (New York, 1963 and 1970) and Ivan H.Light,

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Ethnic Enterprise in America: Business and Welfare among Chinese, Japanese and Blacks (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972). While this author finds both deficient and faulty in analysis and explanation, a critique is beyond the limits of this study. Critiques of Light's ahistorical assumptions and analysis concerning African Americans can be found in William E. Perkins, "Symposium on Ethnic Enterprise in America: Review Essay II," Journal of Ethnic Studies 1, Winter 1974: 73-82. Two other useful critiques of Light's basic suppositions, which he reiterated in an essay on "Ethnicity and Business" presented at a conference on ethnic enterprise held at the Balch Institute, were made by Kenneth L. Kusmer and Randall M. Miller as comments on the essay. All three appeared in M. Mark Stolarik and Murray Friedman, editors, Making it in America: The Role of Ethnicity in Business Enterprise, Education, and Work Choices (Lewisburg, 1986), pp. 13 - 54.

21.Waldinger's terminology is used here for characterizing the first two of the three theories, pp. 5-15.

22.Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Middlemen Minorities," American Sociological Review, 38, October, 1973: 583-94; Edna Bonacich and John Modell, The Economic Basis of Ethnic Solidarity: Small Business in the Japanese American Community, (Berkeley, 1972), pp. 13 - 36, 251 - 59, and 269 - 71.

23.See Nathan Glazer, "Social Characteristics of American Jews," American Jewish Yearbook, vol.55, pp.3-43 and Glazer's sections on the Jews in Beyond the Melting Pot; and William Petersen, Japanese Americans: Oppression and Success (New York, 1971). A more recent study drawing on this model is Illsoo Kim, The New Urban Immigrants: Korean Immigrants in New York City (Princeton, 1981).

24.Waldinger, p.6.

25.An example would be the 'rotating credit association' or some similar institution which institutionalizes self-help among entrepreneurial peoples. Waldinger, p.6. See also Clifford Gertz, "The Rotating Credit Association: A 'Middle Rung' in Development," Economic Development and Cultural Change, April, 1962, pp. 241 -63; Ivan Light, Ethnic Enterprise in America.

26.Ivan Light and Edna Bonacich, Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Koreans in Los Angeles, 1965-1982 (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 193 and 203-204.

27.In a study made in the 1970s, Lawrence Lovell-Troy examined the role of pre-existing social structures, and the cultural values attached to those structures, on business

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enterprise among Greeks in the pizza business in Connecticut. He compared the role and meaning of clan structure between Greeks and 'Orientals,' as he referred to Japanese and Chinese businesspeople. While he found intergroup differences in collective responses to entrepreneurship, nonetheless, he emphasized the importance of cultural resources to the success of ethnic enterprise. Lawrence Lovell-Troy, "Clan Structure and Economic Activity: The Case of Greeks in Small Business Enterprise," in Self-help in Urban America, edited by Scott Cummings (Port Washington, NY, 1981), pp. 58-85.

28.Waldinger., p. 17.

29.These include the works of Budish and Soule, Louis Levine, Jesse Pope, Moses Rischin, Joel Seidman and Leo Wolman. Waldinger, pp. 213, 217-18.

30.Ibid., pp. 1-46.

31.Ibid., p. 13-14.

32.E.A.G. Robinson, The Structure of Competitive Industry (Cambridge, 1931) and William Shepherd, The Economics of Industrial Organization (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1979).

33.Waldinger, p. 14.

34.Waldinger also drew on economist Michael Piore's notion of economic dualism and industrial segmentation to help explain the existence of niches for immigrants. He quoted Piore:

> "...industrial segmentation arises when demand falls into stable and unstable portions, and the two components can be separated out from one another. Where these conditions hold, one can expect an industry to be segmented into two branches: one dominated by larger firms, that handles staple products; and a second, composed of small-scale firms, that caters to the unpredictable and/or fluctuating portion of demand. The consequence of this type of segmentation is that the two branches tend to be noncompeting; hence, where segmentation arises, it offers a sheltered position to small firms of the type that immigrants must establish."

From Michael Piore, "The Technological Foundations of Dualism and Discontinuity," in Suzanne Berger and Michael Piore, Dualism and Discontinuity in Industrial Structure (Cambridge, Mass., 1980); quoted in Waldinger, p.23.

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35.Edna Bonacich and Lucie Cheng, "Introduction: A Theoretical Orientation to Labor Immigration," in Labor Immigration Under Capitalism: Asian Workers in the U.S. Before World War II edited by Edna Bonacich and Lucie Cheng (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 31 and 41-2.

36.Light and Bonacich, p. 429.

37.Waldinger, p.4.

38.Ibid., p. 16.

39.Ironically, Waldinger had worked with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in the mid-seventies in their labor education and organizing departments. Yet, his book did not explicitly reflect any of that experience.

40.David Brody's work is a classic in this area, The Steelworkers in America, The Nonunion Era (Cambridge, MA, 1960).

41.For example, see Gerald Rosenblum, Immigrant Workers (New York, 1973).

42.See Bodnar, pp.117-120. Bodnar, p. 247, n.4, also pointed out that the examples of the role of regionalism in fomenting intra-communal conflict are many. Among the better known studies which touched upon this issue are John Walker Briggs, An Italian Passage: Immigrants to Three American Cities, 1890-1930 (New Haven, Conn., 1978) and Rudolph Vecoli, "The Formation of Chicago's Little Italies," Journal of American Ethnic History, 2, Spring 1983: 5-20. For such divisions among Greeks, see Andrew T. Kopan, "Greek Survival in Chicago: The Role of Ethnic Education, 1890-1980," in Peter d'A. Jones and Melvin G. Holli, eds., Ethnic Chicago (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1981).

43.Bodnar cited as one of the only studies which has emphasized the role of class as the source of conflict within immigrant communities: John J. Bukowczyk, "Polish Factionalism and the Formation of the Immigrant Middle Class in Brooklyn, 1880-1929," an unpublished paper in Bodnar's possession; Bodnar, p.247, n.2.

44.Bodnar, p.118.

45.Ibid., pp. 117-43.

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CHAPTER TWO

GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS

Perceptions of Greek Immigrants

Most of the literature on Greeks in the United States has emphasized the peasant origins of the immigrant generation.[1] What is more, the focus has been on Greeks from Greece proper and, in particular, on those rural folk from the Peloponnesus. The discussion of the social backgrounds of the emigrants has relied heavily on United States immigration statistics for data and on research conducted on both sides of the Atlantic early in this century for description of the causes, conditions and participants in the emigration process. These sources, compiled during the actual period of mass migration, were, for various reasons, preoccupied with the peasant composition of the trans-Atlantic movement. In Greece, Emmanuel Repouli, in a report prepared for the Greek Parliament (1912), and the students of Andreas Andreades, in a multi-regional study of emigration (1917), documented the exodus from the land.[2] They were alarmed at the losses of human resources for economic development and for national defense. Neither one touched, to any great extent, on the socio-economic character of peasant life in Greece except to

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underscore the roles of high taxes and interest rates, crop failures, negligent administration, or the dowry system in stimulating emigration. Andreades' students attempted to identify the social classes involved in emigration, but they used general categories such as working class, manual laborers, farmers, artisans or merchants without indicating what they meant in Greece at that time. However, from them we learn that other social strata left for the new world in significant numbers, especially from Macedonia.[3] Unfortunately, aside from this author, only two writers on the Greek-American background have even consulted Andreades.[4]

At about the same time, Henry Pratt Fairchild (1909 and 1911) and the Immigration Commission of the United States Congress (1911; often referred to as the Dillingham Commission) examined Greek emigration from a North American perspective.[5] They questioned the suitability of Greeks, as well as other southern and eastern Europeans, to life in the United States and pondered the impact of their presence on North American society. Both drew much of their information about the old country from United States consular reports from Greece itself or from the testimony and reports of Greek officials.[6] They argued that Greece was essentially a backward agricultural and pastoral economy which could not sustain its rural population. Therefore, they concluded that the immigrants were overwhelmingly the

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country's poor, unskilled, and illiterate peasants and peasant laborers.[7] It is this image which has most often been borrowed to depict the background of the Greek immigrant - even by writers, unlike Fairchild or the authors of the Immigration Commission's Report, who were sympathetic to those peasants.[8]

The most important study which has preserved this stereotype is Theodore Saloutos' The Greeks in the United States. Published in 1964, it has remained the most credible historical survey of Greeks in the United States.[9] Aside from using an array of secondary sources, he amply documented his study with material which had been previously untapped and which has since been largely overlooked.[10] Even though he included two chapters on, what he called, "the Hellas of the immigrant," his model still contains misleading generalizations and oversimplifications about the immigrants' social origins and their implications for life in the new society.

He termed "the immigrant ... a man of the soil ... devoid of technical skills ... [who] found it preferable to live in cities ... [where] he brought with him the sturdy qualities of the peasant - perseverance and a willingness to work... assets to a person from a land of pastoral quietude ..."[11] Further on, in the introduction to a chapter on "Greeks in Business," Saloutos observed that "from the outset the Greeks displayed an ability to engage in business and commerce with energy and resourcefulness."

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He found that "this was remarkable in view of their peasant backgrounds. Few had traveled far beyond their native villages or had much contact with people of other ethnic origins. They arrived with no liquid capital and with no experience in the restaurant, confectionary, theater, or any other line of business in which they were to become so conspicuous."[12] The only way Saloutos could explain how the Greek immigrant became a businessman was to say that he was "an independent freedom-loving individual who thrived in a society that honored these qualities ... A natural-born competitor with a determination to succeed, he reconciled himself quite early to hard work ..."[13]

Since the publication of his book, Saloutos has been the foremost source cited by virtually every author writing on any aspect of the Greek-American community. Nearly all have accepted his characterization of the immigrants' background. Not only have they, like Saloutos, overlooked the possibility that significant numbers of Greek emigrants might not have been peasants or even rural folk at all, but they have proceeded from the assumption that the peasants had been a homogeneous and undifferentiated mass of people from a closed, subsistance rural economy.[14] In this conception, the immigrants struggled, stumbled and, somehow, through hard work, diligence and an innate gift for enterprise, uplifted themselves into the middle class of their host country.

To some extent Charles Moskos, whose short survey,

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Greek Americans: Struggle and Success draws much from Saloutas, has improved on the latter's formulation.[15] At the beginning of his book, Moskos described Greek-Americans as "... poor and uneducated, but energetic and resourceful immigrants who came to this country ... from the villages of rural Greece ..."[16] But later, when he had to explain the acumen of Greek immigrants in small business, he became more analytical. Evidently drawing on the ideas and research developed by social and immigration historians during the sixties and seventies,[17] Moskos argued that to understand "how ... a large component of an unlettered and rural migrant group [could] display such an affinity for business after arrival in this country ... we must turn to the village life of Greece at the end of the nineteenth century."[18] He consulted two studies, published in 1978, about the economic development of Greece and found that "unlike peasants in most other Eastern European societies of that time, the Greek peasant participated directly in a market rather than a subsistence economy. There was little of the peasants' traditional linkages with the soil through communal usages; land and agricultural products were commodities to be bought and sold. In the villages, selling and buying were familiar endeavors ..."[19]

Despite its strengths, Moskos' formulation has certain limitations. First, he overlooked the possibility that Greek rural emigrants might have had more diverse social and occupational backgrounds which influenced their occupational

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choices and social positions in the United States. Before emigrating, many had been not only small peasant proprietors but sharecroppers (often with some feudal obligations to the landlord), farm workers, shepherds and livestock breeders, itinerant or migratory artisans, peasant handicraft producers, and even seamen, or the sons of all these.[20]

Secondly, most Greek immigrants to the United States were literate - including those from the rural parts of Greece. For the period 1900 to 1914, an average of 25% of the male immigrants above the age of ten were illiterate but 75% were literate. While this illiteracy rate was higher than for Jews and for northern Europeans, it was well below that for southern Italy (52%), Poland (36%), and other eastern and southern European countries.[21] What is more impressive, however, is that in Greece, illiteracy among the adult male population was as high as 71% in 1870, 50% in 1907, and 44% in 1920.[22] From this one can conclude that the men who were leaving Greece for the United States were among the better-educated of the population. This factor, no doubt, requires further exploration for its implications for adaptation of Greek Americans.[23] Two important and related issues to explore are (1) the differential rates of repatriation among the literate and illiterate and (2) the patterns of studying English in U.S. schools among both groups of immigrants since many Greeks attended night school after arrival in the new country.

Finally, Moskos neglected the emigrants from urban

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areas of Greece and from the Ottoman Empire. While the former were apparently modest in number,[24] those from Ottoman towns and cities were much greater, especially because Ottoman Greeks had become increasingly urbanized in the second half of the nineteenth century. Their economies were linked, on the one hand, to their surrounding countryside but, on the other, to domestic and international trade. By the time Ottoman Greeks began to emigrate to the United States, they were not only familiar with commodity exchange relations in the marketplace; they had had more experience with the socioeconomic institutions and cultural patterns of urban capitalist life than had the peasant entrepreneurs from the Peloponnesus.[25]

Moskos' essay has drawn attention to the need to abandon "overarching" stereotypes of the 'old country' and of the people who left it. Sterotypes have obscured the experiences of Greek immigrants in the United States.[26] Little attention has been given to the non-agricultural, urban and Ottoman backgrounds of the immigrants. Researchers must consider the more diverse socio-economic and cultural antecedents of the old country, which helped to shape new world adaptations.[27] But to do that for Greek American furriers, one must know where they came from. The remainder of this chapter is concerned with identifying their 'geographic origins.'

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Shifting boundaries and populations and Immigration to the United States:

To begin with, it is helpful to know a little about the distribution of Greek speaking people within the Mediterranean Region at the turn of the twentieth century. During the age of transatlantic mass migration of southern and eastern Europeans, most Greeks lived outside of Greece. This was because Greece, which had won its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1827, consisted of: the Peloponnesus, Attica, Livadia, Euboea, and the Cyclades and Sporades Islands, adding the Ionian Islands and Thessaly in 1864 and 1881 respectively. This was only a fraction of the country as it has subsequently come to be known. Crete, Macedonia, Epirus, Thrace, and some of the Aegean Islands were annexed between 1912 and 1923, with the Dodecanese included within the nation as late as 1947.[28]

Until 1912 when the First Balkan War broke out, of an estimated 7 million Greek-speaking peoples in the Balkans and the Near East, only 37% lived in independent Greece.[29] Most of the rest were in European and Asiatic Turkey, that is, what remained of the Ottoman Empire, or on the major Mediterranean and Aegean Islands controlled by Turkey, Britain or Italy. (See Table 2.1) There was also a sizeable diaspora in Egypt, the Balkans, and south Russia.[30] It was only with the Balkan Wars, the persecution of Greeks in Turkey, the Turko-Greek War of 1919 to 1922, and the exhange of populations among Greece, Turkey

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and Bulgaria called for by the Treaty of Lausanne (1922) that the distribution of Greeks in the region changed with most Greeks now being concentrated into an expanded Greek national territory.

Up to 1914, while the Greek population living outside Greece was approximately one and a half times greater than that in the independent kingdom, the majority of Greek immigrants who arrived in the United States came from what was referred to at the time as "old" Greece. Before 1898 the only Greeks who had appeared in the United States' immigration records had been from the independent nation because until then immigrants were classified according to "the country of origin of the migrant or their nationality or nativity."[31] Although some Greeks had been leaving their country for the United States in very small numbers since the 1870s, it was not until 1882 that their number exceeded 100,1891 that it reached 1,000, and 1898 that it remained in multiples of a thousand.[32] In all, between 1820 and 1898, 12,581 people entered the United States from Greece - most of them (9,875) between 1891 and 1898.[33]

How many other Greeks arrived from Ottoman lands or other places cannot be determined from the immigration reports because they would have been included in the figures for the countries in which they had been born, e.g., Turkey in Europe or in Asia. But it is unlikely that Ottoman Greeks made up any significant proportion of immigration into the United States before the twentieth century. Those

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TABLE 2.1

GREEKS LIVING IN GREECE, OTTOMAN LANDS, AND ON MEDITERRANEAN AND AEGEAN ISLANDS
circa 1910

	Number	% of Total
Greece	2.6 million	37
Attica and Boetia		
Euboea		
Livadia		
Pelopponesus		
Thessaly		
Cyclades Islands		
Sporades Islands		
Ionian Islands		
Turkey in Europe	1.68 million	24
Epirus		
Macedonia		
Thrace (including Constantinople in Europe)		
Turkey in Asia	1.69 million	24
Asia Minor or Anatolia (including Constantinople in Asia)		
Mediterranean and Aegean Islands	1.01 million	15
Crete		
Cyprus		
Aegean Islands		
Dodecanese		
Chios		
Mytilene		
Samos		
Etc.		
Total	6.98 million	

Sources: A.A. Pallis, "Les effets de la guerre sur la population de la Grece" in A. Andreades, Les Effets Economique et Sociaux de la Guerre en Grece (Paris, 1928), p. 147; Dimitri Pentzopoulos, The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact Upon Greece (Paris, 1962), pp. 26-27; and Greek Census of 1907.

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Ottoman Greeks who were on the move prior to those years travelled instead to urban and commercial centers within the Empire, to the Balkans, Russia, or Central Europe.[34] Moreover, once the United States Bureau of Immigration began in 1899 to report "the country of last . . . residence of the migrants and the 'race or people' they belong to . . .,"[35] the statistics indicate that an established pattern of Greek immigration did not emerge among Greeks from European Turkey until 1904 and until 1907 for those in the Asiatic part whereas other Ottoman ethnic groups had already been leaving the Empire for the United States in larger numbers.[36]

From 1899 to 1914 the Annual Reports of the Commissioner-General of Immigration make it possible to differentiate Greeks from Ottoman lands and various other places from those from Greece. (See Table 2.2) These were peak years of Greek immigration; they saw the arrival of 74% of all ethnic Greeks who came to the United States before the imposition of the highly restrictive Immigration Act of 1924. (See Table 2.3) During those fifteen years, people from old Greece comprised 75% of the immigrants for their group while 15.9% came from Turkey in Europe, 6% from Turkey in Asia, and 3.1% from other places. (See Table 2.3)

After 1914, the Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Immigration are not very useful for making distinctions about the geographic origins of Greek immigrants. For one thing, under the terms of the Treaty of Bucharest following

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the Balkan Wars (August 1913), Greece annexed almost 17,000 square miles of territory and 1.7 million in population which had been part of Turkey in Europe: much of Macedonia, southern Epirus, Crete, several Aegean Islands (excluding the Dodecanese Islands). Varying parts of Thrace also fell under Greek control although its claims to any part of the territory were not ratified by treaty until 1923.[37] After June 30, 1914, the end of the Immigration Bureau's fiscal year, Greeks arriving in the United States from these areas were counted among Greeks coming from Greece. Others, whose last country of residence continued to be reported as Turkey in Europe, came from Eastern Thrace or from the area around Constantinople.[38] As for Greeks arriving from Turkey in Asia, the statistics from 1915 to 1916 onward are also not entirely reliable. While the territory remained the same and Greeks continued to emigrate, after 1913 thousands of Anatolian Greeks had begun seeking refuge on the newly - liberated Aegean Islands, in Greece, as well as in Egypt, France and elsewhere.[39] Undoubtedly, many subsequently emigrated to the United States but were tabulated as Greeks whose 'country of last residence' was Greece or some other place - the latter not specified in the published statistics. According to the official statistics in Table 2.3, Ottoman Greeks made up only 1.6% of the immigrants. But we can assume that their representation was much, much larger since many were emigrating to the United States from territories which had been annexed by Greece between 1912

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TABLE 2.2

GREEK IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES
BY COUNTRY OF LAST RESIDENCE, 1899 TO 1924

Year	Greece	Turkey in Europe	Turkey in Asia	Various[1]	Yearly Total[2]
1899	2,333	25	13	27	2,395
1900	3,771	-	-	2	3,773
1901	5,910	5	1	3	5,919
1902	8,101	1	-	13	8,115
1903	14,082	260	8	26	14,376
1904	11,259	1,246	60	60	12,625
1905	10,390	1,198	135	421	12,144
1906	19,398	2,766	106	857	23,127
1907	36,404	7,060	1,353	1,466	46,283
1908	21,415	5,114	1,295	984	28,808
1909	14,059	4,462	996	745	20,262
1910	25,675	8,959	3,693	808	39,135
1911	26,086	7,569	2,309	1,057	37,021
1912	21,288	7,134	2,149	995	31,566
1913	22,437	9,374	5,192	1,641	38,644
1914	34,832	3,631	4,946	2,472	45,881
1915	11,223	647	1,460	1,857	15,187
1916	22,589	229	1,279	2,695	26,792
1917	22,006	111	205	3,597	25,919
1918	1,784	9	7	802	2,602
1919	368	2	1	442	813
1920	10,893	565	259	2,281	13,998
1921	26,232	1,649	553	3,394	31,828
1922	3,115	279	51	376	3,821
1923	3,057	460	179	481	4,177
1924	4,001	108	195	948	5,252

Source: Walter F. Wilcox and Imre Ferenczi, International Migrations, 2 Vols. (New York, 1929-31), 1:463.

[1] In Wilcox and Ferenczi this column lists Greek immigration only from British North America. The figures given in this table are for Greek immigration from British North America and all other places aside from those in the first three columns. It was developed by subtracting the totals of the first three columns from the yearly total. The figures derived were checked against those in the Annual Reports of the Commissioner-General of Immigration, 1899 to 1924.

[2] The fiscal year for the Bureau of Immigration was July 1st to June 30th.

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TABLE 2.3

GREEK IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES BY COUNTRY OF LAST RESIDENCE FOR PERIODS: 1899-1914, 1915-1924, and 1899-1924

Country of Last Residence	Number of Immigrants	% of Total For Period	% of Total 1899 - 1924
	1899 - 1914		
Greece	277,437	75	55.4
Turkey in Europe	58,804	15.9	11.7
Turkey in Asia	22,256	6	4.4
Various Other Places	11,577	3.1	2.3
Total	370,074	100	74
	1915 to 1924		
Greece	105,268	80.7	21
Turkey in Europe	4,059	3.1	.8
Turkey in Asia	4,189	3.2	.8
Various Other Places	16,873	13	3.4
Total	130,389	100	26
	1899 to 1924		
Greece	382,705		76.5
Turkey in Europe	62,863		12.5
Turkey in Asia	26,445		5.3
Various Other Places	28,450		5.7
Total	500,463		100

Source: Based on the Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration. 1899 to 1924.

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and 1923. Furthermore, since, during that period, the "old country" for many of the immigrants from Asiatic Turkey had ceased to be a reality,[40] these Ottoman Greeks were much more likely to make the United States a permanent home than were Greeks from 'old Greece' of from the annexed territories.[41]

Greeks born in 'old Greece' continued to leave their homeland in large numbers, though probably at a slower rate and as a smaller majority of the entire ethnic group arriving in the United States between the fiscal years 1915 and 1924. Their representation in Greek immigration figures up to 1914 alone account for 55.4% of the 500,463 ethnic Greek immigrants from 1899 to 1924. (See Table 2.3) A study of Greek migration conducted in 1916 under the direction of Andreas Andreades, an eminent Greek economist with an international reputation, confirmed that emigration from the Peloponnesus, Thessaly and the islands of old Greece persisted as an issue of concern to the Greek government which feared further depletion of manpower resources from those areas.[42]

Geographic Origins of Greek American Furriers

Published sources and interviews with retired furriers have provided some important clues as to the geographic origins of Greek American furriers. From them, it has been learned that the first Greeks to become furriers in the United States were from West Macedonia, specifically from

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two towns in that region, Kastoria and Siatista. These have also emphasized, and perhaps exaggerated, the magnitude of the West Macedonian presence among Greek furriers in the industry. Typically, they have claimed that nearly all of them came from Kastoria and Siatista. Admittedly, such generalizations have appeared largely in journalistic articles written for the Greek American press and in some fur industry publications. But even historian Theodore Saloutos erroneously identified the backgrounds of Greek American furriers when he attributed the radical trade union and political activity of the 1930s, '40s and '50s which characterized Greek American furriers and their union, Local 70, to "a small but aggressive group of furriers in New York City, natives for the most part of the area around Kastoria in Macedonia..."[43]

Two writers have stated that there were other Greeks among the furriers as well. Bambis Malafouris, a Greek-American writer, pointed out, in his 1948 survey of Greeks in America, that "the first furriers were nearly all from Kastoria. After 1910, craftsmen from Siatista began to arrive, and later also from other points in Greece and Asia Minor."[44] In the 1960s, Theodoro Giannakouli, in a chapter on furriers from his book on Greek-Americans, devoted a great deal of attention to the contributions of Kastorian furriers to the industry. But, he too acknowledged the presence of Siatistans and others among the Greek American furriers.[45] Malafouris and Giannakouli did not provide

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documentation for their information, but appear to have based their statements on their familiarity with the industry in New York City and on their personal associations with Greek-American furriers.[46] Neither gave any statistics on the numbers of Greeks in the industry or on the proportions of those from various regions. Nor did they raise any questions concerning the significance of the concentration of an ethnic group from particular regions for their experiences and relationships in the industry.

Here, various industry and community sources have been used for the first time to develop a clearer picture of the regional geographic origins of Greek American furriers. Since some of the furriers had their own businesses while others were employed, they have been divided into two primary and obvious categories: employers and workers. Then, records from institutions related to each category were examined and data extracted in order to compile information on Greek American furriers and to determine where they came from.[47] In addition to those records, interviews with retired furriers,[48] the New York State "Manuscript Census,"[49] and a few 'old world' primary sources[50] also helped to identify Greek American furriers and to determine and confirm where they came from in the old country. This writer, drawing on her familiarity with Greek names, reviewed the listings of all furriers in business and union sources and extracted all those which were recognizably Greek to her.[51] Where the source provided no

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information about the geographical origins of the furrier, the names were then compared with names of furriers and emigrants found in the old world primary sources or given to retired furriers for possible identification.

-Employers:

The first year when a Greek name appeared in any section of the Directory of the Fur Trade was 1896. The name was that of the earliest known Kastorian furrier to be in New York City, Vasilios Skaperdas.[52] Ten years later, 1906, all eight of the Greek firms listed in the same directory belonged to Kastorians. By 1910, the number had risen to 23 firms of which 22 were Kastorian and 1 was Siatistan.[53] In the Greek American Guide and Business Directory for 1910 Seraphim Canoutas, its publisher, listed 46 "fur dealers and furriers" of which at least 42 were Kastorian.[54] By 1925, when 40 of the Greek employers first formed a manufacturers' association, the United Fur Manufacturers Association (UFMA), 27 of the members could be definitely identified as Kastorian and a few others as Siatistans.[55] Of 139 firms with Greek names appearing in the Directory of the Fur Trade for the same year, 90 were Kastorian and a handful Siatistans. The regional backgrounds of most ofthe rest could not be determined, except that they were Greek. It is very likely that several of them were also Macedonian.[56] But names of some known non-Macedonians had begun to appear among the Greek fur Manufacturers. They have been identified in interviews or

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in manufacturers' association records as coming from Asia Minor and the eastern Aegean islands.[57] As far as can be determined, none came from 'old Greece.' By 1939, the names of more Asia Minor and Aegean island Greeks appeared in the directories and among the membership of the manufacturers' association, but Kastorian names continued to make up at least 75% of the of businesspeople.[58]

-Workers:

While the employers were overwhelmingly Kastorian throughout the period under study, in time the regional origins of the Greek workforce had become more varied. Up to 1913, the size and identity of the workforce is difficult to verify with any hard data. Employers records for that period do not exist[59] and a stable union only came into existence in 1912.[60] From interviews with retired furriers who worked in the industry before 1913, we know that there were Greek workers working in Greek-owned shops and that, with few exceptions, these workers were West Macedonians, primarily Kastorian in background.[61] Until the end of the First World War, most of the Greek fur workers continued to be Macedonian like the manufacturers, but by the 1920s they came from Asia Minor, its islands, and from Greece.[62]

For the years between 1913 and 1926, the records of the International Fur Workers Union and its Joint Board Furriers Union in New York City confirm the presence of Greek workers in the industry. Greek names appear in their records as

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early as 1913 and continue to 1926 and later. Moreover, in the New York State "Manuscript Census" for 1915, for those neighborhoods where it is known that Greek American furriers could be found,[63] several fur workers have been located. By comparing the names of these fur workers with those found in the above mentioned Registration Book and with the "Register of those [citizens] living aborad" compiled in Kastoria, and it was possible to determine that during and especially after the First World War a growing number of non-Macedonian workers were entering the workforce.

The most reliable source for birthplaces of Greek fur workers is the registration book of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York.[64] Founded in the summer of 1926, the Brotherhood kept a record of its membership in this registration book from September 1, 1926 until January 18, 1937. In it, the Brotherhood's secretary recorded each member's name, date of initiation, age, craft and, most importantly, place of birth. In most cases the place given was the name of a town, city, or island. In relatively few instances birthplaces were given in broad regional categories as "Macedonia," "Asia Minor" or "Greece."

From this source Table 2.4[65] has been compiled for the period 1926 to 1937 showing that of the 1,621 Greek-American fur workers known to have been born abroad, 39.5% came from Turkey in Europe, 36.2% from Turkey in Asia, and only 20.4% from old Greece. Upon closer analysis, it can be seen that 23.6% came from Kastoria and 35.5% from Macedonia as a

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whole. Asia Minor and its adjacent Aegean islands yielded nearly as many (31.7%) as did Macedonia. Most were natives of Constantinople (Istanbul), of Smyrna (Izmir), Pergamon (Bergama), and other towns along Turkey's western Aegean coast and interior, and of the islands directly opposite the same coastline, especially Samos, Mytilene, Lemnos, Chios and the Dodecanese.[66] Only about one-fifth had emigrated from independent Greece and its islands with nearly half of these coming from the Peloponnesus, the source of the earliest and largest emigration.

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TABLE 2.4

REGIONAL ORIGINS OF GREEK-AMERICAN FUR WORKERS, MEMBERS OF LOCAL 70, 1926 to 1937

Place of Birth	Number of Workers Born There		Percentage of Total (rounded to nearest tenth)
Turkey in Europe		641	39.5
Macedonia	576		
Kastoria (n.383)			
Siatista (n.59)			
Kozani (n.35)			
Thessaloniki (n.20)			
Various Towns (n.79)			
Thrace	39		
Albania/Epirus	23		
Roumania	3		
Turkey in Asia		586	36.2
Asia Minor	321		
Constantinople (n.119)			
Smyrna (n.68)			
Pergamos (n.33)			
Various Towns (n.101)			
Eastern Aegean Islands	193		
Samos (n.66)			
Mytilene (n.50)			
Lemnos (n.25)			
Chios. Dodecanese, etc. (n.51)			
Eastern Mediterranean	72		
Crete (n.42)			
Cyprus (n.26)			
Egypt (n.4)			
Old Greece		328	20.4
Athens and Piraeus	64		
Islands (Ionian, Sporades, etc.)	45		
Thessaly	40		
Various Towns, etc.	24		
Peloponnesus	155		
Sparta (n.34)			
Kalamata (n.34)			

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Patras (n.26) Various Towns (n.61)		
Birthplace not located or given only as "Greece"	64	3.9
Total Number of Greek-American Fur Workers Born in Turkey and Greece	1,619[3]	100

Source: "Registration Book of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York," September 1, 1926 to January 18, 1937. Archives of Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

[3] This number represents 79.1% of the 2,048 entries in the Registration Book. 429 entries (20.8%) were not used for the following reasons:

212 had Greek names but no place of birth provided
120 had non-Greek names and birth places outside of Greece or the Ottoman Empire
88 were Greek-Americans born in the United States
9 were eliminated for other reasons.

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Conclusion

Despite the heavy representation of emigrants from 'old' Greece in the immigration to the United States, relatively few of them became furriers in the United States during the first forty years of this century. Instead Ottoman Greeks from European and Asiatic Turkey were the predominant group among Greek American furriershe single largest group of furriers came from one town in southwest Macedonia, Kastoria, with many others from the nearby Macedonian community of Siatista while Ottoman Greeks from a broader geographic area, western Asia Minor and its adjacent Aegean islands, were the second main group of Greeks in the fur manufacturing industry.

Knowledge of the furriers' regional origins helps to explain theirinitial penetration and eventual establishment in the fur manufacturing industry in New York City as well as their behavior and relationships at the workplace. The concentration in one industry of people from such specific regions, especially in the case of the Kastorians, certainly had implications for their adaptation and experiences at the workplace. The importance of this concentration for penetration into the industry and for the subsequent relations between them and their coethnic workforce is a major theme of this study.

As will be seen in Chapters Three and Four, the model of the traditional peasant from an isolated village world does not fit these Ottoman immigrants who became furriers in

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New York City during the first forty years of this century. By and large, they came from regions where Greeks had lived mostly in towns and cities, often as ethno-religious minorities; worked either in non-farming occupations as laborers, artisans, handicraftspersons, traders, carters, shopkeepers, seamen, merchants and professionals or had been commercial farmers; had been geographically mobile prior to the beginning of the migratory current to the United States; and had left the old world with skills which they could, and did, use to adapt to life in the new society. Many also were the sons and daughters of parents who had been engaged in such occuaptions and migrations in the old country but were unable to find a place for themselves in that world. Chapter Three discusses the worlds from which they had emigrated while Chapter Four shows that many Kastorians and some Siatistans arrived in the United States with very real skills and experience which they could adapt to the economic conditions of the fur industry in order to carved out a niche for themselves. Later chapters will demonstrate that the high proportion of Ottoman Greeks from West Macedonia and from Asia Minor and the Aegean Islands in the fur manufacturing industry in New York City was not just an interesting demographic fact. It was related to the premigration backgrounds of one group and to the circumstances of emigration for the other.

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ENDNOTES

1.The most complete bibliographies on Greeks in the United States are: Michael Cutsumbis, A Bibliographic Guide to Materials on Greeks in the United States 1890-1968 (New York, 1970) and, more recently, John G. Zenelis, "A Bibliographic Guide on Greek Americans," in Harry J. Psomides and Alice Scourby, eds., The Greek American Community in Transition (New York, 1982), pp. 231-272. Two older ones are: Theodore Saloutos, The Greeks in the United States (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp. 389-400; and Evangelos C. Vlachos, An Annotated Bibliography on Greek Migration (Athens, 1966), pp. 71-96 on "Greeks in the United States."

2.Emmanuel Repoulis Melete meta Schediou Nomou peri Metanasteuseos [A Study on Emigration with Suggested Legislation] (Athens, 1912); Andreas Andreades, ed., E Ellenike Metanasteusis [Greek Emigration] Athens, 1917). Each of the 37 essays on emigration from a region were prepared by Andreades' students under his close supervision. Andreades developed the conceptual framework both for the research and the writing of each report so that the book would have uniformity. See editor's introduction, pp. v-x. Andreades credited each student with authorship for his article in the published book. However, here references to the book will be made by the editor's name.

3.Andreades, pp. 321-384; passim.

4.Bambis Malafouris, Ellenes tes Amerikes, 1528-1948 [Greeks of America] (New York, 1948), pp. 94-98; Saloutos, pp. 29, 31, 33. As useful as Coutsoumbis' and Zenelis' bibliographies are, the authors omitted two critical studies on emigration from Greece: Andreades and N.J. Polyzos, Essai Sur l'Emigration Grecque: Etude Demographique, Economique et Sociale (Paris, 1947).

5.Henry Pratt Fairchild, "The Causes of Emigration from Greece," Yale Review (August 1909):176-96; Idem, Greek Immigration to the United States (New Haven, 1911), Chapter IV (reprint of 1909 article) and Chapter V on the "Sources and Means of Emigration," pp. 56-82 and 83-105; Reports of the Immigration Commission, Emigration Conditions In Europe, 41 vols. (Washington, 1911; reprint ed., New York, 1970) 4:391-415.

6.Immigration Commission, pp. 397 and 401; Fairchild, Greek Immigration, p. x;

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7.This portrayal of Greek immigration was implicit in the Immigration Commission's discussion of the "emigration situation in Greece," especially in the section on the causes of emigration, Vol. 4, pp. 401-405. Fairchild was more explicit: "... As far as Greeks are concerned, emigration to the United States is almost wholly an affair of the agricultural and pastoral classes ..." On illiteracy among them, he cited statistics which showed that "... while the Greeks are much superior to the South Italians, they are decidedly inferior to the northern races, and to the Hebrews ..." In Fairchild's view, the rate of illiteracy among them diminished their prospects of becoming "true American citizens." Fairchild, Greek Immigration, p. 85, 114-115. Both sources emphasized that the combination of unfavorable economic conditions in Greek agriculture and a desire to "make money" motivated the peasantry to emigrate. Immigration Commission, p. 401; Fairchild, "Causes of Emigration," p. 178, 189, 194, 241.

8.The Immigration Commission and Fairchild were most unsympathetic towards all of the "new" immigrants including Greeks. In 1911 the Immigration Commission recommended the strengthening of laws restricting immigration to the United States. Fairchild supported restriction and advocated it as a policy in his book, Immigration, published first in 1913 and reissued as a revised edition in 1925. His work on Greek immigrants understandably presented them in a most unfavorable light. He stereotyped them and depricated their character throughout his book. A major theme was that "... money making [was] a ruling passion among the Greeks ..." (p. 217 and passim). Among the countless faults Fairchild catalogued, they were allegedly dishonest, especially in commercial dealings (p. 24), indolent, egotistical, vain and superficial (p. 29), fond of haggling (p. 25), incapable of working in harmony with others (p. 61), lacking in reverence for law and every form of authority (p. 239), etc. Thomas Burgess, who cited Fairchild in his decidedly more objective book on Greeks in the United States, praised Fairchild's "accurate and excellent account of the causes of Greek emigration" while he concluded that the rest of the book "lack[ed] fairness, care, and accuracy." Thomas Burgess Greeks in America (Boston, 1913; reprint ed., New York, 1970) pp. 17 and 236. Another contemporary source who disagreed with Fairchild on the Greek character and on the desirability of Greeks as citizens, also cited him on the background to emigration from Greece. Thomas James Lacey A Study of Social Heredity as Illustrated in the Greek People (New York, 1915), p. 44-46.

9.In a bibliographic essay at the end of his book, The Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880-1921 (Arlington Heights, Illinois, 1982), Alan K. Kraut

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termed Saloutos "the undisputed authority on Greeks," p. 191.

10.Saloutos' work is the best documented survey of Greeks in the United States. He included a bibliographic essay describing his major sources and provided 1,214 footnotes for 18 chapters and 386 pages of text. Saloutos, pp. 389-436.

11.Ibid., pp. 45-46. In 1945 Saloutos criticized Fairchild because "he drew sweeping generalizations." Saloutos, "The Greeks in the United States," The South Atlantic Quarterly 44 (January 1945):71.

12.Ibid., p. 258.

13.Ibid.

14.Saloutos reiterated this perception in: "Causes and Patterns of Greek Emigration to the United States," Perspectives in American History 7 (1973):391-96 passim.

15.Charles Moskos, Greek Americans: Struggle and Success (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1980).

16.Ibid., p. 8.

17.Moskos did not explain why he decided to delve more deeply into the backgrounds of Greek immigrants. But he must have been familiar, at least, with the work of Rudolph Vecoli, "Contadini in Chicago: A Critique of The Uprooted," Journal of American History, 51 (December 1964):404-417, and, possibly, with that of Herbert Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815-1919," The American Historical Review 78 (June 1973):531-587.

18.Ibid., pp. 139-40.

19.Ibid., p. 140. The two studies he used were: Nicos Mouzelis, Modern Greece: Facets of Underdevelopment (New York, 1978) and William H. McNeill, The Metamorphosis of Greece Since World War II (Chicago, 1978).

20.Moskos himself provided evidence of the occupational and social diversity among Greek immigrants in a chapter on "Growing up Greek American: A Family and Personal Memoir," pp. 127-37. Moskos' father came from a long line of shoemakers and was one himself as were his brothers. In the United States he and his two brothers became shoe repairers (pp. 128-29). His maternal grandfather, the son of a shepherd and village headsman and born in Albania, went to Constantinople as a youth and worked with relatives in commerce. When he arrived in the United States with his

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business background, he opened a sweet shop in Chicago (p. 132).

21.Constantine Tsoucalas, Exartese kai Anaparagoge: O Koinonikos Rolos ton Ekpaideutikon Mehanismon Sten Ellada 1830-1922 [Dependence and Reproduction: The Social Role of the Educational Mechanism in Greece 1830-1922] (Athens, 1977; translated from the French ed., Paris, 1975), p. 154.

22.Polyzos, p. 46.

23.See Tsoucalas on emigration and literacy, pp. 153-55.

24.Even as late as 1920 74% of Greece's population lived in rural areas. Greece. Statistikon Grapheion [Statistical Bureau] Plethesmos ton Vasileiou tes Ellados Kata ten apographen tes 19 Dekemyrion 1920 [Population of the Kingdom of Greece during the census of 19 December, 1920]; p. xxxii.

25.Ottoman Greek emigrants to the United States, especially those from Asia Minor, comprised a much larger proportion of the permanently settled Greek American population than their numbers recorded in the official United States immigrantion records. The main reason was that these Greeks did not repatriate to the old country after 1914 since the old country for them was Turkey rather than Greece.

26.See Vecoli. In that article Vecoli agreed that historians had to move away from "constructing ideal types of the 'peasant' or the 'immigrant' ... [and] study the distinctive cultural character of each ethnic group ..." p. 417.

27.In the past fifteen years, a good deal of new work on the economic, social, and cultural history of Greece and in Greek anthropology has made it easier to study the premigration background of Greek-Americans. See A. Lily Macrakis and P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, eds., New Trends in Modern Greek Historiography, Modern Greek Studies Association, series 6, 1982.

28.Douglas Dakin, The Unification of Greece: 1770 - 1923 (London, 1973).

29.Dimitri Pentzopoulos, The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact Upon Greece (Paris, 1962), p. 26.

30.Michael A. Dendia, Ellenike Parikoiai ana ton Kosmon [Greek Colonies Around the World] (Athens, 1919); Tsoucalas, pp. 295-98 and 313-325.

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31.Walter F. Wilcox and Imre Ferenczi, International Migrations, 2 Vols. (New York, 1929-31), 1:376.

32.Ibid., figures taken from Table II, pp. 384-88.

33.Ibid.

34.Andreades; Polyzos; Apostolos Vakalopoulos, E Détiko Makedones Apodémé epi Tourkokratias [West Macedonian Emigrants During the Ottoman Rule] (Thessaloniki, 1958).

35.Wilcox and Ferenczi, p. 376.

36.Slavs from Turkey in Europe and Syrians and Armenians from Turkey in Asia outnumbered Greek immigrants from either part of the Empire to the United States between 1899 and 1907. Beginning with 1908 in European Turkey and with 1910 in Asiatic Turkey, the size of the participation of Ottoman Greeks in the exodus to the United States increased. See Wilcox and Ferenzci, Table XXXV, p. 489 and Table XXXVII, p. 491.

37.Dakin; Leftan Stavrianos, The Balkans Since 1453 (New York, 1958), pp. 539-40.

38.The Annual Reports of the Commissioner-General of Immigration for the period 1899 to 1924 contained no explanations of or definitions of the terms 'Turkey in Europe' or 'Turkey in Asia.' There may have been instructions concerning the classification of immigrants from the Ottoman Empire in unpublished instructions for immigration officials at ports of entry. None have been located by this researcher.

39.Polyzos; "Report of W.W. Husband, Special Immigrant Inspector, Regarding Immigration from Eastern Europe [and Asiatic Turkey]." Appendix V in Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration, 1914, p. 403; Stephen P. Ladas, The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey (New York, 1932) p. 441. William Oualid, "The Effect of the War Upon Labour in France," in Charles Gide, ed., The Effects of the War Upon French Economic Life (Oxford, 1923), p. 165.

40.See Chapter Three.

41.Repatriation among Greek emigrants to the United States was very high in the years prior to 1924 when the very restrictive and discriminatory Immigration Act of that year all but put a stop to the trans-Atlantic migrations of many peoples.

42.Andreades, pp. iii-vi; Repoulis; Saloutos, pp. 37-42.

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43.Saloutos, pp. 332 - 33. This error has aroused the ire of many Kastorian furriers who have been politically very conservative both in the their overseas communities as well as in their hometown. It is interesting that although Saloutos quoted Bambis Malafouris as a source for information on the radical Greek American press referred to in the same paragraph as the claims about the Kastorians, he did not refer to the section in Malafouris' book on Greeks in the fur industry. See Saloutos, p. 431, endnotes text on pages 332 - 33.

44.Bambis Malafouris, Ellénes tés Amerikés, 1528 - 1948 [Greeks of America, 1528 - 1948] (New York, 1948), p. 267.

45.Theodoros Giannakouli, "E Ellenoamerikani ston klado tes Gounarikes" [Greek-Americans in the Fur Business] offprint, 1963 from Argonaut, Vol. 2, 1960-62, pp. 9-11.

46.Giannakouli cited his main source of information on the early history of Greeks in the New York fur industry as "... the unforgettable Greek-American writer Ioannis A. Tozis, who lived New York's fur trade for some forty years ..." p. 8. His brief endnotes offer no other sources. Bambis Malafouris, who cited no sources in his text, told this writer that his information came from friends in the industry and from scattered articles from Greek-American newspapers; telephone interview, New York City, September, 1979.

47.The sources used for this section of the text are: For employers: Directory of the Fur Trade, Vols. 20 to 48 (1896 to 1925); Fur News Directory, The Standard, 1912 to 1915; Greek American Guide and Business Directory, 1907, 1909, 1910 and 1921; Membership Records and Credit Reports in the Archives of the United Fur Manufacturers Association, New York City, 1925 to 1943. For workers, the following sources were located in the Archives of the Furriers Joint Council in New York City: "Dues Cards," International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada, 1913 to 1939; "Membership Book for Cutters, Operators, Finishers and Nailors Craft Locals," Joint Board Furriers Union, compiled between 1921 and 1927?; Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York, "Registration Book," September 1, 1926 to January 17, 1937; "Retirement Records" of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry.

48.Five people were especially helpful in ascertaining the regional origins of individual Greek American furriers. Christy Adams meticulously reviewed the "Register of Kastorians Living Abroad" and ticked off the names of all the people whom he knew to have participated in the fur industry in New York City. Yanni Gouliouri in Kastoria and Andreas Manthos in New York identified Kastorians among the

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names of furriers extracted from the 1915 and 1925 New York State "Manuscript Censuses." John Vafiades and John Papayannis each provided information on the regional origins of Greek union organizers and leaders among the fur workers.

49.The 1915 and the 1925 New York State "Manuscript Censuses" were used. Names in the latter were located using known addresses for districts where Greek American and other furriers lived during those years.

50.Demos Kastorias (Florinés) [Municipality of Kastoria (of Florina)], "Demotologion: epi té Vasé ton deltion apografics genikou plethesmou tou Kratos paronton kai aponton demoton" [Registry Books: Based on the reports of the census of the general population of the Nation, present and absent citizens] nos. 1 to 10 and misc., 22 December 1920 (Handwritten); _____, "Vivlion Diamenonton eis to Exoteriko - Demos Kastorias" [Book of those [citizens] living abroad], (n.d.); "Student Registry of Kastoria's Second Public School for Males," 2 September 1915 to 20 June 1919 (Father's given name included as student's middle name); Siatisteon Mneme: Leukoma Sellogou Siatisteon Thessalonikes Gia ta Exenta Hronica tes Draseos tou [Siatistan Rememberence: Album of the Society of Siatistans in Thessaloniki for Sixty Years of Activity] (Thessaloniki, 1972), "Part III: Portraits of Siatistans," pp. g4 - g 187; Ioannis Apostolou, Istoria tes Siatistes [History of Siatista] (Athens, 1929), pp. 44-46, 82-83, 120-22, 128-29.

51.For the rendering of Greek names into American English, see: Sotirios S. Lontos "American Greek," American Speech 1 (March 1926):307-310.

52.Skaperdas actually arrived in New York City earlier than 1896. See Chapter Six.

53.Directory of the Fur Trade, Vols. 20 (1896), 30 (1906), and 34 (1910), sections for New York City. The firms engaged in the various aspects of fur manufacturing usually carried the names of the principle owner(s). Relatively few "styles" were names such as "The Greek Fur Company," which appeared in Volume 30, 1906-1907.

54.Seraphim Canoutas, Greek American Guide and Business Directory (New York, 1910), p. 368.

55.United Fur Manufacturers Association (New York City), Membership Records, 1925.

56.Directory of the Fur Trade, Vol. 48, 1925.

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57.Interviews with Christy Adams, Vasili Dai, Peter Nicholas, and John Vafiades. "Biographical Information" in Dun and Bradstreet Credit Reports, Credit Files of the UFMA, New York City.

58.One of those from Asia Minor was Lazarus Pantelides, born in Constantinople. He is first known to have gone into business in 1921 with a partner. By 1927, he was in business alone. During the 1930's, despite the depression, Pantelides was able to build a very profitable business manufacturing inexpensive, rabbit fur coats. See Chapter Six and "Dun and Bradstreet Credit Reports for L. Pantelides, Inc." in the files of the UFMA, New York City. Even in the 1970s and 1980s, furriers from Kastoria continued to dominate in the business. A growing number of these out to be people either whose parents settled in the town in Greece during and after the First World War or who migrated there from other parts of Greece seeking employment in the local industry there before emigrating to the United States. This became known to this writer during her two visits to Kastoria in 1977 and 1979 for research purposes.

59.Fur manufacturing enterprises throughout the twentieth century have, on the whole, been small scale operations with very short spans of survival. Moreover, as a highly competitive business, the work force was dispersed among firms which numbered between one and two thousand, depending on the status of the economy during any given year.

60.See Philip Foner, The Fur and Leather Workers Union (Newark, 1950) for the story of how the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada was built.

61.These interviews were held with retired Kastorian furriers who had worked in the New York City industry between 1906 and 1914: Damianos Aivazi, Peter Aivazi, Achilles Alvanos, Vasilios Dai, Vasilios Shioukas and Menelaos Toskos.

62.See Chapter Seven.

63.Interviews with retired furriers and in Malafouris, p. 267.

64.The registration book was discovered among the office records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City. This writer is indebted to Mr. Moe Feinblatt, office worker and later office manager in the fur workers union from the 1920s until his retirement in the early 1970s, who unearthed this invaluable document for her.

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65.Table 2.4 covers Greek American fur workers who were members of the Brotherhood and Local 70 for varying periods of time between 1926 and 1937. Of course, there were workers who never joined the union during those years and others who had been in and left the industry prior to 1926. Others joined after January 18, 1937. However, the Registration Book reflects a pattern which came to be established in the inter-war years and persisted until after the Second World War when a new influx of Greek immigrants entered the United States and the New York City fur industry.

66.Constantinople is actually located in Thrace, on the European side of the Bosphorus. However, as a city and a province it was an integral part of Asia Minor economically, politically and culturally. [Constantinople, Smyrna and Pergamon are the Greek names for the contemporary Turkish cities of Istanbul, Izmir and Bergama. In this Chapter and in those that follow, the Greek version will be used in referring to those and other places in Asia Minor.]

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CHAPTER THREE

THE OLD COUNTRY

The foregoing analysis of Greek-American furriers' birthplaces has located them in space but not in a particular time nor in terms of the societies from which they came. To gain a better sense of who they were before they left their homelands, why they emigrated, and what resources they might have brought with them, an examination of the political and socio-economic conditions prevailing in the societies from which they came can inform the motives behind their emigrations, the ways in which they adapted to work in the new society and the relationships they formed among themselves at their workplace.

This chapter explores the backgrounds of Greek American furriers from each of the two major regions of origin previous identified: from West Macedonia in European Turkey and from Asia Minor and its adjacent Aegean Islands in Asiatic Turkey. The chapter begins by showing that Ottoman Greeks were largely urban people engaged in non-agricultural occupations and lives. It then proceeds to review the econonmic conditions and political transformations in the old country which had prompted trans-Atlantic emigration,

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influenced the duration and patterns of their movement, and shaped their ability or desire to make a place for themselves in the new society. All that needs to be said about the old country cannot be neatly crammed into one chapter. Here, outlines have been drawn but in succeeding chapters we return frequently to the furriers' "many pasts"[1]

Ottoman Greeks as Urban People

From the analysis of the regional origins of Greek American furriers found in Chapter Two, it has been established that more than three-quarters of them had come from places which had been a part of the Ottoman Empire at least until the First World War. As has already been noted previously, Ottoman Greeks, in contrast to their counterparts in 'old Greece,' were mainly urban people. They came from cities and towns in South West Macedonia, along the western coast of Asia Minor and the islands of the Eastern Aegean. In Macedonia especially, to be a Greek ethnically and linguistically, almost by definition, meant that one lived in an urban area. In Asiatic Turkey urbanized Greeks outnumbered their rural coethnics while those in the rural areas were either commercial farmers or engaged in non-agricultural pursuits.

European Turkey

-Macedonia

In Macedonia,[2] Greeks had hardly ever been a peasant

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people, except in villages south of Kastoria, on the peninsula of Chalkidiki, along the lower Strymon River, and in the district of Kavala.[3] Most of the region's peasantry was Greek Orthodox by confession, but ethnically and linguistically they were Macedo-Slav, Vlach, and Albanian. Even the most fanatic Greek nationalists of the day acknowledged the cultural diversity of the peasantry by referring to them as "Slavophone," "Vlachophone," and "Alvanophone" Hellenes, while at the same time trying to count them as part of the Greek nation so as to justify the annexation of the province by Greece.[4]

Ethnic Greeks were essentially townspeople. They worked as urban laborers, in artisanal and handicraft occupations, in the liberal professions, and especially in commerce and trade linked to the surrounding rural economy. By religion they too were Orthodox and loyal to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. They spoke Greek as their mother tongue; sent their children to Greek schools for a classical education; and, as staunch defenders of Hellenism and Orthodoxy, they saw themselves as Greeks ("Hellenés," to be more precise) no matter what their ancestry might have been.[5] Above all else, they equated modern Macedonia with that of Alexander in antiquity and of the Byzantine Empire. They believed it should be united with the kingdom of Greece under the Greek monarch.[6] In 1905-1906, a writer from Greece who travelled through Macedonia visited Kastoria and observed: "In Kastoria today religion and language, moral

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and spiritual decorum, customs and values, feelings and yearnings, declare, explicitly and loudly, the Greek nationality."[7]

The towns and cities of southern and western Macedonia, from which many Greek American furriers had emigrated, had the strongest representation of Greeks. Around 1910, some towns in the southwest, like Siatista (population 8,000) and Kozani (population 12,000), were exclusively Greek with only the token presence of Ottoman administrative officials. Others had mixed populations made up of Greeks, Muslims (Ottoman officials, Turks, Albanians, or Gypsies), and possibly Jews. Around 1910, Kastoria had about 6,000 Greeks, 1,250 Muslims, and 700 Jews. However, Greeks were not always in the majority. In nearby Florina, the Muslim population outnumbered all the Orthodox Christians by about 4,000 people, while in Thessaloniki Jews, some 80,000, were the clear majority over the 30,000 Greeks and 20,000 Muslims there.[8]

The urban areas of southwest Macedonia (Vilayet of Monastir) had been important centers for Hellenization of the region's Orthodox Christians. Not only did they support the Patriarchist Church and educational institutions in the villages, but, as rural people moved into those towns, either for protection from the insecurity of the countryside or for work or business reasons, they became Hellenized there. This meant they adopted a Greek identity and, usually, the Greek language.[9] With the upsurge in

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nationalism among the various ethnic groups in the Macedonian countryside during the last half of the nineteenth century, Greek hegemony among the Orthodox Christian population was presented with its most serious challenge in the form of the Macedo-Slav and Bulgarian national movements.[10] The result was that, while Greek influence in the countryside was by no means eliminated, it diminished in many places and retreated more and more to the towns and cities of the south where, oddly enough, the Ottoman military presence helped to sustain it, at least until 1907.[11] By 1900, the cities and towns of Southwest Macedonia, especially Kastoria and Siatista, were clearly aligned with the Greek Patriarchist cause and any Orthodox who lived in them was a Patriarchist and eventually would become a Greek.[12]

Asiatic Turkey

In Asiatic Turkey, all Orthodox Christians were religiously affiliated to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. On the whole, they were linguistically and culturally Greek even though some spoke regional dialects, and had developed a culture distinct in several ways from those found in Greece.[13] Over the course of the nineteenth century, however, the church, under the Patriarchate and the Greek urban bourgeoisie, had actively disseminated a sense of "Hellenic" nationality and identity to Orthodox Christians through their schools and other community institutions.[14] Therefore, one can assume, unlike for

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European Turkey, that those who were part of the Greek Orthodox millet[15] in Asia Minor and the Aegean islands were Greek. The size of the Greek population of Asiatic Turkey just before the Balkan Wars was approximately 2.2 million. Four hundred sixty-nine thousand lived on the eastern Aegean islands from Samothraki in the north to Kastellorizo in the southeast (last of the Dodecanese Islands). One million seven hundred thousand lived in Asia Minor, mostly along the coastline from the Black Sea through the Bosphoros, Sea of Marmara and the Dardenelles to the Aegean, and in the western interior from the Aegean to a line of cities starting in the north at Ismid and running south through Eski Sehir, Afiun Karahissar, and Isbarta to Adalia on the southern Mediterranean coast. The islands were predominately Greek with Muslim minorities on some of them. In Asia Minor, Greeks were a minority with large concentrations in the three provinces of Aidin, Brussa, and Trebizond.[16]

-Aegean Islands

It is difficult to say with certainty what the distribution of the population between urban and rural areas was on the various eastern Aegean islands until the Greek government conducted a thorough census in 1920.[17] It is likely that on most of the smaller islands where the size of the population was modest, life had a decidely rural flavor. On the larger ones like Mytilene, Samos, Chios and Rhodes, which yielded many Greek American furriers, there were urban

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centers of varying sizes.[18] Between 1867 and 1902 the population of the largest island, Mytilene, grew from some 90,000 to 115,000.[19] In 1886, when the British traveller Henry Fanshawe Tozer visited it, he reported that its capital, also called Mytilene, had 20,000 inhabitants and that at least one other town, Ayasso, had seven to eight thousand.[20] More detailed information is available for Samos, which had been a self-governing principality under Ottoman suzereignity since 1832.[21] In 1898, its autonomous government ordered a census whose results were reported in the west in 1901 by Henry Hauttecoeur for the Belgian Royal Society of Geography. Of its 52,775 inhabitants in 7 towns and 22 villages, 18,907 (36%) were townspeople living in four communities of from 4,156 to 5,358 residents and the rest in settlements as small as 341 but with many as large as 1,200 to 3,000.[22] By 1913, more than 21,000 people (40%) lived in those four towns and another 16,000 in communities from 1,000 to 3,500 people.[23] Without a doubt, the majority, even on the larger islands, lived in the rural communities, but given the commercial character of agriculture and the economy and the compactness of insular existence, village life gravitated around the towns.

Except for Mytilene, island towns were hardly metropolises. But they were centers where agricultural and handicraft commodities from the countryside were collected for export to the mainland of Asia Minor and abroad and where new technology was disseminated and goods were

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distributed.[24] Moreover, they provided the facilities needed to carry on trade with the outside world. Banks, chambers of commerce, business associations, foreign trade representatives, communications and transportation systems, and professional services could be found, especially on the larger islands, at various stages of development.[25] On Samos, which had 48 schools for 5,500 children in 1901, the five upper schools in its main towns included several business courses for young men. "The elements of commerce, history of commerce, accounting, commercial arithmetic, commercial geography, political economy and the elements of commercial law ..." were among the subjects offered along with foreign languages like French and Turkish, which were useful in international trade. Such schools did not produce just businessmen but professionals in other fields as well. One which had also a strong humanities program could count among its most illustrious graduates 35 doctors of law, 36 medical doctors, 5 mechanical engineers, 6 agricultural engineers, 2 "laureates" of the Commerciale School of Marsailles, 3 pharmacists, etc.[26]

Life for all islanders, whether they lived in towns or villages, was anything but isolated. Their proximity to the fairly large and prosperous towns on the coast of Asia Minor made contact with and movement to and from the mainland frequent and vital to the region's economy. Merchants, traders, and seamen moved goods regularly up and down the coast between Smyrna and Constantinople.[27] Island artisans

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and laborers migrated seasonally to the towns and cities of Asia Minor or to Egypt to work in the building and construction trades.[28] Many peasants and businessmen migrated permanently to the mainland of Turkey to buy farmland or to settle as businessmen in towns.[29]

-Asia Minor

In Asia Minor, some Greeks had always lived in the coastal towns and cities. But there is strong evidence that in the nineteenth century a demographic shift was taking place in the western and northwestern parts of Asia Minor.[30] As the size of the urban population generally increased, its ethnic composition changed in favor of the Greeks, not only in the larger cities, but also in the smaller towns of the coast and of the western interior[31] - precisely the region of Asia Minor where many Greek-American furriers had been born. In some of these cities, the growth in the Greek population during the nineteenth century, and in particular between the 1880's and 1910, was extraordinary. In Constantinople, the Greek population was about 60,000 in the early 1830's, 120,000 by 1843, and swelled to 250,000 in 1910.[32] Smyrna, which had become the preeminent trading center between the Near East and the West in the nineteenth century, had 25,000 Greeks and 75,000 Muslims in a total population of 106,000 people in 1812. By 1885, the city had grown to 192,000 people and the number of Greeks had nearly quintrupled to 120,000, while the Muslim population declined to 40,000.[33] In 1922, when Greeks were

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forced to quit the city, the population numbered up to 200,000 of a total of 380,000. A smaller city, Pergamon, had 1,000 Greeks and 5,000 Muslims in 1850, 8,000 of each in 1880, but by 1910 there were 15,000 Greeks out of a total of 26,000 people.[34] Only a few other cities like Dikeli, Aivali and Phocaea were mostly or exclusively Greek.[35] But everywhere in western Asia Minor, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the numbers for Greeks were growing at a faster rate than were those for Muslims when the Greeks were steadily supplanting in the urban areas.[36]

These cities on the Aegean coast and in the western interior were commercial centers of varying sizes and importance for the regions surrounding them. Some were at the coastal terminus of railway lines or along the lines which led into the western interior. Others had roads leading into the nearby countryside. All acted as conduits in the process whereby agricultural and handicraft products were collected and exported and Western manufactured goods were imported and distributed. Many of the coastal towns were linked commercially with the adjacent Aegean islands and all had some sort of business, political and cultural ties to Smyrna which lay at the very heart of domestic and international trade and business.

Smyrna had supplanted Constantinople in international trade in the nineteenth century. In 1911, the Encyclopedia Britannica reported that about 7,000 steamships annually visited the port, which each year exported 3 million pounds

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sterling in goods and imported goods worth 4 million pounds sterling.[37] These figures do not take account of the domestic trade carried largely on sailboats between Ottoman ports. The city was cosmopolitan with its large international community of West Europeans, North Americans, Leventines, Greek nationals, etc., in addition to its Ottoman population of Greeks, Muslims, Armenians and Jews. All the major European countries and the United States had consular officials in the city and businesses from those countries had representatives there as well. Although the exporting of indigenous products through Smyrna was controlled by foreign concerns, the importing of foreign goods and internal commerce and trade were dominated by Greek merchants and businessmen who had commercial experience and even training and who often spoke a few European languages in addition to Greek and Turkish. By 1900, Greeks also were assuming the representation of foreign firms in Smyrna as they were in other cities as well.[38]

To the north and south of Smyrna along the Aegean coast were a string of smaller cities which were regional centers for the shipping trade: Old Phocaea, New Phocaea, Dikeli, Aivali, Chesme, Scala Nova, Budrun, etc. In the western interior along the four railway lines running to and from Smyrna were towns which were "'capitals' ... of smaller districts, and ... important distributing and collecting centers for the local trade ..."[39] (Yet other interior

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towns in the northwest were linked by rail to Brussa, another major interior center and from there to the Sea of Marmara and Constantinople to the north.[40]) These interior and northern coastal towns included: Aivalik, Pergamon, Artaki, Aidin, Kutahya, Mudania, Bigha, etc. -- all places where Greek American furriers had been born.

Although the trend towards urbanization was firmly established among Western Asia Minor Greeks by the 1880's, there continued to be a Greek rural population in the three provinces where Greeks were concentrated until the exchange of Christian for Muslim population between Greece and Turkey in 1923-24. In Aidin, the farmers cultivated vines, olives, figs and other fruits in the regions around Smyrna, Sivali, and the city of Aidin. In Trebizond on the Plateau of Pontus, they grew fruit, tobacco, and had market gardens. In Brussa, they were primarily cultivators of silkworms.[41] However, not all Greeks in the countryside were farmers, although a sizeable number lived in the small towns and villages of Turkey with populations under 5,000.[42] Some had their families living on the land and managing the farm while they worked at some other trade or occupation. If their community was coastal, they often went to sea as fisherman, sailors, and marine shippers. Otherwise, they worked as itinerant artisans or traders in Smyrna, Constantinople, Alexandria, or in some other Ottoman city.[43] Since the crops they grew were not labor intensive, the heavy work on their farms was done by hired

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Muslim workers under their relatives' supervision. Before the First World War, Greek rural entrepreneurs had established silk spinning mills, oil presses powered by steam, and cognac factories in the interior countryside to process the region's agricultural products.[44] Other rural Greeks were landlords who rented land to Muslim peasants under sharecropping arrangements or who "attracted [foreign] Greek labourers, particularly for specialized forms of production, like olive or currant-farming, in which the peasantry of European Greece and the islands [was] skilled."[45] Finally, Greeks were the professionals (lawyers, doctors, etc.) in the small towns and the shopkeepers (bakal) in many villages. The latter owned a kind of general store which sold imported and manufactured goods to the Muslim peasants and also generously extended credit to them when they lacked cash for taxes or for purchases. This often led to a cycle of debt and borrowing that resulted in the expropriation of the peasants' land when they failed to meet their obligations. The bakal eventually became a major creditor in many villages and eventually a substantial landowner.[46]

The estimates of what proportion of Asia Minor Greeks were urbanized by the time that they were forced to leave Turkey between 1922 and 1924 have varied from one half to two thirds.[47] The League of Nations' Refugee Settlement Commission in one part of the report of its work described the refugees from Asia Minor as "wholly town dwellers or half urban, half agricultural" and elsewhere said that the

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"urban element outnumbers the rural element though in what ratio it would be difficult to say." They were, to be sure, discussing people who were still in Asiatic Turkey after 1922. Some 150,000 had already left for mainland Greece, the Aegean islands, Egypt or elsewhere between 1914 and 1920.[48]

To what extent natural growth contributed to the expansion of the Greek population in western Asia Minor has never been studied. It has been claimed that Greeks had a "higher fecundity" than did the Turks.[49] However, it is much more likely that the Greek population of Asia Minor multiplied during the last half of the nineteenth century through the first decade of the twentieth because of in-migration of Greeks from Greece, the Aegean islands, and European Turkey.[50] From as early as 1834, peasants from the Peloponnesus began to leave for permanent settlement in Asia Minor and Aegean islands. In turn, thousands of islanders from Samos, Mytilene, etc., left their densely populated homelands to settle in the fertile farmlands of the valleys in Aidin and Brussa provinces.[51] Along with Greeks indigenous to Asia Minor, they took advantage of the Tanzimat reforms of the 1850's and '60's, which afforded the Orthodox Christians protection as a religious minority in a majority Muslim state and which allowed them to own land in Asia Minor.[52] Many of them were also attracted by the job and business opportunities available to them in the building of the railroads and infrastructure of Asiatic Turkey after

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the 1860's.[53] As craftsmen, they had construction and management skills and, in some cases, technical training which the railway companies needed. Given the push factors existing in Greece, European Turkey and the islands, Asia Minor was a desirable alternative. However, by the time of the Balkan Wars, it was no longer advantageous to be a Greek in Turkey and the movement there stopped.

Community Life for Ottoman Greeks

Both in European and Asiatic Turkey, although Greeks lived under Ottoman rule, their communities had considerable internal autonomy. Greek communities were allowed certain privileges[54] to direct their religious, secular and even business affairs so long as their activities did not conflict with Ottoman policy or challege their power and as long as they paid their taxes. The head of the community was the highest ranking Orthodox clergyman. He chaired various committees and bodies which were established to oversee institutions and structures which the community had organized. However, the other members of such administrative and policy making bodies were lay officials, members of the community who had been elected to such positions by various constituencies. Everywhere in the Ottoman Empire, the Greek communities had developed ethnic institutions to meet the spritiual, educational, health, legal, judicial, commercial, economic and social needs of their inhabitants. There were churches, schools, hospitals,

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committees coordinating cultural events and publishing newspapers and books, and even judicial organs for handling civil, commercial and criminal matters within the community. Very importantly, Ottoman Greek commercial and manufacturing interests had developed a system of guilds to regulate and protect their business and commercial interests. Sultan Mustafa the Third had decreed in 1773 that the Greek Orthodox guilds had the right to litigate matters among their members and the power to impose and enforce their judgments. If they paid their taxes to the Ottoman treasury in advance, they could appoint officials of the Greek community in their towns and participate in the administration of communal affairs.[55] Guild members could look to the guild's treasury as a source for loans made with interest charged. In addition to looking after the occupational interests of its members, the guilds as institutions looked after their members' moral and ethical conduct, within the trade and in the community, gave monthly monetary help to their unemployed, sick, or aged guildsmen, provided doweries for and married the daughters of their less fortunate members, and gave funerals as well as memorials for those among them who died impoverished. In the community the guild's treasury supported hospitals and orphanages, built and maintained schools and churches, paid teachers' salaries, published books, educated children in boarding schools locally and abroad in European universities, and engaged in other charitable acts. Along

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with the brotherhoods, religious and humanitarian societies open to all Greek Orthodox, the guilds organized social solidarity and communal self-help during the era of Ottoman domination.[56]

By the twentieth century, the guilds, while nominally still in existence, had declined precipitously in importance.[57] Western manufactured goods and Western styles had overwhelmed the Ottoman economy replacing the, sometimes more expensive, local handicrafts goods and changing tastes and fashion. As that shift proceeded, it affected not only the economy of the Greek communities but their social and power structure as well in favor especially of the merchant and commercial classes.

Contrary to the image of the immigrant as a peasant from an isolated and homogeneous village, most Ottoman Greeks came from ethnically diverse communities. As discussed previously, some Ottoman towns like Siatista and some of the Aegean islands were exclusively Greek. But the larger urban settlements in both sections of the Empire were multi-ethnic, religiously diverse communities. In those places, ethno-religious groups lived in separate quarters of the city. In Kastoria, for example, where Greek Orthodox Chrisitians were in the majority, the rest of the town's population made up of Turks, Gypsies, and Jews each had their own residential sections though the commercial areas were common. A similar situation could be found in any of the towns and cities of Asia Minor from which Greek American

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furriers emigrated. Greeks shared the same towns and cities with Turks, Armenians, Jews and, in very large cites like Constantinople or Smyrna, with Europeans from various countries who had settled there for business or other reasons. Thus, those who emigrated overseas had had experience of living among people culturally and socially different from them before they arrived in the United States. This did not make them more tolerant or cosmopolitan, but it meant that they had some experience in coexisting among strangers.

Community life among Ottoman Greeks had been cohesive and had provided its members with strong bonds which they carried abroad with them. Both migration (a seasonal or periodic phenomenon) and emigration (more permanent movement) were not uncommon experiences for them. Ottoman Greeks travelled, worked and lived throughout the Asiatic, African and European sections of the Ottoman Empire. Whether their journeys abroad were temporary or permanent, these Greeks, as with Greeks from old Greece[58], established communities in their new places of residence. Organized usually around a church, which under Ottoman rule had come to be equated with the nation, these emigrants formed schools, business associations, social and cultural clubs. Very frequently, they also established funds and committees to provide various kinds of financial assistance to their communities in the old country.[59]

It is important to note here that, just as Greek

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immigrant furriers in the United States will be shown to have relied on old country networks and on chain migrations for establishing themselves in business, entrepreneurial Ottoman Greeks kept close business ties to their relatives at home, frequently recruited kith and kin to work in any enterprise established abroad, and developed business networks and solidarity among coethnics in the host country. For those who worked abroad seasonally as craftsmen, artisans, or laborers, ethnic networks were useful in finding places to work.[60] The ethnic communities they formed in the host country helped them to foster and protect their business and work interests there.

Economic Conditions

As Ottoman Greeks were leaving their homelands to emigrate overseas, the economy of the old world was adjusting to deep-rooted changes which had begun to take shape over the previous century. Both European and Asiatic Turkey had been fundamentally feudal, agrarian societies at the end of the eighteenth century. But increasingly, their economies were being drawn into the world capitalist system. Agricultural production became distinctly market-oriented with emphasis placed on planting crops that could be sold for cash on the world markets. Yet, Turkey was only on the periphery of the world capitalist system which was then dominated by British, German, and French capital.[61] All three countries, along with imperial Russia, had important

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geopolitical and economic interests in the Balkans and Mediterranean. The industrial nations viewed Turkey not only as a strategic military site, but as a market for their industrial goods, a source of agricultural products and raw materials for Western industry, and of food for their expanding urban populations. During most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Turkey's major trading partner had been Britain, where it exported grain, cotton, madder root, raw silk, figs, raisins, opium, valonia, and mohair yarn.[62] Under the Anglo-Turkish Trade Treaty of 1838, which gave Britain a most favored nation status, Britain acquired important concessions from the Turkish government, which allowed its subjects rights to purchase and export Ottoman products, to engage freely in the Empire's internal trade, and to be exempt from most internal taxes and export duties. Very importantly, imports of British cotton goods and manufactures, refined sugar, iron and steel, among other industrial products, enjoyed free entry into the Empire. Within a few years, British imports overwhelmed the Ottoman marketplace. By the 1850's, Turkey had become Great Britain's third largest market.[63] Similar agreements were signed later on with other Western industrial powers granting them similar privileges.[64]

In order to facilitate the trade between Western Europe and the Empire, financial institutions and a transportation and communications infrastructure were developed by various European capitalist interest groups. In 1856, Great Britain

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chartered the Ottoman Imperial Bank, which subsequently came under French control.[65] Not only did this institution provide credit for commerce, it also became a major lender to the Ottoman state. It provided credit to cover the growing trade deficit with Western European countries and to finance the development of transportation and communication in the country (railways, ports, bridges, local transit, telegraph systems, and electrification). Other banks were owned by British, French, German and Levantine bankers and financiers. Only in 1916 was the first national bank, the National Credit Bank, established under the control of the Ottoman government.[66] The intensity of foreign investment, in particular by French banks and companies, led Herbert Feis to observe in Europe: The World's Banker, that ". . . it was the ... investor who above all financed economic change in Turkey."[67]

The penetration of European capital into the Ottoman Empire in the form of international trade, loans, and investment brought structural changes to its economy and society. The spread of commercial farming and the expansion of imports of Western industrial goods at the expense of local handicrafts hastened the decline of feudal institutions and relationships in agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing.[68] This economic transformation, coupled with the internal political instability and nationalist awakening in the Empire, had important results for the Greek communities in southwest Macedonia and Anatolia, albeit in

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somewhat different ways. For one thing, in both parts of the Empire, Greeks became more concentrated in and around urban areas by 1900. Secondly, there was a realignment of economic conditions and of the socio-economic positions of Greeks. In West Macedonia this resulted in an eclipse of a once prosperous life while in Anatolia, at least until 1914, there was a blossoming of opportunities for many Greeks. Finally, in the first two decades of the twentieth century, transAtlantic emigration increasingly became an alternative that some Ottoman Greeks chose over the political and socio-economic crises of their world.

-Macedonia

From the seventeenth to the early ninettenth centuries the cities of southwest Macedonia had been thriving commercial centers despite being under Ottoman rule.[69] Merchants from these cities exported the region's agricultural and handicraft commodities and imported manufactured and luxury goods from abroad. It is unclear to what extent these merchants handled the export crops produced by peasant sharecroppers on <u>ciftliks</u>[70] owned by Ottoman landlords. But what is known is that they traded commodities which came from the region's free peasant and herders' economy that existed in the mountains. On the mountain slopes of Macedonia, inaccessible to Ottoman <u>beys</u> and their military retinues and impractical for estate agriculture, free villagers, Macedo-Slavs and Vlachs, bred livestock, cultivated vines, and farmed plants and herbs

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(saffron, flax, camomile, etc.) which were adaptable to the rigors of the mountain. Together with their families, they processed and manufactured rudimentary handicraft products linked to the pastoral and mountain economy. Most of the wool sheared from sheep was cleaned, bundled and sent to Central European factories.[71] A prolific cottage industry grew among peasant women who made thread, spun and dyed red yarn, and wove a course fabric from the rest of the wool both for domestic consumption and for foreign markets.[72] Others made sweaters, socks, blankets and other rough garments for sale in regional markets. The processing of other animal by-products, like meat, hides, butter, cheese and tallow, in addition to that of wine, alcohol, saffron, silk, and beeswax made up the rest of the handicraft production. Most of these commodities were exported as intermediate products to be finished or used in manufacturing processes abroad. Merchants from the cities, like Kastoria and Siatista, would travel around the countryside to buy these goods or take them on consignment from the producers to sell in markets and trade fairs abroad - naturally at great profit to the merchants.[73]

The history of commerce in West Macedonia dates back to the sixteenth century. From the beginning, it was dominated by ethnic Greeks, although eventually Jews and Hellenized Vlachs and Macedo-Slavs joined them.[74] They travelled initially within the Empire and the Mediterranean basin; but by the seventeenth century, they increasingly turned to

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Central Europe, which needed Balkan agricultural and handicraft products for its economy. As a result, the eighteenth century was a time of great prosperity for West Macedonian cities and their merchants. By 1800, Siatista, for example, had some two hundred trading houses and had long been known by the nickname "flourohorio," land of florins, for its wealth.[75] The businessmen involved in this trade had started out as muleteers, carters, forwarders or employees of others, but in time became traders, merchants, and even financiers.[76] During this period a class of merchant capitalists had emerged in Kastoria, Siatista, and other West Macedonian towns. They amassed enormous fortunes from their business dealings since they enjoyed exclusive control over access to markets.

After 1820, a long decline set in for all of southwest Macedonia, reaching its lowest point during the First World War. The initial downturn was related to the Napoleonic Wars and to the subsequent changes in the political geography of Europe which closed off access to the traditional markets for Macedonian goods. Later, the spread of industrialization in the West and the development of new products and sources of raw materials weakened the demand for Macedonian as well as for other Ottomoan handicrafts and agricultural goods. Moreover, modern modes of transportation (railroads and motor transport instead of animal caravans) and a shift in transportation grids and trade routes, away from those traditionally used, made it

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more difficult and expensive for Macedonian merchants to get their goods to markets. The internal political and social crises and the intensification of hostilities in all of West Macedonia at the end of the nineteenth century, coupled with the fluctuations in the world capitalist economy at the time, further weakened the peasant and commercial economy. Many cities all but collapsed and the surrounding countryside continuously lost population. Siatista, for example, shed its former éclat and was reduced to a backwater, dependent upon the export of grapes and wine from its vineyards, of fur goods from what remained of its fur industry, and, like more and more West Macedonian towns, of labor.[77]

From 1897 to 1913, all of Macedonia was in a state of nearly continuous war and turmoil. Kastoria escaped some of the chaos because it was the seat of an Ottoman governor (kaimakam) and a garrison for Ottoman troops. But other towns, and most of all, the countryside, were not spared the disorder brought on by the Macedonian Struggle (1897 to 1907). A severe economic crisis seized the region between 1903 and 1905.[78] The brief foreign occupation of the whole province beginning around 1906 and the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 brought a lull to the fighting. Then, with the two Balkan Wars (1912 and 1913) there was a resumption in hostilities and hardship which lasted until the end of the Great War. The situation had been partially stabilized, at least politically, by the signing in 1913 of the Treaty of

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Bucharest, which acknowledged Greece's sovereignty over a section of Macedonia. But socio-economic conditions remaind in disarray for more than a decade with the influx of Greek Orthodox refugees from parts of Thrace (1914) and Asia Minor (1923-24), the deportation of Muslims and Macedo-Slavs to Turkey and Bulgaria respectively, and the mass emigration of Orthodox peasants and townspeople.[79]

A major change which had occurred as a result of the Balkan Wars was that Macedonia was wrested from Ottoman domination and divided among Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece. The irony of this long-sought-after liberation[80] was that it completed the economic eclipse of West Macedonia. Whatever hope the Macedonian Greeks had had for a national regeneration were dashed. Many people had returned from abroad in 1912 and 1913 to help fight for the liberation of their homeland. After the victories of the Greek forces in November 1912 and early 1913, they, along with their compatriots who had remained in Macedonia, looked forward "to finding in a free homeland abundant means for livelihood and the protection and support of the [new] Government. Unfortunately, the hopes of the repatriated dissipated almost immediately after the second [Balkan] war ..."[81]

First of all, the region, until then part of the Ottoman Vilaget of Monastir, was no longer a single political unit. Its merchants now had to contend with international borders, laws, duties, and restrictions, whereas in the past, these had either not existed or were

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uniform within one realm. Secondly, southwest Macedonia was absorbed into a preexisting state with national priorities that often superceded regional concerns. Athens' emphasis was on the fertile plans and industrial potential of the central and eastern parts of the province. New commercial centers were formed in the eastern part of Macedonia, which was more accessible to the rest of Greece and where the cultivation of tobacco for export was most successful. Finally, the toughest blows to the economy came from the new administration of the province, which kept the heaviest Turkish land tax and almost immediately extended other taxes from Greece proper into the newly annexed region. To bring the new region into step commercially with the rest of the nation, customs duties were raised and new tariffs and protectionist duties imposed on incoming goods.[82] These measures were disastrous for what was left of international trade and internal commerce. They increased the cost of living and further reduced employment opportunities in business.

By the end of the First World War, West Macedonia was a seriously depressed area.[83] Many of its communities lost population between 1913 and 1920. One of the reasons was that emigration became an increasingly attractive alternative for young men and for entire families because the towns' economies could not absorb young workers or sustain many families. The towns' occupational structures remained preindustrial, even though the market system had taken hold

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of production relations. Businessmen were more likely to deal in imported goods which came to them after 1913 via Thessaloniki. The region's traditional handicraft exports had largely disappeared. What light manufacturing that existed in the towns were still workshop operations and handprocesses until after the First World War. Even then, mechanization was adopted at a snail's pace. The handicrafts that survived reflected the undeveloped infrastructure and processing sector or were appendages of the commercial economy which imported western manufactured goods. Some of these crafts processed and serviced the imported goods for local consumption. For example, tailors transformed European cloth, not into the traditional costume, but into Western styles which were inceasingly popular among the young and the prosperous. Some serviced durable goods, like watches, which were brought from abroad. Others, like food processors, met the local demand for bread, milk products, etc.

A list of the occupations found in the 1920 census of Kastoria confirms this pattern. Kastoria was exceptional among most West Macedonian towns because it produced an export product - a fur product. Although the number of people who worked in fur manufacturing can be only guessed for the period up to and including the First World War, in 1920 the Greek government's industrial census showed that there were 418 furriers in Macedonia, most of them probably in Kastoria. Even furriers worked in small workshops with

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only a modest proportion using foot-powered sewing machines. Much of the production process required great skill and was labor intensive. From Kastoria's Town Registry Books for 1920 and from the Register of Students for the Second Public School, the following occupations other than furrier or fur merchant have been taken:

baker	doctor	jeweller	servant
barber	driver	land owner	shoe maker
blacksmith	fish monger	merchant	tailor
boatman	fisherman	miller	timber merchant
carpenter	goldsmith	money changer	vendor
clergyman	grocer	photographer	watchmaker
confectioner	inkeeper	repairer	water carrier

-Asia Minor and the Aegean Islands

In contrast to West Macedonia, the Greek communities of Western Asia Minor and the Aegean Islands benefitted from the growth of European investment and business activity in the Empire.[84] Some became facilitators of that growth while others took advantage of spin-off effects of the development of trade and of the infrastructure of the region. The historical prominence of Greeks in the commercial sector of the Empire's economy was a major advantage to them once trade with the West increased after 1838. Foreign commercial houses initially proscribed their role in exporting Ottoman products overseas, although by 1900 many of these firms opted for representation in Turkey by local Greeks. However, Greeks had the advantage in internal trade and in the distribution of imported goods to

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domestic markets. Greeks knew the markets, spoke the necessary languages, understood the local customs, had experience in trading in the Empire, and were willing and able to go to places no foreigner would want to go. There were also Greek bankers who could finance local commerce and cooperate with international bankers to issue letters of credit and to conduct other financial transactions to expedite trade. Moreover, some got their start in business while working on railroad construction in Western Asia Minor. Between 1869 and the early twentieth century, Greeks had accompanied the British and French railway companies as construction crews, railwaymen, laborers, and even technicians for the building of the railroads into the interior. They found opportunities to establish themselves in the villages and towns along the lines as merchants, shopkeepers (more like trading posts), and land owners.

Greeks were involved in every aspect of trade and distribution. Before the First World War, business clubs of Greeks were very numerous in the Ottoman capital and the major seaport cities of Asia Minor.[85] The merchants fell into two main categories: First, there were the big merchant capitalists who imported Western products, acted as agents for foreign firms, and distributed goods from their warehouses in port cities (like Smyrna, Constantinople, Aivalik, Mytilene, etc.) to lesser merchants, middlemen and traders who made up the second category. These ran shops in the cities and towns on the coast and in the interior and

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also brought imported goods to remote places away from the coastal towns. Other Greeks from the mainland and the islands were forwarders, shippers, merchant seamen, clerks, etc. in the distribution system which fanned out from the coastal and island ports to interior cities along the railroads.

In agriculture Asia Minor Greeks excelled in the cultivation of tobacco, grapes, figs and other fruits and in the cultivation of silkworms. These same crops were grown on the larger Aegean islands. In fact, many of the farmers had emigrated to Asia Minor from the islands to escape the pressures of their extremely dense populations on limited land. Their farms were commercial enterprises geared to export of cash crops. The U.S. counsel general in Smyrna at the time that the Turks retook the city in 1922, George Horton, described the Greek farmer as "... a progressive rather up-to-date agricultural element ..." and reported that "a good many of the Greeks come to America and get new methods of agriculture ..." which they took back and implemented.[86] Farmers from Mytilene imported many innovations to their island and to their adopted homes in Asia Minor: American grapevines for their vineyards; chemical fertilizers; harvesting and milling machines; and tobacco cultivation to the area around Pergamon, northeast of Smyrna.[87] Meanwhile, many land owners did not actually farm the land themselves. The Refugee Resettlement Commission classified these as "<u>astogeorghi</u>" or citizen

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farmers. They "... owned land but did not farm it themselves, or did so occassionally, living mostly by some other trade." Elsewhere in its report, the Commission explained that they were "... a numerous class of small owners in possession of land which they cultivated but which they very often left to the care of their families, or on which they sometimes employed agricultural workmen for heavy work. The owners themselves went to the large or small towns and reinforced the class of artisans, shopkeepers, etc. Those of the coast towns shipped as seamen on the little sailing vessels which dot the eastern basin of the Mediterranean."[88]

Parallel to this prosperity, other sectors of the Greek community were displaced by this same economic development. In agriculture, the farmers experienced a major crisis after 1900 when the prices for olive oil and valoria (acorn) dropped sharply. Some of the islanders fell into debt and ultimately looked to emigration for relief.[89] The importation of foreign manufactured goods and the adoption of Western styles and fashions undermined the traditional handicrafts and the guild structure of production as it had in West Macedonia.[90] Western goods were usually cheaper, more plentiful and often of a better quality than the locally made products. Greeks tended to be the independent, small commodity producers in the towns and cities. They processed food products and manufactured textiles, clothing, shoes, soap, household goods, tools and equipment, etc. for

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Muslim, Christian and other people. As imports increased, many craftsmen and craft workers became redundant. At best, as the market for their handcrafted products contracted, a few of the well-established, probably older, producers could survive. When they and their customers died out, so did their craft. Their ability to make a living and to secure the future in the crafts for their sons disappeared. Young workers, apprentices, and aspirants had to seek alternatives elsewhere as did many of the farmers.[91]

The upwardly mobile socio-economic positions Greeks held in Asia Minor does not preclude the existence of social classes in their communities.[92] One segment, the most powerful and wealthy, was attached to the commercial capitalist economy of Asiatic Turkey. They were the large importers, the owners of merchant houses and shipping lines, the shipbuilders, bankers, and financiers who operated in Smyrna, Constantinople, Broussa, and other major towns in Asia Minor and the islands and who made up the big bourgeoisie. There was also a very large petty bourgeoisie found in all the urban and rural areas. They were the small merchants, traders, shopkeepers, marine carriers and boatowners, factory and workshop owners, and farmers who ran small operations. Greeks were also well represented in the liberal professions as doctors, lawyers, clergymen, teachers, engineers, intellectuals, writers, etc.

The independent artisans and handicraft producers, on the one hand, and the craft workers, farm workers, and

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skilled and unskilled laborers, on the other, made up two sections of the working class.[93] The former were rapidly diminishing, while the latter were growing in numbers as the neocolonial character of the Ottoman economy became more pronounced. It is likely that these "proletarians" were the sons of craftsmen, small farmers, and some of the small businessmen. These men could not be absorbed into the craft and farming economy at the beginning of this century, given the decline of craft production, the instability of prices and demand for agricultural products, and the very rapid growth of the Greek urban and rural populations between 1880 and 1910. These workers made up the construction crews for the railroads, housing, and other building projects, the personnel of merchant houses and importers, and the workforce in the processing operations for agricultural products (in cities and the countryside). They also were dockworkers, porters, boatmen, seamen, drivers, messengers and errand runners, domestic servants, and other manual laborers. As the urban populations grew, Greek businessmen opened taverns, cafes, sweet shops, coffeehouses, hotels, and other small businesses catering to local needs. Such small scale enterprises were numerous in Constantinople, Smyrna and other places and employed many people as workers.

It should be noted that a major turning point for the closely intertwined economic life of Western Asia Minor and the Aegean islands came at the end of the Balkan Wars. All of the prosperity evaporated virtually overnight and almost

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two million Greeks were eventually displaced or killed. In 1913, the Aegean islands, except for the Dodecanese, Imbros and Tenedos, were annexed into Greece and abruptly cut off from Turkish Asia Minor. In 1914, the Turkish government initiated a policy of forced removals of Greeks from the coastal regions of Western Asia Minor. Thousands were sent into exile in the interior over the next five to seven years. In 1914, 150,000 Greeks left their farms, jobs, and businesses in Aidin Province and fled to Greece, mainly to the newly liberated islands. There was a brief revival during the occupation of the area by the Greek army between 1919 and 1922 when about 100,000 returned to Aidin province and resumed their former lives. But by September, 1922, that too had to be abandoned.[94]

Trans Atlantic Migration

From the previous sections of this chapter it is evident that West Macedonian, Asia Minor and Aegean Island Greeks had been geographically mobile long before some of them turned their sights to North America. They had moved about the Balkans, the Mediterranean, Central Europe, and throughout the Middle Eastern and North African regions of the Ottoman Empire.[95] Before 1908, trans-Atlantic migration from those areas was modest to non-existent.[96] Before 1900 the few who arrived in the United States were either businessmen looking for new sources of imports or for technology to take back to the old country or they were

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artisans and craft workers looking for seasonal work which they had previously found in Balkan and Ottoman cities. All of them had learned either from their personal experiences or from those of their relatives, friends, and neighbors that migration at the very most, could result in socio-economic mobility at home. At the very least, it was one way to make a living and to provide for the cash needs of the family in an increasingly monetized economy. None of them expected to settle permanently in the United States. They viewed their migration as a part of the continuum in which businessmen and skilled workmen were temporarily separated from their families while they worked abroad. Sometimes their separation lasted a few months; at other times, a few years. But at the end of the term, the family was reunited in the homeland. As Ottoman Greeks left for the United States, the direction was new, but the process was not.

Political developments within the Ottoman Empire between 1903 and 1914 stimulated a larger volume of emigration among Greeks. The Ottoman Empire had been experiencing dramatic political transformations and convulsions even before the time when Greek American furriers were leaving the old world. Among these the most important for Ottoman Greek emigration were (1) the struggle in Macedonia for control of the province (1897 to 1914);[97] (2) the imposition of a policy of Turkification by the Ottoman authorities (1908);[98] (3) annexation of Macedonia

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and the Aegean Islands by Greece (1912 to 1914);[99] and (4) the Turkish program of repression and forced removals of the Greek population in Asia Minor (1914 to 1923).[100] While the fighting in Macedonia, the onset of the subsequent Balkan Wars coupled with the crushing economic depression and the occupational displacement of Ottoman youth, were all critical factors encouraging the acceleration of the pace of emigration, the most important catalyst was the imposition of universal military conscription in 1908 by the Young Turk government.[101] After 1908, thousands of young men fled their homelands in both the European and Asiatic sections of the Empire in order to avoid the draft. They wanted no part of serving in the oppressor's army.

In these years, the trip abroad was still considered to be temporary. These young men thought that the stay abroad would last until some change had occurred in the old country or until some objective had been achieved in the United States: the homeland freed; Ottoman repression of Greek youth lifted; debts paid; doweries of young female family members assured; capital (to buy land, build a home, or start a business) accumulated, and, especially, the Ottoman military draft of Christian youth revoked.

Whether or not the migration actually was temporary is hard to determine statistically. Until 1908, the United States Immigration Bureau did not keep records on emigrants to other countries. In 1908, the Immigration Bureau began to tabulate emigration according to nationality and country

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of intended residence. By then, the increasingly younger emigrants who had left Turkey to avoid military service were hardly in a position to return even if they wanted to. Eventually, many who had arrived in the United States prior to the First World War stayed, perhaps returning to get married or to fight as volunteers in the Greek Army in the Balkan Wars.

After 1914, the transatlantic journey became a one-way movement for most Ottoman Greeks. For those from newly liberated regions like West Macedonia and the Aegean Islands, it was one alternative to the disappointment that followed the annexation of their homelands by Greece. Some of the first to leave for the United States in 1914 were the volunteers from the Balkan Wars. The economic and administrative impact of the annexation on the Aegean Islands was very similar to that on West Macedonia, which has been described previously: unbearable taxes and tariffs, sharp rise in the cost of living, administrative chaos, etc. But worst of all for the islanders was the influx of 115,000 refugees from Asia Minor into their already densely populated communities. Aside from the strains on housing, food supplies, and facilities, the sudden and drastic expansion of the labor market severly depressed wages and created unemployment. These factors taken together led many Macedonian and island families to emigrate. In 1916, at the height of the exodus, a researcher in the Andreades' study of Greek emigration

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described how many of his compatriots from Mytilene were disposing of all their property before leaving with their families for the United States, where they would settle as families for good. In West Macedonia, another Andreades' researcher noted with alarm that by 1916 emigration from Kozani had also become a family endeavor. The rate of emigration had increased three times what it was in the last years of Ottoman rule.[102]

For the Asia Minor Greeks, the turning point for emigration also came in 1914, when the Young Turk government began the forced exile of Greeks from the coastal regions and intesified the enforcement of their draft laws. While the population shifts were not uniformly and consistently carried out, young Greeks were targets of repression and opted to leave the country either for the, by then, Greek islands of the Aegean or for the United States. Later, some of those who had taken refuge on the islands made their way to the United States as well. Others from the Greek communities of Constantinople and Smyrna, which had been untouched by the population removals, left for Greece, Europe, and the United States. Many had hoped to ride out the storm until the Greek Army could take control of Western Asia Minor.

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Conclusion

Whether the immigrant Greek-American furriers came from Macedonia, Asia Minor, or the Aegean islands, then, they were leaving societies which had been in a state of political turmoil and instability and economic transformation for decades. Those who left Macedonia for North America took with them their ardent nationalism, the conservatism which characterized the Patriarchist cause, and a fervent anti-socialist fanaticism which would reappear among the furriers as anti-communism during the struggles between coethnic workers and employers at the U.S. workplace. For them the annexation of their homeland into Greek territory would once again allow them access to their families and relatives. They could return to their hometowns to visit relatives, to marry, and to establish trans-Atlantic business relations with kinsmen and friends.

Both Macedonian and Asiatic Greeks left their homelands at least partially prepared to confront the challenges of the new society. Migration was not a new experience for them; neither was the status of 'minority' within a majority society made up of dominant groups and many other minorities. Perhaps for most the trans-Atlantic journey was the first trip away from home; but emigration was a familiar experience within their families and communities. Even organizing the components of an ethnic community within a host society was not a totally new experience. After all, their parents, brothers, relatives and fellow townspeople

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had done it before them in different places. Very importantly, Ottoman Greeks brought with them very critical economic resources, intangible though they were, which they could use to find a niche for themselves in the economy of the host country: their familiarity with small scale business and with craft production. Some of them had to drastically modify or adapt their craft experiences to suit opportunities in the new world.[103] But for those who had been furriers in the old world, opportunities for almost complete transfer of skills awaited them. Chapter four delves into the fur manufacturing skills of one group of West Macedonians.

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ENDNOTES

1.Reference to Herbert Gutman and Greg S. Kealey, Many Pasts (New York, 1972).

2.In antiquity, Macedonia had been a part of the inheritance and empire of Alexander the Great. Under the Ottomans, the name was not used. Instead, the region consisted of two vilayets (major administrative provinces); the Vilayet of Monastir and the Vilayet of Thessalonik. Today, the term refers to a geographic region that is divided among three nations: Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia.

3.H.N. Brailsford, Macedonia: its Races and their Furture (London, 1906), pp. 86, 88; and Encyclopedia Britannica, 1911 ed., s.v. "Macedonia."

4.Stephanos I. Papadopoulos, Ekpedeutiki kai Koinonike Drasterioteta tou Ellenismou Kata ton Teleutrio Eona tes Tourkokratias [Educational and Social Activity During the Last Century of Turkish Rule] (Thessaloniki, 1970), p. 7. A good example of how Greek nationalists used these terms is: Ath. Halkiopoulos, E Makedonia: Ethnologiki Statistike ton Vilaetion Thessalonikis kai Monastiriou [Macedonia: Ethnological Statistics of the Vilayets of Thessaloniki and Monastir] (Athens, 1910), pp. iii-x. He argued that of Macedonia's 1.7 million "souls," 600,000 were "Orthodox Greeks recognizing the Ecunmenical Patriarchate [in Constantinople] (Hellenophones, Slavophones, Hellenovlachs, Alvanophones) ... According to these statistics, the Greek element is pre-eminent in Macedonia ..." pp. iii-iv.

5.Encyclopedia Britannica, "Macedonia;" Traian Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant," Journal of Economic History XX (June 1960): 276-79, 290-91.

6.When Brailsford, who was decidely pro-Slav and anti-Greek, described Kastoria in his book, he called it "the home of lost cuases" and added that "it is disdainfully, completely Greek, and it treats as vain travellers' tales the rumours that tell of other races and barbarian peoples ... On this rock [Kastoria is built on mountainous land] the Byzantine Empire has never ended ..." p. 191.

7.Georgiou Hatzikyriakou, Skepsis kai Enteposis ek Periodeyas ana ten Makedonia 1905-1906 [Reflections and Impressions from a Journey Through Macedonia 1905-1906], 2nd ed. (Thessaloniki, 1962), p. 36.

8.Halkiopoulos, pp. 1, 90, 100, 110.

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9.Encyclopedia Britannica, "Macedonia;" and Traian Stoianovich, pp. 279, 291, 310-11. Stoianovich wrote that "virtually all the towns and other communities noted above [among them Kozane, Kastoria, Siatista, Kleisoria, etc.] were ethnically Vlach and culturally Greek," pp. 277, 279.

10.Douglas Dakin, The Greek Struggle in Macedonia: 1897-1913 (Thessaloniki, 1966).

11.Ibid., pp. 117, 473-75.

12.The Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Kastoria, Germanos Karavangelis, was the president of the Central Committee of the National Society for the administrative unit of Kastoria. It coordinated support for the various Greek bands which were fighting in the area for control over Macedonia. Kastoria was strategically critical to the Greek cause in Western Macedonia. Siatista had its own "Committee" as well as armed bands, led by townspeople, which actively participated in combat. See Dakin; Georgios Modis, O Makedonikos Agon kai E Neoteri Makedoniki Istoria (Thessaloniki, 1967); Miltiadis Strakalis, Demos Siatistes: 50 Eti Eleutherias [The City of Siatista: 50 Years of Freedom] (Siatista, 1962), pp. 17-22.

13.See Dimitri Pentzopoulos The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact on Greece (Paris, 1962), pp. 199-219.

14.Karl Dieterich, Hellenism in Asia Minor, trans. Carroll N. Brown (New York, 1918), pp. 43-46; Constantine Tsoucalas, Exartese kai Anaparagoge: O Kenonikos Rolos ton Ekpedeutikon Mehanismon Sten Ellada 1830-1922 [Dependence and Reproduction: The Social Role of the Educational Mechanism in Greece 1830-1922] (Athens, 1977; translated from the French ed., Paris, 1975), pp. 449-496 passim. Education in Ottoman Greek communities was financed by endowments from wealthy Greeks and from guilds or brotherhoods and by the Church. The determination of the curriculum and the operation of the schools were controlled by committees of local secular and religious leaders - usually businessmen, guildsmen and clergymen. Papadopoulos focused on the role of the Greek schools and community institutions as a vehicle for "Hellenism" in west Macedonia in his book on Education and Social Activity. See his introduction, pp. 7-14.

15.The Ottomans used the Turkish term 'millet' to refer to the various communities which inhabited the Ottoman Empire. "The millet did not embrace a unified territory, or a homogeneous ethnic group, or peoples enjoying the same political and juridical status. It consisted of communities isolated from each other, enjoying different social,

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political and economic privileges and weakly linked through an ecclesiastical administration." Wayne S. Vucinich, The Ottoman Empire: Its Record and Legacy (New York, 1965).

16.Dieterich, pp. 46, 41, 54; Pentzopoulos, pp. 27, 29.

17.An enumeration of the population of the newly annexed regions was conducted by the Greek government in 1913. However, the figures for the eastern Aegean islands were only estimates based on other [unnamed] sources and provided only by counties for all islands except Samos, with no indication of urban-rural distribution. See: Greece, Statistikon Grapheion [Statistical Bureau], Aparithmisis ton Katoikon ton Neon Eparhtaion tes Elladas Tou Etos 1913 [Ennumeration of the Inhabitants of the new counties of Greece for the Year 1913] (Athens, 1915), pp. 91-94.

18.For descriptions of the larger Aegean islands, see: Henry Hauttecoeur, "La Principauté de Samos," Société Royale Belge de Geograpie (Bruxelles) Bulletin, 25 (1901):5-32, 81-124, 177-200; Idem, "L'ile de Mytelini," Bulletin Société Geographie d'Anvers 26 (1902):49-84; Megale Ellenike Enkyklopaideia [The Great Greek Encyclopedia], 2nd ed., s.v. "Chios," "Dodekanesa," "Lesvos" [Mytilene], "Rhodos," and "Samos;" and Henry Fanshawe Tozer, Islands of the Aegean (Oxford, 1890).

19.Andreas Andreades H Ellenike Metanasteusis [Greek Emigration] (Athens, 1917), p. 280; and Hauttecoeur, "L'Ile de Mytilini," p. 72.

20.Tozer, pp. 121, 124.

21.Dakin, The Unification of Greece (London, 1973), p. 35.

22.Hauttecoeur, "Principauté de Samos," pp. 103-114.

23.Greece [Statistical Bureau], Enumeration of 1913, pp. 92-93.

24."Scientific methods" of farming and modern equipment and fertilizers were reportedly in use on Mytiline by the First World War. Andreades, p. 265; Dieterich, p. 50.

25.See Hauttecoeur's articles.

26.Hauttecoeur, "Principauté de Samos," pp. 178-79.

27.See Andreades, 275, 281-82; Great Greek Encyclopedia, articles on various islands; Hauttecoeur; and Tozer. Samos' main trading partner was Turkey although its goods also were exported to France (raisins and carob), to Egypt, and other European countries. Of 18 million piastres in exports in

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1900, over 13 million piasters of business was done with Turkey. In the same year, one third of the imports to Samos, valued at six million piasters, came from Turkey. Much of this trade was transported on the 2,633 Samian sail boats which passed through one of the five main ports of the island; Hauttecoeur, pp. 192-93.

28.Andreades, pp. 261, 262-65; Tozer, pp. 121, 243.

29.Dieterich, p. 49; Tsoucalas, p. 304.

30.Dieterich, pp. 36-53; Tsoucalas, pp. 288-95, 298-301. The demographic changes discussed in this section were also placed on the Black Sea coast of Turkey. The focus is on Western Asia Minor here because so many furriers came from there.

31.Dieterich, pp. 36-53 passim.

32.Tsoucalas, pp. 293-94. One source which Tsoucalas quoted placed the Greek population of Constantinople at between 350 to 400,000 in 1920; p. 294.

33.Ibid., pp. 291-93.

34.Ibid., p. 290.

35.Dieterich, p. 38.

36.Ibid., pp. 138-42; Tsoucalas, p. 307.

37.Encyclopedia Brittanica (1911), s.v. "Smyrna;" Dieterich, p. 36.

38.Charles Vellay, "Smyrna - A Greek City," in Georges Bourdon, Charles Vellay and Charles Diehl, Hellas and Unredeemed Hellenism, trans. Carroll N. Brown (New York, 1920), pp. 43-45.

39.Dieterich, p. 48.

40.Ibid.

41.Charles Eddy, Greece and the Greek Refugees (London, 1931), p. 114; and League of Nations, Greek Refugee Settlement Commission, Greek Refugee Settlement (Geneva, 1926), p. 15.

42.Dieterich, p. 49-50.

43.Some, especially those from the Black Sea coast, also went to the southern part of Tsarist Russia or to Egypt. By the early twentieth century, overseas emigration to the

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United States, Southern Africa, and South America was added. See N. J. Polyzos, Essai Sur L'Emigration Grecque: Etude Demographique, Economique et Sociale, (Paris, 1947).

44.Dieterich, p. 50.

45.Arnold J. Toynbee, The Western Question in Greece and Turkey, 2nd ed. (Boston, 1923), p. 123.

46.W.M. Ramsay, Impressions of Turkey During Twelve Years' Wanderings (New York, 1897), pp. 130-34; Tsoucalas, 305-306.

47.League of Nations, Refugee Settlement Commission, p. 12; Pentzopoulos, p. 96-100.

48.Stephen P. Ladas, The Exchange of Minorities - Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, (New York, 1932), p. 16. Some of these returned to Asia Minor briefly during 1919-1922 with the Greek army.

49.Dieterich, p. 50.

50.Ladas, p. 14.

51.Andreades, pp. 263-65. Dieterich, pp. 49-50.

52.Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, 2nd ed. (London, 1968), p. 116, 115-124; Tsoucalas, pp. 304-305; and Vucinich, pp. 93-96. In Turkish, tanzimat refers to the nineteenth century reform movement in the Ottoman Empire.

53.Tsoucalas, p. 306.

54.G.G. Arnakis, "The Greek Church of Constantinope and the Ottoman Empire," Journal of Modern History, XXIV, September, 1952: 235-50; Leftan Stavrianos, The Balkans Since 1453 (New York, 1958), pp. 96-115; T.H. Papadopoulos, Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the Greek Church and People under Turkish Domination (Brussels, 1952).

55.Nicholas J. Pantazopoulos, "Community Laws and Customs of Western Macedonia Under Ottoman Rule," offprint, Balkan Studies 2 (1961): 7-8.

56.Angeliki Hatzimihali, "Morphes Apo ten Somateake Organosi ton Ellenon Sten Othomanike Autokratoria," [Aspects of the Corporate Organization of Greeks in the Ottoman Empire], in E Pentakosioste Epeteios apo tes Aloseos tes Konstantinoupoleos [The Five Hundredth Anniversary of the Taking of Constantinople], Commemerative Issue of L'Hellenisme Contemporain (Athens, 1953), p. 281-82.

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57."... according to Dr. Paspati, as many as 1,640 distinct trades, crafts, and callings existed at one time as separate corporations [in Constantinople]. This is probably an exaggerated estimate. In any case, the number of guilds in the capital greatly diminished during the [nineteenth] century. For investigations made with reference to his subject by Sarakiotis Bey in 1874 showed that the names of only 120 Esnafs [guilds] were then entered in the municipal registers..." Observation made by Lucy Garnett, a frequent traveller in the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the century, in her book Turkey of the Ottomans (New York, 1911), p. 159.

58.Of course, prior to the War of Independence between 1821 to 1827, all Greeks were 'Ottoman Greeks' since the territory of 'old Greece' was until then part of the Empire as well.

59.Tsoucalas, pp. 147-59, 302-312; Apostolos Vakalopoulos, E Detiko Makedones Apodeme epi Tourkokeatias [West Macedonian Emigrants During the Ottoman Rule] (Thessaloniki, 1958), passim.

60.In the various regional studies of emigration from Ottoman lands carried out by the students of Andreas Andreades, the researchers found that, prior to the mass exodus to the United States, networks of emigration to established Greek commercial centers in Europe had existed. See Andreades, pp. 217-360, passim; Vakalopoulos, pp. 8-9.

61.Dogu Ergil and Robert I. Rhodes, "The Impact of the World Capitalist System on Ottoman Society," Islamic Culture 48 (1978):77-91; Stavrianos, Balkans, pp. 319-21, 414-16.

62.Oya Köymen, "The Advent and Consequences of Free Trade in the Ottoman Empire (19th Century)," Etudes Balkaniques (Sofia) 7 (1971):51.

63.Ibid., p. 52.

64.Ibid., p. 50.

65.Herbert Feis Europe, the World's Banker 1870-1914 (1930); reprinted New York, 1965), pp. 320-21; Lewis, pp. 120, 460.

66.Lewis, p. 460.

67.Feis, p. 321.

68.See Ergil and Rhodes and Köymen.

69.Stoianovich, pp. 277-79 and Vakalopoulos, passim. Vakalopoulos' notes (pp. 35-43) are a good bibliographic source for local histories of west Macedonian towns. For a

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bibliography of Siatista and other west Macedonian towns, see: Siatisteon Mneme: Leukoma Sellogou Siatisteon Thessalonikes Gia ta Exenta Hronia tes Draseos tou [Siatistan Remembrance: Album of the Society of Siatistans in Thessaloniki for Sixty Years of Activity] (Thessaloniki, 1972), "Part II: Bibliography of Siatista," pp. B3-B24.

70.A ciftlik was an Ottoman agricultural estate held under quasi-feudal terms. See Stavrianos, Balkans, pp. 138-42; and Traian Stoianovich, "Land Tenure and Related Sectors of the Balkan Economy 1600-1800," Journal of European History, 13 (1953):398-411.

71.Stoianovich, Merchant, pp. 276-77; Vakalopoulos, pp. 3-6, 13.

72.Stoianovich, Merchant, p. 276.

73.Ibid., pp. 260-63, 269, 276-81.

74.Ibid., pp. 260, 261, 262, 266, 278-79.

75.Ibid., pp. 277, 279; Vakalopoulos, pp. 12-23.

76.Stoianovich, Merchant, p. 312.

77.Ioannis Apostolou, Istoria tes Siatistes [History of Siatista] (Athens, 1929), p. 18; Brailsford, pp. 50-51; Dakin, Greek Struggle, p. 153, n.23; A.G. Lazarou, "Siatista," Makedonikon Emerologion [Macedonian Almanac] (Athens), (1910), p. 143; Stoianovich, Merchant, pp. 299, 300-306, 312; Strakali, p. 12, 40; and Vakalopoulos, pp. 26-33.

78.Ph. Bakalis, "Mavres Meres" [Black Days], Kastoria, 6 February 1935, p. 1.

79.Andreades, section on "emigration from Macedonia," pp. 321-384, passim; Ladas; A.A. Pallis, "Racial Migrations in the Balkans During the Years 1912-1924," The Geographical Journal LXVI (October 1925).

80.Macedonian Greeks had taken part in the war for liberation of Greece (1821-27), in uprisings in Macedonia (1854 and 1878), in the Turko-Greek war (1897), and the Macedonian Struggle (1897-1903).

81.Andreades.

82.Ibid., p. 347; Strakali, pp. 39-40.

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83.See: "Introduction" in Maria Negroponti Delivanis, E Oikonomike Anaptexis tes Voreiou Elladas apo to 1912 eos semeron [The Economic Development of Northern Greece from 1912 to Today] (Thessaloniki, 1961) and G.N. Kofina, Ta Oikonomika tes Makedonias [The Finances of Macedonia] (Athens, 1914).

84.This section has combined material from Dieterich, passim, Tsoucalas, pp. 302-313, 326-344, and Vellay, pp. 33-47.

85.Garnett, p. 166.

86.Statement of Mr. George Horton, State Department, Washington, D.C.; Formerly Consul General in charge of the Smyrna District on "Admission of Near East Refugees," at Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization. House of Representatives. 67th Congress, 4th Session on H.R. 13269, December 15, 16 and 19, 1922. p. 94. Horton also published his experiences in Asia Minor in Recollections Grave and Gay (Indianapolis, 1927).

87.Andreades, p. 265 and Dieterich, p.50.

88.League of Nations, Refugee Settlement Commission, pp. 14-16.

89.Andreades, pp. 261-71.

90.Garnett, p.159.

91.Andreades, pp.261-72 and 273-319.

92.Tsoucalas, pp. 338-47.

93.Ibid.

94.A.A. Pallis, Greece's Anatolian Venture-and After (London, 1937).

95.See Polyzos, Stoianovich, Tsoucalas and Vakalopoulos.

96.See Chapter Two.

97.See Dakin; Modis; Christophoros Naltsas, O Makedonikos Aghon eis ten Ditikin Makedonian [The Macedonian Struggle in West Macedonia] (Thessaloniki, 1958).

98.Lewis, pp. 210-27; Serif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study of Modernization of the Turkish Political Ideas (Princeton, 1962); Pentzopoulos, pp. 53-4; Stavrianos, pp. 526-28.

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99.Dakin, pp. 202-226.

100.For a review of the literature on the repression of Greeks in Asia Minor up to 1922, see Victoria Solomonides, "Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-1922: A Historiographic Survey," in A. Lily Mackrakis and P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, eds., New Trends in Modern Greek Historiography, Modern Greek Studies Association Publication, series 6, 1982.

101.See studies of emigration from Macedonia and Asia Minor in Andreades. In the United States in 1914, W.W. Husband, a 'Special Immigrant Inspector' with the Immigration Department, wrote a report on the "situation in Turkey." In it he said the emigration from Turkey of its subject peoples was increasing. Although the causes of emigration had been largely economic, "the changed military policy of the 'Young Turks,' however has developed a new and more important incentive to emigration. Formerly, only Moslems were permitted to serve in the army, but now such service is practically compulsory among all classes and the almost continuous warfare in which Turkey has been engaged in recent years has caused many non-Moslems to leave the country..." Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration. Appendix V, pp. 403.

102.Andreades, pp. 300 and 347-48.

103.For example some old world shoemakers became shoe repairers in the United States; tailors turned into needle craft workers, sometimes custom tailors or repairers and dry cleaners. Others with general business experience in the food trades in the old country went into restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream parlours, etc.

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CHAPTER FOUR

FUR MANUFACTURING IN OTTOMAN MACEDONIA

> "Gounarades vromeroi, kathe tréha kai flouré!"[Furriers so filthy, every hair, another florin!] Old Kastorian saying.

Macedonian immigrant furriers encountered an industry and a mode of production in New York City with which they were familiar. Unlike Oscar Handlin's "uprooted" people,[1] they were prepared to confront the demands and problems of an industrial society. What is more, unlike other old world artisans, like shoemakers who could make no place for themselves in the already industrialized American shoe industry except as repairers,[2] the furriers were able to adapt their prior occupational and manufacturing knowledge and socio-economic experiences directly to the new setting without compromising their social positions. In fact, many ultimately enhanced their pre-migration statuses in the host society. In order to shed light on their adaptation process, the history, organizational structure, technology, and relations of production in the fur industry from which Greek-speaking Macedonians emigrated are investigated in this chapter.

The focus in this chapter is on the fur manufacturing

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industry in Kastoria from where the largest group of Greek American furriers emigrated. Several other of the earliest immigrant furriers were from a town about 30 miles from Kastoria, Siatista, where furs were also manufactured in the nineteenth century and whose merchants also dealt in importing raw materials and exporting finished goods. However, the industry there was not as developed or as concentrated as the one in Kastoria whose emigrants came to hold a more prominent place in the industry in the United States.

Background History

-Origins of the industry in Kastoria

Information about the origins and development of fur manufacturing in Kastoria and elsewhere in West Macedonia is at best sketchy.[3] The most likely theory is that it originated with the establishment of Ottoman power in the town and the settlement there by the fifteenth century of an Ottoman administrative and military elite who created the demand for fur goods.[4] Fur was an important part of the attire of all well-dressed and socially prominent subjects of the Sublime Porte, Christians and Jews as well as Muslims. There were some periods in the nearly six centuries of Ottoman reign during which the infidel were forbidden to wear fur because it was reserved only for the Ottoman rulers as a visible symbol of their political and social supremacy. But it was always the ghiaour,

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[non-Muslim, non-believer, or infidel] who crafted the fur into linings, hats, and trimmings for the Ottoman costume. In the Balkans and parts of the Near East, these furriers were mainly the Greek-speaking, Orthodox subjects of the Sultan.[5]

Additional evidence linking fur manufacture with the appearance of the Ottomans in the Balkans is found in the use of the Turkish language in the industry. Much of the terminology for the technology, the names for the raw materials and the finished goods, and the titles describing the social relations of production were in Turkish even though Turks never engaged in production or trade.[6] It has been speculated that Kastorian craftsmen, along with others, must have learned to process fur from Christian craftsmen in Constantinople after that city had become Istanbul. They then brought the techniques back to their hometowns to train others.[7]

-Position of Kastorians in Ottoman Fur Manufacturing

More is known about the position of Kastorian furriers in the fur manufacturing industry and trade of the Ottoman Empire. First, Kastorians held important positions at the heart of the Empire's industry. Constantinople was the center of the fur trade in the Ottoman Empire and the major commercial market for manufacturered fur goods.[8] Furriers from all the parts of the Empire congregated there to buy pelts which came from Anatolia, Russia, and other places. These merchants would take the skins to provincial cities in

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the Balkans where they were treated and processed into fur goods for the local elite and often exported to Constantinople and other of the principle Ottoman cities in Turkey, Egypt, and Syria.

For much of three centuries the Furriers' Guild in Constantinople was the most prestigious and powerful guild in the Empire.[9] Its chief master was a Greek because the guild itself was predominately Greek Orthodox.[10] This personage, who enjoyed considerable influence in the highest levels of the realm, at times was elected "chief master of the chief masters" of the several hundred guilds in the capital. Most of the furriers in the capital seem to have been natives of the city but others had emigrated there from one of several provincial towns which hand crafted fur goods. From the records of the Metropolitan See of Kastoria, it is known that several Kastorian furriers were working and trading fur goods and raw materials among the guildsmen in Constantinople by the late sixteenth century.[11] After the seventeenth century, Kastorians, who often held the position of chief master, were very influential in the guild.[12]

Although the name Kastoria came to be synonymous with the fur industry in the Ottoman period, fur manufacturing was not the exclusive domain of the Kastorians. From the outset, guilds of furriers existed in several provincial Balkan towns such as Yannina, Moskhopoli, Larissa, Monastir, Ohrida, Siatista, Kozani, Thessaloniki, Serres, Adrianopoli,

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and Philippoli.[13] However, the guild in Kastoria was second in prominence and power only to the one in Constantinople. The other provincial guilds had direct business relations with the guild in Kastoria while many of their members were originally from there, having migrated to those towns apparently to meet the growing demand for furs from the local Ottoman and non-Muslim elites.[14]

The trade in Ottoman fur products in the Balkans was controlled by merchants from Kastoria, and also from Siatista, for over two centuries.[15] Since the early eighteenth century, these merchants had been travelling to Central Europe as part of the very lucrative overland trade with the Balkans.[16] The Greek Orthodox merchants of West Macedonia featured very prominently in that commerce in which they exchanged their region's agricultural and handicraft products for European luxury and manufactured goods.[17] Details of how the trade in fur goods between Kastoria and Siatista with Leipzig, Vienna, and Budapest began and grew are not known. It is likely that the Macedonian merchants first came upon the annual fur fair held in Leipzig[18] as they were trading in other goods. They must have easily recognized it as an alternative source for raw materials to the traditional fur markets in Asia Minor. No doubt, a greater variety and better quality of fur cuttings were available in the German city which had been one of the world's leading fur markets since the Middle Ages. In its day it also had the most advanced fur

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dressing and processing industry. Eventually the Central European market became an outlet for the fur goods produced in Kastoria and Siatista. The "fur fabric" and trimmings that had long been crafted for the Ottoman costume by craftsmen in Kastoria and Siatista found consumers in Central Europe.

Just as Kastoria's furriers occupied high positions in the Empire's fur industry, the manufacture and trade of fur goods were very important to the economy of Kastoria for almost five hundred years. The degree to which the town's economic life depended on fur fluctuated over the years. Until a decline set in at the end of the nineteenth century, the preceeding two hundred years had been the acme of prosperity for Kastoria's furriers and for the town whose economy had become commercialized. During that period thriving markets for Kastorian fur goods were to be found not only internally in the major Ottoman cities of the Balkans and the Near East, but also increasingly in Central Europe.[19]

-Development to end of the nineteenth century

The industry in Kastoria had started as a medieval craft with individual craftsmen contracting directly with local consumers to produce custom-made fur products in their clients' homes or, as was the case for the Ottoman military, in their garrisons. The raw materials, skins mainly from Anatolia and Russia, were imported by merchants from Constantinople. With the expansion in the demand for fur

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products to the non-Muslim population in the Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Ottoman furriers looked for new ways to satisfy the growing market. Instead of using skins which were relatively scarce and which, after a decree of 1713, only Muslims could wear, they turned increasingly to a new technique which called for the piecing together of tiny waste cuttings of fur into a kind of fabric, often with a "mosiac" pattern, to be made into linings, trimmings, hats, etc. This process allowed the furriers to service the demand from the non-Muslim sections of the population with products they wanted.

Although those fragments were available in the fur market in Constantinople, by the early eighteenth century Macedonian merchants had discovered the annual fur fair in Leipzig as they were trading other goods there and in other parts of Central and Eastern Europe. Leipzig had been one of the world's fur centers since the Middle Ages, not only for its trade fair, but also for its fur processing industry which was the most advanced in its day.[20] No doubt, a greater variety, better quality and more abundant supply of cuttings were available from this German city which attracted the Macedonian traders every year.

Once Leipzig had been established as a fairly reliable source of raw materials in the eighteenth century, the character of the industry changed. By then, fur manufacturing in Kastoria had become an export-oriented industry with markets for its semi-manufactured products in

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the Asiatic and European sections of the Empire. Kastorian fur merchants were now travelling with their products not only to Constantinople but, among other cities, to Allepo, Cairo, Damascus, and Smyrna to the Southeast and to Belgrade, Bucharest, Monastir and Thessaloniki in the Balkans. Then, by the turn of the nineteenth century, markets for Kastoria's semi-manufactured fur goods emerged in Leipzig, Budapest, Vienna and other cities and towns in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. By 1870, Kastoria's "mosiac" fur fabric, appeared in France as well. Within another twenty years, they were being regularly imported into France and were included at the Paris fur exhibition of 1889.[21] Eventually, a few Kastorian furriers had made their way with their products to London as well.

Over these two hundred years, the organizational structure of fur manufacturing in Kastoria had changed from that of a medieval craft into a preindustrial but essentially capitalist industry. Intermediate products were being made as commodities for distant markets in Europe and Asia Minor through a process which entailed division of labor and specialization of function. Merchants did not merely transport the goods abroad as they had in earlier times, but increasingly exercised control over the entire production procrss as they became indispensible middlemen between producers and the sources for their raw materials and between the same manufacturers and the remote wholesale markets for their products. Most producers became either

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entirely or partially dependent upon the merchant furriers for raw materials and for capital in order to be able to work. An important part of the manufacturing was done under a 'putting out system' where merchant capitalists clearly had the upper hand over the artisan/producers.

Role of Fur Merchants

During the nineteenth century, the merchant manufacturers came to hold a very powerful and dominant position in the fur industry in Kastoria. Until the end of the nineteenth century, travelling abroad had been a major undertaking in a society which was accustomed to a primitive transport system and where the capital to finance such a venture could only be borrowed at usurious rates. Going abroad was like travelling "behind the sun"[22] for most people, including furriers, who had hardly ever left their towns which were nestled in the mountains of West Macedonia. Only merchants, carters, their employees, and seasonal migrant artisans in the building trades moved outside their immediate environments.[23] Fur merchants who had capital, and therefore mobility, went in various directions from Kastoria depending on what they were selling and what they would be buying. The quality of the goods and the type of fur used determined where the merchant could find buyers.

Only a few of these merchant furriers imported the raw materials which by the nineteenth century came exclusively from Leipzig. Prominent and very powerful merchant furriers

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were the ones who went to Leipzig -- mainly to buy the sacks of fur cuttings, called hordha, [from the Turkish "hurd," meaning old rubbish, scraps, or tiny bits] and secondarily to sell finished goods.[24] Around 1900, Naoum Papamoskho, in his day the most important merchant furrier and manufacturer in Kastoria, dominated the wholesale trade with Leipzig in both raw materials and finished goods though he did not monopolize it.[25]

Earlier in the 1800s, Konstantinos Papanaoum had established what was most likely the first Greek merchant furrier house in the Brühl district of Leipzig, the House of Konstantinos Papa. It continued to operate under one of his direct descendents until the Second World War.[26] Some others from Kastoria and Siatista also became well-ensconced there among the Greek merchant community which could trace its origins to 1700. Around 1886 two brothers from Siatista, Petros and Agathos Zygoures, not only traded in furs but also pursued cultural endeavors, including publishing a well-respected fine arts magazine for Greek intellectuals.[27] The Scutari family from Kastoria endowed the local Greek Orthodox church in Leipzig and supported other philanthropic causes.[28] Except for Papamoskho's, the names of all these and others were listed in the "foreign firms" section of the Directory of the Fur Trade for the years from 1901 to the 1920s.[29]

After 1900, more merchant furriers got involved in exporting finished goods. These merchants, including those

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above, sold Macedonian produced fur goods in European cities (Leipzig, Vienna, Budapest, etc.), in Asiatic Turkey (Constantinople, Smyrna, Damascus, Broussa, Pergamon, etc.), in the Balkans (Bucharest, Konstanza, Belgrade, etc.), and in Egypt (Cairo and Alexandria). Fur products made by, what were considered as, "lesser" craftsmen, (parakatinous) went only as far as Serres, Skopje, Monastir, and Kozani.[30] Eventually, a few of them found their way to Paris, London, and New York during the three decades spanning the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.

Merchants usually specialized in importing specific kinds of hordha depending on what was produced in their own workshops, which local craftsmen they dealt with, and where they had established market contacts. In Kastoria they stored their inventories of unprocessed cuttings in the covered courtyards of their homes which served as warehouses and as workshops in addition to being residences.[31] Merchant manufacturers always set aside adequate supplies of hordha for work in their own shops. The rest of their inventory was for distribution to the town's craftsmen.

The terms under which transactions took place between merchants and manufacturers varied widely.[32] Some of the more prosperous independent furriers could pay cash for the hordha. Such furriers were most likely expert manufacturers of high quality and expensive merchandise like sable. They could afford to pay cash because they demanded better terms from the middlemen who took their goods to market. They

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were among the few who could borrow money from the moneylenders (sarraf), sometimes merchant furriers, who financed commerce in Kastoria as they did throughout the Ottoman world of that period.[33] It was also possible for some manufacturers to receive materials on credit, directly from the supplier with a promise to pay for the hordha at some mutually agreed upon later date. This meant that the manufacturer would pay his debt to his creditor from sales revenues coming from other merchants. Often furriers engaged in some modified barter arrangement with the merchants by paying for part of their purchases in cash and the balance in promised finished goods.

But many furriers also contracted with merchants to deliver to them all the goods manufactured in their workshops in return for using the merchants' hordha. These contracts were verbal agreements wherein the manufacturer gave his "word" to the merchant.[34] Since the hordha remained the property of the merchant, the manufacturer was really a skilled worker who organized the labor to process the cuttings into marketable goods. He was paid on a piece basis when the merchant collected his goods.

There is no doubt that the merchants and the moneylenders made enormous profits in the distribution of the much needed raw materials and the marketing of the finished goods. Moneylenders charged exhorbitant rates of interest and took liens on the borrowers' houses, other real property, or on goods-in-process or inventories. Often

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furriers lost their homes or whatever inventory they had risked because of the extreme and usually unexpected fluctuations in the market values of their goods. Moneylending became so lucrative that some merchant furriers gave up their trade and concentrated their business activity primarily on financing the industry.

The handful of merchant furriers who supplied the hordha bought the cuttings relatively cheaply far away in Leipzig where the waste fur was generated, transported it back to Kastoria, and sold it dearly to the local craftsmen who needed it to make a living. Moreover, as middlemen between the manufacturers and the markets for their finished goods, merchant furriers had the upper hand in setting the terms under which they would market those goods. They arranged either to take the goods on consignment or to buy them at wholesale prices set to their advantage. Those merchants who put out work set the piece rates paid to the skilled contract workers. The producers, whether manufacturers, contract workers, or workers in shops, could only try to get the best terms for their efforts. Such arrangements could be precarious for the independent furrier who was always short on cash. The trip to market and back took months until the transportation system had been modernized. Waiting for the merchant to return with money meant that the small manufacturer would have to borrow from the moneylenders to make ends meet. Consequently, the small manufacturers easily became entangled in a cycle of debt and

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poverty.

It was only when emigration overseas and to Western Europe became a real possibility for other classes of people that the hold of the merchant furriers could be broken. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, long distance travel by caravans of pack animals began to give way to the iron horse. A railway linking Salonica with Central Europe was completed by 1894.[35] The closest stop to Kastoria was Sorovich (now called Amintion), some 40 miles away. Since no other mode of transportation between Kastoria and Sorovich was available until after the First World War, the journey there was made by boat first to Mavrovo, a village across the lake from town, and then continued by carriage to the train. Even as late as 1916 it took ten hours to reach Sorovich.[36] Yet this still somewhat arduous trip would eventually represent new opportunities for the small independent producers.

In 1885 when two furriers who were cousins found out that fur cuttings were available for the asking in North America rather than for the high prices they were paying for what was imported from Leipzig, they decided that one of them should risk taking the trip to North America. Legend[37] has it that Konstantine Skaperdas, one of the cousins, found a letter in a sack of cuttings he had bought from Naoum Papamoskho. In the letter, a cuttings merchant from Montreal reported to an associate in Liepzig that the waste scraps they dealt in were very cheap in the markets in

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Montreal and New York. At the first opportunity, Skaperdas reported his discovery to his cousin, Vasili Skaperdas, who agreed that he would make the trans-Atlantic journey. They reasoned that if they could establish themselves in the New York trade, they would be "saved" and that the venture "had bread in it" for them.[38] It took about twenty-five years before the impact of their decision to go to the United States (and eventually Canada) would make itself felt on the fur industry in Kastoria. But once the movement overseas became established, indeed important changes took place in the structure and organization of the industry at home.

Furriers' Workshops in Kastoria

There were three types of workshops in Kastoria at the turn of the twentieth century. First, there were the typical independent shop included the master-owner, who participated in and supervised production, and a small number of skilled artisans and apprentices or helpers. Often the master and some of his workers were related by blood: cousins, brothers, fathers and sons, etc. It is unclear whether or not female members of the family worked in the shops in any capacity other than sewing. Then, there were the contracting shops where work was "put out" by the small workforce composed of members of the same family who assisted the skilled artisan to complete the lot of work he received from his merchant supplier. Finally, the larger shops, more like factories, were those located in the homes

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of merchant furriers who employed a skilled craftsman (protokalfas) to supervise the work carried on, often in the master's absence, by several other craftsmen with the aid of various apprentices. The protokalfas would report to a relative of the merchant master, even to his wife, when the master was away on a business trip that could last for several months.[39] Naoum Papamoskho was said to have employed as many as thirty to forty workers in his shop with scores of women doing piece work for him at their homes.[40] For the time, this was considered to be a very large operation, more like a factory than the atelier that the other shops were. In addition to Papamoskho, only three or four other furriers had such big enterprises.[41]

The workshops were all located in the Greek Orthodox residential neighborhoods of the town.[42] They were attached to the owners' homes and usually took up a front room set aside for manufacturing. The interior of the workshop, always littered with strands of fur, was furnished with low, wooden tables around which were positioned cushions. When the workers, dressed in long, robe-like garments [entere], entered the shop, they removed their shoes and seated themselves crosslegged on the cushions.[43] The work in the shops was seasonal -- the busy time of year being from September to March when the finished goods were taken to the trade fair in Leipzig.[44] Goods destined for the Ottoman markets left more frequently. During those months the artisans worked long hours, from one or two hours

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before sunrise to one or two hours after sunset.[45] This type of nightwork (nehteré) was not exclusive to furriers; other Ottoman crafts practiced it as well.[46] As the days grew shorter with the onset of winter, working hours had to be extended into the night. Among furriers, the beginning of nightwork was signalled to the workers by the employer who cut a peach from his garden and hung it from the hoop of the shop's lantern, wishing his employees "a good winter, lads." In typical Greek fashion, the workers returned his blessing with: "The lord should give us plenty of strength!" When spring arrived, the workers would hang a branch of hyacinth from the same lamp as an indication that the end of the nightwork had come.[47]

Since the employer not only managed the shop but also performed critical functions in the labor process, he also set the pace of work. During the busy season, he coaxed the workers to concentrate on their tasks quietly. When the pressure subsided, he allowed them even to sing as they worked. Kastoria's furriers composed many songs about contemporary gossip, experiences of their fellow townspeople, or about events of the times. At the turn of the century during the Macedonian Struggle, nationalistic themes found their way into the furriers' shops.[48] To speed up the pace of work, in particular when artisans worked into the night (to nehteré) during the winter months to finish the inventory that the master wanted to send off to the markets, the shopowner would challenge his artisans

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to complete a given amount within a certain time limit at a set rate.[49] He would also try to bribe them with promises of rewards once the job was done. In a poem[50] written in the Kastorian dialect of the period being discussed, Ioannis Bakalis, a journalist and poet, captured the urgency with which a merchant manufacturer tried to get his workers to finish the goods and how he coaxed them so that he might leave for his selling trip:

> "Hurry up fellows, no talking,
> I've told you once
> Every apprentice quietly sew and cut.
> I challenge all of you, I'll give tips too,
> If by dawn this monkey fur is sewn.
> By tomorrow these pehledhes* must become mesadhia*
> And the skunk and marten must be strung together
> Because on Thursday morning I leave for Damascus.
> Hurry now and when I return I will give you a gift."
> Furriery's knives work at the furrier's table,
> Cutting the mink. Seams are made with zeal.
> Quiet in the shop, no one talks; only Mitso
> Murmurs the "Siano tou Nisli."
> And afterwards as the boss counts the pehledhes*
> He sings the "Tartaropla"* and the "Tambahanadhes."*

Wages were hardly enough to keep the artisans and their families alive.[51] Next to nothing is available by way of data or research on wages. One of the functions of the guilds had been to set the wage rates for the master's employees.[52] The most that can be surmised is that workers were paid either a daily wage, by the piece, or by the job

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* Pehledhes, square pieces of various dimensions made from many tiny cuttings which have been sewn together. Mesadhia, the middle part of the fur fabric made by the furriers from the pehledhes; "Siano tou Nisli," the "Tabahanadhes," and the "Tartaropla" were the titles of folksongs once popular in Kastoria.

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completed. Apparently all three systems were used in the shops, depending on whether the workers were skilled or not and whether special incentives were needed to get the goods finished in time to send them to market. Apprentices received a yearly payment which was made to their fathers even in the early years of this century. In addition to their daily wages, journeymen (kalfas) received other incentives from their employers, such as a monetary payment per job completed in addition to his regular wage.[53] In the small contracting shops, it is likely that the owners' immediate family members received no direct payment, since it was the family which earned the piece rate from the merchant. In addition to their wages, workers in merchants' or independent shops also received hospitality from their employer's wife, a throw back to the guild days. The women of the house, often with the aid of the shop's helpers, would serve refreshments to the workers at breakfast time.

-Division of labor

The labor needed to process the fur cuttings was divided according to task and to the level of skill required by the task. There is very little information available with which to assemble a complete picture of who did what.[54] It seems that the introduction of cuttings as raw materials in the late seventeenth century at a time when the demand for Macedonian fur products was growing, stimulated a major division of labor in the industry. The transformation of the cuttings into a finished product was labor intensive

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because the raw materials arrived in sacks as thousands of tiny, varied scraps. These cuttings had to be cleaned, sorted, graded, matched, arranged into patterns, sewn together, rematched, resewn, wetted, trimmed, combed, and blocked in order to be useable as fur goods.[55] Great amounts of time, labor, and skill were needed in the execution of these different tasks. Therefore, the use of these cuttings favored a shift from the old guild handicraft organization of work where a single craftsman performed all the steps in the production process into a manufacturing organization involving specialization of function. However, the introduction of cuttings alone does not account for the emergence of a division of labor and a more productive system of manufacture in the Macedonian fur industry at that time. Another factor was the increasing demand for Ottoman fur goods in markets outside of the local community both within the Ottoman Empire in the late 1600s and in Europe a century later.

Growth in the demand and expansion of the markets for Macedonian fur products in the nineteenth century in Germany[56] and Western Europe further divided the labor process. It came to be differentiated into basically two separate but interrelated phases or stages: primary tasks, which were the essential skilled steps performed entirely within the workshops by male craft workers; and secondary tasks, which required a relatively less-skilled and cheaper workforce composed of women who worked outside the shops in

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their homes and of a small number of male specialists who provided special services for furriers.

The primary tasks involved the sorting, matching, arranging and final sewing of the cuttings into fur goods.[57] Great care and experience was required for these phases of production as is elaborated below in the section on the technology of manufacturing pieced goods. The value of the finished goods depended on their successful completion. In the small workshops, an owner-manufacturer was assisted in making furs by a few artisans and some apprentices. In addition to supervising the work process in his shop, the master participated directly in the production by performing, minimally, the most skilled and critical tasks, and all the skilled tasks when he had no artisans but only a helper, perhaps his son. The artisans sorted, trimmed, cleaned, matched and arranged on paper the cuttings, preparing them for sewing. Once the cuttings were given form as square pieces by women outside the shops, artisans again matched and arranged them before sewing them into their final form. The apprentices and helpers performed odd jobs in the shops, ran errands such as delivering baskets of fur cuttings laid out in patterns on papers to outside women workers, and always expedited the craftsmen's work, watching and observing their techniques.[58] In the large merchant-owned shops, the chief artisan was a foreman who supervised the work process and probably executed the tasks of the master while several

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other artisans prepared the cuttings and sewed the final goods.[59]

One of the two types of secondary tasks was the initial sewing of the tiny cuttings. Once the raw scraps had been processed in the workshops, they had to be joined together in order to make the fur fabric which the Macedonian furriers exported. These pieces were sewn into either long, narrow, ropelike strips (aradhes) or into rectangular shapes (pehledhes), depending upon what the supplying furrier finally produced. Painstaking and arduous work, this job was sent out to be done by female home workers who relied on their children for help. A large workforce of Kastorian women took in this work in order to supplement the family income. As reserve labor, they worked on an irregular and seasonal basis. Their services were most in demand when the volume of production in the town's economy was high. These women did not require any special training since they were taught needlework from early childhood by their grandmothers and mothers within the household economy.[60] Furriers tried to develop a corps of women on whom they could rely to do good quality work.[61] Paid strictly by the piece,[62] these women were employed by merchant manufacturers, like the prominent Naoum Papamoskho, or by the independent, small craftsmen, perhaps a relative or neighbor. During the warm times of the year, women from the Greek neighborhoods would sit outside in groups, socializing while they sewed the miniscule cuttings.[63] Their children helped sometimes with

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the sewing or were even assigned their own tasks. When skunk became popular during the first two decades of this century, domestic child labor was used to pluck out odd colored hairs from the body parts taken from the backs of the animal where the stripes ran down. Requiring care and patience, the children's hands became painfully blistered in plucking out the white hairs from black cuttings and the black hairs from the white.[64]

The other secondary tasks were specialized services for the fur industry which were supplied by seven or eight known families in the town. The small amount of raw fox skins which were brought from Turkey, and to some extent from nearby Albania, could be dressed and dyed in the shops of George Aivazis, the Boutis family, the Stathis family, or the Kontos brothers before being cut into the various body parts for processing.[65] These shops also dyed other cheap pieced goods after they had been assembled in the furriers' shops. A manufacturer who either did not own the requisite equipment, or who could not employ a blocker in his shop, or who was too busy with other phases of production, sent work out for this stage. Thanasi Lianou and the Tsintsiraioi were famous blockers who, as legend has it, had "skewer-like nails which they sharpened once a month."[66]

What is evident from the above description of how the fur trade was organized is that the socio-economic relations of production in the industry in the town of Kastoria at the

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turn of the century were very complex. Diagram 4.1, depicting the organization of fur manufacturing in Kastoria, illustrates both the socio-economic relations of production and the hierarchical labor structure that characterized the town's fur industry during the period under study. This diagram does not reflect the differentiation among producers according to the quality or grade of products they manufactured. Some producers worked the more valuable fur like sable or mink destined for the wealthy markets in Central Europe and perhaps Constantinople while others worked cheaper fur for the local Macedonian or nearby Balkan markets. Moneylenders and merchant furriers obviously dominated the industry both in terms of their command of capital and what it could purchase as well as access to markets. Below them were independent manufacturing furriers whose operations and livelihoods depended on both the moneylenders and merchant furriers. Under the independent manufacturing furriers there was a stratum of skilled workers seconded by trainees with both the latter and former working for the independent manufacturers who themselves were involved in the actual production processes or in the merchants' shops under the direction of a supervisor who was responsible to the merchant furrier.

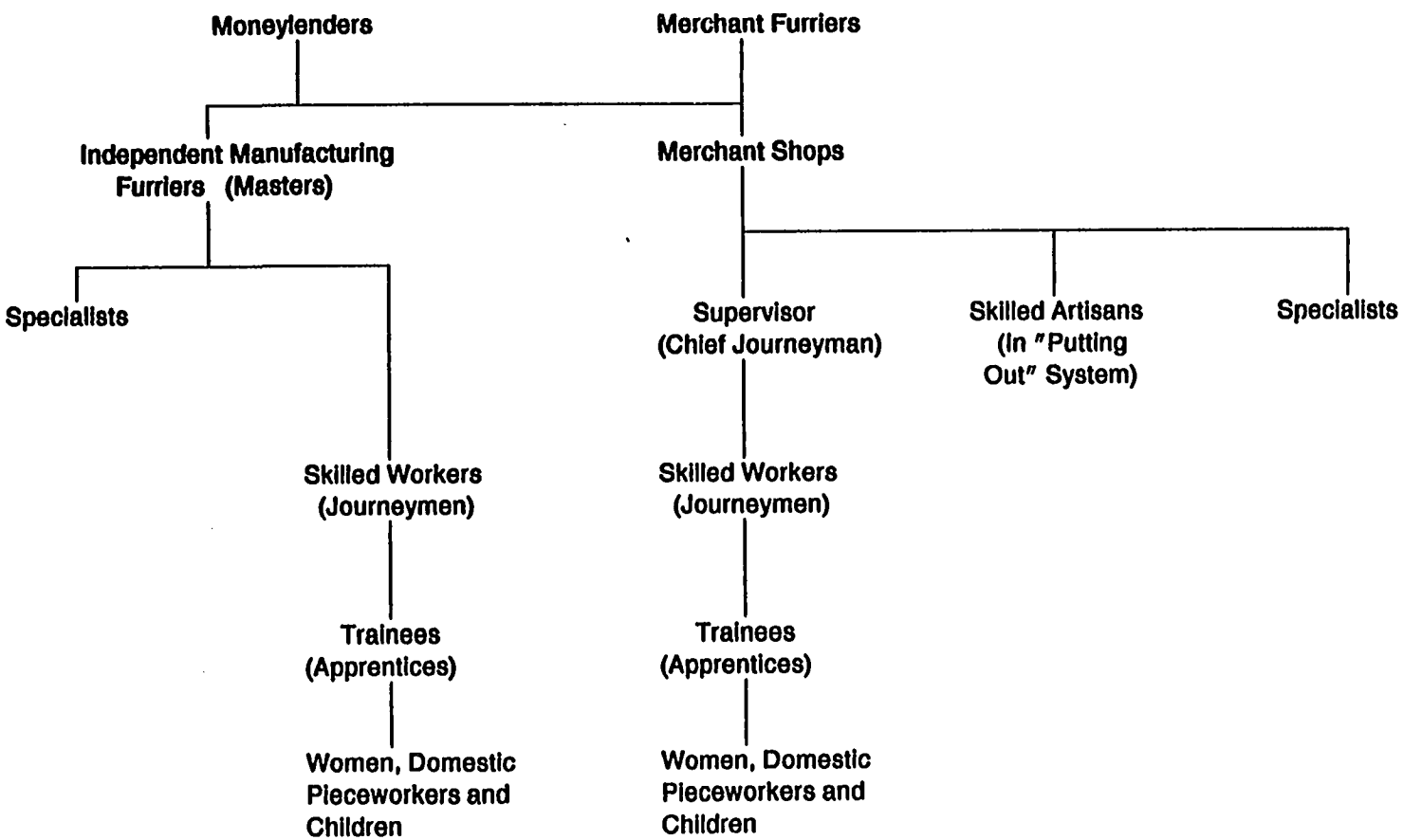
Higher in status than the journeymen workers were artisans in the putting-out system and the specialists to whom various jobs were contracted by merchant furriers and manufacturers. Like the independent manufacturers, these

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DIAGRAM 4.1

ORGANIZATION OF FUR MANUFACTURING IN KASTORIA, CIRCA 1900



domestic workers had some degree of independence over those who were employed was wage workers in shops. They worked with their own tools, in their homes, under their own supervision. But unlike the independent manufacturers who also owned, at least, part of their raw materials and who increasingly gained direct access to export markets as time passed, the "putting-out" workers were tied to specific merchants who supplied them with the raw materials critical to their ability to produce and who influenced the intensity of work in the shop by paying them on a piece basis.

At the very bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy were the women and children who did piece work at home. As important as they were to the labor process, they probably did not even negotiate the rates at which they were paid. As in other contemporary Mediterranean societies, their husbands or fathers were much more likely to handle such matters.[57]

It was not easy to switch to another merchant who was commonly referred to as the "afendiko" [term used in Greek and Turkish meaning the boss or owner] by "his people," that is, those who produced for him.[58] In a culture where loyalty and one's word of honor were very important, tradition and social pressure inhibited a person from seeking a better deal in a marketplace of a few merchants who tended to know one another. Furthermore, with the persistence of some of the guild handicraft values, it was considered shameful for a worker to change masters or for a

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master to solicit another's workman.[69] Some felt gratitude towards the merchants for 'giving' them the means to earn a living. Chris Tsamisis, a retired furrier and emigrant, remembered as a young man hearing people praise Naoum Papamosho: "'God bless him. God give him years in his life. He is supporting all of us.' And the stupid so and so I am . . . I said 'Could you ever figure it out the other way around? What would have become of the big shot if you didn't work?' They couldn't see it that way..."[70] Consequently, although the organization of the industry had changed somewhat, social norms and cultural ties that had bonded society as it differentiated on a socio-economic basis had not yet disappeared. But as fur manufacturing declined and reached depression levels in the first two decades of this century and as large numbers of people emigrated, such handicraft values and beliefs dissipated. Relationships in the industry had been subordinated to the demands and forces of a changed marketplace.

Guild Tradition in Capitalist Fur Manufacturing

Like other Greek Orthodox guilds in the Empire, the furriers' guilds[71] had once regulated entry into and mobility within the trade, determined the terms for membership in the body, set prices, wages, and industry standards, controlled the distribution of raw materials to producers, and monitored relations between masters and their workforce.[72] But by the end of the nineteenth century,

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guilds of fur manufacturers like those of many other artisans had disappeared from the Ottoman economic landscape.[73] By 1900 the Furriers Guild in Constantinople had dissolved its once sizeable treasury and turned its assets over to the "Great School of the Race," a Greek Orthodox secondary school in the capital."[74] In most of Macedonia, including Kastoria and Siatista, there is no trace of the furriers' guilds at the turn of the century. In a town-by-town compilation of guilds and other organizations for all of Macedonia published in a periodical contemporary to the period, only one guild of furriers was listed.[75] With thirty-two members, it was in Monastir, the capital of the Ottoman Vilayet [major administrative unit] of Monastir, which encompassed Kastoria and Siatista. Nothing more is known of it.

There is no direct evidence of a furriers' guild in Kastoria or Siatista. None of the local histories for either town even allude to their existence at the turn of the century, although the participation of Kastorian furriers as guildsmen in Constantinople in the eighteenth century is underscored.[76] The 1902 written statutes of the Greek Orthodox communities in Kastoria and Siatista had provisions for the participation of guilds in the political direction of their respective communities.[77] But whether or not furriers were among those guilds cannot be readily discerned. In interviews with retired furriers who had been active in the trade prior to the First World War, none could

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recall a guild functioning at that time.[78] They referred only to "Profété Eléa," an organization of fur manufacturers founded in 1914.[79] Although it was named for the traditional patron saint of furriers, its connection to a preceding guild could not be established. By the early 1920s, the industry in Kastoria even had a fur workers' union and a merchants' association.[80] All of these were different in function and purpose from a guild.

Whether or not it had disappeared as an institution, the guild's structure and practice persisted into the twentieth century in the recruitment and training of workers for the industry. This was especially important since the labor process remained virtually unmechanized until after the First World War. As will be described below, certain tasks continued to require great skill which could only be acquired over time. The only way a boy could hope to become a furrier was to be apprenticed in adolescence to a master-manufacturer.[81] Usually, the trade ran in families with masters apprenticing their sons and relatives or the sons of other artisans. With the expansion of consumer demand, others could also find an opportunity to enter the trade. Often in the summers, rather than have their young children who were not in school or otherwise occupied loitering around the lake which surrounded Kastoria, a pastime which was viewed askance by the elders, parents would arrange to have their sons work at no pay for a master furrier.[82] Initially these little learners would do no

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more than sweep after the workers, bring them refreshments, or perhaps even help the master's wife with the housework. But, at least, these young children were being exposed to the "mysteries" of the craft. Moreover, this might have been a way for a master to screen potential apprentices.

By the age of twelve boys could become apprentices (tseraki). A tseraki, who referred to his master as his lord or father (kyres), agreed to work for up to two years for a master in return for a payment of a specified amount at the end of the term. The salary (roga) went, however, not to the boy apprentice, but directly to his father. In addition to this wage, the apprentice would receive food, lodgings, if necessary, and new shoes once a year.[83] The apprentice's tasks in the workshop were to expedite and observe the work carried on by the craftsmen. Kastorian folklore describes the tseraki who would set out from his home for the atelier two hours before dawn in order to clean and light the lamps (work often started before sunrise), prepare drinking water, light a fire, and help with the housework.[84] Eventually, the apprentice became a helper (parayios) to one of the artisans in the shop. From him he would learn a particular skill. His pay would increase and become a daily wage (meriatiko) which was supplemented by one lira per year bonus from the master.[85]

After several years of training in a master's shop, an apprentice became a skilled journeyman (kalfas). At one time there was considerable social pressure on both the

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kalfas and the master to continue their association of so many years. Artisans rarely changed masters.[86] But a retired furrier whose family had been in fur for generations recalled that by the beginning of this century, artisanal workers in Kastoria sought the highest wages from among the town's fur employers.[87]

It was not easy for an artisan to become a master. Under the Ottoman craft system, businesses had been passed on from father to son so that sons of masters became masters while those of journeymen usually remained journeymen. When the furriers' guild was still functioning, it had set the terms under which an experienced kalfas who had the support of his master and who had amassed the necessary initiation fee could join the guild. Naturally, as is characteristic of guild economies, the appearance of a new master among the membership could not be allowed to destablize the marketplace. With the dissipation of the guild system, a new enterprise could be started freely if an artisan had the right skill and capital. But it was next to impossible for the artisan to accumulate savings from his wages to initiate his own business, modest though the investment might be. Borrowing was usually out of the question without some collateral which a journeyman probably did not have. The aspiring shopowner would also have needed space in his household, tools, and most importantly, the raw materials. While the first two might have been improvised using resources from within the family, the capital with which to

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buy hordha was hard to come by.[88]

His only hope for some sort of independence from an employer at the workplace was to become a contract or putting-out worker for a merchant. After emigration took hold in the second and third decades of this century, it became easier to bypass the merchant. Hordha, and later machines, were sent home to a brother, father, or close relative or friend as a gift from an emigrant to get someone started as an independent producer.[89] In turn, the development of the communications and transportation infrastructure which had made mass emigration feasible, made it easier to export finished goods independent of the merchant middleman. The emigrant relative or friend abroad would act as an agent or jobber to sell the goods on the wholesale market in Europe or America. Some of these emigrants returned home with savings from their work abroad to open their own fur businesses in Kastoria or Siatista. By then the structure of the industry had changed and the guild system had become obsolete.

Technology and Work Process of Fur Manufacturing in Kastoria

-Raw Materials

By the turn of this century, more than thirty different kinds of fur were being imported into Kastoria for processing. The most commonly used were Asiatic fox, sable, muskrat, squirrel, skunk, and hare.[90] (See Table 4.1 for a more complete listing.) Except for fox which was imported

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as whole skins and cut up into twelve body parts by local craftsmen,[91] these furs arrived as waste cuttings of, what one Kastorian writer termed, "a superior manufacturing industry" in the West.[92] European and American furriers made many of their fur goods from the uncut whole sections of individual skins or pelts which originated mainly in the United States, Canada, and Russia. They discarded what they considered to be the useless scraps remaining from these pelts such as the head, tail, feet, belly, etc. To the Macedonians and other Ottoman furriers, this waste was the raw material for their industry.

TABLE 4.1

KINDS OF FUR CUTTINGS PROCESSED IN KASTORIA CIRCA 1900

astrakan	karakul	rodent (various)
badger	lamb (various)	sable
beaver	lynx	seal
cat	marten	skunk
chinchilla	mink	squirrel
ermine	monkey	weasle
fox (various)	muskrat	wolf
goat (various)	opposum	and other uniden-
hare	rabbit (various)	tifiable types
hedgehog	raccoon	

Source: Antonis Kalafatides, "Monographia: E Gounarike" [Monograph: Furriery] (unpublished monograph; Kastoria, 1965), pp. 25-29.

-Kastoria's Fur Products

The fur goods which Kastoria's furriers manufacturered were really intermediate products which were used in the

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processing of other finished goods before reaching the consumer. From the heads, tails, paws, cheeks, etc. of sable, fox, squirrel, lynx and other animals they made a kind of fur fabric which tailors or hatters could use to line long, cloth outer garments or to trim collars, cuffs, outer edges of cloaks, coats, capes, hats, slippers, or blankets.[93] The fur fabric was produced in various forms depending on the value and quality of the fur cuttings, how it would be used, and what designs were desired in the look of the fabric.[94] The fur squares, assembled from the tiny cuttings, were joined into trapezoidal plates[95] from which linings for cloaks could be made.

Anywhere from three hundred to three hundred fifty red fox legs were used to make the lining in a checkered pattern for one man's cloak.[96] In the Ottoman Empire up to the First World War, cübbe with fur linings and trimmings were widely worn by the older generation of elites among Muslims, Christians, and Jews. (See Photograph 4.1, p. 160.) Bands (bandés) were made from cuttings which were first sewn into long strips (aradhes) and then joined to produce a long piece of fabric with vertical lines in it. Bands were usually 1.2 meters in length and from .25 to .7 meters in width.[97] The narrower ones became trim for the outer edges of the cübbe while the wider ones were for linings. These narrower bandés (also called stélé) were attached to the cuffs and collars of outer wear for decoration. A cheaper line of fur goods were used for blankets or for slipper and

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glove linings. As the industry began to export more and more first to Leipzig and after 1900 to England, France and the United States, it produced goods useful in those markets. The fur fabric took the form of yard goods as plates (pleter) which could then be cut from patterns into outer garments in style at the time.[98] Subsequently, a few furriers in Kastoria also specialized in making the once-popular artificial fox heads and bodies which adorned the collars of ladies' coats.[99] These replicas, expertly made from fox cuttings, were indistinguishable from the real animal except for the size.

-Work Process

The techniques used to process the fur goods were complex and painstaking. Great skill and patience was required to transform the fur cuttings into finished products. The furrier was a craftsman who had to be intimately familiar with the external anatomical structure of various animals whose pelt-pieces were being used as raw materials. He had to be able to discern differences among many closely related shades and hues of color in the hair of cuttings from the same breed of animal but from different individual animals and also be capable of detecting the subtle variations in the texture and length of hair of each fur piece. While each hordha had its own processing peculiarities,[100] four basic steps had to be performed on all hordha no matter of what type of fur it consisted: all hordha had to be cleaned and sorted, matched, sewn, and

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blocked. Each of these steps, in turn, entailed several tasks.

-Tasks

The sorting process began as soon as the furrier opened the sack (bala) containing the scrap pieces. A sorter (xedialextas) separated various body parts into piles by type (koupa) on the worktable (teziaké): heads, top and bottom sections of the necks, front and rear legs, armpits, stomachs, flanks, tails, and parts around the tails. From some animals, like sable, virtually all body parts were utilized, whereas for others, like muskrat, only the head and tail were salvaged. Concurrent with the sorting process, the body parts were cleaned of any debris or foreign matter, wetted, shaped, clipped, combed, and reshaped into usable forms. Finally, the sorter grouped each body part into piles (kampadosini) according to the height of the hair on each piece and for those parts which were bilateral, such as legs or cheeks, there were piles for the left and the right sides. From there, the pieces were moved to the matching table.

Matching the fur cuttings according to color, texture, and height of the hairs was a critical step in the production process. Since the furrier's aim was to produce a kind of fur fabric which looked as though it had been made from complementary whole skins rather than from scraps of skins, it was absolutely important that the shades and hues in the color of each cutting, as well as the texture and

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height of its hairs blend naturally into the ones to which it would be joined. If the cuttings were not perfectly matched, then the resulting product would look like a patchwork and lose value or even become worthless. In cases where a furrier wanted to create a distinctive pattern in the fur, it was still up to him to use his skill to design a pleasing arrangement. Again, the success he achieved influenced the price which the goods could fetch.

Matching was done in two phases interrupted by the sewing of the initially matched pieces into either long strips or rectangles. Later, groups of strips and rectangles would be rematched and sewn into marketable goods. In the first phase, the color matcher (hromatestas) further sorted and matched the pieces into basic color groups depending on the animal. For foxes, there were four red and four blue; for sable, there were blue, red-black, and mixed. Then he divided or "broke" (spasémo) each of these basic colors into various shades of each color. When necessary, the shades might be further subdivided into hues. In the case of mink, which was manufactured in small quantities even at the beginning of this century, although now it is the most commonly processed fur in Kastoria, by the time the sorting and matching by color and height of hair were done, it was possible to have as many as 1,920 colors in three hair lengths for a total of 5,760 varieties of mink fur groupings from which to sew the fur goods!

Bunches of the sorted and color-matched pieces were

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then weighed and a specified weight in cuttings was arranged on a sheet of paper with the skin side up in preparation for sewing. Again, depending on the type of fur and body part being processed, the arrangement of the cuttings could be laid out at random or in a specified pattern. For example, sable heads, which were triangular in shape when laid out flat, had to be filled in with pieces from the animal's neck in order to get a rectangular shape which could then be combined with other similarly constructed shapes to make a fur fabric.[101] The neck pieces and heads were sorted and matched separately before being matched with each other onto papers to be sewn into rectangles. After the rectangles were joined, they were wetted, shaped, clipped, and further grouped to make larger pieces of a fur fabric (1.2m x 2.4m) from which lining for a man's ankle-length cloak (cübbe) was sewn.

Fox heads, paws, and thighs, on the other hand, were arranged in a series of lamda shaped pieces (in an upside down "v" formation),[102] one atop the other, to sew strips that were combined into bands which were finally turned into coat linings as well. Yet other cuttings were arranged by type so that the pieces sewn would have shorter hairs on the outer sides and longer hairs toward the middle. That way the reconstructed fabric would replicate the real animal skin.

Whatever the pattern which the cuttings took on, the sheets of paper with the arranged pieces were piled into

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straw baskets which were then given over for sewing. The sewing was done by hand either by male workers in the shops or by women at their homes. Women were considered especially suited to this task because of their smaller hands and home experience with the needle since childhood. It was said that they were experts at sewing the rectangular shaped sections. A traditional Kastorian verse tells us:

> Kastorian maids
> All sew pehledhes
> At the knot, at the base
> They cut the thread.[103]

Using very delicate and tightly made stitches (tirtiri) resembling embroidery or selvage stitches, the sewers joined two small scraps at a time, some as small as a child's finger, on the skin side.[104] They had to be careful to avoid catching even a single hair in their stitches because it would show on the fur side. Great care and skill was essential to sew the tiny pieces from sables, foxes, and minks since virtually every body part and every salvable scrap was used from such prized pelts.

The sewing was completed in two phases, separated by the second part of the matching. In the first phase of the sewing, the stitchers united the prearranged pieces into either long, narrow strips (aradhes) of about 1.2 meters long or into rectangular shapes (pehledes), depending on the type of fur, body part, the color, and the pattern desired. Groups of strips and rectangles would, in the second sewing

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phase, be combined into large bands (bandés) .25 meter to .7 meter wide by 1.2 meters long or into large rectangular fabric (gouna) of dimensions varying according to final use. In between the two phases, a highly skilled and experienced technician, usually the shopowner, assumed the most important task of all, that of sorting, matching, and arranging for final sewing of the narrow rope-like strips or the small rectangles to make the bands and plates. Using information about the color, hair length, texture and gloss of the fur, he developed the layouts (katastroma) which would then determine the value of the entire lot of goods.

Once the master had completed the layouts, he returned them to the sewers who had to fit them together (tsiatesma) into a uniform whole as bands or as plates. Then, any holes left in the emerging fabric had to be mended and repaired (baloma) before the fabric was stretched, shaped and blocked into its final form. The blocking was a kind of ironing of the fur fabric which was done on special boards (stamatoures) approximately 2.5 meters by 1 meter in dimensions. Many, very sharp and thin nails were used to tack down the dampened fabric with the skin side out. Most small shops had to send their work out to specialists (stamatotas) who serviced the furriers. Even large shops gave out their fabrics for nailing during the times of the year when the volume of work was high. At other times they employed workers who could perform this final step.

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-Technological Change

This entire technology changed very little over the years, except for an innovation here and there. For example, sometime in the eighteenth century, Stergios Aivazis, a descendant of a long line of Kastorian furriers dating at least to the early seventeen hundreds, developed a method for processing valuable sables which reduced the amount of the precious pelt cuttings used. Some of the hidden areas of the 'fur fabric' being made were filled in with cheap cat fur. This earned him the title of the "wise one" (o sophos).[105] Other than that kind of improvisation, all the work continued to be done by hand until after the First World War. The tools used were simple ones which were either common to other related crafts, to household production, or easily made by the furriers themselves or by local artisans. Three-edged needles, thin nails, thimbles, combs, scissors, and thread came from abroad, imported by Greek or Jewish merchants not only for the furriers but for Kastoria's tailors, brocade makers, ribbon makers, housewives, and other users. Wooden hammers, measures, low work tables, and blocking boards were made locally by Kastorian carpenters.[106]

Significant changes in the technology and in the organization of the work process set in only after migration to and from the United States became firmly established. Returning emigrants brought back American-learned techniques which promoted more efficient production and new styles in

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demand in the new world center of fur fashion, New York City. The greatest source of change in the way Kastorian furriers worked came with the introduction of the sewing machine. The first ones brought to Kastoria in 1894 were Jacoby's imported by fur merchant Naoum Samara during one of his trips to New York.[107] But their adoption into the manufacturing process progressed at a very slow pace.

It is not known in whose shops these first machines were used or whether Samara had his own workshop in Kastoria in 1894.[108] How many more machines followed the first ones and when they arrived in the town is also unknown. Only after 1920, when Kastoria's furriers began to export pieced goods in large volume to New York and Paris, did the foot-powered machines come into widespread use.[109] Until then, the organization of the industry still dominated by the small shop and labor intensive production under the control of merchant exporters, did not warrant the use of machines. Probably the only shops to use machines were those owned by merchants like Naoum Papamoskho who employed many workers and who could have afforded the capital investment to buy the equipment and to train the workers to use it. Certainly, the small producer, who contracted with a merchant under the kinds of agreements described earlier, would have been hard put to accumulate enough savings to buy a sewing machine when he could hardly afford to buy a sack of cuttings for his independent production. Most importantly, in the 1920s the market in the United States

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for fur trimmings and pieced goods had expanded considerably.[110] For Kastorian furriers to be able to supply and compete in that market, they had to 'mechanize' to the extent of adopting the sewing machine which could stitch the cuttings better and faster than hands.

Various informants[111] recalled in interviews having seen their mothers and other people sewing pieces by hand until after the First World War. Some of them were born just before and after the Balkan Wars and must have been referring to the second decade of this century. Nerantzi Aivazi, who was apprenticed to his older brother as a youngster and learned all the primary tasks in the shop in Kastoria before emigrating to the United States in 1912, reported that he learned to operate the sewing machine in New York City. Another brother, Thomas Aivazis, who had preceeded him to America by a year, advised him to practice on an old, second-hand one he had bought for his apartment so that Nerantzi could practice on it and be able to get a job in the fur market.[112] The Aivazi shop in Kastoria was an independent one. Its owner employed other workers besides family members. If this shop did not have machines by 1912, it was not likely that they were being widely used in the town's industry at the time. Moreover, until after the war, the international turmoil in which Macedonia, Greece, and Turkey were deeply embroiled, discouraged the importation of any heavy equipment into the region. It is likely that only after the settlement of hostilities, with

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the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, that sewing machines along with other capital goods could be imported into the region, which had by then been formally annexed by Greece.

The adoption of the sewing machine into the production process had a profound effect on female labor. While married women had long worked as domestic piece workers for merchant manufacturers, the sewing machine firmly located the sewing process in the workshop. As male emigration reached mass proportions after 1916, unmarried girls found work in the shops as operators for the first time.[113] They were said to have wanted the work in order to save money for their doweries.[114] But overall, men now displaced the women in this production step because of the elevation in the status of the job and because it was socially unthinkable for a married woman to work outside the home. When the Greek government took a census of Kastoria in 1920,[115] most women declared no occupation. Only a few declare themselves as seamstresses or furriers. This implies that women's place was still considered to be in the home, even if some of them might have been employed by someone outside the family, either at home or in a workshop. That employment was intended to be temporary or dispensable.

Collapse of Ottoman Fur Manufacturing - Survival in Kastoria

At the end of the period that has been covered in this chapter, fur manufacturing had virtually collapsed as an

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industry in the Ottoman Empire.[116] By 1900, the craft had disappeared from all but a few towns in both the European and the Asiatic parts of Turkey. A German scholar travelling in the Balkans at the time noted that in Okhrid, once a fur manufacturing center in what is now Yugoslavia, "... the great wealth of the once comfortable and influential furriers belongs to the past. The industry is no longer there ..."[117] The importation of manufactured goods, especially cloth, from the west following the initial liberalizing of trade in 1838 and the subsequent adoption of western fashion (the so-called "Frankish" clothes, ta frangika) had struck a death blow at the Ottoman handicraft industries, including fur.[118] Moreover, since 1829 the Ottoman government, in its efforts to mimic European progress, actively had discouraged the traditional costume and promoted western attire.[119] Men had once been the greatest consumers of Ottoman fur goods. But now, the younger generation shunned the robes and fur lined cloaks in favor of frock coats, trousers, outer wear such as capes, and other accessories which at least gave them the outward appearance of being associated with the trend towards modernization in the Ottoman world.

In Photograph 4.1, taken in Alexandria, Egypt circa 1900, it is easy to see the generational differences in the choices of styles of clothes. The elderly Kastorian tobacco merchant, Diamandis Goulioufis,[120] wore his cübbe over his Oriental robe (entari) as a symbol of his wealth and status.

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His sons, in contrast, preferred the "frankish" business suits which, in their minds, must have associated them to the socio-economic transformations taking place in the Ottoman world. In Photograph 4.2, taken in Leipzig in 1909, his grandson (and the son of the man second from the right in Photograph 4.1), Christos Goulioufis, a furrier with dealings in Leipzig, London, and Kastoria, is the epitomy of the twentieth century man: suit, collared shirt, tie, watch chain, fedora hat and all.

Most Ottoman furriers had abandoned their craft and changed occupations by 1900. Some became tailors of the new styled garments or of women's wear which at that time had made fewer concessions to western influences.[121] In the first photo above, the woman, wife to the man on the extreme left of the picture, wears a traditional dress and vest, reflecting the slower pace with which change had occurred, even for upper class women. The only places where furriers retained some integrity as craftsmen into the twentieth century were in Kastoria and, to a lesser extent, Siatista. In the latter town, fur manufacturing declined steadily after 1910. Between 1928 and 1932, it was all but eliminated as an occupation, only to be revived after the Second World War by returning emigrant furriers from the United States, who brought capital and technology into the industry.[122] No doubt the Kastorians' well-established prominence in the industry throughout the Ottoman Empire and their longstanding development of and control over

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PHOTOGRAPH 4.1



Kastorian merchant Diamandis Goulioouris and his family in Alexadria Egypt, circa 1880s.

Source: Yannis Goulioouris. Kastoria, Greece.

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PHOTOGRAPH 4.2



Kastorian fur merchant Christos I. Gouliouris in Leipzig, Germany, 1909.

Source: Yannis Gouliouris. Kastoria, Greece.

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alternative markets for raw materials and for finished goods in Europe and subsequently in North America, kept the trade alive in their town.[123] Consequently, when fashions changed in the 1880s and '90s and later when the Ottoman elite departed from Macedonia and the Balkans in 1912, Kastorian furriers could rely on foreign consumption which was undergoing rapid expansion as the demand for fur garments was growing in the west. Since Kastorian furriers manufactured intermediate products, fur trimmings and plates, which could be made into coat trimmings, linings or outer shells of coats with minor stylistic modifications and pieced goods, their products remained competitive and in demand.

In 1908, an article in the Makedoniko Emerologeo (Macedonian Almanac) observed that Kastoria still had "an excellent industry of various furs," specializing in sable for women's capes and men's cloaks.[124] In 1916, British Naval Intelligence reported that although the town's commercial importance had declined from the prosperity it had attained in earlier years, ". . . there is still a good deal of trade, especially in furs."[125] Indeed, in 1911 and 1913 about 47 tons of "fur goods" (gounarika) were imported into the port of Thessaloniki in each of the two years and were valued at 94,521 drachmas in 1913.[126] The composition and destination of those fur goods was not stated in the source which provided the data compiled by the Austrian Consul General in Thessaloniki at the time. However, the

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likelihood was that these fur goods were cuttings (hordha) destined primarily for Kastoria and, possibly, Siatista, since those were the only places in Macedonia where fur products were still being manufactured.

But the significance of the fur industry for Kastoria's economy in the early years of the twentieth century should not be overstated. G.N. Kofina was appointed as director of finance in Macedonia by the Greek Ministry of Finance in November 1912 in order to organize the province's public finances and to study its commerce and industry.[127] When he submitted his report to the ministry ten months later, he wrote nothing about fur manufacturing anywhere in the province, even though he included a chapter on "industry in Macedonia."[128] There, he discussed cotton and woolen textile manufacturing, tanneries, and industries producing hemp products, petroleum barrels, soap, etc. He concluded the chapter with a section on other industries in the rest of Macedonia, including the county of Kastoria, which he characterized as a "clearly agricultural region" where industry was represented only by flour mills and cottage industry, making coarse rugs and harnesses for the local market.[129] Despite the outlets for fur goods abroad, the town's economy had been disrupted continuously from 1897 to the end of the First World War -- first by the Macedonian Struggle (1897 to 1908), then the Hurriyet and Young Turk Constitution (1908), the Balkan Wars (1912 to 1913), and finally, the Great War itself.[130]

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Kastoria was a major center of conflict between the Patriarchist and Exarchist forces between 1897 and 1908, as well as the headquarters of the National Society (Ethnéke Etereia) for the region of Kastoria which was led by the town's Greek Orthodox metropolitan, Germanos Karavangheli.[131] Although the city, which had Ottoman troops and civilian administrators living there, did not see fighting, its surrounding countryside with villages was in turmoil as Patriarchists and Exarchists vied to control it. Following the uprising of Ilinden in 1903,[132] a major escalation of hostilities, a disastrous economic crisis set in for the people of Kastoria. Thirty years later, it was reported in the Kastorian newspaper, Kastoria, that during those "black days" (mavres meres), things were so bad that people masqueraded in their pre-Lenten carnival costumes to beg at their neighbors' doors.[133]

By 1908, Patriarchist and Exarchist antipathy was redirected against Ottoman power in Macedonia after the declaration of the Young Turk Constitution. Many young men chose to emigrate rather than be drafted into the Turkish army as their new status under the constitution required.[134] In 1912, the Balkan Wars "liberated" Macedonia from Ottoman rule, but conditions actually worsened rather than bringing the regeneration of Hellenism, which the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchists believed would follow unification with Greece. Eventually, as a new part of the Greek state, southwest Macedonia became a backwater within

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the context of new national priorities set in Athens. Moreover, the continuation of Ottoman taxes and the addition of new ones by Athens placed excessive burdens on the already strained population and economy.[135] When the First World War broke out in 1914, Kastoria's markets in Central Europe evaporated.

Emigration from Kastoria

Another indication that fur manufacturing could not sustain the town's economy in the early decades of this century was the emergence of widespread emigration from the city and its surrounding countryside. Until after the Second World War, fur manufacturing did not provide jobs or opportunities for youth in Kastoria. Emigration was not a new phenomenon for furriers. Earlier in this chapter the travels of Kastoria's merchant furriers to Asia Minor and Central Europe were discussed. By the 1870s, some furriers began to go to Leipzig to set up shops there not only for trade but to manufacture plates for the European market.[136] From at least 1901 until the 1920s, Kastorian names appeared in the list of Leipzig firms published in the "foreign firms" section of the New York based Directory of the Fur Trade. In the late 1880s, the first venture towards New York was initiated by Vasilios Skaperdas, to be followed by a handful of others in the '90s and the first few years after 1900. Later, when emigration reached mass proportions with the events of 1908 and 1912, Kastorian youths with no

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connections to the industry at home, flocked to New York and Paris to work there, mostly as furriers.[137] Even the sons and relatives of furriers had to look abroad for work. Men like Thoma and Nerantzi Aivazis, sons of a very old fur manufacturing family, emigrated to New York in 1911 and 1912, respectively.[138] Their older brother owned an independent manufacturing shop in which Nerantzi had once worked. But New York offered the younger men opportunities not available in Kastoria at that time. Eventually, Nerantzi returned, but Thoma died in New York.

Kastoria's small manufacturers also began travelling to and from North America on a regular basis, working there as contractors or even as employees for a period, accumulating capital with which to buy hordha, and acquiring some knowledge of the latest fashions and furs in demand in the world centers of furriery.[139] Then, they would return home to work that hordha into plates for export, and begin the cycle anew. Ironically, emigration to the United States ultimately saved the industry in southwest Macedonia and has contributed to its continued success until now. Had contacts and ties with New York City not been established by the emigrants, the industry in Kastoria, and eventually in Siatista, would have gone the way of that in other Macedonian towns towards the end of the previous century. With the collapse of the German and French markets during the First World War, Kastoria would not have been able to sustain its artisans. But as the Central European networks

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diminished, the New York connection thrived. In July 1920, the local paper reported that merchants from the United States had arrived in Kastoria to buy furs and that trade activity in the town had increased.[140] More importantly, the emigrant workers and small businessmen sent home raw materials, innovative manufacturing techniques, business information on styles and trends in the industry, and all important monetary remittances to relatives and associates in Kastoria.

In the 1920s and '30s, many Kastorian furriers frequently moved between their hometown and New York. Although United States immigration laws had all but excluded Greeks from entry into the country, furriers could circumvent restrictions by applying for special visas as businessmen.[141] It was not unusual for them to remain for several months, perhaps working with a furrier brother or cousin, before returning to Greece. Life in the town was drastically interrupted between 1940 and 1949 by the Nazi Occupation of Greece in the Second World War and then by the Civil War, during which Kastoria was again the scene of strife. After the suppression of the Democratic Army of Greece by the royalist troops with the aid of the United States, stability, albeit repressive, returned to the region.[142] The relationship with the fur manufacturing industry and the Kastorian furriers in the United States brought infusions of capital and new technolgy to the local industry as well as new outlets for Kastoria's fur goods.

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Conclusion

This chapter has provided a survey of the fur manufacturing industry in Kastoria at the turn of the century. It has shown that Kastorian furriers were skilled craftsmen when they left the old country for the United States. Theirs was a handicraft, cottage industry which produced goods for a remote market using raw materials unavailable locally. The furriers relied on mobile merchants and merchant-manufacturers to procure the raw materials and to market their products for them. In the industry, these merchants, few in number, occupied a central and powerful position since they were indispensable intermediaries between producers and consumers and producers and suppliers. As we shall see in Chapter Five, this relationship was not unlike that which developed in the fur industry in New York City between fur manufacturers and 'jobbers' who marketed fur goods, especially for small scale producers.

The work process had become divided into separate and distinct tasks performed by workers both within and outside the workplace. A craftsman would be familiar with all the steps in the production process though there were some which he did not usually perform. This was especially so in the sewing together of the tiny pieces of fur cuttings, a task left to women piece workers. Where the scale of production was very small, the craftsman worked alone except for the 'giving out' of the sewing either to his wife and daughters

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or to women in the neighborhood. But where it was large enough to employ workers, the craftsman could distribute the work to specialists within and outside his workshop.

The furriers' knowledge of the intricacy of transforming miniscule fur cuttings into usuable fur goods was highly specialized but would be very valuable within an environment where waste cuttings were plentiful and cheap. array of products Their familiarity with the business relations of producing for a remote market and relying on intermediaries meant that they would be able to recognize and understand those relationships in the new business setting.

Chapter Five will show that in some very important ways, the fur industry in New York at the turn of the century was not drastically different from that in Kastoria and that it was segmented enough to allow for appropriately tooled people to make niches for themselves within it.

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ENDNOTES

1.Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted ((New York, 1951).

2.Nicholas Constantine Karvonides, who emigrated to the United States from Ordu, Turkey in 1913, had been a shoemaker in the old country, a craft he learned from his two older brothers. In the United States after working as a weaver in a textile factory (Pepperell Mills) in Biddeford, Maine and as a part-time assistant to another Greek shoe repairer, he opened his own shoe repair business in 1919 in order to be more independent. Always sensitive about the loss of status involved in adapting his craft, he refused to call himself a cobbler. In an interview in a local newspaper he said that he had learned to be a "real shoemaker" in the old country and that Webster's Dictionary defined a cobbler as a poor laborer. "And that's why I don't like it. Because I'm not cobbler. I didn't put 'cobbler' on my [shop] window. I put shoe repairman." Quoted from Kathleen O'Connell, "Biddeford's Nick the Shoemaker Has Driven His Last Nail," Biddeford-Saco Journal, March 31, 1977, pp. 1 & 10. Also from author's interview with Karvonides, Biddeford, Maine, 4 August, 1973 and Frank K. Gallant, "At 85 Nick Still Works Each Day," York County Coast Star, 21 April 1976, pp. 1 &11.

3.No single study about fur manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire -- either as a monograph or an article of any sort -- could be found. The discussion in this chapter, like the fur goods processed by Macedonian furriers, has been "pieced together." Information from various sources has been collected, sorted, matched, and joined together to construct a mosaic of fur manufacturing at the turn of the century.

There are five main theories to explain the origins of fur manufacturing in Kastoria: (a) the prehistoric origins theory found in Tsamisés, p. 216; (b) the Byzantine origins theory, Ioannis Bakalis, Touristiko Odégo [Tourist Guide] (Kastoria, 1951), p. 99; Constantine Pychion, Touristiko Odégo [Tourist Guide] (Kastoria, 1958), p. 9; (c) the Jewish intermediary theory, D. Giannousés in article in Nea Kastoria [New Kastoria], 15 August 1959; and Mihali Rodas in an article in Véma [Tribune] 14 July 1964; (d) the Ohrida theory, Kalafatides, pp. 14-25; (e) the last one is discussed in the text and is that of Theoharis Bales, in his Ekonomiki kai Organotiki Diereunisis ton Epiheireseon Gounopoiias [Financial and Organizational Research of Fur Manufacturing Enterprises] (Athens, 1973), pp. 19-27. For a summary of all these theories, see Bales, pp. 9-27 and Antonis Kalafatides, "Monographia: E Gounarike" [Monograph: Furriery] (unpublished handwritten manuscript; Kastoria, 1965), pp. 44-14. The author is grateful to Mr. Kalafatides for lending her his manuscript and allowing her to copy it

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for research purposes.

4.Bales, pp. 19-20; Kalafatides, pp. 18-24.

5."Rarely were Muslims furriers, and most of the butchers were Slavs, Greeks, Albanians or Wallachs, and the furriers, Greeks, Zinzares, Jews or Armenians." Ami Boué, La Turquie d'Europe (Paris, 1840), III, p. 117; Tsamisés, p. 216.

6.Kalafatides, pp. 18-20 and "Lexilogion" [Glossary], pp. 75-105.

7.Bales, p. 26-27.

8.Angeliki Hatzimihali "To Isnafi ton Gounaradon," [The Furriers' Guild] ca. mid-to-late 1950s, passim. A copy of this article was given to this author by Yanni Gouliouris in Kastoria, July 1977. It is not known where or exactly when it was published; Tsamisés, p. 218.

9.Angeliki Hatzimihali "Morphes Apo tén Somateaké Organosé ton Ellénon Stén Othomaniké Autokratoria," [Aspects of the Corporate Organization of Greeks in the Ottoman Empire], in E Pentakosiosté Epeteios apo tés Aloséos tés Konstantinoupoléos [The Five Hundredth Anniversary of the Taking of Constantinople], Commemerative Issue of L'Hellenisme Contemporain (Athens, 1953), p. 296-97.

10.Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," pp. 86-87 and "Morphes," p. 297; Apostolos Vakalopoulos, E Detiko Makedonés Apodemé epi Tourkokratias [West Macedonian Emigrants During the Ottoman Domination] (Thessaloniki, 1958), p. 20; Bales, p. 18-19; ". . . Although some were interdenominational, the guilds were generally organized on confessional lines . . . The effects of the division of the crafts into Muslim and Christian types, as well as the esnaf [guild] organizational and professional terminology, have survived long after the collapse of the Ottoman power . . ." Vucinich, pp. 62-63; On his travels through the Ottoman Empire between 1798 and 1801, Francois Pouqueville noted that professions were ascribed according to, what he called, nationality. For Constantinople he provided a table listing some "arts and trades carried on, with the nations by by whom they are exercised." The furriers were Greeks. F.C.H.L. Pouqueville Travels in Greece and Turkey (English translation; London, 1820), pp. 288-89.

11.Bales, p. 18.

12.Ibid.; Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 85 and "Morphes," p. 298; Tsamisés, pp. 187-207 and 217-218; Vakalopoulos, p. 9; and Loukas Sianos Maties Stén Kastoria: Istorikos Kai Laographikos Odégos [Glances of Kastoria: A Historical and

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Folklore Guide] (Kastoria, n.d.), passim.

13.Bales, p. 21; Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 83-84 and "Morphes," p. 297-98. (Although Bales' book was written long after Hatzimihali's two articles were published, no where does he refer to her.) Both of these writers also refer the reader to other sources: Bales to: P. Aravantinos, Epérotika Hronografémata [Epirote Chronicles], Vol. 2, p. 252 and P. Aravantinos, "Ioannina" in Persos Encyclopeida; Hatzimihali to: Dimitri Hasiotes, Diatrive kai Epomnemata [A Treatise and Notes] (Athens, 1887) p. 29.

14.Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 85 and "Morphes," p. 298.

15.Bales, p. 22.

16.Vakalopoulos, passim; Tsamisés, 219. For an interesting description and analysis of the trade between the Balkans and Central Europe see: Traian Stoianovich "The Conquoring Balkan Orthodox Merchant" Journal of Economic History, 20 March 1960, pp. 234-313; Also: Th. Natsina, E Makedones Pragmmateutades eis tas Horas Austrias kai Oungarias [Macedonian Merchants in the countries of Austria and Hungary] (Thessalonika, 1939) and Sp. Lambros "Selides ek tés Istopias tou ev Oungaria kai Austria Makedonikou Ellénismou" [Pages from the History of Macedonian Greeks in Hungary and Austria], Neos Ellénomnémon [New Hellenic Remembrance] 8, 1911, pp. 257-300.

17.Vakalopoulos, pp. 7-9 and 12-25, passim; Stoinovich, passim; Leftan Stavrianos, The Balkans Since 1453 (New York, 1958), pp. 142-43; Giani Kordatos, Esagogi eis ten Istorian tes Ellenikes Kephalaokratias [Introduction to the History of Greek Capitalism] (4th ed.; Athens, 1974); Seraphém Maximos, E Augé tou Ellénikou Kapitalismou [The Dawn of Greek Capitalism] (3d ed.; Athens, 1973); and Constantine Tsoucalas, Exartésé kai Anaparagogé: O Kénonikos Rolos ton Ekpedeutikon Méhanismou Stén Ellada 1830-1922 [Dependence and Reproduction: The Social Role of Educational Mechanism in Greece 1830-1922] (Greek ed.; Athens, 1977; translated from the French ed.; Paris, 1975).

18.Francis Weiss, "The Ups and Downs of Fur Fairs," Fur Review (London) May, 1964, pp. 32, 35-36; Editor, "The Leipzig Miracle," Fur Review (London) February 1965, pp. 54-55.

19.Philipa Bakalis, "Magazia," [Shops] Kastoria, 17 February 1935, p. 1; Bales, p. 22; ,Iphigenia Didaskalou, Kastoria, Patrida Mou [Kastoria, My Native Land] (Thessaloniki, 1976), p. 148; Tsamisés, pp. 218-19; Vakalopoulos, pp. 20-22.

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20.Weiss, pp. 32, 35-36; "The Leipzig Miracle," pp. 54-55.

21.Jean H. Prat, Fourrure et Pelletiers a Travers Les Ages (Paris, 1952), p.278.

22.Kastorian mothers used to threaten to send their naughty children "behind the sun" as a punishment. Interview with Spyros Liakas, a Kastorian emigrant, Fort Lee, New Jersey, June 1977.

23.Vakalopoulos, pp. 7-9 and 12-25; In the regional study of emigration from Greece conducted under the direction of Andreas Andreades, most researchers found that, prior to the mass emigration from Greece to the United States beginning in the 1880s and 1890s, only merchants, artisans, etc. went abroad. Andreades, E Elleniké Metanasteusis [Greek Emigration] (Athens, 1917).

24.Bakalis, "Magazia," p. 1; Tsamisés, p. 219.

25.Bakalis, "Magazia," p. 1; Interview with Naom Papamoskho, grandson of the fur merchant and director of the Chamber of Commerce in Kastoria, Kastoria, Greece, September 1979; Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis, retired furrier, Kastoria, Greece, August 1977.

26.Tsamisés, p. 219.

27.Ioannis Apostolou, Istoria tes Siatistes [History of Siatista] (Athens, 1929), p. 44 and 68.

28.Tsamisi, p. 220. In an interview, retired furrier Achilles Alvanos said that they were the most prominent and wealthy family of Kastoria around 1910-15. One of the Scutari's had married a prima donna of the Leipzig opera. Interview, Kastoria, Greece, September 1979.

29.Fur Trade Review, "Section on Foreign Firms," Directory of the Fur Trade, 1901 to 1922.

30.Bakalis, "Magazia," p. 1.

31.Ibid.

32.The only detailed description of these transactions can be found in Kalafatides, pp. 72-73, 75. Interviews with Nerantzi Aivazi, Christy Adams and Vasili Dai also provided some information on the relationships between merchants and manufacturers and on the role of moneylenders.

33.In the Ottoman lands moneylenders, until they were displaced by Western financial institutions, were mostly Greeks, Jews, and Armenians. See Hatzimihali, "Morphés,"

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p. 284; Stoinanovich, p. 270-72; Tsoucalas, pp. 353-71 passim; Dogu Ergil and Robert I. Rhodes, "The Impact of the World Capitalist System on Ottoman Society," Islamic Culture (April, 1974) pp. 87-88. Kalafatides, p. 75, listed nine moneylenders who financed the town's trade. He identified two as being Jewish; the rest had Greek names, and at least one was also a merchant furrier.

34.At one time all business agreements among furriers depended only upon "the giving of one's word." Interview with Andreas Manthos, Kastorian furrier in New York, New York City, November 1976.

35."Neoelleniké (Makedoniki) Siderodromé" [New Greek (Macedonian) Railways], Deltion tou Epourgeion tés Ethnikés Ekonomias [Bulletin of the Ministry of National Finance], 1913-14, pp. 75-76.

36.When Kastorians set out on a journey abroad, relatives would accompany the traveller as far as Mavrovo where they would pause to eat a final meal and drink a last coffee together before parting. Iphigenia Didaskalou, "Ta Xeprouvoudemata" [The Send Off] in Kastoriana (Thessuloniki, 1959), pp. 36-39. Great Britain. Naval Intelligence Division. A Handbook of Macedonia and Surrounding Territories. Prepared on Behalf of the Admiralty and the War Office. (London, 1916), p. 211.

37.Ph. Bakalis "E Kastoria Sten Amerike" [Kastoria in America], Kastoria, 3 July 1937, p. 1.

38.Kalafatides, p. 25.

39.Laographiko Muséo Kastorias [Folklore Museum of Kastoria], "Letter from Dimitrios Aivazi, a Kastorian Merchant Furrier, to his Wife," 23 January 1885.

40.Interview with Naoum Papamosho.

41.Interviews with Nerantzi Aivazis, Vasili Dais, and Mihali Shiomtas.

42.It is very difficult to determine the size of the industry in Kastoria at the turn of the century. No municipal records for the Ottoman period which could have provided information on the numbers of businesses, craftsmen, and fur workers have survived. Some have claimed that fur manufacturing engaged virtually all of the town's adult Greek-speaking Orthodox inhabitants. In the absense of any hard data, that is clearly an exaggeration. Various sources have said that the industry employed from two to three hundred people in Kastoria before and after the First World War. After the Greek government had taken control of

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West Macedonia, it carried out a census of the population in 1920. That census placed the numbers of people giving "furrier" or "fur merchant" as their occupation at 779 out of a population of 7,861 in the town. However, a municipal official in Kastoria explained to the writer that when the general census was taken, townspeople often included their emigrant-relatives as residents whether they were in town when the census was taken or not. In their minds, those who had gone abroad had done so temporarily and still belonged to the community where they had been born. The Greek government shared that notion. It had instructed its census takers to count "the general population of the nation, present and absent citizens." Since Kastorians who emigrated were very likely to work in the fur industry of the countries which hosted them, many of those men were actually practicing that trade in other places: mainly in Germany, France and the United States. By 1930, an article in the "Great Greek Encyclopedia" on "Kastoria" claimed that 2000 people were employed in the city at that time and that another 4000 worked as furriers in Leipzig, Paris, London and New York. See: John Vasdravellis, Armatoli kai Kleftes eis ten Makedonian [Armed Mountaineers and Bandits (Greek Freedom Fighters of 1821) in Macedonia] (2nd ed., Thessaloniki, 1970), p.58, n.4; Panagioti Gyiokas, To Thauma tes Gounopeias tes Kastorias kai Siatistas [The Miracle of Fur Manufacturing in Kastoria and Siatista] (Athens, 1971), p.4; Demos Kastorias (Florinés) [Municipality of Kastoria (of Florina)] "Demotologion: epi té Vasé ton deltion apografias genikou plethesmou tou Kratos, paronton kai aponton demoton" [Registry Books: Based on the reports of the census of the general population of the Nation, present and absent citizens] nos. 1 to 10 and misc., 22 December 1920 (Handwritten), Archives of Municipality of Kastoria; Interview with Kostas Alexiades, Mayor's Office, Municipality of Kastoria, July, 1977. Th. Ph. Papakonstantinou, "E Kastoria: Geographia - Istoria - Tehni," [Kastoria: Geography - History - Craft] reprint of article in Great Greek Encyclopedia, (Athens, 1930), p. 15.

43.Io. Bakalis, "Oi Kastoriani Gounardes [Kastorian Furriers]," Orestida, (Kastoria), 31 July 1949, p. 3; Ph. Bakalis, "Magazia," 17 February 1935, p. 1.

44.Tsamisés, p. 219.

45.Io. Bakalis, Odego, p. 108; Tsamisés, pp. 218-19.

46.In an interview summarized in her book, Vangelis Pantazis, a master tailor, told Didaskalou that workers in his tailor shop worked the nehteri, p. 156-57. Didaskalou also included a chapter on "family nightwork" in the Kastorian household during which women worked late into the night to provide for their family's needs and to prepare

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doweries for unmarried daughters, pp. 118-124. [Unfortunately, Didaskalou neglected to acknowledge the original source for that piece, A.D. Sahini, To Arhontiko tou Nerantzi Aivazi [Nerantzi Aivazi's Mansion] (Kastoria, 1977). Sahini corrected her in a "declaration" included in his book stating that he had written and published the original article in 1962 in Nea Kastoria [New Kastoria]. Sahini's version is reprinted in Arhontiko, pp. 51-53.]

47.Didaskalou, p. 144; Sahini, pp. 45-47.

48.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis and Christy Adams, Kastoria, Greece, July 1977. Didaskalou added that it was common for furriers of old to pass their time singing songs they had composed in a mocking manner often about lively and scandalous women, p. 144.

49.Io. Bakalis, Odego, p. 108; Idem, "Lexilogion tés Kastorias" [Glossary of Kastoria] in the series "Kastoria: Mythologia, storia, Laographia" [Kastoria: Mythology, History, Folklore], Orestia (Kastoria), # 143, December 1951. Working under such terms, known among craftsmen as "me to kablo," was not unique to furriers. Didaskalou learned from tailor Vangelis Papazis that his workers often had to finish a quota of work within a time-limit, p. 157.

50.Io. Bakalis, Odego, p. 108. Translation of poem into English by this author.

51.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis. He said that before the First World War "neither workers nor employers made very much. They were lean years."

52.Hatzimihali, "Morphes," p. 289-91.

53.Ibid., p. 290.

54.The material in this section has been developed from information taken from interviews with retired furriers Nerantzi Aivazi, Vasili Dais, Vasili Shiotkas and from Io. Bakalis, Didaskalou, and Kalafatides.

55.The steps involved in processing the fur cuttings are described below. See also Ph. Bakalis, "Magazia," 17 February 1935, p. 1 and 24 February 1935, p. 1. Io. Bakalis, Odego, p. 108-109 and Didaskalou, pp. 142-43 have borrowed heavily from Ph. Bakalis in providing a summary of the steps.

56.While there are no statistics available for trade between Kastoria and Germany, some indication of the increase in the consumption of fur goods can be found in the records of the Leipzig Chamber of Commerce. Between 1879 and 1913 the

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turnover in furs increased from 4 1/2 million to 200 million gold marks. "The Leipzig Miracle," p. 55.

57.See section below on the technology of fur manufacture.

58.Ph. Bakalis, "Magazia," p. 1.

59.Tsamisés, p. 218.

60.Didaskalou, p. 118; Sahini, p. 51; Lucy Garnett, Women of Turkey (London, 1890), pp. 31-59; Interview with Tasia Sianos, housewife and member of "Armonia," Mousiko-filologikos Sylogos Kastoria ['Harmony,' Music and Literary Society of Kastoria] which restored the Aivazis' mansion as a museum, Kastoria, Greece, July 1977.

61.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis.

62.Io. Bakalis reported that they were paid piece rates, "by the hundred or by the pehledes." "Magazia," p. 1.

63.Io. Bakalis, "Magazia," p. 1.

64.Didaskalou, p. 143. Interviews with D. Aivazis and A. Manthos.

65.Io. Bakalis, "Magazia," 24 February 1935, p. 1; Kalafatides, p. 31.

66.Bakalis, Ibid.

67.During an informal discussion with Charles Tilly on the role of women in Macedonian fur manufacturing, he asked whether the women or their husbands or fathers negotiated the piece rates with the merchants who contracted for the women's services. He said that in most of the Mediterranean world of that time women did not handle such arrangements themselves. While there is presently no information available to answer Tilly's question, it is likely that Kastorian women, who lived in a patriarchal society, fell into that mold. It is known that in the pre-war Ottoman world, fathers continued not only to negotiate wages for their young sons apprenticed to some craftsman or merchant, but that they collected those wages as well. Hatzimihale described the apprenticeship in 1801 of Mihali Tositsa to his father's friend, a furrier in Thessaloniki. His father had agreed that Mihali would work for the furrier for two years in exchange for training, room and board, and payment of 40 grosia. At the end of the term, the father collected the wages which he set aside as capital for his son. Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 85. A hundred years later in Ordu, Turkey, Nicholas Karvonides (see Note 2 above) went to work at the age of eleven to supplement the family's income. His

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father made all the arrangements with the Turkish businessman who employed him and collected the wages which he used for family expenses. Interview with Karvonides.

68.Kalafatides, p. 72.

69.Hatzimihali, "Morphes," p. 290.

70.Tsamisis also noted: "So even those . . . were the same group that went to New York. And they had the same idea . . ." The implications of the transfer of this attitude to the new workplace in New York City is discussed in Chapters Seven. Interview with Chris Tsamisis in Kastoria, Greece, July, 1977.

71.Most of the sources which discuss the furriers' guild organizations (or Ottoman guilds in general) neglect to take into consideration the changes which took place over time in the composition, function and role of the guilds and in the status of the craft guildsmen. Angeleke Hatzimihale, the only scholar who has written on the furriers guilds in any depth, described an institution which was essentially pre-capitalist in character even though she covered a period of three hundred years, up to and including all of the nineteenth century. For her these were guilds of independent handicraftsmen who supplied both the local retail trade as well as markets abroad, yet, who exercised direct control over their craft through their institution and enjoyed protection from competition and market forces. While she mentioned that "master-merchant craftsmen" were members of the furriers guilds, she only vaguely implied differences in status or power between them and those whom she referred to as craftsmen (tehnétes). Certainly, no friction over power between the two is alluded to. Hatzimihali, "Morphes," pp. 289-301 and "Isnaf," p.82.

72.Hatzimihali, "Morphes," p. 289-94; Nikolaos Pantazopoulos, Ellenon Syssomatioses Kata Ten Tourkokratia [Greek Corporations During the Ottoman Rule] (Athens, 1958), pp. 18-19; Idem, "Community Laws and Customs of Western Macedonia Under Ottoman Rule," offprint, Balkan Studies (Thessaloniki) 2 (1961) 7-8.

73.Ottoman handicraft and artisanal occupations rapidly declined after 1838 with the unrestricted influx of Western manufacturered goods into the Empire following the signing of free trade agreements between Turkey and various European nations. Moreover, the economic and social transformations which accompanied the penetration of Western capital and power into the Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century dealt the death blow to traditional economic forms, one of those being the guild. See: Simeon Daniljanov, "Sur

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Le Developpement Industriel du Sud-Est Europeen A La Fin du XIXe et au Debut du XXe Siecles," Etudes Balkaniques (Sofia) no. 4 (1979), pp. 3-30; Ergil and Rhodes, pp. 77-91; Herbert Feis, Europe: The World's Banker 18720-1914 (New York, 1965), pp. 258-360; Garnett, pp. 158-59; Oya Köymen, "The Advent and Consequences of Free Trade in the Ottoman Empire," Etudes Balkaniques (Sofia) no. 4 (1979), pp. 47-55.

74.Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 87.

75."Somateia Kai Syntehni en to Nomo Thessaloniki . . . Monastiriou" [Associations and Guilds in the Province of Thessaloniki . . . of Monastir] Makedonikon Emerologion [Macedonian Almanac] 1909, pp. 314-20.

76.Apostolou; Ph. Bakalis; Lazaros; Papaconstantinou; Sianos; Tsamisés; and Io. Bakalis, "Kastoriané Gounarades," 31 July 1949, p. 2 and 7 August 1949, p. 3.

77.Nicholas Pantazopoulos, Community Law and Customs of Western Macedonia under Ottoman Rule (Thessaloniki, 1961), p. 21.

78.Interviews with: Nerantzi Aivazis; Achilles Alvanos; Vasilios Dais, and Vasilios Siokas.

79.Io. Bakalis, "Gounarades," 7 August 1949, p. 3.

80.Papakonstantinou, p. 16.

81.Hatzimihali, "Morphes," pp. 282, 290-91.

82.Interview with Mihali Shiomtas.

83.Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 85 and "Morphes," p. 290.

84.Ph. Bakalis, "Magazia," p. 1.

85.Hatzimihali, "Morphes," p. 290.

86.Ibid.

87.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis.

88.It was not easy in the days before the First World War for an artisan to become a master. "Those dreams did not exist then. They [artisans] needed to accumulate capital [to open a shop]. But they only made enough to survive." Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis.

89.Interviews with Andreas Manthos, June 1977, New York City and D. Papadina, lawyer, Kastoria, Greece, September 1979.

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90.Laographiko Mouseio Kastorias [Folklore Museum of Kastoria], "Ledger Book of Kastorian Merchant Furrier in Constantinople, Thoma Em. Pappazoglou, 1896-1905;" Kalafatides, pp. 25-29; Tsamises, p. 219.

91.Kalafatides, p. 34.

92.Papakonstantinou, p. 14.

93.Tsamises, p. 219; Kalafatides, pp. 33-66, passim.

94.Kalafatides compiled a chapter on processing thirteen kinds of fur cuttings. He had interviewed ten furriers, all but four over the age of 70 at the time. Each outlined for him how a particular type of fur cutting (hordha) was processed, what was made, and how those products were used. The information in that chapter has been indispensible to the discussion in this section on Kastoria's fur products and in the next on the techology. Kalafatides, "Epexegarsia kata Hordhades" [Processing According to hordha], Chapter 5, pp. 33-66.

95.Kalafatides, p. 78. A trapezoidal plate was called a "gouna" - fur. It is from this word (gouna), that the Greek word for furrier (gounaras) is derived.

96.Ibid., p. 38.

97.Ibid., pp. 75 and 90.

98.Ibid., p. 96. Kalafatides attributes the origin of this term, pleter, to the English word "plaid fabric with a stripe or fluting." While the fabric he described did have a plaid-like pattern because of the manner in which it was assembled, it is much more likely that pleter is plate which is what this kind of fur fabric is called in the industry. It is also very possible that the Greek term is a borrowing from the German Platte which means plate and is pronounced as is the Greek term. (Langencheidt's German-English and English-German Dictionary [New York, 1970] new and enlarged edition, p. 205). Macedonian furriers produced plates for the Leipzig market 25 or more years before they made them for either the U.S. or the British fur industry. "Leipzig Miracle," p. 55.

99.Kalafatides, p. 119.

100.The detailed description of the tasks involved in each of the four basic steps has been summarized from Kalafatides' study.

101.Kalafatides, p. 39.

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102.Ibid., p. 37.

103.Didaskalou, p. 143.

104.Ibid.

105.Kalafatides, p. 42. Nerantzi Aivazis, in his interview, proudly described how his forebear had invented this technique.

106.Kalafatides, p. 31-33.

107.Ibid., p. 32 and 71.

108.Naoum Samara subsequently had his own business for many years in the United States. His name appeared in the Directory of the Fur Trade beginning in 1919.

109.The city of Kastoria was not electrified until after the Second World War.

110.See Chapter Five.

111.Interviews with Nerantzi Aivazis; Vasilios Dais; Spyros Liakas; and Andreas Manthos.

112.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis.

113.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazi.

114.Tsamises, p. 219.

115.Demos Kastorias (Florinés) [Municipality of Kastoria (of Florina)], [Registry Books].

116.Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 85.

117.H. Gelzer, Von Heiligen Berge und aus Makedonien (Leipzig, 1904), p. 172. [The author is inebted to Ellen Jacobs for translating the sections in Gelzer pertinent to this chapter.]

118.Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 84; Idem, "Aspects de L'Organisation Economique des Grecs dans L'Empire Ottoman," in 1453-1953. Le Cinq-Centiéme Anniversaire de la Prise de Constantinople, commemorative issue of L'Hellenisme Contemporain (Athens, 1953), p. 273. This is the French edition of "Morphes" in which no mention is made of the decline in fur manufacturing in Macedonia. Tsamises wrote that the first to import European clothing into Kastoria was Georgios Antonio. He had traded fur goods in Constantinople where he became a French citizen. (This was possible under special arrangements between the Ottoman government and

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French, as well as other European, governments.) He returned to Kastoria with "Frankish" clothes and introduced them to the community. From that he came to be known as Frangos, pp. 209-210.

119.Bernard Lewis, Modern Turkey (London, 1968), pp. 102 and 236.

120.The author is grateful to Ioannis Gouliouris for the photographs of his relatives and father and for some biographical information about them. Provided in Kastoria, Greece, July, 1977.

121.Hatzimihali, "Isnaf," p. 84 and "Morphes," p. 273.

122.Miltiades Strakali, Démos Siatistés (Siatista, 1962), p. 40, 156 and 158; I.M. Sharp "Sister Siatista," Fur Review (London), January 1971, p. 34.

123.Bales, p. 22.

124.Th. P. "Kastoria," Makedonikon Emerologeon [Macedonian Almanac] (Athens) 1908, p. 266.

125.Great Britain. Naval Intelligence Division, p. 469.

126.G.N. Kofina Ta Ekonomika tes Makedonias (anatéposis ek tou Deltiou tou Epourgeiou ton Ekonomikon) [The Finances of Macedonia (reprint from the Bulletin of the Ministry of Finance)] (Athens, 1914), pp. LXIV, LXVI, and 132.

127.Ibid., pp. v - vii.

128.Ibid., pp. 208-240.

129.Ibid., pp. 238-240.

130.See Chapter Three.

131.Douglas Dakin The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913 (Thessaloniki, 1966); Georgios Modis, O Makedonikos Agon kai E Neoteré Makedoniké Istoria [The Macedonian Struggle and Modern Macedonian History] (Thessaloniki, 1967).

132.Dakin, p. 92-106; Modis, pp. 182-204.

133.Ph. Bakalis, "Maures Meres" [Black Days], Kastoria, 6 February 1935, p. 1.

134.Interviews with Ch. Adams, N. Aivazis, Io. Gouliouris, A. Manthos. Emigration became the main alternative to military service for hundreds of thousands of non-Muslim youth in the Ottoman Empire after 1908. Greek Orthodox

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youth from Macedonia, the Aegean Islands, and Asia Minor opted to leave their homelands for the United States and other countries rather than serve in the Turkish army. In tracing the causes of emigration from those areas, the researchers working under Andreadis confirmed this, Metanasteusis, pp. 217-4.

135.Andreadis, pp. 217-419, passim; Strakali, p. 40.

136.In an article on the fur industry in Leipzig, the editor of the Fur Review (London) wrote: "Now [ca. 1870] there appeared Greek and Armenian merchants who brought goods from the Middle East and established workshops for manufacturing plates from pieces and tails." February 1965, p. 55. No doubt among those Greeks were Kastorians and Siatistans. A. Alvanos recalled that at the end of the nineteenth century, when he was a boy (b. ca. 1887) those merchant furriers who did business with Leipzig produced furs both in Kastoria and in Leipzig. Th. P., writing in the Macedonian Almanac, added: "And indeed for some time the manufactured fur goods of Kastoria were sold only in Turkey, but for several years now there is a hugh trade carried on, especially of sable, with Leipzig from which these [goods] are imported into Paris and London." "Kastoria," p. 266.

137.Kalafatides, p. 71.

138.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis.

139.Interviews with Achilles Alvanos, Vasilios Dias, and Andreas Manthos.

140.Reported in "From 44 Years Ago" Nea Kastoria [New Kastoria], 26 June 1964, p. 2.

141.Interviews with A. Alvanos, V. Dias, A. Manthos, V. Shioukas.

142.For a history of this period see: Leftan Stavrianos, Greece: American Dilemma and Opportunity (Chicago, 1952).

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CHAPTER FIVE

FUR MANUFACTURING IN NEW YORK CITY: 1880s TO 1930s

> "The fur business is almost completely irrational from the trap to the show window. It is a business of little candor, less security, and no statistics. It is a playground of speculators and individualists...It has also made a few fortunes, though not many and no large ones. Like a caterpillar, it is segmented..." Fortune Magazine, 1936.

Introduction

Although the fur industry consisted of four distinct branches [the trade in raw furs, primary processing of raw materials known as 'dressing and dyeing,' manufacturing, and merchandising], Greek immigrants as a group made a living only in the manufacturing branch of the industry. Individually, a few Macedonians became fur merchants or skin dealers in the United States as some had been in the old country. Some of the manufacturers would send small lots of cuttings as gifts or supplies to relatives or friends in Kastoria. A few even made that a business.[1] Other Greeks, though not necessarily Macedonians, found jobs as dressers and dyers in the primary processing factories, but not in any significant numbers.[2] Virtually none went into that business which was highly concentrated and dominated by

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a few large firms.[3] There were a small number of Greek retail or custom furriers in New York City and more in smaller cities and towns in New York state, New Jersey and, eventually, in several other parts of the United States.[4] Most of them had started out in business as wholesale manufacturers, contractors or workers in New York City and later decided to relocate and use their New York experience to establish themselves in business. But wholesale fur manufacturing in New York City was the branch of the industry where Greeks came to be concentrated as a group -- both as entrepreurs and as workers.

Chapter three has shown that Ottoman Greeks were familiar with capitalist business institutions and relationships and with the entrepreunurial skills needed to go into business. Chapter four demonstrated that West Macedonian immigrants left the old country either skilled in fur manufacture or, at the least, having been exposed to it at home or in their communities. These chapters reinforce the notion that immigrant success in the United States was linked to the 'cultural baggage' they had brought with them.[5] But premigration experiences alone do not explain how and why these immigrants became manufacturing furriers nor how and why other, non-skilled Greeks came to work in the industry with them and were able to make it not only an employment opportunity but a business opportunity as well.

By the end of the nineteenth and the start of the twentieth centuries, immigrant premigration agricultural or

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craft skills and business experiences did not easily find direct application in the new society. For example, after the closing of the frontier in the 1890s, peasant immigrants did not even consider farming as an economic opportunity.[6] They had to go to work in urban factories, mines, railroads, etc.[7] Similarly, craftsmen skilled in techniques which had already become industrialized in the United States by the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries never gave much thought to pursuing their old occupations in the new land.[8] However, as the research of the past twenty years has revealed, many immigrant craftsmen and peasants often used their ingenuity to find work opportunities which accommodated their old world lifestyles and work patterns and which had some relationship to skills and abilities already acquired.[9] The immigrants' premigration experiences provided them with an array of possibilities for what they could do in the new society. But how, where and to what extent they could apply their backgrounds was delimited by the economic and social parameters of the host society. Therefore, old world shoe makers did not easily become footwear industrialists in the United States where shoe manufacturing was heavily mechanized, its work process specialized, and where entry into it required substantial, though not completely prohibitive, capitalization.[10] Few of them went to work in the shoe factories of New England. Instead, several became shoe repairers, just as some old world tailors had gone into the dry cleaning and clothing

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alterations and repair business, and others entered other occupations.[11]

However, furriers from various places in Europe and the Ottoman Empire could became furriers in the new society because they found a market for their old world skills and experiences within the fur manufacturing industy in New York City.[12] To explain why the furriers' skills were marketable and why Greek Americans were able to establish themselves as furriers in business and in jobs requires an examination of the economic contours of the fur industry in New York City from the 1880s to the Second World War. This chapter examines the 'economic environment' which made fur manufacturing an increasingly attractive business and employment opportunity for Greek immigrants over those fifty years. It does that, first, by surveying the development of fur manufacturing in New York City from an insignificant handicraft for most of the nineteenth century to one of the two hundred leading industries in the United States in 1929 and through the Great Depression. Then, it identifies and analyzes the factors which made fur manufacturing a business and employment opportunity for immigrants. How Greeks came to be attracted to the fur industy and how they penetrated it, recruited others, and achieved mobility within it is the subject of the Chapter Six.

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Historical Development of Fur Manufacturing

The history of fur manufacturing in the United States falls into five broad periods from its inception in the early 1800s to the Second World War.[13] Over those years, the making of furs was transformed from a minor handicraft into a highly competitive, capitalist manufacturing business.[14]

Early Development to 1880

Although the trade in raw furs had been important to the economic development and territorial expansion of the United States and North America since colonial times,[15] fur goods manufacturing was relatively insignificant until after the Civil War.[16] Through the 1840s it was no more than a handicraft with demand limited to custom-made goods for a select retail clientele. The first time it appeared in the Census of Manufactures was in 1849 when 49 "furriers" were counted for the entire United States. That same year, data was not available for New York City, but in New York state there were 18 "furriers" listed under manufacturing establishments.[17] (See Table 5.1.)[18]

In the early nineteenth century, fur garment manufacturing had been a minor handicraft which catered mainly to the carriage trade. It produced a very limited array of products, mostly custom-made accessories, linings and trimmings for mens outerwear. Fur was more widely used to make fur headwear as part of the hat trade.[19] In the

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TABLE 5.1

DEVELOPMENT OF FUR GOODS MANUFACTURING
1849 TO 1939

Census Year and Place	# of Firms	Avg. # of Wkrs	Wholesale Value of Product	Value Added by Manuf.	Wages
1849					
United States	49	1078	1598695	n.a.	248724
New York State	18	562	698545	265385	119148
New York City	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1859[1]					
United States	95	1293	3115755	1322832	268574
NewYork State	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New York City	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Manhattan	29	737	1970130	804673	108928
1880[2]					
United States	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New York State	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New York City	60	2440	4474018	1530661	868615
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1889					
United States	484	6947	20526988	8784000	3477000
New York State	281	4342	12434272	5536980	2322314
New York City	225	3794	10637261	4870544	2088759
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

[1] In the published statistics for the 1859 Census of Manufactures, data was available for 'New York County' (or Manhattan) but not for 'New York State.'

[2] Data for 1880 is taken from the New York State, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Tenth Annual Report. 1892.

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Census Year and Place	# of Firms	Avg. # of Wkrs	Wholesale Value of Product	Value Added by Manuf.	Wages
1899					
United States	994	8588	27735264	12737822	4273192
New York State	560	4454	15828996	7097000	2486071
New York City	512	4184	15238840	6806000	2386000
Manhattan	482	3920	14443684	6426000	2232000
1904					
United States	867	9370	37119000	15917000	5123000
New York State	603	5804	26244000	11006000	3480000
New York City	573	5298	25279000	10546000	3278000
Manhattan	558	5081	24613000	10264000	3158000
1909					
United States	1241	11927	55937549	24160644	7788000
New York State	863	8244	41301451	17161000	5704000
New York City	821	7824	39874386	16440236	5482884
Manhattan	804	7473	38682000	15953000	5323000
1914					
United States	1322	9030	43632693	19785291	6334661
New York State	877	5904	30312136	13490100	4343418
New York City	824	5519	29070984	12940989	4116246
Manhattan	793	5462	28781991	12798485	4077426
1919					
United States	1815	13639	173137739	67541134	24149212
New York State	1218	8890	134219190	50400606	18219485
New York City	1153	8503	132145251	49371064	17814144
Manhattan	1088	7804	126669590	47373706	16929971
1921					
United States	1707	12052	139365929	54829074	22421193
New York State	1191	7407	102350199	38932028	15360114
New York City	1132	7107	100217230	37991702	14936946
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

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Census Year and Place	# of Firms	Avg. # of Wkrs	Wholesale Value of Product	Value Added by Manuf.	Wages
1923					
United States	1758	14439	198042571	71880428	27923042
New York State	1301	9763	157768262	53963772	20867610
New York City	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1925					
United States	2000	16556	254265708	94950015	35164292
New York State	1353	10343	197437970	70857405	25677794
New York City	1302	9964	194803213	69619212	25226011
Manhattan	1242	9773	192336240	68498461	24814741
1927					
United States	2756	16640	299615047	104292059	37670610
New York State	2029	11215	244941302	80674917	28485400
New York City	1983	10670	241563284	79216121	27903818
Manhattan	1819	10296	236825873	77054112	27063608
1929					
United States	2855	15752	277592752	101485842	33329965
New York State	2046	10928	228489135	78553220	25188452
New York City	2007	10589	226503928	77619580	24750583
Manhattan	1868	10293	222444116	75765687	24130915
1931					
United States	2354	12358	164749401	62115251	24792600
New York State	1695	8738	140094000	49995000	19197000
New York City	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

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Census Year and Place	# of Firms	Avg. # of Wkrs	Wholesale Value of Product	Value Added by Manuf.	Wages
1933					
United States	1463	8210	80524414	30463885	11500346
New York State	1104	5633	67101000	23455000	8830000
New York City	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1935					
United States	2438	12534	143784454	55199604	21039529
New York State	2101	9749	125466641	46596229	17401732
New York City	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1937[3]					
United States	1642	12952	155604982	49260233	21560020
New York State	1307	9875	133906159	39981059	17576495
New York City	1296	9764	133317617	39718522	17441019
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1939					
United States	2175	13111	168031656	60279744	23403321
New York State	1843	10969	151257538	52725730	20500244
New York City	1832	10872	150682842	52376146	20386921
Manhattan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: United States. Bureau of the Census. Census of Manufactures, 1849 to 1939.

[3] In this census year, below the state level published data was available only for "industrial areas." What appears in the table for New York City includes the industrial area of "New York City-Newark-Jersey City." However, the latter two cities had very few fur manufacturing firms. Most of the 1296 were in New York City.

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1850s, some furriers in New York City, either employed in the hat trade or engaged in the custom fur shops, dared to branch out and start manufacturing ready-to-wear fur goods at wholesale.[20] Their product line was limited to fur sets (matching muffs and scarves or collars) and hats for women and children and to the accessories and headwear used by men. According to one source, in 1856 $1,200,000 worth of manufactured furs was consumed in New York City, mostly muskrat sets.[21]

The purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 which made the vast supply of sealskins from the Pribilov Islands available to furriers in the United States, changed the fur business in the United States because it introduced large quantities of seal skins into a market which had seen relatively little utilization of them to that point.[22] The introduction in the early 1870s of seal skin apparel items was immediately well received and over the next three decades, fur manufacturers turned their attention more and more to producing women's garments made of seal in a variety of forms and shapes.

The advent of dry goods and department stores in the 1870s were further spurs to the development of fur manufacturing because they very quickly opened fur departments to cater to a broader spectrum of female consumers than had previously existed for fur goods. "... In the seventies important dry goods houses throughout the country gradually evinced an interest in manufactured furs,

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and in succession opened increasingly attractive fur departments ..."[23] Writing a primer on fur techniques, Samuel Raphael, an experienced New York furrier, noted that "...fur manufacturing, the production of fur garments for ready-made sale, arrived with the growth of the department store..." He further observed that such stores added fur departments and buyers to seek fur merchandise and thereby encouraged manufacturers to meet this new demand.[24]

By 1880 the next date for which data is available for New York City, the industry had grown. Output, as measured by the census category of 'value added by manufacture'[25] had increased substantially, the number of firms had doubled, and the size of the workforce had increased more than three times over that of the previous census year for which data was available. (See Table 5.1) While the scale of the industry was still small, these years had laid the foundation upon which further development would proceed.

Transitional Period - The 1880s

The 1880s indeed were an important transitional period for the industry in New York City. Comparison of data for New York City taken from the 1889 Census of Manufactures with statistics for 1880 taken from New York State sources immediately reveal that major changes were occurring. By 1889 there were 225 firms in the business of manufacturing fur goods instead of the 60 of 1880, an increase of 275%. (See Table 5.1) The size of the workforce had grown by a

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more modest 55% from 2440 workers in 1880 to an average number of 3794 in 1889 and its composition had become decidedly more male, with female workers now only 47% of the total workforce whereas they had comprised 65.1% only nine years earlier. (See Table 5.2) There was also impressive growth in output during those nine years. The "current dollar"[26] figures in Table 5.1 show that output had grown 218% from 1880 to 1889. When those figures are adjusted for a downward change in the general level of wholesale prices during that same period, the "real dollar" increase in output is found to have been even greater: almost 300%. (See Table 5.3.)

This growth in the industry's size and in its volume of output were but quantitative indicators of qualitative changes taking place in the organization and processes of production. Fur manufacturing was experiencing the kind of transformations occurring in other segments of the garment industry in terms of the types of establishments engaged in garment manufacture, of the composition of the workforce, and of the work process and organization of production within the industry and within individual workplaces.[27]

Fur manufacturing firms of the period up to the 1880s had been much larger companies which carried out several functions under one roof.[28] They often occupied three or four story buildings with sales and administrative offices at street level (including a showroom for either or both wholesale and retail sales) and manufacturing, processing,

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TABLE 5.2

DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS ENGAGED IN FUR MANUFACTURE BY GENDER AND YEAR 1849 TO 1919[1]

PART A

NEW YORK CITY[2]

YEAR	AVG. TOTAL # OF WORKERS[3]	MALE WORKERS	%	FEMALE WORKERS	%
1849	562	262	46.6	300	53.4
1859	737	237	32.2	500	67.8
1880	2440	830	34.0	1588	65.1
1889	3794	2006	52.9	1783	47.0
1899	4184	2611	62.4	1561	37.3
1904	n.a.	n.a.		n.a.	
1909	8244	5548	67.3	2679	32.5
1914	5519	4040	73.2	1468	26.6
1919	8503	6445	75.8	2032	23.9

[1] The Census of Manufactures ceased the publication of the gender distribution of the workforce [in the category of "wage earners"] after the 1919 census.

[2] The figures for 1849 and 1909 are for New York State. 1880 figures were taken from the Tenth Annual Report of the New York State Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[3] The figures in this column include a small number of children under the age of sixteen (never more than 75) who were counted as being employed in the industry. Therefore, the figures in the columns for Male and Female workers do not equal the totals in this column.

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PART B

UNITED STATES

YEAR	ADJUSTED AVG. TOTAL # WKRS[4]	MALE WORKERS[4]	%	FEMALE WORKERS[4]	%
1849	516	386	74.8	130	25.2
1859	556	259	46.6	297	53.4
1880	n.a.	n.a.		n.a.	
1889	3117	980	31.4	2137	68.6
1899	4404	1630	37.0	2719	61.7
1904	n.a.	n.a.		n.a.	
1909	3683	1500	40.7	2152	58.4
1914	3511	1526	43.5	1956	55.7
1919	5136	2218	43.2	2880	56.1

Sources: United States Census of Manufactures, 1849, 1859, and 1889 to 1919. New York State, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Tenth Annual Report. 1892.

[4] The figures in these columns do not include workers employed in New York City. They were derived by subtracting the male and female workers in New York City from those employed nationally.

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TABLE 5.3

VALUE ADDED BY MANUFACTURE ADJUSTED TO THE WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX (WPI)[1], 1849 TO 1939.[2] New York City.[3]

[BASE YEAR = 1880]

YEAR	WPI	VAL.ADDED BY MANUF.	VAL.ADDED ADJUSTED FOR WPI	VA / FIRM	VA / WKR
1849	.820	265385	323640	17980	576
1859	.950	804673	847024	29208	1149
1880	1.000	1530661	1530661	25511	627
1889	0.810	4870540	6013012	26724	1585
1899	0.762	6806000	8931759	17445	2135
1904	0.871	10546000	12107922	21131	2285
1909	0.986	16440236	16673667	20309	2131
1914	0.994	12940989	13019104	15800	2359
1919	2.022	49371064	24416946	21177	2872
1921	1.424	37991702	26679566	23569	3754
1923	1.468	53963772	36760062	27010	3765
1925	1.510	69619212	46105438	35411	4627
1927	1.392	79216121	56908133	28698	5333
1929	1.391	77619580	55801280	27803	5270
1931	1.065	49995000	46943662	27695	5372
1933	0.962	23455000	24381497	22085	4328
1935	1.167	46596229	39928217	19004	4096
1937	1.259	39718522	31547674	24342	3231
1939	1.125	52376146	46556574	25413	4282

Source: Table 5.1.

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[1] Dervived by combining information in two tables in the Historical Abstract of the United States. Colonial Times to 1970. (Washington, D.C., 1989), pp. 200-201.

[2] Value added adjusted to the WPI is derived by dividing value added by the WPI.

[3] Figures for 1923 and 1931-1935 are for New York State.

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TABLE 5.4

WAGES AS A PERCENTAGE OF VALUE ADDED BY MANUFACTURE

NEW YORK CITY[1]

1849 TO 1939

YEAR	%
1849	44.9
1859	13.5
1880	56.7
1889	42.9
1899	35.1
1904	31.1
1909	33.4
1914	31.8
1919	36.1
1921	39.3
1923	38.7
1925	36.2
1927	35.2
1929	31.9
1931	38.4
1933	37.7
1935	37.4
1937	43.9
1939	38.9

Source: Table 5.1.

[1] Percentages for 1849, 1923 and 1931-35 are for New York State.

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and warehousing departments above and below ground. Whether the business was strictly wholesale or included a retail department, it was under the direct management of the proprietor who also often supervised production in his manufacturing facility. During the busy season, these firms often employed one hundred or more 'inside' workers who produced fur goods for wholesale and sometimes retail sale in the firm's showroom. 'Outside workers' did some piece work for the manufacturing furriers as well. The regular workforce was composed of relatively few male workers who performed the skilled tasks of cutting and nailing while women, some in the workshop and others at home, were the sewers and finishers. These firms also handled the distribution of their products directly to other retail outlets in New York City or in other parts of the country.[29]

By the 1880s, these older, established firms needed an alternative system of producing fur goods cheaply and profitably while retaining standards of quality in the products. They were motivated to doing that following the economic crisis of the early 1880s which was accompanied by a period of intense labor agitation and organization by skilled male fur workers in alliance with women workers who were the 'fancy finishers.'[30] Moreover, the profitability of fur manufacturing seems to have been deteriorating by 1880, especially because of the rise in the cost of labor. Whereas in 1859 in New York City, total wages paid to fur

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workers constituted only 13.5% of output, by 1880 they were 56.7% of output.[31] (See Table 5.4) This was due less to gains made by workers in their struggles for higher wages, than to the increase in the size of the labor force following the introduction of new sealskin products which were labor intensive.[32] During that same period of twenty one years, the size of the labor force had grown by 231.1%. These added workers had been needed to manufacture the new sealskin dolmans, sacques, and other outer wraps which had become quite fashionable in the 1870s and '80s. Yet, the output per worker, adjusted to the WPI, had dropped drastically by 1880 from $1149 in 1859 to $627, down 45.4%, though the share of average output per firm was down a more modest 12.5%, from $29,208 to 25,511.[33] (See Table 5.3).

The established manufacturers found part of the solution to their economic problems in the mass immigration of Eastern European Jews into New York City which coincided with their production difficulties.[34] Not only were these newly arrived immigrants simply cheaper sources of labor, but more importantly, among them were some skilled and experienced furriers who could easily supplement, replace, and provide the means to discipline the existing and unruly labor force.[35] By the end of the decade, and during the course of the next ten years, Jewish male contractors and their predominantly male workforce, operating in the outside sweatshops[36], had replaced a large percentage of the semi-skilled female workers who had been the mainstay of the

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labor in the manufacturing furriers' factories since the 1850s.[37]

Where these women went and what happened to them is not known. However, not all of the older generation of fur workers were displaced by the influx of the Jewish immigrants.[38] Biographies of leading fur manufacturers of the first quarter of the twentieth century indicate that many skilled male fur workers, in particular those who had worked as cutters and who were familiar with all phases of production, far from being pushed out of the industry, achieved mobility during this period. By using their experience and familiarity with the industry, and probably their connections with former employers who were looking for alternative production schemes, they went into business for themselves as sub-manufacturers.[39] Over the next fifty years, this pattern would repeat itself for other highly skilled furriers.[40]

The established firms did not so much bring the new immigrants into their shops as they began to contract and negotiate with the more entrepreneurial and skilled among them, and with other small manufacturers, to produce goods at their own premises. By 1889, very many of the 225 fur manufacturing firms in New York City were operating under the same type of sweatshop conditions which had become common to the rest of the garment industry during the 1880s and later.[41] Their owners were contractors and small sub-manufacturers who made fur sets, muffs, robes, hats, and

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other cheap pieced goods as well as some of the sealskin products, mostly for the large manufacturers who also distributed the goods.[42] Each employed a small labor force of less than 20 workers[43] to work on goods, sometimes owned by the large 'manufacturers,' who increasingly shed responsibility for production and became more involved in the commercial side of the business.[44] The headaches and conflicts involved in production were being separated from the more lucrative business of merchandising the finished product. The 'manufacturer' of the earlier years became a distributor and the contractor the producer.[45] Even when the new sub-manufacturers worked on raw materials which they owned, for their own account, they had to look to the large manufacturers, increasingly-turned-jobbers, for outlets for their products. Since they took on jobs in a highly competitive environment, the margin of return for them was quite small. Profits depended on how fast the shopowners could push their workers and themselves to produce. These new owners, unlike the manufacturers of the earlier period, not only supervised production but had to be directly involved in it, providing the labor for the skilled tasks specific to fur manufacturing since many of their employees were inexperienced or only partially skilled for fur manufacturing.[46]

This transitional decade resulted in important changes for fur manufacturing -- some with immediate implications,

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others with long term effects on the industry. Firstly, worker productivity was improved markedly during the course of this decade. Using figures which have been adjusted to the WPI which appears in Table 5.3, it can be seen that in less than ten years, output per worker had increased by 152.8%, to some $1585 per worker. Since the level of mechanization in the 1880s was still low, the increase in productivity could be attributed largely to the change in the organization of production. The introduction of the small sweatshop where the work process and the individual worker was closely supervised and managed by the shop owner greatly enhanced the output of goods.

In a memorial tribute to a deceased member of the furriers' union published in The Fur Worker, union official D. Mikol briefly described the working environment and conditions of the 1880s sweatshops which resulted in greater productivity. According to the tribute, around 1885, the deceased had arrived at Ellis Island from Russia, already experienced at making fur goods. Mikol continued:[47]

> "... He found work in a downtown factory [which] was at that time the refuge of all the furriers who came from the old coutnry, because there they could faithfully perform their religious obligations ... in exchange for the greatest economic slavery. ... To work steady was the great goal and ambition of the fur cap makers at that time. They worked from early dawn to late at night, and when the employer wanted to save overhead expenses such as gas, etc., he permitted and encouraged the workers to take bundles home ... The system in that factory was organized in a very effective way to perpetuate this form of modern slavery. The finishers, for instance, were divided. Some working piece work, some working

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> week work. Regular hours of work at that time were 59 a week and they received from six to seven dollars [for week work]. The piece workers received 50 cents to finish a dozen fur caps. There was constant competition of the week workers against the piece workers and vice versa ... the boss showed the week workers how lazy they were in not producing so much as the piece workers. Under such conditions the men were united in praying to God but eternal enemies in the question of their daily bread ..."

As for wages, by 1889 the percentage of output which they represented had fallen to 42.9%. A decade later, wages were just 35.1% of output and continued to drop over the next several years.[48] (See Table 5.4) These figures would imply that the profitability of fur manufacturing as a whole had improved during the 1880s and afterward. However, one cannot assume that the benefits were distributed evenly among firms across the industry. In fact by 1899, the average share of output per firm had dropped to $17,293, 65.3% of the 1889 level, while the output per worker had grown by more than 34.7%, to $2135. (See Table 5.3) Since these figures are only averages spread across all firms and workers, the actual share of output per firm was quite disproportionate and therefore the rate of profitability equally uneven.[49]

One of two longer term effects of the transitions of the 1880s was the change in the gender composition of the workforce. In New York City, female workers had greatly outnumbered male workers until the 1880s when the pattern of employment shifted dramatically in favor of males. Whereas women had comprised 65.1% of the workforce in 1880, by 1889

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they made up only 47% of the total. Employment for women in fur manufacturing continued to fall at least until 1919 when the Census Bureau reported the gender distribution of the labor force for the last time in the period under study. (See Table 5.2, Part A).[50]

In the 1920s and 1930s, with the growth in the volume of production of coats which required fancy linings and fine finishing with careful needlework, employment opportunities for women in fur manufacturing in New York City reappeared.[51] Immigrant women from Eastern and Southern Europe could draw on needlecraft skills acquired at home in the old country to get jobs as finishers since that position required a great deal of fine hand work. Some of these women began to be employed in greater numbers as operators though, from the inception of the union until 1936, they were paid 'second class' wage rates when they were employed as 'female operators.'[52]

The pattern of the gender distribution of the workforce in the rest of the United States differed sharply from that in New York City. To get a more representative idea of what that pattern was on a national scale, the figures for New York City must be removed from those for the United States as a whole since New York City employed from half the labor force in 1849 to three-quarters in 1919. Having done that in Table 5.2, Part B, it can be seen that, nationwide, male workers outnumbered female workers in the first available census figures, those of 1849. Within a decade however, the

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employment of women shot up to over half of the workforce and reached over two-thirds in 1889. Beginning with the 1890s some decline in female employment did occur on a national level, though it was far less than in New York City. Most striking is the fact that women remained well over half of the labor force nationally through 1919 when they were barely a quarter in New York City. Even in the 1930s, when female employment had experienced some improvement in New York due to the decline in immigration and to the increasing importance of finishing, women continued to make up a greater proportion of the labor force in shops outside New York City.[53]

Some of the reasons for the prevelance of women in the shops outside New York were related to the type and volume of work done and to division of labor in those shops. Less manufacturing of new garments was undertaken while those shops did more 'customizing' of 'off the rack' garments bought from New York wholesale manufacturers and did more remodelling and repairing. The total volume of their work did not warrant division of labor on strict craft lines and in many places the proprietor performed the most important tasks. Female workers offered those employers the hand and needlework skills they needed to finish garments at lower costs than male workers.[54]

The other major long term transition of the 1880s was in the separation of the technical and the commercial side of fur manufacturing which emerged with the new

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organizational structure of the industry. Production continued to be increasingly separated from distribution and to take place in many, relatively small manufacturing units throughout the period under study while distribution was handled by intermediaries. The persistence of this arrangement had less to do with extracting more productivity from workers and more to do with the frequent and often extreme fluctuations in the prices of the raw materials used, with the growth of specialization without much mechanization of the work process, and with the conditions of competition in the industry due to the instability and uncertainty introduced with the advent of the element of 'fickle fashion.'

However, contracting per se did not take hold in fur manufacturing as it did in other branches of the clothing industry. It was financially too risky. The cost of raw materials was much too high in relation to the value added by manufacture, comprising well over half of the wholesale value of fur goods for period under study. [See Table 5.5] No manufacturer could afford the substitution of even one cheap or defective skin in a garment.[55] The only exceptions were in the manufacture of inexpensive trimmings or of fur coats from rabbit and other cheap skins where both fur and cloth coat manufacturers relied on contractors. Manufacturers also used the services of finishing contractors who used non-union women workers to make and insert linings into the already completed outer shells of

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coats.[56]

Instead, the actual production of fur goods was carried out in a system of 'submanufacturing' which continued to evolve over the the following years. In it, the owners of the production units not only recruited, hired, trained and supervised labor but also procured and owned the raw materials upon which their workers added value. They also owned or rented their machines and equipment and of course rented their own premises either in loft buildings in the fur manufacturing district or in tenenents on the periphery of that district. But the submanufacturers remained subordinate to and dependent upon intermediaries for credit to buy materials, for the design, style and patters for their products and for distributing them once manufactured.[57] Those middlepersons could have been one of the few, very large 'manufacturers' who might even have had their own 'inside' shops producing special goods while the major part of their business was in distributing goods from submanufacturers. They had their own independent distribution networks and acted as style houses that supplied samples or patterns to the submanufacturers. Other middlepersons could also have been strictly commercial agents like jobbers, buying agents, commission houses, or skin dealers. In the late 1890s, resident fur buyers made their first appearance in New York City.[58] These were intermediaries, located in New York, who made the rounds of the manufacturers or jobbers establishments buying goods for

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TABLE 5.5

VALUE ADDED AND COST OF MATERIALS AS PERCENTAGES OF WHOLESALE VALUE OF FUR GOODS. 1880 TO 1939.

NEW YORK CITY

YEAR	WHOLESALE VALUE	VALUE ADDED	%	COST OF MATERIALS	%
1880	4474018	1530661	32	2943357	68
1889	10637261	4870544	46	5766717	54
1899	15239000	6806000	45	8433000	55
1904	25279000	10546000	42	14733000	58
1909	39874386	16440236	41	23434150	59
1914	29070984	12940989	45	16050699	55
1919	132145251	49371064	37	82630762	63
1921	100217230	37991702	38	62225528	62
1923	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	
1925	194803213	69619212	36	123837779	64
1927	241563284	79216121	33	162347163	67
1929	222444116	75765687	34	146333439	66
1931	140094000	49995000	36	90099000	64
1933	67101000	23455000	35	43646000	65
1935	125466641	46596229	37	78870412	63
1937	133317617	39981059	30	93599095	70
1939	150682842	52376146	35	98306696	65

Source: Table 5.1.

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TABLE 5.6

DISTRIBUTION OF VALUE ADDED BY MANUFACTURE BY SIZE OF FIRM, AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORKERS AND VALUE ADDED BY MANUFACTURE IN DOLLARS FOR THE YEARS 1909, 1914 AND 1919

NEW YORK STATE[1]

Size of firm by Value Added for Selected Years	# of Firms	%	Avg. # Wkrs	%	Value Added in Dollars	%
1909	863	100	8244	100	17161196	100
Less than 5000	176	20.4	252	3.1	321239	1.9
5000 - 20000	279	32.3	1131	13.7	1579472	9.2
20000 - 100000	304	35.2	2884	35.0	5342226	31.1
100000 - 500000	104	12.1	3977	48.2	9918259	57.8
500000 -1 million	None	-	-	-	-	-
Over 1 million	None	-	-	-	-	-
1914	877	100	5904	100	13490100	100
Less than 5000	208	23.7	227	3.8	393733	2.9
5000 - 20000	316	36.0	918	15.5	1687448	12.5
20000 - 100000	283	32.3	2389	40.5	5369616	39.8
100000 - 500000	66	7.5	2370	40.1	6039303	44.8
500000 -1 million	4	0.5	[2]		[2]	
Over 1 million	None	-	-	-	-	-

[1] Published figures for New York City are not available.

[2] Included with the figures for the previous category by the Census of Manufactures.

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Size of firm by Value Added for Selected Years	# of Firms	%	Avg. # Wkrs	%	Value Added in Dollars	%
1919	1218	100	8890	100	50400606	100
Less than 5000	151	12.4	56	0.6	324094	0.6
5000 - 20000	304	25.0	484	5.4	2134268	4.2
20000 - 100000	438	36.0	1623	18.3	8367429	16.6
100000 - 500000	275	22.6	3682	41.4	20628214	40.9
500000 -1 million	31	2.5	1236	13.9	7484080	14.9
Over 1 million	19	1.6	1809	20.3	11462521	22.7

Source: Census of Manufactures, 1914 and 1919.

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retailers in other parts of the country who had contracted with their buying service. Then, commission men and traveling salesmen representing New York City wholesalers also began to travel to retail furriers and other outlets around the country selling from samples.[59] In the inter-war period, two of the very large concerns which emerged were Wells-Treister and Kruskal & Kruskal. In 1936, Fortune Magazine described the latter as "a fur coat jobber, which means that it styles, finances and purchases virtually the entire output of several score small manufacturers. Kruskal's relationship to these manufacturers is less that of customer than of padrone. Kruskal controls them because its merchandising prowess dominates the fur shops of two or three thousand department stores and other retailers throughout the country..."[60]

Further Development, 1889 to 1914

Over the twenty five years between 1889 and 1914, fur manufacturing in New York City expanded impressively, though it experienced several downturns which coincided with the fluctuations in the business cycle of the nation.[61] The growth of the industry in New York City, can be traced in the Census of Manufactures (see Tables 5.1 and 5.3). The persistence of competition and therefore of opportunity in the industry for small, individual entrepreneurs can be detected in the growth in the number of firms manufacturing furs. The 225 firms of 1889 more than doubled in the space

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of ten years to 512 by 1899 and reached their pre-War peak in 1909 at 821 firms. Over half of these firms provided self-employment for their principals who contracted with the large manufacturers to turn out low-priced trimmings and pieced goods. These entrepreneurs, recent immigrants and often partners of two or more related individuals, also performed the labor in their shops. They employed little or no labor and, when they did, it was only for a short time during the peak season.[62] Therefore, the size of the workforce grew more slowly than the number of businesses. This is reflected in the figures on the size of the workforce and on its distribution among firms in Table 5.1. Between 1889 and 1899, the total average number of workers grew by only 10%, [although employment opportunities for male workers increased by 30.2% (See Table 5.2)]. The volume of demand for fur goods in the 1890s was still not great enough to stimulate the employment of labor by these marginal firms. The owner-producers could meet the demand themselves.

By 1904, with some increase in the consumption of fur goods following the economic recovery, the pace at which the workforce expanded quickened. The greatest increase occured between 1904 and 1909 when, in five years, the average number of workers employed in fur manufacturing increased by 47.7% along with the 43.3% growth in the number of firms in the business. Fur garments and accessories were in demand more than ever before and more hands were needed to make

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them. However, even in 1909, one-fifth of the firms still employed, on average, just 1.4 workers each, with some of these employing none. Another one-third employed less than five workers each. Employment opportunities were to be found among the 104 larger firms which employed nearly half the work force and manufactured over 57% of the output. (See Table 5.6.)

The most important increases occurred in output, again with 1909 as the peak pre-war year. By then, output, adjusted to the WPI, had grown to 177.4% of what it had been in 1889 and 86.7% of 1899's output. While 1914, a recessionary year due to the onset of war, showed a sizeable decline in output over 1909, but still above earlier years and 8.5 times greater than the base year, 1880. (See figures in Table 5.3.)

This growth was due to four main factors: growth in demand, the development of new products, mechanization of a critical part of the production process, and the expansion of immigration. A review of each of these follows.

-Growth in demand

A first reason for the expansion of the industry in this period was the rise of demand for luxury consumer goods. The general growth and expansion of the economy of the United States and the increase in prosperity for some segments of the population were important elements in awakening demand for fur goods.[63] In the period between

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the Civil War and the Great Depression, the stratification of society in the United States became more complex as the nation experienced growth in its capitalist economy, in the size and composition of its population, and in the distribution of national income and wealth. One outcome was the appearance of a broad spectrum of consumers living mainly in the larger urban centers with discretionary funds for personal consumption.[64] Initially these consumers included only the upper strata of society. But the sophistication with which the differentiation of products generally proceeded tended to foster demand for products in addition to the necessities of life among middle and working class consumers spread.[65] For a luxury product industry such as fur manufacturing, the availability of discretionary income for expensive purchases was an important stimilus to its development.

The surge in wealth in the late nineteenth century among the newly rich or upwardly mobile bourgeios classes stimulated new demand for luxury consumer goods, such as furs, which evoked the images of power, refinement and high social standing. In earlier times, whereas only royalty and the aristocratic classes had worn fur garments as visible symbols of their power and status, commoners and/or outgroups in many societies were forbidden outrightly the right to wear fur or to use certain kinds of fur which were reserved for only the mightiest. But industrial capitalism restructured society and redefined the character and

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composition of ruling classes. It was no longer possible to tell 'commoners' how to adorn themselves if they had the economic means to purchase the symbols of power long associated with the aristocracy and high society. By the twentieth century, a fur garment had become not only garb for warmth but an investment and a status symbol for the middle classes. During the First World War and in the immediate post war period the growth in disposable income created exceptional demand for fur goods. In the 1920s and 1930s even some working class people could aspire to owning some sort of fur goods because of the extent to which technological development made further differentiation in fur products possible.[66]

At the turn of the century, with the advent of the automobile and, to a lesser extent the airplane, heavy fur coats, caps and robes were a must for warmth in the days when vehicles were 'open air' and before heating systems had been designed for them. The 1900 catalog of W.H. Hall offered long automobile coats for women and fur overcoats for men in a variety of furs and prices.[67] The garments most commonly chosen were "... long, loose, ulster-type garments of raccoon ... worn by both men and women for automobile-riding."[68] Other "wind-resisting and cold-excluding" furs like goat, wolf, opossum, civet cat, bear, muskrat, hair seal, cattle hides and others were also widely used. In 1917, A.L. Belden, an experienced furrier and a first-hand observer of the remarkable surge of demand for

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fur goods, reported in his book on the fur industry that the demand for auto furs had "become so general that auto supply houses now carry fur coats in stock with tires, tubes and sundry parts."[69] A Canadian scholar, writing in 1914, stressed the role of the automobile in stimulating demand for furs in the period before the First World War.[70]

The strategies and forms of promotion and advertising developed for the rest of the apparel industry spread to fur manufacturing which had traditionally relied on a steady and well-heeled clientele. Manufacturers' catalogs, women's fashion magazines, trade publications, print exhibitions, and other media which had already become familiar to other clothing manufacturers came to be known to the furriers as well in the 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s. All of these were intended to communicate the availability of consumer goods to buyers and to stimulate demand. Catalogs, like those of W.H. Hall, presented a firm's products in an attractively designed publication issued annually. In 1883 the publishing firm of Parker and Tilton issued the American Hat and Fur Exhibit, an elaborately prepared, oversized book which displayed the latest styles in hats and fur goods alongside articles on various aspects of both businesses and biographies of leading figures in each. In 1903 the launching of the American Furrier by the Mitchell Publishing Company went a long way towards promoting fashion in the fur industry in its pages and through the stock folders and booklets its publishers furnished to furriers.[71] By the

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1920s, the fur industry had developed industry-wide institutions to promote the wearing of fur products.

-Development of new products

The second major factor which promoted growth in the fur industry during this period was the development of new product lines. These grew out of a new conception of how fur could be used and ultimately resulted in the ability to differentiate products and thereby reach more diverse markets. The unfolding of a new conception of how furs could be used began to emerge in the 1870s with the introduction of sealskin goods and was quite developed by the end of the First World War. First, fur began to be worn on the outside and to be treated as a fabric rather than being worn as a lining, trimming or accessory. Then, the fur garment evolved in stages from a short bolero-like wrap into the full blown coat, as it has come to be known in the twentieth century. Third, women rather than men became the main consumers of fur goods. Fourth, the fur came to be viewed as more than just a functional garment, for warmth. It was transformed from a staid, nondescript, sacklike garment into an object of fashion.[72]

In the fifty odd years before the Great Depression, furriers in the United States developed a series of essentially new products which would be bought largely by and for women. For most of the nineteenth century, fur goods had been mainly linings and accessories for cloth outer garments or fur hats, muffs, and robes or blankets

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which had functional value for their warmth during the winter. Until the First World War, the largest number of fur goods manufactured and purchased were 'fur sets' which were easily within the price range of middle strata women. The set consisted of a neck piece (scarf or shawl) and matching muff. The latter were popular until cloth coat manufacturers developed the large pocket for their coats. The description[73] of the 'fur goods' industry in the Census of Manufactures in 1914 summarized the range of products made by furriers:

> Establishments in this classification manufacture principally ladies', misses', and children's fur sets and furs, including boas, capes collars and collarettes, muffs, scarfs, shawls and stoles, fur coats and cloaks, fur and fur-lined overcoats, other fur garments, fur robes, and fur hats, gloves and mittens. Various other minor products were reported, including bands, rugs, tippets, heads, tails, and paws...

Then, the fur garment evolved from a short bolero-like wrap into the full blown coat, as it has come to be known in the twentieth century. Ruth Wilcox, an authority on the history of fur fashion, attributed the idea of handling fur as a fabric with the texture on the outside to a French coutourier, Doucet of Paris who designed literally 'sensational' fur coats for fashionable continental ladies of the mid-century.[74] Once sealskin caught on in the United States in the 1880s, some garments with the skins on the outside began to appear in furriers' shops and catalogs as harbingers of important changes.[75] They were initially

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short garments which, over the next ten or fifteen years, became longer and more elaborate. By the late 1890s the seal or lambskin jacket, dolman, sacque or newmarket coat had become "the thing, and a furrier would stock them in scores, all the same shape and differing but slightly from year to year."[76] Then, when warm garments became a necessity for riding in automobiles at the turn of the century, the fur coat took a giant step towards acceptability.[77] With the adoption of central heating in buildings, people stopped wearing so many underclothes indoors and women began to wear clothes made from lighter fabrics such as silk. But they needed warm wraps for moving about outside. The fur coat as it evolved over the first two decades of the twentieth century increasing filled that need.[78] In the 1920s the thought of fur as the shell for coats and and other wraps had become institutionalized.

Concurrent with the change from wearing fur on the inside to using it on the outside, was the shift from furs as men's wear to furs as women's clothing. For much of the nineteenth century, men in the United States, as in Europe and the Ottoman world, were the main consumers of fur goods. Except for aristocratic and older, upper class women whose expensive gowns, cloaks, and smart suits were adorned with fur, other women were not part of the market for fur goods until several years after the Civil War. Beginning gradually in the 1870s with short or hip-length sealskin jackets, simple fur hats and muffs, furriers began to set

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their sights on the female consumer. Then in 1883 "...Dame Fashion began to sit up and take notice of the vast, fertile field that lay before her!"[79] W.H. Hall's catalogs clearly reflect the growing preoccupation with women's fur apparel. More than two-thirds of his firm's catalog was devoted to fur sets, muffs, sacques, dolmans, capes, neck pieces, and other products for women. Men's fur coats were featured on one or two plates on a few pages somewhere near the end of the catalog and were briefly included in the list of fur goods at the end.[80]

By the early years of the twentieth century, women were the primary consumers of fur goods. It was to them that furriers and fashion magazines directed their attention. After the First World War, men's furs, except for the racoon coat, had all but disappeared from view. No longer were their coats lined in fur, and only a collar might have been fur trimmed.[81] While statistics documenting the gender of the main consumers of fur goods are not available, a glance through manufacturers' or jobbers' catalogs, fashion magazines, trade publications, and garment trades' press, clearly support the total shift to women's fashion.

As the idea of fur as a woman's outer garment emerged so did the notion of the fur garment as a fashion item. Before the turn of the century fur was worn for its warmth first and as a symbol of status secondly. In the 1870s, '80s and '90s, matrons bought sensible looking Persian lamb wraps as investments which would be handed down to their

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daughters. It was also common for middle class parents to give their daughter a sealskin sacque as part of her dowry. In either case, the purchases were made for the long term. The consumer wanted durability and functionality. The styles were staid, nondescript, and mostly unflattering.

Fur manufacturing had always been closely linked to other garment and apparel trades, especially to the women's garment trade.[82] In the early nineteenth century, long before fur became the outer shell of coats, it had been used primarily as a lining or trimming for menswear or for the fabrication of accessories, especially hats. As the mass production of such goods increased in the nineteenth century and as the production of womens' wear moved out of the seamstress' shop and into the factory or sweatshop, fur goods came more into demand as trimmings or accessories to such goods. From the 1850s until the First World War, 'sets', really muffs and scarfs, were quite popular as complements to women's outerwear, mostly cloaks, mantles, and suits.[83] Later in the century when silk became more popular for women's dresses, women looked to fur wraps for warmth in winter. After 1914, as women's garment manufacturers became more style and fashion conscious and as women's wear constituted a greater percentage of the clothing manufactured in the United States, furs became an important part in the promotion of the image of the well dressed, chic woman.[84] In the inter-war years the cloth coat and suit industry became major consumers of fur

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trimmings for their products.

For the first two decades of the twentieth century, style continued to evolve slowly: larger pockets, collars and sleeves, fuller and long coats, combinations of two complementary furs in one garment, etc. But "...the basic design of the fur coat followed the same historic meal-sack lines and the demands of 'the mode' were answered by festooning the sack with stoles, sashes, pompons, tails, paws and snouts..."[85] The technique of combining furs together in the 'skin on skin method' hampered the design of fur coats. The major changes in fashion were introduced in the 1920s when "furs [were] for the first time handled like fabrics."[86]

As the conception of the fur garment changed, so did the notion of which skins could be turned into those garments. Until the Great War, the most commonly used skins were Persian lamb, sealskin, skunk, muskrat, and the luxury furs like sable, ermine and mink. But as the world supply of these traditional skins contracted, furriers turned hitherto uptapped animal skins into objects of desire.[87] With the technological improvements in dressing and dyeing, the more plentiful and cheaper furs could be introduced to make an entirely new type of product: the imitation of the fine fur. No sooner were the restrictions on pelagic sealing and on Alaska seal invoked than 'Hudson Seal' appeared on the market in 1911.[88] 'Hudson Seal' was no more than muskrat processed, sheared and dyed to imitate

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seal. Over the next twenty-five years a long list of similar imitations appeared. Initially, the unknowing consumer might have thought the imitation to be the authentic fur. In the 1928 the Federal Trade Commission of the United States Department of Commerce adopted rules barring deceptive labelling.[89] Nevertheless, the essential point is that by the 1930s a very large pool of skins had become acceptable as raw materials for fur garments. This allowed for the development of new fur products and the expansion of the consumer market.[90]

-Mechanization

The introduction of the sewing machine was the single most important technological advance in the entire period under study. Its adoption prompted changes in the work process which immediately affected productivity. This happened in two stages: first with the foot-powered fur sewing machine and then with the streamlined fur machine which had an electric motor. Belden reported that regular sewing machines had been used on medium grades of fur as early as the 1850s and that sometime in the 1870s attempts were made to adapt the standard sewing machine to the peculiarities of fur. He reported that "a fair degree of success was attained by two or three skilled mechanics, but the results were not wholly satisfactory to furriers producing high class goods."[91] In the 1880s, The Hatters and Furriers Trade Directory advertised "Fur Sewing Machines" made by C.M. Boland who had first patented his

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machine in 1878.[92] In 1895, S.M. Jacoby marketed the first fur sewing machine "which met all reasonable expectations; the machine was accurate, speedy, light running, and was available for sewing light or heavy skins, the cheapest or the most costly petlries."[93] In less than ten years, an electric motor had been added to the machine, further enhancing work speed and precision.[94]

Even though most of the steps necessary to make a fur garment required skilled hand work, the joining of the fur skins and pieces by machine increased the productivity per worker significantly. Moreover, it improved the quality of the finished goods since the sewing machine could make a tighter, neater, and stronger stitch than even the most experienced human hands could do.[95] Best of all, Belden noted, since the cost of owning or renting a machine was not prohibitive, "a very pronounced advance in fur manufacturing immediately followed, new firms were formed to begin operations as quickly as sewing machines could be produced; the number of manufacturers increased each season and their output was many times greater than when they depended upon hand sewing."[96]

Belden's assessment of the impact of the machine seems to have misrepresented its benefits for the most common type of firm which was small and employed few workers. The share of output, and therefore of gain per firm, did not grow by multiples because so many new firms, largely immigrant-owned, were involved in the production of the increased

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output in this period. This is borne out by looking at the distribution of "value added by manufacture" among firms by their size in the Census of Manufactures.[97] (See Table 5.6) In 1909, 52.7% of the firms, employing 16.9% of the labor force, produced 11.1% of the value added by manufacture/output; another 35.2% of firms with 35% of the labor force produced 31.1% of output; and 12.1% of firms with 48.2% of the labor force produced 57.8% of the output. Since so many firms in the first category produced so little[98] and so few firms in the third produced so much, one conclusion which can be drawn is that, at least in this period, mechanization made a greater difference for the larger and mid-size firms which not only employed more workers but had more machinery than for the more numerous, small, sweatshop type firm.

The major increase in productivity followed the electrification of the fur sewing machine which was being consistently improved. In 1917, the Fur Worker reported that electricity had been introduced in fur factories between 1909 and 1914. By the latter date, electric power had increased three and one-half times what it had been in 1909.[99] In 1914, despite a recession characterized by a decline of 21.9% in the total value of fur goods manufactured and of 29.5% in employment, with the number of firms increasing by only 3 over the previous Census year, the average output per worker had reached its highest level for the period 1880 to 1914. (See Table 5.3.) There were

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only 2958 electric motor fur sewing machines reported in use that year in the entire United States, but there is no doubt that they boosted output.[100]

By 1919, when the size of the labor force in New York was only about 8.7% greater than it had been in 1909, total output had grown 46.4% in those ten years and output per worker by 34.8%. Considering that the size of the labor force had changed quite modestly, the increase in the growth of output was due to the increased mechanization of the work process since the number of machines had nearly doubled what they were in 1914, to 5,785.[101] Over the next decade, the number of machines more than doubled again to 12,028 by 1929 and output was 128.5% greater than in 1919 with the labor force still a rather modest 24.5% greater.[102] Most impressively, output per worker was 83.5% greater than in 1919.[103] At that point, the expansion of mechanization seems to have leveled off with no important machines introduced until the advent of the stapling machine and the blower after the Second World War.

-Expansion of Immigration

Finally, the expansion of immigration from the 1890s onward encouraged the growth of the fur industry in this period and later. It was perhaps the most important factor which helped to transform fur manufacturing in the United States. From the earliest years of manufacturing in New York City to the end of the period being studied,[104] the continuous migration of craftsmen from various European

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centers of fur goods production was critical to the establishment and expansion of the industry in New York City. They brought with them skills and experience critical to the growth of this largely unmechanized industry.

In the 1850s, the furriers who first established the wholesale manufacturing of ready-made fur goods had been immigrant furriers from Germany and other Central European countries, many of them Jewish as well.[105] Most of them had arrived in the United States already skilled in furriery in the old country. They had initially gone to work in New York's fur hat industry and by the 1850s had come to recognize the opportunities available in the manufacture of other fur goods as well. They applied both their technical and entrepreneurial skills, acquired in the old country during apprenticeship, to open manufacturing businesses. Coming from the world centers of the fur industry, they could apply their knowledge of and contacts with Europe to procure the already partially processed 'raw' materials, to design and promote European fashions, and to recruit additional skilled labor.

In the 1880s, the presence in the New York City fur industry of skilled fur craftsmen among Eastern European Jewish immigrants had made it possible for the established furriers to organize the new system of production which divorced the technical and commercial aspects of manufacturing goods. The fur businessmen concurrently cut costs, undermined the nascent labor agitation in their

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industry, greatly reduced the need for labor in their shops, replaced their former inside workforce which was largely female with new male workers now organized and supervised by a contractor, or later a submanufacturer, under a manufacturing system which was heavily dependent upon the networks and relationships found in the ethnic community.[106]

During the 1890s and later, as earlier in the century, no tradition or system of apprenticeship had existed in the industry to train skilled workers for fur manufacturing. The industry relied on the presence of skilled furriers among immigrants who either had arrived in the United States on their own or had been recruited directly from the old country by friends or relatives who were already in the business.[107] Until the restriction of mass immigration to the United States in 1924, the immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe continued to provide the industry with ready-made skill in the techniques of fur manufacture and in fore-knowledge and familiarity with the business. Moreover, those among the immigrants who were not skilled as furriers prior to emigrating but who had experience with needlework or tailoring were also useful in the industry as sewers or finishers since their skills could be easily adapted to tasks in the fur manufacturing shops.

The War Years

The developments in demand and product line coupled

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with the mechanization of an important part of production and the continued influx of skill and labor into the industry brought the industry to a highpoint in 1909. At the onset of the First World War, the fur industry initially fell into a slump because of the uncertainty of the times and the interruptions in trade caused by the war. Not only did consumer demand wane, but the conflict abruptly severed the movement of pelts across the Atlantic and cut off furriers in the United States from their suppliers of raw and processed skins in Europe. It halted the furriers' access to the traditional markets for raw skins and for processing in Europe.[108]

Until 1914, Leipzig, London and Paris had all supplied fur merchants in the United States with skins and with the bulk of processing services. It had been assumed that only European processors could adequately and correctly dress and dye skins. For example, many furriers and merchants believed that the water in Leipzig had some special properties for processing Persian lamb. The fur business had always been conducted this way: furs, which were produced in North America, were collected and brought to New York City, bundled and shipped to London where they were sold at auction, processed there, and then reexported to the United States.[109] Ironically, although the United States had long been one of the world's major producers of animal pelts, most were sent overseas for distribution and for processing. In terms of pelts from other parts of the

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world, their distribution primarily through the skin dealers in Leipzig, was an accepted fact of business. Until the war, most New York manufacturers expected that they would buy skins imported from Leipzig by local merchants or by the representatives of international merchant houses.

With the outbreak of the war, a new situation confronted fur merchants and the manufacturers they supplied: first, the European fur markets either were suddenly inaccessible or they ceased to function; second, raw skin processing took a back seat to the military needs of the combatant countries; and third, the routes were interrupted and sea travel made unsafe. Faced with a crisis, fur dealers in the United States acted quickly. The first step was to revamp the distribution process by marketing North American raw skins in the United States and Canada instead of exporting them. This decision, taken by a group of daring fur dealers was unprecedented. Merchants had always accepted the customary way of doing business by sending raw skins from their source in North America to the long-established auction houses in London from where they subsequently bought and reimported them or by travelling to Leipzig to buy skins which originated in various other parts of the world rather than travelling to those centers themselves to gather furs.[110] The war gave those fur dealers who wanted to shift the distribution center to the United States the impetus to achieve their dream.

In 1913, 1915 and in 1916 the first fur auctions were

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held in St Louis and New York, respectively.[111] Simultaneously, fur merchants in the United States initiated more trade directly with Canada and made New York the center for the distribution of raw skins in the Western Hemisphere. Over time, this resulted in the decline of the London and Leipzig markets. Fur merchants and dealers in the United States were importing more furs directly from other producing countries around the world and were bypassing the traditional markets. The United States had long been the main consuming nation of fur goods; now New York became the world center of the fur trade.[112]

The second step was quickly to develop a viable processing industry in the United States. Most of the advances in processing furs, both in dressing and especially in dyeing, had been made in Europe. Skin processors in the United States seized the opportunity created by the diversion of British and German chemicals and dyestuffs to military use to build the dyeing facilities of fur processors in this country. During the war years, several important specialists were lured away from British dye houses by firms in the United States.[113] They brought with them their knowledge of what had been heretofore secret processes and worked with their North American colleagues to improve the techniques of processing pelts. Many of the latter had emigrated earlier in the century to work in the nascent processing industry in the United States.[114] Most experts agree that during the war, this transfer of

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technology, and the incentive to build the existing processing industry were important factors in the rapid growth of the entire fur industry in the post war period.[115]

The strides in processing and in dyeing made it possible not only to treat fine furs more carefully, but to tap other sources of pelts in the animal world.[116] Whereas until the early twentieth century the standard skins used for garments and trimmings were relatively few (seal, sable, otter, Persian lamb, skunk, fox, etc.) and rather expensive as they became scarcer, by the early twentieth century the world demand for fine furs outstripped the supply thereby inflating prices. Moreover, as furs became increasingly fashionable over the next decade, the number of skins used to make a garment swelled in order to accommodate design and style. Thanks to the strides in processing and dyeing, a variety of new skins suddenly became useful as raw materials for the fur manufacturer. Among the most important of these were the muskrat and the rabbit. Such plentiful and 'adaptable' furs changed the fur business as they became the basis for creating cheap imitations of fine furs. Not only did this help to satisfy the desire of women with modest means for a fur coat, but it launched the fur as a viable alternative to the cloth coat in the years to come.

In New York, the size of the industry expanded during this period. The number of manufacturing enterprises had grown to 1153 by 1919 with an average labor force of over

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8500 workers for the year.[117] The total number of people 'engaged' in this branch of the fur industry, not only as factory workers but as 'proprietors, firm members, salaried staff and clerks' was now nearly 14,000.[118] 1919's output also had grown by 46.4% over that of 1909 and was 87.5% greater than recessionary 1914 output, most of the recovery occurring between 1917 and 1919.[119]

Along with the growth in the size of the industry in this period, capital and labor in New York City each organized themselves into their respective organizations: the workers into a union and the employers into an association of manufacturers. Although various unions and employers' associations had existed before 1912, it was only in that year that both formed organizations which would eventually become enduring institutions. A substantial number of the workers formed the New York Joint Board Furriers Union in New York City. It was made up of four craft locals, the Cutters in Local 1, the Operators in Local 5, the Nailers in Local 10 and the Finishers in Local 15 which together formed the Joint Board. After a successful strike in 1912 which forced the employers to recognize the union as the bargaining agent for the workers, the Joint Board launched the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada which received its charter from the American Federation of Labor on July 1, 1913.[120]

The organization of the workers into the union was a catalyst for the organization of employers into an

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association.[121] In the late nineteenth century, the employers had formed a number of associations which had come and gone. In 1912, several of the more prominent firms organized the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. to represent its members business interests in the industry and in negotiations with the union and to provide credit information to its members. In 1926, when asked to assess the association's 'performance and achievements of the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc.,' its president Samuel N. Samuels reflected that "in the great crises within the fur trade, the Association readily shoulders tremendous responsibilities ... [It has been] highly successful in dealing with labor ..."[122] The Associated remained the dominant employers' association throughout the period under study. Increasingly, its membership was comprised of coat and other apparel manufacturers. However, other associations, at times at odds with the Associated, were subsequently founded by the trimmings manufacturers and by the Greek manufacturers in the 1920s and 1930s.[123] In 1924, the Associated, along with business people from other branches of the industry, formed the National Association of the Fur Industry to try and unite the all sections of the industry.[124]

The Nineteen-Twenties

-Economic status of the industry

The financial panic of 1920 brought the prices of fur

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skins crashing after they had risen to astronomical levels due to wild speculation at the end of the war. Prices fell by as much as 75% in the course of 10 months and dozens of fur houses went under.[125] But as the national economy recovered and demand for fur goods was restored by the 1922 to 1923 season, the fur industry was also rejuvenated and the manufacturing branch resumed the expansion which had been taking place up to 1919.

During this decade, records were set in the growth of the industry in New York City. (See Table 5.3.) More workers, earning more wages[126] added more value to fur skins and cuttings in more firms than ever before.[127] The peak year for employment was 1927 when, during the busiest month of the year,[128] over 14,000 workers were 'engaged' in fur manufacturing in New York City for the largest amount of total wages for any year until then or for long after, just under $28,000,000.[129] That same year the 'value added by manufacture' amounted to just under $80,000,000, unadjusted for inflation, and still a record at an adjusted $56,908,133. (See Table 5.3) The number of manufacturing establishments in business was an unprecedented 1983, only to be topped in 1929 with 2007 firms.[130]

The expansion of the economy in the 'twenties and the increasing differentiation of fur products opened new markets and stimulated output. In addition to that, business opportunities and incentives for small firms continued to multiply though these firms individually

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employed few workers and produced only a small percentage of the industry's output. For the United States as a whole, 96% of firms employed 20 or less workers and 73% employed 0 to 5 workers. 73.5% of all workers were employed by firms with 20 or less workers and of these, 31% by firms with 5 or less.[131] The wholesale value of goods produced by half of all firms employing almost 40% of the workforce was under $50,000 each.[132] The industry had remained extemely competitive and individual craftsmen could strike out on their own. But the scale of their operation would be miniscule and their share of the industry's earnings therefore inconsequential.

-Little mechanization but important innovations

Fur manufacturing remained essentially a hand process despite the growth in output and in demand for fur goods after the First World War.[133] One of the main reasons why it was so easy to get into this business was that very little mechanization had taken place since the adoption of the fur sewing machine. A few other machines were in use in the fur manufacturing factory though these performed peripheral operations and were all "hand fed" machines.[134] In an advertisement in the Fur Trade Review in 1924 and 1930, Ruhe & Sonen, Inc. of 232 West 27th Street in New York City offered the manufacturing furrier "electric fur grooving machines...electric uncurling machines...fur brushing and ironing machines...fur staying machines...fur beating machines..." and, of course, "fur sewing

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machines..."[135]

In 1934, the "Special Fur Commission" appointed by the National Recovery Administration to study 'wages and hours in the fur manufacturing industry,' examined the extent of mechanization in the industry. They observed: "Such machinery [as that noted above] has been of assistance entirely in speeding up the time required for certain operations on a single garment. In no instance has this machinery made it possible for an individual to perform an operation simultaneously on a number of garments." The commission report continued: "Even where the maximum mechanical equipment is used, it is substantially true that every garment is individually made from the original matching of the skins to the insertion of the lining of the finished garments. This is true of the lowest and the highest price garment whether made by wholesale or custom manufacturers."[136] That situation did not change even after the Second World War.[137]

The production of fur goods, which was organized around the four main crafts of cutting, sewing, nailing and finishing, did not easily lend itself to mechanization beyond the fur sewing machine for several reasons. Firstly, the raw materials used in making fur garments, trimmings and pieced goods were animal pelts, products of nature, captured for the most part in the wild.[138] There was very great variation among them, even those taken from the same breed of animal. Secondly, the selection and matching of a group

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of skins used in making a garment or, even more so, of pieces for trimmings and pieced goods required great skill and experience. Thirdly, multiple or mechanized cutting of skins to match patterns was totally undesireable and impractical. The potential loss from errors was too great. Fourthly, for the nailing and stretching of skins, staplers were eventually used after the Second World War but their introduction was strongly resisted by the union. None the less, while stapling speeded up the pace at which this task was performed, the work could still be done only on one garment at a time. Finally, the Special Fur Commission noted that "the nearest approach to multiple work occurs in those comparatively few establishments which have devices for cutting a number of cloth linings for a garment simultaneously by means of a mechanically operated circular blade." The assembly of the lining was also done by machine. However, the insertion of the lining into the fur shell, the attachment of buttons or other passamenterie, and the making of button holes was all done by hand, one coat at a time by skilled finishers.[139]

During these years, there were, however, a few important innovations in the techniques of 'working' the fur into garments. First, furs were "... for the first time handled like fabrics. Shirring, gathering and pleating [were] introduced; ruffles, and all sorts of circular tendencies [were] in evidence. The furs themselves [were] now decorated with brocaded inserts, unusual contrast furs,

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lavish linings of flowered brocades and silks..."[140] The firm of Oldman Brothers also quickly realised that the addition of "a good lining helps to sell a coat." By finishing inexpensive garments, as well as luxury ones, with quality linings and work, Oldman Brothers set the pace in sales and reputation in the industry.[141]

Then, furriers began to move away from the "skin on skin method"[142] of assembling garments which produced a "blockish" look for even the fanciest fur coat to techniques producing more draped and elegant lines. Before the end of the decade, the new "let out" technique had been generally adopted as the norm for the manufacture of coats. Developed during the war years, it entailed the slicing of pelts lengthwise and diagonally into narrow strips which were joined together, first, end-to-end and, then, matched and joined side-to-side to form the parts of a pattern for a coat.[143] "The reason?" for this technique, asked Fortune Magazine in 1936, shortly after its widespread adoption, was the "long, narrow stripes in a coat make its wearer look slender."[144] It also considerably reduced the weight of a fur coat so that its wearer would be more comfortable.[145]

-Specialization

In the 1920s, the developments in demand for fur goods, in fashion, in the differentiation of fur products and in the technology of primary processing encouraged and intensified specialization both among manufacturing firms and within the work process. The Special Fur Commission

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included in its report a "description of the industry" which outlined the specialization of wholesale manufacturing establishments[146] by type of product manufactured, by type of fur used as raw material, and by price range of product. They found that there were three general categories of wholesale fur manufacturing firms: those which produced fur garments; those which manufactured trimmings both for the fur coat and for the cloth coat and suit trade; and those which turned out pieced goods and 'fur plates,' the latter a type of fur fabric. Although there was often overlapping in terms of products and functions among all three of these categories, each concentrated on one type of end product.[147]

The garment shops manufactured "stock garments in quantities in anticipation of, and in response to, orders received from jobbers, department stores, specialty shops and fur shops..."[148] They were specialized by the types and value of fur they used.[149] Establishments increasingly narrowed the range of furs they would and could manufacture to just a few kinds or even to just one, such as mink or squirrel or fox. Some produced "extremely fine and valuable furs, such as ermine, broadtail, chincillla and sable" into high fashion and formal wear for a very wealthy and select clientele. Others worked on fancy or luxury furs such as mink, caracul, Persian lamb or squirrel. Another group put out the more moderately priced and practical muskrat which was marketed as 'Hudson seal,' neutria or natural muskrat.

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for casual and daily wear. Finally, there were the 'rabbit' houses which produced 'popular' priced garments processed to resemble more expensive furs. All these establishments, not just those using rabbit, came to be known by the type of fur they worked. They were known as 'mink houses,' 'squirrel houses,' 'muskrat houses,' and so on.[150]

The trimming houses primarily manufactured fur collars, cuffs, and front trimmings in a variety of pelts and prices as stock merchandise and in response to orders. In the 1920s, and during the 1930s as well, they mainly serviced the cloth garment industry, providing them with trimming mainly for suits and coats. To some extent, the trimmings houses specialized in certain types of fur, like fox, though not as much as the garment establishments.[151]

The demand from the cloth coat trade swelled the numbers of fur trimmings houses. Trimmings became so important a branch of fur manufacturing that the trimmings manufacturers organized themselves into separate organizations, from the fur coat manufacturers who had been members of the Associated Fur Manufactures.[152] In the 1925 Census of Manufactures, trimmings were listed in a category along with other fur goods that amounted together to 14.7% of the wholesale value of fur goods manufactured in New York State. However, in the next census report, 1927, trimmings alone accounted for 33.8% of the total value of output of fur goods and 39% by 1929.[153] Towards the end of the next decade, trimmings gave way to rabbit coats as is reflected

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in the decline in the proportion of total value which trimmings made up. (See Table 5.7.)

During those years, the shift away from finished or primary products, to trimmings, which were secondary products used by other manufacturers in making their finished product, had important implications for the industry. For one thing, it linked one significant section of manufacturing to the cloth coat and suit trade which had control of the relationship. Secondly, it intensified competition between the fur coat business and the cloth coat and suit trade in favor of the latter. Until the mid-to-late 1930s, there was intense rivalry between the two branches and their organizations because the trimmings manufacturers were linked to the cloth coat industry which was in direct competition with the manufacturers of moderate and inexpensive lines of fur garments.[154] Thirdly, it changed the composition of the furriers workshop. In the coat shops, there was a need for every craft skill: cutting, nailing, operating of sewing machines, and finishing. But in the trimmings shops, finishers were not essential. The matching of fur pieces which was the job of the cutter, was not as complicated as for making a coat and the degree of skill needed in a cutter in a trimmings shop was not as great as for a shop making coats.

The third major category of manufacturing establishment were the fur piece plate manufacturers. By the 1930s, there numbered over 500 establishments specializing in these

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TABLE 5.7

WHOLESALE VALUE OF MAJOR FUR PRODUCTS FOR YEARS 1925 TO 1939[1]

YEAR	FUR & FUR LND COATS	% OF TOTAL	TRIMMINGS	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL VALUE OF FUR GOODS
			NEW YORK STATE		
1925	155290337	78.7	29057495[2]	14.7	197437970
1927	132322681	54.0	82682226	33.8	244941302
1929	108232726	47.4	89116987	39.0	228489135
			UNITED STATES		
1931	73936376	44.9	64366134	39.1	164749401
1935	89861680	62.5	33495648	23.3	143784454
1937	94922182	61.0	37083656	23.8	155604982
1939	101907645	60.6	32194098[2]	31.6	168031656

Source: Census of Manufactures, 1925 to 1939.

[1] In the Census of Manufactures for the years 1925 to 1939, the published data for 'products by class, number and value' was provided with breakdowns by major states for 1925, 1927 and 1929. For 1931, 1935, 1937 and 1939, data for this category was only given for the United States as a whole. No statistics in this category were available for New York City or for the census year of 1933.

[2] In 1925 and 1939, fur trimmings were in a category which included other fur products such as fur plates. However, for both years, trimmings were mentioned specifically and first within the category.

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products.[155] These shops used the the waste pieces or cuttings from the manufacture of fur goods from various skins to produce a kind of fur fabric, similar to the kind made in Kastoria.[156] These plates were used "in a variety of ways, but especially in making the lining for men's coats, trimmings, fur caps and miscellaneous novelties." By the 1930s, they were also increasingly being used to make fur garments either by the plate makers themselves or by others.[157]

In this period, specialization proceeded within the work process as well.[158] The work process had long been organized around the four major functions of cutting, sewing, nailing and finishing. Each one of these functions was further subdivided into related tasks. The Special Fur Commission identified over twenty distinct operations which were performed in the manufacture of fur garments. Among them were the selecting, matching, cutting, sewing in three stages, wetting, stretching or nailing, cleaning and ironing (glazing), closing, lining, staying, tapering and finishing of the garment. Some of these functions and tasks had always been part of the technology of the fur manufacturing shop; others had emerged as new styles, processes and other innovations were introduced.

While the older craft workers, especially those who had emigrated as furriers, could perform most of these tasks, by the 1920s, the workers had increasingly became specialized in one craft and often within a particular function within

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that craft. Moreover, many workers had also developed expertise in a particular type and grade of fur or in one type of fur manufacture. This sometimes restricted their ability to transfer that expertise to another type of fur or product. A worker who could work on mink coats could transfer that ability to ones of sable. But a worker in the rabbit lines or in trimmings or piece plates could not hope easily to move to the making of mink or sable coats.

The innovative firm of Oldman Brothers introduced 'section work' for coat manufacturing. It was especially effective in the production of the inexpensive line of fur garments, made mostly from muskrat, coney and rabbit. "Every important part of a garment [was] in the hands of an individual specialized in that particular branch of the work. By constantly working on this one portion of a coat, the natural result [was] the greatest amount of production at the lowest cost plus a finer garment."[159] All this resulted in a highly specialized workforce employed in shops organized on the basis of specialization as well.

More houses also began to devote their activity to producing fur coats for various strata of the population. This expansion brought a greater variety of skins into use and encouraged further specialization. More and more, firms specialized in producing goods from a few types of pelts and catered to a particular segment of the market: to those wanting practical furs, formal wear, sports furs, mens' wear, imitation, etc. The differentiation by type and value

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of pelt and the rapid changes made in style favored these small firms which could specialize in one or a few related types of fur, each of which required special handling and expertise, and which could easily adapt production to changes in styles.

By the end of the 1920s the fur manufacturing industry consisted of a few thousand firms which were segmented according to the class of product they made, the fur they specialized in, the price range of goods they produced, and whether their products were completed goods or secondary ones used in manufacturing another finished item. For labor, they could draw on a pool of workers whose skills varied according to a particular task within the labor process, to the type and value of pelt or pelts they had experience on, and to the kind of product they had worked on. While this kind of specialization was a hindrance to mobility for both the shop owner and the worker and often resulted in business failure or unemployment when a particular fur skin or product went out of fashion, it was a strength in terms of the industry's productivity since it made New York furriers more competitive nationwide.[160]

-New York City as center of the industry

In the 1920's, New York City came to occupy an even more dominant position within the wholesale fur manufacturing branch of the industry. It had always been the largest center in the United States as far back as the first census statistics can take us. (See Table 5.8.) In 1889,

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when the first meaningful national statistics became available, New York City produced 51.8% of the wholesale value of fur goods manufactured in the United States and had 46.5% of the manufacturing establishments and 54.6% of the workers. While the industry was not concentrated in New York at that time, there was no other single place in the country which could compete with New York for importance. Table 5.8 shows how New York City's dominance over the industry became more pronounced over the next fifty years. By 1929, the output of fur goods in establishments in New York City, which comprised 70.3% of all firms in the country and employed 67.2% of all the workers, exceeded all others in their contribution of 76.5% of the total value added by manufacture of fur products. By the Second World War, fur goods manufacturing was squarely concentrated in New York City.[161] In 1939, according to the Census of Manufactures, some 87% of the output, as measured by 'value added by manufacture,' of fur goods produced in the United States was made in New York City. 84.2% of all manufacturing firms and 82.9% of workers were there as well.

Within New York City, 'the fur market,' which encompassed both the fur manufacturing industry and the skin dealing and auctioning business, was situated in Manhattan. Like the rest of the garment industry, it had started out in Lower Manhattan in the nineteenth century and over the years it had worked its way 'uptown' through the Lower East Side, stopping a while in both the east and west of Greenwich

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TABLE 5.8

CONCENTRATION OF FUR INDUSTRY IN NEW YORK CITY.
[PERCENTAGES OF UNITED STATES FIRMS, WORKERS AND VALUE ADDED BY MANUFACTURE IN NEW YORK CITY]

YEAR	% OF FIRMS	% OF WORKERS	% OF VALUE ADDED
1859	30.5	57	60.8
1889	46.5	54.6	55.4
1899	51.5	48.7	53.4
1909	66.2	65.6	68.1
1919	63.5	62.3	73.1
1929	70.3	67.2	76.5
1939	84.2	82.9	86.9

SOURCE: TABLE 5.1

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Village, up Sixth Avenue and Broadway, and finally settling in the area between Broadway and Eighth Avenues from Twenty-fourth to Thirty-first Streets, adjacent to other sections of the apparel trade.[152] The larger and more stable businesses were in the forefront of the moves with the newer, more tenuous and more recently established ones found in the older districts where the rent was cheaper yet where premises conducive to the businesses' needs could be found as well as access to the supplies and equipment needed for production.

In 1921, fur shops began to move into more modern production facilities specifically designed for the fur industry. These skyscrapers were situated in the garment district around Seventh Avenue. The new factory buildings were constructed by real estate organizations headed by prominent furriers and skin dealers.[153] Within a few years, these buildings came to house and to concentrate most of the manufacturing shops within a few square blocks. The Abelson Commission found that "...most of the work is done in two dozen buildings in this area. It is estimated that ten per cent of the workers in New York City are in one building - 150 West Thirtieth Street...Many establishments cannot even leave the heart of the 'fur district' advantageously ... [because] this area includes not only fur manufacturing but fur dealers, offices of dressers and dyers, lining establishments and subsidiary lines such as pointing and headwork. As soon as an establishment,

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especially wholesale, leaves this district, certain disadvantages arise..." By 1939, this self-contained area of Manhattan became the center of 90% of fur manufacturing in the United States and a good part of the world trade. It offered manufacturers direct and rapid accessibility to the raw fur market, to skilled labor, and to retail buyers.[164]

-Fur coat as fashion

The fur coat came into its own as a fashion item. Style and design came to be an important part of the manufacturing process. The introduction of the shorter length fur coat with a distinctive lining which was styled to compete with its cloth counterpart helped to transform the business. Especially important to this process was the emergence of the fully fashioned 'fur coat' made up in many styles, using a variety of pelts ranging in price from very expensive to the cheap fur. In the late twenties the increased use of the let-out method allowed for the elegant, long draped look which short haired fur coats continue to have to the present. Women were attracted to fur both for its the status it imparted as well as for the beauty of its design. The furrier could now offer variety and diversity to the consumer. Fortune Magazine noted that "throughout the [First World] War and afterward the basic design of the fur coat followed the same historic meal-sack lines and the demands of 'the mode' were answered by festooning the sack with stoles, sashes, pompoms, tails, paws, and snouts. But in the twenties there was a slow awakening ... And by 1930

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style was an essential part of every American fur coat."[165] Some furriers went to Paris to promote the use of fur in 'haute coutour' while others experimented with designs on various furs at home.

The strides made by the processors in transforming the lowliest, though plentiful, pelts of rabbits, coney and other animals into replicas of fancy furs made it possible to produce a line of fashionable products which could appeal to the woman of modest means. Among the first manufacturers to see the possibilities of popular-priced fur coats as rivals to the cloth garment was Oldman Brothers. In the 1920's they successfully marketed the 'sealine' coat made of rabbit but disguised by processors to resemble seal. It was an instant success and the firm encouraged smaller fur retailers to establish fur departments to handle garments for the woman of limited means. Oldman Brothers also encouraged the retailing of cheaper garments for the woman of limited means and encouraged small retailers to establish departments to reach this consumer market which proved to be a very important market in the 1930s. "The House of Nechamkin was also among the first to realize that the dyers' production of new and serviceable peltries from the humble coney would open new markets hitherto closed to the makers of fur garments. They turned their efforts into this new channel by specializing in 'Ideal Belgian Seal' and uniting its natural beauty and wearing qualities with the art of their designers and cutters ..."[166]

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A third firm which specialized in inexpensive products was Abrams and Linden. Whereas in 1920 they produced about 25 coats a week with a staff of six including the principals, by 1926 they had 60 employees and were turning out over 850 coats weekly. They "made a specialty of popular priced garments, featuring coneys in various shades, marmots and 'Mendoza' beaver ... These materials made up in smart up-to-the-minute fashions and with excellent workmanship have been instrumental in establishing and retaining the satisfied Abrams and Linden trade." By producing in volume, they were able to offer "the buyer the best possible value for his [sic] money in style, beauty and quality of material and wear ... "[167] The fur coat was now within the grasp of almost every woman -- from the wealthy society matron who could afford sable or mink to the secretary who could now wrap herself in rabbit processed to resemble something more lavish or exotic.

-Promotion of fur goods

During the 1920s, more than ever before, fur manufacturers, individually and especially through their industry associations,[168] attempted to promote their products to a broader spectrum of consumers to whom they offered a spectrum of prices and products. In 1923 all branches of the fur industry joined to organize an elaborate exhibition at Madison Square Garden in New York City as a way of publicizing furs. The next year many of the same people in the fur world organized the National Association

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of the Fur Industry among whose function it was to "stimulate demand for furs and fur garments by extensive publicity in various forms." These included advertising campaigns in the print media outside the garment industry, periodic fur fashion shows and exhibitions not only in New York City but in various parts of the country, and the preparation of attractive window displays in retail furriers shops.[169] Soon such marketing techniques became standard procedure followed by large fur manufacturers, jobbers, retailers, and industry institutions.

The Depression Years

Towards the end of the decade, it seemed to many in the business as though there were no limits to the growth of the New York fur industry. Writing in 1927, Harold Innis, the Canadian economic historian and expert on the fur industry, ended his classic book, The Fur Trade of Canada, on a very optimistic note. He said that "the tendencies which have been noted in the fur-trade during the past half century will probably continue with undiminished strength."[170] But, after 1927 the industry stagnated and slumped into a recession even before the crash of the stock market in October of 1929.[171] Although 1927 had seen the greatest value in output produced in the industry, the rate of growth between 1925 and 1927 had slowed from the previous two year period and then declined slightly over the next two.[172] Writing again in 1931 in the Encyclopedia of the Social

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Sciences, now with the benefit of hindsight, Innis observed that the basic causes of the 'slump' had been "over buying of raw materials, overproduction, the maintenance of prices on a high level despite the sharp fluctuations, and the lowered quality of products."[173] It should be added that the industry had also experienced periodic disruptions since 1926 as fur workers struggled with their employers for a greater share of the increased output in the form of higher wages and as their union was weakened by a struggle over control.[174]

Once the depression had taken hold of the national economy, luxury industries like fur manufacturing were immediately affected. By the end of 1931 when the biennial Census of Manufactures was taken,[175] the dollar value of output, adjusted to the wholesale price index, (See Table 5.3) had declined 17.5% of what it had been in the peak year of 1927, though it was still above the 1925 level. But in the worst year of the Depression, 1933, it had reached its lowest level in almost fifteen years at 57.2% less than the value of output in 1927. A turn around for the fur industry occurred in 1935, with output still below 1931 figures but improving. This revival was briefly interrupted by the general recession within the depression in 1937, but it resumed by 1939. (See Table 5.3) However, the industry did not recover its pre-Depression momentum until after the Second World War.[176]

Changes in employment figures and in the numbers of

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firms operating in the industry are another measure of the industry's condition during these years. (See Table 5.1) By 1931, the average number of wage earners employed in fur goods manufacturing in New York State was 20% less than in 1929, at the beginning of the depression in the national economy; but by 1933 the number had plumetted to 48.5% less. When the data for maximum and minimum numbers of employed workers are compared for the early years of the depression, we find that during 1933, in the quarter when the maximum number of people were employed in the industry, there were 6,000 fewer jobs than in the maximum period in 1929. In the worst quarter in 1933, more than 10,000 jobs had disappeared in comparison to the maximum month in 1929.[177]

However, in the last half of the 1930s, employment figures did not decline or fluctuate very much. By 1935, the average number of workers employed in the industry had gone up by 73.1% to 9749 workers and then stabilized during the next few years before reaching 10,872 in 1939. (See Table 5.1) Even during recessionary 1937, the average number of workers employed in New York State actually increased slightly. Although the maximum number of production jobs in the industry never exceeded the maximum numbers of the late 1920s, they came close with only about 80 workers less in 1939.[178]

Why did the size of the workforce remain so stable in this period while the number of firms in business fluctuated so greatly? Firstly, most workers were employed in firms

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which could withstand the economic contraction and stay in business by lowering prices and adapting the products they made. Secondly, the production of the inexpensive fur garments and trimmings was labor intensive, just as were other fur garments. Even though the level of skill and the time needed to produce individual units of rabbit or muskrat coats was less than a coat made from a valuable pelt, the volume of production of the former was much greater, thereby requiring more workers.[179] Thirdly, at the start of the 1933 season, the Fur Workers Industrial Union, representing "the great majority of the workers in the fur industry of New York City,"[180] had won the 35-hour week in September 1933 and had it reaffirmed in contract negiotiations with employers once a merger had been achieved among the main unions in the industry the previous June, 1935. Moreover, with unity among the workers in the industry, the amount of illegal contracting work done in the industry was drastically reduced thereby imposing union standards in more shops. Finally, in the 1936-1937 and the 1938-39 agreements the employers had to make major concessions to the union on the participants in the production process and on the terms of employment for workers. This resulted in expansion in the size of the labor force.[181]

In comparison to the 1920s, value added per worker declined overall during the 1930s. Firstly, workers were now adding value to products which were cheaper in value, not only in raw materials, but in manufacturing cost per

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unit. The level of skill and the labor costs involved in making imitations of luxury furs from rabbit and muskrat were much cheaper than the higher quality furs of earlier years. Secondly, the unity within the labor movement in the industry meant that union standards were more uniformly enforced in the shops, thereby, releasing some pressure from individual workers. In 1936, Fortune Magazine had observed that "the extent of these practices (known as the speed-up and contracting) varies inversely with the strength of the fur workers' union, which over the past decade has varied considerably."[182] Finally, the figures on value added per worker for the period prior to 1936 were somewhat inflated by the contribution to output from employers and foremen whose participation in production cannot be accounted for using data from the Census of Manufactures.[183]

The mortality rate among fur businesses was higher than usual, especially during the early years of the depression. A graph of the number of firms in business in New York State between 1929 and 1939 would resemble a roller coaster.[184] The record 2046 firms of already stagnant 1929 initially slid to 1695 in 1931, then lunged further to 1104 in 1933, before climbing to a record number of 2101 in 1935, only to plummet again to 1307 in recessionary 1937, and finally clamber up to 1843 in 1939. What is interesting about this reckless fluctuation is that individual furriers continued to find incentives to go into business at a time when immediately around them failure was very likely and when in

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the broader business community failure and subsequent concentration were rife. For some furriers skilled in the critical tasks of cutting, firstly, and machine sewing, secondly, individual enterprise might have been the only way to be employed during a time when unemployment was so common. It is also likely that the more highly skilled cutters and operators, those who had specialized on the more expensive skins and could command higher wages, probably preferred individual enterprise to the lower wages and status they would have had to accept by working on the cheap furs which became popular in the 1930s. Economist Victor Fuchs writing in 1957 about the fur industry thought the increase in the number of firms during the mid-thirties' recovery was "probably because of the high value attached to being one's own boss."[185] No doubt, among craft workers trained in the old world, this was true. But if the opportunities had not existed, these furriers would have had to remain frustrated laborers.

Other reasons for the persistence of both entrepreneurial and employment opportunities in fur manufacturing during the Depression era stemmed from the highly competitive structure of the industry and from the ability of furriers to adapt their products to the changing times. Economist Gardiner C. Means explained that, overall, during the Great Depression production fell by relatively small amounts in low concentration industries where price declines had initially been relatively large resulting in

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stable or increased demand in the longer term.[186] He found that from 1929 to 1932, prices in the more competitive sectors of the economy fell generally by 60% before rising again by 46% in the expansion period 1933 to 1937. During the downturn of 1937 to 1938, they again fell by 27%, recovering after that. The competitive sector of the economy had to lower prices in response to the initial dwindling demand but it lowered production less and fired fewer workers. Of course, it suffered not only great declines in prices but also large reductions in profits per unit.[187] But entrepreneurs continued to find reason to either stay in business or to start one up.

The economic structure of fur manufacturing was extremely competitive. Even during the depression years, well over 1000, and at times close to 2000, separate enterprises were engaged in the manufacture of fur goods. As indicated previously, the period 1929 to 1933 saw nearly 1000 firms disappear from the business with the rapid and steep decline in demand for luxury goods and then the drop wholesale prices during that period. However, those furriers who could sustain themselves against declining prices were also able to redirect their energies towards products which would keep them in business at a profit and meet what demand existed in the marketplace. These businesses set about marketing new and cheaper fur products.

Despite the initial decline in consumer purchasing power during the depression, furs had become very popular

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and, contradictory as it might seem, demand escalated considerably. In its opening paragraph to its 1936 article on "Furs," Fortune Magazine observed that "the market for fur coats has more than doubled -- mostly during the depression."[188] Fortune revealed how that happened: "It was not done with mirrors -- but it was done (mostly) with that other convenience of magicians: rabbits." In 1936, the three most popular furs were 'Sealine,' 'Lapin,' and 'Hudson Seal.' There were also the 'Baltic Lion," 'Electric Mole," 'Mendoza Beaver,' 'Nubian Seal' among many others. None of these had ever existed in nature but were the creation of the processing industry whose raw materials were the rabbit and the muskrat. By the 'thirties, furriers were no longer deliberately deceiving consumers as had been the case earlier on.[189] "To the trade, these tricks of nomenclature are as routine and innocent as garnishing a potato," wrote Fortune. However, in 1938, the Federal Trade Commission promulgated a new set of 'Trade Practice Rules for the Fur Industry' which prevented the misnaming of simulated furs to conceal their true name or nature in any way so as to mislead or deceive the buyer.[190] Yet now, the average women in the United States could get a fur coat ranging in price between $39.50 and $59.50 which, perhaps remotely, resembled one worth multiples of what she had spent.[191] More importantly, "the rabbit ... showed a cruelly deflated industry how to start making money again, and first introduced a small factor of stability into the

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most uncertain business of them all -- the manufacture of fur coats."[192] The rabbit imitations helped fur coat manufacturers gain some headway in sales against cloth coats. Fortune Magazine termed the nutria-dyed rabbit which retailed for $49.50 the "most popular fur coat in America." At the same time, thanks to the rabbit and the skin processors, eighty per cent of all fur coats retailed at less than $150.[193]

By shifting emphasis to inexpensive products and keeping prices low, fur manufacturers were able to stay in business, start new firms, and keep workers employed. Of course, the more vulnerable firms, those which employed few or no workers and produced only a small fraction of output or which could not afford to cut prices because of their shaky financial status were hard hit by the onset of the 1937 depression when 805 firms closed down. However, by 1939, the number of firms in the business had recovered by 536, resulting in a net loss during the four year period from 1935 to 1939 of some 269 firms.[194]

Factors Making Fur Manufacturing Accessible to Immigrants

This chapter has focused thus far on the historical development of fur manufacturing. What remains to be discussed is, what one sociologist has called, the "economic context"[195], which favored immigrant penetration of fur manufacturing after 1880. The question is, what made fur manufacturing an attractive and attainable business

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opportunity for immigrants before the Second World War?

-Immigrant Industry

From the very beginning, fur manufacturing was an immigrant's industry. Since its inception in the mid-nineteenth century, it had a preponderance of the foreign born and their children as entrepreneurs and as workers. Central European immigrants, mostly German and either Jewish or Gentile, founded the industry in the 1850s. Their relatives and countrymen and women comprised an important part of the skilled labor force and helped to transfer the basic skills and techniques needed to develop the business in the United States.

In the 1880s and later, the availability of various levels of skills related to fur manufacturing among Eastern European Jewish immigrants allowed the industry to expand. These immigrants had arrived in the United States already knowledgable and experienced in furriery, having learned the trade in the old country, and quickly became both its labor force and its entrepreneurs. Even the "less skilled" workers, the sewers, were German and Irish women recruited from those immigrant communities to work in the furriers shops. As the business grew, more skilled workers were recruited from the homeland by businessmen who brought their relatives and countrymen to join their firms. At the turn of the century, immigrants from the Ottoman Empire and from other parts of Eastern Europe found work and opportunities in fur manufacturing in New York City.

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The immigrants brought the techniques and organization of manufacture which had been developed in the old country: first in Central Europe, at that time a world leader in the business, and later from Eastern and Southern Europe. These were adapted to meet conditions in New York City. They drew on their contacts and kinship networks with the institutions which distributed and processed fur in Germany and Britain so as to make the best raw materials of the day available to the industry in New York. Without the transfer of skills and technology from the old countries of the various immigrant groups which entered fur manufacturing, development of this industry would probably not have taken place. Moreover, because mechanization of the work process remained difficult and since the manufacture of furs was labor intensive, the availability of cheap skilled or semi-skilled immigrant labor was a major contributing factor to the development and growth of the fur industry.

Pre-existing skills were absolute prerequisites for getting into business. Any of the ethnic groups which penetrated the industry carried furriery skills as part of their 'economic baggage' from the old country. At least, the ones who were the first from their ethnic group to get into the business had been furriers before emigrating. In the 1850s, the German, Jewish, Hungarian and other Central Europeans who had established the wholesale manufacturing industry had been furriers from the old country, some coming from families of furriers. Many of the Jewish immigrants

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from Eastern Europe who got into the business from the 1880s onwards had also been furriers in the old country. The same was true of the first Greeks who became furriers in New York as well.[196]

Given the need for pre-existing skill, however, the labor intensive nature of the work process also contributed to making the industry conducive to immigrant penetration. As demand expanded, the pool of industry-specific skilled workers was insufficient to produce enough fur goods in a craft setting to satisfy consumers. In the absence of full scale mechanization, division of labor and specialization became essential. Eventually 'section work' was introduced in order to speed up production as well as to improve quality control in the manufacturing process.[197] The immigrant fur manufacturer had to recruit workers to fill the positions in his workshop. Obviously, he would call in his relatives who might have shared his occupational background. That was done in the 1850s and '60s by the founders of the industry who wrote to Europe for brothers, cousins, or nephews who had been trained as furriers to come to fill the need in skilled positions.[198] The Jews and Greeks did it half a century later as well. But when that was not sufficient, especially with the pressures for expansion and for the inclusion of intermediary skill levels in the shops, the furriers had to turn to hiring unrelated workers. Between the 1850s and the 1880s, mostly Irish and German women were hired for these positions. How they were

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recruited and what their relationships to their furrier employers was is not known. But later on, the Jews and Greeks, operating under pressure of extreme competition, looked to their respective ethnic communities for workers.

It should be noted that there was little interest in fur manufacturing shown by native born[199] businessmen, especially after the changes initiated in the 1880s. Earlier in the nineteenth century, there were some native born furriers in the business who remained active until the turn of the century. Some of them held very prominent positions in the trade during their time along side the furriers from Central and Eastern Europe. Houses like those of Martin Bates, Jr., W.H. Hall, C.C. Shayne, and George C. Treadwell and Company were all well known and prominent native born furriers in the 1870s, '80s and '90s when there were relatively few manufacturing establishments in New York City.[200]

In 1884, C.C. Shayne occupied a building at 103 Prince Street where he manufactured furs in the basement and had an elegant sales area on the upper floors.[201] W. H. Hall was located in the 1880s on Greenwich Street and in the late '90s at 346 Sixth Avenue where the firm occupied an eight story building.[202] Hall also catered to a well-heeled clientele. These furriers were not only wholesale manufacturers but also retailed their products. But as the structure of the industry changed at the end of the century, they disappeared from the scene. Thereafter, the only

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"native born" who went into the business, or who worked in the manufacturing shops, were the sons and daughters of immigrants, often furriers themselves.[203]

-Centered in New York City

Secondly, the fact that fur manufacturing was centered, and eventually concentrated, in New York City was an important factor in attracting immigrants to the industry and in encouraging them to succeed in it. There is no mystery behind New York City's commanding position in wholesale fur manufacturing.[204] The reasons are related first, to the presence of the women's clothing industry in New York.[205] In 1925 George Filipetti, of the New York Regional Plan, had described "...the fur market as a satellite of the women's garment industry..." to which it looked increasingly for leadership in style and even in demand for fur as a trimming or accessory for cloth apparel. Indeed as women's fashions came to occupy the central position in the New York garment industry, furs came to be an important ancillary to them.[206]

At a very early date, New York had been established as the main port of export for raw skins to overseas markets and of import for processed and raw skins to the United States. New York's furriers therefore always enjoyed relatively easy access to the materials they needed for their trade from the fur merchants located near by. In the 1840s and 50s furriers workshops sprang up on Maiden Lane in lower Manhattan very close to the export/import trade area.

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Subsequently, as the manufacturers moved uptown, the skin dealers followed them, always close at hand to facilitate production.

Very importantly, in New York the industry had ready access to a large pool of skilled and semi-skilled workers from which to draw its labor force. The skilled were furriers who had come to New York from various points in Europe already experienced in fur manufacturing. Those termed 'semi-skilled' were the men and women who arrived in New York with some degree of experience in tailoring, sewing or needleworking and who went to work in the city's garment trades. The latter might not have known much about fur goods, but they were familiar with the needle and with hand work, experience very valuable in an industry which would remain a largely hand process for decades. The abundant numbers of such workers in New York was a major force in the development of the industry.[207]

Other branches of the fur industry were concentrated in and around New York, facilitating the supply of raw materials, the provision of equipment and services to manufacturing houses, and the distribution of finished product. The important auction houses, most skin dealers or fur merchants, the large resident fur buying agencies and jobbers, the factors, the major trade associations, etc. had their headquarters in the same neighborhoods of New York where the manufacturing shops could be found. The skin processors, the dressers and dyers, were clustered in New

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York City (both Manhattan and Brooklyn) and in its immediate environs. Suppliers of equipment and other manufacturing material and service and repair dealers were all located within a very compact and accessible area of the manufacturing shops themselves.[208]

All that even the smallest immigrant furrier needed to do was to step onto Seventh Avenue from his shop to be able to buy a few skins, lining material, or fancy buttons; arrange to have some skins processed to order; rent, buy or repair a new or used fur sewing machine; trade surplus skins of one type for a colleague's excess of a different one needed; make a deal with a jobber for a given amount of product; or hire labor needed permanently or, more likely, temporarily for producing a particular product. The flexibility that this kind of concentration provided made it possible for the industry to survive as a viable business. Under any other arrangement, it would have succumbed to the uncertainty and the instability in demand and fashion. Moreover, with suppliers, distributors and services so near at hand, manufacturers could operate on a very tight margin between costs and profits since they did not need to stock large quantities of materials or invest heavily in machinery. It was always readily available,[209] a telephone call or a few steps away.[210]

In 1936, in an article on the fur industry, Fortune Magazine described the 'fur district' as a place where "the rents are high and the lofts are poorly lighted, but if

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you're in the fur business you are within a block of Seventh Avenue between Twenty-fourth and Thirty-first streets, New York City. Reason: everyone else is. If your cutter quits, walk down to the corner and come back with another one. If you need pelts, phone across the street and the dealer will bring them right over. Eighty per cent of the country's fur coats are made by firms located here, largely because New York mechanics, by specialization, have made themselves the fastest producers in the world. Besides a dozen kinds of dealers and manufacturers, the fur district harbors some thirty men who collect old fur from discarded old coats which they sort and sell for matching."[211]

Additionally, the concentration of fur manufacturing in New York City meant that the immigrant furrier would be able to staff his manufacturing enterprise relatively easily. New York was, of course, a major drawing point for new immigrants and a center of extensive ethnic communities. All the major ethnic furriers employed immigrant workers, usually their coethnics. Ethnic communities were critical to the success of immigrant enterprise in most lines of business, especially in manufacturing. They offered the immigrant fur manufacturer a sizeable pool of labor from which to staff his fur workshop. The immigrant employer would have been hard put to recruit workers if he did not have access to kinspeople and other coethnics. He probably would not have been able to communicate with workers of other ethnicity nor would he have been able easily to manage

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the workplace with workers of a different cultural background and from different communities. The ethnic community provided the norms and, potentially, the sanctions with which to control the workplace, at least during the initial penetration of the industry.

-Competitive Structure of the Industry

The most important economic factor making the fur industry a viable business opportunity for foreign born furriers was its competitive structure. In his study of ethnic enterprise, Roger Waldinger found that immigrants gravitate towards industries and businesses which have a highly competitive structure, low barriers to entry and where a 'niche' can be identified as business opportunity.[212] The structure of the fur manufacturing industry offered immigrant entrepreneurs ample opportunity to go into business. It was a highly competitive industry characterized by instability and uncertainty where small scale organizations could very efficiently carve out a niche within which to operate.

The instability was related to the extreme sensitivity of demand for fur garments to the state of the general economy. As luxury items, the slightest indication of recession or economic austerity was immediately felt by the fur industry, often before the change had become really noticeable in the economy. Moreover, fashion had always been fickle. From season to season, styles in fur garments, in popularity of pelt, in hemlines could change easily.

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The furriers raw materials were products of nature where the availability could fluctuate dramatically. Also, as products of nature, there was tremendous variation in the materials furriers worked with. The price of the raw materials were subject to extreme fluctuation, even within any given production season. Furriers who had bought certain skins in quantity at prices which seemed to be in a never-ending upward spiral, were financially destroyed when those same skins were suddenly available at a fraction of what had been paid for them. Therefore, the flexibility enjoyed by small business organizations and operations with low capitalization was a very important asset in an environment marked by instability and uncertainty.

The 'barriers to entry' into the fur manufacturing business were quite low. Minimal capitalization was needed to get into and to stay in business. The investment in machinery and equipment was very little. What machines were used, namely the sewing machine, were readily available for purchase or hire as used machines from companies which specialized in hiring out equipment to the needle trades. The equipment needed to start a shop was elementary: aside from a sewing machine, some tables and chairs, a few specialized but inexpensive knives, basic sewing supplies, nails and boards were among the items to be purchased. The raw materials could be bought on credit from the skin dealers, if one was known in the trade. In some cases, furriers could even save enough to buy the cuttings for

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pieced goods and trimmings since their cost was not excessive. It was also possible for the first-time entrepreneur to contract with an established manufacturer, perhaps a former employer or someone known to the contractor, or with a jobber, who would provide the raw material and design or pattern for the goods which were needed.

The shop could be set up in the fledgling businessman's tenement home if necessary[213] or in some cheap loft space which was readily available in the older garment manufacturing areas of Manhattan. By the 1920s, ample space was readily available in the high rise manufacturing buildings constructed specifically for the fur trade in midtown Manhattan where all of the support services a furrier needed could also be found.

The small scale of many fur businesses and the very low level of their capitalization meant that overhead and administrative costs were minimal. During the slow season, the furrier-businessman could turn off the power, return the rented machine, and lay off his workers without worrying about costly capital equipment lying idle. Moreover, the development of the jobbing system as a major means of distributing products all but eliminated marketing costs for small firms and further reduced administrative expenditure. Most small manfacturers, who were directly engaged in the production process, could absorb themselves with the problems of production since they dealt through a jobber or

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relied on resident buyers and buying agents for access to retail outlets around the country.

Furthermore, the would-be fur manufacturer did not need to employ a designer. Designers were employed by large manufacturers and the major jobbing houses which set the trends and styles in the business. Many products in demand during the first forty years of the century were also standardized items which did not require extensive styling. This was especially so in the areas of the business most easily penetrated by immigrant businessmen. The "sets," fur robes, pieced goods, trimmings, and linings which were the mainstay of much of the industry into the 1920s required little innovation in design and styling. During the 1920s and 1930s, the cloth coat and suit industry, which contracted with many manufacturers for trimmings, provided specifications for the products needed.

The opportunities for specialization which increasingly characterized the industry also favored the immigrant entrepreneur. It made it possible for that person to find a 'niche' in the industry where he could use his special expertise to get into production. Given the range and variety of products manufactured in the industry and the diversity of consumer markets as well as the competitive conditions, 'niches' were available.

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Conclusion

This chapter has traced the development of the fur manufacturing industry in New York City from the 1880s to 1939. It has shown that as fur manufacturing became 'industrialized' it remained an essentially unmechanized, specialized business characterized by the extensive separation between the commercial and technical or productive sides of the business. The factors which made it a business opportunity to immigrants entering the United States with applicable skills and experience formed in the old country have been examined as well. The next chapter explores how Ottoman Greek immigrants who had training as furriers in the old country made a niche for themselves in fur manufacturing in New York.

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ENDNOTES

1.Interviews with retired Kastorian furriers Christy Adams and Andreas Manthos.

2.The New York State factory inspector reported that "one of the largest and most important establishments in the district is a hatters' fur cutting shop, employing 365 hands. It prepares fur for felt hat manufacturers ... The skins are first scraped and trimmed by a large force of Italian and Greek men..." State of New York. In Senate, "Preliminary Report of the Factory Investigating Commission," No. 30 (1 March 1912.), p. 333.

3.The only Greek name found in the business of primary processing was that of A. Yankou. A few others located away from the metropolitan New York area are mentioned in Theodoros Giannakouli, "E Ellenoamerikani ston klado tes Gounarikes" [Greek-Americans in the Fur Business] offprint, 1963 from Argonaut, Vol. 2, 1960-62, p. 11.

4."Dun and Bradstreet Credit Reports" in the Records of the United Fur Manufacturers Association, New York City.

5.See Chapter One. Looking for explanations in cultural baggage, or lack thereof, is fraught with problems. All of the blame for failure and the praise for success is placed on the immigrant individual or group. Little attention is given to the society and economy in which the immigrants, or anyone else, found themselves and the socioeconomic and cultural contexts in which they acted. The structure and organization of the both the macro and micro economy in which immigrants lived and worked was critical to their experiences and destiny in the new world.

6.There were some exceptions to this generalization among various immigrant groups including Greeks. Some of the Greeks who went west, working on the railroads or in the mines, ended up in California as commercial grape growers and wine makers. Others took up commercial fishing both on the Atlantic and Pacific coast. Nicholas J. Nasikas, from a family of chief shepherds in Macedonia, originally settled on 160 acres of uncultivated land in New Hampshire which he turned into a dairy farm of 2,500 acres supplying his 'feta' cheese factory in Vermont. See Bambis Malafouri, Ellenes tis Amerikes 1528 - 1948 [Greeks of America 1528 - 1948] (New York, 1948), p. 250, 285 - 86, and 475.

7.Theodore Saloutas argued that "some scholars ... have cited the disappearance of the choice lands or their appropriation by the older immigrant stocks as the chief reason for the failure of the Greeks to enter farming.

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This, at best, was a minor factor. It fails to take into account that most of the immigrants came to the United States with the sole thought of living and working in the cities. Furthermore, rural life in the United States was different from that in Greece..." Theodore Saloutas, The Greeks in the United States (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964), p. 60.

8.Prior to the 1880s, craftsmen, artisans and other skilled immigrants entered various industries in the United States, often providing the critical skills needed to establish and develop the technology and management of those businesses. For examples see: Roland T. Berthoff, British Immigrants in Industrial American, 1790-1950 (Cambridge, Mass., 1953); and John Bodnar, The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America (Bloomington, Ind., 1985), pp. 66-67.

9.For Italians, see Virgina Yans-McLaughlin, Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo, 1880-1930 (Ithaca, 1977; Urbana, 1982)

10.At the turn of the century, there were some opportunities in the shoe industry for contractors who provided services for the large shoe manufacturers. It is not known whether these niches were taken up by immigrants with premigration shoemaking skills. For a description of the shoe industry during the early decades of this century, see Horace B. Davis, Shoes: The Workers and the Industry (New York, 1940), pp. 42-61.

11.Among Ottoman Greeks from Ordu, Turkey who emigrated to Biddeford, Maine before the First World War, several of them, including this author's father, eventually opened shoe repair or dry cleaning/alterations shops after initially having worked in local textile factories. They had been apprenticed in their trades in the old country, whether with their fathers, a relative, or local craftsmen. Others from their town also went into small business enterprise: restaurants, grocery stores, and a photography shop. While the hours of work might have been as long as, if not longer than, factory work, these enterprises, which were mostly compromises of old world occupations, afforded these immigrants independence and shelter from the indignities of working in the factory, not to mention steadier work, job security, and probably more income. Interview with Nicholas Karvonides, Biddeford, Maine, August 1976.

12.Another group of Greek immigrants who were able to find a direct application of premigration skills in the United States were sponge divers from the Dodecanese Islands of the Eastern Aegean. They established their community and their sponge diving businesses in Tarpon Springs, Florida at the beginning of this century. See: Robert A. Georges, "The

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Greeks of Tarpon Springs: An American Folk Group," Southern Folklore Quarterly, XXIX, (June, 1965): 129-141; Jennie E. Harris, "Sponge Fisherman of Tarpon Springs," National Geographic Magazine, XCI (January 1947): 119-136; and Malafouris, pp. 161-174. As for other ethnic groups, examples of immigrants who transferred skills directly, though not always able to use them for business purposes, were nineteenth century Cornish miners in the mining industry [Mark Wyman, Hard Rock Epic (Berkeley, Ca., 1979)], other nineteenth century British immigrant artisans [Charlotte Erickson, Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth Century America (Coral Gables, Fl., 1972) and American Industry and the European Immigrant (Cambridge, 1957)], However, in the twentieth century, the instances among Greeks or among other 'entrepreneurial' immigrant ethnic groups where there was opportunity for the direct application of premigration skills is probably very small. (See Bodnar, p. 68.) More to the point is that such 'entrepreneurially' oriented immigrants were often able to find 'niches' in more generalized, usually non-manufacturing, business opportunities for themselves in the new society. See Note 6 above and Chapter One.

13.Only one source makes any attempt to provide a periodization for the fur industry. Written in 1923, its author identified three phases: (1) from the end of the Civil War to the early 1890's; (2) from the 1890's to the outbreak of the `Great War'; and, what he termed "the present period," from 1914 to 1923. It seems that he was unaware that wholesale manufacturing had begun in the 1850's and that the beginning of that phase should be differentiated from the earliest phase. Harry Mayer, "The History of Fur" in International Fur Exposition presented under the auspices of the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. at Madison Square Garden, New York, 7, 8, 9 May 1923: 21 - 36.

14.In 1957, Victor Fuchs, then an assistant professor of economics at Columbia University, in his book on The Economics of the Fur Industry showed that "fur manufacturing is carried on under conditions of intense atomistic competition exceeding that of most other industries." Victor Fuchs, The Economics of the Fur Industry (New York, 1957), p. 37 and passim.

15.Two bibliographies of sources on the fur trade and its history can be found in: Stuart Cuthberson and John C. Ewers, A preliminary Bibliography on the American Fur Trade (St. Louis, 1939); Joseph P. Donnelly, A Tentative Bibliography for the Colonial Fur Trade in the American Colonies, 1608 - 1800 (St Louis, 1947); and Edith Varney, compiler, Furs and Fur Bearers of the United States and

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Canada: A List of Books and Articles on the Technology and Romance of the Subject. (St. Louis Public Library, 1929). A few important titles include: A.L. Belden, The Fur Trade of America and some of the Men Who Made and Maintained It (New York 1917); Harold Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada (Toronto, 1927); and Agnes C. Laut, The Fur Trade of America (New York, 1921).

16.The fur industry in the United States is divided into four major divisions: (1) the fur trade which involves the trapping, collecting, and distributing of raw (unprocessed) furs; (2) the dressing and dyeing or processing of raw furs into a form which prepares them to be manufactured into a finished product; (3) the manufacturing of fur goods; and (4) the merchandising of the finished products through jobbers, resident buyers, large manufacturers and other middle persons either in fur shops or in department stores and specialty stores.

17.Census of Manufactures, 1849.

18.The data in Table 5.1 was compiled from the United States Census of Manufactures for the years 1849 to 1939. Information has been included for the United States as a whole, for New York State, New York City and Manhattan. Fur manufacturing had been centered in New York City, and especially in Manhattan, since the middle of the nineteenth century. Data for New York State was included because for some years in the period between 1849 and 1939, for which census data is used, published statistics are not available for New York City and/or Manhattan. The data from this table has been used to develop other tables in the chapter.

19.Fur goods manufacturing was listed in the census under the heading: "Furs (separate from felt and soft fur hats)." Fur hats and fur felt hats were listed under "Hats - Fur." Census of Manufactures, 1859.

20.See biographies of leading furriers in the 1850s and 1860s in: Belden; Richard Edwards, editor, New York's Great Industries: Exchange and Commercial Review. Its Leading Merchants and Manufacturers (1884; rpt. New York, 1973); Parker and Tilton, American Hat and Fur Exhibit (New York, 1883); and National Association of the Fur Industry, Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926 (New York, 1926). (Hereafter, as a group, the biographies in these sources will be referred to as 'Business Biographies.'

21.Belden, p. 46.

22.Between 1825 and 1840 seal skins had been processed in Albany, New York and made up into men's caps and gloves. But the business declined after that with only one firm

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remaining in the processing business after that. That firm saw a rejuvenation of its activity after 1867. In anticipation of increased demand for seal skin goods, within months of the purchase, greedy traders rushed to the Pribilov Islands "in a free-to-all dash [which] nearly exterminated the fur seals, then estimated to number upwards of five million individuals, and undoubtedly would have slaughtered every last seal on the rookeries if they had possessed sufficient salt to preserve all the pelts, and the necessary vessels for their transportation..." Almost immediately, the United States Congress acted to restrict the right to sealing and to limit the numbers of skins which could be taken annually from the new territory. Beginning in 1870, contracts were given out to single companies for twenty year periods until 1910 when the government assumed direct control over the catch. By 1912 over 2.3 million seals had been slaughtered in Alaska alone, the number for seal skins from all parts of the world being over four million. Belden, pp. 115 - 16, 119, 121 - 25, and 147.

23.Ibid., p. 318.

24.Samuel Raphael, Advanced Fur Craftmanship (New York: 1948), p. 12.

25.In the Census of Manufactures, the wholesale value of manufactured goods is found in the category "value of product." This amount includes in it the 'cost of materials' as well as the 'value added by manufacture' to those materials. However, in the fur industry, the value of the raw materials, fur pelts, was always far greater than the value of the labor performed on them. See Table 5.5. Therefore, to get a clearer picture of the productive capacity of fur manufacturing, the category "value added by manufacture" is much more useful. That is what is meant by "output" in the text which follows.

26.The "current [or nominal] dollar" figures are those values which prevail at any given point in time while the "real [or constant] dollar" figures have been adjusted for inflation or deflation of general price levels, taking price levels at a particular point in time as a base. For discussion of the terms current, nominal, constant and real in terms of output on a national level, or "gross national product," see Campbell R. McConnell, Economics: Principles, Problems, and Policies, Tenth edition (New York, 1987), pp. 158-9. Also see E. K. Hunt and Howard J. Sherman, Economics: An Introduction to Traditional and Radical Views, Fourth edition (New York, 1981), p. 433.

27.Jesse Pope, The Clothing Industry in New York (Columbia, Mo., 1905).

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28.In 1926, in its "Business Biographies" section The Yearbook of the Fur Industry provided some indication of the diversity of these early firms in a description of the background of a contemporary skin dealer, Charles S. Porter. "Beginning as a boy in the employ of J. Ruszits [circa 1873] ... Mr. Porter has spent all but eight years of his life in dealing in the peltries that have brought him success. J. Rusnits, like many furriers of that day was dealer [in raw furs], manufacturer, merchant of supplies and sundries, and, during the five years he spent with him, Mr. Porter acquired a thorough knowledge of almost every branch of the fur industry. ..." Yearbook, p. 111.

29.From descriptions of operations in the business biographies of various firms in Belden, Edwards and Parker-Tilton.

30.The crisis lasted from 1882 to 1885. The years for union organization and strikes were 1880, 1882, 1885, and 1886. See Philip Foner, The Fur and Leather Workers' Union: A Story of Dramatic Successes and Achievements (Newark, 1950), pp. 8 - 17.

31.Computed by dividing wages by output.

32.By dividing the total wages paid by the average number of wage earners in the workforce in 1859, we find the average wage per worker was $147.80. Using the same method for 1880, the average wage was $355.99 per year. The increase in the average yearly wage per worker was then about 141%. But the increase in the total wage bill for the same period was almost 700%! For a summary of the labor struggles in the fur industry during the 1870s and '80s, see Foner, chapter one.

33.The average output per firm for any given year has been computed by dividing the total output for the industry, or 'value added by manufacture,' by the total number of firms engaged in the manufacture of fur goods. Similarly, the output per worker has been computed by dividing 'value added by manufacture' by the average number of workers employed for any given year. In both cases, WPI has been taken into account.

34.Foner tells us that in the early 1880s "fur bosses hit back [at union organizing and strikes] by importing workers from Germany. To the bewilderment of the employers, these workers turned out to be Socialists and promptly reported to the union..." p. 8.

35.The 'Business Biographies' reveal that many Jewish furriers arrived in the United States with skills. See also Foner, p. 20 and Moses Rischin, The Promised City

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(Cambridge, Mass., 1962) p. 183.

36.Alfred Lief, Happy the Helping Hand (New York, 1948), pp.13-14.

37.Although Foner did not refer to the gender issue, he noted that "during the 1880's and 1890's, a large influx of Jewish immigrants came to the United States from Roumania, Bessarabia, Hungary, Austria, Poland and Russia. A number of them entered the fur trade, some having been members of fur workers unions in their native land. By 1892, the number of Jewish workers in the trade increased rapidly." Foner, p. 20-21.

38.The role of immigrant labor in replacing native born workers in U. S. industries has been a contentious issue in the history and politics of the country. It was an important part of the deliberations and concerns of the United States Immigration Commission in the period between 1907 and 1910 and has been the subject, in one form or another, of a great many books. [One is Gerald Rosenblum, Immigrant Workers: Their Impact on American Labor Radicalism (New York, 1973).] Mass immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe coincided with, was encouraged by and facilitated, the process of mechanization and the development of a highly specialized sub-division of the labor process in most industries, both of which degraded skills. In some cases, immigrant labor did succeed native born workers, for example, in New England textile factories where the female labor force became male and immigrant, both Canadian and European, or in other cases as in the steel industry the older and more skilled generation of workers found their control in the industry eroded as more foreign born labor was brought into the work process. [See John Bodnar, Immigration and Industrialization: Ethnicity in an American Mill Town, 1870-1940 (Pittsburgh, 1977); David Brody, Steelworkers in America: The Nonunion Era (New York, 1960); Tamara K. Harevan, Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship Between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community (Cambridge, England, 1982).] All too often, the focus of labor union officials, politicians, and even scholars has been on the immigrants as interlopers whereas the responsibility for worker replacement and displacement really lies elsewhere. It was American capitalists who mechanized and subdivided the work processes and degraded skills in order to expand production, maximize profits, and increase their control over the work process. Machines and the new divisions of labor really replaced the older, more skilled workers. The new arrivals were recruited, sometimes directly from the old country, to run them or, as in the case of fur manufacturing, to fit into a new organization of production. Some important works of the last twenty years on changes in the organization of

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production and the dilution of skill in U.S. industry include: Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capitalism: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century (New York, 1974); Cecelia Bucki, "Dilution and Craft Tradition: Munitions Workers in Bridgeport Connecticut, 1915-19," Herbert G. Gutman and Donald H. Bell, The New England Working Class and the New Labor History (Urbana, 1987), pp. 137-56. David Montgomery, Workers' control in America: Studies in the history of work, technology and labor struggles (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1979); David Nelson, Managers and Workers: Origins of the New Factory System in the United States, 1880-1920 (Madison, 1975).

39.See the 'Business Biographies.'

40.The term 'highly skilled' furriers refers to those workers with skills as cutters who would have learned sorting and matching in addition to cutting fur skins. These skills went together as a set and were critical to any fur manufacturing operation.

41.See J. M. Budish and George Soule The New Unionism in the Clothing Industry (New York, 1920); Louis Lorwin (Louis Levine) The Women's Garment Workers (New York, 1924); and Pope.

42.Lief, p. 13. "Most of them were 'green hands' taken in as learners in small shops clustered around Houston, Wooster, Spring and Greene Streets, in hte lower East Side of Manhattan. Many of these small shops were contractors for the bigger manufacturers like Gunther's and Russek's. Wages, hours and other working conditions were, of course, worst in the contracting shops. Unable to earn enough to keep their families alive, the Jewish fur workers were forced to take 'bundles' of work home. ... Although alarmed by the growth of the contracting shops which threatened their existence, the German Furriers Union looked down upon the 'greenhorns' and refused to organize them..." Foner, p. 21.

43.In 1899, ten years later, of 994 firms manufacturing fur goods in the United States, 846 (85% of all fur firms) employed 20 or less persons. Census of Manufactures, 1899.

44.This was the trend found throughout the garment industry in the 1880s and '90s. See Lorwin, pp. 12-17; Pope, p. 61-5; and Leo Wolman, "Garment Industries," Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1st ed. (New York, 1930-33), pp. 576 and 578.

45.Jesse Pope discussed the separation of, what he termed, 'the technical and commercial' aspects of production in garment manufacturing; p. 61-66. See also Rischin, p. 64.

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46.This was somewhat different from some of the garment sweatshops of the period, as well as of those of the late twentieth century, where the contractor could often distance himself from participating directly in production. Either his or her workers were more likely to have the skills needed for production or the work process had been sub-divided to such a degree of specialization that workers, either in their tenement apartments or in the sweatshops, could easily be taught a particular process and allowed to complete their section of work unsupervised.

47.D. Mikol, "In Memoriam" in The Fur Worker, February 1923: 3 & 6.

48.The decline in the proportion of output which wages represented in a labor intensive industry, no doubt, stimulated the labor agitation of the '90s and later. Despite the fur manufacturers' initial success in the 1880s in resisting their workers' demands for better wages and conditions, between the 1890s and the First World War, the newly recruited Jewish workers proved to be as troublesome as the older group of German workers. Although a stable and durable union was not established until 1913, several strikes and other attempts at organization took place during that period and finally culminated in the successful 'revolt of 1912.' See Foner, pp. 18 - 50.

49.While figures on the distribution of output for 1889 and 1899 are not available here, those for 1909 are. By dividing total output [in current dollars, $$16,440,236] by the number of firms [821] manufacturing fur goods in 1909, the average output per firm was $20,025. However, when we examine the distribution of the total output by size of firm, it is seen that $9,918,259 [or 57.8%] of the "value added by manufacture" was produced by the 104 [or 12.1%] largest firms in the business. The average output for these 104 firms was therefore $95,368 each, some $75,000 more than the average output for all firms combined. By 1919, roughly one-quarter (26.7%) of firms accounted for more than three-quarters (78.5%) of the output; of the latter, 4.1% of firms produced 37.6% of output. Census of Manufactures, 1909 and 1919. See Table 5.6.

50.In New York City, males continued to outnumber females in the industry until several years after the Second World War. However, by the late 1960s, women made up 73% of the work force. From a flyer distributed by the Morton Research Corportation advertising its self published report: "Facts and Trends in the Fur Industry," circa 1968.

51.The "Special Fur Commission" appointed in 1934 by the National Recovery Administration to study 'wages and hours in the fur manufacturing industry found that "... about

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fifty per cent of the finishers reported in New York City were women ..." Paul Abelson, Willard E. Atkins, and H. LaRue Frain, "Report of the Special Commission on Wages and Hours in the Fur Manufacturing Industry," submitted in January 1935 and reproduced as Work Materials No. Six in March 1936 by the Division of Review of the Office of National Recovery Administration, pp. B16. (Hereafter referred to as 'Abelson.')

52.In the labor agreement between the union and the manufacturers' association for the period 1936 to 1937, for the first time the class "female operators" was eliminated from the agreement. See Collective Labor Agreements between the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada and the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. between 1913 and 1936. Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York.

53.The "Special Fur Commission" found women performing tasks such as "the sewing of skins ... and may even do cutting in connection with repariing and remodeling jobs ... Finishing work outside of New York City is done almost entirely by women. Whereas about fifty per cent of the finishers reported in New York City were women, ninety per cent of those reported outside of New York City were female workers ..." Abelson, pp. B15 - B16.

54.Ibid.

55.Manufacturers did, however, give out extra work to be done at home by trusted employees. Abelson, pp. B10-11.

56.In the early 1920s, finishing contractors were a major problem for the Fur Workers Union. Many of these shops were run by Greek employers who recruited and employed Greek women with needlecraft skills. See Chapter Six.

57."Furs," Fortune Magazine, January 1936, pp. 120 & 123.

58. 93 'resident fur buyers' were listed in the Hatters and Furriers Trade Directory 14 (1899).

59.Abelson, B9. It is known that as early as 1884 some manufacturing firms sent salespersons on the road to market their products. Edwards, p. 155.

60.Fortune Magazine, p.73. Note that by extending credit to producers with which to buy the raw materials, the jobbers avoided any risk of damage to the valuable fur pelts in the process of manufacture. Should they be damaged, the manufacuring furrier was still responsible for the loan he had received. Although the fur manufacturer was not a contractor in the strict sense in which that term was used

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in other branches of the garment industry, where the contractor is a procurer of labor but does not own the materials upon which he works, he was no more independent than his garment colleague and had the additional burden of responsibility for procuring the raw materials under terms of credit.

61.The data from the Census of Manufactures only reflects the crisis of 1914.

62.In 1899, some 35% of all firms in the United States employed under five workers each. Census of Manufactures. 1899.

63."The Romance of the Fur Industry from Primitive Yesterday to the Wonders of Today," Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, p.10 - 11; Innis, p. 16 -17, 101.

64.Innis, p.17.

65.Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926, p.11. Thorstein Veblen has described the increase in discretionary income for the expanding upper strata during the nineteenth century. Thorstein Veblen, Theory of the Leisure Class (New York, 1899). Harold Innis, who considered Veblen's thesis "as to the position of women in the leisure classes...to be very much to the point with reference to this [fur] commodity," focused on the role of "increasing population, increasing urbanization and the spread of machine industry" in enhancing demand for fur goods. Innis, pp. 16 - 17. These themes were further elaborated by Paul Nystrom in his Economics of Fashion (New York, 1928). Christopher Lasch provided a provocative interpretation of the culture of consumption which, he believes, has been the byproduct of mass commodity production under capitalism in the United States in his The Culture of Narcissism (paper edition; New York, 1979) pp. 135 -140.

66.Belden, pp. 185-86 % 468-9; Harold Innis, "Fur Trade and Industry," in the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol.6, 1931, p. 536; Roslyn Latto, "Alice in Fashionland: A History of Fur Fashions During the Past 75 Years," AMERICAN FURRIER combined with SOL VOGEL, July 1948, pp. 10-11, 19, 48-50, 52, 54, & 60; Herman A. Newman, "The Evolution of Fur Fashions Over a Quarter Century," Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1925, pp. 157-72; and Ruth Wilcox, The Mode in Furs: The History of Furred Costume of the World from the Earliest Times to the Present (New York, 1951).

67."W.H. Hall Catalog for 1900." Bound in New York Public Library pamphlet collection.

68.Latto, p. 48.

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69.Belden, pp. 181 and 223.

70.J.W. Jones, Fur-farming in Canada (Ottawa, 1914) cited in Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, p.17, n.3.

71.W.H. Hall catalogs for 1889-90, 1890-91, 1899 and 1900, New York Public Library; Parker and Tilton, American Hat and Fur Exhibit; and Newman, p. 159. Newman was the founder of the American Furrier.

72.Fortune Magazine, p. 123; Latto, passim; Raphael, p. 9-10; and Wilcox, passim.

73.Census of Manufactures, 1914. This description was essentially the same as that in 1889 and continued to be used, with some minor modifications, until 1921. In the 1927 census, the industry description changed. Fur goods industry is "engaged primarily in the manufacture of fur garments (fur and fur-lined coats and overcoats) and other commodities made entirely or chiefly of fur, such as fur hats and caps, gloves and mittens (except fur-lined), collars and neck pieces, robes and trimmings, as well as sheep-lined garments..." The emphasis had by then shifted to the production of garments. See Census of Manufactures, 1889 to 1927.

74.Wilcox, p.122.

75.Catalogs for G.H. Hall; Latto, pp. 11 & 19; and Wilcox.

76.John C. Sachs, Furs and the Fur Trade (London, 1923); Wilcox, p. 122.

77.Raphael, p. 10.

78.Wilcox, pp.155-60; Latto, 48-50,52; Newman, 157,159.

79.Latto, pp. 11 & 19.

80."W.H. Hall Catalogs." New York Public Library.

81.Wilcox, p. 156-7.

82.Wolman, p. 193.

83.Belden, p. 182-87; Newman, p. 157; "W.H. Hall Catalog"; Wilcox, p. 159

84.Writing in the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (1930-35), Leo Wollman showed that while the ouput of women's garments in 1899 constitued only 39% of combined value of men's clothing, by 1929, women's clothing and shirt industries, represented 59% of the value of output of this

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category. In "Garment Industries" vol.5, p.193.

85.Fortune Magazine, p.123.

86.Latto, p. 52.

87.Belden, p. 185-86.

88.Belden; Laut, p.21; Wilcox, p. 156.

89.Thomas J. Biggins, "International Trade in Furs," The Fur Journal, December 1928: 50-51.

90.In 1927, The Fur Journal, a publication of the National Association of the Fur Industry, reissued a revised "Dictionary of Fur Names" which had first appeared in the Association's "Yearbook" in 1925. This dictionary preceeded and influenced the rules drawn up by the Federal Trade Commission and was based on principles established by the London Fur Trade Association. It listed several hundred tradenames used by furriers and provided definitions for the actual description of the fur. Bridgewater M. Arnold, (preparer) "Dictionary of Fur Names," The Fur Journal, June, 1927: 42 - 48.

91.Belden, p. 179.

92.Boland's advertisements in 1888 and 1889 claimed that he was the "original inventor and manufacturer of fur sewing machines." Hatters and Furrers Trade Directory, vols. 1, 3, and 4, 1886, 1888 and 1889.

93.Belden, p. 179. Boland's machine had also been available in three models for different uses:

> "No. 1 -Fine Fur Sewing Machine for general work...
> No. 2 -Special Machine for light work and Seal sewing...
> No. 3 - Machine for sewing Robes and all heavy work. .."

Hatters and Furriers Trade Directory, vol. 3, 1888, p.79.

94.In the 1906 -1907 issue of the Fur Trade Directory, the S.M. Jacoby Co. advertised a "new model" of "Jacoby's Best Fur Sewing Machine" which offered "Electric Power Installation" as an option. The advertisement further claimed that "this machine produces double as much sewing..." Fur Trade Directory, 1906 - 1907.

95.For many years after the refinement of the sewing machine, furriers working on the most expensive pelts such as sable, ermine, silver fox, etc. believed that only hand sewing was worthy of the garments they produced. Eventually, with further improvements in the machine, they

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were convinced to abandon this view. Innis, p. 113.

96.Belden, p. 179.

97.Comparative figures on the industry and value of product for New York City were not available so those for New York State have been used here. This is justified since virtually all the fur manufacturing conducted in New York State took place in New York City. Of the 863 firms in the state in 1909, 821 were in the city and produced 96% of the output; in 1914, 824 of 877 firms were in the city producing 96% of output. Census of Manufactures, 1914.

98.It must be borne in mind that the owners of the small shops which employed few workers always were themselves engaged directly in the production process. Therefore, the amount of labor in their workshops far exceeded the numbers indicated in the category "average number of workers" employed in their shops. This means that the output in such firms was divided up among even more people, making output per worker even lower.

99.The Fur Worker, 20 February 1917. This report was based on an article on the electrification of fur sewing machines which had first appeared in the Fur Trade Review in January 1917.

100.Data on the number of fur sewing machines in use in New York State or City is not available. It was published on for the United States as a whole. Census of Manufactures, 1914.

101.Ibid.

102.The number of firms in business had grown by 74.1%. However, since the size of the workforce had not grown nearly as much, labor's impact on the growth of output could not have been very much without the benefit of the electrified sewing machine.

103.For further discussion on the reasons for the increase in output per worker during the period 1919 to 1929, see the section below on "The nineteen-twenties."

104.Even in the late 1980's, the fur manufacturing industry draws most of its labor force from abroad. Most of the workers are immigrants from Greece, many of whom have been trained in the workshops and factories of Kastoria, although few of these are native Kastorians.

105.See "Business Biographies."

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106.The same pattern was found in other garment trades. See Budish and Soule, Levine, Pope, and Rischin. In the next chapter, it is argued that the ethnic community made it possible for the ethnic contractor/entrepreneur to go into and sustain his business by providing him with the material support he needed to start his enterprise as well as with the pool of labor from which to hire his workers. See also the works cited in the introduction on ethnic enterprise.

107.Beginning with 1905, the category 'furriers and fur workers' appeared for the first time in the Annual Report of the Commisioner-General of Immigration under "immigrant occupations by race and destination." In 1905, of 756 immigrant furriers, 620 were 'Hebrew,' 4 'Greeks,' and 534 bound for New York State. In the years that followed, the numbers of Greeks increased somewhat [to as many as 60 in 1911]. The pattern however, remained the same: Jews continued to make up the overwhelming majority with most making their way to New York.

108.Belden, pp. 478-79.

109.Belden, pp. 157-58; "The Romance of the Fur Industry: from Primitive Yesterday to the Wonders of today," Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, p. 9.

110.George Cripps, About Furs (Liverpool, 1902), pp. 13-16. Cripps describes the traditional markets and some of the culture of fur dealing in the old world.

111.Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, pp. 135-6; Laut, p.21.

112.Naturally, once the war was over, London reasserted its claim as the primary market for furs. Even in the mid-twenties "...it was not an uncommon thing for American merchants to buy American furs at the London auctions..." But eventually, this practice eventually subsided and New York won in its "formidable bid against London for leadership in this field." George Filipetti "Trends and Tendencies in Location of Wholesale Markets - I. The Clothing Markets," in The Wholesale Markets in New York and its Environs (New York, 1925) p.25. Innis, p. 136-7.

113.In 1922, a British writer reported that "American dyeing was obtained during the war by the head dyer in a celebrated English works (he was a German, by the way) who was induced by an American organization to leave his employers and transfer his knowledge across the Atlantic; with him went the head dresser - an Englishman unfortunately - and the improved position taken by American dressing and dyeing is largely due to these two individuals." Sachs p. 113; Innis, p.123; Laut, p. 4.

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114.See biographies of dressers and dyers in the Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926, pp. 253-306. In the introduction to the Yearbook, its author noted that "although the cradle of the art is in Germany, there have been dressers and dyers of real efficiency in this country for more than one hundred years. It is true that many of their formulae were imported. It is also true that many of those who have brought the industry to its present high peak of perfection came to this land "ready made" for their calling..." p.11.

115.Innis, Laut, pp. 21-2; Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, p.9 & 11.

116."Business Biographies of Fur Dressers and Dyers," Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926 New York, 1926, p. 253-55.

117.During the busiest period of the 1919 season, as many as 10,000 workers were employed. Census of Manufactures, 1919.

118.Census of Manufactures, 1919. The figure for workers included in the 14,000 was not the 'average number for the year,' but the maximum number employed during any month of the year. That number was used in order to show how large a number of people found some degree of employment in the industry during the course of 1919.

119.These percentages have taken into account changes in the general level of prices since 1880 and are drawn from data in Table 5.3.

120.For a detailed history of the fur workers' union, see Foner.

121.Prior to 1912, the founding dates of employers' associations often coincided with or followed those of workers' organizations since at least the 1880s. For example, in January 1885, militant German furriers founded the "Fur Workers Society" in New York. It was made up of five locals of operators, fancy fur finishers, fur capmakers, fur dressers, and fur skin fleshers and shavers. In the spring 1886, 1500 fur workers held a May Day demonstration in New York and on May 3 called a strike. Concurrently, on April 3, 1886, the employers founded the "Manufacturing Furriers Association which had 60 of the 72 fur bosses as member. See Foner, pp. 18 -26 and Hatter and Furrier Trade Directory, vol.1, 1886: xxx.

122.Samuel N. Samuels, "Performance and Achievements of the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc.," Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, p. 147.

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123.The rivalry among the employers' associations is discussed briefly in Jesse Thomas Carpenter, Competition and Collective Bargaining in the Needle Trades, 1910 - 1967 (Ithaca, New York, 1972), pp. 540 - 47.

124.Innis, pp. 124 -25.

125.Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, pp. 14-16 and 18-47; Laut, p. 22-23; Mayer, p. 33; Associated Fur Coat and Trimming Manufacturers, Inc., "Stitch, Stitch, Stitch," in Fur Fashion Show and Exposition' of the Fur Industry (commemorative catalog), June, 1936, p. 69; and "Fluctuations in Fur Prices: A discussion and table of the trend of fur prices in American over a period of more than fifty years," Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, p. 307.

126.The average wages per worker for 1927 were $2615.17 (total wages paid divided by the average number of wage earners). When wage figures are adjusted to the 1880 dollars, then the highest average wages per worker, $2062.87, were paid in 1931. The adjusted average wages for 1927 are second at $1878.71.

127.Before the Second World War, the last census of manufactures taken by the Census Bureau of the United States government was in 1939. The next one was taken after the war in 1947. That year, an averge number of 12,036 production workers, earning $53,377,000 in 2004 manufacturing establishments, added $111,589,000 of value to raw materials.

128.In the Census of Manufactures the figures for the 'maximum' and 'minimum' months of employment were provided only for the United States as a whole and for New York State. Figures for New York City are unavailable. However, since the 'average total number of wage earners' engaged in the fur manufacturing industry in New York City accounted for 95% of the total figures for New York State that year (see Table 5.1), it can be assumed that they comprised at least the same percentage for the 'maximum' and 'minimum' months.

129.Even when these wages are adjusted for inflation to the 1880 index, they still represented the highest wage bill for the period.

130.In Table 5.1, the 2101 firms listed for 1935 are for New York State since New York City figures are unavailable.

131.Of 2855 manufacturing establishments in the United States in 1929, 132 employed no workers at all, 2078 employed 5 or less workers, 662 employed six to twenty workers, 102 employed 21 to 50 workers, and 13 employed over

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50. None employed more than 250. See 1929 Census of Manufactures, "Size of Establishment by Number of Wage Earners in report on "Fur Goods" Industry.

132.See 1929 Census of Manufactures, "Value of Product by Number of Establishments and Wage Earners," in report on "Fur Goods" Industry.

133.Abelson, p.B11; Innis, p.113.

134.Abelson, p.B11

135.Fur Trade Review, vols. 47, 1924, Part I, p. 7 and vol. 53, 1930, Part I, p. 15.

136.The Commission noted that: "The nearest approach to multiple work occurs in those comparatively few establishments which have devices for cutting a number of cloth linings for a garment simultaneously by means of a mechanically operated circular blade. It is also possible to do some part of the cleaning work simultaneoulsy on a number of garments by means of a revolving drum." Abelson, p. B11.

137.In the late 1940s, Women's Wear Daily ran a series of several articles and photographs dealing with, what the paper called, "the fur manufacturing industry's lack of mechanical progress." In one article, prominent designer and manufacturer Max Koch was quoted as saying that "the fur business is 100 years behind the rest of the apparel industry ... The only improvements that have been made in the fur industry have been in the dressing and dyeing of skins, not in the garment manufacturing ..." Women's Wear Daily, date of publication unknown; clipping found among David Kaplan's papers at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City.

138.Trapping animals for their pelts in the wilds of the United States and Canada remained the main source for furs until the turn of the twentieth century when fur 'farming' or ranching, as it is also known, was introduced with the breeding of fox. Later mink, Persian lamb, and other animals, including some inexpensive furs such as rabbit, were bred for their pelts. Writing in 1921, Agnes Laut provided some discussion of fur farming which was in its infancy at the time she prepared her book. "Fur farming really began back in the 1880's, in Prince Edward Island; but it was less than ten years ago [ca.1911] that the facts came out to the world...barely was the War over, when fashion went fox...and silver fox skins [raised in captivity] sold at the fur auctions...in the spring of 1920 at $1200 a skin..." However, mink was hardly being farmed in 1920. According to reports that Laut had received, "up

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to the present, mink farmers can make more money selling live stock than selling pelts." Twenty-five years later, mink fur farming became the major source of that animal's pelts for the fur industry in the United States and the most desirable and prestigious type of fur garment produced. Laut, pp.2, 101, and passim 50 - 151. In 1924 and 1925 James L. Edwards began writing a series of books on fur farming of various animals for the Fur Farms Publishing Company of Utica, New York. One of the first, which was revised at least twice was Mink Farming. Other sources on fur farming are: Frank Ashbrook, Fur Farming for Profit (New York, 1928 and rev. ed. 1948) and A.R. Harding Fur Farming (St.Louis, n.d.). For more titles on trapping and farming, see the St. Louis Public Library bibliography.

139.David Mills, "The Manufacture of Fur Garments," The Journal of Home Economics 19 (March 1927): 142.

140.Latto, p.52.

141.Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926, p. 215.

142.This method was also known as the "head-to-rump" method. Raphael, p.136. The leading manual on fur craftsmanship describing this process was Cyril Rosenburg, Furs and Furriery (London, 1920).

143.Samuel Raphael's book, Advanced Fur Craftsmanship, provides a detailed discussion of the 'let out' method of fur garment manufacture and for the handling of various types of furs. See especially, pp. 32-3 and 37-209. See also Mills, pp. 137-38 and David Kaplan, "Let-Out Fur Technique," National Cleaner and Dyer, February, March and April 1947.

144.Fortune Magazine, p.66. See also Raphael, p. 33.

145.Wilcox, p. 159.

146.The Commission pointed out that aside from wholesale manufacturing firms, the fabrication of fur goods also took place in other types of establishments, namely: custom fur establishments, retail fur shops, specialty and department stores, and miscellaneous other establishments such as tailor shops, dry cleaners, etc. However, they had developed criteria for analyzing the complex structure of fur manufacturing in order to come up with recommendations for a national policy on wages and hours in the industry. In the process, the Commission differentiated among various types of establishments according to the degree to which the business depended on manufacturing, whether the garments made were custom prepared in response to demand or were partly or completely finished articles made as stock or

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sample items in anticipation of demand, and whether the products were sold in the wholesale or retail market. In the custom shops which depended on retail fur sales to stay in business, orders for custom made articles actually constituted only a modest proportion of total sales. Most of their business came from the "customizing" of stock items, partially or fully prepared by wholesalers, for their retail customers. Department stores did even less manufacturing of new articles. Like the custom furrier, their fur departments primarily custom-fit the garments purchased by their buyer or through a middleperson. In fur retail stores, which first appeared during the Great Depression, manufacturing was limited to alterations, repairs and remodeling for retail customers. Their primary business was to sell completed articles. The fabrication of garments was not the main source of sales for such businesses. Moreover, their share of overall fur garment production was minimal. Abelson, pp. B2 - B6. In this chapter, attention is given only to wholesale fur manufacturing.

147.Max Bachrach, an authority on the fur industry of the pre-Second World War period, provided a less detailed outline of the organizational structure of fur manufacturing in his book, Fur: A Practical Treatise 3rd ed. (New York, 1953), pp. 569-70.

148.The Commission noted that many manufacturing shops also took in orders for custom-made garments either from retailers or from individual clients. At times, they did remodeling and repairing work for their trade clients. Abelson, pp. B2 - B3.

149.There were a firms which made 'general lines.' But these were few in New York City. Except for the industry in California, much of the wholesale manufacturing business in the rest of the country did general line work. Abelson, p. B7. One firm mentioned in the Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, P. Schulag & Sons, Inc., (established in 1888) specialized in "stylish stout" fur coats. They made a general line of fur garments of the better class "for up to size 52." p. 217.

150.Abelson, p. B7.

151.Ibid., p. B6.

152.The Fur Trimming Manufacturers' Association was established in the 1920s. In the 1930s, the New York Fur Trimming Manufacturers' Association was formed. Carpenter, p. 540.

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153.The data on "classes of products" manufactured in the 'fur goods' industry is available in the Census of Manufactures for New York State but not New York City for the period 1925 to 1939. It should be noted that the wholesale value given included within it the cost of materials, which as previously noted was always greater than the value of labor added on to manufacture fur products. In the case of fur trimmings, it can be assumed that since trimmings were often made from pieces rather than from skins, the proportion which labor represented in the total wholesale value given for fur trimmings was higher than that given for coats. Therefore, if the 'value added by manufacture' were available for the various categories of fur goods, then the percentage of the total of 'value added by manufacture' which would have been given for trimmings would have been even greater than that for 'total wholesale value.'

154.Brochure of the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc., "More than Fifty Years ...," issued in New York, 1965, p.7; Mayer, p. 31; Innis, p. 140. The new organization was called the Associated Fur Coat and Fur Trimmings Manufacturers, Inc.

155.Abelson, p. C10.

156.Bachrach termed these plates as 'yardage', "the name given to furs that are sewed together in long strips of various widths and sold by the yard..." p. 570.

157.Abelson, p. B7 - B8.

158.Ibid., p. B7-B8 and B.13-B16; Innis, p. 125.

159.Business biography of Oldman brothersin Yearbook. 1926, p. 215.

160.Abelson, pp. B7-B8 & C6-C7.

161.Abelson, p. C6.

162.Filipetti, pp. 23-25.Over time the perimeter of the 'fur market' contracted. [In the 1980s, with the shrinking of fur manufacturing in the United States to only luxury furs in some three or four hundred firms with only about 2,000 workers, the industry can be found in a handful of buildings along Seventh Avenue between 27th and 30th Streets as well as on those side streets. In the meantime, many of the former fur manufacturing highrises have been turned into loft apartments or rented out for other purposes.]

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163."In about 1921, a number of new buildings of the modern factory type were erected on Seventh Avenue and in 1923 and 1924 buildings commenced in the side streets between Seventh and Eighth Avenues." "Fur Fashion Show and Exposition," (commerative catalog), p. 69. Two of these buildings were Greeley Arcade and Kheel Tower. Yearbook of the Fur Industry.1926, p. 97 & 105. The latter was still being used for fur manufacturing in the 1980s.

164.Abelson, p.21B; Fuchs, p.37.

165.Fortune Magazine, p. 123.

166.Business biographies of Oldman Brothers and of the House of Nechamkin in "Business Biographies of Fur Manufacturers," Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926, pp. 213 and 215.

167.Business biography of Abrams and Linden in "Business Biographies of Fur Manufacturers," Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, p. 149.

168.The Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. and the National Association of the Fur Industry.

169."The institution of annual fur fashion shows has stimulated the trade in fur garments materially." Innis, p. 116. "The National Assocaiation of the Fur Industry" in the Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926 (New York, 1926), p.37; various articles and announcements in the Fur Journal, publication of the above organization from 1927 to 1929.

170.Innis, p. 142.

171.Abelson, p. B8; Between 1927 and 1929, the value of output declined slightly, and the average number of wage earners employed by 81. However, the number of establishments manufacturing fur goods increased by 24. See Table 5.1.

172.The rate of growth in fur manufacturing, for any reported two-year period reported in the Census of Manufactures during the 1920s, was highest between 1921 and 1923 when it was 37.8%. See Table 5.3.

173.Harold A. Innis, "Fur Trade and Industry" Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences vol.6, 1931, p. 535.

174.In 1927, the average wage received by each of the workers was higher in absolute dollars than ever before or until after the Second World War. However, wages as a whole were only 35.2% of the value of total output during that record year and 31.9% in 1929. Total wages in relation to the total value of output had not been so low since the

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recessionary year of 1914 when they were 31.8% of output. For an account of the 1926 General Strike and the 1927 strike, see Foner, pp. 179-246 and 276-88.

175.Beginning in 1921, the Census of Manufactures was conducted every two years until 1939. Until 1899, it had been conducted every ten years, just before the decennial census of the population. As of 1904 until 1919, it was taken every five years.

176.See Fuchs, passim; Russel R. Taylor, The Fur Industry (Boston, 1946) and Russel R. Taylor, "A Review of the Structure and Economics of the U.S. Fur Industry" (Doctoral Project for D.B.A., Western Colorado University, 1978). Presently, the New York manufacturing industry has declined tremendously with under 2000 workers employed in a few hundred shops. See "Furriers: Endangered Species," Newsday 13 November 1990, pp. 3 & 23.

177.The Census of Manufactures published industry employment figures in four categories: average number of wage earners employed during the year; number employed on December 15th of any given year or on a working date closest to that day; number employed each month; and maximum and minimum months or quarters. Except for decennial years, these categories were available only for the nation as a whole or for the nation and for states. Census of Manufactures, 1929 and 1933.

178.In 1929, the maximum number of jobs in New York State was 14,449 while in 1939 there were 14,369; in 1937 12,560 and 1935 13,277. On the other hand, the minimum months of employment reached lower than what they had been in 1929 when the minimum was at 8078. The minimum month in 1935 was at 6235, in 1937 at 6564 and in 1939 at 6215. Census of Manufactures, 1929, 1935, 1937 and 1939.

179.In its 1936 article on furs, Fortune Magazine estimated that furriers produced twice as many fur coats in 1935 as in 1927 but the retail sales of the former brought in only about 60% of the 1927 revenues from sales; p. 64. To make that many more coats, even though they were cheaper in value, required more labor, working longer hours, under difficult conditions given the weaknesses in the fur workers' union in the period from 1927 to 1935.

180.The report of the "Citizens Committee to Investigate Conditions in the Fur Industry" confirmed the support which the Fur Department of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union enjoyed among the workforce. The Citizens Committee included several figures from the ethnic, literary and university community in New York City. Cited in Foner, p. 420.

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181.Between August 1935 and January 1936, the union closed down more than a hundred contracting firms and signed agreements with three hundred open shops. Furthermore, in the 1936 agreement, an equitable distribution of work work over a six month period (rather than four months) was achieved; in 1938, it was increased to cover eight months. No more than two members of a firm, that is employers, were permitted to do production work in a factory from 1936 to 1938. Beginning with 1939, the number was reduced to one and limitations were placed on the hours during which such productive work could be carried out. This meant that more workers had to be hired and that the employers' relatives had to be designated as workers and join the union. Restrictions were also placed on the number of hours a foreman could work and on the times during which a foreman could engage in production work. Foner, pp.482-84. "Collective Agreement of the Associated Fur Coat and Trimming Manufacturers, Inc. with the Furriers' Joint Council of New York and International Fur Workers' Union of U.S. and C., 1936 - 1937." Issued by the Conference Committee of the Fur Industry.

182.Fortune Magazine, p. 120.

183.Beginning with 1889 to 1937, The Census of Manufactures provided data on the number of "persons engaged in the industry" in the following categories: proprietors and firm members; salaried officers, superintendents, and managers or salaried personnel and managers; and wage earners. In 1889 and 1899 there was also a category for "clerks." In 1939, the Census of Manufactures included under "persons employed in manufacturing establishments" the sub-category of "manufacturing" which in turn had two further sub-categories: "salaried employees" and "wage earners (average for the year)." It is not clear what the production function of this "salaried employees" in manufacturing was. See The Census of Manufactures, 1889 to 1939.

184.New York State figures are used here because data for New York City was unavailable for census years 1931, 1933 and 1935.

185.Fuchs, p.152, n.21.

186.Gardiner C. Means, Industrial Prices and Their Relative Flexibility (Washington, 1953), p.8. Means also headed the U.S. National Resources Committee which produced a study on The Structure of the American Economy (Washington, D.C., 1939). See also a summary of his findings in John Blair, Economic Concentration (New York, 1972), part 4 and in Hunt and Sherman, p. 572.

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187.Means contrasted patterns in the competitive sector with those in the more concentrated sectors of the economy. He found that industries with great concentration lowered their prices very little during the 1930s but kept them from declining further only by reducing production significantly. Prices and profit per unit were stabilized at the expense of great decreases in production and large-scale unemployment. See Hunt's summary, p. 572, based on Gardiner Means, "Inflation and Unemployment," in John Blair, ed., The Roots of Inflation (New York, 1975), pp. 1-15.

188.Fortune Magazine, p.64.

189.Fortune, p.74. In 1925 and 1927, the National Association of the Fur Industry had published a "Dictionary of Fur Names" which attempted to do away with deliberate misrepresentations of products. It was first published in the Association's Yearbook. 1925 and reprinted in The Fur Journal June 1927: 42-8.

190.Bachrach, p. 581. "In 1928 the Federal Trade Commission [had] called a conference of the interested parties to eliminate objectionable practises; and rules were adopted to standardize the naming of furs, which offered partial relief." Innis, "Fur Trade and Industry," p. 535.

191.In 1936, "eighty per cent of all fur coats retail at less than $150. A 10 per cent federal tax on all coats wholesaling at more than $75 is partly responsible for this; but the whopping success of the rabbit is perhaps more so." Fortune, p.72.

192.Fortune, p.120. Rabbit in its myriad forms remained popular.

193.Fortune Magazine, January 1936, p. 72.

194.Although the 536 new firms were new enterprises, most of their principal owners had most likely been in business before, probably during the previous manufacturing season.

195.Roger Waldinger, Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades (New York, 1986), p. 15.

196.See Chapter Six.

197.Abelson, pp. B13-B16; Yearbook, 1926, p. 215.

198.'Business Biographies.'

199.Here this term excludes the children of immigrant furriers born in the United States.

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200.'Business Biographies.'

201.Edwards, p. 300.

202.W.H. Hall Catalogs for 1889 - 90, 1890 -91, 1899 and 1900.

203."Business Biographies of Fur Manufacturers" in Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926, pp. 149 - 223 and various biographies of furriers found in Belden. Also, interviews with Peter Nicholas, Manager, United Fur Manufacturers Association, New York City and Gary Kugler, Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc., New York City.

204.Abelson, p. B21 and C6. On the desirability of New York City for the fashion industry as a whole and its significance for immigrants see Rischin, pp. 63 - 4.

205.Jesse Pope outlined the 'chief forces' which made New York the heart of the clothing industry. He saw the city as (1) the center of fashion for the nation; (2) the port of entry for new ideas, the latest styles from Europe, and for raw materials which were available in plentiful supply and at a good price; (3) a great manufacturing center and depot for various kinds of merchandise which drew buyers from around the nation; and (4) the locus of plentiful labor, not cheap but highly skilled and "present in such quantities that it is always possible to secure it in its various grades at any time it is needed. Pope, pp. 288-89.

206.Filipetti, p. 17-18, 23-4.

207.Abelson, p. C6-7.

208.Fillipetti, p. 17, 24-25. Addresses for suppliers provided in Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926 were all in the same area of Manhattan as the manufacturers.

209.In 1980, in an interview with a New York costume jewellry manufacturer concerning the possibility of establishing that industry in a developing country, he pointed out that the concentration of suppliers, service, and distributors in one location was essential to the survival and profitability of his business. If he had to rely on ordering materials, equipment, and maintenance and repair services from distant sources, he could not stay in business. Whenever he needed a particular clasp for a production item or repair for one of his machines, he could pick up his phone and have what he needed within a matter of hours and sometimes minutes. That kind of intense symbiosis among related segments of apparel and clothing accessory industries was difficult to replicate.

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210.By 1920 to 1921, virtually all fur manufacturing establishements had telephones. See listings of manufacturers in the Directory of the Fur Trade for the period 1914 to 1921.

211.Fortune Magazine, p.73.

212.Waldinger, pp. 13-27.

213.The tenement act of 1892 theoretically prohibited the use of tenement apartments as workshops. Pope, p. 57. But ample cases have been documented of the act's violation into the twentieth century. Among recently arrived Greek immigrant furriers it was common until the first world war to live and work in the same premises. See Chapter Six.

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CHAPTER SIX

GREEK IMMIGRANTS BECOME FURRIERS IN NEW YORK CITY

> "Reduced to its fundamentals ... a fur-coat factory is a man with a needle and thread."
> Fortune Magazine January 1936

The first recorded Greek immigrant fur manufacturing firm appeared in the Directory of the Fur Trade in 1896. Just before the First World War, there were at least fifty-one firms; by 1929, when there were more firms manufacturing furs in New York City than ever before, there were 224; and during the depression years there were as many as 300 Greek-owned firms in the industry.[1] (See Table 6.1)[2] Over the same period, the number of Greek immigrants in the labor force also grew. Although accurate data on their numbers is much more difficult to compile, it has been estimated that up to 1,000 Greek workers were organized into the fur workers union in 1925. In the late 1930s, ironically a period of high employment in the fur manufacturing industry in New York City, some 1,500 were members of Local 70, Greek Fur Workers Union, while a few hundreds of other Greek workers were in non union shops. After the Second World War, the numbers both of Greek-owned firms and of Greek-

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TABLE 6.1

Greek-Owned Fur Manufacturing Firms in New York City, 1896 to 1939

YEAR[1]	NUMBER OF FIRMS	YEAR	NUMBER OF FIRMS
1896 - 1897	1	1918 -1919	62
1901 - 1902	3	1919 - 1920	77
1903 - 1904	3	1920	95
1904 - 1905	4	1921	93
1906 - 1907	10	1922	108
1909 - 1910	15	1923 - 1924	94
1910 - 1911	23	1925	144
1911 - 1912	41	1926	189
1912 - 1913	51	1928	286
1913 - 1914	43	1929	224
1914 - 1915	33	1930	198
1915 - 1916	24	1935[2]	300
1916 - 1917	41	1937	139
1917 - 1918	63	1938 - 1939	149

SOURCE: Directory of the Fur Trade, 1896 to 1939.

[1] For certain years shown above, the Directory was issued from the middle of one year to the middle of the next while after 1920 until 1937, it was issued on an annual basis.

[2] For 1935 only, the Directory included the names of 130 fur plate manufacturers among the other categories of fur manufacturers listed.

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American and Greek immigrant workers in the industry continued to swell and to increasingly replace Jewish owners and workers. In the 1980s, over three-quarters of the workforce and about a third of the businesses were Greek.

The preceeding chapter has shown that the industry was open to penetration. It was expanding, its structure was competitive, would-be native born entrepreneurs were virtually non-existent, and the barriers to entry were low, save for one, technical skill. How Greek immigrants initially penetrated fur manufacturing in New York City and established a position for themselves in it is the subject of this chapter. The interplay between an economic environment in fur manufacturing conducive to immigrant penetration with the immigrants' cultural and economic baggage, the similarity between certain aspects of the old and new business and work environments, and the availability of a coethnic workforce are explored here.[3]

Pioneer Greek American Furriers

The penetration of Greek immigrants into fur manufacturing is closely linked to the sequence and patterns of immigration of Kastorians to New York City.[4] Since Kastorians were the first Greeks to become furriers in the United States,[5] they opened opportunities for their compatriots as a group to enter the fur industry. The story starts with Vasili Skaperdas, a minor fur merchant in Kastoria around 1885.[6] Local legend has it that his

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cousin, Konstantine Skaperdas, discovered a letter[7] inside a sack of karakul fur cuttings which he had bought from the great Kastorian fur merchant Naoum Papamosko. That letter, alledgedly written by a Jewish fur cuttings merchant in Montreal to another dealer in Leipzig, reported that fur cuttings [horda] were available very cheaply in Montreal and New York because they were discarded as useless.[8] The two cousins immediately recognized the opportunity which this information provided them for wealth and for independence both from the Leipzig market and from the local dominant dealers like Papamosko. Konstantine Skaperdas was reported to have told his cousin Vasili: "Cousin, look here, that which we buy from Leipzig and which we pay for with gold, they buy from America for nothing. They throw it away there; they don't know what to do with it. This work has bread. If we can bring raw material directly from the place of production, we are saved..."[9] Before this, Kastorian furriers had not even considered North America as a supplier of their peculiar type of raw material. As Zacharias Skaperdas, the son to Konstantine, noted some fifty years later: "In that period the only country which supplied Kastoria with horda was Germany and specifically Leipzig. America we knew only from geography in school."[10] The two cousins decided that one of them had to go to North America to take advantage of this opportunity which fortune had brought them. So in 1885, the unmarried cousin, Vasili, left Kastoria to go abroad to buy horda. His first stop was

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Constantinople where he sold some fur goods from his hometown so he could finance the rest of his trip, which included a stop in Leipzig to sell more goods before proceeding to the United States. On the last leg of the journey, he was accompanied by two other Macedonian fur merchants: Perpessa and Mustapha from Siatista. The three had intended to buy fur cuttings from New York and proceed to Montreal for more of the same before returning to Macedonia. Their trip was to be expeditionary and temporary.

They arrived in New York sometime in 1887. The two Siatistans did not stay long in the United States.[11] But Skaperdas remained in North America. Nothing is known about what he did for at least seven years and no one seems to have immediately followed him. Skaperdas was just a solitary emigrant who went to the United States for essentially personal reasons. There is no indication that he wrote back to his cousin, Konstantine, or to other relatives until 1894 when he sent for his nephew, Apostolos Skaperdas. That same year, three of Vasili's cousin's, Ioanni, Spyro and Naoum Samaras, also arrived in New York, perhaps with Apostolos. At least one of the latter two Samaras brothers returned to Kastoria that same year, but Ioanni stayed in New York for some years. Later Spyro went to Boston where he set up a long standing business as a furrier.[12] Before the end of the nineteenth century, Ioanni Samaras brought his nephews, Thoma, Antoni and

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Christo Dimou and some other relatives, Georgo and Christo Papanaoum, to the United States. "But their experiences were not encouraging ... and here and there only a few others followed."[13]

By 1902, fifteen years after the first Kastorian had arrived, only four more men are known to have gone to New York. There is no record that any other Kastorian Greeks were in New York or North America at this time.[14] That was not the case with immigrants from Siatista. While Perpessa and Mustapha were probably among the first Siatistans to go to the United States and Canada, they were soon followed by many of their townsfolk who went not just to New York City but to work in the mill towns of New England, the factories of the midwest, and in the building of the railroads in the west.[15] But no Siatistans worked in the fur trade at this point. In Kastoria "push" factors had not yet developed to stimulate a current of emigration from the city. Unlike Siatista, up to the end of the nineteenth century, Kastoria's economy continued to be able to support its urban population. While temporary migration had been a way of life for the town's businessmen, they travelled mostly within Ottoman lands, for at most a year at a time, or to Cental European commercial centers. Relatively few, and only the most prosperous, settled abroad permanently.[16] No matter how attractive the United States might have appeared to other Macedonian Greeks at this time and despite the growth taking place in the fur industry in the United States

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simultaneously,[17] the motherland still offered more to Kastorians.

Kastorian Furriers Migrate

For Kastorian furriers, migration to the United States occurred in three successive stages. First, the escalation of the Macedonian Struggle after the massacre at Ilinden in 1903 precipitated an economic and political crisis and insecurity in West Macedonia which sent many young men to the United States. A few of the Kastorian emigrants to New York had even been members of Greek nationalist armed bands who were getting away from the fighting and from the Ottoman authorities. Achilles Alvanos, whose photograph as a young Macedonian warrior ["Makedonomahos"] appears below, (Photograph 6.1), had fought with the band of Kapetan Varda. He first went to the United States before 1907 to avoid assassination by opposing forces in his district. In New York, he went directly to work in fur manufacturing, for the firm of Vanta Brothers and later did contracting work as a piece goods maker.[18] But most went to the United States "to try it out. As soon as they had saved [a few dollars], they returned to Kastoria, showed off, and praised America. This tempted others to make the trip to the land of the dollar."[19]

The second stage of emigration followed the declaration of the 1908 Young Turk Constitution which for the first time required military service of all male Christian subjects.

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PHOTOGRAPH 6.1



Achilles Alvanos, "Makedonomahos," [warrior in Macedonian Struggle] from Kastoria attached to a Greek band. Photograph taken in Macedonia *circa* 1905, shortly before Alvanos left for the United States.

Source: Family of Achilles Alvanos, Kastoria, Greece.

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The Ottoman draft immediately spurred emigration from Kastoria on a scale not seen before.[20] It drew into it a broader array of social strata and changed the duration and intent of the emigration. Travel abroad was no longer the domain of the male merchant or experienced artisan who migrated seasonally for business or work. It began to include youth, apprentices, young artisans, and common laborers in addition to those who had already begun to travel. Moreover, the economic disruption of the previous decade did not dissipate but worsened as the government of the Young Turks attempted to redefine the direction of the Empire. In Kastoria, fur manufacturing was in, what must have seemed, a permanent state of depression given the disruption of the economy over the past several years and the rapid decline of the traditional Ottoman costume at the turn of the century. But in New York City, the growth in the industry during the first decade of the twentieth century was unsurpassed. More hands than ever were in demand to produce fur goods for a growing market. Therefore, the combination of the possibility of avoiding service in the oppressor's army and the promise of the opportunity to work in the new land drew many to New York.[21] From 1912 to 1916, a lull followed the second stage of emigration. When the Balkan Wars broke out at the end of 1912, emigration from West Macedonia was interrupted and many of the Kastorians living and working in New York decided to return to the motherland to participate in the

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liberation of their homeland. In the larger Greek American community in New York and the United States, the Panhellenic League had organized volunteer units of Greek immigrants to go and fight in Macedonia. Among these units, the Kastorians were quite prominent. Some of them must have also believed that with independence from the Ottoman Empire and integration into Greece, life would improve markedly.[22] Furthermore, a recession in the fur industry in New York at the beginning of the First World War helped many Kastorian furriers make the decision to repatriate. Once Macedonia was liberated and the hopes of economic and social regeneration were dashed, many of the volunteers began to return to the United States.[23]

Mass emigration from Kastoria and other parts of Macedonia began in earnest with the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913 and especially from 1916. This is the third stage of emigration. Disappointed, unemployed, and with few prospects, young Kastorians left for the United States and for France in larger numbers than before the war.[24] Many took their families or recently married brides with them. Retired Kastorian furriers recalled that although a few Kastorian women had emigrated before the Balkan Wars, it was only after 1912 that they came in significant numbers. Nerantzi Aivazis, who was in New York between 1912 and 1914, remembered that many women started to arrive in New York with the returning combatants of the Balkan Wars. But more importantly, he added that Kastorian furriers in New York

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began to make money in the fur business after 1914 and were then able to have their families join them. Moreover, the simultaneous devaluation of the drachma, especially in comparison to the U.S. dollar, encouraged family emigration.[25]

Others left in groups of up to fifty youths. Christos Papadamou (known in the United States as Christy Adams), at 18 the eldest son of a Greek Orthodox priest, borrowed some money to finance his trip to the United States. He went in a party of fifty other Orthodox and Jewish emigrants who left Kastoria because their families were poor, in need of housing and required doweries for sisters or daughters. In Kastoria, Papadamou had been apprenticed to a shoemaker but the prospects of making a living from that trade were not good given the large numbers of shoemakers already in the town and the declining economic conditions. His best option was to go to the United States where he was able to learn to operate a fur sewing machine and to earn enough as a furrier to help educate his younger brothers, bring them to New York, help the family to buy a house and to provide dowry for his sisters. Like Papadamou, many of the youths in similar circumstances had not been trained as furriers; others had some exposure and training but were too young to have acquired alot of experience or had never worked with a machine. Both groups hoped to find jobs working for one of the fur manufacturing firms owned by a relative or compatriot. The opportunities in Paris were not as great as

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they were in New York after 1916 because that was the very point during which New York City assumed preeminence in the world's fur business.[26] Moreover, in the United States, domestic demand for furs leaped to proportions unknown before the First World War generating opportunities for work and businesses.

The movement of Kastorians to the United States continued unabated until the full effect of immigration restriction took hold in 1924. After that, however, furriers from Kastoria, including those who had made previous trips to the United States, continued to emigrate until the Second World War interrupted free movement in and out of Greece. These furriers applied for entry into the United States as merchants or businessmen for six months at a time while others had either citizenship or permanent residency in the United States which allowed them to go back and forth to the old country. Spyros Liakos, who remained in Kastoria until after the Second World War, witnessed the seasonal migrations of many of his fellow townsmen to and from the United States between 1935 and 1940. They would leave home with made up goods to sell in New York so that they could buy more horda with some of the profit before returning home. Some of them would stay the six months allowed by their visas and work for one of their relatives or countrymen.[27]

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A Supportive Network

Economic 'push and pull' factors on both sides of the Atlantic provide a partial explanation of the forces behind emigration. As important as they might have been, a network to facilitate and encourage chain migration had to be in place in order that it be sustained.[28] The opportunities in the fur industry and the receptivity of a new community had to be communicated to prospective emigrants; the means to move either had to be provided or the ability to replace borrowed resources had to be assured in order for the emigrants to be willing to leave the homeland for a new place. All of that came from immigrants in the United States. They wrote letters home telling their relatives and friends about their lives in the United States and urging younger brothers, sons, cousins to emigrate. Others made return journeys to see their families, to bring back horda, or to explore business and employment opportunities during a slow season in the United States. They described the opportunities for work and brought resources with which others could travel. Naturally, they had the funds with which to make the trip home in the first place. Others brought with them or sent money, horda or gifts which impressed relatives and neighbors with the wealth of the United States.[29] It was not unusual for immigrants to send their relatives prepaid tickets bringing them to New York via Piraeus or Patras, Greece rather than Salonika, since before 1912 emigrants had to hide their departure to the

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United States from the Ottoman authorities. Nerantzi Aivazis reported that, in 1912, he was able to go to the United States because his older brother Thoma, who had preceeded him to New York by one year, had written that jobs were available in fur manufacturing, that Thoma had a place for them to stay, and that Damianos would have the chance to learn to use a fur sewing machine so he could get a job. A prepaid ticket for the entire journey from Kastoria to New York was enclosed with the letter.[30]

At least one vetern Kastorian emigrant, Lazos Vanta, made several trips back to the old country to "escort" Kastorian youth to the United States. Among the young emigrants he accompanied on the trans Atlantic journey was Nerantzi Aivazi. Aivazi recalled that "we young boys had him [Vanta] as our leader for our trip. He was older and could protect us." How Lazos Vanta came to assume this function was not clear in the interview. But, he obviously was entrusted by families in Kastoria with the responsibility of getting their sons to New York. He might even have been delegated the task of recruiting Kastorian youth by some of his business compatriots in New York.[31]

Once these emigrants reached Ellis Island, what was called by all Greeks "Kastengari,"[32] some of them were met by Chris Yankou, another Kastorian who had been one of the first to reach the United States. He shepherded the newcomers in their first days in New York, helped them settle, get jobs, and facilitated their personal business

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dealings.[33] What Yankou did for young Kastorians was very similar to the role played by 'agents' in the Greek American community of the early twentieth century. One contemporary observor, Thomas Burgess, an Episcopalian minister close to the Greek American in those early years, described role of such "agents" in a book he wrote, Greeks in America. Burgess said that these agents acted as bankers, employment agents, translators, travel agents and other intermediaries facilitating the needs of the immigrant. His depiction of the career of one such 'agent' brings Yankou's role to mind.[34]

By 1906 the first Kastorian club known as "Aristotle," was founded in New York at 165 Bleecker Street to provide fellowship for the town's sons and to organize aid for the hometown. One of the club's first acts was to buy geographic atlases for the schools in Kastoria.[35] While "Aristotle" did not last long, another more successful attempt at organizing a regional society took place in August 1910 when "Omonia, Society of Kastorians" was founded. It became an important institution among Kastorian furriers in New York throughout the entire period being studied and beyond.[36]

Like immigrants and migrants from all places, these Kastorians stayed in neighborhoods and buildings where others from their hometown lived.[37] By doing that they could provide support and a sense of community for one another. Until the nineteen twenties, their settlements

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were always close to the fur market and manufacturing areas. Up to 1905 they lived together in four groups in apartments near to Broadway between Houston and Canal Streets. Then some began to move northward with the industry to West Eighth Street near Sixth Avenue, along Sixth Avenue up to Fourteenth Street, and others to East Fifth Street between First and Second Avenues. At numbers 58 and 60 West Eighth Street the buildings were filled with Kastorians who called them the "Inn of Foolishness" [Tes Morias to Hani] because most who arrived in the United States between 1905 and 1910 passed through there. When a new arrival came, the residents greeted him with a song: "Damn you America and you too Kastengari!" [Anathema se Amerike kai se vre Kastengari]. Each building had five floors, each with four apartments which served as workshops as well as living areas. Holidays were celebrated together and on name days the community visited the appropriate persons. When someone was sick, he was nursed by the group he lived with using home brews imported from the old country.[38]

Most young men also worked where they lived. Many of the Kastorian-owned fur manufacturing shops were located at the same addresses along lower Sixth Avenue and on West Eighth and East Fifth Streets where people lived. In the early years, a few senior furriers recruited large contingents of Kastorian fur workers into the buildings on West Eighth Street where they housed and also employed them in their workshops at the same location.[39] At night the

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workers would sweep up their workspace, roll out their folded cots, and go to sleep. In the mornings, they would put the beds away, eat their breakfasts and start work directly.

Penetrating the Fur Industry, 1890s to 1912

So far it has been established that Kastorians were the first Greeks to enter fur manufacturing as a group and that they made up the majority of Greek furriers in the business up to the end of the period under study. The question is how were they able to penetrate the industry and to make a niche for themselves? The answer to that is multi-faceted.

-Conducive Economic environment

Chapter Five showed that the economic environment of the fur manufacturing industry was conducive to immigrant business initiatives. Immigrants migrating to the United States with furrier's skills had a great advantage over the native born in penetrating the fur manufacturing industry since there were no established institutions through which skills could be acquired in or outside of the industry. In fact, the industry relied on the transfer of skill from European fur manufacturing centers for its development and expansion. The industry was competitive; the barriers to entry were mostly low with very little capital investment required and with a low level of mechanization. The volatility of the fur manufacturing business and the lack of standardization in both raw materials and final products

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made it a very unlikely candidate for intensive mechanization of production and for the rationalization of its business organization and of the industry. Furthermore, its organization was structured so that the technical or productive side of manufacturing was separated from the wholesale and retail commercial or distributive side of the business.[60] This meant that an immigrant who either could not speak English at all or had only a rudimentary knowledge of the language or who did not have access to the commercial network for distribution could busy himself with production while someone else, a middleperson, handled the commercial side of the business. Finally, the growing variety of products being manufactured were also being directed towards increasingly differentiated markets over the period under study so that opportunities for specialization in a particular product or pelt increased. While the competitive characteristics of the fur industry and the nature of its products and organization provided Greek immigrant furriers with opportunities, a major factor necessary for penetrating the industry were preexisting skills in fur manufacturing. That is, the immigrants had to have acquired the knowledge of working furs in the old country. Then the industry was accessible.

-"Cultural Baggage"

The Kastorians had furriers' skills as part of their "cultural baggage."[61] Those who had arrived before 1908, like the pioneer Vasilios Skaperdas, had been fur craftsmen

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in the old country and had come from generations of fur manufacturing families.[42] Some had grown up working with their fathers or relatives in shops attached to their homes and others had been apprenticed as youths to furriers in the town. Nerantzi Aivazis, from a family of several generations of furriers, was one person who grew up working with his elder brother John who had a workshop in Kastoria by the end of the last century [and who worked almost until he died in 1974]. As a boy, Nerantzi started to work by helping deliver sorted, matched and arranged pieces to women who then sewed them on a piece rate basis at their homes for John Aivazis. As Nerantzi grew, his brother gave him additional responsibilities in the workshop, teaching him how to sew and eventually how to sort, match, cut and arrange fur cuttings, the most skilled of operations in Kastoria at the time. In 1912, he migrated to the United States to join another brother where he stayed for 22 months.[43]

After 1908, and especially after 1916, many of those who emigrated to the United States had not been furriers or the children of furriers in the old country. Some of them still arrived in New York with training and experience as furriers because they had gone first to France where they worked for a growing community of Kastorian furriers in Paris and acquired some skills there. Mihali Shiomtas had received some training in his father's shop in Kastoria before he emigrated to France in 1917. But, it was in his

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Uncle Skaperdas' shop in Paris where he learned to cut and sew furs. After staying in France for about two and one-half years, he left for New York where he worked in fur manufacturing for the next fifty years. He reported that many other Kastorian youths had followed his path via France to the fur industry in New York City.[44]

For those who had no prior experience in fur manufacturing, during the first decade of this century the Kastorian furriers already in business undertook to give them 'on the job' training in their firms. Increasingly after 1916, emigration to New York City became the way in which a Kastorian youth could hope to become a furrier. It can also be argued here that since Greek-speaking Orthodox Macedonians like the Kastorians were urban people, engaged in urban occupations as craftsmen or shop keepers or else apprenticed to become one of these,[45] most of those who became furriers in New York had had some exposure to the craft system of production as a business and therefore had some business organization skills which could be applied to fur manufacturing once they had acquired the technical skills as workers.

-Skills

The type of skills Kastorians came with were advantageous to them in New York City. In Kastoria, every furrier apprentice learned to perform each of the major tasks in the work process during the course of his training. Since he started as a helper in the master's shop, he had

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the opportunity to observe, learn and perform everything from sorting, grading, matching and arranging fur cuttings to sewing them together. In chapter four, the extent of skill and the intimate familiarity with pelts which Kastorian furriers developed was described in some detail.

However, there were three skills which did not exist in Kastoria until after the Second World War. Firstly, the Kastorians had no experience working with whole skins since the industry in the old country was based on the manufacture of fur cuttings into fur goods. Secondly, they lacked the knowledge of how to make a fur outer garment, in particular a coat, since the products manufactured in the Macedonian town were trimmings and a yardgoods-like fur fabric used by tailors to line cloth coats. Consequently, Kastorian furriers also did not know how to do finishing, the third skill they lacked. They had no reason to learn the art of sewing a lining and accouterments, ornamental and functional, into and onto a fur coat. However, until after the First World War, those skills were not really essential for most people to be able to find a place in the U.S. fur industry because the most commonly used fur goods were not coats but trimmings, linings, neckpieces, muffs, collars, cuffs, sets [of muffs and scarves] and fur robes. The types of products being manufactured in volume in the U.S. industry resembled the products Skaperdas, his relatives and countrymen had been making in the old country.[46] Kastorian furriers could turn those out blindfolded. They had the

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necessary skill and experience to sort, match, cut, arrange, shape and sew fur cuttings to make those products.[47]

-Familiarity with the fur industry

It was also very important for the Kastorian furriers that the manufacturing industry which they encountered in New York at the turn of the century was also familiar to them.[48] The fur industry as a whole in the United States was more complex in its organization and structure than in Greece. It had the four major branches described in Chapter Five, three of which did not exist in Kastoria. But fur manufacturing in New York resembled what the Kastorians had known in the old country in several important ways. Kastorian furriers had been manufacturing fur goods for a distant market for at least two centuries before they began to emigrate to the United States. Certainly, the size of the demand for their goods in the old world was nothing to compare with the market in the United States. Yet, they were familiar with wholesale production for the marketplace. The manufacturers were accustomed to working through middlepersons to reach consumer markets in western Asia and Europe just as New York fur manufacturers relied on jobbers, resident buyers, buying agents and large manufacturers. In Kastoria, production was carried on in small workrooms inside the manufacturer's living quarters, often with family members or relatives participating. The sweatshops and tenement workshops in New York were not a far cry from those workrooms.

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In both countries, it was possible to get into business as a contractor with very little capital. In Kastoria, the craftsman could get raw materials from a fur merchant who contracted with him for an agreed amount of output. The craftsman often never owned the raw materials but only provided the labor with which to prepare the fur goods in behalf of the merchant furrier. Similar arrangements could be made in New York between sweatshop operators or individual contractors and the jobbers/distributors. The contracting arrangements between the manufacturer/jobbers /retailers and the actual manufacturers/producers were not entirely unlike those found back in Kastoria. Piece work and the task-system, which were widely used in the garment trades including fur manufacturing, were known to the Kastorians who had worked under them in the old country.[49] The range of products made in Kastoria were more limited and standardized than what was developing in the United States after the 1890s. However, there were parts of the New York industry which did turn out a somewhat standardized product where style varied more according to type of pelt used than according to design. The manufacture of trimmings, sets, linings, neckwear, and other pieced fur items fell into this category. Although one important part of the work process, sewing, had been mechanized, each product was still made individually and mostly by hand. The sewing machine, while new to them, did not present an obstacle since its operation was fairly easy to learn for the types of products they

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initially were making. Some may even have had the chance to have used or seen one in Greece since Naoum Samaras, one of the first migrants to the United States, had brought one back to Kastoria in 1894. The industry in New York was developing more diverse products for a more differentiated market; its firms specialized in particular products made from pelts of a particular type and value; and more diverse forms of business organization and division of labor were emerging. But the Kastorians were able to adapt to these differences and to the diversity and use them to their advantage.

-Business organization and division of labor

In Kastoria the furrier's business organization was a very simple handicraft form and usually revolved around the family.[50] The craftsman was the principle owner, manager and producer with family members pitching in to help him put out the work. The craftsman performed all the important tasks in the production process but often others, female relatives or friends, did the sewing for him either at home or in the neighborhood. Wage labor was not usually employed except in the relatively few larger shops since a furrier's wife, child or relative's child could help when help was needed and, at the same time, male family members could acquire training. This kind of informal business organization was quite adaptable to the economic environment of fur manufacturing in New York.

In New York, most of the early businesses were simple

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proprietorships or partnerships among family members or townsmen. In the trade directories up to 1914, the 'styles' [firm names] which were listed indicated a single owner or family proprietary business or a partnership between Kastorians.[51] In those businesses the owners were also the producers since labor was rarely employed. Division of labor was quite limited because the owner(s) could perform all the main tasks in the firm. Since they were manufacturing trimmings, linings and other pieced goods the major tasks in the work process were sorting and matching the fur cuttings, cutting and trimming them to be arranged into shapes, and sewing the arranged pieces into finished goods. A Kastorian furrier could take a bale of cuttings (horda) and single- handedly turn it into collars, cuffs, neckpieces, or trimmings. When he had established himself in the industry and could get more orders for his goods or when a large volume of demand was anticipated in the market, the furrier might then decide to hire a worker to assist him. That worker was most likely to be an operator who would sew the pieces as his employer prepared them for assembly. [A cutter who would have had the sorting, matching and arranging skills would not need to be employed in such a small operation since he could go into business himself.] If an especially fast and skillful operator was hired, the furrier-owner sometimes fell behind in the preparation of the pieces for sewing. In that case, the operator would leave his machine to assist the owner with

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the backlogged facets of the production process.[52] Later on, the division of labor in the factories that emerged to produce coats and other outer garments became more complex than in the contracting workshops of the first years of the century. But the existence of the small workshops where division of labor was minimal, with the owner performing several tasks in the production process and perhaps with one employee to perform a specialized job, continued to the end of the period under study and provided access to business ownership to many Greek immigrants, recent and seasoned.

-Work Habits

The work habits and customs which the Kastorians brought from the old country reinforced the behavior and attitudes needed in the New York work and business environment of the garment trades.[53] They were used to working extremely long hours of at least six days per week to put out the work they had taken on. In Kastoria it was not unusual in the busy season to start work before sunrise and finish after sunset, the so-called "nehteri" or night work.[54] In New York retired furriers reported working equally long hours with time off for rest only on Sunday. Being paid by the piece or by the task-system was also nothing new since both systems existed in the old country. These systems spurred them on to work harder. Living and working in the same quarters was common in the old country. In New York, Kastorian furriers worked where they lived. In the mornings, they got out of their beds, put away their

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bedding, ate their morning meal and started working. At night they reversed the procedure. This saved them money and allowed them to put in even longer hours working.[55]

Working, after all, was one of the main reasons for being in the United States. For the early emigrant furriers the idea was to spend a number of years in New York earning some money to send home for doweries, mortgages, property acquisition, or other debt repayment. A set of letters from one emigrant furrier to his three siblings in Kastoria clearly reveal his preoccupations. In all four of the letters, written between 21 July 1908 and 14 January 1910, he advised his siblings on the purchase of property in his behalf with money he sent them and on other family and business affairs at home. While he made reference to his hardships in working in New York, he never detailed them nor dwelled on them. Instead, he engaged in discussion focused on Kastoria. He had emigrated around 1905 as one of the 'Makedonomache' [Macedonian rebels] who had to leave the region for security reasons. But as the Macedonian Struggle had wound down by 1908, he remained in New York. So far as he was concerned, he had an economic mission in New York which once completed would allow him to return to the old country.[56] This kind of determination to accumulate and to return to the old country or to remit financial assistance to relatives motivated others as well to work under very trying conditions.

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Making the first "niche"[57]

From the start, the Kastorians got into fur manufacturing from the business side of the industry rather than as workers. When the first ones arrived in New York they were not interested in working in the mainstream industry since the purposes of their trips were either to buy horda for the old country and return home as soon as possible or to establish a business which would continue to supply horda to Kastoria; much the same types of arrangements which their prominent fellow townsmen and fur merchants had in Leipzig. But, given the brisk expansion of fur manufacturing in New York in the 1890s, they quickly realized that they could also set up manufacturing enterprises to supplement what they did as merchants. If nothing else, they could accumulate some capital to buy more cuttings for the old country from their earnings in manufacturing.

Activities of Kastorians as manufacturers is confirmed in the Directory of the Fur Trade which listed the handful of Kastorian businesses in New York up to about 1906 as manufacturing in addition to dealing in cuttings for export. The very first Greek-owned business listed in that directory was in 1896 for "V. Skaperdas and Company at 133 Prince Street" in the heart of the fur district in New York at that time. Vasili Skaperdas was a manufacturer of trimmings until 1901 - 1902 at which point he was also listed as dealing in furs and skins and exporting cuttings, obviously

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to Kastoria. Skaperdas had also opened a branch in Montreal which must have supplemented his New York enterprise.[58] In 1901, the next date for which data is available, his cousin, Ioannis Samaras had his own fur cuttings business, "J. Samaras and Company," at 135 Prince Street, next door to Skaperdas.[59] Soon after that Vasili Skaperdas disappeared from New York although his firm was in Montreal until 1904 to 1905. Kastorian sources have reported that at about that same time he had contracted tuberculosis in New York and died in Piraeus, Greece on his way back to Kastoria.[60] Others joined these men and by 1906, the Directory of the Fur Trade listed eight Kastorian firms of which seven were manufacturers. The eighth had two branches to the business. "Dimon Brothers and Company," the Demou brothers mentioned above, were "importers and exporters of furs and skins" at their 31-33 East 10th Street address while they were "retailers of furs and millenary" at 130 West 34th Street. While a few other Kastorians continued to deal in cuttings for export, only Dimon Brothers and one other company persisted in dealing in furs and skins for many years.[61] Obviously, they had been able to use their years in the United States to their advantage.[62]

-Adapting 'cultural baggage'

Once long-term emigration from Kastoria converged with the furriers' realization that there were opportunities in manufacturing in New York in addition to buying raw materials there, they drew on their "cultural baggage" and

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pooled their resources to carve out a niche for themselves. They were able to identify a place in the manufacture of pieced goods into fur trimmings used by the fur industry, linings, and 'sets.' The latter product was made up of fur muffs and neck pieces or scarves in various configurations and types of furs which were used to complement winter clothes and to keep the wearer's neck and hands warm in the absence of adequate collars and pockets on pre-First World War coats. Some Kastorians also made fur novelties such as stuffed animals and animal heads used for neck pieces.

Expert at working with fur cuttings or pieces, by 1911 of the [seventy] Kastorian furriers positively identified in the trade directories, [fifty-six] were listed specifically as making wholesale sets. In 1912, many were making linings as well as sets. Most of the rest were manufacturing neckwear, novelties, and fur heads, tails and paws. An indication of the range of products they made can be found in the one or two line descriptions of their products which Kastorian furriers submitted to the Directory of the Fur Trade identifying their line of goods. From those we learn that they made up 'black lynx and Persian paw sets,' 'ermine tails,' 'pieced Persian and Persian paw sets,' 'pieced mink sets,' 'wholesale children's sets, civet cat a specialty,' 'wolf and fox,' and others.[63] The furriers could buy cuttings and the less valuable pieces of costly furs, such as the paws and tails of mink, fox and Persian lamb, relatively cheaply and make them up for the trade. These

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products accounted for a sector of the market where demand was high since the prices for them were relatively low. What kept the prices low, even though their production was labor intensive, were the extreme conditions of competition arising from the availability of cheap though skilled immigrant craft labor to produce them. Kastorian furriers found themselves competing not so much among themselves but with other skilled ethnic craftsmen who were immigrating simultaneously.[64] The competitive conditions favored the producer who was able to produce quickly and cheaply. The Kastorians not only were willing to do that but they knew how to.

The choice of pieced goods was natural for Kastorians and many of them remained in that area of the trade to the end of the period. The manufacture of pieced goods could be initiated independently because the capital needed to buy cuttings and to secure equipment to make them was relatively small. Some Kastorians even worked at other occupations where they earned wages from which they could save in order to buy cuttings to manufacture in their apartments or rooms during hours off from the job. One Kastorian furrier who arrived in New York around 1902, reported how he had done exactly that. When he first got to New York, he "sold flowers on twenty-third street, made cigarettes, then became a carpet worker and had other small jobs until he had saved enough to buy a sack of mink cuttings to make into pieced goods in his apartment.[65] Since the early Kastorian

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settlements were in the fur district of the day, they could easily buy raw materials and find markets for their output among the large manufacturers and jobbers whose businesses could be found in and near the same areas.

It is not known how the first Kastorian furriers learned to use the fur sewing machine. Since they were skillful at sewing pieced goods by hand from the old country, they might have initially continued that process in New York especially while, as in the case cited above, they worked at unrelated occupations during the day and on fur goods during their spare time. But the mainstream industry was using machines for sewing more and more. Already at least one Kastorian had taken a machine back to the old country in 1894. Surely those in New York were learning to use machines as well. The quickest way to learn was to work in a mainstream shop where machines were used. A few of those pioneer furriers must have been employed in those shops, perhaps in a non-sewing capacity, and had the chance to learn through observation and practice. The other possibility is that some bought or rented a machine and taught themselves through trial and error. One retired Kastorian furrier, Nerantzi Aivazi, described in an interview how he had done exactly that shortly after arriving in New York in 1912. His brother, who had emigrated in 1908 and was employed in a Greek fur shop, owned an old machine which was kept in their apartment and suggested that Nerantzi practice sewing some scraps on it.

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"[From Kastoria] I only knew cutting. My brother told me it would be good to learn the machine because I would be paid better. ... I practiced on that machine for about fifteen to twenty days. When I broke a needle, I got upset. Then my brother said I was ready to work outside..." He added that "I had zeal [meraki] and learned to use the machine easily. I wanted to improve my position..." Since Kastorian shops were using machines by 1912, and probably had them before that, Kastorian workers were developing ways to train themselves to sew on them.[66]

Working space was also not a problem. In the old country, Kastorian furriers were accustomed to working where they lived. So it was quite easy to set up production in their small apartments or rooms which they shared with their fellow townsmen who were busy doing the same thing. The tools and equipment they needed were elemental. They improvised on the work tables by using the same ones on which they ate their meals and the furriers' knives, needles, and other supplies were readily available from 'furriers supply shops' in the fur district. Their production costs were nominal and could easily be saved from wages. If they needed the only piece of machinery used in the production process at that time, a sewing machine, one could be secured through either a rental or the purchase of a used one. Most shops were very small operations with under five people in them, usually related, and with very limited division of labor. Typically, two or three brothers

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would get together to buy some cuttings with resources saved from working at other jobs either in the fur industry or in unrelated fields. They would pitch in to make pieced goods. Often, one had more skill at sorting, matching and cutting and the other at sewing. However, lines were not sharply drawn and each one could and would help the other to get the job done.

The outlets for their products were the jobbers and large manufacturers in the trade who were only too eager to get hold of fur goods for sale in the growing market for fur goods in the first two decades of this century. They contracted for sets, neck pieces, and other pieced goods which some sold in their own retail shops or distributed to department and specialty shops around the country. There were a few Greek non-furriers who could speak some English and who acted as distributors for the furriers.[67] But since the 'fur market' where trading, production, and wholesale distribution took place was always very centralized and compact and because the Kastorians lived in and immediately around it, it was not difficult for a producer to walk a short distance from his workshop / apartment to find a buyer for his output.[68] Many Kastorian furriers, like other small producers, also contracted with large fur manufacturing houses to make up a given quantity of a specified item used to trim fur outer garments. For example, some Kastorian contractors made 'ermine tails' or heads which were used by fur coat manufacturers as

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contrasting, ornamental trimmings on garments made from other furs.[69]

This early group of furriers also adopted new business forms in New York so that they could make their presence known in the fur market. They were able to have themselves listed in the trade directories. As early as 1901 to 1902, "V. Skaperdas and Company" had a one line blurb as part of its listing explaining the company's specialty as a "furs and skins and cuttings exporter."[70] Others followed suit in years to come and in 1912 "Basdeka Brothers, the Reliable Fox House: Everything in Foxes" had the first separate boxed advertisement for a Kastorian firm.[71] By 1910 at least seven of the twenty-three firms listed in the Directory of the Fur Trade had telephones. Within four years, twenty-one of twenty-nine firms had phones.[72] Lastly, as early as 1908 the firm of "Pavlides Brothers" of 315 East Fifth Street had its own letterhead with its own logo, a bear hurdling a fur muff. The letterhead also noted the firm's specialization as manufacturers of "fine furs and novelties" and its activities as "importers and exporters of fur cuttings."[73]

-Pooling Resources for Ethnic Enterprise

Unlike other immigrant entrepreneurs who have formed formal ethnic institutions to mediate immigration and entry into business, there is no evidence that Kastorian furriers developed such structures as 'rotating credit associations' or employment bureaus to help immigrants finance businesses

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or get jobs.[74] From the very beginning Kastorian furriers 'pooled their resources' in a variety of informal ways in order to gain a foothold in the fur manufacturing business. Their common kinship and ethno-regional and occupational backgrounds were the most important assets around which was they mobilized their resources. Having come from a society in which they were a disfranchised minority, Kastorians were accustomed to drawing on common ethnicity and culture to promote communal aims.[75]

It has already been noted that Kastorian furriers lived together in clusters not only on the same streets but even in the same tenement buildings and apartments.[76] By lodging together, not only did the furriers share day-to-day living expenses, they could also work together to start manufacturing fur goods on their own and share information regarding jobs and contracting opportunities in the mainstream fur industry. Some of them established firms at the same addresses where they lived, thereby paying one rent for both accommodations and workspace. In the 1915 New York State Manuscript Census, Kastorians could be found living at addresses along Sixth Avenue and on West Eighth and East Fifth Streets where some of them had fur businesses at the same addresses listed in business directories.[77]

They also clustered their shops together. Between 1907 and the early 1920s, most Greek shops could be found along West Eighth or East Fifth Streets and on Sixth Avenue between Eighth and Fourteenth Streets. Some of the older

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premises were passed on from one individual or group of furriers to another. Over a period of ten to fifteen years, various Kastorians were found to have worked at the same addresses as their predecessors who had moved their businesses further uptown and their residences to other parts of the city.[78]

Another way in which the immigrant Greek furriers pooled their resources was by cooperating and forming partnerships in order to go into business.[79] Unlike some other ethnic groups[80], this was not a carry over from the old country. There, fur enterprises were individually-owned handicraft workshops. Instead it was an adaptation to the economic realities of the fur business in New York where it was common for relatives, mostly brothers, or friends to join together to start a manufacturing firm.[81] A casual survey of the trade directories reveals that partnerships were common among all ethnic businessmen in the fur industry. Partnerships in the fur industry had two major advantages over simple proprietorships. First, start up capital, only a few hundred dollars, was easier to accumulate since at least two people could put together their savings from wages or other work (or borrowings) to buy the equipment and raw material needed.[82] Secondly, while fur manufacturing was a labor intensive industry, small entrepreneurs initially did not want to employ labor since wages would be an added expense when cash flow was weak or non-existent. The principals therefore performed

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all the tasks themselves and could divide the work according to the experience and expertise of each member or the needs of the business. As with all businesses in fur manufacturing, these partnerships were vulnerable to dissolution for any number of reasons related mostly to the volatility of the industry. Therefore, partnerships were formed and reformed, sometimes with the same individuals, sometimes with different people. Later, when Greeks from other areas entered the fur business, they too would pool their financial resources and technical expertise to start a business. For an enterprising worker skilled in sewing but not in the essential craft of cutting, partnership with a cutter was the vehicle for mobility in the industry.[83]

Table 6.2 below contains a summary of the incidence of partnership as a business form among Greek immigrant furriers for selected years between 1909 and 1929. This summary is derived from an analysis of the lists of Greek-owned enterprises identified in the various trade and ethnic business directories used in this study. It shows that partnerships remained very common among Greek immigrant furriers for the entire period under study, not just in the early period when the first 'niche' was made. They comprised at least half, and up to three-quarters, of the fur enterprises owned by Greek immigrants. The most common partnership was among two or more brothers who initially shared the work in the production process and if the firm survived and expanded, shared in the management of the

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TABLE 6.2

PARTNERSHIPS AMONG GREEK-OWNED FUR MANUFACTURING FIRMS
NEW YORK CITY, 1909 TO 1929

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF FIRMS	NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
1909 - 1910	15	10	66.6
1913 - 1914	43	31	72.1
1919 -1920	77	50	64.9
1925	144	77	53.5
1929	224	136	60.7

SOURCE: Directory of the Fur Trade.

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firm.[84] Moreover, virtually all partnerships among brothers were made up of Kastorians or Siatistans.[85] Since Greeks from other places were not as concentrated in the industry and had, in most cases, acquired the skills in the United States, they had to look to coethnics rather than to relatives or fellow townsmen to form partnerships. There were partnerships between Kastorian and other Greek businessmen and with Jewish or other non-Greek furriers from as early as 1912. These continued and the numbers grew somewhat over the period under study, but they never became very numerous.[86]

In Kastoria, there had been an informal system of extending credit and some very simple financial services to furriers and other businessmen. Wealthy merchants would act as bankers, really moneylenders, by lending some of their surplus cash to craftsmen, other merchants or shopkeepers who had real property to put up as security or who had relatives working abroad from whom the moneylender could collect the debt plus interest. The borrowers used the funds either for their businesses or to buy property. In some cases, the moneylenders would also help migrants remit funds back to the hometown by actually taking them back to relatives on a return journey.[87] It is unclear whether or not any semblence of this informal institution functioned among the Kastorian furriers in New York to help them raise funds for their businesses. The main purpose of "Omonia," the society of Kastorians in New York founded in 1910, was

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to mobilize resources to be sent to aid charitable institutions in the homeland and for local self-help or mutual aid.[88] There may have been individuals who acted in the capacity of 'bankers.' It was not uncommon in the Ottoman-Greek American community for a prominent English-speaking person, usually a businessman, to act as interpretor, letter writer, kind of social worker, business advisor, employment 'bureau,' and banker.[89] Among the Kastorians, there was at least one furrier, one of the early immigrants, who assumed part of this role including facilitating the remittance of funds to the old country. Whether he lent or helped mobilize funds, however, was not confirmed.[90]

Another indirect reference to the existence of informal financial services within the early immigrant furrier community was made in an article, "Greek Americans in the Fur Business." Its author, Theodoro Giannakouli quoted some unidentified source as describing two Kastorian firms as "the schools and the banks [added emphasis] of hundreds of immigrants who engaged in this craft."[91] No further explanation was provided as to what banking services were provided so it is only possible to conjecture whether such 'banks' might have made start-up capital available to graduates of its school. Presumably, the manufacturing businesses of which these 'banks' were a part would not have wanted to set up rival firms. However, without knowing in what capacity furriers 'worked' for the two firms which

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provided so many services, it is hard to tell whether or not they would have been so inclined. If the firms were outright employers of labor, then they would not have wanted to encourage their workers to set up independent businesses. But, if they were jobbers in addition to being manufacturers, then they may have preferred to have independent producers contracting with them to make fur goods which their firms then distributed in the wholesale market. In that case, their 'banks' could have been important vehicles for buying equipment and getting credit to purchase raw materials.

Finally, all fur manufacturing businesses operated to some extent on credit when it came to buying raw materials. The credit was extended by fur dealers, large and small, or jobbers to manufacturers whose reputations were known to them in their business and ethnic community.[92] Very often, no papers were signed since deals were made on trust. In the early years, the Kastorians were not part of the networks which would extend credit in the mainstream industry. However, as long as there were a few Kastorians who dealt in cuttings,[93] the manufacturers must have bought some of their cuttings from them. What the terms of credit were between the Kastorian dealers and manufacturers are not known. They too, however, relied on kin and communal bonds to underwrite their deals. One's word sealed the deal.[94]

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Extending the "niche " 1914 to 1939

The First World War brought growth and prosperity to the fur manufacturing industry in New York City. That growth was accompanied by an expansion of competition and of opportunity for immigrant furriers, including for many who had never been in the fur business before. The number of Greek-owned fur manufacturing businesses between 1914 and 1939 multiplied considerably. [See Table 6.1]

Given the availability of skills and the existence of opportunities, Greeks preferred the independence which self-employment offered even though in many cases the operation of a fur business was precarious and the financial rewards marginal.[95] Anyone who had the critical skills of a cutter and operator, or who could put them together in a partnership, could easily find a bit of space, purchase or rent a machine cheaply, and start producing as a trimmings contractor. The birth and death rates of such fur manufacturing firms were high in the best of times. But Greek furriers, like furriers in the rest of the industry, were not deterred from trying. They knew that if they were self-employed, they at least could get as much as possible from their labor rather than working for someone else, usually another Greek, for sixty or more hours per week during the season as was the norm in Greek shops before the workers were organized in 1925.[96] Once the season was over, all furriers, contractors and workers, were out of work but perhaps the self-employed had a little more and

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could hope to get at least a few more contracts to keep going. After all, even in the unionized, mainstream shops where wages were relatively high for the time, most workers could only count on some twelve to eighteen weeks of steady work during the year with little security and no unemployment or other benefits until the late 1930s and after the Second World War.[97] Therefore, being in business was attractive.

-Trimmings Manufacture

As styles and the variety of fur products developed during the First World War and later in the 1920s and 1930s, Kastorian furriers were able to adapt to the changes in a variety of ways. Most of them stayed in the pieced goods and trimmings section of the business where demand remained high until the Second World War.[98] They worked increasingly on pieces from various types of furs but for different markets from before. First, as demand grew in other parts of the world for fur sets, a large New York jobbing house regularly bought the muffs and neckpieces from the Kastorians (and other small furriers) to send by the thousand to China, Japan and Latin America.[99]

More importantly, however, during the First World War and especially in the 'twenties when the cloth coat and suit trade began to use fur trimmings in volume, these Kastorian furriers, along with hundreds of other trimmings manufacturers, supplied the coat manufacturers with collars, cuffs, and front trimmings. The smart fur-trimmed cloth

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coat nearly overwhelmed the all-fur coat as an item of fashion during the 1920s and 1930s because it was slim, straight, light in weight and relatively inexpensive; yet it offered the luxury, elegance, and, of course, status which fur gave to a garment.[100] It was not difficult for the Kastorians to switch to making trimmings for this new market. Although some of the manufacturers did the designing on their premises, the styles were set by the cloth coat houses who ordered the trimmings to their specifications from furriers. Some of those coat companies even directly entered the raw fur market for skins which they then had made up by contracting furriers, including the Greeks.[101] Other trimmings manufacturers bought skins in the primary or raw fur market or pieces from cuttings houses which they then made up for their clients in the cloth coat trade.

By 1927, a peak year in fur goods manufacturing[102] in general and in fur trimmings to date, of a total of 173 identifiable Greek firms in the New York State Directory of Manufacturers, at least 125 were in trimmings, linings, and neck pieces, though many of these also manufactured coats.[103] Although the list includes non-Kastorian Greeks, the Kastorians dominated them. Over the next seven or eight years as trimmings manufacturing continued to hold a very prominent position in the fur industry, the numbers of Greek firms in the business continued to grow. While many of the firms specialized in cheap or moderate priced fur trimmings,

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in the early thirties some moved into fancy fur trimmings like fox and mink after having worked cheaper or 'popular' grades of fur. These firms continued to make their sales to the suit and coat trade.

Until the early 1940s, one of the most prominent Greek trimmings firms was Vanta Brothers. From Dun and Bradstreet credit reports some of it's history can be reconstructed to illustrate the path which several other, though not all, Greek trimmings manufacturing firms followed. It was started in 1906 by two of the three brothers, Harry and Luka, who arrived in the United States from Kastoria in 1905 and came from a family of furriers in the old country. They had been employed in fur in New York for one year before starting their own business initially making wholesale fur sets from their workshop at 313 East Fifth Street. During the war years, their younger brother Socrates joined them and they moved to 400 Sixth Avenue, closer to the new center of the fur trade in midtown. There they continued to manufacture fur sets but sold them both at wholesale and retail. By the early 1920s they were located in the heart of the fur manufacturing industry at 301 Seventh Avenue where they remained for more than a decade manufacturing trimmings. In the early depression years, a Dun and Bradstreet credit report said that Vanta Brothers "manufacture a popular priced grade of women's fur garments ... [and that] "the business is active and of substantial size with the personnel well regarded in local bank and

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trade circles." Their sales figures for the 1931 to 1932 'depression era' season, reported as of 31 January 1932, were a startlingly healthy $1,115,000. That year, the firm was reported to be manufacturing long hair fur trimmings and specializing in fox with sales made to some 500 accounts in the suits and coat manufacturing business. Two years later, the company had five salesmen and 20 workers producing for up to 800 accounts with sales of some $700,000. Although the absolute dollar amount of sales represented a decrease of some 37% from the 1931/1932 season, it must be remembered that 1934 was the year following the devastating depression year of 1933 which saw a tremendous devaluation of the dollar.[104]

The management of Vanta Brothers, which employed twenty production workers and five salesmen to service 800 accounts in 1934, had been divided among the three brothers: Harry was in charge of finances and the buying of raw materials, Lukas supervised production, and Socrates headed up the sales department. During 1936 they added "a better line of coats" to their ongoing trimmings manufacture. This was a very wise business decision because over the next few years trimmings declined in importance as fur coats rose in prominence due to improvements in the styling and manufacturing techniques of furriers and to the ability of dressers and dyers to simulate almost any fur from cheap rabbit skins.[105] By 1941, although they continued to manufacture trimmings, 20% of Vanta Brothers total volume of

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sales was in fur coats. The company had to hire additional workers in order to continue as a coat manufacturer since coats required a greater division of labor and the addition of crafts not employed in trimmings houses, most notably finishing and nailing.

-Coat manufacture

Some of the Kastorians were able to move into the manufacture of outer garments, especially coats. To do that, they had to learn the techniques of fur coat manufacture, first, from skins and, then, from plates. They acquired the knowledge of how to work skins and to make fur coats by going to work in the coat producing section of the industry. Retired furrier Vasili Dai whose brothers Elias and Konstantinos were in New York in 1908 and 1910 respectively, recounted in an interview that his brothers had initially gotten jobs in Jewish shops where they worked skins, making coats.[106] By doing so they were able to add on to the skills they already possessed. Consequently, by 1915 when Vasili and a fourth brother, Elia, arrived in New York, his older brothers had already opened their own business at First Avenue and Fifth Street where they made coats from skins.[107] In 1916 to 1917 they moved into the retail and custom manufacturing business as well with a store first at Second Avenue and Seventh Street, then to 462 Sixth Avenue, at Twenty-third Street and Sixth Avenue and, later on, at 375 Fifth Avenue near Thirty-fourth Street. In this store they had their salesroom on the street level and

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their factory upstairs. By 1937, although Vasili and Elia had withdrawn from the company to return to Greece, the two original partners remained with the firm in which they employed five steady employees manufacturing and repairing women's fur coats, scarves, and accessories. Their prices ranged up to $3000 for their custom made goods and despite the depression their sales were over $200,000 for 1937.[108]

In interviews, other retired furriers[109] recalled that the first major openings for working in coat manufacturing firms, the so-called 'Jewish shops'[110] among which could be found those manufacturers at the forefront of the industry in product design and development, occurred between 1910 and 1912. During efforts to organize workers into a union and some strikes which predated the fur workers' general strike of 1912, which resulted in the organization of the International Fur Workers Union,[111] Jewish employers, some of whom knew about the Kastorian furriers on East Fifth and West Eighth Streets because they had bought goods from them, approached them for the first time with offers of jobs at wages much higher than what they earned as businessmen and certainly as workers. They were to be replacements for the striking workers. Although they worked as 'scabs,' Kastorians for the first time were exposed to other sections of the industry and to manufacturing other products, in particular coats.

Evidence of a few Kastorian furriers manufacturing complete fur garments at a relatively early date can be

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found in the Trade Directories. In the 1911 - 1912 Directory of the Fur Trade, the firm of Lazarus D. Liakos and Company located at 109 West 28th Street ran an advertisement announcing that "we make a specialty of Hudson Seal coats. Black fox, wolf and natural racoon sets."[112] The next year the same company's advertisement added that "We do repair work of every description for the trade."[113] During the war years, as the industry expanded tremendously both in the volume of its output, in the diversity of its products, and in its attempts to reach differentiated markets, more opportunities became available. Some firms combined the manufacture of trimmings and pieced goods with coat manufacture. Skaperdas and Company, a relative of the pioneer Vasili Skaperdas and in business "since 1899," took an advertisement in the 1914 - 1915 Directory of the Fur Trade announcing that they were manufacturing lynx coats and sets at wholesale. In 1921, the firm of Stathis Brothers, a Kastorian family in business for at least ten years, advertised that they had the "best values in chokers of marten, mink, squirrel and foxes" while they also made up a line of Hudson Seal coats.[114]

One of the firms which capitalized on the post-war opportunities and applied their old country training in fur and their experience of working in the New York industry to successfully specialize in coat manufacture was Siotka Brothers. A business biography of their firm which appeared in the Yearbook of the Fur Industry in 1926 described their

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story:[115]

> Andrew and Christie Siotka, owners of the fur manufacturing firm of Siotka Brothers, were literally born into the fur trade. Their father was, and still is, a fur merchant in Kastoria, Greece, and they began to learn the fur trade as they learned to walk and to talk. By the time they left school to join him in business, they were expert furriers; this thorough knowledge, acquired in childhood, has been of inestimable value to them in their activities in the New World.
>
> Andrew Siotka went to Paris with his father in 1906, but convinced of the possibilities America offered to the furrier, came to this country in 1907. For four years he worked in various departments of the fur trade, putting the finishing touches on the process of education that had been going on all his life. His brother, Christie, joined him in 1911, but just as they were about to start in business, there came the call to arms in Greece and Andrew sailed for the homeland. He had hardly returned, three years later, when the Great War called Christie Siotka into the United States Navy, and it was not until 1919, eight years after their plans had originally been made that Siotka Brothers began their fur manufacturing business that they have conducted so successfully since its inception.
>
> Starting in a small loft at 167 West 23rd Street, Siotka Brothers manufactured fur coats, specializing in Hudson seal for the quality trade. Their experience throughout their American apprenticeship had been entirely with houses of the 'quality' type and they set out to cater to the better class of trade, with a product made in quality, workmanship, style and material especially for that trade. Their specialty has been Hudson seal since the inception of the business, and their reputation has been built upon that staple article.
>
> It was not long before the quality of Siotka Brothers' garments and their admirable methods of doing business, developed their trade to the point where larger premises became necessary. In 1922 they moved to West 28th Street, and there continued to grow in volume of business, in number of employees and in the regard of the fur trade. Another move has now become necessary and very soon [1926] their address will be 150 West 30th Street in the new building that is to house some of the finest manufacturing firms in the fur

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> trade.
>
> The House of Siotka Brothers will expand in their new quarters. To their staple line of Hudson seal, which, in the past, has comprised the bulk of their business, they will add garments of the finer grades of caraculs, and peltries of the type.

The success of the Siotka brothers may not have been entirely typical of most other Kastorian furriers. However, their career illustrates how the combination of the old world training as fur craftsmen with the experience as employees in the more advanced sections of the mainstream industry ["with houses of the 'quality' type"] enabled Kastorian furriers to achieve some mobility in the industry.

-Plate manufacture

Less is known about how and when Kastorians got into plate manufacture for coats in New York. Fur plates were being manufactured in New York at the turn of the twentieth century when the first Kastorians were getting into business. Then, plates were used to make linings for men's coats and to manufacture moderately priced Persian lamb garments. Later, as the demand for fur goods grew in the nineteen twenties and thirties, manufacturers looked for new ways to keep the price of the fur coat moderate or low. Plates provided a partial solution to the high cost of raw materials since assembling a coat from the paws, tails, gills, bellies, or waste cuttings was much cheaper than working on skins. It seems that Kastorians, and other Greek furriers, got into plate manufacture at about that time. In Chapter Four it was shown that Kastorians knew alot about

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plate manufacture since they had been making them for centuries to be used as linings for part of the traditional Ottoman costume. Certainly, the fur trimmings which so many of them made up were often cut from fur fabric which could have easily been a precursor to the full blown fur plate used to make coats. From interviews it is known that in the 1920s, Kastorians were making plates from squirrel bellies for linings to men's cloth coats and of racoon in a zig-zag pattern for coats.[116] 1930s Dun and Bradstreet reports on selected members of the United Fur Manufacturers Association show that more Greek furriers were producing plates for coats and trimmings in the mid and late 1930s. By the late 1940s many Kastorians specialized in plate manufacture both in the United States as well as in Kastoria from where they were imported.[117]

-Geographic mobility

Another way in which Kastorian furriers were able to 'extend the niche' for themselves was by moving to the newest areas in which the fur industry as a whole was migrating as garment manufacturing was expanding. During the First World War most Kastorian furriers had their shops on Sixth Avenue, below Fourteenth Street. But they gradually moved uptown so that in 1919 several were located on Sixth Avenue in the Twenties, closer to where the mainstream industry was situated.[118] By 1925, a booming period for fur manufacturing, of the identifiable 144 Greek-owned firms in the Directory of the Fur Trade, forty could

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still be found on lower Sixth Avenue and within the next five years, only a handful of shops listed in the trade directories remained removed from the mainstream fur market.[119]

Long distance geographic mobility also helped a number of, mainly Kastorian, Greek furriers to gain a foothold as entrepreneurs.[120] Most of them had emigrated from Kastoria as furriers, worked in the fur line in New York City for a period of time, and then decided to try other places in the United States where there might be an opportunity to start up a business in a less competitive environment. A few chose cities relatively close to New York: Newark, Buffalo, Albany, Philadelphia and Boston.[121] Others went west to large centers like Chicago, Detroit or Minneapolis.[122]
Among the first on record to go outside New York were the Basdeka twin brothers, Diamandi and Demetrios, whose father had been a furrier in Kastoria. They arrived in New York prior to 1910 when they started their first business there. By 1911 it is known that they had specialized in manufacturing linings in a shop at 43 West Twenty-eighth Street. They added wholesale fox sets in 1912 before leaving for Minneapolis. Their shop in New York appeared in the trade directories until 1913 to 1914 when at least one of the two were in Minneapolis. In the latter city they were wholesale manufacturers and retailers of furs at least until 1960.[123] Their firm, like many of those outside New York, enjoyed greater longevity than the average fur

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manufacturing firm in New York City, Greek or otherwise, because it was less subject to the ferocious competition found in the world's fur center. Moreover, while all of these furriers could and did fill custom orders for fur garments and accessories from their clients, a large part of their business was in retailing furs 'off the rack.' These came from wholesale manufacturers in New York or Chicago or were made up as stock items in these shops. Most importantly, they also provided ancillary services, such as remodelling, repairing, cleaning and storing fur garments, which accounted for a steady portion of their revenues.[124] Even in New York City, firms which provided the above noted ancillary services as an important part of their business tended to be more stable. The firm of Spiros M. Vogas, first started in 1921, operated on a very small basis renovating, repairing and remodelling fur coats for a private clientele. At times the owner, who worked mostly alone,[125] manufactured coats for clients or did contracting work for a few manufacturers. He also maintained a cold storage facility for his customers who were charged 1% of their garments' appraised value as a storage fee. Although his business was considered 'unprogressive' in the trade, Dun and Bradstreet noted that he had derived a living from it for many years.[126]

For many Kastorian furriers, geographic mobility was trans-Atlantic rather than trans-continental. It has been stated above that many of the earliest migrants viewed their

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work in the New York fur business as temporary. The lengths of their stays varied from a few months to a few years. Others made repeated trips to and from Kastoria; sometimes frequently, sometimes with intervals of years in between. They would go to New York to work as furriers, earn some cash, buy horda, return to Kastoria to work it either alone or with relatives, and eventually return again to New York. Some stayed in Kastoria while a relative in New York supplied them with horda and critical information on the latest styles and fashions so that the producer in Kastoria could manufacture and export a finished product to the United States. A list of 196 furriers in Kastoria which appeared in the 'foreign firms' section of the 1930 Directory of the Fur Trade, included the names of several furriers who had been to the United States at least once and who were, in 1930, in business in Kastoria. Some of them, like Nerantzis Aivazis, stayed for two years before repatriating; others, like Argyris Papdiskos, for some fifteen years.[127]

Other Greeks in the Fur Business

While Kastorians were the main group of Greeks in the fur business, they were not the only ones. First, their fellow West Macedonians, the Siatistans, some of whom had left the old country with skills as well, became furriers in New York although in fewer numbers than the Kastorians. Among the fur businessmen they did not exceed a few dozen.

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Until the 1920s those who got into business had been furriers in the old country. They followed their West Macedonian compatriots into the pieced goods section of the business, making the same sorts of products. While less is known about the patterns and processes of their entry into the business, their experiences resembled those of the Kastorians. Very few Siatistan immigrants had been furriers in the old country[128] and more chose other occupations and areas of the United States to settle in. For example, while "Omonia" in New York City was the only Kastorian regional society formed in the United States, the Siatistans had established their societies in several cities across the United States, the first one being in Lowell, Massachusetts at the beginning of the First World War and the one in New York in 1916.[129]

Among the first known Siatistans to start a fur business in New York were the Voziou brothers, James, George, Naoum and Constantine. Their history is much like that of the Vanta's or other Kastorian furriers. The first two were in New York by 1907 and started the firm with the others in 1910. James, and perhaps George, had worked on subway construction initially and had accumulated some capital which they eventually used to get into business. The other two brothers were out of the business by 1919, but the former two continued until the 1950s when James, the major figure in the management of the firm, died. Until the Second World War, about 70% of their business was in

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manufacturing trimmings sold to the coat and suit trade and the rest in 'popular priced' sealine coats sold to department stores. Their firm started as a strictly family affair but eventually employed labor as well. Although they were in business continuously until the 1950s, the business underwent reorganization three or four times.[130]

The other Greek entrepreneur-furriers in New York also came from the Ottoman Empire, especially from Asia Minor and the adjacent Aegean Islands.[131] How they became furriers is not as apparent as in the case of the Kastorians and Siatistans. A few of them, like the West Macedonians, had been furriers in the old country and had brought skills and familiarity with the trade as part of their "cultural baggage."[132] But most of them had acquired the skills by working in the industry in New York, either in Kastorian shops or in the mainstream industry. When business opportunities expanded after the First World War, these furriers combined their industry-specific skills with the business acumen they had developed in their old country to make a niche for themselves within the fur industry. Since they did not individually have the array of skills which the furriers trained in Kastoria had, the most commonly followed path into business was for two or more people to combine skills and savings. The typical combination was between a cutter and an operator, the two most critical skills in the fur factory. These two people, almost invariably male, could start out working alone, sharing the management of the

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business and the production tasks, and probably contracting with a large manufacturer or for a jobber. Once their business gained some ground and they accumulated some capital, they could go on to hire labor and thereby expand their operation. Those who could not do that remained small contractors either for larger Greek manufacturers or for the mainstream industry.[133] Two important areas of opportunity for them were as finishing contractors and as manufacturers of popular-priced coats and trimmings.

Their 'niche,' into business was the manufacture of a 'popular priced' line of trimmings or coats, either as contractors or as full-fledged manufacturing firms. Many of these Greek furriers had acquired skills and gained experience in working on pieced goods and fur trimmings for Kastorians and in the mainstream industry in the booming period between 1916 and the early 1920s. When demand for fur trimmings from the cloth coat and suit industry mushroomed, like the Kastorians, these non-Macedonian furriers saw an opportunity to become independent of their employers by contracting with the many cloth coat or suit manufacturers in New York. Others, more daring perhaps, ventured into the popular priced rabbit fur coats. Since the processed rabbit skins were more standardized and uniform than any nature could produce, some of the sorting and matching skills necessary to manufacture fur goods from natural pelts were not required for producing a rabbit coat. Less skill, though more speed, was needed for cutting and

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sewing rabbit skins since their value was a tiny fraction of the natural pelts they simulated. For example, a slip of the cutter's hand, which could turn a five hundred dollar sable pelt into five dollar's worth of furrier's waste, was not as costly when working on rabbit. The introduction of rabbit fur allowed many furriers who had previously been employed to go into business for themselves even though they were not the most skillful craftsmen. What they needed was the ablility to manage a business.

One person who seized upon this opportunity was Lazarus Pantelides.[134] Born in Asia Minor, he arrived in the United States in 1916 and was employed in fur shops until 1921. Then, using his savings he went into business. From 1922 to the 1925/1926 season, he was in partnership with another Greek furrier under the firm name of Christou and Pantelides. After that, he operated as a sole proprietor until he incorporated his business in 1932 as L.Pantelides, Inc., which lasted up to his death in 1950. Pantelides became somewhat of a legend among Greek American furriers in the 1930s and 1940s because of the success he had with his business and the wealth he had amassed. Some admired him while others, especially some of the longtime furriers, resented his entrepreneurial prowess. In the 1930s, he manufactured 'lapin' and 'sealine' coats in his factory where he employed about twenty to twenty-five workers but he also gave out work to several small contracting shops which "he had under his thumb."[135]

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Although Pantelides apparently was not a furrier prior to his arrival in the United States, he was a cleaver and adept businessman. Unlike many of the Kastorians who were fur craftsmen firstly and businessmen secondly, Pantelides concentrated on the management of his business. He was not involved directly in production; he had some of his fellow countrymen and women from Asia Minor in the factory and seemed to be able to rely on their abilities and loyalty. Besides, the products he made did not require as careful supervision as garments made from more valuable pelts. That was also why he could easily contract with small producers, also from Asia Minor, to make up a large part of his output. While this approach of working with coethnics was not unique to him, Kastorians also used it, he was able to retain the contractors' loyalty because he could consistently provide them with work during the otherwise lean years of the depression. Dun and Bradstreet credit reports show that during the first recovery period of the depression, 1934 to 1936, his sales more than tripled from $209,045 to $674,009. Very few other Greek firms, including Kastorian ones, even came close to reaching that volume of sales and the only one to match or surpass Pantelides was Vanta Brothers which had sales over one million dollars in 1932, a peak year, and between $558,000 and $700,000 over the next two or three years.[136]

Another important entry point into business for some non-Macedonian furriers was through finishing contracting.

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Finishing contractors provided services to fur coat manufacturers who wanted to avoid hiring finishers in their shops. The finisher's job entailed sewing in the linings, taping the edges of the garments, putting in pockets, attaching buttons or other fasteners, and finally, where requested, monograming the lining. What was unique about finishing is that it was the only task within the work process of coat manufacturing which could be given out to a contractor as 'section work.' The other major tasks required close personal supervision by a member of the firm, or a trusted foreman, since each garment produced was made from non-standardized raw materials and depended on highly skilled hand processes. The preparation and fitting of the lining could be more easily separated from the production of the shell since they were made from cloth and were more standardized products. It should be noted, however, that finishers had to be skilled needleworkers since their work was visible to the consumer and played an important role in selling the product.

Finishing was not an area which drew West Macedonians since it required tailoring or needlework skills rather than furriery skills. Many of the immigrants from Asia Minor and the adjacent Aegean Islands had the type of skills and even tailoring experience to do finishing contracting. Although they sometimes employed labor, most of these contracting shops were composed of families, with husbands, wives, daughters, or brothers and sisters working for

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themselves.[137] These contractors had most likely worked in fur coat manufacturing shops before they began providing their finishing services to manufacturers. That was where they got their experience in working with fur garments even if they had already had more generalized needlework skills. As fur coat manufacture increased in the immediate post First World War era, Greeks took advantage of the opportunity which arose from the fur manufacturers' desire to cut production costs by 'giving out' at least one part of the work process.

Coethnic Laborforce and Immigrant Business Opportunity

So far, the discussion has focused on how Kastorian immigrant furriers interfaced their premigration training and experience as furriers and their communal bonds with the availability of opportunities in fur manufacturing to get into business. It has been shown that, before the First World War, along with a few Siatistans, they were able to carve an initial niche for themselves in the wholesale manufacture of pieced goods, especially sets and neck pieces. Later, as they acquired additional skills and as the fur industry expanded, they extended the niche into trimmings manufacture for the cloth coat and suit trade and, some, moved into the manufacture of moderate and popular priced coats after the war. It has also been noted that in the 1920s Greeks from other parts of the Ottoman world, most without prior exposure to the trade, also got into the fur

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manufacturing business.

What is missing from this discussion is the role of a coethnic labor force in promoting opportunity in small business for ethnic entrepreneurs. So long as Kastorian furriers remained satisfied with very small contracting operations, a few related producer-owners in a workshop could service a very limited market for their goods. But for any Kastorian, or other Greek, furriers to make headway in fur manufacturing in New York, they had to employ labor.[138]

By the end of the first decade of this century, the division of labor in competitive fur shops, really small factories, had expanded. In pieced goods and trimmings shops, where Greek furriers concentrated initially, the work was divided among cutters who sorted, matched, cut and arranged the pieces; operators who sewed the arranged pieces together, and nailors who stretched and shaped the final product. If the pieced goods were sets of muffs and scarves or some other finished neck piece [as opposed to trimmings or plates which were secondary products used by others to manufacture a finished product], a finisher might be needed to attach fastners or lining to the goods. In coat manufacture, the work was divided among all crafts: cutters, operators, nailers, and finishers. A floorworker might have been hired to wet and stretch skins, assist the nailor with glazing or drumming, move goods around the factory during production, and other miscellaneous tasks.

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If the firm grew, a designer, salesperson, and office staff would be added. How many workers in each craft were hired depended on the type of fur and type of garment being made, the volume of production desired and on the management of the shop.[139]

For those Greek furriers who recognized that they needed to employ workers in order to grow, the mainstream labor market was not an option for them. First of all, they could not, or would not, meet the wage standards of the time, neither those prevailing before the organization of the fur workers union in 1912, nor after.[140] They would not be competitive. Secondly, the mainstream labor market was composed predominantly of East European Jewish workers. Greek employers could not even communicate a job offer let alone supervise them because of the language barrier. Moreover, many Jewish fur workers preferred to work for Jewish employers who, not only spoke their language, but understood and shared their religious and cultural beliefs and customs.[141]

The most obvious and likely place for Greek furriers to recruit and hire workers was from within their own community. With fellow Greeks as workers, the problem of communication was obviated, especially if the workers spoke the same regional dialect as the employer. The boss could speak the workers' language and convey instructions directly. Since he understood and shared their customs, he could modify the work routine to accommodate ethnic

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preferences, thereby reducing a source of friction. He could also use his knowledge of how the industry functioned, his contacts with a jobber, his, perhaps limited, knowledge of the local language, his mastery over and participation in any skilled processes in the production process, and his authority over the job to control his workforce. Finally, since the Greek firms were mainly contractors and sub-manufacturers who relied on jobbers to distribute their products, cheap labor was essential to their operation. By employing coethnics, the ethnic entrepreneur could draw on Greek American institutions, kinship or regional bonds, and the norms of a common culture to manage the workforce and to extract the maximum productivity at a minimum cost.[142]

Kastorian employers initially hired people from their hometown using the kinship and regional ethnic networks to recruit workers from abroad which have been described previously.[143] Once the numbers of both skilled and unskilled Kastorians and Siatistans in the community was large enough, the entrepreneurs could recruit from the neighborhoods. Nerantzi Aivazi recounted that he got at least one of his jobs in New York City when he met a fellow townsman and furrier on Sixth Avenue, near to where both men lived and where the latter had his shop. His friend, who knew that Aivazi was a skilled furrier, hired him on the spot.[144] The locally organized regional societies also provided a venue for recruiting workers. Although the stated purposes for organizing "Omonia," the Kastorian

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regional society, were to provide assistance to the homeland and to organize mutual aid, there is no doubt that it also served as a site for hiring labor since many Kastorians congregated there. They also hired acquaintances from the Chelsea neighborhood where they lived and in the restaurants where they ate.[145]

When employers from the mainstream industry recruited Kastorians workers to replace striking workers, the first initiative to hire from outside the West Macedonian community began. Retired furriers reported that their Kastorian compatriots went to the Greek-owned luncheonettes, which were numerous in New York City, where they recruited restaurant workers with promises to pay higher wages than they were getting and to teach them a craft. The workers responded affirmatively.[146]

As business opportunities expanded at the end of the First World War and as the division of labor in fur manufacturing shops became more specialized, employers turned to the Greek American community in New York as an important source of labor. Many of the workers hired into Greek shops at that point were from Asia Minor and the adjacent Aegean Islands and from the Peloponesus, many recently arrived in the United States.[147] By 1925, when the Greek workers were first organized into the fur workers' union, most of the workforce was non-Kastorian and non-Macedonian in background even though these still comprised a significant group among the furriers. Broader ethnic

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networks and communal institutions were used to recruit these workers. The Greek newspapers carried advertisements for jobs. 'Word of mouth' referrals were a very common means of recruiting workers and of securing jobs. Workers already employed in a shop introduced their compatriots to their employer when a job became available. As one retired worker put it, "in the old days, we went where we had friends."[148] After the war and the upsurge in the fur industry, Greek immigrants were often encouraged by people in the community to apply 'off the street' for jobs from Greek furriers. In the early 1920s, there was a general perception among the foreign born in New York that the fur industry offered the best employment in the garment trades, which themselves were major employers of immigrant labor anyway.[149] Workers would go to the Greek fur district on Sixth Avenue and solicit work from furriers. If they had someone who knew someone, all the better.[150]

Though the ethnic community continued to be a source of labor for both Greeks and the mainstream entrepreneurs, eventually another mode of recruiting workers evolved in the fur manufacturing industry. Early in the morning, workers would congregate on a streetcorner in the fur manufacturing district, designated by habit as 'the market,' to wait for the 'bosses' to come down from their high rise shops to hire a mink cutter or a rabbit operator or a finisher. Little is known of the origins of this 'custom' but it probably could be traced to the days when the industry was located on the

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lower east side of Manhattan and in Greenwich Village, adjacent to or within the furriers' ethnic communities. By the time the industry had migrated to its midtown location, the habit of recruiting one's workforce on the street was well established. In 1918, a fur worker protested to the editor of the Fur Worker that " this disgraceful 'auction' should have been abolished long ago. Fur workers who are discharged or out of work go to the street market and thus advertise themselves for hire by the employers... Many workers thus expose themselves to insult,...to [inclement weather]... while waiting on the corners of Twenty-seventh Street and Sixth Avenue...to be taken advantage of at will."[151] As an alternative, he suggested the creation of a labor bureau under the union's control. While the Greek shops were still located on the geographic periphery of the industry, this labor market probably was not used. However, once the Greek shops occupied space in the industry's loft buildings on Seventh Avenue and the side streets in the upper twenties, then the Greek workers also stood in the street corner hiring market hoping to be hired. Employers would place notices on sign boards on the street that jobs were available.[152] By then, the 1920s, more Greek workers were getting jobs in non-Greek shops as well.[153]

Once the workers were recruited, those who were unfamiliar with the craft had to be trained and others with skills had to be introduced to the new techniques and products. For the Kastorians, a "school" of sorts existed

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on West 8th Street, in two of the largest shops there, said together to employ up to 250 workers.[154] Kastorian youth lived there, as discussed previously, and immersed themselves in their work, for 14 or more hours per day. Successive waves of migrants were initiated in those shops.[155] It was common for workers to get their training from employers , on the job, in the small, contracting shops.[156] Furriers' union leader, John Vafiades had no knowledge either of fur manufacturing or of tailoring when he arrived in the United States. He acquired skills as a fur sewing machine operator in his cousin's fur shop. Within a short time he learned how to sew long strips of fur pieces together which were then united to make trimmings. At another job in a small two person shop, he acquired cutting skills by helping the owner sort, match and even cut pieces for trimmings.[157] Some were hired as floorworkers and learned by watching craftspersons perform their tasks as the floorworker moved around the shop, hoping to have a chance to get some direct instruction from a skilled worker. Others were hired as sewing machine operators or finishers "for nothing," that is they got the chance, during a trial period, to try out and experiment on some useless scraps or to assist a craftsperson but received no wages.[158] During this period, the "trainee" would be given various tasks by the owner.[159] Very often, such people had already worked in a different part of the garment industry as a sewing machine operator or had done hand needlework. In mid 1920s

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and 1930s it became commonplace to hire workers as 'learners' who would be trained as they worked. The union contract allowed for apprentices who could be paid entry level wages.

Most Greek immigrant women had learned needlework while they were growing up as part of their socialization while some people had been trained in tailoring.[160] It was not uncommon for women who had worked in other areas of the garment industry to be recruited to fur shops. In the fur shops, these women relied to a large extent on other Greek women, friends or strangers, to teach them how to work on fur coats. One woman who was highly skilled at embroidery, applique and other needlework had worked first at various jobs in garment factories. She was able to apply her skills with little difficulty to finishing coats.[161] Another got a job as a finisher through a friend. She had learned to crochet and embroider in her native Crete but was initially overwhelmed when the boss immediately gave her a coat to finish. Not only had she never worked in a garment shop or a factory, she was completely ignorant of what to do. Luckily, the same friend who had helped her secure the job, guided her through the steps and actually finished the first coat for her. Having gained some confidence from her friend's instructions and guidance, she was able to keep her job and remain in the industry for more than forty years.[162]

No effective formal structures were developed to

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recruit and train workers during this period. Employers and workers both relied on their ethnic communities and on the customs long existing in the fur industry to match workers with jobs. But the match between worker and employer was largely based on ethnic and even regional origins. As for training, workers relied on their coethnic friends to teach them the skills and to help them gain experience.

Conclusion

Given the economic environment of fur manufacturing at the beginning of this century, Greek immigrants from Kastoria chose fur manufacturing as a business opportunity, rather than some other equally competitive and accessible business, because of factors determined by their old country background. As they made a niche in that industry, the bonds of kinship and common ethnicity, and even more specifically of a common regional background gave them the moral and material support they needed to penetrate the fur industry and to establish a niche in it for themselves. Some of these socio-cultural structures they brought with them; others were the result of the adaptation of cultural baggage to the realities of the new society.

In the process of adapting their occupational background to the economic environment of the fur manufuring in New York, Greek American furriers, whether consciously or not, appealed to ethnicity to recruit, train and manage their labor force. As we shall see in the next chapter,

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during the early years, tensions, which normally arise between employers and workers, seemed to have been abated through appeals to ethnic solidarity or to the norms of kinship. Alternatively, they were considered to arise as issues of individual concern. In addition to that, Kastorians and other Greeks from Asiatic Turkey were familiar with the social structure and culture of craft and artisanal production in the old country which called for loyalty and deference to be shown to one's employer. Initially, the world of the Greek American fur contracting shops replicated that environment because of the largely pre-industrial mode of production in fur manufacturing at the time. Moreover, the Greek shops were isolated by language and culture if not by physical space from the mainstream industry. The fact that there were many small shops each employing a few people, further isolated workers from one another.

Indeed, union organizers in the mainstream industry considered "Greekland," as Morris Kaufman who was president of the International Fur Workers Union, called it, unorganizable. In their view, ethnic consensus among the Greek furriers overrode any class consideration on the part of the workers. The absence of any evidence in either written or oral sources of collective action on the part of workers in the Greek shops would seen to confirm the union's view.

If we were to concentrate only on the role which

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coethnic labor played in facilitating the establishment of ethnic enterprise, then the class relations and tensions which developed between workers and employers would be obscured. Common ethnicity would be seen to promote consensus between fur workers and their employers. In the early years of Greek participation in the industry, that would seem to have been true. However, by taking a look at the relations between employers and their coethnic workers over a longer period of time, one can see that tensions did emerge and express themselves in class rather than ethnic terms. It is that theme which is touched on in chapter seven.

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ENDNOTES

1.The number of Greek-owned firms did not increase in a linear progression as these figures would seem to imply. While there was overall growth during the years between 1896 and 1939, changes in economic conditions in the fur manufacturing industry and in the nation's economy affected how many Greek furriers would go into business versus being employed in the industry.

2.The data in Table 6.1 was derived from the Directory of the Fur Trade (hereafter, DFT) found in the New York Public Library. In most cases, the 'styles' or names of fur manufacturing firms were registered as the names of the principle owner or owners of the business. Drawing on her knowledge of Greek names, this author went through the lists of fur manufacturers in each of the available issues of the DFT and extracted those names which were clearly Greek. Other sources for Greek fur manufacturing firms were also available but not for such an extended period of time as the directory used here. Since The Fur News Directory (hereafter, FND) and the Greek American Business Guide and Directory which was edited and published by Seraphim Canoutas between 1907 and 1921 (hereafter, Greek Directory), contained names not included in the DFT it is clear that the latter was not all inclusive. However, making such comparisons or combining data from these sources is fraught with problems. A few of the most important are linked to the manner by which each of these directories collected their lists, what criteria they used, and when exactly they did their research. Since fur manufacturing firms had very short lifespans more often than not, data valid in one of these directories at one point in time might have been incorrect shortly afterwards.

3.Roger Waldinger, Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades (New York, 1986), pp. 40 - 41.

4.Drawing on the work of two sociologists, William Petersen ["A General Typology of Migration," American Sociological Review 23 (1958) pp. 256-66] and Everett S. Lee ["A Theory of Migration," Demography, 3, no.1 (1966) pp. 47-57], historian Josef Barton presented migration as proceeding "according to a regular sequence of stages." Those stages are: (1) the pioneer stage motivated largely by private aspirations; (2) the minor stream of migrants from one particular place to another; and (3) mass migration as villagers are carried forward by a pervasive social momentum. The third stage produces large urban settlements where immigrants form ethnic groups and institutions. Joseph Barton, Peasants and Strangers (Cambridge,

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Massachusetts, 1975) p. 6.

5.A furrier with a Greek sounding name was found listed in the 1899 Hatters and Furriers Trade Directory as a "wholesale fur manufacturer" in Boston. Whether "Alexis P. Caraman and Company" was in any way connected to the Kastorians is unknown and doubtful. His surname has not been found in Kastorian records and there is no mention of him in any secondary sources either. It is also possible that he belonged to one of the other Christian ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire since his first name is Christian but the surname is of Turkish derivation. Christians from various ethnic groups had such names which usually took suffixes in the language of the ethnic group.

6.In their seminal essay on chain migrations among Italians, John MacDonald and Leatrice MacDonald discovered the "genesis of chains" among Italians in only two cases. See John S. MacDonald and Leatrice D. MacDonald, "Chain Migration, Ethnic Neighborhood Formation, and Social Networks," Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly, 42 (1964), pp. 82-97. This author found that local histories written in articles for local newspapers, in various books and journals or papers in local libraries as well as oral history or interviews can help uncover the genesis of chains. In 1917, Andreas Andreades' study of emigration from Greece documented the antecedents of the emigration to the United States and, in some cases, included the names and some details about the genetors of the emigration across the Atlantic. Collection of this data was facilitated for Andreades because his researchers, university economics students, studied emigration from their home regions and towns. Andreas Andreades, ed., E Ellenike Metanasteusis [Greek Emigration] Athens, 1917).

7.What language the letter was written in is not stated. It certainly was not in Greek, but could have been in German. Whether or not Skaperdas actually spoke or read German is not known. Merchants who travelled frequently to Central Europe did know some German. It was possible that he did or that he could have found someone else in the town whom he trusted to read it for him.

8.This information was not entirely accurate. The hat industry used furriers waste to make fur felt hats. In 1883 the Parker and Tilton Hat and Fur Exhibit, in an article on "Head Coverings for Men," listed eigth types of fur which were used to make felt hats: beaver, nutria, coney [rabbit], hare, muskrat, mink, squirret and seal. As more cheap labor became available in the 1880's and 1890's, more use was made of the cuttings to produce pieced goods and trimmings.

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9.For discussion of the role of the fur merchants like Papamoskho in the Kastorian fur industry, see Chapter Four. From an interview with Zacharias Skaperdas, Konstantine's son, conducted by Philip Bakalis and published in "E Kastoriani sten Amerike" [Kastorians in America] Kastoria 7 March 1937:1. [Philip Bakalis, a furrier and part-time journalist, arrived in New York in 1910 where he entered and worked in the fur industry over the course of the next forty plus years. He wrote a series of articles on the Kastorian community in New York which were published in Kastoria between March and June 1937.]

10.Bakalis, Ibid.

11.Theodoro Giannakouli, "I Ellenoamerikani ston Klado tis Gounarikes" [Greek Americans in the Furriery Branch] Argonautes 2 (1960-1962): 250. Neither name was found in the New York City section of the DFT or in the listings of Greek furriers in the Greek Directory. However, Perpessa and Mustapha were partners in the fur trade in Leipzig and were listed together there in the foreign firms section of the DFT between 1909 and 1920. According to George D. Vlassis, writing in The Greeks in Canada (Ottowa, 1942), p.35, Perpessa seems to have remained in Montreal for some time and to have made other visits there later on.

12.Giannakouli, p. 250. Naoum is reported to have brought the first sewing machine to Kastoria in 1894. See Chapter Four. If Spyro accompanied his brother back to Kastoria, he was back in New York in 1903 with a shop at 33 Bond Street and again from 1910 to 1913/1914 at which point he, too, went to Boston where he ran a fur business for many years. In 1919, Naoum reappeared in New York as a trimmings manufacturer at 152 Sixth Avenue where he remained until the onset of the depression when he moved uptown to 468 Sixth Avenue. DFT 1903, 1910 to 1930 and New York State, Directory of Manufacturers, 1927.

13.Phillip Bakalis, 14 March 1937, p.1.

14.Giannakouli, p. 250. Aside from the people named in the text, he mentions noone from Kastoria who had been in the United States prior to 1902. None of the retired Kastorian furriers interviewed for this project could name any other people either.

15.Andreades, p. 351; Ioannis Apostolou, Istoria tes Siatistes [History of Siatista] (Athens, 1929), p. 46; Miltiades Strakali, Demos Siatistis: 50 Ete Eleutherias [The Municipality of Siatista: 50 Years of Freedom] (n.p., 1962); and Siatisteon Mneme: Leukoma Sellogou Siatisteon Thessalonikes Gia ta Exenta Hronia tes Draseos tou [Siatistan Remembrance: Album of the Society of Siatistans

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in Thessaloniki for Sixty Years of Activity] (Thessaloniki, 1972), p. G146-G150. Retired furrier Elefterios Tsioutsious reported that his father, Naoumis Tsioutsious, a livestock breeder, made three trips to work in the United States, in 1902, 1908 and 1916, staying from a few to six years each time. He never worked as a furrier there nor was he aware of opportunities for West Macedonians in the industry. Instead he and 40 other townsmen worked on the railroads during each trip. He had gone abroad to accumulate some 'capital' from his wages for his children. Interview with Elefterios Tsioutsious in Siatista and Kastoria, October 1979.

16.See Chapter Four.

17.Andreades, p. 321-58; Chapter Five.

18.Another Kastorian furrier in New York City who had fought in the Macedonian Struggle and left because of it was Lazarus Gougoulitsa. Interviews with the decendents of the former and with Achilles Alvanos in September, 1979. Although the latter was quite elderly at the time of the interview (approximately 92 years old), he was so proud of his participation in the Macedonian Struggle that he insisted on showing this researcher the rifle he used in the fighting and the photograph (which appears in the text) of himself in the 'uniform' of the Greek bands.

19.Bakalis, 14 March 1937: 1.

20.See Chapter Three.

21.Among those who left after 1908 were Kastorians who neither went to New York nor ever worked in fur. One example was Christos Tsoukas, not a furrier, who worked in the midwest as a steel and a construction worker between 1911 and 1921. He went there with two unnamed townsmen "to improve his economic condition." Interview with his son, Apostolos Tsoukas in Kastoria, October 1979.

22.One of the furriers in New York, Argyris Papadisko, wrote a number of poems in memory of some of his fellow countrymen who returned to fight in the Balkan Wars. Those poems also expressed the zeal and patriotism with which those young men went off to fight. See Argyris Papadisko, Kastoriana - Dokimia [About Kastoria - a trial] ([Greece?], 1927), pp. 55-64; Saloutos, pp 108 - 117.

23.A non-Kastorian Greek veteran of the campaign at Bizani, which had taken place in 1912, said that he had gone to the Balkans with the volunteers organized by the Panhellenic League. He reported that many other Greeks had accompanied him and confirmed that most of those who were not killed or

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severly wounded returned to the United States as soon as the fighting was over, just as he did. This interview was conducted 'casually' by this author in a New York City park where she happened to encounter this retired gentleman on a park bench during the summer of 1984. Two Kastorian furriers known to have left the United States to fight and then to have returned to resume their fur businesses in New York were Cosmas Milonas [cited in Malafouris, p. 467] and Dimitri Papakonstantinos [eulogized in a poem by Papadiskos, pp. 63-4]. The latter subsequently died in New York due to wounds he suffered in the war.

24.Interviews in Kastoria with Christy Adams (July - August 1977 and September 1979); Nerantzi Aivazis (September 1979); Mihali Shiomtas (July 1977); Vasili Shioukas (September 1979); and Apostolos Tsoukas (September 1979).

25.Interviews with Christy Adams; Nerantzi Aivazis; and Vasili Dai (Kastoria, July 1977.

26.Several young Kastorians who had experience in the trade from the old country joined relatives in Paris. Mihali Shiomtas was one of them who went there in 1917 to work with his uncle. He had learned about furs in his father's and neighbor's workshops but gained more experience and skill in his uncle's in Paris where he learned to cut furs and to operate a machine. After a few years there, he decided that better prospects awaited him in New York where he arrived in early 1920. Interview with Mihali Shiomtas.

27.Interview with Spyros Liakos, Fort Lee, New Jersey, June 1977. Other retired furriers from Kastoria and Siatista confirmed Liakos' observation: interviews with Christy Adams, Vasili Dai, and Vasili Shioukas from Kastoria and with John Guibas from Siatista (Siatista, August 1977).

28."Chain migration can be defined as that movement in which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation and have initial accommodation and employment arranged by means of primary social relationships with previous migrants..." MacDonald and MacDonald, p. 82.

29.References to gifts and money sent home to relatives were reported in several of the interviews conducted with retired Kastorian furriers who had first gone to the United States as early as 1907. Vasili Shioukas related how he had sent some sort of a 'check,' sold to him by a fellow countryman, which turned out to be worthless when it reached the old country. Interview with Vasili Shioukas. In his letters sent from New York to his brothers and sister in Kastoria, Lazarus Gougoulitsa referred frequently to money he had sent them to buy a house and to gifts he had sent to his sister. Four letters of Lazarus Gougoulitsa written from New York

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City to his siblings in Kastoria between 1908 and 1910, held by Gougoulitsa family in Kastoria, Greece.

30.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis.

31.Ibid.

32."Kastengari" was the Greek immigrant's version of Castle Garden where all immigrants disembarked at the southern tip of Manhattan and were screened until Ellis Island opened in 1892. Kastorians, like all immigrants, dreaded the inspections and frequent delays at Ellis Island. One of them even composed a satiric song about a townsman who was held there for a considerable time for some unstated reason. Interview with Christy Adams.

33.Reported in interview with Vasili Shioukas. Although initially Yankou was a furrier (businessman, worker, and union man), he eventually opened a travel agency on Fourteenth Street in New York City. This occupation was completely compatible with his role in 'shepherding' newcomers into the fur industry.

34.Thomas Burgess, Greeks in America (Boston, 1913; reprint New York, 1970), pp. 45-51.

35.Reported to Philip Bakalis in an interview with the club's first president Georgios Georgiades. Kastoria, 13 June 1937: 1.

36."Omonia," Society of Kastorians in New York celebrated the 80th year of its existence in 1990. It still has an office on Eighth Avenue in New York City and a clubhouse in Astoria. Among its many community and social functions, it provides a health insurance plan for its members, most of whom are from Kastoria and furriers.

37.Barton, pp. 48-63; MacDonald and MacDonald. Interviews with Christy Adams; Nerantzi Aivazis; Peter Aivais (New York City, November 1976); and Vasili Dai. Also see Bakalis, 21 March 1937: 1; and Malafouris, p. 267.

38.Greeks name their children for saints of the Greek Orthodox Church. On the celebration of the name day for the saint, everyone with that name also celebrates and is visited by members of the community. The description of these early Kastorian settlements in New York City is taken from the series of articles written by Philip Bakalis which appeared in the newspaper Kastoria in March 1937.

39.Giannakouli, p. 251; Malafouris, p. 267.

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40.On the importance of immigrant skills to the fur industry, see Harold A. Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada. Toronto, 1927, p. 123-25. On the competitiveness of fur manufacturing, see Victor R. Fuchs, The Economics of the Fur Industry (New York, 1957), pp. 37 - 61. For the distinction between the technical and commercial aspects of garment manufacturing, see Jesse Pope, The Clothing Industry in New York (Columbia, Mo., 1905), pp. 61 - 62. Also, see Chapter Five.

41.See Chapter One for discussion of the significance of premigration entrepreneurial and technical skills to immigrant enterprise. While Waldinger argues that a economic environment conducive to immigrant enterprise is the most critical factor to the success of ethnic business, he acknowledges that cultural factors are important as well. Waldinger, pp. 14-15.

42.Among the UFMA records on various Kastorian firms were Dun and Bradstreet credit reports which noted that the firm's principals had learned the trade in the old country. A list of Kastorian furriers who had been in business in the United States [compiled from DFT and Greek Directory] was shown to two retired furriers in Kastoria, also one-time emigrants to New York City, Christy Adams and John Goulioouris, who were able to confirm that many of them had acquired skills prior to migration or that they came from families which had been in the trade for years. Among those names were: Aivazis Brothers, Bendo Brothers, Day [Dai] Brothers, Dimon Brothers, Djimas Brothers, Doykos, Goulioouris, Halatsi, Litska, Manthos, Mylonas Brothers, Nantchou, Papanaoum, Samaras, Skaperdas, Alexis Toskos, Vanta Brothers, Yankou Brothers, and others. Beginning in 1905, the Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Immigration listed the category "furriers and fur workers" as one of the "skilled" occupations in the tables on "immigrant aliens admitted ... by occupations and races or peoples." While the overwhelming majority of immigrant "furriers and fur workers" counted in those Reports between 1905 and 1916, were Jewish (4937 of a total of 6693, or 73.8%), there were 310 immigrating Greeks recorded with furriers skills. The only other ethnic group with a larger number of immigrant furriers were the Germans, with 330 skilled immigrants for that same period.

43.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis. Other immigrant informants came from families where their parents and immediate relatives held other occupations in Kastoria. They, however, were apprenticed to local furriers at a young age and thereby acquired skills prior to emigrating. Interviews in Kastoria with Vasili Dai; Mihali Shiomtas; and Vasili Shioukas.

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44.Interview with Mihali Shiomtas. In the "Book of Persons Living Abroad" compiled by the municipality of Kastoria, many Kastorian emigrants were noted to have been in "Paris." Some of these were subsequently identified by another Kastorian-American furrier, retired and living in the city, as having worked in the fur industry in New York.

45.See Chapter Three.

46.See Chapter Four.

47.Retired furrier Apostolos Tsoukas pointed out that furriers trained in Kastoria learned all the major processes in fur manufacturing, sorting, matching, cutting, shaping or nailing, and sewing. Interview in Kastoria, September 1979. Since the industry in Kastoria did not make coats until after the Second World War, no one learned finishing skills. In the United States, furriers usually specialized in one process and often in a grade of fur, that is, 'fancy' furs (valuable), moderate priced or cheap goods. It was possible to acquire other skills in U.S. shops but not usual for most workers. Those most likely to learn another craft were operators who worked closely with cutters and had the opportunity through observation and cooperation to learn cutting.

48.See Chapters Four and Five.

49.It would be interesting to see which, if any, of the contracting and production arrangements described by Jesse Pope in his classic The Clothing Industry in New York (Columbia, Mo., 1905) were 'imports' which came to the United States with the immigration of East European Jews in the 1880's and 1890's.

50.See Chapter Four.

51.See DFT 1896 to 1919 and FND 1911 to 1922.

52.John Vafiades said that he became so adept at his job as an operator sewing pieced goods that his employer would ask him for help in sorting, cutting and arranging the fur pieces. Interview with Vafiades.

53.For a description of the old world work habits see Chapter Four.

54.See chapter four.

55.Interviews with Christy Adams, Nerantzi Aivazi, Vasili Dai, Vasili Shiokas, Mihali Shiomtas, and Menelaos Toskos.

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56.Letters of Lazaros Gougoulitsa to his siblings in Kastoria, 21 July 1908 to 14 January 1910. Held by Gougoulitsa family in Kastoria, Greece.

57.Most of the information in this section comes from interviews with retired Kastorian furriers conducted in Greece and New York during July and August, 1977 and September and October, 1979.

58.It is not known when he opened that branch. It could have been some years before mention of it was made in the DFT since he had first travelled there with Perpessa and Mustafa when he initially arrived in North America.

59.DFT, vol. 20, 1896 - 97 and vol. 25, 1901 - 1902. Another possibly Greek name appeared in the DFT in 1901 - 1902. It was that of W. Mellis, a manufacturer of trimmings at 65 Prince Street. He was probably also a Kastorian furrier since the name Mellis, or a variation of it as Melia, was later known to be that of a Kastorian furrier family in New York. However, there is no other record to corroborate that a W. Mellis was a Greek furrier at this early date.

60.Bakalis, 14 March 1937: 1.

61.The other Kastorian family of dealers were the Doykos Brothers who were "importers of furs and skins," probably from West Macedonia including Kastoria. Their name first appeared in the DFT listing for New York City in 1904. However, unlike the Dimon brothers who persisted in the directories until the 1930s, the Doykos' name did not appear in any variation for several years during the First World War and until 1925.

62.The Dimon Brothers were the only large Greek-owned fur merchant firm in New York for most of the period under study. Zissi Brothers of Dayton, Ohio were another Kastorian family firm dealing in furs and skins. Malafouris, p. 269.

63.DFT, 1911 to 1912 and 1912 to 1913.

64.Between 1905 and 1916, upon admission to the United States, 6,693 immigrants reported their occupations as 'furriers and fur workers," that is, they entered the country with skills in furriery. Of this number 310 said they were Greek and 4,937 were Jews. Most of these also gave their destination in the United States as New York State. United States. Immigration and Naturalization Bureau, Annual Report of the Commission-General of Immigration, "Immigrant Aliens Admitted ... by Occupations and Races or Peoples," 1905-1916.

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65.Bakalis, 21 March 1937, p.1. Other nonGreek immigrant furriers also saved from their earnings in order to accumulate the small capital needed to get into business. See the "Business Biographies of Fur Manufacturers" in the Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926, pp. 149 -155 and 183 - 225.

66.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazis. One source said that Kastorian furriers in New York City started using electrified sewing machines in 1917. Before that, they used the foot-powered ones which were common in the industry prior to the First World War. Giannakouli, p. 10.

67.Retired furrier Vasili Shioukas who had been in the United States between 1908 and 1933 reported that the Kastorians sold plates and pieced goods to manufacturers through at least two agents. He recalled an Epirot Greek named Konstantinos Vekios and a Kastorian, Spyros Shioukas. Both had never been furriers by trade (Shioukas had been a fisherman in Kastoria) but "they knew a little English to communicate." Interview with Vasili Shioukas.

68.Nerantzi Aivazi explained in his interview that when he was in the New York with his older brother Thoma between 1912 and 1914, his brother who worked in a fur manufacturing factory would take the pieced goods which Nerantzi had made up at home to sell in the wholesale fur market. They lived on Sixth Avenue between Twelfth and Thirteenth streets. In those days, the fur market was located in Greenwich Village near to other garment trades. Many manufacturers shops were already on Sixth Avenue and moving uptown.

69.For descriptions of early twentieth century fur fashions which used ornamental and contrasting fur trimmings, see Ruth Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Furs: The History of Furred Costume of the World from the Earliest times to the Present (New York, 1951) and Roslyn Latto, "Alice in Fashionland: A History of Fur Fashions During the Past 75 Years," AMERICAN FURRIER combined with SOL VOGEL, July 1948, pp.10 - 11, 19, 48 - 50, 52, 54, 60.

70.DFT, 1901 to 1902.

71.DFT, 1912 to 1913, p.299.

72.DFT, 1910 to 1911 and 1914 to 1915.

73.Lazarus Gougoulitsa wrote his letters to his family on the business stationary of the firms he worked for between 1908 and 1910. Like Pavlides Brothers, the others had letterheads, logos and blurbs describing their specialties. Letters held by Gougoulitsa family in Kastoria, Greece.

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74.In Ethnic Enterprise in America: Business and Welfare Among Chinese, Japanese, and Blacks (Berkeley, 1972), Ivan Light focused on the roles of 'rotating credit associations,' trade guilds, and regional or clan organizations in promoting entry into business for the Chinese and Japanese. On the use of labor bureaus by Jews, see Moses Rischin, The Promised City (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), p.58.

75.See Chapter Three.

76.See section above, "A Supportive Network."

77.A list of names of Greek furriers located in the New York State Manuscript Census for 1915 at the addresses mentioned in the text were shown to Kastorian furriers Christy Adams, Yannis Goulioúris, Andreas Manthos and Mihali Shiomtas. These men identified most of the names as Kastorian. Andreas Manthos even came across his father and two elder brothers who had been in the United States when he was a small child. These names, and some of those which were unidentified, were compared against names in the writer's photocopy of the "Register of Kastorians Living Abroad." Many names matched successfully. Then, names and addresses of individual Kastorians found in the census were matched with names and addresses of fur manufacturing firms in the Greek Directory, DFT, and FND.

78.Aside from West 8th Street, a common address at numbers like 27, 29, 35, 39, 41, 43 and 58 for various Kastorian firms from 1907 to at least 1922, some other addresses used by different firms up to 1930 were along Sixth Avenue from the 160's to 180's. Numbers 162, 163, 168, 174, 175, 180, 181, 183 and 186, all near 11th and 12th Streets, were very common from about 1910 to the mid 1920s among succesive Kastorian fur manufacturers. Whether some Kastorians owned the buildings or not is unknown. DFT and FND.

79.Edna Bonacich and John Modell considered 'partnership' among ethnic businessmen to be "the simplest form of cooperation to develop capital..." in their study of Japanese American small business. Edna Bonacich and John Modell, The Economic Basis of Ethnic Solidarity: A Study of Japanese Americans (Berkeley, 1981), p. 48. On the Chinese preference for partnership, see Light, pp. 18 and 93.

80.In his work on business enterprise among the Chinese, Japanese and African Americans, Ivan Light found that "the Chinese had brought with them ... their culturally preferred style of economic organization ... a penchant for partnerships rather than sole entrepreneurships." He then showed how these partnerships among relatives or clan "cousins" promoted consumer loyalty among other clan members

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and reduced "employer - employee tensions." Light, pp. 18 and 93.

81.While partnerships could be found among Greek American enterprises in other business fields in New York and other cities of the United States, they were nowhere as prevelant a form of business organization as they were in fur. See: Greek Directory for 1907, 1909, 1910, 1912, 1915 and 1921; C.D. Chapralis, editor, The Greek-Americans and the Greek-Canadians: Information and Service Directory (Chicago, 1948); and The Greek Blue Book: a Purchasing Guide for 50,000 Greek-American Business Establishments (New York, 1939).

82.A Dun and Bradstreet credit report on Peter Zias in the files of the UFMA reported that he had originally been employed in the fur line as a cutter. In 1933, with his "accumulated life savings," at the age of twenty-five he entered business as a partner in the firm of Zias and Toarteil, manufacturing furs at 370 7th Avenue in New York City. UFMA Records.

83.Interviews with Christy Adams; and John Vafiades (Prague, Czechoslovakia, September 1979).

84.See summary of the firm 'Vanta Brothers' below.

85.The regional origins of the principal members of the partnerships were established by 'linking records' from Kastorian sources (the 'Register of Kastorians Living Abroad' and the 1920 Manuscript Census of Kastoria), and from the Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70 ('Registration Book' which provides birthplace for members) with the lists dervived from the trade and business directories for the fur industry.

86.DFT and FND.

87.Joint interview with Christy Adams and Nerantzi Aivazis.

88.Constitution of "Omonia," Society of Kastorians and manuscript summary of highlights of the minutes of the Society from its founding on 7 August 1910 to 1 August 1960, prepared on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Society by Andreas Manthos. Interview with Vasili Shioukas who was present when "Omonia" was founded.

89.In this writer's hometown, Biddeford, Maine, one Pericles Economos, from Ottoman northern Epirus (currently part of Albania), served all these functions from his ethnic grocery store on 'Main Street.' His role in the community was confirmed in interviews with him in Biddeford in 1979 and with the writer's father, also an Ottoman Greek from Asia

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Minor, Nicholas Karvonides, in August, 1976. Helen Zeese Papanikolas in Toil and Rage in a New Land: The Greek Immigrants of Utah (Salt Lake City, 1974) and her son, Zeese Papanicholas in Buried Unsung: Louis Tikas and the Ludlow Massacre (Salt Lake City, 1982) also write about them among Ottoman Greeks from Crete who emigrated to the inter-mountain west of the United States.

90.See text and note on Chris Yankou above. One interviewee confirmed that Yankou had been involved in expediting immigrant furriers' financial affairs and remittances to Kastoria. Interview with Vasili Shioukas.

91.The two firms were that of John Doykos and the Pappatina Brothers, both located on West Eighth Street in New York. See Giannakouli, p. 251.

92."Furs," Fortune Magazine, January 1936: 73 & 121; Fuchs, pp. 25-28.

93.After 1910, there were only two firms still dealing in raw materials. One was an importer of 'furs and skins,' Doykos Brothers; the other, both an importer and exporter of 'furs and skins,' Dimon Brothers and Company. DFT, 1910 - 1930.

94.Interview with Andreas Manthos, furrier and secretary of "Omonia," Society of Kastorians in New York, June 1977.

95.Greek immigrants in the United States showed a very pronouced proclivity to enter small business. While several monographs have focused on the Greek American entrepreur, one of the earliest indications of the formation of a petty bourgeois class of Greek immigrants is the publication of Seraphim Canoutas' Greek American Guide and Business Directory beginning as early as 1907. While it covered a good part of the United States, though not all of it. In 1910, for New York City alone, it contained six and one-half pages with approximately 125 listings per page for about 800 different enterprises, mainly 'boot black parlors,' 'confectioners,' 'florists,' 'retail fruit dealers,' and 'restaurants and lunch rooms.' Much later on, a directory with 50,000 listings for Greek American businesses was published for the whole of the United States: The Greek Blue Book: a Purchasing Guide for 50,000 Greek-American Business Establishments (New York, 1939).

96.Fur Worker, December 1925

97.See Foner; and Fortune Magazine, p. 120. It is interesting that many Greek furriers from some of the marginal businesses, and even some from the once stabler ones, joined the fur workers union in the 1950's and later

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in order to apply for the retirement benefits which the union gained for workers in the post war era. 'Application forms' for benefits in the records of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Furriers' Joint Council, New York City.

98."...the majority of the members [of the United Fur Manufacturers Association] work in trimmings and pieced furs..." "Minutes" of the Conference Committee of the Board of Directors of the United Fur Manufacturers Association, 19 April 1926, New York City. UFMA Records.

99.The jobber was a firm called Gluck and Raphel. Up to the mid 1980's, Raphel was located on West 29th Street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues in New York City. Interviews with Christy Adams and Mihali Shiomtas.

100.Wilcox, pp. 158 - 59.

101.Harry Mayer, "The History of Fur," in Associated Fur Manufactures, Inc., "Commemorative Catalog of the International Fur Exposition" held at Madison Square Garden, New York City, 7-9 May 1923, p. 31. Mayer complained that "the cloth coat industry is today [1923] using furs in great quantities for trimming purposes. When it is in the market for any single article its powers of absorption have proved so great as to make it impossible for the manufacturing furrier to 'get in on' that particular variety ... [and] ... cloak houses have not been satisfied to purchse made up trimmings from fur firms, but have gone far afield to cut up pelts themselves ..." But they still needed furriers to make them up into usuable trimmings. Those were contracted out.

102.The wholesale value of all fur products for New York State for 1927 was $244,941,302 of which fur trimmings and neck pieces accounted for $94,088,345 or 38.4% of the total. In 1929, the share of the wholesale value of fur products represented by trimmings and neck pieces was even greater. United States Census of Manufactures "Industry Reports," 1927 and 1929. See also Chapter Five, Table 5.7.

103.New York State, Directory of Manufacturers, volume 1 (Albany, 1927), pp. 1738 - 1748 and 1754 - 1765. This source was used in place of the DFT because the 1927 volume of the latter was not available in the collection at the New York Public Library.

104.Actually, the 1934 sales figures for Vanta Brothers were an improvement over those for the years ended 31 December 1932 and 1933. The former were $558,000 and $640,000 respectively. Dun and Bradstreet credit reports for Vanta Brothers, UFMA Records.

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105.The 'let out' technique described in Chapter Five allowed fur designers to bring slimming elegance and grace to their designs of what had been bulky, blockish fur coats.

106.Interview with Vasili Dai.

107.Ibid. A Dun and Bradstreet credit report on the firm done for 1937, stated that "the business first started in 1911 as a partnership between Gus [Constantine] and Theoharis Day [Americanization of Dai] who originally came from Greece and were employed. During September 1916 they were joined by Elias and Basil [Vasili] to form Day Bros., Inc. with authorized capital of $1000..." Credit report in UFMA Records. The DFT listed "Dai Brothers" as engaged in "furs" at 92 First Avenue as of 1913 to 1914.

108.Ibid.

109.Interviews with Menelaos Toskos and Christy Adams.

110.Both Greek and Jewish furriers differentiated between the shops owned by their own ethnic group and that of the other. Just as Greeks talked about "Jewish shops," Jewish employers and workers talked about "Greek shops." The differences were actually more than what the ethnic labelling implied. The "Jewish shops" were the mainstream businesses in the industry and the principles in the larger and more successful ones held leadership positions in the business, financial and associational institutions of the industry. However, Jewish shops were not homogeneous. Those which held power in the trade were the large manufacturers and jobbers or the large skin dealers. Just as the small Greek entrepreneurs carved a niche for themselves in some specialty in the trade or as contractors for the manufacturer/jobbers, many Jewish furriers did the same. For the Greeks, the term "Jewish shops" meant the larger and more progressive factories which employed a greater division of labor, several workers, more machines, and produced a more up-to-date product. By the time of the First World War when the old German and Anglo-Saxon furriers had all but disappeared from the trade, it was true that such enterprises were Jewish owned.

111.Foner, pp. 41-50.

112.DFT, 1911 - 1912, p. 301.

113.Ibid, 1912 - 1913, p. 269.

114.Ibid, 1914 - 1915 and 1921.

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115.Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926 (New York, 1926) pp.219 - 21.

116.Interview with retired fur worker Bill Callas, New York City, June, 1977.

117.UFMA Records. Greek fur workers employed in plate manufacturing shops were organized into the Greek fur workers union between mid 1933 and 1934. The nineteen shops so organized were mostly Kastorian owned or partnerships between Kastorians and Jewish furriers. "Registration Book of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York" in archives of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

118.In June 1928, Kastoria, the main newspaper in the city in Greece with that name, reported that a movement 'uptown' to the main fur district had been going on and mentioned some of the furriers who had relocated there. Kastoria, 1 June 1928: 2.

119.As late as 1943, 'family enterprises,' those employing no labor but manufacturing as contractors with members of the family, were estimated by the Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70, to be "on Sixth Avenue going all the way down to Chatham Square or Bleecker Street..." See testimony of John Vafiades, manager of Local 70 1936 t0 1948, "Official Report of Proceedings Before the National Labor Relations Board in the Matter of United Fur Manufacturers Association, Inc.," Case No. II-R-3619, New York, New York, 23 April 1943, p. 201.

120.Among the non-Kastorian Greek furriers to establish a highly successful fur business outside New York City was George N. Zoros who was born in Kalabaka, Thessaly in Greece. Little is known about his background, how he got into the business or about his business experience except that he came to the U.S.A. as a young man and was reputed to have been in the fur business in Chicago as early as 1915. His name does not appear among any of the trade directories for New York nor in any of the records of the fur workers union. His business was located in Chicago from at least 1923 to 1948. DFT, 1923 - 1924 to 1930 and Chapralis, pp. 170 and 327.

121.Some of those firms were: Demetrios Tsonas by 1916 and Macedonia Fur Company by 1919 in Newark; George Alexander in Buffalo; Reliable Fur Shop in Schenectedy, New York run by Nicholas Skaperdas and Zacharias Djimas to 1924 when each opened shops in Amsterdam and Utica, New York (Skaperdas) and in Albany (Djimas); Spyros Samaras (one of the pioneer immigrant furriers) in Boston by 1914; A. George Doykos by the 1920's in Lawrence; and D.A. Yankou in Philadelphia by 1916. DFT, 1914 to 1930 and UFMA Records.

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122.Kastorian shops in the midwest included: Zissi Brothers in Detroit, Michigan from 1915; Leakas Furriers, Inc. from at least 1919 in Dayton, Ohio where John T. and James T. worked initially for another furrier before opening their shop [Peter T. Leakas came to the United States in the early thirties to work for his elder brothers before moving to Columbus, Ohio to open his own business in 1943, Leakas Quality Furriers, Inc.]; and Anastas C. Delianos went to Springfield, Ohio in 1919 and opened his business in 1920; Balalas and Company in Chicago at least by 1921; Kosmas P. Milonas by 1922 and Andrew G. Margaritis during the 1920's in Chicago. DTF, 1914 to 1930; UFMA Records; Malafouris, p. 467; and Chapralis, p. 299.

123.DFT, 1911 - 1912 to 1913 - 1914, 1920 to 1930; FND, 1911, 1912. Dun and Bradstreet Credit reports in the UFMA Records.

124.Djimas Brothers, Incorporated of Albany, New York manufactured fur coats, capes and chokers from raw skins which were purchased both from brokers [fur merchants] and from trappers in upstate New York. Although sales of new goods made up a greater part of volume, the remodelling, repair and storage of furs was a most profitable and important part of their business. Dun and Bradstreet reports from 1932 to 1947, UFMA Records.

125.In May, 1931, his shop was organized by Local 70, the Greek Fur Workers' Union. He employed one worker, a finisher named Anna Rovere, who was initiated into the local on 25 May 1931. Registration Book of Local 70, Greek Fur Workers' Union, in the Records of the Furriers' Joint Council of New York City.

126.This firm was in business until the late 1950's. UFMA Records.

127.Interviews with Nerantzi Aivazi and Andreas Manthos. According to the New York State Manuscript Census for 1915, Argyris Papadisko arrived in the United States in 1905. His book of poetry shows that he published a poem in New York in 1907 and contains a poem, "O Gyresmos" [The Return], commemorating his return home to Kastoria in 1920. Papadisko, pp. 42 and 70-72.

128.Interviews with Athanasios Tertis, furrier and former immigrant to the United States; and with Georgos Bontas, librarian at Municipal Library of Siatista, in Siatista, Greece, October, 1979.

129.Siatistans settled, worked and formed communities in New England, upstate New York, and in the midwest. In those places they worked at various occupations unrelated to the

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fur industry. They formed regional societies in Manchester, New Hampshire (1918), Bradford, Massachusetts (1922), Buffalo, New York and Detroit, Michigan (date n.a.). Siatisteon Mneme: Leukoma ... [Siatistan Remembrance: Album...], pp. G448 - 450.

130.Dun and Bradstreet credit reports, UFMA Records; and interview with Athanasios Tertis.

131.Malafouris, p. 267 and Chapter Two.

132. Retired fur worker and union leader John Vafiades identified his cousin, Stefanos Stefanides or John Stevens, from Bigha in the Chanakale region of Turkey as a furrier from the old country. Stevens had employed Vafiades as a newly arrived immigrant in his shop and taught him how to operate a fur sewing machine. John Papayannis, another retired fur worker and union leader, said that Alex Pappas and his two brothers had been furriers in Constantinople prior to emigrating. Alex remained in the United States as a fur worker but the other two went to France to work. Interview with John Papayannis, Athens, October, 1979.
Alex and his brother Christophor were located in the 1915 Manuscript Census of the State of New York as living at the well known 58 West Eighth Street in New York. The Census classified them as furriers and as workers with the abbreviation "w." Since fur manufacturing was still a viable craft in Asia Minor, it is possible that there were other 'old country' furriers from Asia Minor aside from the two cases cited here.

133.Interviews with Christy Adams; Achilles Alvanos; and Apostolos Tsoukas.

134.Information on Pantelides compiled from Dun and Bradstreet credit reports in the UFMA Records and from interviews with Christy Adams; John Vafiades; and with UFMA director Peter Nicholas, New York City, July, 1978.

135.As a union leader, Vafiades knew Pantelides shop well since he had personally investigated Pantelides' violations of the labor agreement concerning contracting several times and had levied fines worth thousands of dollars against him. Interview with John Vafiades.

136.During the 1940s until Pantelides' death in 1950, the firm's sales hovered close to one million dollars annually. Sales figures for both firms from Dun and Bradstreet credit reports in the UFMA Records.

137.Reported in "Activities of the N.Y. Joint Board Furriers' Union for a Period of Five Months," Bulletin of the Furriers' Joint Board and reprinted in The Fur Worker,

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December, 1922, p.2.

138."Greek fur workshops, with paid personnel aside from members of the family of the owner, began to be developed after 1910-12." E. Tsamouranis, "E Viomechania ton Gounaradon" [The Fur Industry], Part 5 in Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald] (New York), 29 April 1947.

139.Fuchs, pp. 53 - 54.

140.Jewish workers would not work for the Greek employers because their shops were not unionized. Interview with Costas "Gus" Tates.

141.D. Mikol, "In Memoriam" in The Fur Worker, February 1923: 3 & 6..

142.For a sociological discussion of this issue, see Waldinger, pp. 32 - 39 and 148 -66. Chapter seven argues that the ethnic entrepreneurs' ability to 'manage' a coethnic labor force had its limitations in extent and time. There is no argument that this was true for Jewish garment workers who worked for Jewish employers. There is a considerable literature on the militancy of Jewish garment workers. Although no one has yet discussed this for Greek fur workers, it also was eventually true for them as well as Chapter Seven shows.

143.Interviews with Christy Adams, Vasili Shioukas and Mihali Shomtas.

144.Interview with Nerantzi Aivazi.

145.Interview with Costas "Gus" Tates.

146.Interviews with Christy Adams, Mihali Shomtas, and Menelaos Toskos.

147.From 1914 onwards, the emigration from Ottoman areas had been considerable due to the political upheavals following the Balkan Wars and the Turkish policies towards the Greek ethnic minority in the remaining Ottoman lands. The U.S. immigration statistics do not reflect the movement of these people for reasons discussed in Chapter Two.

148.Interview with Bill Callas.

149.In March 1920, Morris Kaufman, manager of the Joint Board Furriers' Union, complained about "the false impression of the public of the exaggerated prosperity in our trade. Somehow people think that the workers in the fur industry are gathering money by the bushel. This draws many from other trades and those who have no trade who seek to

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make 'easy' money in the fur industry." Still in 1923, he warned that the union was "at present facing a serious condition which is due to and abnormal and unwarranted influx of apprentices and new workers." According to Kaufman, among the reasons accounting for this 'abnormal influx' was "the impression scattered broadcast that the fur trade is a 'gold mine.'" "Help to Stop Stream of Apprentices!," The Fur Worker March 1920: 1; and "The Problem of an Overflow of Apprentices in New York," The Fur Worker February 1923: 4.

150.John Vafiades reported that he got one of his first jobs as an operator in a Kastorian shop in this manner. His relative took him to Sixth Avenue and Twelfth Street where he was employed by his relative's acquaintance, small contractor to sew strips for trimmings. Since John was the only employee, the contractor performed all the other tasks. Interview with John Vafiades.

151."Plea For Abolishing The Employment 'Market'," Letter to the Editor of The Fur Worker, September 1918, p. 4 - 5.

152.Helen Sdona Mikedes got her first job in a Greek fur shop by responding to an ad for women in a shop. She said that newspaper advertisements in English language papers were read by Greek workers who also scoured the fur district for job notices posted by employers on the street. Interview with Helen Sdona Mikedes, Athens, October, 1979.

153.From the 'Retirement Records' of individual Greek furriers in the archives of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry, Furriers' Joint Council of New York City.

154.Giannakouli, p. 10.

155.Among the people interviewed, one who was trained there was Bill Callas from Siatista.

156.'Minutes' of General Membershop Meeting of the United Fur Manufacturers Association, 20 April 1926. UFMA Records.

157.Interview with John Vafiades.

158.Interaviews with Christy Adams; John Vafiades; and Arthur Kotoros (New York City, October 1978). Alfred Lief reported that at the turn of the century, it was not uncommon for a learner to pay a boss $25 for a four week course in the trade. Then, the trainee would earn $2.50 until he could prove his worth by getting a better job. Alfred Lief, Happy the Helping Hand (New York, 1948), p.16.

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159.Helen Mikedes asserted proudly that unlike many Greek women she had never worked without being paid. But for others, it was common to work for a trial period without pay. Mikedes said that the boss would keep expressing dissatisfaction as the worker turned out coats so as to avoid paying her for as long as possible. Interview with Helen Mikedes.

160.Of five finishers who were interviewed, all said that they had experience from the old country either in tailoring or in needlework of some sort. Anastasia Morphopoulos, Maria Daskalakis, and Vasiliki Papazissis had been taught crocheting and embroidery at home. John Papayannis had been trained and worked as a tailor before emigrating from Constantinople and then worked in the garment industry in New York for ten years before going into the fur manufacturing. Helen Sdona Mikedes had gone to a vocational school in Athens where she had been trained to sew, cut, embroider, etc. In Athens, she worked in a garment factory initially and later operated from her home as a tailor.

161.Anastasia Morphopoulos had 'learned the needle' as a young girl at home in the old country and had worked for several years in embroidery work in New York before getting a job as a finisher.

162.Interviews with Maria Daskalakis. Helen Sdona Mikedes said that she learned to finish fur coats in one morning by spending a few hours in a shop carefully watching another woman at work. By ten o'clock she felt confident that she could do the same. The boss gave her a coat, she successfully completed it and was paid for it on a piece basis.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

ORGANIZING THE UNORGANIZABLE

"...a small but durable whirlpool
of Greeks in this Jewish lake..."
Fortune Magazine January 1936

In most of the sociological literature on the topic of ethnic enterprise, ethnicity has been presented as a mediating factor between immigrant employers and their coethnic workers. It has been thought that the bonds of kinship and friendship and the commonality of ethno-cultural background ameliorate antagonisms and tensions which arise at the workplace.[1]

In the fur industry Greek employers understood very well how powerful a force common ethnicity could be and how it could be used to discourage their workers from organizing themselves or from uniting with workers of other ethnic backgrounds in the fur industry to promote their interests. The Greek shops could stay in business and compete with the mainstream firms not only by finding a niche in the supply side of the market but by being able to produce goods at a cheaper cost than their immediate competitors or than mainstream manufacturers could produce in their factories. That meant employing cheap labor. Greek employers very

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deliberately appealed to their workers' sense of ethnic solidarity in order to prevent the organization of their labor force, and of Greek fur workers in general, into the fur workers' union. Their chauvanistic message to their coethnic workers claimed that together they made up the 'Greek fur industry' and that they needed to work in concert in order to prosper and to overcome the threat which, the employers charged came from a 'conspiracy' of Jewish businessmen and Jewish union leaders who comprised the majority ethnic group in the industry.[2] Moreover, they tried to convince their workers that their jobs in the industry depended on the existence of Greek-owned businesses. During the strike against the Greek employers in the summer of 1926, one employer and official of the Greek manufacturers' association wrote in the Greek American press:[3]

> It is in your [the workers] interest that the Greek shops remain open and consequently for the road to open for all of you should you want one day to become factory owners. Greek workers, in the needle trades industry there are more than twenty three thousand shops but there isn't even one Greek worker because there does not exist even one Greek factory ... The problem of the Greek workers is to organize for their interest and not for the interests of the Jewish Association.

Earlier that year, during a general strike in the industry, the manager of the Greek manufacturers' association complained about the organization of the Greek workers into the Joint Board Furriers' Union and about their participation in the strike. In an article, he wrote:[4]

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> ...And we find ourselves before the tragic spectacle where a foreign leader [Ben Gold], as representative of Greek workers comes to negotiate with Greek manufacturers, without knowing the Greek, without caring to know the Greek. It is truly perplexing how it is possible that coethnic [omo-ethnis] workers accept such leaders. And what results do the Greek workers expect from such leaders for whom the [contract] demands are motivated by ulterior designs, risking Greek industry and condemning the workers to long unemployment, privations, hardships and the lasting agony of the uncertainty of the outcome of the struggle, without these demands representing the sentiment and the interests of the followers. And how do these leaders claim to represent the interests of Greek workers when the interests of the two groups [Greek and Jewish workers] have different directions, when the interest of these leaders is to fuse the Greek group with theirs in order to protect their interests and to annihilate the Greek forces ... Today the leaders come with demands destructive to the work of people of our race ... They are asking that the Greek factory owners lose their businesses and even that the Greek workers lose their places and in this way to divide the Greek forces...

For years Greek fur workers had had the reputation of being nothing more than 'scabs' and their contractor-employers of being spoilers in the industry, the latter tyrannizing the former.[5] During major strikes in 1912, 1917 and especially in 1920, Greek workers had been brought into mainstream shops to replace striking workers and work was given out to Greek contracting shops.[6] During the early 1920s mainstream manufacturers gave out work to Greek and other finishing contractors, arousing the anger of union workers. Morris Kaufman, president of the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada (IFWU), labelled the workers, in what he called "Greekland," as unorganizable.[7] In June 1925, a letter to the editor of

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the Fur Worker on "The Burning Issue of the Finishing Contractors"[8] complained that

> the real trouble comes from the Greek contractors. These the union has until now found practically impossible to organize. They employ quite a large number of people; some of them employ twenty or more workers that know no other language, than Greek and if a committee or business agent approach trying to talk to them they consider it a hostile act and are ready to treat them as enemies. Their wages are from $10 to $20 a week, and they work from 7 o'clock in the morning or earlier to 7 P.M. or later for the same wages...This is the real dangerous element that the union is up against and not the few Jewish contractors...

The following month, an article in the same union publication attempted to analyze the problems with the strike at the finishing contractors in early July of 1925:

> ...such a strike cannot succeed because of certain reasons. First because of the difficulty with the Greek shops to which no access can be gained. An efficient, loyal Greek organizer is required to prepare the ground for a length of time. To enter a Greek shop with the word 'union' on the lips one must be prepared for a violent attack by the contractor ... Then such a strike is in doubt because these petty employers are apt to play a 'hide and seek' game. They work themselves or with partners like them. One cannot hold them responsible for anything, not even for their own signature, and even if you gain, you lose them. Even if you close their shops outright, they find a way of making the work elsewhere.[9]

The attitudes in these letters were decidedly anti-Greek, a sentiment not discouraged by the leadership of the International of the union at the time which had ignored the workers in 'Greekland.' However, the letters do reflect the perception of the role of Greeks in the industry before they became organized.[10]

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Yet, the more than fifteen years between 1925 and 1943, a period moving from high employment and prosperity in the fur industry to the doldrums of the Great Depression, saw great turmoil and tension between the Greek workers and their employers in the fur industry. This time saw the emergence of keen class conflict between fur workers and their bosses and of intra-class struggle for control over the fur workers' union.[11] Greek workers participated in all the major strikes called by the fur workers union against employers including those directed specifically against Greek shops: in November 1925, February to August 1926, 1927, 1929, 1932, 1934, 1938, and 1939.

This chapter addresses itself to the tensions between Greek American fur workers and employers; to how Greek workers organized themselves, with the assistance of the already existing fur workers union in the mainstream industry, to combat exploitation of their bosses; to show that while, initially, ethnic solidarity might have created 'consensus' among Greek American furriers and have tempered the emergence of class tensions and conflict, over time, as the labor force changed, became more stable in composition and mature in experience, fissures appeared in the ethnic solidarity among them. However, it also considers factors other than ethnicity which had contributed to the absence of collective working class activity among the Greek fur workers before 1925. Once favorable conditions emerged, Greek fur workers joined class-based organizations to

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struggle for their interests. But ethnicity remained an important factor in determining how they fought for better working conditions and for more control over their work lives.

The Non Union Era: The Years Up To 1925

In the mainstream industry in New York City, both fur workers and employers had been organized into permanent institutions representing their interests since 1912.[12] However, before 1925, there were no workplace organizations among Greek furriers, neither for workers nor employers. It was not as though Ottoman Greek immigrants did not know how to organize themselves into occupational associations. In the old country, guilds and brotherhoods and even more modern business associations had existed for craftsmen, merchants, shopkeepers and members of other occupational groupings.[13] In New York City, other Greek businessmen, who were concentrated in various fields, formed business associations as early as 1911.[14] But while Kastorian furriers, who predominated among Greek American furriers, were the founders of their regional society, "Omonia,"[15] and while, by 1914, Kastorian furriers in the old country had established an association, 'Profete Elia,' to represent their business interests, in New York, until 1925, none had found it necessary to form an occupational grouping and only two had ever joined the already existing manufacturers' association in the mainstream industry.[16]

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Instead they carried on their businesses individually or with family members and partners. The Kastorian Society, where furriers met frequently in the society's quarters located near to the fur manufacturing district, was a place for informal discussions and dealings.[17] But it was not equipped to handle business matters within the industry.

As for the workers, there were no well established organizational or institutional precedents in the old country. Given the limited development of industrial production in the Ottoman world at the beginning of the twentieth century, workers' organizations there were in their infancy. The workers from large centers such as Constantinople, Saloniki or Smyrna might have had some recollection of socialist organizations and movements but by and large it is hard to estimate their exposure to working class action and organization.[18] It was unlikely that many of the immigrant furriers had much of any tradition of unions, of workers' movements, or of collective action on the part of workers.[19]

However, it should be noted that Lucy Garnett, a British 'ethnologist' who had travelled extensively in and written on the European and Asiatic sections Ottoman Empire prior to the First World War, claimed that shortly after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, 'trade unions' were in evidence in the large urban centers in Asia Minor, which she called 'Turkey.' In response to legislation being considered by the parliament, she reported:[20]

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> 'Monster meetings' were held, not only in the Capital, but in all the large provincial towns, to protest against the proposed law, and to maintain the right of the labouring classes to combine for their mutual benefit and also their "right to strike." Speeches were made in all the various languages spoken by the crowds of always orderly demonstrators, urging them to a solidarity devoid of racial or religious rivalry, and having for its sole object the bettering of the common lot and the enactment of just and constitutional laws for the protection of the workers...

Garnett also paraphrased the type of 'resolutions' which such meetings adopted. These resolutions declared "that the wretched condition of the working classes could only be bettered by means of Trades Unions...that the right of combination is recognized by the [Young Turk] Consititution, and that any measure having for its object the abolition of such right is contrary to the Consitution...[and]...that the Government should officially recognise the Unions..."[21] What Garnett experienced could have also been known to some of immigrants from Asia Minor who eventually became furriers, though there is no evidence available to indicate this aside from the fact that over three hundred Greek fur workers had emigrated from the urban areas she was referring to.[22]

Greek fur workers in New York City did join the union as individuals before 1925 when they worked in mainstream manufacturing businesses which were unionized. (See Table 7.1) A few subsequently even claimed to have participated in the historic strike of 1912.[23] That strike first brought recognition of the Joint Board Furriers' Union by

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TABLE 7.1

GREEK MEMBERSHIP BY GENDER IN NEW YORK JOINT BOARD LOCALS 1913 THROUGH SUMMER 1925[24]

	CUTTERS	NAILERS	OPERATORS	FINISHERS	TOTAL
	LOCAL 1	LOCAL 10	LOCAL 5	LOCAL 15	
GENDER					
MALES	75	47	325	47	494
FEMALES	0	0	57	199	256
UNKNOWN	3	4	6	13	26
TOTAL	78	51	388	259	776

Source: "Ledger Cards" for Craft Locals of the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada. 1913 to 1939. Archives of the Furriers Joint Council of New York, New York City.

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the employers who themselves were forced to organize into the Associated Fur Manufacturers' Association at that time.[25] Even some of the least likely candidates for union membership, the Kastorians, who either had business experience or aspirations or had relatives in business, became union members when they worked as employees away from their kith and kin.[26] Most of them joined only for short periods of time.[27]

There were some workers who were not part of the network of West Macedonian furriers and who got jobs as finishers and operators directly in mainstream shops, independent of the Greek section of the industry.[28] These also had joined the union as individuals and not as part of any concerted effort of Greek workers to become union members. Nonetheless, some workers had the experience of being union members before 1925 and had been exposed to standards in the unionized section of the industry. At least one of these, Alex Pappas, an immigrant from Constantinople, had arrived in the United States in 1912 with his brother. They came from a family of furriers in the old country and by 1914 were working as furriers in New York. In 1915 they were living together at 58 West 8th Street where Kastorian furriers could also be found. By 1916, Alex was a member of Local 5 of the Joint Board furriers' union and subsequently became an activist in Greek-American left wing political movements. He was quite active in organizing Greek workers into the union in the

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1920s and 1930s.[29]

Despite the experience of individual Greek fur workers in the fur workers union, there is no evidence of any collective action on the part of Greek fur workers against their coethnic bosses in the period before 1925.[30] It appears that Greek workers employed in Greek-owned businesses made no efforts as a group to change conditions under which they worked or to redress grievences against their coethnic employers. Yet, all the Greek furriers interviewed for this study who had worked in the industry prior to 1925 reported that conditions were terrible for Greek furriers: working hours were very long, more than twelve per day; wages were as low as five dollars per week for some workers in 1916, considerably below the standard of in the unionized, mainstream industry; employment was not steady throughout the year, at best furriers worked for twelve to eighteen weeks during the year; workers could be dismissed at the employer's will; Greek employers often required their workers to perform work unrelated to fur manufacture in their shops; and some lived in the same unhealthy environments where they made furs.[31] Years later a union official described how "it is well known that the ... bosses take on ... workers as soon as the latter arrive from the old country, that for a long time they give them no wages, that after a while they give 3 - 5 dollars per week , and that they pay at the end of they year, according to the "old country" custom, when they [make deductions for living

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expenses] and in the end [the workers] are left in debt..."[32] Conditions were further described in a report to the General Executive Board of the International Fur Workers Union by the organizing committee for the Greek fur workers strike of November 1925:[33]

> ... We have been living in darkness for years. We never have happiness in our lives, working from six o'clock [a.m.] to seven o'clock [p.m.] every day. We used to go to the Shop [sic] at seven in the morning and come out with a beard on our face. We never saw a holiday like other humans, we never had enough to support ourselves ... Married men were working for $18.00 a week -- finishers and operators, the best on the market working for $32.00 a week, not even enough to support or dress himself ... We have been sleeping for years and years ... The Greek bosses have us ... and make millions on us but refuse to give us time and a half for overtime, refuse to give us holidays ...

Whatever disputes arouse or grievences emerged over such conditions were handled as problems between or among individuals. John Vafiades, who eventually became a major leader among the Greek fur workers in the 1930s and 1940s, explained that as a youth in his first jobs in the fur industry, he resolved the difficulties he had with his bosses by just leaving their employ. In the first case, he had been working for his cousin who abused and insulted him. Vafiades, at that point unfamiliar with the advantages of belonging to a union, walked away from the his cousin's shop in protest over the treatment he had received. But he wrote a letter home telling his mother, who would be sure to tell his cousin's mother, how Vafiades had been mistreated by his relative. Clearly, here the worker handled the problem

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individually and appealed to the kinship network to sanction his relative/employer.[34] In his second job, he worked for a Kastorian furrier from seven in the morning to nine at night and had to do household chores for his employer's wife as well. At the end of the first day, when Vafiades got up to leave his sewing machine at 6 o'clock, his employer asked him: "Where are you going? This is not a union shop." It was then that he learned that he was expected to work until nine at night. After a few weeks there, Vafiades also left that shop and then held a series of jobs with several other small Greek fur manufacturers before being organized into the union in early 1926.[35]

As a way of escaping the exploitation of the Greek shops, others also left their low-paying and long-houred jobs for somewhat better conditions in the mainstream industry whenever they had the opportunity to do so. In chapter six, the story of how Kastorians as a group first got jobs in the mainstream industry was recounted. According to one version, when the workers learned that the mainstream shops would pay them multiples of what they had been earning in their coethnics' employ, without hesitation they abandoned the latter and headed 'uptown.'[36] Apparently the offer of higher wages very quickly undermined whatever ethnic solidarity had bonded the workers to their coethnics' shops.

The reasons for the absence of organization and collective action among Greek fur workers in the Greek shops

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can best be understood by examining the conditions under which they worked, the aspirations with which many workers approached their jobs as furriers, and their close ties of kinship to their employers during these early years.

It is not difficult to understand why Greeks remained unorganized and why they themselves did not directly confront the exploitation of their employers. In the early years, workers and bosses were linked via networks of kinship and friendship since most Greek furriers came from Kastoria, firstly, and, then, from adjacent parts of West Macedonia.[37] More importantly, until after the First World War, there were relatively few of them in the industry either as entrepreneurs or workers. Those who employed labor usually hired their relatives whom they did not think of as employees but as part of the family unit of production, especially since their homes served also as their work sites.[38] They paid them wages but also they felt that they were providing them with a place to live and an opportunity to work. Although these workers complained about the hardships they encountered, it did not seem to occur to them that they could do something as a group to change their situation. Improved working conditions were not the issue. Besides, many Macedonians might have felt the same type of obligation towards their coethnic employers which had been exhibited in the old country towards the merchant manufacturers, like Naoum Papamoskho who contracted with them to process his fur goods. The retired furrier,

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quoted in Chapter Four, who recounted their subservience and deference towards Papamoskho, noted in his interview that "...even those ... were the same group that went to New York. And they had the same idea ..."[39]

In cases where the employer and worker were unrelated by kinship, friendship or regional origins, though they were Greek speaking and Orthodox, the worker often worked alone alongside the employer. Both were isolated from the rest of the industry although there were other Greek shops and workers around them. A distinct characteristic of Greek immigrant participation in the fur manufacturing industry in New York was that as a group they remained separated from the mainstream industry. This was true for the Kastorians and other Greeks as well, both bosses and workers. In the early years, their shops were clustered on the same streets, frequently, even in the same buildings. When one firm vacated a site, another Kastorian business took its place at the same address. Some buildings on East Fifth, West Eighth, and lower Sixth Avenue had successive Kastorian furriers conducting business in them.[40] When it came to the workforce, almost all the workers in Greek-owned shops were Greek, not only in the early years but throughout the period under study.

Vafiades' case was not unusual. Like many of his compatriot furriers, he worked in a shop where he was the only wage worker alongside his cousin or the other two furriers who owned their businesses. Vafiades, like other

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workers, was isolated from any other workers with whom he might have even considered collective action. Vafiades also pointed out in his interview that before the 1925 union-sponsored strike against the Greek shops, collective working class action had never occured to him even though he had been exposed to Marxist ideas and to politicization before emigrating. He frequented the meetings at the Spartacus Club of the Greek Federation of the Workers' Party of America where he listened to lectures and discussions on political issues facing the left in Greece and the United States. But it did not occur to him that he could seek out and join a union to protect him as a worker. Rather he considered striking for higher wages opportunistic. Moreover, at that time, the leaders of the Greek left whom he encountered did not advise him to do so.[41]

For some, like Lazaros Gougoulitsa who was in New York for about a decade, the priority was to earn money for his family in Kastoria to buy real estate. In his letters to his siblings, he emphasized the difficulties under which he earned the money he was sending them as a way of ensuring that they invested according to his instructions.[42] Others saw the opportunity to work in a skilled occupation as a marked improvement over the unemployment and economic depression of the old country. Besides, they had emigrated in order to remit funds to relatives in the old country for mortgages, doweries and the like. Some also viewed their stay in the New York industry as a sojorn since they would

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return to manufacture furs in Kastoria from the cuttings they had bought in New York with the savings accumulated from their wages. Until 1924 when the immigration laws of the United States became restrictive, many Kastorian furriers frequently moved to and from the old country with raw materials on the eastward journey and finished pieced goods on the return to the west. Such people obviously recognized the hardships they experienced working in New York, but their primary focus was on changing conditions in the old country through the economic resources they could get in the United States. They were not interested in vesting time in improving what were thought of as temporary conditions in New York.

Those Kastorians and other West Macedonians who had not been furriers in the old country viewed their jobs in the Greek fur sweatshops as temporary. They were opportunities for training in a skilled occupation at a time when the other job possibilities available to them were as workers in food and hotel services and in other unskilled, low paying fields. Working for the contractors was a springboard for a job later on in the mainstream industry where the pay was better and the working hours shorter. If a male worker was lucky, then he might even be able to go into business with the skill and experience acquired. Greek sweat shops could then be endured while they held hopes of finding opportunities to start up their own firm. Between 1916 and the late 1920s many workers were encouraged by the growing

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demand for fur goods and the increased prosperity in the industry which they saw around them. The number of Greek owned businesses in New York City grew in multiples after the First World War and some who had been workers in New York left to establish retail and custom manufacturing businesses in other parts of the United States.[43]

Up to the end of the period under study, unskilled or partially skilled Greek workers also used the contracting shops to acquire skills and familiarity with the practice of making fur goods so that they could then move into the mainstream shops which had union conditions. Former union official John Vafiades said that many women with some experience as needle workers did their 'apprenticeship' as finishers in the contracting shops until they could get a job in a union shop.[44] The work histories of many women and other workers found in retirement records confirm that the contracting shops were a common route to employment in the industry for them. Retired fur workers reported in these histories that they worked in the contracting shops at the beginning of their careers and then moved into the mainstream unionized shops.[45] The contractors were a 'stepping stone' to better jobs in the industry for many women and other workers so that their onerous conditions could be tolerated until a better opportunity came along. The problem was that the existence of contracting shops undermined the availability of better conditions and opportunities in the unionized shops so that these workers

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could not find jobs in mainstream shops.

Aside from factors internal to the community of Greek furriers, the furriers' union in New York did not show much interest in organizing the Greeks, neither those who worked in the Greek owned shops nor even those in the unorganized mainstream shops. It was very difficult, some have said impossible, for Greeks to get union books in order to be able to work in union shops.[46] Not only was the price for union initiation and membership very high but the leadership was either disinterested or just did not want Greeks in the union. Until the end of the First World War, the numbers of Greek workers and businesses was small. There was no urgency about organizing them as a group. But as the industry expanded from 1916 onwards, the size of the Greek workforce grew as did the presence of Greek businesses in the industry.

Between 1919 and 1924, many Greeks were attracted to the industry by the increasing prosperity it was experiencing. During those years, the industry generally experienced a large influx of new workers, including many Greeks. A job as a fur worker was quite desireable compared to employment in other related and unrelated fields in New York. Following the success of the 1912 general strike in the industry, fur workers earned relatively better wages for relatively fewer hours than did workers in other needle trades or in other manufacturing and service industries in New York City. It is also likely that the rapid growth

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which the industry had experienced during and after the First World War had encouraged many workers in New York City to seek jobs in it. Perhaps some also hoped to use their employment in the industry as a vehicle for getting into the business side. During 1920 to 1924, several articles and editorials in The Fur Worker and reports at the meetings of the General Executive Board of the UFMA were devoted to this issue of the 'influx of new workers.' The minutes of the General Executive Board meetings of the International of the union reflect the awareness of the Greek presence in the industry and of the need to bring them into the fold. There was talk of hiring a Greek organizer to undertake the organization of the Greek workers. But nothing was ever done about it or about the presence of the Greek workers. Given the lackadaisical position of the union, the Greek shops which employed Greek workers remained completely unorganized as did the growing number of Greek workers in mainstream businesses.[47]

Turning Point in Organizing the Greeks: 1925

The emergence of formal institutions among Greek furriers came in 1925 when, for the first time, Greek furriers formed and joined organizations at their workplaces. Choices about membership depended on furriers' social class: workers went into the union, the four craft locals of the Joint Board Furriers' Union of New York; bosses into a manufacturers' association, the United Fur

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Manufacturers Association. However, for both groups, ethnicity was an important factor shaping the character of their membership in their respective class organziations.

The impetus for organization among Greek furriers came from the fur workers.[48] During the summer and fall of 1925, Greek fur workers joined the union in response to an effort by the leadership of the Joint Board to organize Greeks, as a group, who were working both in Greek shops and in other nonunion firms. Over 750 Greek workers joined the four locals of the union during this drive, the largest number joining the operators' and finishers' locals.[49] (See Table 7.2) By October 27th those who worked in the Greek contracting and manufacturing shops were ready to launch a strike against their employers. The strike lasted nine days and was settled in the workers' favor. On November 4, 1925, 42 Greek employers signed an agreement with the representatives of the Joint Board bringing union conditions into their shops for the first time ever.[50] Within a little more than a month, the union's organizer reported that "sixty Greek association shops have signed agreements with the Union, and 23 Independent shops..."[51]

During the strike, the employers had gotten together informally at first to deal with their striking workers. Known as the Greek Fur Manufacturers, they negotiated with the union through George J. Chryssikos, a Greek American lawyer with offices on Park Row in Manhattan and on Exchange Place in Jersey City, New Jersey.[52] When it came to

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TABLE 7.2

GREEK MEMBERSHIP BY GENDER IN JOINT BOARD LOCALS
FALL 1925

	CUTTERS LOCAL 1	NAILERS LOCAL 10	OPERATORS LOCAL 5	FINISHERS LOCAL 15	TOTAL
GENDER					
MALES	66	91	242	27	426
FEMALES	0	2	56	248	306
UNKNOWN	2	10	3	7	22
TOTAL	68	103	301	282	754

Source: "Ledger Cards" for Craft Locals of the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada. 1913 to 1939. Archives of the Furriers Joint Council of New York, New York City.

signing the agreement on November 5th, the manufacturers signed individually since they still had no legally responsible organization which could sign on their behalf. However, a group of them asked their legal counsel to draw up papers forming an incorporated body. On November 16, 1925 the United Fur Manufacturers Association (UFMA) was founded by 42 firms, 33 of those who had signed the initial memorandum of agreement with the union plus 9 others.[53] Organized manufacturers' associations already existed in the industry in New York City: among them were the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. and the Fur Trimmings Manufacturers Association. The former represented three or four hundred firms which produced garments while the latter represented those manufacturing trimmings mainly for the cloth coat

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industry, a line in which many Greek firms participated. But most of the firms in both of these associations were owned by people of Jewish background. Through to 1925, the Greek-owned firms had been isolated from the mainstream industry by physical space, by specialization within the organizational structure of the industry, and by language and culture. When the time had arrived for the Greeks to join with others to negotiate with their workers, they opted to form an ethnically based organization which they felt would better represent and protect their interests in the industry vis a vis their workers and their competitors. Only two Greek businessmen were known to have joined the Associated Fur Manufacturers before 1925. This approach might have been due in part to the fact that their workforce was comprised mainly of Greek workers and that the workers, while organized into the four main manufacturing locals of the union, also had a Greek branch within the union to represent their needs and to promote education and union membership. But during the General Strike in the industry in 1926, other factors were disclosed which played a more important role in shaping the manufacturers' decision to form an ethnic association.

The initiative to bring the Greek workers into the union came from the manager of the Joint Board Furriers' Union, Ben Gold. Gold had been elected to his position in May 1925 as head of the left wing of a united front which

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opposed the administration of Morris Kaufman as president of the IFWU and of his colleagues in the New York Joint Board.[54] Gold and the united front aimed at clearing out what Gold considered to be 'the corruption and tyranny of the Kaufman forces.' The Gold group's stated goals were to democratize union elections, procedures, and participation, to protect members' rights to express opinions and to affiliate with political parties of their choice, and to adopt a program "to assure and improve the economic conditions of the fur workers."[55] To achieve this last aim, Gold launched a drive against contracting shops and to organize the unorganized workers in the industry. The organization of the workers in the Greek shops was a prerequisite for implementing a program to achieve gains for all workers in the industry. Not only would union standards be introduced into the Greek shops for the benefit of the Greek workers, but their unionization would prevent the continued use of Greek shops and workers to degrade conditions in the industry.[56] Moreover, Gold looked to the negotiations which would begin in December, 1925 with the mainstream manufacturers for a new contract in the industry. He knew that success in organizing the Greek furriers would mean a strong bargaining position in those negotiations.[57]

The Gold administration's first attempt, in June 1925, was to organize some 125 finishing contractors, among them several Greek shops. Although 50 of the contractors settled with the union, "the Greek shops remained untouched."[58]

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The administration of the International, still under the control of the Kaufman group, blamed this failure upon the inexperience of the Joint Board's new leaders with, what they considered to be, the inaccessible Greek shops.[59] But Gold quickly realized that the way to penetrate them and the rest of the Greek shops was by working through a Greek organizing committee and creating a Greek branch within the Joint Board.[60] He knew that communication was a major obstacle to organization since the majority of the workers spoke or read little English. A Greek organizing committee would be able to talk to the workers and inform them about what their options were as members of the union.[61] Gold and his colleagues must have appreciated the importance of using coethnic organizers who could engender trust since they understood the workers' culture and were part of the community they lived in.[62] Gold had been a part of the socialist movement and of garment workers' struggles in New York City since his youth.[63] He certainly had witnessed the success of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in organizing immigrant garment workers into the union by employing ethnic organizers, offering many groups ethnic locals, publishing weekly newspapers in various languages, and offering them opportunities to participate in the leadership and governace of the union.[64] Moreover, at the time of the 1925 organization drive, ethnic federations still existed within left wing political organizations.

In his Memoirs, Gold recounted an exchange between

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himself and a Greek worker at one of the organizing meetings prior to the strike which underscored the sensitivity of the ethnic issue among fur workers:[65]

> Mr. Gold, this is my first meeting. I did not want to come to any of the previous meetings because neither I nor my friends have any faith in you. You [sic] union is not a union. You [sic] union is a Jewish organization. Greek workers are not taken into your Jewish organization, and the Jewish shops are not open to Greek workers. So we remain prisoners in the Greek shops. You never showed any concern before for our suffering and our helplessness. All of a sudden you have discovered that the Greek workers are also people. So I want to know if there is going to be one union of Jewish and Greek workers, or will there be two separate unions -- a Jewish union and a Greek union -- and will we remain prisoners of our Greek bosses?

Gold responded that after the strike was over "all the strikers will receive union books from one united union of Jewish and Greek fur workers."[66] Gold's response was an attempt to underscore internationalist working class solidarity among workers of all ethnic and language backgrounds in the United States. At the time, the issue of the role and existence of 'language fractions,' or ethnic federations, within the Workers' Party was a sensitive question since the Party was in the process of eliminating the language federations and reorganizing its structure.[67] As a party member, Gold was committed to organizing the furriers into the union on an industrial and internationalist basis.[68] But to ignore the existence of ethnicity both as a sentiment and as a set of norms and relationships would have been folly.

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Since Gold had no direct links to the progressive Greek workers in the industry, he drew on his political network to forge a connection. It was common knowledge in the industry that he and his closest colleagues in the union were part of the organized left movement in New York City.[69] In his Memoirs, Gold explained that he sought assistance from "a group of Greek comrades, members of the Communist Party and ... their left-wing friends, all of whom were intelligent workers and all of whom spoke English ..."[70] The 'comrades' were part of the Greek language section of the Party and belonged to a left-wing club in the community called 'Sparctacus' which was a center of Greek American radical political activity, located in the fur market at 26th Street and Sixth Avenue during the 1920s.[71] With these comrades, Gold was able to assemble a committee of about twelve to fifteen people who acted as catalysts for organizing the workers and for leading the Greek branch in the union. Most of them had been fur workers before the organization effort began. But a few were brought into the industry and made members of the union specifically for the task at hand.[72]

A case in point was the main organizer for the Greek committee, John Papayannis. He was an immigrant from Asia Minor who had grown up in Constantinople where he learned tailoring before leaving for the United States in 1912. Once in New York City, he went to work in the men's clothing industry. In an interview,[73] Papayannis said that prior to

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working in the garment industry, he knew nothing about workers' movements or ideologies because "in the old country it was midnight." But by 1918, he was a member of the Greek Socialist Union in America which was affiliated with the Socialist Party until it split into two groupings. The Greeks, including Papayannis, went with the Workers Party of America (Communist) which subsequently became the Communist Party.[74] Papayannis had also joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union where he got experience as a shop chairman at his workplace. Although he did not want to leave the Amalgamated, he was persuaded by his union and by party colleagues to move over to the fur industry in order to facilitate organization of the Greeks. Once in the fur trade, he got a job as a finisher where his tailoring skills were most directly applicable. Then, with Gold and the united front administration, he set about the task of putting together an organization committee.

In his interview, Papayannis made it clear that while Gold had started the process for organizing the Greek workers, it was the organization committee composed of dedicated rank and file fur workers with the assistance of members of the Greek Branch of the Workers' Party which actually carried out the task of bringing the workers into the union.[75] The organization committee's first assignment was to get the Greek workers to a meeting at Bryant Hall, on Sixth Avenue and 42nd Street in September 1925. They succeeded and were able to form a strike committee from

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among the 300 to 400 workers present. Meetings were held regularly and by mid October the Greek workers were taking advantage of the low initiation fees offered them to join the union and get a book. Instead of the $140 and more that workers were accustomed to paying, Papayannis reported that Greek workers were able to get a book for as modest a sum as $28.50. Since union shop jobs were eagerly sought after by the Greek workers, they signed up by the hundred for books.[76] The workers then began to ask their organizers "why the union wasn't calling a strike. They argued that [it] was the best time because the season was in full swing and the bosses were loaded down with orders ..."[77] After sketching the course of the Greek workers' strike in 1925, we will examine the factors which enduced the workers to respond to the union's efforts to organize them.

The General Strike of Greek Fur Workers

The general strike of Greek workers started on the morning of October 27th with several hundred union pickets assembled in the center of the Greek fur shop district. Within a few hours, their ranks had swelled to over 1000 Greek workers. Everyone in the trade was surprised to see the Greek workers on strike for the first time and displaying militancy which "the old furriers declared they have seldom seen."[78] According to the Daily Worker, the streets were filled with onlookers and sympathizers and "so splendid was the spirit of struggle among the Greek furriers

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that even the bosses were forced to express their admiration."[79] From contemporary press reports, the strike quickly gained momentum and support despite the presence of police and the arrest of some of the strikers. It was to the workers' advantage that this strike occurred at the height of the manufacturing season and just at the beginning of the retail selling season. The union was well aware that "the favorable conditions in the trade" during 1925 and "the strong determination of the Greek workers" would result in a short strike.[80] Within a few days of the onset of the strke, some independent employers had settled with the union. On October 28th and 31st the newly formed Greek Fur Manufacturers' organization met with the union and told them that their response to the workers' demands would be forthcoming on the morning of November 5th. As of November 1st, a "truce" had been called between the opposing factions. The workers halted their picketing and the employers avoided using an injunction and the police against the workers. Meanwhile, the Greek employers met to discuss the terms the union was demanding.[81]

In order to keep the pressure on the employers and to sustain the workers' morale, on November 4th, the Daily Worker issued a special front page edition in Greek for the striking workers. It was prepared in cooperation with the Greek American progressive paper, Empros which was "the official organ of the Greek Federation of the Workers' Party of America."[82] For 'technical reasons' Empros was unable

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to bring out the strike edition itself. Featuring Empros' masthead, the 'special furriers' edition' reviewed the course of the strike, the strikers demands, and the conditions faced by the workers in the Greek shops. It gave special prominence to the issue of working class solidarity between the Greek and Jewish workers in response to the efforts of the Greek employers to undermine their workers' membership in the union and participation in the strike by playing on ethnic emotion. As was noted previously, the employers had tried to convince their workers that both had a common interest in promoting Greek interests in the industry, that they, the employers, had provided their fellow Greeks with jobs and opportunities on the basis of their common ethnicity, and that, now, the workers were being misled by 'Jewish propaganda' which was pitting Greek against Greek. They argued that it was up to Greek workers and employers together to combat the conspiracy to send the Greeks back to dishwashing. In taking this stance, they were clearly appealing to anti-semitism, on the one hand, and to chauvanistic ethnic solidarity on the other.[83]

The Empros editorial in the Worker countered:[84]

> The arousal of patriotic sentiment to which [the employers] resort, trying to convince you that through the economic success and enrichment of a few hundred Greek entrepreneurs in America the Greek name and prestige is exalted, their supposed love for the Greek workers which makes them hire only Greek workers, and not others, in their shops, and generally all the beautiful words with which they surround their predatory plans, shouldn't deceive the Greek worker.

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> ... You realize that your bosses contradict their words through their actions. Toward combatting your strike, they have not hesitated to form a united front with employers of other ethnic groups. In their daily business dealings, they don't ask whether the person trading with them is Greek or of another ethnicity. When they buy their materials for their work, they don't consider whether the seller is Greek or Jewish but whether he sells cheaper then the other person. And when they engage workers, don't think that they prefer Greeks for any other reason than that until now the Greek workers as unorganized workers sold them their labor power cheaper than other workers. ...

This editorial and another article on the same page then went on to praise the Greek workers for displaying working class solidarity and unity with the Jewish workers in the industry. Very importantly, the editorial appealed to the collective Greek sense of 'filotimia,' that is, the sense of pride, honor and self-esteem which was highly valued among all Greeks both on a personal as well as an ethnic basis.[85] The editorial asserted that the Greek strikers[86]

> were worthy to elevate the respected name of WORKER. ... GREEK FUR WORKERS OF NEW YORK! You have written one of the brightest pages in the workers' struggle. The Greek [pride/honor/self-esteem/ 'filotimia'], which is always the pretext by which the exploiters rob you, must become, for the first time, the reason for a great workers' victory. If you wanted the name of your race to be referred to with praise and admiration, you have succeeded. Your brother workers exalted you when they declared: THE GREEK WORKERS KNOW HOW TO FIGHT...

The main aims of the strike were to force the Greek employers to deal with their workers collectively, to recognize the Joint Board Furriers' Union as the bargaining

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agent for their workers, and, of course, to adopt wages, hours and conditions in line with union standards in their shops.[87] The Greek employers had resisted the idea of signing an agreement with the union on two counts. Firstly, and obviously, they did not want to be confronted with an organized workforce which would make demands for higher wages, shorter working hours, job security, and better conditions. Secondly, the Greek manufacturers claimed that they would be forced out of the business if they had to accept the unionization of their workers. Up to 1925, Greek furriers had been insulated by their physical, economic and cultural isolation from the mainstream industry. That insulation had allowed them the competitive edge to stay in business: cheap labor. Since they drew their work force from among their coethnics and operated small workshops in which they performed important functions in the production process and where they frequently lived, they had been able to keep labor costs and overhead low. Therefore, they produced goods which were labor intensive yet which were geared towards the lower end of the consumer market where there was high demand. To be forced to pay union scale wages for fewer working hours with limitations on overtime, on piece work, on contracting, etcetera eroded their competitiveness. No doubt, it also chafed at their preindustrial, craft production value and belief system which had not been previously challenged in New York City. These employers believed that they had certain prerogatives

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over their coethnic workforce and could make unlimited demands of their time and energy. As late as 1924 and 1925, their workers were expected to work the long hours they had been expected to put in in the old country and to perform duties in the employer's premises which were unrelated to production.[66]

On the morning of November 5th, representatives of the union met with the Greek manufacturers at the Hotel Martinique in midtown Manhattan. Hundreds of workers waited outside to hear the results of the negotiations. Upon learning that their employers had accepted all their demands, the workers began a victory parade through the streets of New York with signs in Greek and English and with some workers dressed in ethnic costumes. For the first time, Greek shops were organized and Greek workers as a group were in the union.

Often first strikes of this type in other branches of the needle trades had produced bitter resistence by the employers. However the Greek manufacturers were confronted by an industry which was already widely unionized. Their workers were determined to be part of the union which offered them better wages and conditions than they could hope for from their coethnic employers. Moreover, the employers had little choice but to settle. They would not have been able to find alternative workers capable or willing to work in their shops. Since the organization drive and the strike coincided with the busiest time for

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their businesses, right when demand for finished goods was highest, a prolonged strike would ensure great losses and perhaps collapse of their businesses. The best strategy for the employers was to settle with the union and then hope to find ways, once the season was over, to break their workers' organization. Anyway, the agreement which they signed would only last for a few months, from early November 1925 to the beginning of February 1926, when the entire industry would have to negotiate a new agreement. By signing in November, the Greek employers were buying time.

In the union, the Greek workers had joined the locals appropriate to their craft or job function in the shops, but they also met as an ethnic group within the Greek branch of the Joint Board. That branch of 'Greek Fur Workers of New York,' as it was known, opened 'club rooms' at 115 West 23rd Street, near to where they worked. It offered the workers a "very comfortable reading room ... lectures and other entertainments of educational value ..." with regularly "scheduled lectures delivered from 2 to 4 p. m." The branch had also organized a 'victory ball' to be held at the Terrace Garden in Manhattan where "every fur worker of New York" was invited so that "the Greek Fur Workers [could] at this occasion celebrate the victory of their achievements and also the foundation of the Greek Fur Workers' Branch of the International Fur Workers' Union."[89] In an article in The Fur Worker on the 'activities of the Greek Fur Workers,'

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the branch's organizer, John Papayannis, wrote:[90]

> The victorious Greek strike fulfilled all of our hopes. It has instilled faith and spirit into the hearts of the Greek fur workers. Convinced of their power, the Greek fur workers have now begun a new campaign which is intended to elevate the new members and educate them to understand the importance of being organized.

Why had the Greek furriers become organizable by 1925?

To attribute the unionization of the Greek workers only to the determination of Ben Gold to 'organize the unorganizable' and to the efforts of the Greek Organizing Committee of the union is to overlook other critical factors at the workplace, among the workers themselves and in their community which really made it possible to bring them into the Joint Board's fold.

-Workplace

By 1925 the environment of the workplace had changed. There was still a place in the industry for the small producer who manufactured trimmings or pieced goods with a relative or two and perhaps with a hired operator or finisher. But those handicraft-like workshops were not targets of the organization drive. The union was interested in the shops which had become factories and which employed four, five or more workers.

The growth in the demand for fur products during and after the First World War had brought new opportunities to Greek businessmen and workers in the industry. Between 1919 and 1925 the number of Greek-owned fur shops had grown

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considerably. (See Chapter Six) In turn, this meant more jobs for Greek workers in those shops.[91] Moreover, the advent of the fur coat as an increasingly important product and the development of a brisk business in the manufacture of trimmings for the cloth coat trade meant that not only did the Greek shops have to expand the number of workers they employed, but they had to hire people to perform additional functions. It was no longer enough to hire an operator or two to assist the principle in production, the more progressive firms needed cutters, nailors, finishers and several operators during the busy season. While some of those functions had once been performed by one of the principals in the firm, now that person had to attend to other aspects of the business rather than to be involved in production. (See example of Vanta Brothers in Chapter Six.) Moreover, the production of coats and other garments in volume required more division of labor and specialization in the work process. So, the shops grew from the two or three person workforce, composed of relatives and a hired worker, to a team of five, six, or more workers in a shop. With other people by their sides facing some of the same conditions, the workers could at least discuss their problems with the other employees and possibly find a sympathetic and empathetic ear. Also, the employers were now faced with more a complex labor-management situation, both from the perspective of coordination and supervision of production as well as from that of labor relations. Some of

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the earlier approaches of handling labor disputes could not be invoked now that the labor force was less likely to be composed of 'kith and kin.'

Another change at the workplace which encouraged unionization was that the increased division of labor and specialization in the manufacturing process brought more people into the Greek shops who would remain workers permanently. In earlier years, when the shops worked mainly pieced goods and the workforce was made up of people with a more general range of skills which could be transfered to other products and raw materials, the hope of breaking away from an employer and starting one's own enterprise was quite real. However, with the growth of specialization within crafts and with the increased importance of two additional crafts on a major scale in the Greek shops, nailing and, especially, finishing, that hope just did not exist for workers in those crafts. While cutters and, to a lesser extent, some experienced operators continued to be able to strike out on their own with some small savings and usually with a partner, the finishers, nailers and most operators did not have that option. In Chapters Five and Six, much was said about the ease with which a fur manufacturing firm could be started. While the various factors promoting entry did prevail throughout the period under examination, one essential ingredient for going into business was skill in sorting, matching and cutting furs, abilities developed with time and experience. Finishing contracting was a thriving

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business option for some less skilled workers. However, such firms were almost always run by a male, perhaps once a worker himself, who hired several women to finish coats which he contracted for completion from large manufacturers. In getting contracts, men had a distinct advantage over women since the industry was completely dominated by male entrepreneurs at every level. Even for men, the opportumities were limited in this contracting area. Therefore, a significant section of the workforce, most women and less skilled or experienced men, were locked into positions as workers.

Developments in fur manufacturing did not only affect the Greek businessmen. The mainstream industry obviously also grew in this period. (See Chapter Five.) With that growth, job opportunities increased for individual Greek furriers in those shops. As more and more Greeks entered the mainstream labor force, met other workers and joined the union as individuals, more of them got an idea of the benefits and advantages of belonging to the union. These jobs broke the isolation which had reinforced their employers' control over their work lives.

-Workers

A major factor making the organization of the Greek workers possible was the change in the ethno-regional and gender composition of the Greek workforce which had taken place by 1925. As has been described in Chapter Six, until the First World War, most of the Greek workers in the

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industry were from Kastoria, with a much smaller number from Siatista and adjacent places in West Macedonia. The close ties of kinship and friendship among the Kastorian furriers, coupled with the opportunities for mobility within the fur industry for many of them, had made the organization of Greek shops very difficult. While these same individuals did not seem to find union membership objectionable when they worked in mainstream shops, organizing themselves against coethnic employers from their hometown, who might also have been relatives, was another matter.

The influx of new workers which followed the growth of business opportunities from 1916 onwards brought Greeks from other regions into the fur industry. The majority of the new Greek furriers were still from the Ottoman areas of the Greek speaking world, but now from Asia Minor, the Eastern Aegean Islands adjacent to the coast of Turkey and other parts of Macedonia. Another smaller contingent came from the Peloponnesus and from other parts of Greece proper. (See chapter two.) Among the workers who joined the Joint Board Furriers' Union in the fall and early winter of 1925, the majority were from areas outside Kastoria. Kastorians made up less than one-quarter of the newly organized Greek workers. While that was still a significant proportion of the labor force, their influence among the workers was diluted. The other workers did not share the same sense of intimate commitment to their employers even if they were fellow Greeks.

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Table 7.3 illustrates the distribution of membership of Greek fur workers by their region of origin in the two largest craft locals of the furriers' union which also recruited the greatest number of Greek workers.[92] In the fall of 1925, some 583 Greek workers had became members of the operators' and finishers' locals. (See Table 7.2) Of those, just over 10% could be identified as having been born in Kastoria while more than two-fifths had been born in other places. Of the remaining two-fifths for whom birthplaces could not be determined, some certainly were Kastorian. But most of the "undetermined" had surnames which could not be found in the "Register of Kastorians Living Abroad," a list compiled by the municipality of Kastoria in the 1930s.[93] Moreover, since four times as many names were found of people born outside Kastoria as born there, it is likely that less than a fifth of the newly organized workers were Kastorian.

In the finishers local, the presence of Kastorians was even less than in the operators' local. In the early years, some Kastorian furriers, mostly males, but including a few women, worked as finishers in mainstream shops and joined Local 15 if those shops were organized. Among the names found in the union's records was that of Menelaos Toskos who had been a member of the finishers' local in 1917, giving his address at the time as 186 Sixth Avenue where his compatriots, the Papadina Brothers, had their fur business. In an interview with Toskos, he said that he had lived and

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TABLE 7.3

GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN OPERATORS' LOCAL OF JOINT BOARD BY PLACE OF BIRTH. FALL, 1925.

PLACE OF ORIGIN	OPERATORS	FINISHERS	TOTAL	%
KASTORIA	57	6	63	10.8
OTHER	130	123	253	43.4
UNDETERMINED	114	153	267	45.8
TOTAL	301	282	583	100.0

Source: "Ledger Cards" for Craft Locals of the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada. 1913 to 1939; "Registration Book," Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70. Archives of the Furriers Joint Council of New York, New York City.

worked with the Papadina's for a time. At the same time, he also found work in mainstream shops as a finisher. Subsequently, he went into business on his own. On the whole, however, Kastorians did not concentrate in this craft. Those who were employed by other furriers were more likely to work as operators, cutters and nailers, tasks which matched the skills they had from the old country.[94]

The Kastorian furriers were a very tightly knit group. Other Greek furriers considered them to be 'clanish.' Their high concentration in the industry as businessmen and as upwardly mobile workers certainly created an environment for a closed network.[95] In New York, the Kastorian Society, which itself reinforced ties to the homeland and within the

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ethno-regional group, was formed and run almost exclusively by furriers. Over the years they lived close to one another, first within or adjacent to the fur district and, later, in more residential neighborhoods such as Washington Heights, Astoria and, eventually, in Nassau County on Long Island. In the community, Kastorians socialized mainly among their fellow townspeople whether through the Kastorian society or in their neighborhoods.[96] The frequent contact which they had with their hometown to the end of the period under study reinforced kinship and friendship ties as well. Kastorian furriers frequently travelled to the old country for business or for visits.[97] The town's newspaper, Kastoria, carried articles about the community in New York City and often commented on the need conscientiously to preserve the language among the second generation and the links between those abroad and those at home.[98] Kastorian writers developed that theme in their poetry and in their essays which were published and circulated on both sides of the Atlantic.[99] Even after the adoption of restrictive immigration legislation in the United States, Kastorian furriers continued moving between the two countries because they either had citizenship in the United States or they went there under the relatively generous conditions of a businessman's visa. This continuous contact reinforced the sense of ethno-regional solidarity among the Kastorians and contributed to cross-class unity at the workplace.

Unlike the Kastorians, the workers from other parts of

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the Ottoman world were not such a tightly knit unit. Firstly, they came from many cities and towns in Asia Minor, the adjacent Aegean islands and mainland Greece so that they did not have a single, common local birthplace. Although some of the workers were related to one another or even to coethnic employers, there is no evidence that there was any concentration such as that among the Kastorians. If these Greeks belonged to ethno-regional organizations, they were dispersed among several different ones whose membership was drawn from several class and occupational backgrounds. What is a very important contrast with the Kastorians is that many of these workers had become permanent immigrants in the United States by 1925. For one thing, the Immigration Act of 1924 did not permit them to migrate to and from the old country in a casual manner, sustaining contacts and links to the culture of the old country. The furriers from Asia Minor and from some of the Aegean Islands could not return to their homelands, even for a temporary visit, if they wanted to. The Ottoman repression of Greeks in Turkey from 1914 to 1922 followed by the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1922 to 1924 and the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese Islands precluded any repatriation to the land of their birth. As for those furriers who had left from the islands of the Eastern Aegean which had become a part of Greece after 1913, economic factors hampered their repatriation though not their contact with communities in the old country while those from the Dodecanese found their

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homeland under the occupation and control of Italy.[100] Whatever had prompted emigration for these furriers and whenever it had taken place, their stay in the United States had become permanent by 1925.[101]

When the gender composition of the workforce is examined, it is evident that by 1925, a decidedly large percentage of the workers were women. While it is not known how many women had been employed in the Greek shops prior to 1925, in the 12 years between the founding of the union in 1913 and the organizing drive in the fall of 1925, 256, among the 776 Greek workers who had joined the four manufacturing locals of the Furriers' Joint Board were women who had worked in mainstream shops.[102] But, of the more than 750 Greek workers who joined the union in the fall of 1925, over 300 were determined to be women. (See Table 7.2) If for no other reason than their sheer numbers in the workforce, these women were a deciding factor in the unionization of the Greek fur workers. Their support of and participation in the union's organization drive and in the strike were necessary for success. None of the accounts of the organization drive and of the strike in contemporary press nor in subsequent secondary sources give recognition to the role of the women. That was not unusual at a time when the role of women in labor union organization and leadership was given little, if any, attention.[103] Yet, at least five members of the Greek Organizing Committee were

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women, most of whom continued to play a critical role in the leadership of Greek workers through to the 1940s.[104]

It is not hard to see why the women would be attracted to the union. It offered them a vehicle for advancing their concerns and interests in an industry where women had relatively little opportunity for advancement, which in fur meant either getting into a higher paying job and craft or going into business. No Greek women could be found among the cutters and only two among the nailors, traditionally exclusively male domains.[105] Even when a woman might have gotten a chance to learn cutting techniques when, as an operator, she worked closely with a cutter, she was never given the opportunity to put her skills to use. It was almost unheard of for a woman to become a cutter or a nailor. Some women who started out as finishers could eventually get jobs as operators. But until 1936, women operators were paid as 'second class' operators, no matter what their skill level was. The rates were For a long time the union acquiesced to that arrangement.[106] Most of the Greek women, like women in general in the industry, were concentrated in the finishers' craft, with only a small group as operators. (See Table 7.1) Finishers were among the lowest paid of the craft workers and held the lowliest status.[107] They had virtually no possibilities for advancement to another craft. Skillful finishers could get a chance to work on more expensive fur coats and thereby earn more money. But finishers rarely were able to move

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into the better paying and more prestigious and mobile crafts: cutting and operating a sewing machine. Therefore, not only would they not be able to get into higher paying jobs, but they would be unable to go into business, as many cutters and operators did. They were almost permanently proletarianized and had alot to gain from union participation.[108]

More direct evidence of the importance of women to the initial and sustained organization of Greek fur workers came from John Papayannis and John Vafiades, leaders of the Greek furriers during two different periods [during the 1925 and 1926 strikes for Papayannis and during the years from mid 1935 to 1948 for Vafiades]. In interviews, both of them emphasized that the Greek women were militant and dedicated to the cause of the union. Papayannis reported that the women rallied to the union in the 1925 organizing campaign and that during the 1926 general strike in the industry, they formed a 'Greek Women's Strike Committee.' (See Photograph 7.1)[109] During the many months of struggle in 1926, he said that the women were so enraged by the anti-union stance and the slander against the workers of the Greek newspaper, Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald] that about 200 of them staged a demonstration in front of their offices in Manhattan where they burned copies of the paper in protest.[110]

Vafiades, on the other hand, witnessed the women's radicalism during the battles between left-wing and right-

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PHOTOGRAPH 7.1



"Part of the Greek Ladies General Committee of the Furriers Strike. 1926."

Source: Records of the Furriers Joint Council. New York City.

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wing factions for control of the Greek local and workers between 1935 and 1943, during the Depresson years' strikes against employers, and their activism in the union's war efforts in the forties. During these years, Greek women had come to outnumber their coethnic men as union members.[111] He described the women as "not just ladies, they were fighters ... serious people ... the mothers of children," who were being exploited by men who ran finishing contracting shops with the unorganized female finishers. In the thirties, as before, in the early twenties, the women could not get into the union because the 'books were closed.' Vafiades said that in strikes these women carried scissors in their purses both for self-defense during picketing and for acts of sabotage against scab-produced goods. In non-confrontational work, Vafiades reported that the Women's Committee of Local 70 vigorously supported both the general war relief work as well as the campaign to assist the people of German-occupied Greece. They were also the backbone of Local 70's cultural and educational program in the 1930s and 1940s.[112]

Some of the women who participated in the Local's programs were politicized people, members of Spartacus and of left-wing groups. There was a core who were part of the 1925 organizing efforts and of the left-wing leadership of Local 70 from the mid 1930s through the 1940s.[113] But most of the women were not necessarily political activists nor leftists. Nonetheless, they remained active and devoted

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union members. Many of the women unionists had been furriers intermittently since the early 1920s when they were single. When they married, often many left the trade only to return to the industry and union in the 1930s when their families had been established. Others worked continuously in the trade, as both married and single women.[114] Throughout a good part of their work lives, the union provided them with a forum from which to fight for their interests as workers and with a focal point for community activities.[115]

One such woman was Maria Daskalaki. She was born in Crete and arrived in the United States in 1927 as the young bride of a man from her town, Rethymion, Crete. Having learned to sew, crochet and embroider in her native land, with the help of a friend she quickly got a job as a finisher in a Kastorian-owned shop. Over the years she worked for many different employers, especially during the depression years when, as Maria put it, "America didn't have bread for the workers..." Although she spoke very little English, she worked mostly in non-Greek shops where the boss could communicate his instructions with a few words and gestures. It is not clear when she actually joined the union, but in her interview she recalled that during the depression she used to work forty hours for just $10 and she had participated in various union-led strikes.[116] Her militancy during strikes, when she walked the picket line with other workers, was tempered by her crocheting which,

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she confessed, she did to pass the time when she was not on the line. During the Second World War, she was an active participant in Local 70's Greek War Relief effort. She said that she always liked the idea that she found the Greek flag in the union headquarters. When she would enter the building, she would always go over to it and "make her cross" as a sign of respect for the flag of the homeland. She belonged to Local 70 until its dissolution in 1966 and to the Furriers Joint Council until her retirement about ten years later. When she was interviewed, she looked the epitomy of the traditional Greek-American grandmother with her head-to-toe black widow's garb, her almost non-existent English, and her modern Greek speech laced heavily with Cretan dialect. In many respects, she resembled one of her contemporaries back in her hometown at the turn of the century. She complained that her husband had dominated her life and that she had always felt inadequate because she could not bear children. After her husband's death in 1966, she decided to become a member herself of the Cretan regional society on West 30th Street in New York and of St. Eleftherios Greek Orthodox Church on West 25th Street. Until then only her husband had membership in either organization. Yet, this woman had been a worker and a union member and supporter for more than forty years.

-Community

The Greek fur workers of 1925 found themselves living in communities which would offer support for their

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collective efforts to protect their interests as workers. A substantial number of Greek fur workers lived in the residential neighborhoods adjacent to the fur manufacturing district which covered the area between Sixth and Eighth Avenues and Twenty-fourth and Thirty-first Streets -- especially in the northwest part of Greenwich Village, throughout Chelsea, and in Hell's Kitchen.[117] This was a heavily ethnic and working class section of Manhattan, not only of Greek workers but of other groups as well.[118] Many of the people who lived in these neighborhoods were needle trade workers, not just in fur but in all parts of the garment industry. Unionization was a process which these neighbors of the Greek fur workers had been experiencing since just before the World War. In the community within which many Greek furriers lived in 1925, there was nothing unusual about people belonging to a union or going out on strike.[119]

Most Greek Americans in these same neighborhoods, as in the rest of New York and in the nation in 1925, were workers. No one has systematically examined the occupational and class structure of the Greek American community in New York City in this period. However, a review of data based on a limited sampling of Greeks taken from the New York State Manuscript Census for 1925 for some parts of Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen reveals that 81% of the economically active individuals who had Greek sounding names and who gave Greece or Turkey as their place of birth were

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workers.[120] The other 19% were self-employed businessmen, mainly in the food business, and a professionals who probably serviced the surrounding Greek community. A great proportion of the workers were in the food and restaurant trades (42%), other service occupations, small manufacturing jobs and the garment industry. While it is not known how many had ever belonged to a union or participated in a strike, it is unlikely that a community with such a high concentration of workers, and of small business people, would be unsympathetic to the efforts of fur workers to become organized and to strike for better conditions of work.[121]

What is more, in the decade since the start of the World War, these neighborhoods had become home for families of Greek furriers as well. The appearance of families after the close of mass migration in 1924 was another indication that these immigrant communities had become more permanent settlements than in earlier years. In the same neighborhoods surveyed above for their working class composition, was found a high concentration of Greek workers living with their families. This factor coupled with the likelihood that most fur workers would remain workers, the furriers had more reason than ever to seek collective responses to disputes and grievences against their employers.

By 1925, the broader Greek American community in New York City was well informed about the problems faced by

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working class Greek Americans. The oldest Greek language newspaper in New York, Atlantis, had been carrying news about Greek American workers since before the First World War.[122] Since such a large section of the community was made up of workers, other papers of the day such as Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald], also carried union and labor news. They had a special sections devoted to news about workers throughout the country.[123] During the general strike in the fur industry in New York in 1926, the two major daily newspapers, Atlantis and Ethnikos Kyrix, devoted extensive coverage to the Greek workers' participation in the strike. Interestingly, Atlantis, which was by no means a working class paper, supported the workers' position while Ethnikos Kyrix became the mouthpiece of the employers. The two papers became embroiled in the polemics between the opposing groups which continued long past the end of the strike.[124] However, the coverage they provided, along with that in the working class press, Empros, kept the issue of the unionization of the Greek fur workers before the broader Greek-American community.

The New York community had also developed some working class organizations. Among them was the Greek branch of the Workers' Party of America, which had its strongest following and membership in New York City.[125] It had been publishing a newspaper there since 1918, first under the title Foni to Ergatou [Voice of the Worker] until 1923 and then as Empros [Forward].[126] While Empros gave close attention to

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international news, to news of Greece, and to the Greek American community, it often devoted large sections of the first page to union and labor issues and an entire interior page to the same topic.[127] Members of the Greek branch also established and operated a working class cultural and educational center, Spartacus, near to the fur district on Sixth Avenue. While the size of its following is difficult to estimate, it has been reported that many people, not necessarily organized leftists, from the same neighborhoods where furriers lived on the West Side of Manhattan, would go to Spartacus to hear lectures, hold discussions, watch plays by radical theater groups or eat dinner since Spartacus also operated a restaurant in its premises.[128] Spartacus became an important source of community support for the organization of the Greek fur workers into the union and for their continuing struggles during the turbulent period from 1926 to 1943.[129]

Implications of 1925 Strike

The 1925 strike showed that once organized, the Greek fur workers had the capacity to go on strike against coethnic bosses and sustain militant collective action until their demands had been met. Greek employers and some leaders in the furriers' union learned that the bonds of ethnic solidarity between coethnic bosses and workers were not impenetrable and that despite common ethno-culutural backgrounds, workers could place class interests before

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ethnic concerns.[130] Although the employers' had vigorously attempted to entice their workers away from the union by appealing to ethnic pride and sentiment as well as by trying to enflame prejudice, the Greek workers exhibited a clear understanding of where their interersts as workers lay. For them, membership in the union brought them the same standards of work and pay common to unionized workers in the mainstream industry. It also offered some promise for the future to people who would remain workers over the long term.

The strike had also established a distinct demarcation between labor and capital among Greek furriers and resulted in institutions representing each. Whether the bosses liked it or not, they had to accept that their workers would remain part of a working class organization just as they had chosen to belong to a manufacturers' association. Chapter Eight shows that instead of trying to fight their workers' organization, the bosses adopted a strategy of coopting the union with the intention of bringing it under their control.

Before 1925, most Greek workers had had little choice but to accept terms in the workplace dictated by their coethnic bosses. However, their unionization and strike altered the power relationships in the Greek shops in their favor. The workplace now had rules negotiated and agreed upon by organized bodies representing opposing interests at the workplace. Bosses had to temper their demands and expectations and to consider the possibility of collective

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action in response to any violations of the agreement they had signed with the union. Reluctantly, they also had to relinquish some of their authority and prerogatives to the union as well. A few months after they had signed the first agreement with the Furriers' Joint Board, and at the beginning of the 1926 General Strike when the union had presented its demands, the Greek employers complained bitterly that their workers wanted to run their shops.[131]

In the fall of 1925, Greek fur workers had accepted unionization and asserted their right to be organized in a class organization. In addition to offering them protection at their workplace, the union was also a center of cultural and educational life for the workers. But what was essentially a class organization retained a distinctly ethnic character for the Greeks since they remained organized, in one way or another, within an ethnic branch or an ethnic local of the mainstream union until the end of the period being examined.[132] The force of ethnicity was even greater for the Greek employers since they were completely separated from their mainstream counterparts, most opting to remain independent of any formal body. When Greek manufacturers did become members of any organization, they joined the United Fur Manufacturers Association which was a Greek enclave.[133] The significance of the ethnic character of the Greek furriers' class organization is explored in the epilogue.

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ENDNOTES

1.Roger Waldinger has argued that "ethnicity provides a common ground on which the rules of the immigrant workplace are to be negotiated ... The social structure around which the immigrant firm is organized serve to stabilize the employment relationship ... ethnic commanality provides a repertoire of symbols and customs that can be invoked to underline cultural interests and similarities in the face of a potentially conflictual situation ..." Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades (New York, 1986), p.38.

2.Series of articles and letters written by members of the Greek United Fur Manufacturers' Association and by the Association's manager, John Rompapas, and published in the Greek American press in New York during 1926 to 1929. This theme reemerged in the mid 1930s during further efforts to organize the Greek workers' into the mainstream union in the industry. However, by then, the employers' chauvanistic and reactionary ideological position had become further embellished. See Chapter Eight.

3.Zaharias Djimas, "To Provlema ton Ellenon Ergaton Gounarikis [The problem of the Greek Fur Workers], article in 'guest' column in Atlantis, 12 August 1926.

4.John Rompapas, "To Zetema tes Apergias ton Gounaradon Neas Yorkes [The Issue of the New York Furriers' Strike]," Atlantis, 27 February 1926.

5.Jack Hardy, The Clothing Workers: A Study of the Conditions and Struggles in the Needle Trades (New York, 1935), p. 120. Philip Foner, The Fur and Leather Workers' Union: A Story of Dramatic Successes and Achievements (Newark, 1950), p. . Ben Gold, Memoirs (New York, 1984), p.43. Retired Jewish fur workers, who had worked in the industry from before and during the First World War, confirmed that Greek fur workers were viewed with contempt during their efforts to build the Fur Workers Union from 1912 onward. Most thought that the Greeks were just unorganizable until 1925 when a concerted effort was made to bring them into the union. Indeed in the strikes of 1912 and 1920, Greek workers were recruited into the mainstream shops to replace striking workers. Moreover, even during normal times, many mainstream shops 'gave out' work to contracting shops, including Greek ones, while union workers were unemployed. Informal interviews with members of the "Retirees Club" of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City, March 1979.

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6."...since the organization of the Furriers' Union the manufactureres have succeded in creating a division between the Greek and the Jewish fur workers. During the strikes of 1912, 1916 [sic] and 1920, the bosses succeeded in using the Greek workers against the Jewish and always held the Greek workers as a club over the head of the union whenever a new agreement had to be concluded. "Strike Call Brings Greek Furriers Out," Daily Worker, 30 October 1925, p.4. During the strike to organize the Greek fur manufacturing shops in November 1925, Women's Wear Daily reported that the success of the union's December negotiations with the mainstream employers' association depended on the outcome of the strike since during the 1920 furriers'strike, "the greater part of the production that helped to break the strike came from the Greek shops." Women's Wear Daily, 5 November 1925, p. 39.

7.Gold, p.43.

8."Letter to the Editor," The Fur Worker, June 1925.

9."The 'Strike' at the Finishing Contractors," The Fur Worker, July 1925: 3. This article and the letter cited in endnote 8 were written in the midst of a power struggle between the left-wing, communist leadership of Ben Gold in the New York City based Furriers Joint Board and the right-wing, socialist leadership of Morris Kaufman, president of the International Fur Workers' Union of the United States and Canada (IFWU) to which the Joint Board was affiliated. Published in the organ of the International, they were meant to discredit the Joint Board's efforts to "organize the unorganized" in the fur industry. Nonetheless, the attitudes which they reflect of the Greek shops and their workers were typical.

10.In an informal discussion between this author with Jewish members of the 'Retirees Club' of the Furriers Joint Council in New York in 1979, a few who had joined the union during the First World War reported that Greek furriers were widely considered to be scabs and strikebreakers. In a telephone conversation with this author, another researcher, doing a dissertation on the fur workers union with Melvin Dubovsky at the State University of New York in Binghamton, Sandra Shapley, heard the same sentiment expressed from retired Jewish workers.

11.Philip Foner wrote about the struggles between the right-wing and the left-wing among the workers for control of the union. See Foner, International Fur and Leather Workers' Union. Joel Seidman has a chapter on the "Civil War in the Needle Trades" in general but which includes a section on the furriers. See Seidman, The Needle Trades (New York, 1942), pp.153-85.

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12.See Chapter Five and Foner; Yearbook of the Fur Industry, 1926 (New York, 1926) pp.146-47; A.L. Belden, The Fur Trade of America (New York, 1917), pp. 53-55.

13.See Chapters Three and Four.

14.One early source on the Greeks in the United States, Thomas Burgess, lists the 'Association of Florists' and the 'Association of Confectioners' for New York City. In 1910, there were about 150 or more establishments in each of these occupations. See Thomas Burgess, Greeks in America (Boston, 1913; reprint New York, 1970), pp.34-6 and 61. Also see Seraphim Canoutas, Greek American Guide: Directory of Greek Business Men in the United States and Canada (New York, 1910), p. 366-68.

15.Of the 42 names of "Omonia's" founding members, 25 were in business as furriers and probably most of the rest were working in the business at the time of the society's incorporation in 1910. List of "Founding Members of 'Omonia,'" compiled by Andreas Manthos, secretary of the Kastorian Society, New York City. The names on this list were compared with the list of names of Greek fur manufacturers compiled from the Directory of the Fur Trade and from the The Fur News Directory for the years 1909 to 1911. Mr. Manthos also identified some of the remaining 17 as furriers at that time.

16.Two Greek manufacturing firms, Kyriakos Shopis and the Shiotkas Brothers, joined the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. sometime prior to the end of 1925. See Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926, pp.217 and 219-20.

17.As Kastorian furriers moved their businesses to the midtown area which became the fur industry's permanent location, the Kastorian Society followed suit. For many years its offices and club house were located on West 23rd Street until they bought a building on Eighth Avenue between 22nd and 23rd Streets. On January 1, 1928, the newspaper Kastoria informed its readers that "Omonia had opened a new clubhouse on Sixth Avenue near the Day Brothers' fur retail shop at 23rd Street. It added that the furnishings were donated by the fur manufacturing firm of Bendo Brothers and Pappas. Kastoria, 29 January 1928, p.1.

18.John Vafiades, who became a major leader of the radical Greek fur workers in the 1930s and the manager of the Greek Fur Workers' Local 70 in 1936, was an unorganized fur worker in 1925 but soon became a union militant. He reported that in his hometown of Biga in Western Asia Minor he was first exposed to socialist ideas when his family gave shelter to a Jewish Marxist named Simon who was passing through his town. 'Simon' had talked to him about the promise socialism

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offered to the working class. Later, when Vafiades had become a seaman in order to get away from Turkey and Ottoman persecution, he and a Greek speaking Armenian youth from his town struck up a strong friendship with an older Greek sailor who was a communist. This man 'tutored' them about Marxism for the several months they were on board the ship. It is interesting that while Vafiades became a Marxist, a communist and a staunch trade unionist during his lifetime, his companion who had listened to the same mentor subsequently became a Wall Street financier who committed suicide during the Great Depression when he lost his fortune. Interview with John Vafiades.

19.Until after the First World War, the trade union and socialist movements among Greek workers and intellectuals in Greece and the Ottoman Empire remained in embryonic form. See Yiani Kordatos, Istoria tou Ellenikou Ergatikou Kinematos [History of the Greek Workers' Movement] 2nd ed. (Athens, 1956; reprint ed. 1972), passim and pp. 7, 171-76 and 282-85.

20.Lucy Garnett, Turkey of the Ottomans (London, 1911), pp.161-62.

21.Ibid., p.162.

22.See Table 2.4 in Chapter Two.

23.Among the veterns of the 1912 strike was a John Skaperdas who had arrived in the United States in October 1911. He claimed that he participated in the 1912 strike as a member of the operators' Local 5. From John Skaperdas' application form for retirement benefits, Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry.

24.The author compiled Tables 7.1 and 7.2 from a list of Greek names extracted from the ledger cards of the four craft locals of the New York City Joint Board kept by the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada and from a typewritten list, bound by craft local, which was kept by the administrative office of the New York Joint Board Furriers Union. The ledger cards were organized in alphabetical order by members' surname within each craft local. Aside from the members' names, each card contained the member's ledger number, date of initiation, and a record of dues payments. The typewritten list was also organized alphabetically by members' surnames within each craft local. Ledger numbers and, occassionally, addresses were provided. This list was initiated in 1921 but provided no other direct information on dates of membership. However, the author could distinguish between those organized before and after the organizational drive of Fall 1925 by the series of ledger numbers used. Also, the names and ledger numbers of

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those organized during the Fall 1925 were appended to the list in handwritting, making them easy to identify. Most of the handwritten entries were duplicates of those found among the International's ledger cards. Others bearing ledger numbers matching the series initiated in Fall 1925, were included among the list in Table 7.2. The author used her familiarity with Greek names to extract the Greek members for her list. Gender was determined from the members' first names.

25.Foner, pp.39-50.

26.An example was Menelaos Toskos, born in Kastoria around 1888 and emigrated to the United States in 1906. He arrived in New York unskilled as a furrier but soon got work in a compatriot's shop where he began to learn the business. He is one of the informants who witnessed and participated in the influx of Kastorians into mainstream shops as strike breakers in 1912. Yet, in 1917 when he had a job as a finisher in an organized shop, he joined the union as he did again in 1921. Until the 1950s when he worked in a shop with a 'permit' from the union but not with union membership, he had nothing more to do with the union. Most of his career in the fur industry, which continued to the end of the 1970s, was in business. From interview with Menelaos Toskos and from his records found in the Health and Retirement Fund and among the ledger cards and lists of the Finishers' Local 115 of the IFWU.

27.From ledger cards for members the Joint Board Furriers' Union of New York Locals of Cutters (Local 1), Operators (Local 5), Finishers (Local 15) and Nailers (Local 10) for period 1913 to July, 1925, Records of the IFWU in the Archives of the Furriers Joint Council of New York. The cards were kept in alphabetical order by union members' names within groups by local for the entire period from 1913 to 1939. This researcher went through all the cards in each of the above four locals for that entire period and selected all those with names which could be identified as Greek. Information recorded included member's name, ledger number, craft local, initiation date, dates of dues payments, and sometimes addresses. Many workers had more than one card under different ledger numbers. Moe Feinblatt, office worker and manager for the Furriers' Union in New York City for over fifty years, explained in an interview in 1978 that workers joined and left the international union more than once or during various periods new numbers were assigned by new administrations.

28.From information on worker's history of employment and union membership in statements given by fur workers in the Fur Industry's Health and Retirement Fund 'survey' or 'application for benefits' forms. Such records have been

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kept by the Fund since it was established in 1945. This researcher went through the Fund's archives which include the records of workers who had retired and were deceased or who had applied for benefits which were denied. Records were selected of individuals with Greek surnames and/or who belonged to Local 70, Greek Fur Workers Local of the IFWU. The members of Local 70 were almost exclusively of Greek ancestry.

29.From interviews with John Papayannis, head of organizing committee for Greek fur workers in 1925 and 1926, and John Vafiades, progressive union activist and manager of Local 70, Greek Fur Workers Union from 1936 to 1948. File for Alex Pappas in the archives of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry. Ledger cards for Alex Pappas in the files of Local 5 of the IFWU. Listing for Alexander Pappas and Christopher Pappas in the "Manuscript Census" for the State of New York, 1915, at 58 West 8th Street. Entry for Alex Pappas in the "Registration Book" for Local 70, Greek Fur Workers Union of New York.

30.None of the written sources, such as the ethnic press or any accounts of Greek participation in the fur industry in New York, or more specifically of their union activity before 1925, mentions any movement among Greek workers. The reports of the Joint Board Furriers in New York published in The Fur Workers or in the Reports of the General Executive Board of the IFWU specifically stated that the Greek shops and Greek workers were unorganized until 1925.

31.Interviews with Christy Adams; Nerantzi Aivazi; Achilles Alvanos; John Papayannis, Mihali Shiomtas, Vasili Shioukas, Menelaos Toskos; and John Vafiades.

32.John Papayannis, "E Dieretike Prospatheia ton Ergodoton [The Employers' Divisive Efforts]," Atlantis, 30 November 1926: 4. See Chapter Four for discussion of the method of annual payment of wages which was customary in the Ottoman craft economy. However, there, the master craftsman/employer had certain obligations for the maintenance of an apprentice.

33."Statement of the Greek Organizer" of the New York Joint Board Furriers' Union of New York to the General Executive Board, in the Proceedings of the International Fur Workers' Union, Boston, Massachusetts, 9-17 November, 1925, Volume II, pp.406-407.

34.Vafiades also reported that his cousin, vindictively, sent immigration officials after him since his status was initially irregular. Interview with Vafiades.

35.Ibid.

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36.According to retired furrier Christy Adams who had learned of the story from his predecessors in New York: "1910 was the first strike among furriers [in New York]. They didn't have workers. So a few of them knew that there were Greek furriers on Fifth Street on the East Side. They said why don't we go get them and break the strike. Indeed they went there and found our boys ... 'Do you want to come up to work skins?' 'We'll come. How much will you pay us? Here we get five dollars per week.' 'We'll give you twenty dollars.' 'Twenty dollars! Everyone up!' That way the Kastorian shops remained empty..."

37.Tamara Harevan found that French Canadian textile workers in Manchester, New Hampshire often secured jobs through family and ethnic contacts. For a period of time, common ethnicity and kinship among the workers, coupled with the company's policy of paternalism towards their workforce, encouraged loyalty towards employers and relatives in the factory and discouraged collective class action at the workplace. However, all that came to an end in 1922 with a nine month long strike. Tamara Harevan, Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship Between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community (Cambridge, 1982); also two of her earlier articles: "The Laborers of Manchester, New Hampshire, 1912-1922: the Role of Family and Ethnicity in Adjustment to Industrial Life," Labor History 16 (Spring 1975): 249-65; and "Family and Work Patterns of Immigrant Laborers in a Planned Industrial Town, 1900-1930," in Richard L. Ehrlich, ed., Immigrants in Industrial America: 1850-1920 (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1977).

38.This was also true among Jewish workers and employers in the garment trades. See Jesse Pope, The Clothing Workers (Columbia, Mo., 1905); and Moses Rischin, The Promised City (Cambridge, Mass., 1962).

39.Interview with Chris Tsamises, a retired furrier who had lived and worked both in Kastoria and New York City. He had said that he remembered hearing poeple praise Papamoskho. "'God bless him. God give him years in his life. He is supporting all of us.' And the stupid so and so I am ... I said 'Could you ever figure it out the other way around? What would have become of the big shot if you didn't work?' They couldn't see it that way. So even those ... were the same group that went to New York. And they had the same idea..."

40.DFT, 1896 to 1929.

41.Interview with John Vafiades.

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42."I swear to you on my deceased mother's soul, try immediately to get the deed for the house because I cannot sleep. My only dream is that house. Think and act. Try not to waste not a cent of the money ... because I made it through torture ..." Letter of Lazaros Leonidas Gougoulitsa in New York City to his brother and sister in Kastoria. 16 February 1909. In possession of Gougoulitsa family, Kastoria, Greece.

43.See Chapter Six.

44.Interview with John Vafiades.

45.Retirement records of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry.

46.Interviews with John Papayannis and John Vafiades. In his Memoirs, Ben Gold confirmed that "the union shops were closed to the Greek workers; no Union books had been issued to them ..." Gold, p.40. This statement was not entirely true since the names of Greek union members were found prior to 1925 could be found distributed among the ledger cards of the four New York manufacturing locals in the union. Ledger cards of the IFWU.

47.Minutes of the General Executive Board of the IFWU, Montreal, January 1923, pp.33-34. See also: The Fur Worker, December 1922, p.2 and June 1924, p.2 and 8 and Foner, p. 161.

48.At least as far back as the 1880s, employer associations in the fur industry were formed in response to organization and strike activity on the part of workers. Foner, pp. 10, 19, and 41-42. For more discussion on the relationship between the organization of labor and that of capital in the garment and the movement to achieve industry-wide standards of production and to minimize the adverse effects of unbridled competition, see Jesse Thomas Carpenter, Competition and Collective Bargaining in the Needle Trades, 1910 - 1967 (Ithaca, New York: 1972), pp.514 - 557.

49.Some secondary sources have placed the number of Greek fur workers who were organized and who participated in the strike against Greek employers at 1,500 or more. See Foner, p. 161 and Gold, p. 42. This researcher could only identify 754 names from the IFWU ledger cards and from the Joint Board's typewritten list. These were workers with Greek names who either had become new members of the four New York craft locals (cutters, operators, nailers and finishers) of the union or had continued paying dues on old ledger numbers between October and December 1925. There were probably others whose records were not found or for whom pre-Fall 1925 ledger numbers were used with no obvious

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way for this researcher to determine that they had rejoined or reactivated membership in the Fall of 1925.

50.There were 42 firms which signed the "Memorandum of Agreement" between the Greek Fur Manufacturers and the Joint Board Furriers' Union of New York, Locals 1, 5, 10, and 15 of the IFWU. 4 November 1925. Records of the United Fur Manufacturers Association, New York City. Each firm signed individually since a formal association did not yet exist which could sign on behalf of its members.

51.John Pappas [Papayannis], organizer, "Activities of the Greek Fur Workers," in The Fur Worker, November-December 1925, p.5.

52.Taken from original copy of the "By-Lays of United Fur Manufacturers" prepared by Chryssikos in October 1925 and from a letter dated 4 November 1925 from Ben Gold. Records of Local 70 in the Archives of the Furriers Joint Council of New York.

53.The lawyer who represented the Greek fur manufacturers and who drew up the by-laws for the incorporation of the United Fur Manufacturers Association was George J. Chryssikos, a Greek American attorney from Jersey City, New Jersey. The original by-laws were drafted in Greek so that they could be read and understood by the members who accepted them at a general meeting on October 30, 1925. On November 16, 1925, the Association was formally incorporated. "By-laws and Minutes of the United Fur Manufacturers Association," Records of the United Fur Manufacturers Association, New York City.

54.Foner, pp. 142-54; Gold, pp.20-27. [The most definitive account of the political and institutional history of the IFWU can be found in Philp Foner's book, The Fur and Leather Workers Union (Newark, 1950). Although it was a partisan book, written as a tribute to and justification of Ben Gold's career and leadership, Foner provided a useful collection of information on the development of the union and of the battles within it over control of its administration. In the archives of the Furriers' Joint Council, the successor to the Joint Board, can be found all of the primary source materials which Foner amassed in writing the book. When Ben Gold published his Memoirs in 1984, he wrote: It is not my intent to write the history of the Fur and Leather Workers' Union. More than thirty years ago, Dr. Philip S. Foner wrote that ... and his book, will, without any doubt, occupy a most important place in the history of the American labor movement." Gold, p. 5.]

55.From the united-front program quoted in Foner, p. 153. See also Gold, p.25.

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56.Gold, p. 40; Foner, p. 160 & 162; interview with John Papayannis.

57.Women's Wear Daily, 3 November 1925, p.39.

58."The 'Strike' at the Finishing Contractors," The Fur Worker, July 1925, p.3.

59.See exerpt from the article reproduced in this chapter on page 3.

60.Since the beginning of the century, ethnic organizers had been used by labor unions in various industries to organize their immigrant workers. See William Leiserson, Adjusting Immigrant and Industry (New York, 1924), pp. 185-214. In The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America (Bloomington: 1985) pp. 100 - 104, John Bodnar summarizes the work of several historians which demonstrated the role of ethnic organizers. Gold had certainly learned the value of the ethnic organizer from his many years and experiences in the garment industry.

61."Union organizing requires explaining procedures and ideas that are often fairly abstract or intricate. While immigrants usually picked up enough English to allow for basic on-the-job communication, they could not understand English language explanations of union principles or union business until they had developed advanced language capabilities. Hence the absolute necessity of interpreters, and, even more so, of organizers who spoke the languages of the immigrants (i.e., interpreters often were not skilled organizers or speakers and therefore not as effective as experienced foreign language organizers)." Robert Asher, "Union Nativism and the Immigrant Response," Labor History, vol.23, no.3, Summer 1982, n. 14, p. 332.

62."To create proto-organizations of foreign-born workers the immigrants had to be approached by men and women they trusted and could understand. In many immigrant communities, most of the ethnics who possessed the linguistic, oratorical and organizational skills necessary to organize workers were of middle and upper class backgrounds, and usually were hostile to trade unionism. And many immigrant workers viewed their fellow countrymen of higher class standing as exploitative entrepreneurs. ... This situation created a void that in most cases was filled by ethnic radicals. Whether we are dealing with Jews, Italians, Finns, Greeks or Slavic workers there is considerable evidence that the most dynamic organization impulse was created by the agitation of ethnic socialists, syndicalists and anarchists. By World War I many craft unions were regularly using foreign language organizers of their own ... in the years between 1880 and 1914 radicals

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spearheaded the organization of the 'new immigrant' worker. ... Immigrant radical organizers were not identified with the suspect middle and upper classes. They spoke the language of the immigrant workers. And they understood both the operation of the mechanisms of economic exploitation and the need for fostering class solidarity to overcome economic and ethnic divisions within the working classes..." Asher, pp. 332 -33.

63.Gold had been a member and organizer of the Fur Workers' Union since 1912 and had joined the Socialist Party in 1916, at barely 18 years of age. Foner, pp. 73-74.

64.Leiserson discussed the importance of 'ethnic locals' and to the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and of ethnic organizers in other unions trying to organize miners, packing house workers, textile workers, steel worekrs, etc. See Leiserson, pp. 210-214, 185-209 and 217-224.

65.Gold, p.42.

66.Ibid.

67.Daily Worker, 30 September 1925, p.4 and 6 October 1925, p.4.

68.One writer in the Daily Worker wrote: "...Our Federation membership must become convinced that reorganization and bolshevization of our Party means to Americanize them in the bolshevistic sense of that word. They must realize that, hitherto, they have been members only of some kind of by-organization and that reorganization means to bring them closely to the fold of the revolutionary party of American workers as full fledged members..." H. Puro, "Problems of the Reorganization of Our Party," Daily Worker 6 October 1925, p.4.

69.Gold was a member of the Communist Party, of the Trade Union Educational League, and of other organizations associated with the Communist movement. In his Memoirs, he openly discusses his association with the Communist Party of the United States. His closest associates in the union, Irving Potash, Jack Schneider, Joseph Winogradsky, Sam Burt and others shared his politics and ideology.

70.Gold, p. 41. John Vafiades also reported that Gold worked through the Greek American left to find organizers.

71.'Spartacus' remained close to the fur district into the 1940's since the backbone of its membership and following was in the fur trade.

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72.Philip Foner included a list of "the most active leaders of the Greek strikers" in his summary of the organization effort among the Greeks. The names he gave were: George Arvanitis, John Demelis, Louis Hatchios, Anthony Julios, Steve Leondopoulos, Vasiliki Maliarou, John Papagianos [sic], Tom Pappas, Harry Parrisis, A. Payvouris, Gus Rossios, Aristides Sotiropoulos, and James Stephenson. See Foner, p. 161. To this list can be added the names of Pete Athanasiou, Mike Gougousi, Nafsika Kalkandi, ? Krayiotis, Mary Lambrou, James Metaxas, Mary Sicalidou, Kostas (Gus) Tates, Thalia Zourelli. Aside from John Papayannis, another person who had not been a furrier prior to 1925 was George Arvanitis who was chairman of the Greek branch of the Communist Party and who had been placed in the industry as a nailor. Among the others, virtually all were activists in 'Spartacus' and the Greek American left and some had family associations with the Greek American and Greek Cypriot left wing political movements. From interviews with John Papayannis and John Vafiades and from membership records of the IFWU and the retirement applications of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry.

73.Interview with John Papayannis.

74.The Greek Socialist Union, founded in November 1917, had its headquarters at 793 Second Avenue in New York City, close to a Greek neighborhood at the time. In July 1918, the organization began the publication in Greek of a working class newspaper, E Foni tou Ergatou [The Voice of the Worker] which changed its name to Empros [Forward] in 1923. At that point, the Greeks still had their own Greek section of the Party, now located at 301 West 29th Street and known as the 'Greek Section' of the Workers Party of America (Communist). E Foni tou Ergatou, July 1918, p.1 and Empros, 7 July 1923, p.1.

75.John Vafiades subsequently underscored the importance of the role of the Greek organizing committee. He said: "Gold gave the line; but these were the activists ... They were people who came from the bottom. They weren't made up. They became the leadership which took a left-wing shape..." Interview with John Vafiades.

76.Interview with John Papayannis. The actual amount of the reduced initiation fee was $27.25. Any "Greek fur workers who joined the ranks of the strikers until a settlement will be reached, the initiation fee is not to exceed $27.25 as in accordance with the decision of the Joint Board Furriers Union..." This statement appeared in a letter from Ben Gold, Manager of the Joint Board Furriers' Union, to George Chryssikos, lawyer for the Greek manufacturers. Dated November 4, 1925, it became a part of the "memorandum of agreement" which was adopted by the union and the

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manufacturers on November 5, 1925. Records of the United Fur Manufacturers Association.

77.Gold, p. 42.

78."Strike Call Brings Greek Furriers Out: Militant Mass Pickets Under Left Leaders," Daily Worker, 30 November 1925, p.4.

79.Daily Worker, 30 October and 3 November, 1925.

80.Reported in "Strike Call Brings Greek Furriers Out," Daily Worker, 30 October 1925, p.4.

81.Daily Worker, 30 October and 3 and 4 November 1925; Women's Wear Daily, 3 and 5 November 1925.

82.From Empros' masthead which appeared on front page of the Daily Worker on 4 November 1925.

83.According to John Papayannis and John Vafiades, articles and news reports supporting the employers views were published in Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald], a major newspaper in the Greek American comnmunity. Unfortunately, copies of this paper for 1925 could not be located in any of the major libraries in New York or Boston nor in the holdings of the Balch Institute.

84.Daily Worker, 4 November 1925, p.1.

85.The importance of 'filotimia' among Greeks is discussed by J.K. Campbell, Honour, Family and Patronage (Oxford, 1964); Idem, "Honour and the Devil," in J. G. Peristiany, ed., Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society (London, 1966), pp. 139-170; Dorothy Lee, "View of the Self in Greek Culture," in Dorothy Lee, ed., Freedom and Culture (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1959), pp. 141-153; and J. G. Peristiany, "Honour and Shame in a Cypriot Highland Village," in Peristiany, Honour and Shame, pp. 173-190. The Greek organizers of the struggle and the Greek radicals supporting the strike effort understood the importance of appealing to the sense of Greek ethnic pride and honor in order to bolster the workers' confidence that their actions were correct, not only for them as fur workers, but for all Greeks. Drawing on the twenty years of research on immigrant history, Bodnar notes that ethnic labor leaders understood the immigrant workers' cultures, of which they were a part, and could draw on some aspects of their value and belief systems to promote unionization. See Bodnar, pp. 100 - 101.

86."Empros dia ten Niki," [Forward to Victory], special Greek strike edition of The Daily Worker, 4 November 1925:1.

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87.A list of the main demands were published in Greek and in English in the Daily Worker: 44 hours work per week; time and one-half for overtime work; ten paid legal holidays; a minimum scale of wages; the right of union representatives to enter and inspect conditions in factories; and all the other conditions prevailing in union shops in the industry. Daily Worker, 2,3 and 4 November 1925.

88.Interview with John Vafiades.

89.See advertisements in The Fur Worker, November-December 1925, p.5.

90.John Pappas [Papayannis], "Activities of the Greek Fur Workers," The Fur Worker, November-December 1925, p.5.

91.Statistics on the size of the workforce in the Greek shops before 1925 do not exist.

92.The 583 names in the list of operators and finishers from which Table 7.2 was compiled were compared with the names in the "Registration Book" of the Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70. The latter contained information on the 'place of birth' of most of its members, many of whom had been organized into the Joint Board's finishers and operators locals in 1925. Through this cross-referencing of these sources, Table 7.3 was developed.

93.While there are several surnames which are common among Greeks from many parts of the Greek-speaking world, some are more commonly found in certain regions.

94.See Chapter Four. Interview with Menelaos Toskos; Toskos' 'application for benefits' in the records of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry.

95.It has been reported that the Kastorians would not teach the key craft of cutting to anyone but to a fellow townsman. Other Greeks who learned cutting did so in the mainstream shops. Interviews with Andreas Manthos and John Vafiades.

96.Interview with Anna Rhuska who was born to a Kastorian furrier's famiily in New York City, circa the First World War. Interviews with John Papayannis and John Vafiades.

97.This was confirmed in almost every interview which was done with a Kastorian furrier. In the period between 1920 and 1939 the town's newspaper, Kastoria carried numerous articles and announcements about the comings and goings of townspeople to and from the United States.

98.Kastoria, 11, 14 and 25 March 1928 and 4 and 18 April 1937.

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99.The two Kastorian brothers, Philip and Mihali Bakalis wrote numerous essays in Kastoria on their compatriots' community and workplace life in New York. In 1928, Kastorian poet and one-time emigrant in New York Argyris Papadisko published a collection of his poems, about half of which were written abroad. Several of those evoked nostalgia for the hometown and a few touched on the theme of the Kastorian immigrant's commitment to his birthplace. See Kastoria and Argyris Papadisko, Kastoriana [About Kastoria] (Kastoria, 1928).

100.See Chapter Three.

101.The writer's father, though not a furrier, was an Ottoman Greek from Ordu, Turkey who had emigrated from his homeland in 1913 in order to work temporarily in the United States. By 1922, he knew that he would never return to Turkey and that the United States would be his permanent home. Greece was not an option for him since he knew that his relatives, who had been sent there under the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne, were refugees and considered as a burden on the country by the local Greeks. Interview with Nicholas Karvonides, Biddeford, Maine, August 1976. A discussion of the political, economic and social implications of the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey for the Greeks can be found in Dimitri Pentzopoulos, The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact upon Greece (Paris, 1962).

102."Ledger Cards," IFWU, 1913 to Summer, 1925. Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

103.Very little has been written about the role of women in the fur workers union and in the industry. One recent study which has drawn attention to women as organizers and union activists in the garment industry is Carolyn Daniel McCreesh, Women in the Campaign to Organize Garment Workers, 1880 -1917 (?: 1985).

104.Naufsika Kalkandi, Mary Lambrou, Vasiliki Maliarou, and Thalia Zourelli were often on the Executive Board of the Greek Fur Workers' local, although none ever held a position as an officer.

105.Names of Greek women could not be found among the workers in the cutters and nailers locals of the Furriers' Joint Board nor among the same craft workers of the Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70. For the period up to 1939, it was highly unusual to find any woman of any ethnic background employed as a cutter or nailor. Many were employed as operators, though they were in the minority, while most finishers in the mainstream industry were female.

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106.See agreements between manufacturers' associations and the International Fur Workers Union up to 1936.

107.Within each craft workers were divided into '1st' and '2nd' class groups. For cutters, nailers and operators these distinctions were based on the type of garment and skins they worked on; for finishers, taping and staying were second class tasks. First class finishers were paid more than second class operators and nailers and female operators but less than first and second class cutters and first class operators and nailers. Second class finishers received the lowest wages of all craft workers.

108.A few women went into business with their furrier husbands and many women worked in their husbands' shops as finishers or operators. Some businesses which were incorporated even listed women as officers of the corporation though not in the management of the business. Sources: Interview with John Vafiades. Dun and Bradstreet Reports of member firms of the UFMA and work histories of Greek applicants for retirement benefits of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry.

109.Only one woman in the photograph could be identified. She is Vasiliki Maliarou. The elderly gentleman in the center was a finisher from Siatista, A. Payvouris. He had been active in the organizing campaign of 1925. It is interesting that a man appears at the center of all these women. Perhaps, in someone's mind, his presence sanctioned the women's participation in union activities since he was very patriarchal in appearance.

110.Interview with John Papayannis.

111.In a list of members of the Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70, compiled in October 1937, 762 of the 1544 members were Greek women and 647 were Greek men. Of the remaining 46 members, 21 were non-Greeks and the gender and/or ethnicity of 25 members could not be determined. Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York City.

112.It was well known in the 1930s that fur manufacturers employed gangsters, like Lepke and Durrah, to intimidate and terrorized striking workers. See Foner, pp. 396-415. Interview with John Vafiades.

113.Among these women were: A. Galani, Naufsika Kalkandi, Mary Lambrou, Vasiliki Maliarou, Eleni Sdona Mikedes, Sykalidou, Angeliki Zarzanika, Thalia Zourelli, and others named by John Papayannis and John Vafiades.

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114.Work histories of women furriers found in their retirement applications in the records of the Health and Retirement Fund of the Fur Industry.

115.Interviews with Maria Daskalaki, Helen Mikedes and Vasiliki Papazissi.

116.She recalled that a man named Papacontantinou was the union representative at the time of her initial membership. It has not been possible to identify exactly who he was. However, it is likely that she was referring to John Papayannis who was first union organizer in the Joint Board Furriers' Union until 1928 and then an activist in the Greek local 25 of the Furriers' Section of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union. The only record of her membership comes from the records of Local 70 which note her initiation as of 1935, at a time when many progressive Greeks joined the local after having been members of the Greek branch of the fur division of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union (NTWIU). Records of membership for the NTWIU are not available.

117.Addresses for the 700 or more Greek fur workers could not be located in any of the union's membership records for 1925. But in his interview, union organizer, John Papayannis, confirmed that many of the workers lived in the areas named in the text. A list of members of the Greek Fur Workers' Local 70 for 1937 provided the workers' addresses. While many of the 1,457 members listed were by then living in upper Manhattan and in Queens and Brooklyn, about 25% still lived in Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen, an area on the west side of Manhatten from 14th to 49th Streets and from Sixth to Ninth Avenues. Records of the Furriers' Joint Council, New York City.

118.See New York State "Manuscript Census" for 1925.

119.David Montgomery has shown that this decade was one of very intense union activity among the foreign born throughout the United States including, of course, New York City and the garment trades. Montgomery, Workers Control in America (Cambridge, 1979). See also, J.M. Budish and George Soule, The New Unionism in the Clothing Industry (New York, 1920).

120.This data was collected in part by the writer [assisted by her spouse] and in part by two undergraduate students at City College. The latter, who were in a course on the "Greek Experience in the United States" which was given by the writer at City College in 1973 under the direction of Herbert Gutman, collected the data for a research paper on the occupational composition of Greek immigrants in some neighborhoods in New York in 1925.

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121.One major exception would have obviously been those fur manufacturers who also lived in these communities on the lower west side of New York City.

122.During the stike at the Rockefeller-owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Company in Ludlow, California in 1914, Atlantis gave considerable coverage to the struggle between the workers and the company since many Greek immigrants and their families were victims of the "Massacre" which occurred there. One of the leaders of the strike was Louis Tikas, a Greek immigrant from Crete. For the story of the Greek participation in this strike, see Zeese Papanicholas, Buried Unsung: Louis Tikas and the Ludlow Massacre (Salt Lake City, Utah: 1984).

123.A clippings file for articles appearing in the Greek American press between 1926 and 1939 and written by officials of the fur manufacturers' association and of the union was kept by the Greek fur workers union. This file was discovered among the papers of Local 70, Greek Fur Workers Union in the Archives of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City. These clippings were most helpful to this writer since copies of Atlantis amd Ethnikos Kyrix for that entire period are unavailable in any of the major libraries in New York City, Boston, Chicago and Lowell (where large Greek populations settled) or in major collections of modern Greek studies in the United States like the Modern Greek Collection of the University of Cincinnati. It is not certain whether the Library of the Balch Institute in Philadelphia, which has some original copies of Atlantis but not of Ethnikos Kyrix, has the volumes for those years. The author has in her possession some volumes of Empros for the years between 1923 and 1939.

124.Atlantis continued to publish articles sympathetic to the fur workers and often written by radical union leaders until the early years of the Great Depression. However by late 1935 when a struggle for control of the Greek fur workers local 70 emerged between 'left' and 'right' wing factions, Atlantis shifted its weight to support of the employers and the right wing faction in the union. See Atlantis, 1926 to 1930 and 1935 to 1942.

125.Branches could also be found in other major manufacturing centers with sizeable Greek American working class communities, especially in the steel making cities in Pennsylvania and Ohio and in Chicago and Detroit. Oddly enough, although Greek textile and shoe workers were quite numerous in New England factory towns and cities, there apparently was no branch to be found there expect perhaps in Boston. Even 'letters to the editor'of Empros and responses to fund raising drives initiated by Empros were less common from Greek Americans in New England than from parts of the

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Midwest and Midatlantic states. Interviews with Sam Mamunes; and John Vafiades.

126.In July 1925, the editorial offices of Empros moved to Chicago for a period of about one year. It then resumed publication in New York City. In October 1939 the paper changed its name to Elefteria [Liberation] and in April 1941 to EllenoAmerikanikon Vima/Greek American Tribune. It was written, edited and published with a core of the same people until the early 1950s when it ceased publication under pressure from the FBI and the immigration department. Several of its key personnel were also deported to Eastern Europe during the McCarthy Era.

127.In the 1930s and 1940s the Greek Fur Workers' Local 70 received extensive coverage in Empros.

128.Interview with Anastasia Morphopoulos. Ms Morphopoulos had been an activist in the Greek American community since the First World War. Her husband was a restaurant worker and union organizer and she was a garment worker and briefly a fur worker. In the 1920's the two of them also participated in a theater group organized by Spartacus and performed plays written by radical Greek immigrant playwrights and by Maxim Gorki.

129.Interviews with John Papayannis, Kostas 'Gus' Tates, and John Vafiades.

130.It is instructive as well as for contemporary sociologists who have emphasized the resilience of ethnic solidarity over workers' consciousness and class interest.

131.Kastoria 21 February 1926, p.4

132.The Greek Fur Workers' Local 70 remained in existence until 1966 when it was disbanded by the international union to which the Furriers Joint Council was then affiliated [The International Butcher Workers Union] on the basis that it was a 'segregated' local within the Joint Council. The Civil Rights Act of 1965 was invoked as the legal basis for the international's decision. The Greeks, who by then comprised a very large and much younger section of the labor force in the industry in comparison with the older and fewer mostly Jewish section, unsuccessfully resisted their local's dissolution. Their leadership at the time believed that the local was dissolved more because it presented the leadership of the Furriers Joint Council with an organized challenge from below rather than because it segregated Greek workers from the mainstream union. See transcript of the National Labor Relations Board Hearing "In the Matter of the Greek Fur Workers' Local 70-F of the Furriers' Joint Council of New York and the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen

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of North America, AFL-CIO on December 1,7,14 1965. NLRB docket #2-RC-14212. 3 volumes. Interview with Arthur Kotoros.

133.The United Fur Manufacturers Association remained the organization of choice among Greek manufacturers into the 1980s with the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. being viewed by them as the 'Jewish' association. There were some non-Greek manufacturers in the 1940s and later who joined the UFMA, but always in small numbers or as partners with Greek furriers.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

EPILOGUE

What has been shown in Chapter Seven is that commonality of ethnic background was not enough to suppress class antagonisms and subsequent confrontation between Greek fur workers and their coethnic bosses. However, it would be misleading to end this study in 1925 without pointing out that, during the period up to 1943, ethnicity persisted as an important factor in shaping relationships among Greek American furriers and between them and the rest of the industry. This epilogue will briefly highlight the interplay of class and ethnicity among these furriers at their workplace during the years from 1925 to 1943.[1]

Ethnicity and the Employers

For the Greek employers, ethnicity was a strong force promoting and buttressing their business and class interests at the workplace. From the very beginning, they had been able to penetrate and establish themselves in the fur industry as a tightly knit group which had the requisite skills and experience bolstered by the strong ethnic bonds and networks needed to carve out a niche for themselves. Prior to 1925, Greek manufacturers had been able to recruit

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and manage their work force through ethnic networks and norms. Subsequently, in November 1925 when the Greek employers were first confronted collectively by their coethnic work force, they had gotten together as 'the Greek manufacturers' to negotiate with the union which was acting on behalf of their workers. As Greek manufacturers, they appealed to their coethnic workers as fellow Greeks to abandon the strike which, they claimed, had been instigated by outsiders.

After the settlement of the 1925 strike, rather than join the mainstream association, the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. which was predominantly Jewish, the Greek furriers institutionalized their group as the United Fur Manufacturers Association (UFMA). Its main objectives were to represent the business interests of the Greek manufacturers in the industry, to act as the medium through which Greek businessmen would try to protect their 'niche' in the industry, and to act as the intermediary between individual employers and their organized labor force. Although they had dropped direct reference to the ethnic character of the organization in the incorporation papers of the association, its entire membership, executive body and administrative staff, was Greek. Meetings were to be announced in the Greek press and, while the minutes were issued in English, the meetings were conducted in Greek.[2] These furriers had united as businessmen, employers and as Greeks; that is, on an ethno-class basis.

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The UFMA remained the organization of choice for those Greek manufacturers who became members of a trade organization. Virtually none of the Greeks ever joined the mainstream Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. or participated in any of the trade activities which the Associated sponsored.[3] Of course, many non-Greek firms also never joined the Associated since their businesses were transient and marginal while the Associated represented the more stable and substantive firms. But, while several of the members of the UFMA could have met the standards of membership in the Associated, they preferred to remain in a parallel, but separate institution. Whether there was ever a concerted effort on the part of the Associated to recruit Greek manufacturers or to absorb the UFMA is not known. But the likelihood is that they would not have joined.

The UFMA also consistently accused the Associated of working in collusion with the Fur Workers Union to drive the Greek employers out of the industry.[4] One reason for making this claim was to appeal to the ethnic sentiment of their workers and of the community at large. Since the industry was so fiercely competitive and since the Greek employers relied on a particular niche within the industry for their survival, they felt vulnerable to pressure from the mainstream industry. They believed that because the mainstream manufacturers were predominantly Jewish, ethnic networks and bonds among them reinforced their control over the industry. While divisions existed among the Jewish

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manufacturers based on competition among their firms, the stratification of their businesses within the industry,[5] and on differences in regional background and on number of years in the United States, the Greek fur manufacturers did not necessarily care to perceive and acknowledge such distinctions but spoke of Jewish interests as a unified bloc.[6] What further aggravated the latter perception were non-business institutions among the Jewish fur manufacturers in the New York which must have appeared to consolidate ethnic solidarity among them: the 'Charity Chest of the Fur Industry,' the 'Fur Trade Foundation,' and a synagogue located in the fur market.[7]

What is most important, whenever the Associated, which was composed mainly of Jewish firms, entered into negotiations for a new agreement with the Fur Workers Union, whose membership was also mostly Jewish, only those two parties were involved.[8] The Fur Workers Union had been quite adamant throughout its history that there be one collective agreement throughout the industry. In 1926, the Joint Board in New York would negotiate only with the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. during the big strike that year. They Union preferred to then deal with other manufacturers individually and, if possible, to ignore any other associations. Jesse Carpenter, who has written a study on collective bargaining in the needle trades, said that "the most sustained struggle to maintain the principle of one association, one union, and one collective agreement

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for each industry came in the fur manufacturing trade...When the United Fur Manufacturers' Association (employers of Greek workers) .... [was] formed in the twenties, [it was] forced to accept the agreement negotiated between the Associated Fur Manufacturers and the union."[9] To the Greek UFMA, that was undeniable evidence of a conspiracy between the two parties designed to exclude and eliminate them from the industry. The Greek manufacturers felt that their ethnic association along with an independent Greek labor organization could protect their interests as minorities and insure their survival in the industry. Later on, in 1936, the same concern was articulated by Thomas Miller,[10] at the time the president of the UFMA, in an article on the history of fur industry over a twenty year period in which he discussed what he called "the problem of the minority status of Greeks in the fur industry:"[11]

> ... The Greeks also have to confront the serious problem that they constitute a minority in the fur industry. However, this issue, despite all the seriousness it has, would be rendered relatively simple if the two Organizations of the Greek fur industry, both that of the manufacturers and that of the workers, have as leaders honest, courageous and progressive men ... It is well known that the large Organizations in the fur industry wish to rule over the industry and that it is likely that during conferences to conclude a joint agreement, they predominate ... Consequently, it is not absurd to expect that the result of such conferences will be the announcement of a strike by the workers or of a lock-out by the employers; not because there are serious differences between workers and employers but because through the lock-out or strike the minority in the industry will loose its independence and the larger organizations will prevail ...

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Employers, Workers and Ethnicity

In the early years, the employers had relied on ethnic and kinship networks, bonds and norms to recruit, train and discipline their workers. But with the strike of November 1925 against the Greek shops, such informal communal mechanisms withered. The workers had joined the fur workers' union and their coethnic employers had formed a manufacturers' association. Class organizations among Greek American furriers had become institutionalized with the 1925 strike. There was no way to turn the clock back. The employers understood and accepted that; yet over the next eighteen years they persistently tried to undermine class solidarity among the Greek fur workers and between them and the rest of the mainstream labor force. Furthermore, they tried to supplant class unity and sentiment with ethnic loyalty and allegiance. What the organized employers in the UFMA substituted for communal bonds and networks was an appeal to the workers' "shared feeling of peoplehood,"[12] or, what is better termed in the context of how it was used by the bosses, ethnic chauvinism.

No sooner had the workers and employers settled the strike and the workers joined the Joint Board Furriers' Union than their coethnic employers through the UFMA began to work at a strategy to coopt the workers' willingness to belong to a multi-ethnic, class-based organization. The aims were to separate the Greek workers from the mainstream union and to draw them into an ethnic labor organization

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which would be autonomous of the Furriers Union and under 'Greek control,' and which would sign independent agreements with the UFMA. These aims, and the strategy employed to achieve them, remained essentially constant during the next eighteen years, with some modifications and elaboration based on changes in political and social trends both in the Greek American community and in the broader society in the United States. The strategy entailed (1) the development of an aggressive propaganda campaign whose message was initially chauvinistic and anti-Semitic but, later, also fascistic and anti-communist; (2) the use of institutions of the Greek American community, especially the press, to disseminate their positions and to influence the rank and file fur workers as well as the perceptions of the general community; (3) the refusal to recognize or negotiate with the mainstream union; (4) the encouragement of ethnic, dual labor organizations to supplant the legitimate industry-wide union among the Greek workers; and (5) the promotion of a group of 'labor leaders' who had close ties to the UFMA, its manager, and the employers.

-UFMA Objectives

Aside from wanting to separate their work force from the mainstream workers and to have them join what was essentially a "company union," there was another motive behind the bosses' strategy. Recognizing that the unionization of their work force was irreversible, the UFMA, like any employers' organization, was interested in

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curtailing the demands of their workers. They were willing to concede certain minimum conditions and terms of employment to their workers so long as such demands did not go too far. For the Greek employers, a coethnic labor force under their control provided them with a competitive edge against the mainstream industry. If they had to pay higher wages, increase the size of their work force to a minimum of ten workers per shop, remove management from production functions, abandon contracts with non-union shops, and accept one collective agreement for the industry, all demands being made by at least one of the mainstream unions[13], many of the Greek firms would have gone out of business, especially the substandard contracting shops which worked with UFMA members. Such changes challenged the existence of the UFMA, its membership, and the contractors with whom they did business.[14] In order to protect its business and class interests in the industry, the UFMA, therefore, hid behind the transparent concern for its coethnic workers and their jobs based on a "shared feeling of peoplehood."

Not all Greek employers were active in designing and implementing this strategy. Before the Second World War, the membership in the UFMA never exceeded 75 firms even though the number of Greek-owned firms in the trade directories during this same period more than doubled that number.[15] The smaller producers, often contractors to larger Greek or mainstream manufacturers, usually worked

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alone or with a relative. When they employed workers, only two or three were in a shop where the division of labor was minimal and where the employees were most likely to be family members. These shops were very difficult for the union to penetrate not only because they included family members but because they were marginal operations which shifted location frequently and were in and out of existence easily. Since these businesses were small and proscribed by the contracting/jobbing system and their work force small and manageable via informal kinship channels, they had little incentive to battle the union either individually or collectively. In fact, such producers remained 'unorganized' in that they were reluctant to join an employers' association where they would have to pay membership fees and incur other expenses which they could not afford. Nonetheless, during crises, such as the 1926 General Strike, these independent employers rallied behind the UFMA and made contributions to the employers' strike fund.[16]

It was the UFMA which undertook to undermine the workers participation in the mainstream union. Its members owned small-sized factories employing eight or ten or more workers with greater division of labor in the factory where the owner was not usually directly involved in production. Some of them were in direct competition with their counterparts in the Associated since both organizations had members who were fur garment manufacturers as well as

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trimmings producers.[17] The competitive edge that they had had in the industry had been the large pool of mostly unorganized coethnic workers who were paid low wages for long hours of work and the sizeable number of Greek contractors available to them. With the organization of their workers in 1925 and with pressure from the union to eliminate contracting shops and to organize all workers, the UFMA manufacturers felt vulnerable. Therefore, they resorted to ethnic chauvinism to try to convince their workers that ethnic solidarity meant the survival of the 'Greek fur industry' and therefore of jobs for Greek workers.

-Implementation of UFMA Strategy

While the UFMA might not have mapped out their strategy from the very beginning, the 1926 General Strike in the fur industry[18] provided them with the initial opportunity to shape its major components. In February, when the strike first started, John Rompapas, manager of the UFMA and a major player in developing and implementing the UFMA's strategy,[19] had sent an article to the Atlantis which contained most of the major points that would be repeated and elaborated upon over the next several years by him and by other leading members of the UFMA.[20] Naturally, as a spokesman for an employers' association, he attacked the strike and the union. But he also went on to voice the claims that the union's leaders threatened Greek interests in the industry; that the union's leaders wanted to "fuse

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the Greek group with theirs to defend their interests and to annihilate the Greek force" in the industry by destroying Greek businesses.[21] Implicit in Rompapas' argument was the idea that the majority ethnic group in the industry, the Jews, wanted to drive the Greeks out of fur manufacturing. Although in this article he never referred to the ethnicity of the union leaders, Rompapas and other UFMA spokespersons did not mince their words later on that year and over the next several years.[22]

Rompapas also raised the issue of an autonomous Greek union for the workers in this article. He claimed to have received information that the Greek workers were "considering establishing their own local with a separate treasury, representation on the council, and independence from the International Union. If there are Greek leaders capable to undertake this task, they would be worthy of congratulations because through the gathering together of the Greek labor force Greek interests are insured completely."[23]

All employers had thought that the strike would be short-lived and that the union would cave in to their pressure. They were astonished at the tenacity and determination of the strikers who kept the industry shut down for seventeen weeks. The Fur Workers' Joint Board, under the leadership of Ben Gold, was able to get an agreement on 11 June 1926 acceding to most of its original demands. During the course of the negotiations between the

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union and the mainstream manufacturers' association, the UFMA was not included. The union preferred to settle first with the large association which represented the largest number of shops. When it was ready to talk with the UFMA, the latter refused to meet claiming that the union was attempting to force the Greek manufacturers to submit to the control of the mainstream association. In a statement to Women's Wear Daily, the vice president of the UFMA, and another important strategist of UFMA tactics and positions, Thomas Miller, said: "We believe it is the union's business to get better terms for its members, but we do not think it is part of the union's business to force an affiliation between our organization and any other."[24] The Greek fur workers remained on strike for more than a month past the signing with the mainstream employers.

It was at this point that the UFMA began to elaborate and implement its strategy to split the Greek workers from the mainstream union. First, throughout the duration of the strike, the Greek American press in New York had carried frequent articles reporting its progress. Ethnikos Kyrix sided with the employers while Atlantis and Empros took up the workers' cause.[25] When the strike against the Greek-owned shops dragged on past the settlement in the mainstream industry, the polemics began to fly in the pages of the local Greek American press. The leaders of the UFMA supplied Ethnikos Kyrix with a steady stream of articles suggesting that a conspiracy between the mainstream Jewish

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manufacturers' association and the fur workers' union was threatening the 'Greek fur industry' and that the Greek fur workers were being misled and exploited by the union.[26]

At the end of August, a competing union, the Brotherhood of Greek Fur Workers, was organized by a group of mostly Kastorian furriers with the help and encouragement of the UFMA. At the time, it was common knowledge that the UFMA was behind the Brotherhood's formation.[27] Its leaders arranged for one of their compatriots experienced in labor relations and at one time a labor recruiter, Chris Yankou, to spearhead the formation of the Brotherhood. In 1926, Yankou had also beem the president of the Kastorian society and was known to have financial interests in Yankou Brothers, a non-association fur manufacturing firm located in New York and Philadelphia.[28] In March, Yankou Brothers was included in a list of 185 Greek fur manufacturers opposed to the General Strike which was published in the local newspaper in Kastoria.[29] In April 1926, he had been a part of a group of independent Greek manufacturers which formed an "Industrial Committee of Greek Manufacturers" to meet with the UFMA so as to discuss common interests in combatting the strike and in establishing a joint strike fund.[30] During the summer and fall of 1926, the UFMA cash book showed two disbursements of several hundreds of dollars to Yankou, presumably for use in organizing the Brotherhood.[31] Needless, to say, Yankou's record during the 1926 General Strike and his business affiliations hardly

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gave him the credentials to organize and represent workers into a union. However, together with one of the original organizers of the 1925 strike committee and other people, Yankou signed up 376 workers on 1 September 1926, all employees in fur shops affiliated to the UFMA.[32]

The UFMA immediately signed an agreement with the Brotherhood to cover the workers in their shops. This agreement required their workers to leave the Joint Board and join the Brotherhood. They were able to recruit none other than Father Methodios Kourkoules of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in New York City to act as the impartial mediator between the coethnic workers and employers.[33] Retired Kastorian furrier Vasili Shioukas reported that for many years Father Kourkoules had been a close friend to Chris Yankou. It is not known what Yankou's role might have been in recruiting Kourkoules, but it can be surmised that he must have intervened in some fashion. Kourkoules' participation lent legitimacy to the negotiations especially for the Macedonian immigrant furriers since in the old country the highest ranking Orthodox priest in a Greek community was the head of every formal communal institution.[34] After a year or so, Kourkoules was replaced by a layperson but he continued in the capacity of honorary chairman of the conference committee between the union and the association. Now, the Greek employers' group had a coethnic labor organization with which it could negotiate labor disputes among coethnics, independently of the

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mainstream union.[35]

Over the next decade, the Greek Brotherhood, which became known as the Greek Fur Workers Union, chartered Local 70 of the International Fur Workers Union (IFWU) in March 1927, and the Greek manufacturers' association became permanent institutions. Although Local 70 did not represent all the Greek workers in the industry,[36] it did control jobs in the Greek shops which belonged to the UFMA and the UFMA dealt exclusively with it.[37] Any workers who were employed by UFMA shops, therefore were obliged to join the Brotherhood in order to remain employed.[38] A factor which further solidified the relationship between the UFMA and Local 70 was that the leaders of both organizations were predominantly Kastorian. Between 1927 and 1935, the Board of Directors of the UFMA had only two or three manufacturers who were not Kastorian and those were from Siatista, Kastoria's sister fur manufacturing city. Its manager, John Rompapas, while not a Kastorian, was also a West Macedonian from Kozani and most of its members were similarly from the two West Macedonian towns.[39] The officers and executive board of Local 70 were largely Kastorians with only a few members from outside Macedonia. Its manager was also a Kastorian.[40] Moreover, 28% of the membership of Local 70 between 1926 and 1935 was made up of Kastorians.[41] Such overlapping of local and regional origins, and undoubtedly of kinship ties, among workers and bosses, in class organizations with a distinctly ethnic character, certainly

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reinforced the basis of collaboration among the two groups. Without a doubt, these workers and bosses interacted with one another within their communities outside the workplace. The Kastorian Society, 'Omonia,' was one place where they came into contact with one another on a regular basis.[42]

The harmonious relations between the coethnic workers in Local 70 and their bosses in the UFMA continued largely unchallenged for several years. In 1928, there was an unsuccessful attempt made by progressive members of Local 70 to unite their local with the Greek Branch in the Joint Board Furriers Union.[43] During the next several years, Local 70 negotiated agreements with the UFMA which were similar to those in the mainstream industry though the issue always raised by critics was whether it was enforced.[44] Workers employed in UFMA shops had to join Local 70 if they wanted to keep their jobs since that local had agreements with their employers' association. From 1926 to 1935, Local 70 and the Greek manufacturers gained advantage from the disruption and division within the union in the mainstream industry that followed the success of the 1926 General Strike led by Ben Gold and the left wing leadership of the Furriers Joint Board.[45] Efforts to undermine Gold's influence and control over the New York Joint Board, which comprised over three-quarters of the IFWU's membership, came from the combined efforts of the administrations of the international and of the American Federation of Labor (AF of L). By 1927 the two organizations had expelled Gold and his

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colleagues as well as the Joint Board from the IFWU, replaced it with the Joint Council, run by furriers of their liking, and recognized a separate Greek local also opposed to Gold and his associates. Gold and the leadership of the Joint Board eventually joined other leftists in the garment industry to form the Needle Trade Workers Industrial Union (NTWIU) in 1928-1929 in which the furriers constituted their own division with Gold at their head. The furriers in the NTWIU, including those Greeks[46] who had remained with Gold from as far back as August 1926, were preoccupied with the efforts to keep their constituency within what became known as the "Industrial Union." The IFWU and the AF of L were eager to tolerate and to encourage the existence of Local 70 so long as it kept a portion of the Greek workers away from Gold's organization.

Following unity in the mainstream union (1935)[47] and the emergence of a progressive opposition to the leadership of Local 70,[48] the collaboration between the leaders of Local 70 and the UFMA was broken in 1936-37. In December 1936, after a vigorous campaign by left wing Greeks under the direction of John Vafiades and after intervention from the International Fur Workers Union, elections were held in Local 70 and the left wing slate was elected to office.[49] Then, another round of intense confrontation between the new leadership in the union and the UFMA followed and lasted until 1943. Again the pages of the ethnic press were flooded with articles calling, on the one hand, for separate

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Greek institutions among the workers and the employers in the industry. Again the old theme about the Greeks being a minority in the industry, threatened by a conspiracy of the 'Jewish' association and union, was revived.[50] Of course, accusations that the new leadership was under the control of the Communist Party and Moscow were made frequently. On the other hand, the progressive leadership denounced the racism and pro-fascist stances of their employers and of the former union administration. They advocated a strong union and internationalist unity among workers of all national backgrounds in the fur industry.[51]

Although the new leadership of Local 70 remained in control of the local until the early 1950s, its power did not go unchallenged either by the employers or by the former leadership. Once they had been elected to the executive positions in the union, the UFMA would not recognize them and would not honor the agreement it had signed with the previous administration. Simultaneously, the old administration refused to submit records and control of the treasury to the new officers. After a general lockout/strike occurred in the industry in 1938, the UFMA first negotiated an agreement with Local 70 but then decided not to honor it. Over the next two years, Local 70 was embroiled in a struggle both with the employers and with members of the previous administration over legitimacy, recognition and control over the Greek-owned shops.[52] Then, in January, 1940 opponents of the left wing

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leadership, with the support of the employers, formed yet another rival union[53] for Greek fur workers which was supposedly open to any fur worker, but which was obviously, meant to draw Greek workers away from Local 70. The American Federation of Fur Workers (AFFW), was chartered directly by the AF of L[54] in opposition to Local 70 which, by then, was part of the mainstream Joint Council, itself affiliated to the International Fur and Leather Workers Union, a founding member of the Congress of Industrial Organization (CIO).[55] According to one list, membership in the AFFW reached about 330 workers while Local 70's rolls counted 1455 in October 1937 and close to 2000 in the early '40s.[56] Like the Brotherhood and Local 70 prior to 1935, the AFFW had several Kastorian furriers[57] in its leadership and among the membership with continued close ties to the employers' organization, the UFMA, and to right wing causes also subscribed to by the employers. After more than three bitter years of struggle between the AFFW and Local 70, which involved strikes, court action, challenges before the National Labor Relations Board and an extensive battle of words,[58] "the membership of the Joint Board of the AFFW:AFL voted to dissolve their organization and return its charter and seals to the American Federation of Labor."[59] Local 70 agreed to accept most of them into its ranks.[60] From then until 1966, all the Greek workers employed in organized fur manufacturing shops remained members of Local 70.[61]

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Ethnicity and the Workers

-Ethno-class workers' organizations

Throughout the period from 1925 to 1943, Greek workers also remained organized, in some fashion or another, in workers' organizations with distinctly ethnic characters; that is, like the Greek employers' association, theirs were also ethno-class organizations. In 1925, when the workers first entered the Joint Board Furriers' Union, they joined craft locals at their workplaces; but within the union they had an ethnic, language branch which mobilized their participation in union activities, strikes, educational and cultural programs.[62] In February 1926, when the Joint Board Furriers Union in New York prepared for the lockout/strike which lasted from February 2nd to June 11th of that year, the Greek workers were organized into strike committes, not according to their membership in craft locals but according to their membership in the 'Greek branch.' For example, the Greek women had their own 'Greek Ladies Strike Committee.'[63] In the fall of 1926, 392 Greek workers employed in Greek shops which were members of the UFMA joined the independent Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York.[64] In March, 1927, the Brotherhood became 'The Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70' when it received a charter from the AF of L as a local of the IFWU. Yet, it remained autonomous of the Furriers Joint Council in New York and only in 1929-1930 did it begin to engage in minimal and sporadic contacts with the latter.

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In 1928, when nothing came of the short-lived and unsuccessful attempt to unite Local 70 and the Joint Board's Greek Branch, the Greek Branch of the Joint Board Fur Workers Union was absorbed into the Fur Division of the NTWIU. Now, what had been just a 'branch' in the Joint Board became 'Local 25' of the NTWIU.[65] In 1935, Local 25 was disbanded and its members were asked to join Local 70. Then in 1940, when the AFFW appeared on the scene, it too was an ethnic organization even though it had some non-Greek members and professed to be open to all workers in the industry.

-Ethnicity Determined Union Membership

The mainstream union in New York was de facto an ethno-class organization as well. While no census is known to have ever been taken of the ethnic composition of the IFWU or of fur manufacturing's New York Joint Board and its successor, the Joint Coucil, it was common knowledge that it was composed overwhelmingly of Eastern European Jewish workers while its leadership was almost entirely Jewish as well. Since they were in the majority, and since the fur manufacturing workers' union had had an internationalist, socialist orientation since its inception in 1913, there was no need to note the ethnicity of the members. It was a given.[66] Yet, the Union's official publications, frequent flyers and leaflets were issued not only in English as the national language of the United States, they were translated and printed in Yiddish as well.[67] Its meetings and day-to-

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day business were also conducted in Yiddish for a very long time. The New York fur workers' union was active among progressive Jewish community organizations and groups and it supported progressive political causes of concern to the Jewish community as well.[68] Yet, membership in the mainstream union was open to any fur worker regardless of her or his ethnic background. That was not entirely the case for the Greek furriers.

From the very beginning, ethnicity determined affiliation within the union for Greek furriers. Under the Joint Board's leadership from 1925 to 1928, the Greek workers were initiated and registered as members of their respective craft locals. That was their primary membership in the union. Issues such as conditions of work, wages, and grievances were handled by the craft local. However, the Greek workers also belonged to the Greek Branch which dealt with the task of recruiting the workers to the craft locals. It also provided education for the workers on union procedures and on the value of union membership, mobilized Greeks for job action when that was necessary, and organized cultural activities. What the exact structure of the branch was and how it was related to the Joint Board and to the IFWU is not known. It had emerged from the efforts of the organizing committee which had assumed the task in the fall of 1925 of getting the Greek workers to join the union. At the time, it did not have the same status in the union as the various craft locals which elected their own officers to

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participate on the Joint Board and in its decision making.

For the Greek Brotherhood and Local 70, ethnic background and/or employment in UFMA shops were the main criteria for membership.[69] The Brotherhood called itself "The Greek [emphasis added] Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York" and Local 70 became "The Greek [emphasis added] Fur Workers Union." Local 70 also demonstrated an interest not only with the ethnicity of its members, but with where they had been born in the old country. Along with information on the date of initiation, the member's age at time of initiation, her or his craft, and prior union affiliation, the Local's secretary also recorded the place of birth for its members. In most cases, the place was specified as a city, town, village or region rather than just generally as 'Greece,' 'Macedonia,' 'Asia Minor,' or some other general place.[70]

In 1930 at its Convention in Miami, the IFWU agreed that all workers employed in Greek-owned shops and all Greeks employed in Joint Council shops would be members of and represented by Local 70. Moreover, Local 70, while not formally affiliated to the Joint Council Fur Workers' Union in New York City, was invited to participate in the meetings of the Joint Council.[71] This decision helped to institutionalize the separation of the Greek workers into a separate body. Thereafter, it did not matter whether the workers had been born in the United States or in the Greek world, or which administration controlled the mainstream

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union, if they were ethnically Greek, they were asked to join Local 70.

-Ethnic Leadership divided into left and right

Between 1925 and 1943 the leadership of the Greek fur workers, unlike that of their employers, was divided into two ideological camps: one a right-wing, conservative and separatist group which favored cordial relations with their coethnic bosses in order to protect the interests of Greeks in the fur industry; the other a progressive, internationalist group comprised of several communists and left wing people who viewed their employers, coethnic or not, as their adversaries and the union as the promoter and protector of class interests. These two groups competed for the allegiance of their coethnic fellow workers in the industry and during the eighteen year period the workers were divided between the unions each group represented, though not necessarily equally. That situation had also existed in the mainstream union between 1926 and 1935, so it was not unique to the Greeks. However, the divisions lasted much longer among the latter. Interestingly, the workers negotiated their way around the situation by sometimes belonging to one or the other union, depending on where they were employed and who had an agreement with that manufacturer. At times, workers belonged to both unions simultaneously: to one in order to satisfy their political or social vision; and to the other in order to be able to work.[72]

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The most active elements among the chauvanistic Greek workers were the small group of mostly Kastorian furriers who were consistently in the Local's leadership up to 1936. They vehemently opposed internationalist working class solidarity.[73] After their defeat in Local 70 elections in 1936, they were joined by a few disgruntled fellow West Macedonians and, interestingly, in 1937 by a circle of four or five former Communists and activists among progressive Greek furriers.[74] The latter adhered to the Lovestone line in the Communist Party and had been expelled from that organization. They decided to join forces with the ultra-nationalistic workers in order to fight the left wing, mostly communist leadership in the union.[75] It was this alliance which produced the AFFW between 1939 and 1943. While the "Lovestonites" in the AFFW played down the anti-Semitism of the UFMA, they intensified their anti-communist attack, eventually accusing the leaders of the mainstream union and their colleagues in Local 70 of being 'communazis,' in the polemic jargon of the day.[76]

While some individual Kastorians and other West Macedonians were active among the progressives furriers,[77] many more of the left wing furriers came from Asia Minor and the Eastern Aegean islands. Among the Greek Organizing Committee in 1925, 17 of the 22 known members had been born in Asiatic Turkey or in Greece.[78] Later, in December 1936, of the 20 elected to the new executive board of Local 70, including some of the same people, 11 were from Asia Minor

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and the Eastern Aegean Islands, 3 from Greece and 1 from Siatista in West Macedonia.[79] Whether or not these people had arrived in the United States with a more developed sense of working class interests or with a more progressive social outlook is not necessarily clear.[80] However, as has been argued in Chapter Seven, the experiences of national oppression and the loss of homes, property and family members which Asia Minor Greeks had undergone between 1912 and 1923 had left them more responsive to radical social visions. Many of their counterparts who had been settled in refugee centers in Greece during that same period had become socialists, communists, trade unionists and other liberal and left wing political activists in their adopted home. Their neighborhoods in Greek cities, like Nea Smyrne and Kalithea in Athens, were know as 'red' areas since they repeatedly supported radical candidates and causes. What is more, the refugees from Asia Minor were a staunchly anti-monarchist force once they had been resettled in Greece.[81]

-Ethnicity as an Organizing Force

For both groups, ethnicity persisted as an important force for organizing Greek American fur workers, though in different ways. The right-wing leadership openly and directly appealed to chauvanistic ethnic sentiment. In the late 1920s, the rhetoric was virulantly anti-Jewish. They reiterated their employers' claims that 'the Jewish association' and 'the Jewish union' wanted to eliminate Greek furriers from the industry. One headline in Ethnikos

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Kyrix proclaimed hysterically that "The Greek Fur Workers do not want to become slaves of the Jews." They continued that Greek furriers, both capital and labor, needed to work together harmoniously in order to protect their jobs and businesses in the industry. They advocated ethnic exclusivity and separation and acquiesced to their employers' demands for a 'separate Greek industry' where supposedly 'Greek' interests would be assured.[82] What that meant was that the Greek employers would have their ethnic association and Greek workers their ethnic union. The two Greek groups would then negotiate their own agreement and relationships. Class differences between Greek workers and bosses were consequently muted while common ethnic interests were promoted at the expense of wages, conditions and power for the workers and their union. Later in the 1930s, overt anti-Jewish sentiment was suppressed. But the right wing forces were still preoccupied with preserving "one united, self-governed and independent Greek local"[83] separate from the mainstream union,especially after the June 1935 unity among the workers within the mainstream industry. While their energy was consumed in fighting for autonomy from the mainstream organization, conditions for Greek workers in the Greek shops deteriorated until the change in administration of Local 70 in December 1936.[84]

Anti-communism had always been an important corollary to the ethnic chauvanism used by the right wing Greek furriers. They drew on all the standard anti-communist

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rhetoric of the day to denounce both the left wing Greek union leaders as well as those in the mainstream union. In 1926 in the Greek American press, the "Organizing Committee" of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood accused the 'Bolsheviks' in the mainstream union of using the Greek workers as "their rayahs and subjects," of issuing "ukase," and of selecting a handful of "ignorant and illiterate, godless, irreligious ... Greco-Bolsheviks" to do their bid.[85] In the mid and late 1930s, the right wing constantly alluded to the associations of the left wing leadership of the union to the Communist Party. In an open letter to John Vafiades, who was by then the manager of the Greek Fur Workers Union, a right wing opponent, John Tozis, repeatedly addressed him as "'Comrade' John Vafiades." Tozis went on to emphasize that "... it is by this time a common knowledge that you have been reared in a school where "imported" leaders -- for you yourself are boasting that you attended the Lenin School of Moscow and that the Communist Party of the U.S.A. brought you to New York in order to capture our Local -- are taught to resort to all kinds of "dirty" means, to use cunning, to conceal and even to distort the truth in order to gain their ulterior purposes..." Later in the letter he called Ben Gold, by then the president of the IFWU, as "a notorious communist."[86] Once the "Lovestoneites" had joined up with the right wing, the red-baiting intensified. On February 3, 1941, the AFFW issued a leaflet soliciting members with

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emphatic headlines as follows:[87]

> DRIVE THE COMMUNAZI FIFTH COLUMN OUT OF THE CONTROL OF THE UNION! EXPOSE THE UNSCRUPULOUS CHIEFS OF THE FUR INDUSTRY WHO ARE WORKING HADN AND HAND WITH STALIN-HITLER AGENTS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE WORKERS AND SMALL MANUFACTURERS! JOIN THE A.F. OF L. AND HELP MAKE THE FURRIERS UNION A REAL AMERICAN INSTITUTION!

The right wing group tried to organize, not only among the fur workers, but within the Greek American community as well. In 1938, along with fur manufacturer Thomas Miller and UFMA manager John Rompapas, a few of them formed the Hellenic American Loyalty League which was affiliated to the Loyal Clubs in the United States and to the American Legion.[88] One of these fur workers even became the president of the Hellenic American Loyal Club.[89] They actively tried to recruit other Greek American furriers and members of the ethnic community to these efforts with the support of the sections of the Greek American press.[90] Then, in 1939, the same fur workers from the Loyal Club organized a 'workers eduction center,' called the Greek Workers Center, at 167 West 29th Street, right in the heart of the fur market, as a way of attracting members of Local 70 away from the left wing leadership.[91] It was a prelude to the founding of the dual union, the AFFW, early the next year.

The right wing group also identified or allied themselves with conservative political causes in the homeland. During the late 1930s, they were openly

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sympathetic to the fascist government of General Metaxas in Greece. Along with some of the employers and with the Kastorian Society, they actively campaigned to raise funds for the establishment of an airforce which the Metaxas government was trying to develop.[92] However, once Greece had been invaded, first by the Italians in October 1940 and then by the Axis Powers in April 1941, open support of fascist causes in the Greek American community became anathema and these furriers, like other Greeks, joined the movement to support the struggle for freedom in Greece.

The left wing avoided direct appeals to ethnic sentiment. Instead their message shunned the racist, anti-Jewish and fascistic fanaticism which came both from the UFMA and from the right-wing workers whom they considered "stooges" for the employers. They advocated international working class solidarity and argued that the Jewish workers in the industry had common interests and a common struggle with them. When the issue of ethnicity was discussed, it was to criticize its use by the employers and the conservative leadership of Local 70. In 1926, the Joint Board's Greek organizer, John Papayannis wrote that[93]

> "... ethnicity does not play any role in workers issues. It is used however as a weapon by the employers to exploit their workers. The Joint Board is neither Jewish or Greek but clearly an international workers body and as a pure workers Union it is concerned only with workers, Greek or Jewish or whatever nationality ..."

Again, during the 1936 election campaign, the left wing

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"Progressive Group" wrote in one of its flyers:[94]

> Sisters and Brothers: Don't listen to the anti-Jewish propoganda of our Local 70 officials. All workers are brothers, regardless of antionality, creed, color, religion or political belief. With their rotten propoganda against the Jewish workers some of our officials of Local 70 disgrace us and do us a great deal of harm. We Greek workers must prove to the thousands of Jewish workers that we are not Jew-haters ... We must condemn all racial prejudice injected into the minds of the workers by the ignorant and vicious officials of Local 70. Our name must be kept clean ... The bosses would like to see a fight between the Jewish and Greek fur workers ... Didn't the Jewish workers help us organize? Didn't we strike together in 1925 and 1926? Aren't we all exploited by the bosses. Don't let them divide our ranks ... Let us all be united.

However, despite the internationalist outlook and commitment of the new leadership of Local 70, the ethnic character of the local endured and there was tacit acceptance of ethnicity in its program and concerns and in the culture of the union. In the same campaign leaflet noted above, the "Progressive Group" had presented a program which called for "all Greek fur workers to belong to Local 70. No discrimination ... Local 70 to conduct its meetings in the Greek language ... The Greek workes should elect their officials of Local 70 ... the Greek workers shall have the right to work in any shop in New York ..."[95] Once they took control of Local 70, it remained a separate local, though now directly affiliated to the Joint Council. Its members continued to be Greek workers employed both in UFMA and Associated shops and in some independent firms which had signed individual agreements with them or with the

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mainstream union. Its main tasks continued to entail organizing unorganized Greek shops, enforcing the industry-wide collective labor agreement, representing Greek workers in negotiations, and dealing with the Greek employers. Its leaders were all Greek workers, most of them long associated with left wing, progressive causes and movements in the Greek community. The Greek flag stood alongside the American in the Local's offices and the Greek language was used in its meetings, in keeping minutes of the local, in letters and circulars to the workers, and in the cultural and educational programs which the Local sponsored. Both the leaders and most of the workers lived in and around Greek ethnic neighborhoods, many of them close to the fur market as well.[96] Finally, in 1936, the left wing initiated the publication of a monthly newspaper in Greek which contained articles written by the Local's officials and members and, sometimes, translated from the official organ of the mainstream union.[97]

The left wing supported political causes in Greece and movements in the Greek American community. Its members were very active among progressive Greek American organizations and issues in New York. Several were closely linked to the progressive Greek American Spartacus Club and to the left wing press, Empros. Local 70 workers held prominent positions in the Greek War Relief in New York City during the war years, collecting funds, food and clothing to send to the old country. Between 1940 and 1945, they voluntarily

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taxed themselves $7.50 annually per worker for Red Cross and United Nations relief funds, contributing over $40,000, much of it for Greece. They also contributed over seven tons of clothing valued at $50,000 to the Greek War Relief.[98] After the war, Local 70 and its leadership campaigned for democratic change in Greece. They were among the main activists in the League for Democracy in Greece which worked to influence public opinion in the United States in favor of the anti-monarchist forces in the civil war in Greece during the late 1940s. These progressive furriers were also important catalysts for the organization of Greek American workers in other industries both in New York and in other parts of the United States. The IFWU and the CIO had called on John Vafiades[99] and other Greek American furriers to help in the organizing drives among Greek workers in the hotel and restaurant trade in New York, in the leather industry in Massachusetts and in the steel industry nationwide.[100] Local 70 took the initiative to bring together Greek American trade unionists into the Greek American Labor Committee which was an important lobby for ethnic issues in the Democratic Party as well as for support of the anti-Nazi struggle in occupied Greece.

The willingness of the left wing leadership, both within the mainstream union and among the Greeks, to retain the ethnic character of the Local, while simultaneously pursuing a vigorous campaign to increase wages, reduce

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working hours and improve conditions,[101] was quite practical and, in the absense of direct evidence, one could guess deliberate. For one thing, it minimized the employers' effectiveness in undermining the workers' organization by appealing to ethnic sentiment. By offering the Greek workers a niche within which their language was spoken, their values and culture understood, and their ethnic concerns addressed, the mainstream union, highly ethnic itself, could go about the business of promoting all the workers' interests at the workplace and keeping them organized under one umbrella. The swelling of Local 70's membership to 1455 in October 1937,[102] ten months after the left wing entered office, underscored the popularity of the new administration and its success in meeting the workers' expectations. Never before had so many Greek workers belonged to Local 70, or any other ethnic union in the industry, at any one time.[103]

By the 1930s, a great many of the Greek workers were women, largely finishers who were drawn into the industry by the sizeable increase in the manufacture of moderate and inexpensive lines of fur coats. An ethnic local offered them an acceptable structure within which to join the union and in which to participate actively in the affairs of the workplace. By 1937, they comprised the majority of the union, with 52.4% of its membership. (See Table 8.1)[104] If the left leadership of Local 70 was to succeed in uniting all the Greek workers into one union, the women were

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TABLE 8.1

GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN LOCAL 70 BY GENDER

1937

FEMALES	762	52.4%
MALES	647	44.5%
GENDER UNDETERMINED	25	1.7%
NON-GREEKS	21	1.4%
TOTAL	1455	100%

Source: Local 70 Membership List for October 1937. Typewritten. Local 70 Papers in Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

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critical to their objectives. The right wing had taken women for granted. Even though there were many female members of the Greek union between 1926 and 1935, no woman had ever served as an officer or on the executive board and no women's group functioned to promote the interests of the women workers. Among the more traditional and conservative sections of the Greek American community, including the right wing leadership, it was thought that the woman's place was in the home with her children. If she had to work, it was considered undignified and improper for her to participate in the affairs of the workplace aside from doing her job. Pressure from fellow Greeks at the workplace and in the community often discouraged women from taking part in workplace activity such as in strikes and in union

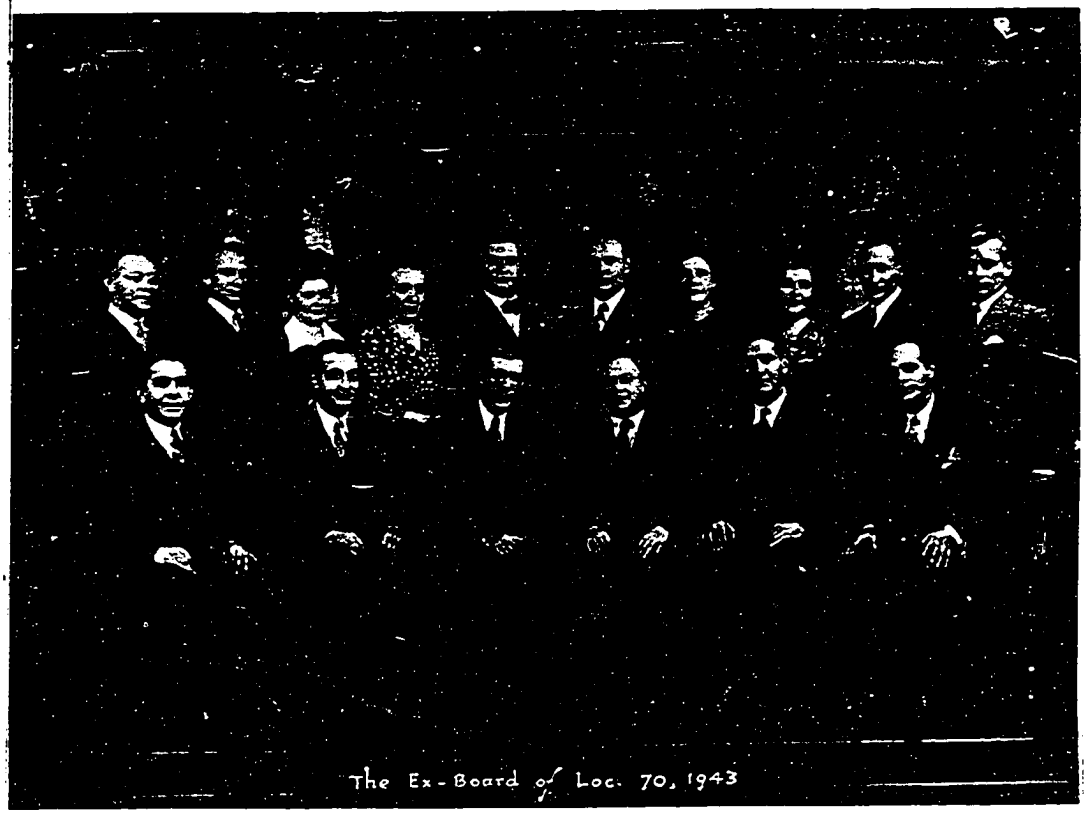
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meetings.[105]

The progressive leadership, however, encouraged women to participate actively in the union and in the Greek American community. Women had always held prominent positions among the progressive fur workers' union. During the 1925 organizing effort, women were part of the organizing committee; in early 1926, while all Greeks had their own branch, the Greek women also were organized into the "Greek Ladies General Committee of the Furriers Strike." From 1936 onwards, Greek women were in the forefront of the progressive group in the Local. They served on its executive board (though not as officers and only a few at a time), wrote in its monthly organ, and participated in its organizing drives and strikes. (See Photograph 8.1) John Vafiades described them as fearless on the picket line, especially against harassment and intimidation either from the police or hired thugs.[106] During the war years, these women worked tirelessly to mobilize aid for the victims of Nazi aggression in the old country and later to support the progressive political forces fighting in the civil war in Greece. They also cooperated with women in the mainstream union's program to support the war effort.[107] In 1937, the women revived the Women's Committee within Local 70. It actively supported the union's program and was very visible in the Greek American community over the next fifteen years. Each month, the Local's newspaper contained articles not only reporting the activities of the Women's Committee but

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PHOTOGRAPH 8.1



The Executive Board of the Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70. 1943.

Source: Among Local 70's Papers. Records of the Furriers Joint Council. International Fur and Leather Workers Union. New York City.

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discussing the importance of their participation in the Local's program. In one article titled "The position of today's woman in trade unions role of women," the writer tried to stimulate her sisters' participation in the Local's affairs by urging them not to think that "union issues concern only the men and not the women." She encouraged them to reject 'the servile role' society had bestowed upon them and to take an active part in all aspects of union life and to support its struggle.[108] Within the ethnic environment of Local 70, the participation of Greek women, both married and single, could be sanctioned by their ethnic community which placed considerable restrictions on the extent and character of female interaction with non-Greeks while allowing women to gain experience outside the home and family.

Conclusions:

Greek immigrant furriers were able to use the ethnic resources which stemmed not only from a common ethnic background, but more specifically from a common regional background to penetrate and establish themselves in the fur manufacturing industry. The coethnic community provided a pool of labor from which the Greek manufacturers were able to recruit cheap labor with which they could survive within the extremely competitive conditions of the fur industry. So long as those workers shared the same regional origins as their employers and had reason to expect to become furriers

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themselves, tensions between workers and employers could be resolved among themselves. But once the composition of the labor force broadened to include coethnics from more diverse regional backgrounds whose conditions of employment and prospects for the future changed, the ethnic community was no longer able to mediate tensions. Class considerations surfaced and the workers were open to collective action against employers in concert with other workers who shared the problems they faced at the workplace. Ethnic sentiment and allegiance influenced the process of class unity among Greek American furriers, both for the workers and for their employers, and the development among each of awareness of their class interests. But ethnicity did not supplant class solidarity for either group.

David Montgomery has pointed out that "... it is folly to think of immigration and ethnicity soley in terms of barriers to class consciousness. Ethnic loyalties have provided important solidarities among workers and sources of reform and revolutionary ideologies as well ..."[109] Montgomery had Irish, British, German, Italian, Finnish and Jewish workers in mind.[110] From the experience of the Greek American furriers, it can be seen that not only was ethnicity a resource for ethnic enterprise and a tool for managing coethnic workers; it could also be a medium through which ethnic workers could be effectively organized into a working class organization.

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ENDNOTES

1.For the discussion on the interplay of class and ethnicity among Greek American furriers, the author relied on: (1) a 'clippings file' of articles from the Greek American press, for the years from 1926 to 1939, which was kept by Local 70, (2) countless flyers issued by Local 70 and its opponents, and (3) the sometimes sporadic periodical publications of Local 70 and its various opponents which were published between 1936 and 1941 (O Agon, E Foni, O Ergates Gounarikes, and To Vema [In order: The Struggle, The Voice, The Fur Worker, and the Tribune]). These were found among the papers of the Greek Fur Workers' Union, Local 70 in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

2.By Laws, Charter and Minutes of the United Fur Manufacturers Association (UFMA), November, 1925. Records of the UFMA, New York City.

3.Over the years before the Second World War, only a few companies, like Shiotka Brothers, had ever joined the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. and then only briefly. In 1931 Bendo Brothers and Pappas and in 1939 L. Pantelides, active members of the UFMA, were the only wholly Greek-owned firms to participate as exhibitors in the "Fashion Show and Exposition of the Fur Industry" for those respective years. In other years, a few other firms exhibited as well. See Manuals of the "Fur Fashion Show and Exposition of the Fur Industry" organized by the Associated Fur Coat and Trimming Manufacturers, Inc. with the cooperation of other trade associations [excluding the UFMA], New York, 1931, 1935, 1936 and 1939.

4.Between 1926 and 1936, several articles of this nature appeared in the pages of the mainstream Greek American press in New York. During the height of a propaganda war between the UFMA and the furriers union, John Rompapas, manager of the UFMA, published an article whose title underscores this view: "E Evraii Diathetoun Afthona Hremata pros Katastrofen ton Ellenikon Epihereseon: Kommounistai kai Evraii, en symmahia me allous misEllenes, polemoun tous Ellenes ergates and ten Elleniken viomehania" [Jews dispose of abundant money for the destruction of Greek businesses: Communists and Jews, in collaboration with other Greek-haters fight the Greek workers and the Greek industry] Ethnikos Kyrix 2 December 1926. In 1936, Rompapas retained the same theme in a series of articles which tried to argue that the struggle in the fur industry was only superficially a workers' struggle. "The struggle is ethnic and has continued as such since 1925, without changing direction..." John Rompapas, "Ta Etia kai o Skopos tes Diamahis eis ten Syntehnia tes Gounarikes" [The Causes and the Intentions of the Battle in

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the Fur Craft], published both in Atlantis and Ethnikos Kyrix, between 6 August and 21 September 1936.

5.The Greek manufacturers were not the only furriers who felt threatened by the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. Since the latter represented fur garment producers, trimmings manufacturers who worked with the cloth coat industry were under tremendous pressure from the Associated. In the 1920s, they formed the Fur Trimmings Manufacturers Association which also resented not being consulted and given consideration in the negotiations for agreements between the union and the Associated. Jesse Carpenter discussed this problem in his study Competition and Collective Bargaining in the Needle Trades, 1910-1967 (Ithaca, NY, 1972), p. 540.

6.For examples, see articles cited in note 5 by John Rompapas and one by Zaharias Djimas: "Ta Ellenika Ergostasia Neas Yorkes: E Evraii Synomnosan na Exontosoun ten Monen Ellenikin Viomehania" [New York's Greek Factories: The Jews have Conspired to Destroy the only Greek Industry], Ethnikos Kyrix 13 November 1926.

7.The Charity Chest of the Fur Industry was founded in 1923 to provide charitable aid to the broader community. Although it was a Jewish organization, it assisted people on a non-sectarian basis. The Fur Trade Foundation was also founded in 1923 "to relieve the unfortunate and the indigent of the fur trade" and was "the outgrowth in the fur trade of the slogan of the Jewish Federation of New York: 'We take care of our own.'" Yearbook of the Fur Industry. 1926, pp. 241 - 42.

8.Carpenter also noted the UFMA's displeasure with that situation. Carpenter, p. 540. See also: Statements of Thomas Miller to Women's Wear Daily, 11 June 1926 and 10 March 1927.

9.Carpenter, p. 540.

10.Thomas Miller was a Kastorian who had Americanized his name from the original 'Thoma Mylonas.' He was a major figure in the employers' association and in the conservative section of the Greek American commounity for over a decade. According to John Vafiades, Miller considered himself a bit of an intellectual and enjoyed debating union officials, including Ben Gold, on the merits, or as he saw it, the demerits of Marxism. Interview with John Vafiades.

11.Thomas Miller, "E Viomehania tes Gounarikes and e Exelixis tes kata ten Teleutaian Eikosaetian en Nea Yorkes" [The Fur Industry and its Development during the last Twenty Years in New York], Atlantis 17 January 1936.

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12.Milton Gordon, Assimilation in American Life (New York, 1964), pp. 23-4.

13.These were demands made by the progressive, left-wing leadership in the mainstream industry under Ben Gold. See Foner, p. 180.

14.In the 1930s, L. Pantelides, a major manufacturer of rabbit fur coats, employed from 30 to 40 workers in his factory. But he was also known to use several Greek contractors since he did a very large volume of business with department stores, especially Wanamakers. Pantelides was an active member and sometimes executive board member of the UFMA from the 1930s until his death in 1950. Interviews with Peter Nicholas and John Vafiades.

15.Membership Records of the UFMA, 1925 to 1939 and Table 6.1, Chapter Six.

16.The names of non-members who contributed to the UFMA's strike fund were noted among the receivables in a cash book found among the Association's papers. Records of the UFMA. These same names were also published in the local newspaper of Kastoria, Kastoria, April 1926, p. 1.

17.Initially, the Associated Fur Manufacturers, Inc. represented fur garment manufacturers. But around 1930, it merged with the Fur Trimming Manufacturers Association to form the Associated Fur Coat and Trimming Manufacturers, Inc.

18.For detailed descriptions of the events in the 1926 strike, see Foner, pp. 179-244; and Ben Gold, Memoirs (New York, 1984), pp. 55-84.

19.Rompapas had been an anarchist in his early years in the United States. Having had business experience, he was suited to the job of administrative manager of the UFMA. Beginning with 1910, he owned and operated the Atlas Bookstore at 25 Madison Street in lower Manhattan. In 1913 he wrote to Thomas Burgess, an American minister who published a segment of it in his book, Greeks in America (Boston, 1913; reprint New York, 1970), pp. 71-2. In it, Rompapas reported on the volume of his book business and said that he also sold money orders. In 1914 he published an anarchist tract, The Story of My Life (New York, 1914) which was published in English by Rablais Press. In an interview, John Papayannis said that Rompapas had written another book specifically on the working class movement. The author could only locate the title noted above and another book for Greek speakers on learning English in the National Union Catalog of the Library of Congress and in the Catalog of the New York Public Library.

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20.John Rompapas, "To Zetema tes Apergias ton Gounaradhon Neas Yorkes" [The issue of the New York furriers strike], Atlantis 27 February 1926.

21.Ibid.

22.A two page list of 13 "anti-Jewish propaganda" articles published in Atlantis and Ethnikos Kyrix between 1926 and 1929 by Rompapas and others was compiled by progressive Greek members of the mainstream union. It was found among the papers of Local 70 in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York. In 1937, an unsigned article written by a 'fur worker' appeared in Empros attacking the reappearance of Rompapas' 'anti-Jewish propaganda' in the Greek press. There, he was characterized as a one-time 'anarchist' turned 'monarchist' who echoed Hitler's teachings in his writings. "Rompapas, O 'Kakos Daimon' tes Syntehnias Gounarikes" [Rompapas, the Bad Demon of the Fur Trade], Empros, 19 March 1937.

23.Rompapas, 27 February 1926.

24.Statement of Thomas Miller to Women's Wear Daily, 11 June 1926.

25.Empros as the official organ of the Greek section of the Communist Party would be expected to take up the cause of the fur workers. However, Atlantis had traditionally been the mouthpiece of the pro-monarchist section of the Greek American community and Ethnikos Kyrix was partisan to the pro-republican, liberals. Yet, between the latter two papers, it was Atlantis which offered the union and the workers support from 1925 to the early 1930's. In the mid thirties, its editorial position shifted in favor of the employers and the more conservative elements of the labor force.

26.These articles were written primarily by three people: John Rompapas, UFMA manager; Thomas Miller, UFMA vice-president and head of negotiating committee; and Zaharias Djimas, UFMA executive board member. They appeared in Ethnikos Kyrix between August and December of 1926.

27.In their interviews, John Papayannis, Costas "Gus" Tates and John Vafiades all said that the role of the UFMA in organizing the Brotherhood was common knowledge among fur workers at the time.

28.Clipping from Women's Wear Daily, 19 August 1926, found among Records of UFMA. The same article noted that Yankou, who also operated a steamship tick and real estate agency, was "an active figure in Greek labor circles" prior to the 1926 strike. However, Women's Wear Daily did not elaborate

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on the nature of his activity.

29.Kastoria, 28 March 1926, p. 3.

30.Clipping from Women's Wear Daily, 9 April 1926, found in Records of UFMA.

31.This writer came across the UFMA's cash book for 1926 while she was doing research in the UFMA's records. Considering Yankou's role in organizing a labor body, these disbursements from the employers' association could be considered highly irregular and unethnical.

32."Registration Book" of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York.

33.Father Methodios Kourkoules remained as impartial chairman of the conference committee for one or two years when he asked to be relieved of the responsibility and replaced with someone else. Kourkoules had emigrated to the United States as a priest from Mytilene, an island off the western coast of Asia Minor, and became rector of the Greek Church in New York. One of the researchers working on emigration from Mytilene as part of the Andreades study on emigration from Greece reported that, circa 1916, Father Kourkoules had 'incited' emigration from Mytilene by continuously writing to his relatives and friends, urging them to emigrate. Andreas Andreades, ed., E Ellenike Metanasteusis [Greek Emigration] (Athens, 1917), n. 2, p. 301; "Minutes" of the Executive Board of the UFMA; John Rompapas, "Ta Aitia kai o Skopos tes Diamahes eis ten Syntehnia tes Gounarikes" [The Causes and Purpose of the Struggle in the Fur Trade], Atlantis 31 August 1936.

34.Nikolaos Pantazopoulos, Ellénon Syssomatiosés Kata Tén Tourkokratia [Greek Corporations During the Ottoman Rule] (Athens, 1958), pp. 18-19; Idem, "Community Laws and Customs of Western Macedonia Under Ottoman Rule," offprint, Balkan Studies (Thessaloniki) 2 (1961) 7-8. See Chapter Three.

35.See Agreement between Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood and the UFMA, August, 1926. Records of the UFMA.

36.While precise figures, or even estimates, are hard to come by, it has been said that more than half of the Greek fur workers were employed in mainstream shops covered by contracts with the mainstream unions. Interview with Moe Feinblatt. In any case, the numbers and size of Greek shops was never large enough to employ the 1500 Greeks who worked in the industry during the 1930s.

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37.In 1926, there was disagreement about the size of the so-called "Greek industry" in fur manufacturing. Zacharias Djimas, one of the employers and a member of the Executive Board of the UFMA, claimed that there were "400 Greek manufacturers [and] 2000 Greek workers" in the industry. Djimas also claimed that at least 10,000 Greeks "recieve bread," or were supported by the 2400 furriers. This was in an article which appealed for support for the Greek manufacturers' association and for the Greek Brotherhood from the broader ethnic community. Zaharias Djimas, "Ta Ellenika Ergostasia tes Neas Yorkes" [The Greek Factories of New York], Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald], 13 November 1926. A few weeks later, John Papayannis, Greek organizer for the Joint Board Furriers Union, refuted Djimas' claim. He said that there were only 550 to 600 workers in some 15 to 17 Greek-owned factories employing about 7 to 30 workers each and another 60 to 70 which employed 1 to 6 workers. Any other "manufacturers" were workers who had a machine at home and worked there at night. John Papayannis, "Ta Ergatika Zetemata eis ten Viomechanian ton Gounarikos" [Workers Issues in the Fur Industry], Atlantis, 30 November 1926. While Papayannis was correct about the number of workers employed in Greek shops, he might have underestimated the number of shops employing workers. In 1927, some 175 fur businesses which had owners with Greek names were cited in the New York State Directory of Manufacturers (New York, 1927). While most of those were probably small shops, it is likely that most employed one or two workers each at the minimum.

38.Between September 1926 and May 1935, some 1,341 workers had been initiated into the Greek Fur Workers Union. Source: "Registration Book of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York," September 1, 1926 to January 18, 1937. Records of Furriers Joint Council, New York City. However, not all these workers retained continuous membership in the Greek Local during these nine years. Some left the industry, were unemployed because of the Depression or got jobs in shops organized by other unions in the industry.

39.Names of members of the Board of Directors of the UFMA came from the "Minutes of the Board of Directors" of the UFMA, New York City, 1926 to 1935. The regional origins of these people were determined either from biographical information in Dun and Bradstreet Credit reports kept by the UFMA or from interviews with retired Kastorian furriers (Christy Adams, John Goulioures, and Andreas Manthos) and with the manager of the UFMA, Peter Nicholas in 1979. The manager of the UFMA from 1925 to 1937 was John Rompapas from Kozani.

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40.In the first 'board of governors' of the Greek Fur Workers' Brotherhood, elected sometime in August, 1926, 5 of the 12 members were Kastorians, 2 were from other parts of West Macedonia, and five from other places. By the following March when the Brotherhood became Local 70 and held new elections, 8 of the 12 were Kastorians, 2 were other West Macedonians and only 2 from other places. The names of the manger and the executive board of Local 70 for this period were taken from letterhead for the Greek local found in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York and from reports in Women's Wear Daily 18 August 1926 and 8 March 1927. Those names were then located in the "Registration Book of the Fur Workers' Brotherhood of New York" which covered the years September 1926 to January 1937. The "Registration Book" provided the birthplaces for most of its members including those in the leadership.

41.In the "Registration Book" of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood of New York, 378 of the 1350 workers who joined the union through May 1935 were Kastorian. While the majority of the workers were not Macedonian, the presence of such a large bloc of workers from one town with close [almost clannish] ties with the organization's leadership and with the employers' organization was significant.

42."Omonia," the Kastorian Society, was located in close proximity to the fur market in Manhattan. During the late 1920s and 1930s, its president was Chris Yankou. In 1937, in an appeal to the UFMA for financial contributions to Omonia's annual journal, he "stated that his organization was a part of the Fur Industry, all members of the Omonia Society being either employers or employees of our Industry..." "Minutes of the Board of Directors" of the UFMA, 22 September 1937.

43.See clippings from various issues of Atlantis and Empros, October 1928. Among papers of Local 70 in Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

44.See agreements signed between the New York Joint Council of the International Fur Workers Union and the Associated Fur Manufacturers Association and between Local 70 and the United Fur Manufacturers Association. 1929, 1932, 1934 and 1936.

45.Foner, pp. 247-416.

46.While Greek Local 25 existed within the furriers' division of the NTWIU, no records were found to indicate the size of its membership.

47.See Foner, pp. 417-80.

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48.See announcement of the 'rebirth of Local 70' and of its new executive board in Deltion Ergaton Gounarikes: Episimon Organon tes Enoseos Ellenon Ergaton Gounarikes - Lokal 70 [Fur Workers' Bulletin: Official Organ of the Greek Fur Workers Union, Local 70], 1 February 1937. Found among papers of Local 70 in Records of the Furriers Joint Council.

49.Both the incumbent, right-wing leadership of Local 70 and its challengers issued countless leaflets stating their positions and attacking their opponents. Some of these leaflets were found among the papers of Local 70. Also among the papers were three or four issues of the newsletters issued by each side: E Foni - ton Ellenon Gounaroergaton: Organon tes Prodeutikes Omados [The Voice - of the Greek Fur Workers: Organ of the Progressive Group] and O Agon - ton Ellenon Ergaton Gounarikes: Episemon Organon tes Enonseos ton Ellenon Ergaton Gounarikes Lokal 70 tes International Fur Workers Union of the U.S. and Canada, Affiliated with the A.F.of L. [The Struggle of the Greek Fur Workers: Official Organ of the Union of GreekE Fur Workers, Local 70]. Ethnikos Kyrix, Atlantis, and Empros also carried articles in their labor news columns. Interview with John Vafiades.

50.Thomas Miller, Atlantis, 17 January 1936 and John Rompapas in a series of articles in Atlantis during 1936 and early 1937.

51.This time Atlantis had joined Ethnikos Kyrix in supporting the employers' position. During 1936, both papers carried articles written by John Rompapas or Thomas Miller, now the president of the UFMA, for the association and by John Tozis, a furrier and poet from Siatista, for the old leadership of Local 70. Empros, as the organ of the Greek section in the Communist Party, supported the left-wing workers in the union.

52.Foner, pp. 490-94; correspondence, leaflets, and newspaper articles from the Local 70 and the Greek American press found among the papers of Local 70 in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York.

53.Plans for a company union had been revealed three years earlier during the "Trial of John Apostol" before the General Executive Board of the IFWU. Then, the employers and the deposed officials of Local 70 were found to have been meeting to discuss forming another 'brotherhood' like the one established in 1926. See: "Minutes of a Meeting of the General Executive Board," International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada, held in Asbury Park, N.J., 25 to 28 January, 1937 , pp. 1-40 and 70-73. Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

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54.Leaflet issued by AFFW and dated 12 July 1940 announcing granting of "Charter Number 22385" by the AF of L and AFFW letterhead with charter number and with AF of L seal found among Local 70's papers; Foner, pp. 581-82. On 9 January 1942, the George Volanis, chairman of the 'Provisional Joint Board of the American Federation of Fur Workers Union,' wrote to the membership announcing that "the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor has granted our petition for additional four charters in order to reorganize our Union into a Joint Board consisting of five locals..." By then, the AF of L was interested in promoting the AFFW as a competitor to the Joint Council and the IFWU which were by then affiliated to the CIO. Copy of this letter found in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

55.Foner, pp. 496-503.

56.Membership list for Local 70 dated October 1937; undated membership list for AFFW typed on its stationery. When elections for officers and an executive board for the AFFW were held on 14 February 1941, according to a tally of votes cast for candidates which was recorded on a copy ballot found among the papers of Local 70, only 85 people participated. Local 70 papers in Records of Furriers Joint Council of New York.

57.In 1941, the AFFW's president, vice-president and at least 2 executive board members were Kastorians.

58.Foner, pp.575-76, 578-79, 581-82. Evidence of the extent of the use of print media to influence the workers and the community at large was available among Local 70's papers in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council where leaflets, correspondence, pamphlets, and newspapers from both sides were found.

59.Announcement made jointly by John Vafiades, manager of Local 70, and George Volanis, president of the dissolved AFFW, in a press release issued by Local 70 on 25 June 1943. Found among papers of Local 70 in Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York City.

60.Ibid.

61.See Chapter Seven, endnote 132.

62.See Chapter Seven.

63.See Photograph 7.1 in Chapter Seven.

64.Of the 392 members, 376 were initiated on one day, 1 September 1926. The other 16 people joined over the next three months. "Registration Book of the Greek Fur Workers

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Brotherhood of New York."

65.Ben Gold prepared an article for Empros in 1928 which attacked Local 70 as a 'company union' and urged Greek workers to join "the new Greek local under the new International." The new international was to be the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union. Ben Gold, "Tha Organothoun E Ellenes Ergati" [The Greek Workers will be Organized], translated into Greek by the staff of Empros, 13 October 1928.

66.In the fur processing industry in New York and New Jersey, the ethnic composition was ethnically more diverse with many Italian, African American, Jewish, Greek and other groups in the workforce.

67.The Fur Worker, the official publication of the IFWU, was also published in Italian and Russian at least into the early 1920s.

68.In 1978-79 while the author was doing research among the records of the Furriers Joint Council in New York City, she discovered boxes of unsorted and disorganized letters and papers belonging to Ben Gold, once manager of the Joint Council and later the president of the IFWU, and to Irving Potash, once an organizer and then manager of the Joint Council. Among these papers were many letters from progressive Jewish charitable and fraternal organizations soliciting assistance and support from the union.

69.Non-Greek workers employed in UFMA shops also joined the Brotherhood while they were employed by those shops. In August 1926 when the Brotherhood was founded, of the first 376 workers to be initiated, all on September 1st, 47, or 12.5%, were non-Greeks. "Registration Book" of the Greek Fur Workers Brotherhood.

70.See Table 2.4 in Chapter Two.

71."Minutes" of the Joint Council of the IFWU, 13 December 1930, Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City. John Tozis, "E Diafora Metaxi tou Tzoint Konsel kai to Lokal 70 ton Gounaroergaton" [The difference between the Joint Council and Local 70 of the Fur Workers] Atlantis 12 September 1936.

72.This information was provided by Moe Feinblatt who had worked in the office of the Fur Workers Union from the 1920s until the '70s. Interview with Moe Feinblatt.

73.In articles in Empros and in their union publications, the left-wing leadership accused some of these of having been strikebreakers during general strikes in the industry

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in 1921 and 1926 and of having often done contracting work in the past.

74.The leading figure among these Greek Lovestonites was Charles Soulounias, a man with a long and checkered career in left wing circles. He was one of the first members of the Greek section of the Communist Party and in the early 1920s had organized among Greek steel workers in Pennsylvania and Ohio. In 1925 and/or 1926, he was recruited to the fur industry as a nailer by the party to help organize the Greek fur workers. During the next ten years, he held various positions in the progressive Greek branch of the Joint Board Furriers Union and in the Greek Local 25 of the Fur Division of the Needle Workers Industrial Union. Then, in 1935 along with other members of the 'Industrial Union,' he joined Local 70 and assisted in the process by which the left-wing took control of it. [John Vafiades reported that he always resented having had to work with Soulounias during this short period.] After it was discovered that he had been working with the opposition and was involved in some shady operations both within the union and in party functions, he was expelled from Local 70 in the summer of 1937 and from the Communist Party. An entire file of leaflets and letters on the Soulounias Affair which were found among the Papers of Local 70 were useful in compiling this summary. Other information comes from interview with Sam Mamunes, whose father was a founding member of the Greek Section of the Communist Party and who, as a child in Pennsylvania, had known Soulounias, July 1987 and from articles in Empros.

75.Interviews with John Papayannis and John Vafiades. In 1938 [exact date unknown], Empros published an article with the following title and subtitles:

> "What did the Progressive Administration of Local 70 Give to the Fur Workers? The Racketeers in favor of Soulounias are Agents of the Employers and the Enemies of the Workers. The Apostol-Mariola Clique [former leaders of Local 70] Uses the "Very Smart" Expelled from the Communist Party -Soulounias, Papayannis, Kalfides- to Retake the Administration of Local 70 and to Transform it into a Racket."

76.Several such leaflets were found among the papers of Local 70 in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council.

77.These included about a half dozen workers from Kastoria or Siatistia who had been involved with the left-wing leadership since the late 1920s. When some retired Kastorian fur manufacturers were questioned about one of these individuals, the author was told that he was not

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really a Greek Kastorian but a 'Bulgarian' from one of the Slavic speaking villages nearby. This was clearly a way of disowning this person.

78.For names of members of Greek Organizing Committee: Foner, p. 161 and Interviews with John Papayannis and John Vafiades. Papayannis and Vafiades identified the regional origins of the 22 names and most of these were then compared against information on place of birth in the "Registration Book of the Greek Fur Workers Union." From the Registration Book, it was learned that 11 had been born in Asia Minor or on the Eastern Aegean Islands, 4 in Greece, 5 in West Macedonian [2 Kastorians and 3 Siatistans], and 2 were from undetermined places.

79.The birthplaces of 5 board members could not be determined. Names of elected members of the full Executive Board of Local 70 were taken from a ballot with the results of the election written in which was found among the papers of Local 70. These names were then located in the "Registraton Book of the Greek Fur Workers Union" which provided their places of birth.

80.One was the sister of a founder and leading member of the communist movement in Cyprus. Another was the sister of a leading Greek American radical. John Vafiades, who led the progressive group in Local 70 from 1935 to 1948 and was its manager for most of that same period, was well known for his radical activity. In his interview, Vafiades explained that before emigrating, he had been exposed to socialist ideas as well. See Chapter Seven.

81.Dimitri Pentzopoulos, in an examiniation of the impact of the Asia Minor Refugees on modern Greek life, described them as a liberal, progressive, and cosmopolitan in contrast to their more conservative and pro-monarchy compatriots from mainland Greece. Dimitri Pentzopoulos, The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and Its Impact on Greece (Paris, 1962), pp. 173-95.

82.Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald], 17 August 1926 and 19 November 1926. The themes and points in these two articles repeated those found in similar articles by John Rompampas and by members of the executive board of the UFMA published in Ethnikos Kyrix and in Atlantis during the summer and fall 1926.

83.From leaflet issued sometime in 1936 under the signature of John Apostol, president in the right wing administration of Local 70. These views also appeared in articles written by the right wing fur workers for the Greek American press during 1936. These were found in Local 70's clippings file. Records of Furriers Joint Council of New York.

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84.See "Trial of John Apostol" in "Minutes of a Meeting of the General Executive Board" (UFMA), held in Berkeley-Carteret Hotel, Asbury Park, N.J., January 25th to 28th, 1937. Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

85."E Adelphotes ton Ellenon Gounaradon Apokalypte Skandala ton Mpolsevikos [The Greek Furriers Brotherhood Reveals Bolsheviks Scandal]," Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald] 30 September 1926. In Greek, the terms 'rayah [bonded peasant],' 'atheos' [godless], and 'athriskos' [irreligious] were selected to rouse emotional responses among Ottoman Greeks for whom the memories of Turkish/islamic domination were strong. While 'ukase' [decree] was a Russian term used by anti-communists to equate Bolshevism with the autocracy of the Tsar, for Greeks it reffered to the Sultan's power to issue decrees at will.

86.Leaflet titled "A Protest and a Challenge: To The 'Imported' Leader of the Greek Fur Workers Union Local 70 of New York," signed by John Tozis, 'candidate for manager of Local 70,' and dated August 18, 1938. Among papers of Local 70 in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York.

87.Charles Soulounias was most probably the author of this leaflet which was found among the papers of Local 70 in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

88.Empros claimed that the purpose of the Hellenic American Loyal Club, which had many fur manufacturers and workers in it, was to oppose and undermine the Union. During the early part of 1939 [exact dates not available] it carried a thirteen part series of critical articles on the role of the Loyal Club in the Greek American community and among the Greek American fur workers. "One regretful member" of the Loyal Club, who was also a member of Local 70, disclosed in a letter published in the Local's paper that he had been pressured to join by a few fellow fur workers and by his employer. He said that, at first, he believed that the Club was "a Greek American society which aimed at helping its members to progress in American society ... But eventually when I saw the Club's real objective, I regretted my association with it ... The Loyal Club ... is nothing more than a body which was founded by a few who want to take over the leadership of the union ... the leaders of the Loyal Club ... have bosses as members and they meet to discuss Union issues ... They invite to their meetings the bosses' President ... to attack the Union..." O Ergatis Gounarikes [The Fur Worker], December 1938, p.2.

89.George Volanis, once an executive board member of Local 70 and subsequently the president of the AFFW, became the president of the Loyal Club in 1939. National Herald 17 January 1939.

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90.Ethnikos Kyrix and its editor and publisher, respectively Dimitrios Callimachos and Nicholas Tatanis, were supporters of the Loyal Club. Articles on the Club's activities frequently appeared in its pages. In the issue of 17 January 1939, a photograph showed Callimachos and Tatanis, among other leading figures in the Greek American community, at the launching of the Club.

91.It was organized by a group calling itself "The Educational Association of Greek Workers of America." It claimed that its purpose was educate Greek workers "along pure labor lines - not on propaganistic movements ... [It] is politically independent ..." They planned to use lectures, discussions, and general educational and social gatherings to teach workers on the "issue of their [summetohis] and struggle in their occupational organizations." Atlantis 24 February 1939.

92.See articles on aid from Greek furriers to the National Hellenic Aviation League in Atlantis, 8, 10 17 December 1937.

93.John Papayannis, "E Diairetiki Prospathei ton Ergodoton" [The Divisive Efforts of the Employers], Atlantis, 30 November 1926.

94.Leaflet headed: "To All Greek Fur Workers! A Special Election in Local 70." (circa 1936). Among Local 70's papers in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

95.Ibid.

96.Local 70's membership lists for October 1937 provided members' addresses.

97.Unlike the Yiddish, Italian and other versions of the Fur Worker which were translations of the same text found in English, the Greek language paper contained several articles directed specifically to Greek workers.

98.Reported in an article on Greek American organizations which featured Local 70 in Vima: Greek American Tribune 2 March 1945, p.14.

99.Vafiades was an experienced labor organizer. Not only had he worked among Greek American furriers, but also in the organizing drives in the early 'thirties among the rubber workers in Ohio. Vafiades had been sent there by the Communist Party to assist in bringing non-Greek workers into the rubber workers' union for which he wrote the constitution which was later used as a model for a reformed Local 70. Interview with John Vafiades.

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100.Dan Georgakas, "The Greeks in America," Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora XIV (Spring-Summer 1987): 28. A leaflet issued by the 'Greek Workers Education Federation' to Greek steelworkers in the United States had the same address, 269 West 25th Street, as the Progressive Group of Local 70 which was led by John Vafiades. [This leaflet claimed that 1/10 of all steelworkers in the United States were Greek.] Found among the papers of Local 70 in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council of New York.

101.See Foner and Collective Labor Agreements between the Furriers Joint Council and the manufacturers' associations for the 1930s and '40s.

102.From typewritten 'membership list' for Local 70, dated October 1937, found among Local 70 papers in the Records of the Furriers Joint Council, New York City.

103.According to the "Registration Book" for Local 70, between September 1926, when the Brotherhood began taking in members, and June 1935, when the progressives joined the local en masse, Local 70 had initiated some 1350 members. 376 of those had joined in September 1926 and another 364 by the end of 1927. Over the next seven and one-half years, to May 1935, only another 610 workers' names appeared in the book. However, most of these 1350 workers did not retain membership consistently throughout these years. When the left wing took control of the Joint Council following unity, from June to December 1935 alone, 500 workers registered with Local 70, followed by another 198 over the course of the next year.

104.Gender was determined from the members' first names.

105.One retired finisher, who had worked in the industry in the 1930s, said that her husband, like those of some of her co-workers, was displeased that his wife had to walk a picket line. Nonetheless, she did it. Another retired finisher from Siatista said that she felt embarrassed about participating in strike actions, especially since her employer was a relative.

106.Interview with John Vafiades.

107.Interview with John Vafiades and with Eleni Sdona, one of the committees activists.

108.O Ergates Gounarikes [The Fur Worker], December 1937, p.2.

109.David Montgomery, "To Study the People: The American Working Class," Labor History 21 (Fall 1980): 507.

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110.Ibid., notes 51 and 52, pp. 507 and 508.

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Morphopoulos, Anastasia	Retired garment and fur worker and emigrant from Asia Minor. New York City. May 1986.
Nicholas, Peter.	Manager, United Fur Manufacturers Association. New York City. September - October, 1978.
Papadina, Damianos.	Lawyer to fur industry in Kastoria. Kastoria, Greece. September 1977.
Papamoskos, Naoum.	Director, Chamber of Commerce of Kastoria and grandson of fur merchant Naoum Papamoskos. Kastoria, Greece. July 1977.
Papayannis, John.	Retired fur worker, union organizer in New York City and emigrant from Asia Minor. Athens, Greece. September 1979.
Papazissi,Vasiliki.	Retired fur worker and emigrant from Siatista. Athens, Greece. October 1979.
Shioukas, Vasili.	Retired furrier and emigrant. Kastoria, Greece. September 1979.
Shiomtas, Mihali.	Retired furrier and emigrant. Kastoria, Greece. July 1977.
Siaños, Loukas.	Writer and retired educator. Kastoria, Greece. July 1977.
Sianos, Tasia.	Member of "Armonia," Mousiko-filologikos Sylogos Kastoria [Music and Literary Society of Kastoria]. Kastoria, Greece. July 1977.
Tates, Gus.	Retired fur worker, union activist and emigrant from Kastoria. New York City. Winter 1979.
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Ethnikos Kyrix [National Herald] (New York)

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Fur Trade Review

Fur Trade Directory

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