CHAPTER 12

THE EMPLOYMENT OF CYPRIOTS IN LONDON

The Pattern of Employment

In the earliest years of Cypriot settlement in Britain, before the war, Cypriot immigrants found work chiefly in the hotels and restaurants of the West End of London.[1] By the end of the 1930s, a number had opened small businesses of their own - for the most part small cafes - and this trend accelerated during and after the war. According to George and Millerson, the number of Cypriot restaurants and cafes in London rose from 29 in 1939 to 200 by 1945, and to 280 by 1950[2]. By the latter date there were also 60 hairdressing salons, and numerous tailoring dressmaking shops, shoe-makers' shops and groceries.

At the beginning of the 1950, then, it appears that the Cypriot community in London had become established on the economic basis of various craft and service businesses, the principal among these being catering. The 1951 Population Census unfortunately gives no data on the occupations of Cypriots in England and Wales: only in 1961 is this information provided for the first time. A study of records at the Cyprus Government's London Office for the years 1952 and 1958, however, suggests that during the 1950s, as the size of the community grew, significant changes were taking place in the distribution of occupations among the immigrants. Whereas in 1952 one-half of the men in the sample were engaged in catering, the proportion had fallen to below one-third by 1958. The proportion in craft trades such as tailoring and hairdressing remained more or less constant, and the balance was made up by a substantial shift into factory work of various kinds. Nearly a third of the sample in 1958 were engaged in factory work, by comparison with less than one in twelve in 1952.[3] The size of the community had approximately doubled during this period, though, so that the actual number involved in catering had continued to increase. However, it appears that catering and other traditional trades had been unable to expand fast enough to absorb all the new migrants who arrived during the middle of the decade; hence, increasing numbers were obliged to find work outside the community. This they were able to do on account of the positive demand for labour which prevailed throughout much of the British economy during the mid-1950s.

For the following decade, the 1960s, the further development of these trends can be charted more thoroughly, thanks chiefly to the detail provided in the 1961 and 1966 Sample Censuses. These supply a variety of classifications of the employment situation of Cypriots in Greater London, including industry, occupation and socio-economic group.

To begin with, there has been a relatively high level of 'economic activity' among Cypriot immigrants in London. Of Cypriot men, according to Table 12.1, only 10 per cent were 'economically inactive' in 1966, as compared with 16 per cent among the total population. Among Cypriot women too the level was relatively high, with 47 per cent 'economically active' as opposed to 42 per cent generally. As for change between 1961 and 1966, the level of 'economic activity' among men was virtually unchanged, while that among women rose slightly. Among the 'inactive' men in 1966, two-thirds (7 per cent of the total) were students in educational establishments, and about one in seven were in retirement. The proportion of women who were full-time students was 3.5 per cent. The remaining proportion of Cypriot women, just under 50 per cent, may be assumed to have been engaged in domestic work in their own homes.

The occupations of economically active Cypriots are shown classified into broad categories in Table 12.2. This indicates a stable pattern of occupations in which there was a concentration in craft, factory and service occupations. This applies equally to both men and women, though among the latter the service occupations played a smaller part than among men. There was no significant participation in primary production at all, and in transport and communications only a small amount on the part of Cypriot men. In the non-manual occupations representation was low, though there had been some increase over the five-year period. Although this occurred to some extent in the professional,

Table 12.1

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY OF CYPRUS-BORN PERSONS IN GREATER LONDON 1961 & 1966

%	1961 male	1961 female	1966 male	1966 female
Economically Active	89.7	45.7	89.5	47.2
Economically Inactive	10.3	54.3	10.5	52.8
Retired	..	..	1.6	0.3
Students	..	..	7.0	3.5
ALL PERSONS OVER 15 YEARS	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N (10% Sample)	1,294	982	2,083	1,734

Sources: G.R.O. 1961; C.I.T. 1966.

Table 12.2

OCCUPATIONS OF CYPRUS-BORN PERSONS IN GREATER LONDON, 1961 AND 1966

%	MALES 1961	MALES 1966	FEMALES 1961	FEMALES 1966
Professional, Technical and related workers	2.2	3.6	0.7	1.8
Administrators and Managers	0.9	1.4	0.9	0.4
Clerical Workers	2.8	3.3	4.5	8.1
Sales Workers	4.1	5.7	1.6	3.3
Service, Sport and Recreation workers	36.7	33.8	15.8	13.6
Transport and Communications workers	2.7	3.2	0.4	0.0
Craftsmen, Production Process workers & Labourers n.e.c.	43.9	44.6	69.9	68.9
Farmers, Fishermen and Foresters	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miners, Quarrymen and related workers	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not classified	6.5	4.4	6.2	3.9
Total Economically Active	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N (10% Sample)	1,161	1,864	449	818

Sources: G.R.O. 1961; C.I.T. 1966

administrative and managerial occupations, it was the increase at the clerical and sales grades that was more marked in terms of numbers. Taking all these latter groups of occupations as a whole, there was an increase from 8 per cent to 14 per cent at the non-manual level for men and women alike - the most notable rise having been in the proportion of women clerical workers.

By comparison with the population of Greater London as a whole, as may be seen from Table 12.3, male Cypriots were greatly over-represented in service occupations. Over a third of Cypriot men were employed in such occupations in 1966, as compared with less than 8 per cent among the overall population of Greater London. The proportion of Cypriots in craft and production work was similar to that among Londoners overall, but in other occupations Cypriots were markedly under-represented. The proportion of Cypriots in professional, managerial and clerical occupations was less than one-third of that among Londoners generally in each instance; of non-manual grades, only sales occupations involved Cypriots to comparable extent. Although the figures for 1966 showed an increase in the proportion of Cypriots in the non-manual occupations compared with 1961, the level remained well below that of the rest of the London population.

Table 12.3

OCCUPATIONS OF MALE CYPRUS-BORN PERSONS IN GREATER LONDON COMPARED WITH TOTAL POPULATION 1966

%	Male Persons Born in Cyprus	All Males in London
Professional, Technical & related workers	3.6	11.0
Administrators & Managers	1.4	5.7
Clerical Workers	3.3	11.3
Sales Workers	5.7	8.9
Service, Sport & Recreation workers	33.8	7.6
Transport & Communications workers	3.2	10.1
Craftsmen, Production Process workers and Labourers n.e.c.	44.6	39.5
Farmers, Fishermen & Foresters	0.0	0.7
Miners, Quarrymen & related workers	0.0	0.0
Not Classified	4.4	5.2
Total Economically Active	100.0	100.0
N (10% Sample)	1,864	246,830

Sources: C.I.T.1966; General Register Office, Sample Census 1966, England and Wales, Economic Activity County Leaflet: Greater London, H.M.S.O. (n.d.)

The distribution of occupations among the Cypriot settlers differed also quite markedly from that of their jobs immediately prior to migration. From Table 12.4, however, one can see that there was a tendency for workers in occupations in which Cypriot settlers were well-established in Britain to be over-represented among the migrants by comparison with the occupations of the population of Cyprus as a whole. This suggests that the development of specialisation in craft and business and services among the Cypriots in Britain in turn attracted workers with special skills in these fields.

Table 12.4

COMPARISON OF OCCUPATIONS OF MALE CYPRIOTS IN LONDON WITH PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS OF CYPRIOT MIGRANTS

%	ALL CYPRUS	CYPRIOT MIGRANTS	CYPRIOTS IN LONDON	
	1960	1960-66	1961	1966
Professional, Technical and related workers	3.9	3.8	2.2	3.6
Administrators and Managers	1.6	1.4	0.9	1.4
Clerical workers	6.5	9.4	2.8	3.3
Sales workers	6.7	8.7	4.1	5.7
Service, Sport and Recreation workers	8.4	12.5	36.7	33.8
Transport and Communications workers	5.7	4.4	2.7	3.2
Craftsmen, Production Process workers & Labourers n.e.c.	33.4	49.0	43.9	44.6
Farmers, Fishermen and Foresters	26.6	7.9	0.2	0.0
Miners, Quarrymen and related workers	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not classifiable	5.2	2.9	6.5	4.4
Total Economically Active	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	161,628	17,188	1,161	1,864

Note: London data derived from Census 10% Sample Surveys: figures for persons born in Cyprus.

Sources: C.P.A. 1960; V.& M.S./D.R.; G.R.O. 1961; C.I.T. 1966

Correspondingly, with little participation in transport and communications work and next to none in primary production in Britain, there was under-representation of these occupations among the migrants. The anomaly here, however, is the situation of clerical and sales workers, who made up 18 per cent of the migrants during 1960-66, compared with only 13 per cent of the Cyprus population. Yet with only 7 per cent and 9 per cent of Cypriots in London in these occupations in 1961 and 1966 respectively, it would appear that many such migrants changed to manual occupations on settlement. The extent of the change is probably exaggerated in the Table since the figures do not include earlier migrants who were more exclusively drawn from the manual occupations. The reasons for the change are not altogether clear, though opportunity - the opportunities immediately available, and made so by relatives and friends - must have been the predominant factor. The limited knowledge of English that many migrants possessed may also have been an obstacle. Lastly, there may have been some discrimination against Cypriots by non-Cypriot employers, though according to the P.E.P. Report on Racial Discrimination the extent of discrimination against Cypriots was small by comparison with that against coloured persons.[4]

Table 12.5

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP CYPRUS-BORN PERSONS IN GREATER LONDON, 1961-1966

	MALES		FEMALES	
%	1961	1966	1961	1966
Employers & Managers				
- large establishments	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.2
- small establishments	12.8	10.2	3.9	2.2
Professional workers	0.9	2.6	0.0	0.1
Intermediate non-manual workers	1.1	1.0	0.7	1.5
Junior non-manual workers	5.1	5.3	5.9	10.8
Personal Service workers	20.6	19.3	8.0	7.0
Foreman & Supervisors - manual	0.5	1.2	0.0	0.2
Skilled manual workers	28.3	28.7	19.6	18.2
Semi-skilled manual workers	9.5	11.4	49.6	49.0
Unskilled manual workers	10.8	6.8	4.3	1.8
Own-account workers (non-professional)	7.7	11.2	3.7	6.3
Farmers & agricultural workers	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not classified	2.6	1.8	4.3	2.7
Total Economically Active	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N (10% Sample)	1,161	1,864	438	818

Sources: G.R.O. 1961; C.I.T. 1966

The Census classification by socio-economic group provides further detail of the employment situation of Cypriots in employment in London in 1966 (Table 12.5). In the manual grades, skilled workers predominated among men and semi-skilled among women, while with neither sex were unskilled workers more than a small minority. Moreover, the proportion of workers lacking skills altogether declined considerably over the five year period between Censuses. At the non-manual level, the Census revealed a substantial proportion of employers and managers among Cypriot men, but these were almost exclusively engaged in small establishments - that is, employing less than 25 persons. Hence it is not surprising that most other non-manual workers outside the professions were of junior, rather than intermediate, status. Finally, there was a noticeably high proportion of (non-professional) own-account workers. Among both men and women the proportion increased by more than half between 1961 and 1966. The figures therefore indicate a marked propensity for Cypriots to set themselves up in small-scale business independently, either with or without employees. This propensity is confirmed by the classification by 'economic status' given in the Census, which shows that as many as 20 per cent of all Cypriots in employment were self-employed, compared with 9 per cent of the total Census population. Only just over a third of the self-employed Cypriots had employees working for them.[5]

Table 12.6

INDUSTRY OF MALE CYPRUS-BORN PERSONS IN GREATER LONDON, 1961 & 1966

%	1961	1966
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	0.1	0.0
Mining & Quarrying	0.0	0.0
Food, drink & tobacco	7.2	6.1
Chemicals & allied industries	0.5	0.7
Metal manufacture	0.5	0.6
Engineering & electrical goods	4.8	5.5
Shipbuilding & marine engineering	0.0	0.0
Vehicles	0.6	0.8
Metal goods n.e.s.	1.1	2.1
Textiles	0.5	1.0
Leather, leather goods & fur	0.6	0.8
Clothing & footwear	14.5	12.7
Bricks, pottery, glass, cement, etc.	1.5	0.6
Timber, Furniture, etc.	3.3	2.4
Paper, printing & publishing	0.8	1.2
Other manufacturing industries	1.6	1.6
Construction	4.0	6.1
Gas, electricity & water	0.5	0.6
Transport & Communication	3.8	4.4
Distributive trades	10.3	11.4
Insurance, banking & finance	0.5	1.1
Professional & scientific services	2.1	3.7
Miscellaneous services	38.2	33.9
Public administration & defence	0.8	0.7
Not classifiable	2.2	2.0
Total in employment	100.0	100.0
N (10% Sample)	1,097	1,787

Sources: G.R.O. 1961; C.I.T. 1966

Turning now to look at the industries in which Cypriots in London were employed, we find that the concentration in a limited range of craft and service industries which was noticed in earlier decades persisted through into the 1960s. However, there also continued a trend away from the 'traditional' industries for Cypriot immigrants that had begun during the 1950s. It can be seen from Table 12.6 that the non-professional services, the clothing and footwear trades, and the distributive trades still dominated the picture, but between 1961 and 1966 their combined proportion of the total dropped by approximately 5 per cent. But what is equally striking as the concentration of the majority is the wide spread across a variety of industries of the remainder. In fact, Cypriots were represented in almost every kind of industry except for heavy industry, which in London is practically absent anyway. On the one hand this reflects the tendency for at least a few Cypriots to take up almost every kind of trade that could possibly be of value to their community - cornering a ready market, and simultaneously rendering the community practically self-sufficient. In the areas of north London most densely settled by Cypriots, such as Camden Town or Finsbury Park, almost every need can be satisfied by a fellow-Cypriot: from food to housing, furniture to transport, publishing to finance, and medicine to religion. On the other hand, the spread of occupations indicates how Cypriots in London have accepted the wide range of opportunities open to them in their new environment, working mostly in the light industries which abound such as food-processing and light-engineering, and also to some extent in construction.

Table 12.7

INDUSTRY OF FEMALE CYPRUS-BORN PERSONS IN GREATER LONDON, 1961 & 1966

%	1961	1966
Clothing & Footwear	61.7	60.7
Miscellaneous Services	14.8	12.8
Distributive Trades	8.0	10.6
Other	15.5	15.9
Total in Employment	100.0	100.0
N (10% Sample)	438	790

Sources: G.R.O. 1961; C.I.T. 1966

Among Cypriot women in employment, there was no comparable spread across the range of industry, but instead an even greater concentration than with men - a concentration in the clothing industry (see Table 12.7). In both 1961 and 1966, rather more than three-fifths of Cypriot women in employment were engaged in this industry. During the 1950s, according to George & Millerson, the proportion was much higher: 85 per cent in 1958 and 95 per cent in 1952.[6] The other industries in which Cypriot women were engaged were principally the distributive trades and the non-professional services, catering being the chief among the latter. In both 1961 and 1966, only 15 per cent of Cypriot women working were employed outside these industries.

Cypriots living outside London differed significantly from those within London in the pattern of their employment. This difference occurred not only in the occupations of Cypriots and the industries in which they were employed, but also in their socio-economic status.

The principal difference was that, outside London, a far higher proportion of Cypriot men were engaged in the 'services' sector, chiefly in the catering and hotels industry. Thus while the proportion of London Cypriots engaged in this field had declined substantially since the war to 20 per cent in 1966, the proportion of those outside London in catering and hotels remained high at 58 per cent. Apart from this majority in catering and hotel industry, there was no concentration in any other industry on the part of Cypriots outside London. Few Cypriots outside London have entered the retail trade (4 per cent as opposed to 9 per cent), and scarcely any worked in the clothing and footwear industries (2 per cent as opposed to 13 per cent). And manufacturing industries generally (other than clothing and footwear) engaged Cypriots substantially less than in London (13 per cent by comparison with 23 per cent).

In terms of socio-economic group or status, the main difference between London and provincial Cypriots was that relatively few of the latter were engaged in manual occupations (20 per cent as opposed to 48 per cent). On the other hand, 25 per cent were either employers or managers (as compared with 11 per cent), and a further 13 per cent were own-account workers (also 11 per cent for Greater London). Professional grades were thinly represented, as in London, and so were other grades of non-manual workers apart from the substantial proportion classified as 'personal service workers' (30 per cent as compared with 19 per cent in London).

Among Cypriot women living outside London, a smaller proportion of those aged 15 and over were economically active (39 per cent as opposed to 46 per cent), and the proportion in this case was very close to the national average of 38 per cent. But whereas the majority of women workers in London were engaged in the clothing industry, very few outside London were working in this field (an

estimated 140 women or 13 per cent). Most women outside London were engaged in service industries, as with Cypriot men, and 51 per cent of those economically active were working in catering or hotels (as opposed to a mere 5 per cent in London).

The Catering Trade

The catering and hotel industry still maintained its position as the most popular for Cypriot men during the 1960s, though the proportion engaged in it continued to fall - through 27 per cent of the total in 1961, to 20 per cent in 1966. However, as the total number of immigrants increased more than proportionately, there was little, if any, numerical decline in the number concerned. Allowing for underestimation in the Census statistics, one can estimate that in 1966 there were approximately 4,500 Cypriot men working in catering and hotels in London alone. Adding in some 500 Cypriot women who also worked in this sector, we have a total of around 5,000 Cypriots involved in catering and hotel work in London at that time. Outside London, a clear majority of employed Cypriots were engaged in catering and hotels as well, so that the total for the whole of Britain was substantially higher.

The steady fall in the proportion of London Cypriots involved in the catering and hotel trades was accompanied by a change in their employment status. Before the war, Cypriots worked mostly in the kitchens of the large hotels and restaurants, with a minority working as waiters. In 1952, the Cyprus Government's London Office could still report that many first-class hotels and restaurants, such as the Savoy, the Ritz, the Mayfair and the Berkeley, were 'almost entirely staffed by Cypriots' on the catering side.[7] However, by 1950, as we have already seen, there were some 280 cafes and restaurants in London run by Cypriots, and by 1952, according to the London Office report, the number had risen beyond 300.[8] Thus from the wartime onwards, Cypriots were leaving employment in the large catering establishments and setting up in business on their own. Rents were relatively cheap at that time, and even quite modest savings were sufficient for a hard-working family to set up and maintain a small business. With the aid of a relative or two, and later a few more, the business could be expanded, for the wages that new immigrants (who received board and lodging free) required were small.

This post-war practice on the part of Cypriots of setting up in business on their own is not peculiar to those who worked in catering. Rather, it is a general characteristic of Cypriot immigrants in Britain, displayed by those working in skilled and other trades as well. The source of the motivation for many Cypriots is the value generally placed in their culture on personal independence: economic independence being both a means to this end, as well as part of the end in itself. In catering, the opportunity to achieve it lay partly in the cheapness of rents and wages, as has already been pointed out. Also, of course, it lay in the fact that, by working for many years in a variety of jobs in large restaurants, they could acquire all the skills of a trade that scarcely any had been acquainted with prior to settling in Britain.

The types of restaurant run by Cypriots vary greatly. The earliest cafes which were opened before the war were largely for the benefit of other Cypriots, with manager and clientele generally deriving from the same village. On the one hand, they served the traditional functions of the village coffee-house: a meeting-place for men during their leisure hours, a centre for information and discussion, and the home of leisure pursuits such as coffee-drinking, smoking and traditional games of skill and chance. On the other hand, in the new environment, they acquired additional functions as well, changing their character somewhat. Most of their customers had neither wives nor homes in London, and even if they did, these were often too far out to return to during the 'in-between' hours of restaurant work. They therefore looked to these cafes to provide their meals, and indeed to provide practically all of their entertainment outside the hours of work and sleep. In view of their importance and popularity, they often took on welfare functions in a small way - providing credit or lending in hard times, as a source of advice, and in general permitting a sense of security for the new arrivals in strange surroundings. Sometimes, too, the villagers associated with a cafe would collectively arrange financial or other aid for some project in their native village.

Although the original pre-war Cypriot cafes in the Soho area have now almost all disappeared, many cafes of this type can still be found in the areas of north London, such as Camden Town and Islington, where most of the post-war immigrants first settled. Some are quite explicit about their

community focus, such as the Akanthou Social Club, while others which are equally village-oriented take the name of the proprietor, or perhaps some more exotic title such as Flamingo Club. For their exclusively male clientele, these cafes offer a completely Cypriot atmosphere - either in the traditional manner of the village coffee-house, or, if they are out to appeal to the younger generation, in a more modern style typical of the towns in Cyprus, complete with Espresso Bar and Juke Box.

Cafes of this type are essentially neighbourhood cafes: places where the local menfolk can enjoy their leisure hours in the company of fellow Cypriots, free from the domestic scene in which traditionally they have no place. Such cafes, however, are not the only kind of establishment run by Cypriots which is aimed at other Cypriots rather than outsiders. There have also sprung up more recently a number of restaurants, setting themselves quite high standards in cuisine and entertainment, which aim to appeal to the more affluent Cypriots in London. While the style of these restaurants and clubs remains distinctly Cypriot, they have a more cosmopolitan character. Their clientele is more commonly whole families, who may well be strangers to one another, and in this respect they contrast with the all-male clientele of 'regulars' who patronise the traditional type of Cypriot cafe in London. The emergence of this newer type of Cypriot restaurant 'for Cypriots', and the concomitant decline of the traditional village-type cafe, reflect social changes currently occurring among the Cypriot minority in Britain.

Cafes and restaurants which are run for a non-Cypriot clientele are of a variety of kinds, ranging from fish-and-chip shops, through coffee-bars, to exclusive West End restaurants. Unlike their Italian, Indian or Chinese counterparts, Cypriots do not have a cuisine which has been identified as distinct and attractive by the society at large, and few 'Cypriot' restaurants offer distinctively Cypriot fare. Outside London's West End, almost all 'Cypriot' cafes and restaurants are British in style, and their Cypriot ownership is usually unidentifiable. Even in the West End, Cypriot-owned restaurants tend to offer Greek and Turkish food as but one part of a broadly continental-style cuisine.

Conditions of work in the catering industry compare poorly with those in other industries, and it is not surprising that Cypriot restaurateurs have been dependent on new immigrants to maintain or increase their complement of employees. In the kitchens, especially, the work may be by no means pleasant, and for all the hours are long. With the inconvenient afternoon rest-period filling out the day, little opportunity remains for family life or other organised leisure activities. Wages, too, are generally low in the catering industry. Even in the mid-1960s, the basic wage rate for many waiters was little above £6 a week. Tips may raise such a figure quite substantially, but if the waiter lives and eats in, the rate is correspondingly reduced. On top of all this, there is of course a marked seasonal variation in the demand for labour, which in earlier times particularly caused considerable unemployment among Cypriot immigrants.

As the years of settlement pass, however, most Cypriots manage to move out of the lower grades of catering work, either by attaining more senior status within the enterprise, or by saving money to buy a catering business of their own, or alternatively by leaving the catering trade altogether. Starting one's own business was a lot easier soon after the war than it is now, for high rents have to be met, and also much higher wage bills. No longer is it possible to bring over a steady trickle of relatively cheap labour from Cyprus. The restrictions imposed under the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 have made the importation of Cypriot labour increasingly difficult, and Cypriot employees already in London have correspondingly benefited from this shortage of potential recruits. Not only have restaurants been forced to improve wages and conditions in order to keep their staff, they have also been obliged to engage non-Cypriot employees to some extent, especially after the number of Category A Vouchers became restricted in 1965.

The Clothing Industry

Similar pressures have influenced developments in the clothing industry, at least as far as Cypriot businesses are concerned. No record of the total number of Cypriot firms is available, but in 1966 the industry was the second highest employer of Cypriot men, and by far the highest of Cypriot women. Again, as with catering, the proportion was tending to decline slightly, but in 1966 one in every eight men and almost two in every three women were still engaged in the clothing industry. The

men work either as craft tailors, or else as managers or specialist skilled workers (design, maintenance, etc.) in small factories which are chiefly devoted to the manufacture of women's outerwear garments. It is these factories which employ almost all of the women too, either within the workshop itself or alternatively on their own machines in their homes.

The women's outerwear industry is largely based in London, and is characterised by small, often poorly equipped factories and a long tradition of immigrant labour. During the post-war period there has been a persistently acute shortage of labour, and Cypriot immigrants, whether skilled or not, have readily found work in it. Most are engaged in small 'outdoor' factories, which provide 'cut, make and trim' services for larger firms which both supply the cloth and wholesale or retail the product. Dresses and blouses are the main items of clothing produced. Many women are employed to do the machining stage in their own homes, and such homework is more common with blouses which can be easily transported, can be more nearly finished by the machinist, and which are easier to check on return. Home working has advantages for both worker and employer. In particular, it allows married women with children to continue working part-time at a good wage-rate, and it may permit language difficulties to be overcome. For employers it saves on overheads, and home workers are self-insured for National Insurance purposes and do not require holiday payments. It also has the advantage of seasonal flexibility in an industry in which seasonal variation in demand is an important factor. This in turn renders the full-time workers in the factories more secure in their employment all the year round.

While the clothing industry remains organised in this manner, it is easy to start up in business on very little capital. The early Cypriot clothing workers generally found employment in Jewish or other non-Cypriot firms in central London, but the more enterprising soon found that they could manage successfully on their own with one or two family workers and their machines. In a back room or a basement they could set up a workshop, and in addition would hire a factory cutting-room one or two nights a week. The wife and other female relatives would do the machining at home, and the husband would be responsible for handling all outside matters, including obtaining an appropriate supply of work. Starting perhaps with one machine only, before long enough might be saved to bring over a sister or cousin, and then another and another until the scale of operation becomes large enough to occupy a proper workshop or small factory. To judge from advertisements in the Cypriot press, Cypriot factories first became established in some number in the first half of the 1950s, and since then the quantity has continually grown. As then, most are still small in scale, employing not more than a dozen workers. However, there are by now a number of quite large Cypriot clothing factories in central and north London, and a few with their own West End showrooms. From small beginnings, they have grown to become substantial family enterprises, although many others no doubt have been less successful or have failed.

As with Cypriots in catering, the early migrants in the clothing industry settled in Camden Town and Islington in order to be near the workshops in the Soho area. More recently, however, many Cypriots have moved northwards, away from the centre, to make their homes in Haringey, Stoke Newington and around. Affluence has enable them to buy houses in more pleasant and prestigious areas, and to afford a longer journey to work. The factories, in turn, have tended to follow them, first to Islington and Camden Town, and currently out into the suburbs. The reason for this is the serious shortage of labour, especially since the restriction imposed on the issue of Category A Employment Vouchers (as prescribed by the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962) for new immigrants in 1965. Since that date it has become increasingly difficult for employers to obtain Cypriot labour, indeed for them to obtain any immigrant labour at all. Correspondingly, the earnings of women workers in the trade, almost all of whom are on piece-work rates, have risen phenomenally. Expanding businesses bid keenly against each other for new workers, using half-page or full-page advertisements in the Greek Cypriot press. To experienced machine-workers, they offer earnings of £30, £35 or even £40 a week, both for factory work and also for homework. New, inexperienced workers begin lower, but can quickly come to receive the full rate. Earnings today are at least two, and sometimes three times as high as they were in the middle to late 1950s, if newspaper advertisements may be taken as a guide. Thrown into the bargain are two or three weeks holiday a year, bonuses of one kind or another, improved working conditions and a characteristically Cypriot atmosphere with recorded music and

other attractions. Of course, many smaller firms cannot offer such rewards as these, and wage rates are proportionately lower. However, it is the larger newer businesses that set the pace, and those who cannot keep up will be unable to retain their employees. It becomes far less profitable to set up a small new family business when women can earn so much elsewhere. The labour shortage induced by immigration controls may therefore set in motion some major structural changes in the industry, changes in both the size and the location of factories.

One of the main reasons why many Cypriots have entered the clothing industry in Britain is that they had already acquired the appropriate skills before emigrating. Some men would have worked as tailors previously, and almost all women would have already acquired the basic skills of dressmaking. In the same way, the fact of skills previously acquired accounts in part for tendency of Cypriots to enter certain other skilled trades, such as hairdressing, leather-working (including shoe-menders) and wood-working. However, by no means all of those entering these trades would have had previous experience in Cyprus, family recruits frequently being given the opportunity to learn the skills on the job. Retailing is a further trade which is popular among Cypriots. Greengrocery and general grocery are most common, but to some extent almost every produce is covered. About one in every nine Cypriots work in the distributive trade of one kind or another. Both in retailing and some of the skilled trades (principally hairdressing); Cypriots have opened shops far beyond the limits of dense Cypriot settlement, and by now their distribution covers almost the whole of Greater London.

The Ethnic Economy

Cypriot settlers in Britain thus work principally in the following trades, roughly in order of importance: the catering trade, the clothing trade, other trades involving traditional craft skills, and retailing. It is estimated that in 1961, at least two-thirds of Cypriot men and four-fifths of Cypriot women were occupied in one of these trades, not including those involved in clerical or managerial capacities. Some of these businesses involve factory production, and others direct personal contact with the consumer. They differ also in certain other respects too. However, one important feature which they all have in common is that in every case it is possible for a single man to start up in business on his own, and to be successful while keeping that business a small-scale family enterprise which the owner manages personally. In Cypriot culture a high value is placed on autonomy and self-sufficiency in a man, and in his family as a unit; and in the economic context these values are realised in self-employment and the owner-management of small familistic firms. In 1966 (as shown in Table 12.8) one-fifth of all Cypriot men at work were self-employed, more than twice as many as in the population as a whole. This proportion is almost identical to its equivalent in 1961, and the sample survey statistics indicate that towards 1500 Cypriots set themselves up in business on their own during the five-year period. It should be noted, however, that almost all of the numerical increase is accounted for by persons without employees. The correspondingly slight increase in the number with employees under them suggests that opportunities for expanding personal or immediate family businesses are now much less than in the 1950s. One factor which would account for this is the labour shortage caused by the restriction on Cypriot immigration during the 1960s. Not only has this presented intrinsic difficulties to aspiring and existing employers, but, as already pointed out, it has caused substantial rises in wages and other costs. Some firms may have gone out of business or been bought out for these reasons. No representative data is available on this point, though advertisements in the Cypriot press indicate that a considerable amount of buying and selling of businesses takes place. Large Cypriot firms do exist, as noted earlier of the clothing industry, but they are very few, and according to the 1966 Census, only 5 per cent of Cypriot employers and managers worked in establishments of more than 25 persons.

This predominance of small family businesses is particularly marked among Cypriots living outside London. As we have already seen, the majority of these were employed in the catering and hotel trade, and were located in a variety of towns and cities up and down the country. A small number of evidently entrepreneurial Cypriots own large hotels or chains of cafes and restaurants, but for the most part Cypriot businessmen are owner-managers of small-scale enterprises. Among Cypriots

Table 12.8

SELF-EMPLOYMENT AMONG MALE CYPRUS-BORN PERSONS IN GREATER LONDON 1961 & 1966

%	1961	1966
Self-Employed	19.5	19.5
without employees	8.9	12.3
with employees	10.6	7.2
Employees	80.5	80.5
TOTAL IN EMPLOYMENT	100.0	100.0
N (10% Sample)	1,144	1,787

Note: 1961 figures for 'six major conurbations' combined: include 47 (4.1%) persons resident outside Greater London.

Sources: G.R.O. 1961; C.I.T. 1966.

outside London, 32 per cent were self-employed in 1966 (two-fifths with employees, three-fifths without), as compared with 20 per cent within London. Family businesses, with wives working alongside husbands, are also more common, as indicated by a higher proportion of Cypriot women working in the catering trade.

The overall pattern of work among Cypriots in Britain thus by no means reflects that of the population at large, for Cypriots are concentrated in certain craft and service industries, work mainly in small familistic firms in central and north London, and have a high rate of self-employment. In part this is accounted for by the opportunities open to them at different stages of settlement, in part by the skills acquired prior to immigration, and in part by choice exercised in accordance with Cypriot cultural values. The result constitutes the economic basis on which Cypriot community life in Britain has developed, and in economic terms this community may be judged to have been generally successful. By means of providing important economic services for the wider society, and providing also for most of its own economic needs, the Cypriot community has made itself an integrated and also largely self-sufficient element within the economy generally.

From the point of view of the individual migrant, too, success has been the lot of most, in that settlement in Britain has enabled them to find jobs no worse, and usually better than could be obtained in Cyprus; in that these have in turn provided economic and social security for Cypriot workers and their families; and in that the wages earned allow a higher standard of living than would be possible in their home country. But for many these rewards have not been easy to come by, in a strange country where economic customs and language may be poorly understood. Principally they have been achieved by dint of hard work: long hours being common, and arduous labour and poor conditions not infrequent. But such hard work is voluntary, for most Cypriots come to Britain to get steadier jobs and better wages, and it is basic to their philosophy of life that hard work early on earns leisure later. Steady saving, self-employment, and safe investment in property are three important elements in an ideal pattern that is achieved by many and shared by most (although few of the many actually manage to relieve themselves of the work-load and grasp the elusive leisure).

Another ingredient of individual success has undoubtedly been the ability of some to exploit kinship and village ties as a source of labour appropriate for the maintenance or expansion of their businesses. Speaking of this, Cypriots talk altruistically of being able to 'help' their relatives, implying

that it was a point of honour to do so, and that they were fortunate to have the opportunity. This sentiment is often an important element in their motivation, but generally the economic advantage weighs importantly too. For, in effect, a Cypriot businessman's village has often been (particularly in the 1950s) little less than a private source of cheap labour, and from the profit on it much personal wealth has been gained. The structure of patronage so created, in which the new migrant becomes indebted to his employer-sponsor, allows a successful businessman to increase his social and political influence within the settlement, thus bringing him further prestige. Hence with economic success comes social mobility and the development of status differences in the community, not just in spite of the solidarity of kinship ties, but with their necessary aid. In the late 1950s, as prospective migrants became wiser about what they could reasonably expect, the 'exploitation' of immigrant labour lessened, and by the mid-1960s, with further restrictions on immigration form the Commonwealth, skilled workers coming from Cyprus were at a premium. Recently, therefore, the labour situation has not so much helped as hindered the economic prospects of Cypriot businessmen, though as noted earlier it has been greatly to the advantage of wage-earners already in Britain.

From yet another angle, therefore, it appears that the conditions appropriate for rapid expansion of economic activity within the Cypriot community, which prevailed in the 1950s, are by the mid-1960s tending to disappear. A slower steadier pattern of development may be expected in future, except that the few who have already acquired substantial capital (such as the owners of the largest clothing factories) will continue to be in a position to expand. A second generation of Cypriot workers in Britain may not, however, follow their parents into these 'traditional' occupations. Instead they may use the educational qualifications they acquire to spread more widely through the national economy. To the extent that this is the case, the future pattern of the economic base of the Cypriot community may differ from what has just been described.

Footnotes

1 Government of Cyprus, London Office, Report, 1938, p. 5.
2 George V. & Millerson, G., "The Cypriot Community in London", Race, Vol. VIII, No. 3, Jan. 1967, pp. 284-5.
3 George & Millerson, op.cit., p. 283.
4 Racial Discrimination, Political and Economic Planning, 1967, p. 74.
5 See below.
6 George & Millerson, op.cit., p. 283.
7 Government of Cyprus, London Office, Report, 1952, p. 4.
8 ibid.