



COMMON INTEREST POSTAL ITEMS between Turkey and Greece

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The history of two neighbors has certainly common interest. Especially if these countries were involved in wars, occupations and other unfortunate events. The postage stamps issued and, mainly, the Postal History are the proofs of these events and show us with the better way what really happened.

We can say that the Postal History begins after the foundation of the Greek State (1830), so there are no postmarks of the Ottoman Administration before. The areas of Thessaly, Macedonia, Epirus, Aegean Islands, Thrace and Crete remain under Ottoman Rule and the big number of Ottoman Post Offices created there from the middle of the 19th Century offer us the possibility to develop beautiful collections. [picture 3],

Meanwhile, the Greek Posts, established Post Offices in some Ottoman towns in Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly and actual Turkey (as the Levant ones) [pictures 1 and 2].



Picture 2. Cover franked with 60 lepta Paris print (UPU 2nd weight rate) from KONSTANTIN TOYRKIA (Constantinople, 3rd Greek postmark), sent to Athens. The small oval postal marking "DP" means Postage Paid (Dikaioma Plirothen).



Picture 1. Prephilatelic private correspondence, given to the Greek Vice-Consulate of Volos (bi-linear handstamp: "YPOPROXENEION TIS ELLADOS EIS VOLON", sent to Piraeus (PEIRAIEYS 26.MAIOS.61) via Yenichehir (LARISSA TOYRKIA 22.MAIOS.61) and Athens (ATHINAI 26.MAIOS.61).



Picture 3. Cover franked with 1pi, tied by blue bilingual Ottoman MARGALIDJ 8-9-906 (Epirus, nowadays Margarit), sent to Janina

During the Turkish-Greek war of 1897, we have the provisional Ottoman Occupation of Thessaly, with the issue of a Turkish set of stamps and the creation of some Post Offices. During the same period, we have the Blockade of Crete, the history of which is demonstrated with the stamps issued and the Post Offices established by the International Forces.

The Balkan Wars changed the map of the Balkans. The Greeks established Post Offices in Epirus, Aegean Islands and Macedonia, which used postmarks with the Greek names or even the old Slavic or Turkish ones [picture 5], which were definitely changed during the 1920's. Very rarely we can meet Ottoman postmarks used provisionally by the Greek post offices [picture 4].



Picture 4. RECHADIE (JANINA) 25.10.13 (nowadays Igoumenitsa, port in Epirus), on 10 lepta Greek stamp. This postmark isn't yet met on Turkish stamp and this is the only strike known (exist in the Turkish Post archives)



Picture 5. DEMIR-ISSAR 5.AUG.15 type V, on Greek stamp. The name of this village was changed to Sidirokastron (same meaning)

The same happened after the WW1, when the Greeks occupied part of the Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace (1919-1923). In Asia Minor regular Greek stamps were used, but in Eastern Thrace were used overprinted Ottoman and Greek stamps [picture 6]. Many Post Offices were established in both areas and the material is very demanded by the collectors. Also, the military units had their own handstamps and many military post offices operated.



Picture 6. HARIOUPOLIS 23.MAI. 22 (Haïrebolu, Eastern Thrace) violet, on 50 lepta Greek stamp +5 lepta welfare, cover sent to the USA via ADRIANOUPOLIS AFIXIS 25.MAI.22 (Edirne, arrival)

Up to the Treaty of Lausanne, the islands of Tenedos (Bozdja-Ada) [picture 7] and Imvros (Imroz) were occupied by the Greeks, using the special stamps for the "New Territories" (overprint "Hellenic Administration", the issue for the "Campaign 1912-13") and later the regular Greek stamps.



Picture 7. Parcel Post stationery (1 drachma, up-rated to 2,15 drachmas) sent from TENEDOS 12.MAIOS.20 (type V)

During the International Occupation of Constantinople, the Greeks, as the French, examined the Turkish correspondence. Such material is very rare [pictures 8 and 9]. It is also interesting to notice that the Greek Military Post Office in Constantinople accepted civil mail.



Picture 8. Cover of the Bank "Marmorosch, Blanc & Co", sent with Greek stamp through the Greek Army Post Office of Constantinople TAXH. TOMEYS 920 22.MAI.21, to Smyrna. Censored by the Greek Military Mission in Constantinople (ELLINIKI STRATIOTIKI APOSTOLI, KONSTANTINOUPOLIS, ELOGOKRITHI) on special censor tape.



Picture 9. Envelope with return receipt from EYOUB SULTAN captured by THORIKTON KILKIS TACHYDROMEION (Post Office of Battleship Kilkis) and censored "ELOGOKRITHI THORIKTON KILKIS O KYVERNITIS K.A" (Censored, Battleship Kilkis, Commander K.A.)