

International Journal of Maritime History

<http://ijh.sagepub.com/>

Shaping Greek-Tunisian Commercial Relations in the Ottoman Mediterranean World: The Efessios Merchant House

Maria Christina Chatziioannou

International Journal of Maritime History 2007 19: 161

DOI: 10.1177/084387140701900109

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://ijh.sagepub.com/content/19/1/161.citation>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

Additional services and information for *International Journal of Maritime History* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://ijh.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://ijh.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Jun 1, 2007

[What is This?](#)

Shaping Greek-Tunisian Commercial Relations in the Ottoman Mediterranean World: The Efessios Merchant House¹

Maria Christina Chatziioannou

A Mediterranean Neighbourhood

Although Tunisia was never a vital economic hub, it nevertheless became part of a Greek commercial network that stretched as far east as the Black Sea. Both its Mediterranean and Ottoman identities made it attractive to Greek entrepreneurs. Moreover, its geographic proximity to western ports; its familiar socio-economic and cultural milieu; and its status as an affluent agricultural country offered a range of mercantile opportunities. Although Greece did not have strong economic ties with Tunisia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, its merchants did take advantage of a widespread western network led by Jewish and French merchants. Migrants from the northwest Peloponnesus constituted a large part of the small Greek presence (250 persons) in Tunis in the mid-nineteenth century.²

The “Ottomanization” of Tunisia was a slow process that grew out of the Ottoman-Spanish rivalry in the Mediterranean.³ Tunisia was part of the Ottoman Empire from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth century, while in the

¹An earlier version of this essay was presented at the Fourth International Congress of Maritime History in Corfu in June 2004. An alternative version of this paper appears in Maria Christina Chatziioannou and Gelina Harlaftis (eds.), *Following the Nereids: Sea Routes and Maritime Business, 16th-20th Centuries* (Athens, 2006), 87-97.

²M. Kharalambis Poulos, “Les Hellènes,” in C.H. Dessort, *Histoire de la ville de Tunis* (Algiers, 1926), 151-155; and H. Kazdaghli, “Communautés méditerranéennes de Tunisie. Les Grecs de Tunisie du Millet-i-rum à l’assimilation française (XVIIe-XX siècles),” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, Nos. 95-98 (2002), 449-476.

³For a detailed description of the formative years of the Tunisian *beylicate*, see Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, “The *Beylicate* in Seventeenth-Century Tunisia,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, VI, No. 1 (1975), 70-93.

International Journal of Maritime History, XIX, No. 1 (June 2007), 161-180.

late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the so-called “Barbary Pirates” threatened maritime enterprise in the region. The Anglo-French rivalry in the western Mediterranean was heightened by the British occupation of Gibraltar (1704) and the establishment of a protectorate in Malta (1813), both of which threatened long-standing French commercial relations throughout the Mediterranean world. Despite political and military upheavals, commercial activities in the Mediterranean were facilitated by geographical proximity. Cultural bonds were created between different ethnic and religious groups inside the vast territory that comprised the Mediterranean basin.

Ottoman possessions in the Mediterranean were important suppliers of foodstuffs and raw materials. Greek and Tunisian products were carried to a variety of Mediterranean ports, thus creating a web of direct and indirect commercial relations. Trade was conducted by both land and sea. French, Jews and Italians had always had a preponderant role in Tunisian trade in grain and wool, and in European ports, mainly Marseille and Leghorn, Greek merchants became acquainted with this commerce, since both cities were major centres of Greek mercantile networks.⁴ In the pre-industrial period, geographic propinquity and economic complementarity were strong assets. Cultural relations based upon trade could overlap religious and ethnic differences.

A comparison of Tunisia and the Peloponnesus in the Ottoman period suggests similar developments. The Ottoman conquest of Tunisia brought to power a *beylerbey* (provincial governor) in the new *eyelet* appointed by the Porte. There were three major power groups: the janissaries, who were mainly Muslim-born Anatolians; the corsairs, who for the most part were converts from Rumelia; and the representatives of the Porte. Tunisia gradually adopted the Ottoman political ideal of a strong centralized state dependent upon a salaried army and administration.⁵ While this was occurring, the Ottomans gradually conquered a large part of what was to become the modern Greek state. Their campaign against Peloponnesus (1458-1687) was interrupted by a Venetian conquest and ended with the Peace of Passarowitz in 1718, which ceded the territory to the Ottomans. A *pasha*, the Morowalesi, governed the peninsula, and by the late eighteenth century local Christian autonomy became stronger. Local notables such as P. Benakis and P. Mavromihalis in Calamata accumulated wealth and power and prepared for the revolution in 1821 that led

⁴For the Greek community in Leghorn, see Despoina Vlami, *To fiorini, to stari kai i odos tou kipou. Ellines emporoi sto Livorno 1750-1868* (Athens, 2000, in Greek).

⁵Asma Moalla, *The Regency of Tunisia and the Ottoman Porte, 1777-1814* (London, 2002), 139.

to independence.⁶ During the Ottoman occupation a local Greek elite based on trade, tax farming and piracy came into being. As well, throughout the eighteenth century French merchants became interested in agricultural exports and in the market for manufactured goods in the main Peloponnesian ports of Methoni, Coroni, Nauplio and Patras. After the French Revolution, trade with France declined throughout the eastern Mediterranean, creating openings for British economic interests and local entrepreneurs.

Peloponnesus and Tunisia shared some important characteristics. Both were agricultural areas which exported goods to other ports in the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe. Over time, they established a complementary relationship based mainly on the maritime transport of food and raw materials.

Tunisia went through a period of internal conflict and revolt (1702-1814), and recent studies indicate the strengthening of bonds between local administrations and the weakening of the power of Europeans in the Regency, as well as a moderation of the *corso* due to peace treaties between the Porte and several European countries. Under the rule of Hammuda Pasha (1774-1814), the frontier culture declined in this part of North Africa, and Turkish became the official language. The whole Husaynid *beylical* period up to 1881, when Tunisia became a French protectorate, has been considered as a "semi-national dynasty." It was an era of the peaceful merger of Tunisian and Ottoman cultures. Driven by the idea of Islamic solidarity, the Tunisians fought alongside the Ottomans in Navarino (1827) and during the Crimean War (1854-1855), thus coming into direct conflict with Greek national aspirations.⁷

Between 1801 and 1805, and again in 1815, the United States Navy weakened Mediterranean piracy by attacking Tunis and other corsair bases along the Barbary Coast of North Africa.⁸ This represented direct American intervention during a period of Anglo-French commercial competition. As a result of the loss of its revenues from piracy, the Tunisian government was plunged deeply into debt. The chief creditors were France, Italy, and Britain, all of which had imperial ambitions in northern Africa. As piracy waned, Greek merchants expanded their activities in Tunisia. But this was still not easy, since the Americans considered any vessel flying the Ottoman flag an enemy, and the Hydriots, under the Greco-Ottoman flag, were terrified at the

⁶Martha Pylia, "Les notables moréotes, fin du XVIIIe début du XIXe siècle: fonctions et comportements" (Unpublished PhD thesis, Université Paris I-Sorbonne, 2001), 203-213.

⁷Tunisia constituted one of the pillars of opposition towards the reform policies of Selim III; see Moalla, *Regency of Tunisia*, 141.

⁸J.A. Field, Jr., *America and the Mediterranean World, 1776-1882* (Princeton, 1969), 49-58.

prospect of being captured, especially when rumours were spread by Tunisian merchants that the US had sunk a small Levantine ship.⁹ Indeed, there were few protections or rules governing Mediterranean commerce at this time. For example, when a hostile Tunisian ship stuck on the rocks off the island of Hydra in 1814, the captain obtained a loan from a Hydriot officer to repair his ship using bills of exchange drawn on Smyrna.¹⁰

During the Tanzimat era, Tunisia went through its own Western-oriented reformation under Ahmad Bey (1837-1881).¹¹ By the mid-nineteenth century, Tunis had a population of 100,000, most of whom were Muslims. It also hosted a foreign community, which included 5000-6000 Maltese and 4000-5000 Italians. The ruling group of the city was the *baldis*, the Arab bourgeoisie, whose economic and social power derived from their artisanal activities. Next to them were the *mamluks*, who represented the political elite close to the *beylical* government. Many of these people were former white slaves from the Caucasus or the Aegean islands.¹²

Mediterranean Trade Routes

The importance of the *corso* in the Mediterranean is well known. From the seventeenth century Muslim and Christian corsairs, acting both individually and in small fleets, created a competitive equilibrium in the area which transcended religious divisions. This was the period when the Maltese corsairs were at their peak, and their “illegal” transactions became an integral part of the Mediterranean commercial world.¹³

In the eighteenth century, Malta played a crucial role in economic relations with the northwest African coast (Magreb) by purchasing prize ships

⁹Hydra, 16 September 1804, *Archion Kinotitos Hydras 1778-1832* (Piraeus, 1921), II, 176.

¹⁰Smyrna, March 1814, in *ibid.*, V, 97-98.

¹¹Khelifa Chater, *Dépendance et mutations précoloniales. La régence de Tunis de 1815 à 1857* (Tunis, 1984), 570-571 and 587-588; L. Carl Brown, *The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey, 1837-1855* (Princeton, 1974); and Jean Ganiage, *Les Origines du Protectorat français en Tunisie 1861-1881* (Paris, 1959).

¹²William L. Cleveland, “The Municipal Council of Tunis, 1858-1870: A Study of Urban Institutional Change,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, IX, No. 1 (1978), 35-37.

¹³Dionysios A. Zakythinis, *L'Hellénisme Contemporaine* (Athens, 1939), 8-9. Among the rich historiography on the corsairs of Barbary and Malta, see especially Peter Earle, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary* (London, 1970).

and cargoes. The island's main economic advantages were capital and commercial expertise, both accumulated during a long period of trade and piracy. Those advantages enabled Maltese merchants to serve as middlemen between northern European manufacturers and southern European consumers. This position enabled Malta to play an important regulatory role in the commercial activities of the western Mediterranean equivalent to that of Venice in the Adriatic. The strong Maltese presence in Tunisia is well documented,¹⁴ although Greek enterprises there still need to be explored.

The importance of Malta as a naval and military base on the Mediterranean sea routes also offered a variety of opportunities to its neighbours. Due to its strategic importance, the island also became a hub of political intrigue. It is well known, for example, that Italian political exiles who favoured the *Risorgimento* hatched various conspiracies and campaigns on the island.¹⁵ Moreover, the Greek-Ottoman merchant marine frequently used Malta as a trading post. Greeks from Messolonghi and Hydra used the Maltese flag from the eighteenth century, and in the first decade of the nineteenth century cargoes of oil, cotton, wool, raisins, silk, vermilion and Cretan soap were exported from Greek ports to Malta. Indeed, the volume of Greek shipping entering Maltese ports in 1818-1820 was estimated to be almost as large as that of Greek vessels in the eastern Mediterranean during the same period.¹⁶

Between the mid-eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, Greek merchants controlled a large part of the external trade of the Ottoman Empire with Western Europe and a substantial share of intra-Ottoman commerce. Throughout this period trade in agricultural products and raw materials increased in the markets of the Ottoman Empire which were in frequent contact with ports in the Italian peninsula, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands and the Black Sea. The need for access to centres of distribution led to the creation of family enterprises whose members were dispatched to various cities.¹⁷ It is

¹⁴In 1856, the Maltese in Tunisia constituted the majority of the European population; Chater, *Dépendance et mutations precoloniales*, 588.

¹⁵In 1825 the Western-minded Greek politician, An. Polyzoidis, and the French philhellene, M. Raybaud, tried unsuccessfully to organise in Malta a military campaign in favour of independence; see Katerina Gardika, "O Anastasios Polizoidis kai i elliniki epanastasi," *Mnemon*, No. 1 (1971), 46-47.

¹⁶Vasiles Kremmydas, "Aspects des relations entre la Grèce et Malte (1810-1821)," in Kremmydas (ed.), *Aferoma ston Niko Svorono* (2 vols., Rethymno, 1986), II, 223-231.

¹⁷Maria Christina Chatzioannou, "L'emmigrazione commerciale greca dei secoli XVIII-XIX: una sfida imprenditoriale," *Proposte e ricerche*, XXII (1999), 22-38.

in this context that Greek commercial migration spread to the eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea and ports in Western Europe.

In the seventeenth century the most important destinations for Tunisian exports were Marseille, Leghorn and Malta, and Tunisia's main trading partner was still France. French and Jewish merchants dominated this trade. A representative Jewish trading house in Tunisia was Jacob and Raphael Lombroso, from Leghorn, who traded between Marseille and Tunisia, importing Spanish wool for the manufacture of the Tunisian *fez*. The French merchant Nicolas Beranger exported Tunisian wheat and acted as an agent for Marseille's merchants and Leghorn's Jews. A tight commercial triangle was created between Leghorn, Tunisia and Marseille that enabled such people to profit from the French-Ottoman capitulations.¹⁸ Marseille was the main import port for Tunisian grain, oil, wool, wax, sponges and leather. By the late eighteenth century the terms of this trade were shifting in favour of Tunisia: between 1776 and 1789, for example, the value of Tunisian exports increased three-fold while exports from Marseille remained stable.¹⁹ But what is most important is that Marseille, with a large merchant marine, was the gateway to Tunisia for various products from Spain, Italy, Egypt, Syria and the West Indies. In short, Marseille was an indispensable intermediary in Tunisia's external trade.²⁰

In 1736, the French consul in Tunisia, Saint Gervais, complained in his *Memoirs* that there were few Christian merchants in the country; despite consular protection, there were only six from France, although they did dominate trade with Marseille and Toulon. Jews carried out the commercial transactions with Italy, and English merchants were increasingly important in trade with the Levant.²¹ Although the resident French merchants were few, Marseille remained by far Tunisia's main trading partner. In 1788, for example, Marseille was listed as the destination for thirty-seven percent of the ships from Tunisia, followed by Malta and Leghorn, while the majority of departures for the Ottoman Empire went to Alexandria.²²

¹⁸Minna Rozen, "Les marchands Juifs Livournais a Tunisia et le commerce avec Marseille a la fin du XVIIe siecle," *Michael*, IX (1985), 95-100.

¹⁹Mongi Smida, *Aux origines du commerce français en Tunisie. Les traites capitulaires* (Tunis, 2001), 104.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 102-103.

²¹Saint Gervais, *Mémoires Historiques qui concernent le gouvernement de l'ancien et du nouveau Royaume des Tunis avec des réflexions sur la conduite d'un consul* (Paris, 1736), 317 and 328; Cf. Brill's, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, VIII, 842.

²²Daniel Panzac, *Commerce et navigation dans l'Empire Ottoman au XVIIIe siècle* (Istanbul, 1996), 180.

Marseille and to a lesser extent Leghorn were the main destinations for Tunisian agricultural products. Oil and wool were mainly absorbed in French manufacturing.²³ Marseille was also the principal destination for the small quantities of similar Peloponnesian exports. The soap factories of Marseille used oil and soda from the northwest African coast as they used olive oil from the Greek territories. It was in Marseilles and Leghorn that Greek merchants became acquainted with Tunisian products, above all the famous *fezzes*.

Nascent Greek mercantile enterprises had to cope with the perils of the *corso* at sea but still participated in the trade in Tunisian *fezzes*. The trade in grain carried out by the fleet from Hydra was directed mainly towards Leghorn and Marseille. These vessels not only had to cope with Barbary and Maltese corsairs but also with Greek pirates. The best-known Greek corsairs, the Maniots from the southern Peloponnesus, preyed on traffic between the Aegean and the western Mediterranean. Mani was a densely populated region which shared several demographic and economic similarities with Malta.²⁴

The war for Greek independence was a turning point in Greek-Tunisian relations.²⁵ These became openly belligerent, since the Greek fleet was engaged in a war with the Ottomans who were supported by Tunisian ships. But at the same time, the woollen Tunisian *fez* continued to be an important piece of Greek apparel. During the Husaynid dynasty and after the establishment of the Greek state, Greek-Tunisian trade was still conducted either by Greek mercantile networks based in Marseille and Leghorn or through nearby ports. Among the pioneers in this commerce were merchants from the southern Peloponnesus. Both regions had similar trading and consumption patterns, and their similar cultural backgrounds encouraged trade both in the Ottoman period and immediately after the achievement of Greek independence.

²³*Ibid.*, 181-184.

²⁴Mani faced a continuous migration from its lands in the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries; see V. Panayotopoulos, "I shedon nisos Mani. To geografiko ipovathro mias makras istorikis diadromis," in Y. Saitas (ed.), *Mani Temoignages sur l'espace et la societe. Voyageurs et expeditions scientifiques (XVe-XIXe s.)* (Athens, 1996, in Greek), 34. For Malta, see Carmel Vassallo, *Corsairing to Commerce: Maltese Merchants in XVIII Century Spain* (Msida, 1997), 1-3.

²⁵Tunisian relations with the Levant became more difficult after 1822 because of the Greek war of independence and Greek corsairing activities; see M.-H. Cherif, "Expansion européenne et difficultés Tunisiennes de 1815 à 1830," *Annales E.S.C.*, XXV, No. 3 (1970), 726.

The Efessios Merchant House

The private archive of one merchant house testifies both to the commercial relations between southwest Peloponnesus and Tunisia and to the role of Malta as an intermediary in the nineteenth century. During the period of Greece's conquest by the Ottomans the Efessios family from Calamata established a commercial network between Calamata, Malta and Tunisia.²⁶ Their business was based on the exchange of Peloponnesian and Tunisian agricultural and manufactured products. The family firm was a partnership between brothers and cousins that in earlier times would have been called *fraternitas*. Expansion came about through the migration of family members to major port cities, and financial resources were increased through a variety of practices typical of merchants in the days before banks. A tightly-controlled network of acquaintances assisted the family firm financially. The trade pattern of the Efessios merchant house can be compared to that of the Lombroso and Beranger in previous eras. Economic transactions were conducted through family and ethnic trading networks. The main trading axis remained Tunis-Marseille, and the Efessios family established bases in both. But the family did not neglect the opportunities of using Malta and Leghorn as well.

Calamata was prosperous in the nineteenth century. Its main comparative advantage was its geographic position, and it had a long history of involvement in commerce with Adriatic and western Mediterranean ports. It was a station for sailing ships *en route* from the Aegean islands to Italian and French ports. In the middle of the nineteenth century the economic elite of the town of 1219 people, out of a total population of 22,599, consisted of merchants, "industrialists" and landowners.²⁷ Wealthy families gained local political prestige by trading silk, oil, figs, vallonea and vermillion; processing olive oil; manufacturing silk; and being tax farmers.

The Efessios family had been based in Calamata since 1700 and owned a respectable estate.²⁸ During the second half of the eighteenth century documents show that the family acquired property in the area. The founding

²⁶The private archive of the Efessios merchant house in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries has been microfilmed with the assistance of Elias Efessios, Jr. and is currently being processed at the Institute of Neohellenic Research (NHRF) in Athens.

²⁷Y. Bafounis (ed.), *Statistiki tis Ellados. Plithismos tou etous 1861* (reprint, Athens, 1991), 78-79 (in Greek).

²⁸D. Doukakis, *Messiniaka kai idia peri Faron kai Calamatas* (Athens, 1911), 259-261 (in Greek). Elias Efessios, or Vovos, was considered the main merchant importing fezzes from Tunisia; see O. Chrysospathis, *Istoria tis Calamatas* (Athens, 1936), 35 (in Greek).

fathers of the family firm, Nicolettos and Stamatis, were cousins who had been partners since the mid-eighteenth century. Stamatis' line, however, was eclipsed due to a lack of male descendants, while Nicolettos' branch has survived to the present. His family members intermarried with other local notables in Calamata, such as the Benakis and Mavromihalis.²⁹

Nicolettos's principal heir was Elias Efessios (1789-1867), an adventurous young man who at the beginning of the nineteenth century left his birthplace and went to Smyrna, where he stayed with an Armenian family. He began to sail on the dangerous seas between Calamata, Smyrna and Alexandria at a time when all three were part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1816 Elias moved to Tunis and began to trade. He initiated the creation of a commercial network by establishing correspondents in Malta and Zante; from 1823 to 1828, the Maltese trade was handled through Nicolettos Efessios. After the creation of the Greek state, Elias moved back to Calamata; married a woman from the family of his Constantinople correspondent; and extended the family by fathering seven children. One of his daughters, Charikleia, married Petros Ant. Mavromihalis, the mayor of Calamata and a descendant of a well-known Maniot family. Elias became a successful entrepreneur who profited from family expertise and continued to accumulate wealth for many years to come.

Table 1
Efessios Merchant Network Locations (1831-1861)

Network Suppliers	Entrepreneur Co-ordinator	Information Agents	Network Suppliers
Constantinople			
Corfu			
Coroni			
Hydra		Leghorn	
Kyparissia	Calamata	Malta	Tunis
Leontari			
Mistras			
Nissi			
Patras			
Pyrgos			
Zante			

Source: Efessios Archive, Commercial Correspondence, 1839-1850, and Bills of Lading, 1831-1861.

²⁹The relations are certified by marriage contracts and documents of real estate purchases in the Efessios' private archive.

Elias Efessios was the “entrepreneur-coordinator” of the family firm.³⁰ He developed a network (see table 1) throughout the western Peloponnesus (Coroni, Kyparissia, Leontari, Mistras, Nissi, Patras and Pyrgos) and two of the Ionian islands (Corfu and Zante). It is evident that geographic proximity was important for the collection of economic information and the provision of goods. Constantinople, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, was an important trade connection, especially for the *fez*. The ports of Malta and Livorno supplied commercial information to Efessios’ agents and were trading posts for certain goods. Apart from Calamata, Tunis was the other branch of the supply network. The entrepreneur in Calamata managed the information flow and organized transactions from there to Tunis, frequently via Malta.

Between 1831 and 1861, 133 bills of lading have been preserved in the Efessios archive (see figure 1). They show the trade orientation of Elias Efessios before his death. During this period, this Peloponnesian family continued to take advantage of an established trade network. Malta was an indispensable stopover on the route to Tunisia, and a reliable representative there was always a necessity. The network connecting Calamata, Malta and Tunisia was established through local partners trading foodstuffs, dyes and *fezzes*.

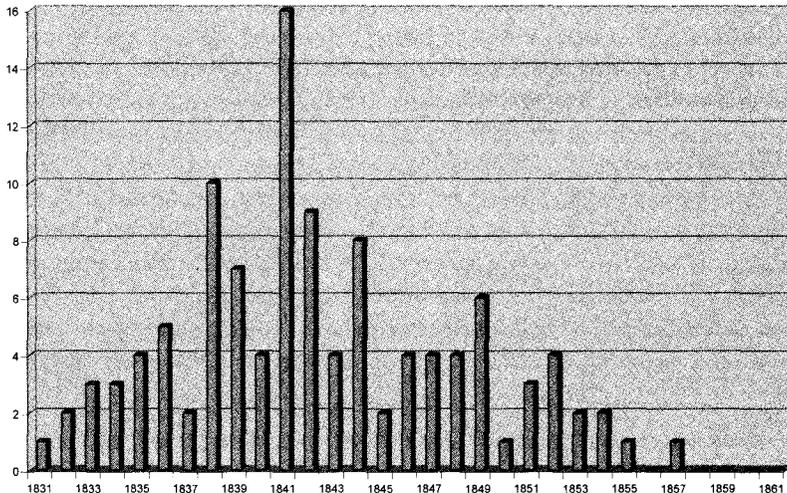


Figure 1: Bills of Lading of Efessios Trading House, 1831-1861

Source: See table 1.

³⁰Mark Casson, *The Entrepreneur. An Economic Theory* (Aldershot, 1991), 57.

It is clear based upon the bills of lading that the peak period of activity was 1838-1849, the decade following Elias Efessios' relocation to Calamata and the formative years of his personal trading network. In the same decade voyages between Calamata and Tunis, which constituted the majority of trading ventures, were mainly in exports from Tunis (see appendix 1).³¹

Over the thirty-year period the dominant export from Calamata to Tunis was silk, accompanied occasionally by vermillion. In the other direction only fifteen cases of red *fezzes* were shipped from Tunis to Calamata along with dried octopus, stockfish and occasionally butter, rosewater and dates. This trading pattern is reflected in the firm's business correspondence: petty commodities accompanying the most expensive trading items such as silk and *fezzes*. This pattern has been observed in similar case studies in periods when foreign competition was intense and medium-rank merchants could not purchase those goods in greatest demand.³² The withdrawal of the famous Tunisian *fezzes* from the Efessios' commercial exchanges cannot be explained by a decline in consumer demand, since *fezzes* continued to be worn throughout Greece until the late nineteenth century. Another explanation might have more validity: that a large part of domestic demand was satisfied by a new manufacturer who commenced production in Athens in 1839, offering an assortment of *fezzes* that competed with Tunisian exports.³³

The export cargoes from Tunis to Calamata included 164,000 silver coins (spanish *colonati*, *talers* and *francs*). This amount certainly was not accounted for solely by remittances for Greek exports, so we need to seek an alternate explanation. One hypothesis worth testing is that the founding of the Greek state created a demand for European coins for domestic commercial transactions and that Tunis was an excellent locale for their acquisition.

The Efessios merchant house reflected new economic realities when it moved away from traditional trades. In the southern Peloponnesus silk had long been produced and manufactured in Calamata and its hinterland, as was vermillion. Similarly, *fezzes* and dried octopus from Sfax had long been staples of Mediterranean trade. But all these products were relics of an increasingly outmoded trading pattern. Navigating in dangerous seas and carrying traditional products throughout the Mediterranean basin reflected the economic needs of a different era.

³¹See appendix 1.

³²The situation was similar in Smyrna for the Geroussi family; see Maria Christina Chatziioannou, *Oikogeneiaki stratigiki kai emporikos antagonismos. O oikos Geroussi ston 19o aiona* (Athens, 2003, in Greek).

³³Christina Agriantoni, *Oi aparhes tis ekviomihanisis stin Ellada ton 19o aiona* (Athens, 1986), 398 (in Greek).

After the creation of the Greek state, Calamata moved away from its Ottoman past and its commercial relations with Tunisia. Light industries were introduced after the mid-nineteenth century, manufacturing silk, flour, spirits, oils and soap. The town's population increased steadily, and credit was tight. Private lenders and small banks thrived. Indeed, Elias Efessios' descendants owned a small private bank in Calamata after the 1860s, adapting rapidly to the new economic situation through adaptation. As a result, the geographic expansion in Mediterranean trade was replaced by a reliance on the local economy, and the firm was renewed through diversification.

Appendix 1

Bills of Lading of Efessios Trading House, 1831-1861

Date	Con-signor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1831	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	826 <i>okes</i> , silk <i>tzekinia</i>
1832	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1 case red <i>fez</i> , tobacco
1832	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Ionian	525 <i>okes</i> silk, figs, 126 <i>okes</i> vermilion
1833	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	82 quintals octopus
1833	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	3100 Spanish <i>colonati</i>
1833	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	24 sacks silk, figs, 6 sacks vermilion
1834	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	UK	2 sacks silk, 1 sack vermilion
1834	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	2 sacks silk
1834	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	21 sacks red silk, figs
1835	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1050 silver coins (Spanish <i>colonati</i> , <i>talers spathati</i>)
1835	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	4 sacks silk
1835	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	16 sacks silk
1835	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2070 silver coins (Spanish <i>colonati</i> , <i>talers spathati</i>)

Date	Consignor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1836	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	9 sacks silk, figs, dresses
1836	Argyropoulos, An.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	19 quintals octopus
1836	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2652 silver coins (Spanish <i>colonati</i> , <i>talers spathati</i>)
1836	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunisia	Greek	26 sacks silk
1836	Tzatzonis, K.	Patras	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	7 sacks silk
1836	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	567 silver coins (Spanish <i>colonati</i> , <i>talers spathati</i>)
1837	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1646 silver coins (Spanish <i>colonati</i> , <i>talers spathati</i>)
1837	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	22 sacks silk
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	4173 silver coins (Spanish <i>colonati</i> , <i>talers spathati</i>), 15 diamond rings
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	19 quintals octopus, 21 straw bags, dates, tobacco
1838	Efessios, Elias	Zante	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1 case <i>fez</i> , treated silk, cloth items
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	3000 silver coins (<i>talers</i> , <i>francs</i>)
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	4000 silver coins (<i>talers</i> , <i>francs</i>)
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	634 silver <i>francs</i> of Marseille

Date	Con-signor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	500 silver coins (<i>talers reginas</i> with no holes)
1838	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	29 sacks silk, figs
1838	Berfounis, K.	Trieste	Zacharia, Demetrio	Calamata	Greek	2 cases glasses
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2920 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1838	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1838	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	1 sack silk
1839	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	7 sacks silk
1839	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	Silver coins
1839	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	4053 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1839	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	Silk, figs
1839	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1839	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1839	Kyriakopoulos, Pr.	Constantinople	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 ???
1839	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	Octopus, tobacco
1840	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 <i>talers</i>
1840	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	3000 silver coins (<i>francs</i> without holes)
1840	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	Silk 30 sacs, Vermillion
1840	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	750 <i>francs</i>

Date	Consignor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1840	Giamari and Bastogi	Leghorn	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	280 bales stockfish
1841	Vassallo, Giuseppe	Sfax	Efessios, Elias/Scouteridi, G.	Calamata/Zante	Sardinia	151 quintals octopus
1841	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Argyroulakis, An.	Tunis	Greek	1 parcel silk
1841	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	7 sacks silk, 2 sacks vermilion
1841	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Greek	18 sacks silk, 1 sack vermilion, 18 pieces cheese
1841	Kyrousis, I.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	500 francs
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 francs
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1169 francs
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	750 francs
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	3026 silver coins (<i>talers</i> , francs)
1841	Kyrousis, I.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	300 francs
1841	Ardiro-poulos, An.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	307 ox heads
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	860 francs
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	3000 francs
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	1891 francs
1841	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Stuaritis, I.	Zante	Ionian	1 sack silk
1841	Kyrousis, I.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	159 francs
1841	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2750 silver coins (<i>talers</i> , francs)

Date	Consignor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1842	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunisia	Greek	30 sacks silk, 4 sacks vermillion, figs, salami
1842	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	300 <i>talers</i> , 6 dresses
1842	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1500 <i>francs</i>
1842	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2549 <i>francs</i>
1842	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Sardinian	13 sacks silk
1842	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	29 <i>talers</i>
1842	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	2400 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1842	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2080 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1842	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2000 <i>francs</i>
1843	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Ionian	12 sacks silk
1843	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Ionian	1 sack silk, 27 bales leather
1843	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	4000 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1843	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	2100 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1844	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	904 <i>francs</i>
1844	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2000 <i>francs</i>
1844	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Ionian	2 sacks silk, 1 packet leather
1844	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	7410 silver coins (<i>talers, francs</i>)
1844	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 <i>francs</i>

Date	Consignor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1844	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	500 <i>talers</i>
1844	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Tuscan	6000 silver coins (<i>talers</i> , <i>francs</i>)
1844	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Bagdantelou, G.	Zante	Ionian	978 <i>francs</i>
1844	Gialias, P.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	27 sacks silk, figs
1845	Theodorou, G.	Calamata	Efessios, Elias	Tunis	Ionian	9 sacks silk, vermillion, figs
1845	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Efessios, Elias	Patras	Greek	4 sacks silk
1845	Efessios, Elias	Tunis	Karalias, I.	Calamata	Sardinian	1000 <i>talers</i>
1846	Efessios, Elias	Tunis	Karalias, I.	Calamata	Greek	<i>Muhamiz</i> , dates
1846	Efessios, Elias	Tunis	Karalias, I.	Calamata	Austrian	4000 <i>scuds</i>
1846	Efessios, Elias	Tunis	Karalias, I.	Calamata	Sardinian	1000 <i>francs</i>
1846	Efessios, Elias	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Malta/ Calamata	Greek	10 cases <i>fez</i> , garments, kina, marble, wool, <i>latroni</i> , butter, caviar, 1 French chandelier, 9000 <i>talers</i>
1847	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Greek	8 sacks silk
1847	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	4000 <i>talers</i>
1847	Manidakis, Chr.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata		250 silver coins (<i>talers</i> , <i>francs</i>)
1847	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	3500 <i>talers</i>

Date	Consignor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1848	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	4500 <i>talers</i> , 1 case <i>fez</i>
1848	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Greek	12 sacks silk, figs, <i>trahana</i>
1848	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Manidakis, Chr.	Tunis	Greek	Silk
1848	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Tuscan	1 case <i>fez</i>
1849	Gabeli Hag, Halifa	Sfax	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Tuscan	157 quintals octopus, pistachios
1849	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Kahigi-anakis, P	Zante		300 Mexican <i>talers</i>
1849	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Charalambus, G.	Patras		2000 <i>francs</i>
1849	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Tuscan	8 sacks vermillion, 16 sacks silk, figs, oats, pork
1849	Charalambus, G.	Patras	Alamagkas, I.	Malta	Greek	10 sacks silk
1849	Aleksopoulos, N.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	???
1849	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Greek	32 sacks silk
1849	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Greek	Silk, cheese, Figs, tobacco
1849	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	6000 <i>francs</i> , rosewater
1850	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	8000 <i>francs</i> , 1 case <i>fez</i> , butter, rosewater
1851	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Greek	20 sacks silk, cheese, figs, tobacco, caviar, sausages

Date	Consignor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1851	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	2000 <i>talers</i>
1852	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Greek	12 sacks silk, vermillion, figs, cheese, caviar
1852	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Russian	8000 silver coins (<i>talers</i> , <i>francs</i>)
1852	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	5000 <i>francs</i> , 12 flasks rosewater, <i>Muhamiz</i>
1852	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Russian	15 sacks silk, 8 sacks vermillion, caviar, cheese, sausages
1853	Niculi, Dionisio	Sfax	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	French	32 sacks octopus, 7936 <i>rotoli</i>
1853	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	7500 <i>francs</i> , rosewater
1853	Alamagkas, I.	Malta	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1 iron double bed
1854	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	1 case <i>fez</i>
1854	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	1100 <i>francs</i> , 1 case <i>fez</i>
1854	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Ralli, Skilitzi, Argenti	Marseille	Greek	8 sacks silk
1855	Krassakopoulos, El.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Sardinian	8395 <i>francs</i>
1855	Alamagkas, I.	Malta	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	47 sacks octopus
1856	Francesos, I.	Syros	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1000 <i>francs</i>
1856	Francesos, I.	Syros	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	966 <i>francs</i> , 197 pounds Sterling

Date	Consignor	Place	Consignee	Place	Ship (Flag)	Cargo
1856	Diamantides, G.	Syros	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	11,262 golden <i>drh</i>
1857	Krassakopoulos Bros.	Tunis	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	1 case <i>fez</i>
1860	Alamagkas, I.	Malta	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	311 bales stockfish, 2 cases iron, 3 cases porcelain, wool, orange extract
1860	Alamagkas, I.	Malta	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	UK	334 quintals stockfish, empty cases
1861	Petrokokinos	Syros	Efessios, Elias	Calamata	Greek	16 sacks octopus

Source: See table 1.