

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On 4 August 1936, a new regime assumed power in Greece, led by Ioannis (Jean) Metaxas, a former Army General, and a politician since 1922, who was appointed Prime Minister by the King on 13 April 1936. The regime immediately suspended the constitution and dissolved Parliament.

Greece engaged in WWII on 28 October 1940, following Italy's ultimatum. After six months of intense fighting along the Greco-Albanian border, Germany attacked Greece on 6 April 1941, occupied Athens on the 27th, and marked the end of the regime.

POSTAL ENVIRONMENT BEFORE WWII

Postal operations were largely affected by the new political situation:

- Currency control was imposed on international mail.
- Intense propaganda was generated by the Hellenic Post in favour of the dictatorship and the monarchy.
- Conversely, several postal innovations were experimented with, such as the introduction of illustrated postmarks, mailboxes on ships, franking devices and meter stamps, to name a few.

The most notable feature of the period was the rapid development of air transportation, which Greece followed very closely.

Major European transcontinental airlines used Athens and Corfu as key night stopover points on routes between Europe and the Far East or Africa.

POSTAL ENVIRONMENT DURING WWII

Greece's involvement in WWII caused the requisition of aircraft and ships by the government. The air traffic through Greece was significantly affected as most intercontinental flights were suspended or redirected.

At the same time, two large networks were established:

- The military mail system (not dealt with here).
- Censorship, which substituted the earlier currency control.

Following the counter-offensive against the Italian invasion in Greece, the Greek military forces entered South Albania (North Epirus), and established civil post offices in the occupied territory, which operated for only a few months.

Greece: The 4th of August Regime (1936–1941)



From Kabul, Afghanistan (13 Apr. 1937), via Torkham at the border (14 Apr.), Landi Kotal, India (in Pakistan today, 15 Apr.), and most likely to New Delhi, India. Next, on Imperial Airways to Athens (24 Apr.), and SHCA, the Greek carrier, to Thessaloniki (25 Apr.).
Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 130 p[ul] (75p+45p); registration 75p; 3rd weight airmail 20–30g 420p (3x140p) from June 1936 to Apr. 1937; total 615p, overpaid at 625p.

- This is the first recorded air cover from Afghanistan to Greece during the inter-war period.
- Thessaloniki currency control.

EXHIBIT'S PURPOSE

Throughout most of the regime's rule, Greece experienced a period of peace, as its involvement in WWII was limited to the final six months.

While 20th-century postal history is often most intriguing during wartime, the exhibit's peace period proved to be rich in several postal aspects, many of which still require study, comprehension, and bringing to light.

Hence, my personal interest in the development and presentation of this exhibit.

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EXHIBITOR'S MAJOR PUBLISHED WORK

- 'Mail of a displaced citizen on Folegandros in 1938', *Philotelia* No. 733/2022.
- 'The 31 mailboxes at sea 1939–40', *Philotelia* No. 704/2017.
- 'Airmail in Africa during the 1930s', *Philotelia* Nos. 682–683/2013, 684–685/2014.
- 'A 1940 American exchange control cachet', *Philotelia* No. 667/2011.
- 'The 1937–41 Social Welfare stamps', *Philotelia* Nos. 648–649/2008.
- 'Greek airmails 1939–40', *Philotelia* No. 628/2004.
- 'The 1940–41 illustrated postcards', *Philotelia* No. 613/2002.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aitink, H. E. and Hovenkamp, E., *Bridging the Continents in Wartime* (2005).
- Boyle, T. H., *Airmail Operations During WWII*, (1998).
- Tiberius, P., *Griechenland-Postgeschichte 1821–2001* (2002).

SYMBOLS and CONVENTIONS

- The currency used was the Greek drachma (symbol D) divided by 100 lepta (symbol λ).
- All month names with five or more letters were abbreviated to their first three letters.

1. INTRODUCTION

The dictator, Prime Minister Ioannis (Jean) Metaxas, is the main protagonist of the 4th of August regime, also known as the *Metaxas dictatorship*. The regime assumed power on 4 Aug. 1936, at 22:00 hrs.

[Bottom left]: *À Son Excellence Monsieur Jean Metaxas, Premier ministre du gouvernement de Grèce*
From Elmala Kanazli, Cairo, Egypt (28 Jan. 1939) to Athens (4 Feb., on the reverse).
Rates: 5th weight surface 80-100g 72m[jilieme] (20m+4x13m) and registration 20m, both from Nov. 1931 to Aug. 1940; total 92m.

[Top right]: *Day 1*
From Patra (5 Aug. 1936) to Urbana, OH, USA.
Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 18D from 2 May 1933 to 30 Oct. 1936; total 26D.

[Bottom right]: *Day 2*
From Piraeus (6 Aug. 1936) to Amsterdam, Netherlands.
Rates: 2nd weight surface 20-40g 13D (8D+5D); 3rd weight airmail 20-30g 21D (3x7D) from 8 June 1933 to 20 Jan. 1939; total 34D.

Dictatorship days 1 and 2



2. POSTAL RATES

Basic postal rates remained largely unchanged during the entire period in question (see Table A). In 1940, some printed matter and parcels were slightly increased. On the other hand, international airmail rates were frequently altered, depending on the country of destination, time frame, airline used, and route travelled.

Supplementary rates also remained unchanged, except for the anti-tuberculosis rate, which was increased in 1939 (see Table B).

Table A: Common basic postal rates

Domestic	
Postcard:	2D
Letter to 20g:	3D
Overweight per 20g or portion thereof:	2D
Registration:	4D
International	
Postcard:	5D
Letter to 20g:	8D
Overweight per 20g or portion thereof:	5D
Registration:	8D



International letter

From Athens (19 June 1938) to Montreux, Switzerland.

Rates: 7th weight surface 120–140g 38D (8D + 6x5D); social welfare (optional) 1D; total 39D.

- Athens currency control.

Domestic letter

From Thessaloniki (26 Dec. 1938) to Athens (26 Dec.).

Basic rate: 4th weight surface 60–80g 9D (3D + 3x2D).

Supplementary rates:

- (a) 4th weight airmail 60–80g 4D (4x1D).
 - (b) Social welfare 50λ.
 - (c) Anti-TB compulsory during the Christmas fortnight from 23 Dec. 1938 until 6 Jan. 1939, 10λ.
 - (d) Thessaloniki Fair compulsory on letters from Thessaloniki 20λ.
- Total 13.80D.

Table B: Supplementary postal rates

(a) Domestic airmail

Letter or postcard for each 20g or portion thereof: 1D

(b) Social welfare all-year round

Domestic postcard: 10λ
Domestic letter: 50λ
International letter (optional): 1D

(c) Anti-tuberculosis

in Christmas / New Year and Easter fortnights

Regular letter and postcard: 10λ*
Registered letter: 20λ*
Parcels: 50λ

* Rate increased to 50λ on 3 Apr. 1939.

(d) Thessaloniki International Fair all year round

Letters and parcels from Thessaloniki: 20λ



Sample without value

From Thessaloniki (?? Apr. 1937) to Siegmarschönau, Saxony, Germany.
 Rate: 2nd weight sample without value 50-100g 3.20D (2x1.60D).
 • Thessaloniki currency control.



50%

Discounted mail for military sectors
 From Didymoteicho (25 Apr. 1940) to Kavala (26 Apr.).
 Discounted rate: 10λ for military personnel's mail served in units guarding the northern Greek border line.
 • Handstamped with ΣΥΝΟΡΙΑΚΟΣ ΤΟΜΕΥΣ ΕΒΡΟΥ [Evros Border Sector].



Parcel post form

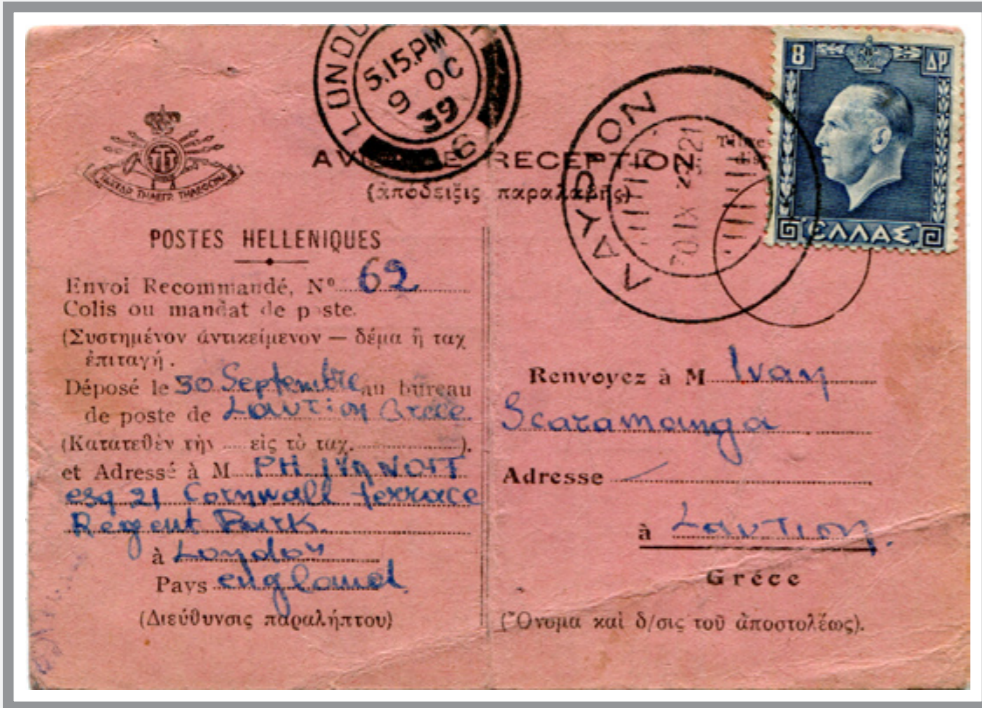
Parcel post form for a parcel (850g) from Athens (27 Nov. 1940) to Florina (3 Dec., on the reverse).
 Rates: Parcel up to 1kg 10D; anti-TB rate (compulsory on parcels throughout the year) 50λ; total 10.50D.
 • The stamps on parcel post forms were either razor-cut or punched to prevent postal employees from selling them to stamp dealers.



Postal money order

Postal money order (3,984D) from Lamia (15 Apr. 1941) to Galaxidi.
 Rate: Money order of 3,501-4,000D at 14D.

• The stamps on money orders were destroyed in a similar manner to the ones on parcel post forms.



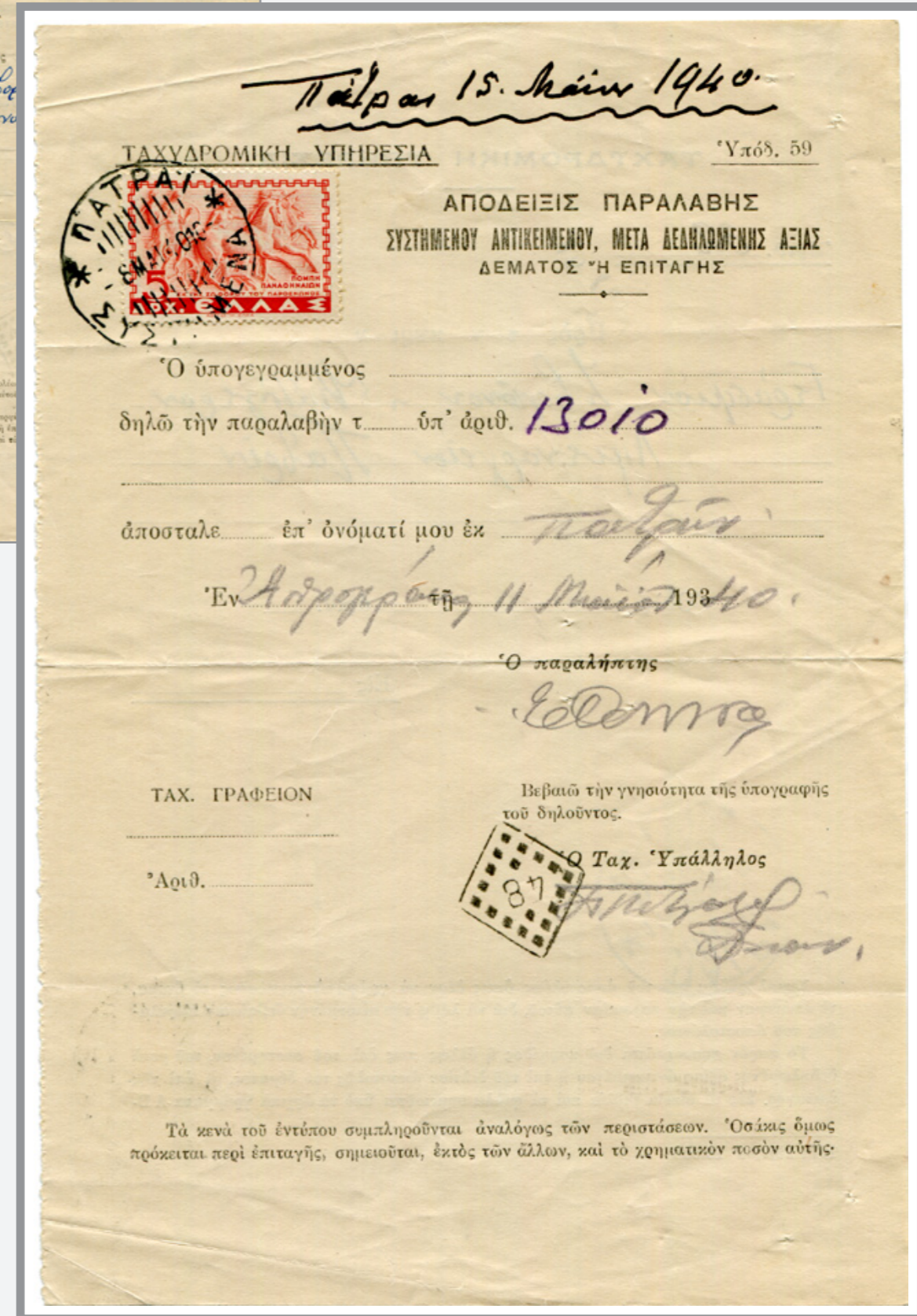
Avis de Réception (AR) form for a registered letter sent abroad

From Lavrio (30 Sep. 1939) to London (9 Oct.), signed by the recipient. Sent back to Lavrio, where it reached the original sender on 1 Nov. (handwritten note on the reverse).

Rate: Avis de Réception for a registered letter sent abroad **8D**.



50%



Avis de Réception form for a domestic registered letter

From Patra (8 May 1940) to Asprogerakas village, Cephalonia (11 May), and back to Patra (14 May).

Rate: Avis de Réception for a domestic registered letter **5D**.

• Diamond handstamp **48** denotes the rural route between villages at the south-eastern tip of Cephalonia.



Avis de Réception (AR) handstamp on a registered letter sent abroad

From Corfu (12 Feb. 1938) to Malta (17 Feb., on the reverse).

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g **13D** (8D+5D); registration **8D**; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **22D**.

- The A[vis] de R[éception] was charged at an extra **8D** and affixed on a separate card to be signed by the addressee and returned to the sender.
- Corfu currency control.



Postage dues: Underpaid domestic postcard

From Sperchias (8 Oct. 1936) to Patra (10 Oct.).

Rate: Postcard surface 2D, underpaid at 1D.

- The handstamp ΕΙΣΠΡΑΚΤΕΟΝ ΤΕΛΟΣ [postage due] was applied on arrival, and the missing 1D was paid double with a 2D postage due stamp.



Postage dues: Underpaid postcard from the USA, first missent to Athens, GA, USA, then to Athens, Greece

From New York, NY, USA (21 Oct. 1936), via Athens, GA, USA (22 Oct.), to Athens, Greece (illegible postmark).

Rate: Postcard surface 3c, underpaid at 1c.

- Handstamps T and Centimes 20, as well as pencil marks T6 and 0.4 for double the unpaid rate of $2 \times 2c = 4c$. The equivalent of the missing 20 gold centimes was 6D (calculated as $6/30 \times 100$, at a rate of 30D to 1 gold franc), paid upon arrival with 6x1D postage-due stamps.



Postage dues: Unpaid surface rate

From Athens (4 Oct. 1937) to Haifa, Palestine.

Rates: Surface up to 20g, 8D not paid; airmail up to 10g, 6D from 22 Mar. 1933 to 28 Feb. 1938 overpaid at 8D; social welfare (optional) 50λ.

- Handstamp T and pencil mark 50c indicating the unpaid surface rate. The equivalent of the missing 8D was 25 gold centimes. The cover was properly charged with double dues, i.e. 50 gold centimes, paid either in cash or not at all.
- Athens currency control.



Postage dues: Unpaid overweight

From Athens (15 Apr. 1940) to Mytilene (18 Apr.).

Rate: 2nd weight surface 20-40g 5D (3D+2D) underpaid at 3D as 1st weight; social welfare 50λ.

- The missing 2D were charged double upon arrival with a block of 8x50λ postage-due stamps.

Insufficiently prepaid international mail and other instances of mixed franking

The rules regarding insufficiently prepaid or readdressed international mail were established by the UPU. When the despatching or receiving post office discovered that a postal item was insufficiently prepaid, an appropriate fee was charged upon arrival, calculated in gold French francs (1 franc was divided into 100 centimes).

All UPU members were required to periodically submit the exchange rate of their national currency to the gold French franc to the UPU. The UPU, in turn, notified its members to ensure accurate calculations.

The amount charged might differ from what was based on the daily exchange rates determined by national banks.

Other instances of mixed franking could arise due to local legislation, such as in the case of the US customs authorities (see next page).

Invalidated Greek stamp: Mixed franking with a Swedish stamp



From Athens (7 Dec. 1939) to Stockholm, Sweden (12 Dec.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- The 3D postage stamp was withdrawn and invalidated as of 30 Nov. 1939; hence, the presence of pencil marks around the stamp, along with the handstamp T.
- The cover was correctly charged upon arrival at double the missing rate, i.e., 6D or 20 centimes (calculated as $6/30 \times 100$, at a rate of 30D to 1 gold franc) or 15 öre, paid with the affixed 1939 Carl von Linné ordinary postage stamp.
- The Swedish Post Office label reads *Fee 15 öre. Note! Upon delivery, the amount due must be paid using postage stamps, which should be affixed to the item to be delivered and cancelled.*
- Athens currency control.

Invalidated Greek stamp: Mixed franking with French stamps



From Athens (10 July 1937) to Pas de Calais, France (15 July).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- The 8D stamp was withdrawn and invalidated as of 24 Jan. 1937; hence, the red crayon line around the stamp, along with the handstamp T; also pencil marks 50c (gold centimes) and 3 (French francs) upon arrival.
- The cover was correctly charged at double the missing rate, i.e., 16D or 53c (calculated as $16/30 \times 100$, at the rate of 30D to 1 gold franc), rounded off to 50c or 3FRF, and paid for with the affixed French-postage due stamps.
- Athens currency control.

Readdressed abroad: Mixed franking with a British stamp



From Athens (6 Apr. 1938) to Reading (11 Apr.), UK, readdressed twice in Germany.

Rate (Greece to the UK): Postcard surface 5D or $5/30 \times 100 = 17c$ (gold centimes), at a rate of 30D to 1 gold franc.

Rate (UK to Germany): Postcard surface 1½d = 15c (gold centimes), at a rate of 10d to 1 gold franc.

- Postal clerk's error: No redirection fee should be charged in the UK, as the 5D paid in Greece for the card to be sent to the UK was higher than the UK rate of 1½d to Germany.
- Athens currency control.



**Local legislation:
Mixed franking with a US stamp**

From Athens (21 May 1937) via Chicago, IL (1 June), to Denver, CO, USA (illegible date in June).

Rates: 5th weight surface 80–100g **28D** (8D + 4x5D); registration **8D**; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **37D**.

Handstamped on arrival with **LETTER PARCEL / COLLECT TEN CENTS**; collected with one 10c postage-due stamp.

- Athens currency control.

50%



Magazine wrapper

From Piraeus (9 Apr. 1940) to Athens. **Rate:** 2nd weight magazine 50–100g **10λ** (2x5λ).



Registered postcard sent abroad

From Athens (10 Aug. 1940) to Washington, D.C., USA.

Rates: Postcard surface **5D**; registration **8D**; total **13D**.

- Athens currency control.



Express mail

From Athens (15 Oct. 1938) to Limburg an der Lahn, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g **8D**; express **15D**; airmail up to 10g **7D** from 1 June 1933 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **31D**.

- Athens currency control.

Reduced surface rates to and from the Petite Entente and Czechoslovakia

Postcard:	3.50D
Letter to 20g:	6D
Overweight per 20g:	3.50D
Registration:	6D

To and from Turkey: Rates valid throughout the period in question



From Athens (7 Feb. 1941) to Istanbul (15 Feb.).

Reduced rate: Post-card surface 3.50D.

- Athens censorship.

From Istanbul (29 Aug. 1938) to Athens (31 Aug., on the reverse).

Reduced rate: Surface up to 20g 8 kuruş.

- Athens currency control.

To Romania: Rates valid throughout the period in question



From Athens (8 June 1938) to Bucharest (11 June, on the reverse).

Reduced rates:

Surface up to 20g 6D; registration 6D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 13D.

- Athens currency control (on the reverse).

From Thessaloniki (8 May 1938) to Brasov (10 May, on the reverse).

Reduced rates: Surface up to 20g 6D; airmail up to 10g 2D from 1 Mar. 1938 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- Thessaloniki currency control.



To Czechoslovakia: Rates valid from 15 Apr. 1937 to 30 June 1940

To Yugoslavia: Rates valid throughout the period in question



From Karyes, Mt Athos (6 May 1939), via Thessaloniki to Belgrade.

Reduced rate: Postcard surface 3.50D.

- Thessaloniki currency control.



From Athens (19 May 1939) to Prague (21 May, on the reverse).

Reduced rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 9.50D (6D+3.50D); 3rd weight airmail 20–30g 16.50D (3x5.50D) from 21 Jan. to Oct. 1939, conveniently overpaid at 17D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 27.50D.

- Athens currency control.



From Athens (27 May 1937) to Bor, Yugoslavia (in Serbia today; 31 May, on the reverse).

Reduced rates: 5th weight surface 80–100g 20D (6D + 4x3.50D); registration 6D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 27D.

- Athens currency control.



From Piraeus (18 June 1938) via Thessaloniki (20 June) to Prague.

Reduced rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 9.50D (6D+3.50D); social welfare (optional) 1D; total 10.50D.

- Piraeus currency control.

3. CENSORSHIP AND CURRENCY CONTROL

Evidence reveals that the dictatorship enforced censorship as soon as it assumed power. Among the suspended constitution articles was Article No. 20, which stated that *the confidentiality of correspondence is absolutely inviolable*. In addition, in his military order, the Commander General of the Army Third Corps mentioned: *Censorship is enforced on newspapers, periodicals, telegrams, telephone conversations, and correspondence.*

Two weeks later, on 20 August, the National Currency Protection Commission was established to examine international mail. The use of the word 'censorship' was avoided, but censorship was never lifted. In the Patra post office, a short-lived and rarely seen *censorship* handstamp was used, which in October was substituted with an almost identical copy reading *currency control* instead. Fine examples of these two handstamps are illustrated herein on the covers at top right (*censorship*), and at bottom right (*currency control*).

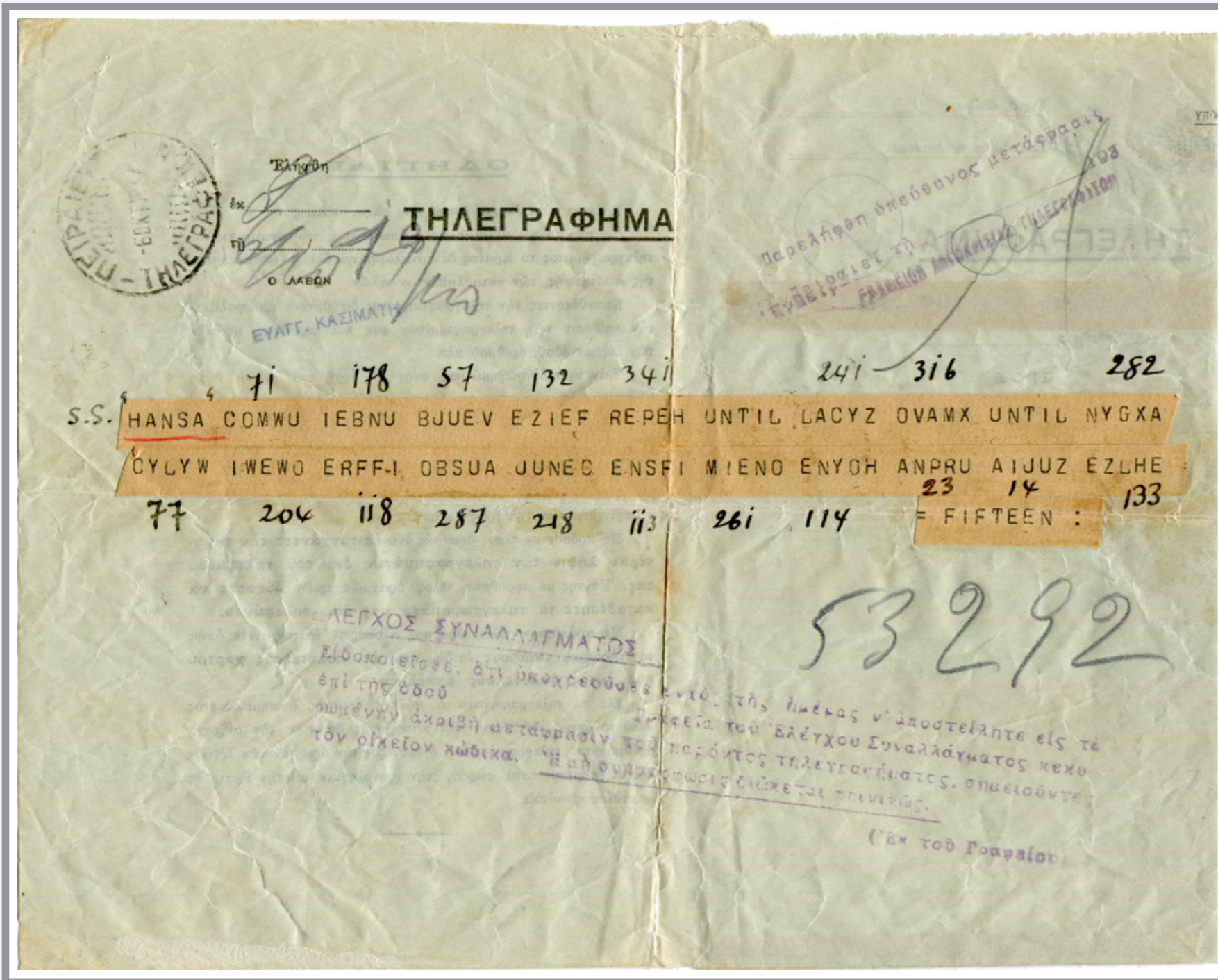
Handstamp twins



From Patra (the day and month are illegible; the year is 1936) to Chicago, IL, USA.

Rate: Surface up to 20g 8D.

• Dual circle ΛΟΓΟΚΡΙΣΙΑ ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΕΙΟΥ / ΠΑΤΡΩΝ [Postal censorship / of Patra].



Censorship and currency control hand in hand

Telegram from Copenhagen to Piraeus (6 Oct. 1937).

Bottom handstamp: 'Currency control: You are requested to send during the day the translation of the telegram to the offices of the currency control...'. Top handstamp: '...translation received. Telegrams censorship office'. It appears that both practices were carried out at the same office.



From Patra (21 Oct. 1936) via Athens (21 Oct.), Berlin (23 Oct.), Koln (24 Oct. in all transit postmarks on the reverse) to Urbana, OH, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 18D from 2 May 1933 to 30 Oct. 1936; total 26D. Dual circle ΕΛΕΓΧΟΣ ΣΥΝΑΛΛΑΓΜΑΤΟΣ / ΠΑΤΡΩΝ [Currency control / of Patra].



Athens YEΣ type 1a (ligature inside circle)

From Athens (9 Dec. 1937) to Cairo, Egypt.

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20-40g 13D (8D+5D); 4th weight airmail 30-40g 20D (4x5D) from 9 Aug. 1932 to 28 Feb. 1938; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 34D.



Currency control (August 1936 - October 1940)

On 20 August 1936, two weeks after the establishment of the 4th of August dictatorship, a new civil service was set up to protect the national currency by thoroughly inspecting international correspondence.

It was called the 'National Currency Protection Commission', with offices closely connected to the central post offices in major towns. In certain situations, the Commission also engaged in censorship practices.

Different types of handstamps and sealing tapes were used by the numerous offices. As is usually the case, some of them are quite common, while others are rather hard to come across.

On 28 October 1940, when Greece became involved in WWII, the National Currency Protection Commission gave way to a typical wartime censorship service. This service applied to both domestic and international mail while using brand new handstamps and sealing tapes.

Currency control handstamps type 1: Ligatures

The ligatures were used in Athens and Piraeus. The letters involved in the ligatures all refer to the afore-mentioned Commission. The following different types have been recorded:

- YEΣ ligature types 1a, 1b, 2, 3 (Athens)
- ΠΕΝ ligature types 1, 2, 3, 4 (Athens)
- ΕΥΑΠ ligature types 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (Piraeus)

Athens YEΣ type 1b (missing outside circle)

From Athens (5 Feb. 1937) to South Bend, IN, USA (8 Feb.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 20D from 31 Oct. 1936 to 28 Feb. 1938; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 29D.



Athens YEΣ type 3

From Athens (11 Feb. 1940) to Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (Harare, Zimbabwe, today).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 16D from 1 Oct. 1939 to 15 Mar. 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 25D.



Athens YEΣ type 2

From Athens (8 Oct. 1938) to Vienna, Austria.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 4D from 1 Mar. 1938 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 13D.



Currency control handstamps type 1: Ligatures (cont.)



Athens ΠEN type 1
 From Athens (5 July 1938) to Amsterdam, Netherlands.
Rates: 2nd weight surface 20-40g **13D** (8D+5D); 4th weight airmail 30-40g **28D** (4x7D) from 1 Mar. 1938 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **42D**.



Athens ΠEN type 3
 From Athens (25 Jan. 1938) via Zemun (26 Jan., on the reverse) to Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia.
Rates: Surface up to 20g (reduced to the Petite Entente) **6D**; airmail up to 10g **3D** from 7 Sep. 1933 to 28 Feb. 1938; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **10D**.



Athens ΠEN type 2
 From Athens (19 Apr 1939) to Helsinki, Finland.
Rates: Surface up to 20g **8D**; airmail up to 10g **8D** from 21 Jan. 1939 to Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **17D**.



Athens ΠEN type 4
 From Athens (9 Sep. 1938) to Brussels, Belgium.
Rates: Surface up to 20g **8D**; airmail up to 10g **7D** from 31 Oct. 1936 to 15 Mar. 1940; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **16D**.

Currency control handstamps type 1: Ligatures (cont.)



Piraeus ΕΥΑΠ type 1

From Piraeus (24 Dec. 1936) to Zurich, Switzerland.

Rates: Printed matter surface up to 50g 1.60D; anti-TB rate (optional for abroad) 10λ; total 1.70D.

- Handstamp used in Dec. 1936.



Piraeus ΕΥΑΠ type 2

From Piraeus (1 Jan. 1937) to Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

Rates: Printed matter surface up to 50g 1.60D; anti-TB rate (optional for abroad) 10λ; total 1.70D.

- Handstamp used from Dec. 1936 to Dec. 1937.



Piraeus ΕΥΑΠ type 3

From Piraeus (12 Dec. 1936) to Vienna, Austria.

Rates: Surface up to 20g, 8D.

- Handstamp used from Dec. 1936 to Mar. 1937.



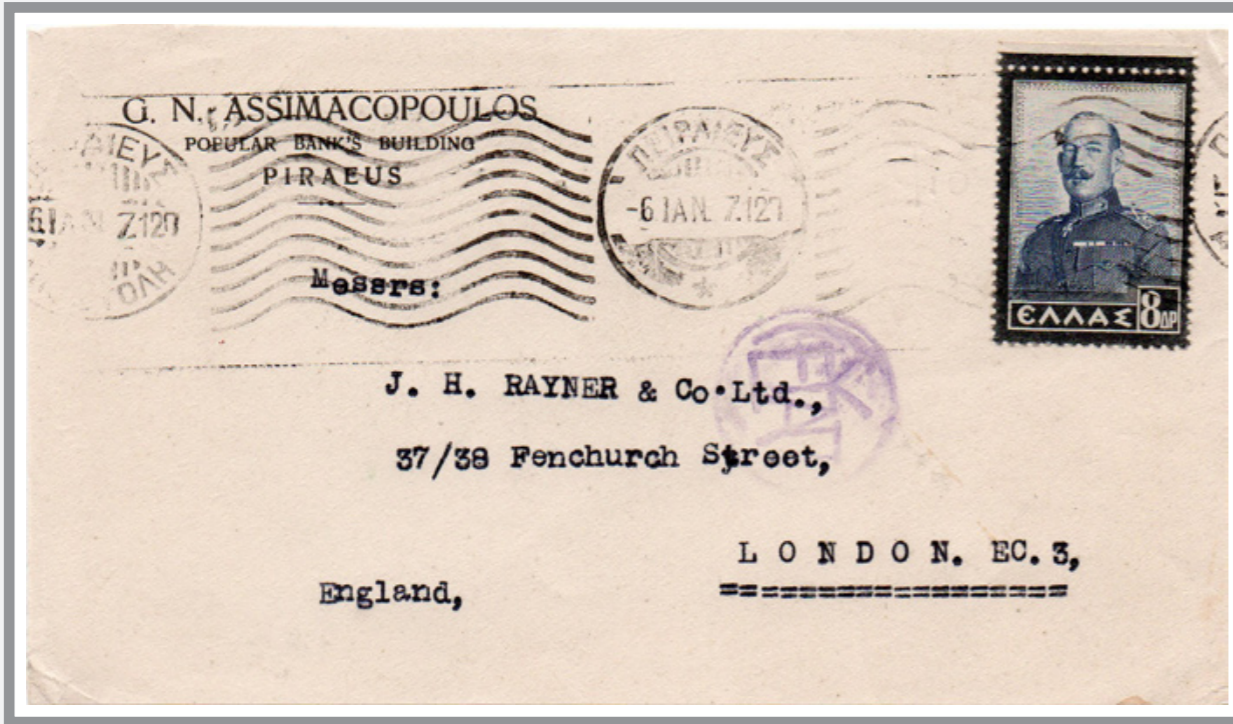
Piraeus ΕΥΑΠ type 4

From Piraeus (23 Jan. 1937) to Genoa, Italy (26 Jan., on the reverse).

Rates: Postcard surface 5D; airmail up to 10g, 5D from 7 Sep. 1933 to 28 Feb. 1938, overpaid at 7D, the rate valid to most countries in Europe; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 13D.

- Final day of use of the King Constantine I mourning issue.
- Handstamp used in Jan. and Feb. 1937.

Currency control handstamps type 1: Ligatures (cont.)



Piraeus ΕΥΑΠ type 5

Cover front from Piraeus (6 Jan. 1937) to London, UK.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D.

- Handstamp used in Jan. and Feb. 1937.

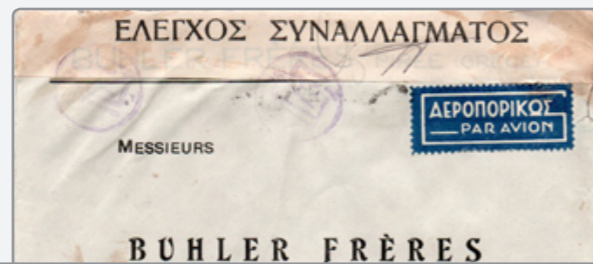
Currency control handstamps type 2

Handstamps bearing:

- ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ [National Currency Protection Commission]
- followed by the town's name inside the outer circle,
- and ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ [Bank of Greece] inside the inner circle, around Axelos' Goddess Athena.



60%



50%



Piraeus ΕΥΑΠ type 6

From Piraeus (27 Jan. 1937) via Athens (27 Jan.) and Rome (28 Jan.) to Uzwil, Switzerland.

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 13D (8D+5D); 4th weight airmail 30–40g 28D (4x7D) from 31 Oct. 1936 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 42D.

- Handstamp used from Sept. 1936 to Jan. 1937; in purple only in Jan. 1937.



From rural route 695 via Elassona (3 June 1940) and Thessaloniki (4 June) to Saranac Lake, NY, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- Elassona currency control.



Currency control handstamps type 3

bearing ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ [National Currency Protection Commission], followed by the town's name inside the outer circle around Axelos' Goddess Athena. From Arhanes village (5 Jan.) via Heraklion (6 Jan., on the reverse) to Lexington, KY, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; anti-TB (optional for abroad) 10λ; total 8.10D.

- Heraklion currency control.

Currency control handstamps type 4

bearing ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ - ΕΛΕΓΧΟΣ ΣΥΝΑΛΛΑΓΜΑΤΟΣ [Bank of Greece - Currency Control], followed by the town's name inside the outer circle and ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ [Bank of Greece] inside the inner circle around Axelos' Goddess Athena.

From Xanthi (20 Oct. 1939) via Thessaloniki (20 Oct., on the reverse) to Boston MA, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional, on the reverse) 1D; total 9D.

- Xanthi currency control.



Currency control handstamps type 5

of various types used in Piraeus. From Piraeus (24 Feb. 1939) via Athens (25 Feb., on the reverse) to Buenos Aires, Argentina (on the reverse).

Rates: 4th weight surface 60–80g 23D (8D + 3x5D); registration 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 32D.

- Piraeus currency control.

PAPASTRATOS
CIGARETTE MANUFACTURING COMPANY
PLOUTONOS - GRAVIAS - PIRAEUS



Currency control handstamps type 6a

bearing ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ [Bank of Greece], followed by the branch name.

From Kavala (14 Nov. 1936), cancelled on the Alexandroupolis–Thessaloniki T.P.O. (14 Nov., on the reverse) to Munich, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D.

- Kavala currency control.

Currency control handstamps type 7

bearing the prefecture name, followed by ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ [National Currency Protection Commission], encircling Greece's coat of arms.

From Kharkiv, Soviet Union (23 Mar. 1938), via Athens (6 Apr., on the reverse) to Missolonghi (7 Apr., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 50 kopecks] from 1 May 1936 to ?? xxxx 1940.

- Aetolia–Akarnania prefecture currency control.



Currency control handstamps type 6b

bearing BANK DE GRÈCE [Bank of Greece], followed by the branch name.

From Samos (4 Dec. 1936) via Piraeus and Athens (7 Dec.) to Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D.

- Samos currency control.
- Handstamp used from Oct. to Dec. 1936.

Currency control handstamps type 8

bearing ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ [National Currency Protection Commission] followed by the town's name.

From Kavala (5 Nov. 1939) via Athens (6 Nov., on the reverse) to Louisville, KY, USA.

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 13D (8D+5D); 5th weight airmail 20–25g 120D (5x24D) from Oct. 1939 to 15 Mar. 1940; social welfare (optional, on the reverse) 1D; total 134D.

- Kavala currency control.



Currency control handstamps type 9 bearing ΕΞΗΛΕΓΧΘΗ [inspected].



From Heraklion (1 Oct. 1936) via Athens (2 Oct., on the reverse) to Gothenburg, Sweden (5 Oct., on the reverse).

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 13D (8D+5D); 3rd weight airmail 20–30g 21D (3x7D) from 18 Sep. 1933 to ?? Oct. 1939; total 34D.

- Heraklion currency control with a Bank of Greece ΕΞΗΛΕΓΧΘΗ [inspected] handstamp and Athens ΠΕΝ type 3.

Currency control handstamps type 10 bearing the examiner's insignia.



60%

From St Nicholas, Crete (11 Nov. 1937), via Heraklion (12 Nov.) and Athens (15 Nov.) to Florence, Italy (17 Nov.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 5D from 7 Sep. 1933 to 28 Feb. 1938; social welfare (optional) 1D, total 14D.

- Heraklion currency control with insignia E.A.

Currency control handstamps type 11 bearing ΕΠΙΤΡΕΠΕΤΑΙ Η ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΗΣΙΣ [despatch permitted].



70%



From Piraeus (1 Feb. 1939), cancelled on the Milan–Genoa T.P.O. (5 Feb.) to Genoa, Italy (5 Feb.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; registration 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 17D.

- Piraeus currency control with linear ΕΠΙΤΡΕΠΕΤΑΙ Η ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΗΣΙΣ [despatch permitted].
- Purple dual-circle handstamp used in Jan. and Feb. 1939.

Currency control handstamps

Miscellaneous cases



Stamp cancelled by currency control handstamp

From Athens (2 Sep. 1940) to Glasgow, redirected to Edinburgh, Scotland, UK.

Rate: Postcard surface 5D.

- Athens currency control.

Currency control on telegram

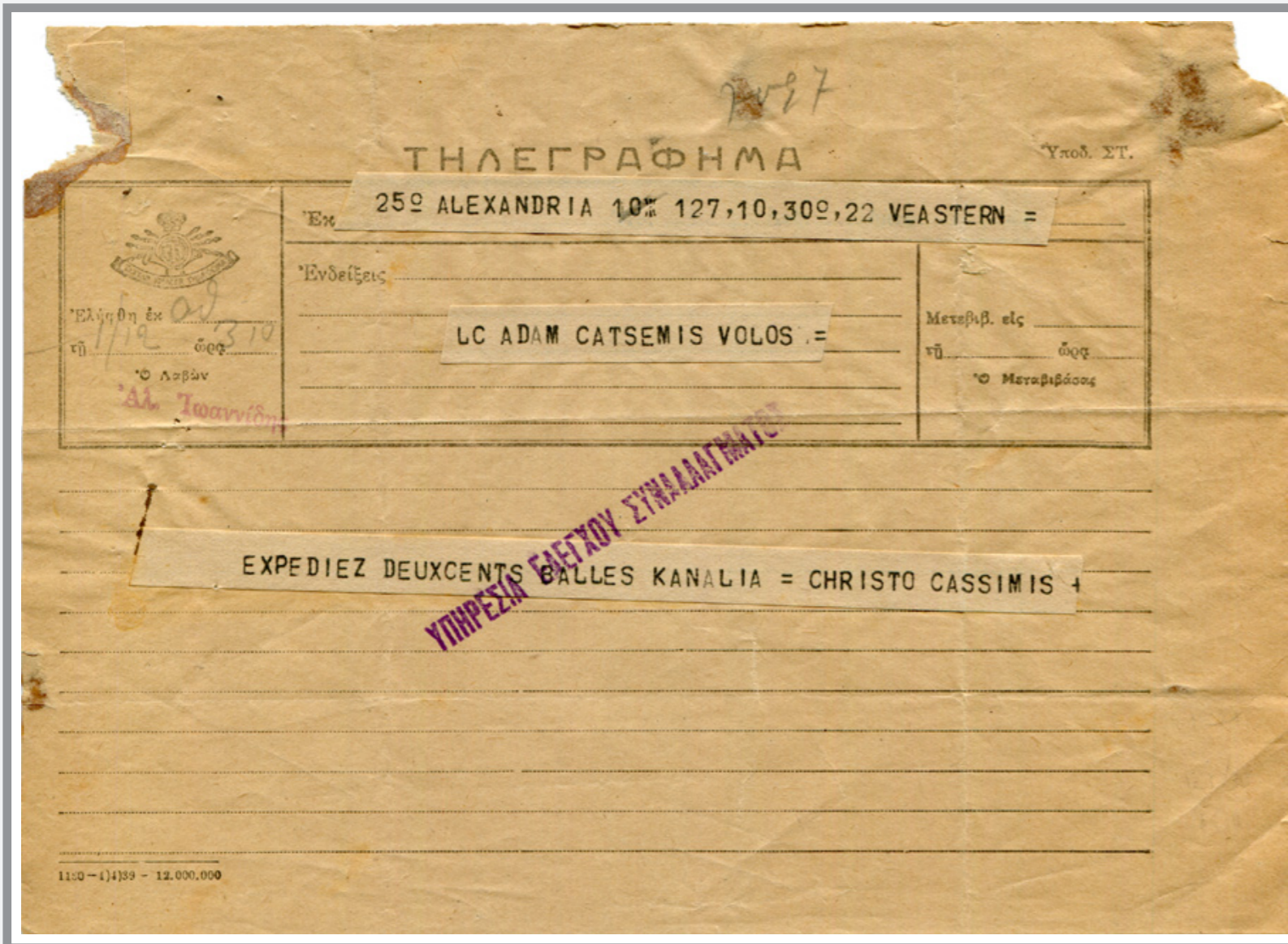
From Alexandria to Volos.

- Linear handstamp ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΕΛΕΓΧΟΥ ΣΥΝΑΛΛΑΓΜΑΤΟΣ [Currency Control Commission].

Currency control on a parcel post form



70%



Parcel post form for a parcel weighing 3.2kg from Athens (18 June 1938) by rail via Chiasso (green handstamp at the Swiss customs office at the Italian border) to Geneva (24 June).

- Athens currency control ΠΕΝ type 4.



Type 1: ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΗ
[Athens Despatch]

From Athens (21 Nov. 1937) to Argos (27 Nov., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; total 3.50D.

- Message: 'The new state needs disciplined Greeks'.

4.1. PROPAGANDA MESSAGES

At the Athens central post office, six types of mechanical cancellations were used to disseminate propaganda messages—mostly inspired by the dictator's speeches. Approximately forty different slogans have been recorded.

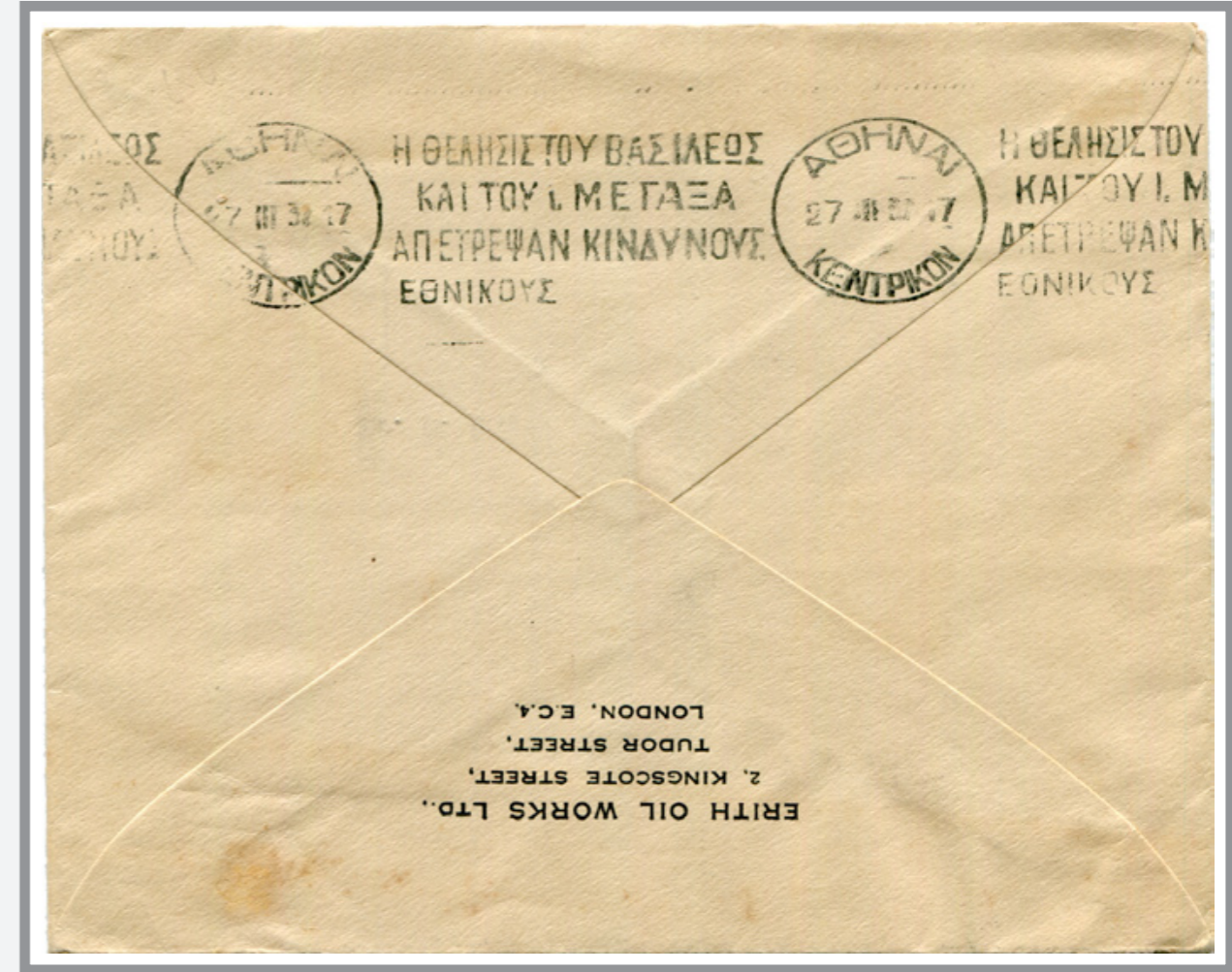
In addition, propaganda messages were also applied by handstamp at censorship offices, while others were printed on the reverse side of post office receipts for registered letters.

Type 3: ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΚΕΝΤΡΙΚΟΝ Ι
[Athens Central I]

From London, UK (23 Mar. 1937, on the reverse) to Athens (27 Mar.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ (all stamps on the reverse); total 3.50D.

- Message: 'The will of the King and of I. Metaxas prevented national dangers'.

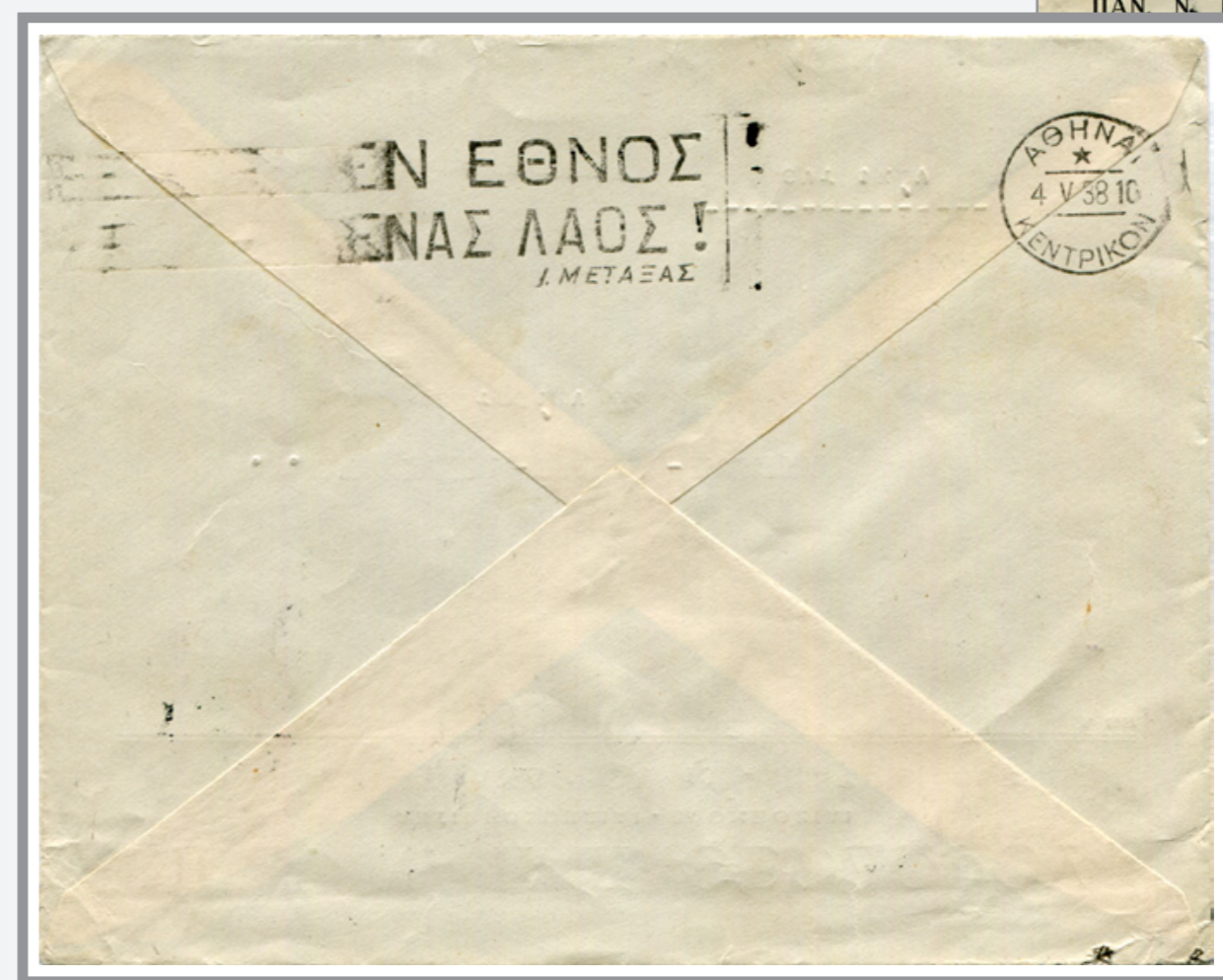


Type 2:
ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΑΦΙΕΙΣ
[Athens Arrival]

From Thessaloniki (21 Feb. 1938) to Athens (22 Feb.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; Thessaloniki rate 20λ; total 3.70D.

- Message: 'Greece has found her pace and is marching on / I. Metaxas'.



Type 4: ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΚΕΝΤΡΙΚΟΝ ΙΙ
[Athens Central II]

From Patra (3 May 1938) to Athens (4 May).

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20-40g 5D (3D+2D); social welfare 50λ.

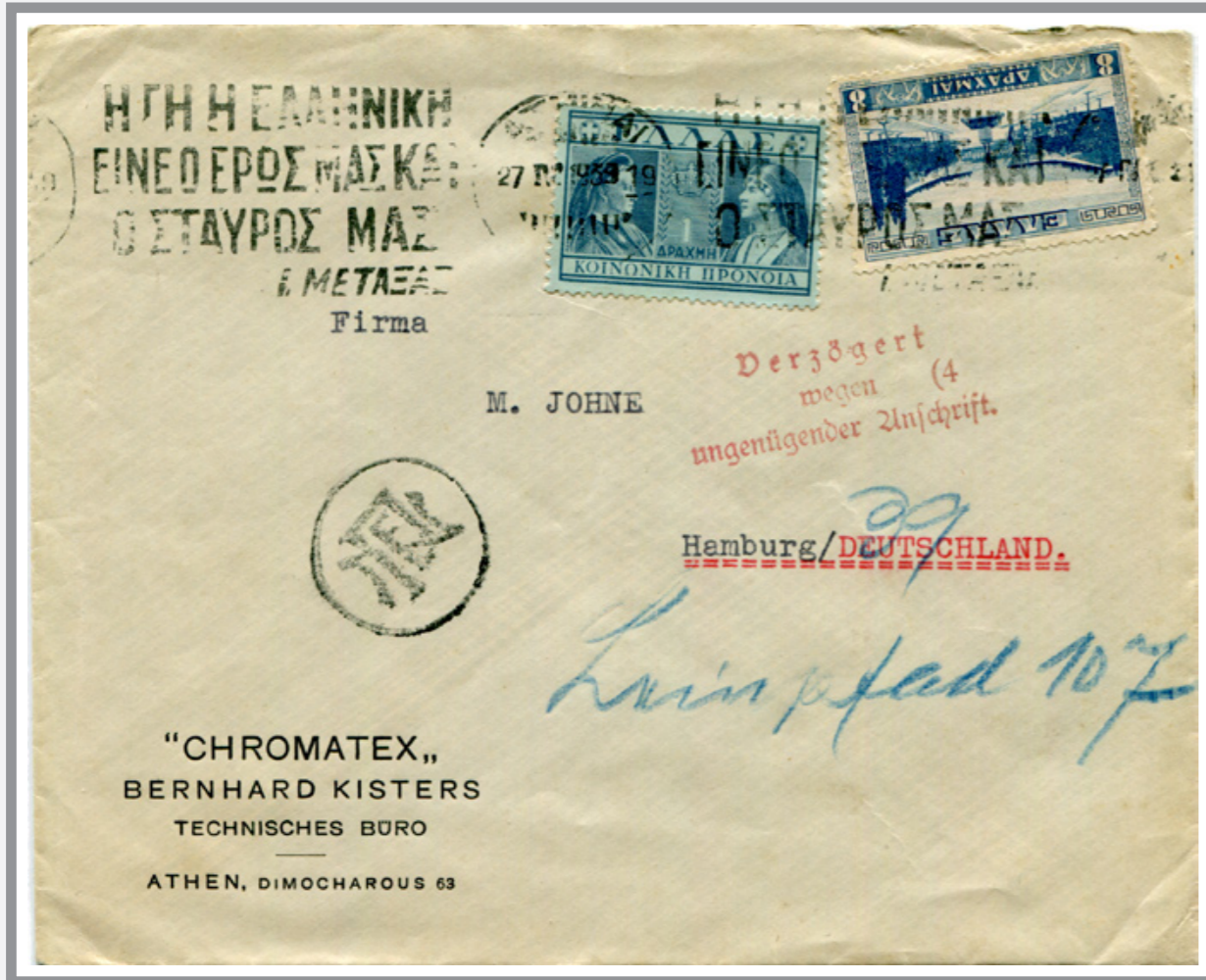
- Message: 'One nation, one people / I. Metaxas'.



40%



40%

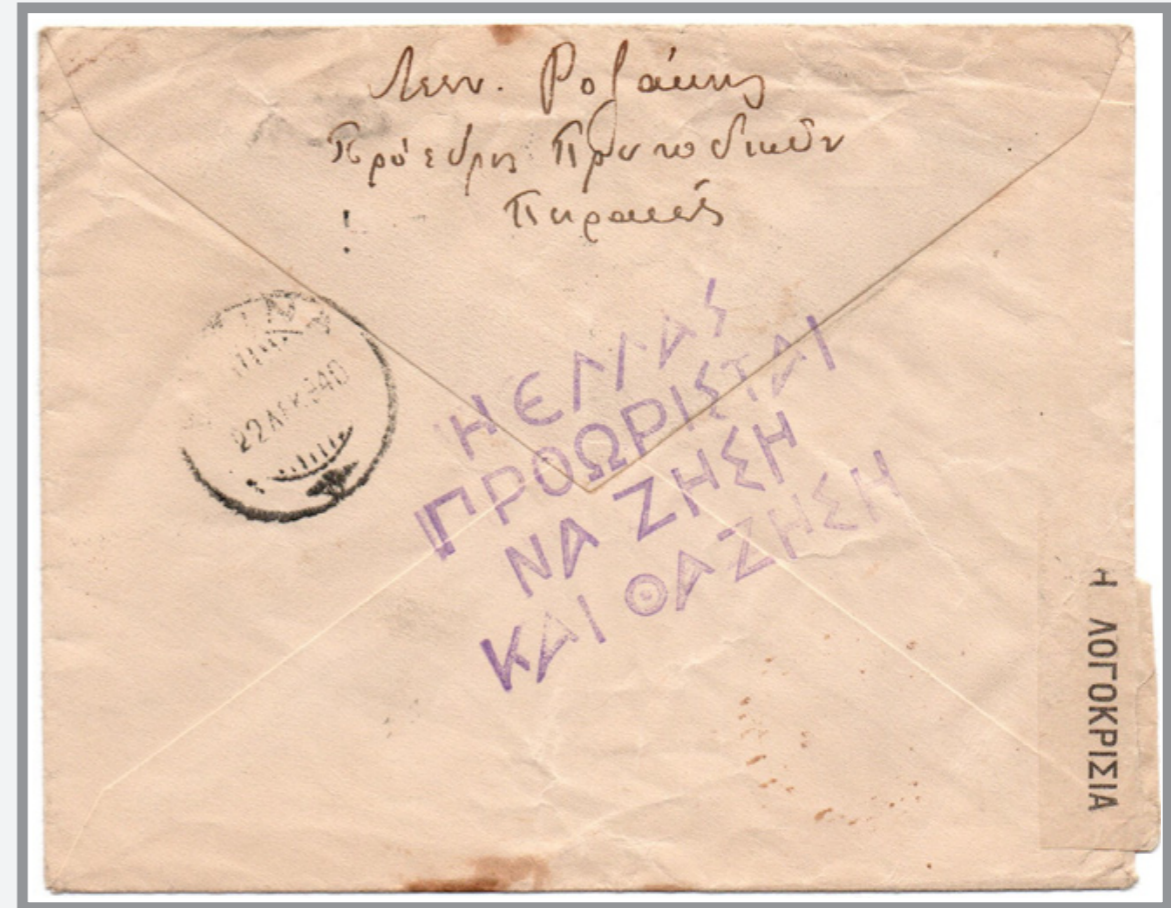


Type 5:
ATHINAI

From Athens (27 Apr. 1939) to Hamburg, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- Message: 'The Greek land is our passionate love and our Cross / I. Metaxas'.
- Athens currency control.



GENERATED AT THE CENSORS' OFFICE

From Athens (18 Dec. 1940) to Vytina village (22 Dec.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ.

- Message: 'Greece is destined to survive and will survive'.
- Cancelled with No. 1 of a series of at least 500 numbered censor handstamps used in Athens.

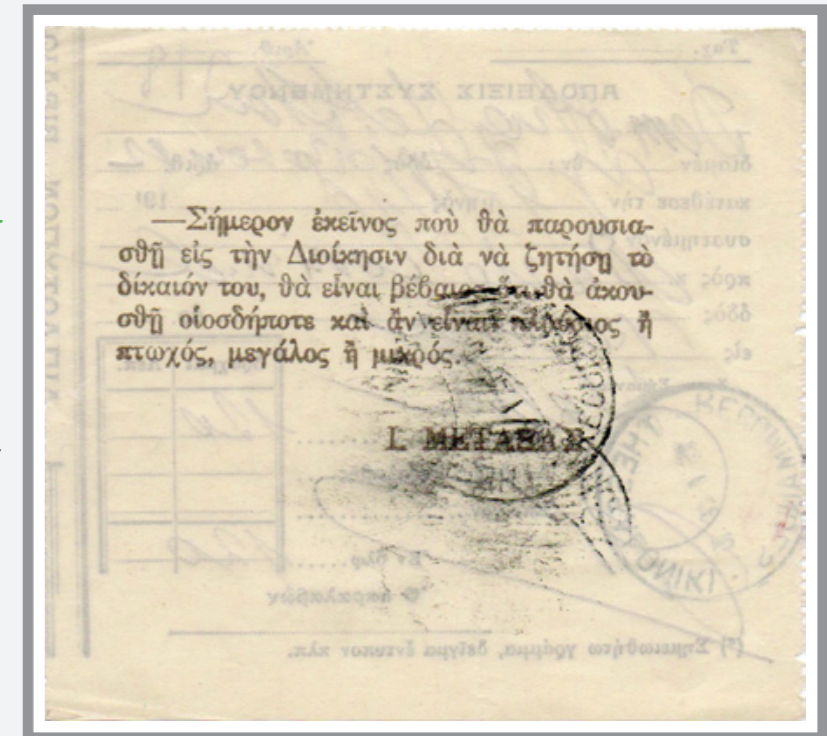


Type 6:
ATHINAI POSTE AERIENNE

From Patra (22 Nov. 1939) via Athens (22 Nov.) to Gera, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g 16D (2x8D) from Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D.

- Message: 'Support the soup kitchens'.



ON A POST OFFICE RECEIPT FOR A REGISTERED LETTER

- Message: 'Today, everyone presenting himself to the government to claim justice will be assured that they will be listened to, whether rich or poor, significant or insignificant. / I. Metaxas'.
- Still in use in 1946, after the end of WWII and five years after the fall of the dictatorship, the former dictator's name **I. METAXAS** was inked out using the postmark.

4.2. 4th OF AUGUST ILLUSTRATED POSTMARKS

Several post offices employed illustrated postmarks on 4 August 1938 and 1939 to celebrate the dictatorship's anniversary. They were used as typical obliterating cancellers. Properly used items are hard to come across.

Athens 1938



From Athens (4 Aug. 1938), sent in-town.

Rates: Visiting card surface 1.50D, where 50λ were paid with a special social welfare stamp; social welfare 50λ; total 2D.

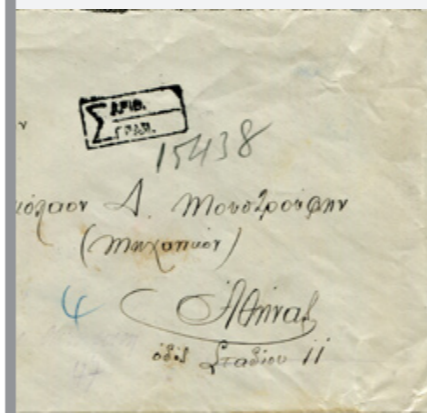
Patra 1938



From Patra (4 Aug. 1938) to Zakynthos (6 Aug.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; total 3.50D.

Volos 1939



40%

From Volos (4 Aug. 1939) to Athens (5 Aug.).

Rates: Third weight surface 40–60g 7D (3D + 2x2D); registration 4D; social welfare 50λ; total 11.50D.

Heraklion 1939



From Heraklion (4 Aug. 1939) to Athens (6 Aug.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; total 3.50D.

- Additional propaganda message on the arrival mechanical cancellation, 'Hurrah! 4th of August 1939.'

4.3. ROYAL FAMILY ILLUSTRATED STATIONERY

On King George II's 50th birthday, 20 July 1940, the Hellenic Post released a set of six illustrated postcards featuring portraits of the Royal Family. It was the first of four attempts by the Hellenic Post to produce illustrated postcards.

This set was later supplemented by two additional cards on 1 December to celebrate Prince Constantine's baptism. The

cards are numbered A1 through A9, except for A4, which was rejected and never issued.

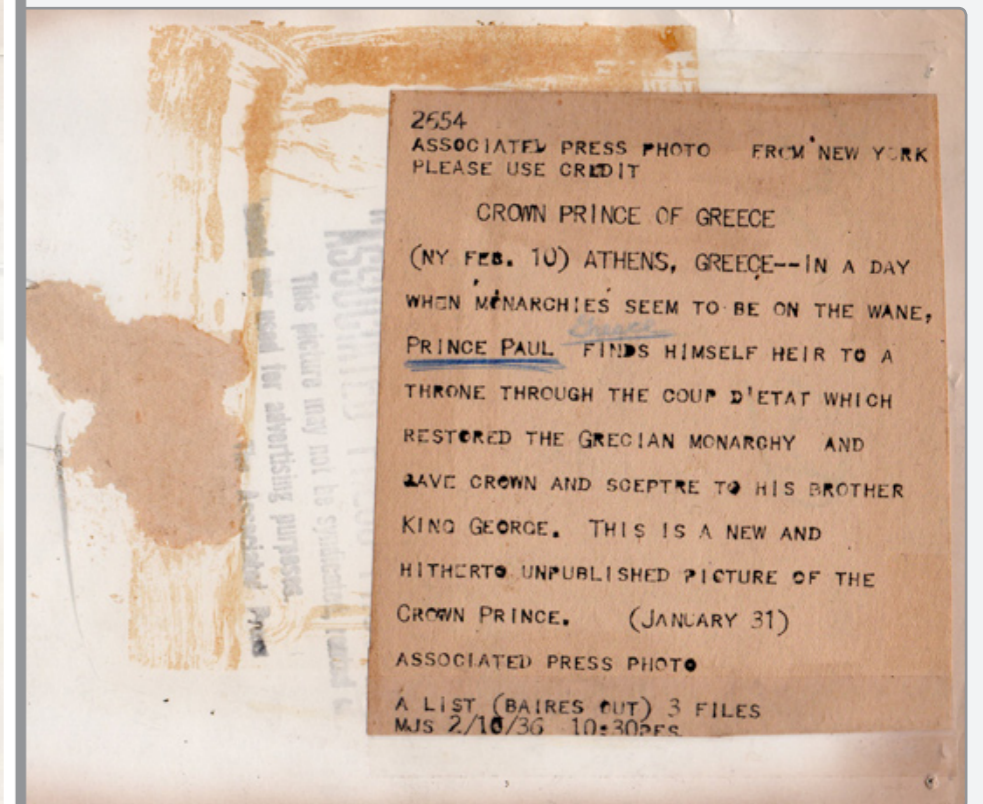
Despite extensive publicity, the cards' sales were a major disappointment, and even fewer cards were properly used. The complete Royal Family set is presented here.

Details were reported by the exhibitor in *Philotelia* Nos. 613/2002 and 749/2024.



No. A4 (never issued)

At the last minute, while at the printer's premises, No. 4 postcard—already printed on one side—was rejected, left blank on the reverse, and never issued for unknown reasons until 2024, when the exhibitor brought to light the prototype photograph.



70%

The likely reason why No. A4 postcard was never issued

The note attached to the reverse of the photograph indicates that its owner is the Associated Press, whereas all eight other postcards of the same set originated from the Royal Palace's official photographers, Nelly and George Boucas.

The note's strong language suggests a critical stance by the Associated Press towards the regime or the Royal Palace: 'In a day when monarchies seem to be on the wane, Prince Paul finds himself heir to a throne through the coup d'état which restored the Grecian monarchy and gave crown and sceptre to his brother King George.'

It is therefore reasonable to assume that the Associated Press and the Hellenic Post may not have reached an agreement regarding the transfer of ownership or publication rights.



50%



No. A1

From Thessaloniki (14 Nov. 1940) to Athens.

Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.

• Thessaloniki censorship.



50%



No. A3

From Ierapetra (12 Sep. 1940) to Patra (19 Sep.).

Rates: Postcard 2D; social welfare 10λ; total 2.10D.



50%

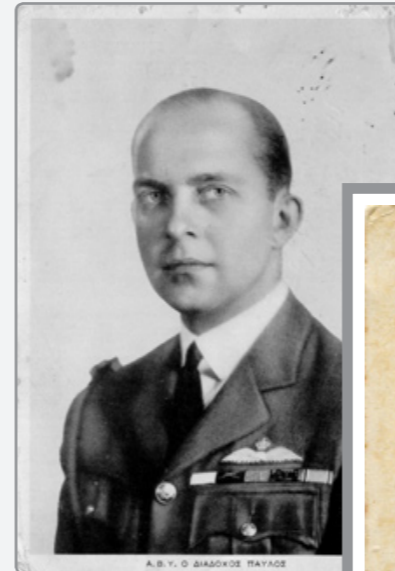


No. A2

From Xanthi (31 Oct. 1940) to Kilkis (15 Nov.).

Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.

• Athens censorship.



50%



No. A5

From Megalopoli, cancelled by the Kalamata-Tripoli T.P.O. (2 Aug. 1940), via Corinth (2 Aug.) to Patra.

Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.



50%



No. A6
From Elateia (26 July 1940) to Thessaloniki (16 Aug.).
Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.



50%



No. A8
From Thessaloniki (2 Jan. 1941) to Military P.O. 461.
Rates: Postcard 2D; social welfare 10L; anti-TB (compulsory from 23 Dec. to 6 Jan.) 50L; total 2.60D.
• Thessaloniki censorship.



50%



No. A7
From Thessaloniki (19 Nov. 1940) to Alexandroupoli.
Rates: Postcard 2D; social welfare 10L; total 2.10D.
• Thessaloniki censorship.



50%



No. A9
From Athens (5 Dec. 1940) to Alexandroupoli.
Rates: Postcard 2D; social welfare 10L; total 2.10D.
• Athens censorship.

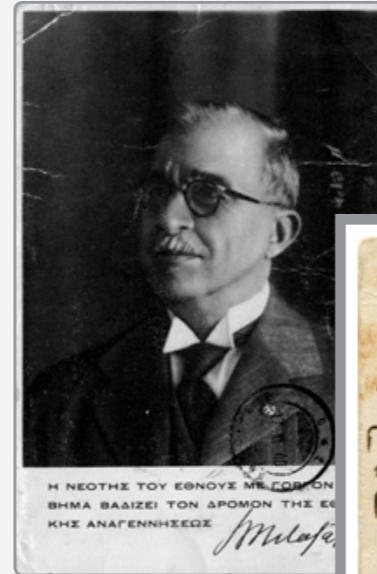
4.4. NATIONAL YOUTH (EON) ILLUSTRATED STATIONERY

On 4 August 1940, a day of festivities marking the fourth anniversary of the dictatorship, the Hellenic Post released the second set of illustrated postcards, fifteen in total. The themes depicted were chosen from earlier National Youth Organisation (EON) activities. The cards were erroneously numbered A1 instead of B1–B15.

Despite receiving more publicity than the ones of the Royal Family set, the EON cards' sales were another major disappointment. Very few properly used cards have survived to this day.

Nine out of the fifteen EON cards are presented here.

Details were reported by the exhibitor in *Philotelia* No. 613/2002.



50%

From Kilkis (15 Nov.) via Army Central P.O. (16 Nov.) to Military P.O. 790 (17 Nov.).
Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.
• Kilkis (blue) and Thessaloniki (red) censorships.



50%



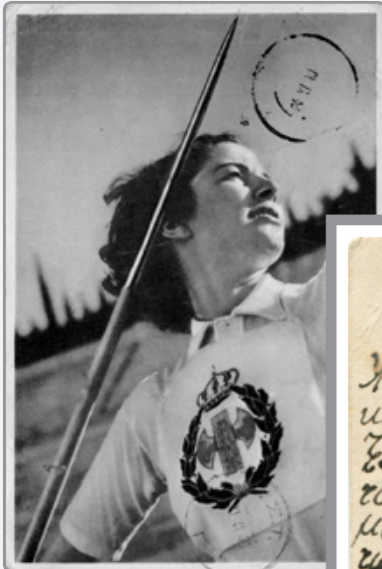
From Lavrio (4 Aug. 1940) to La Seyne-sur-Mer, France.
Rates: Postcard surface 5D.
• Posted on the day the cards were placed in circulation.
• Athens currency control.



50%

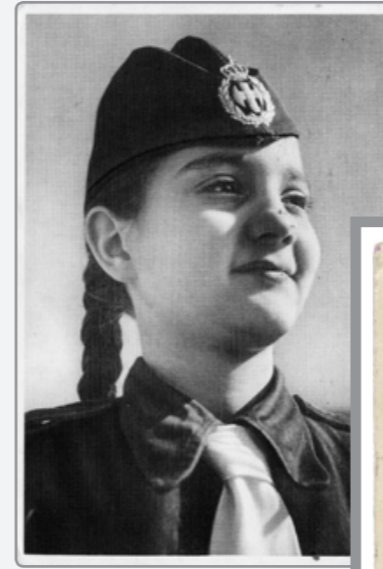
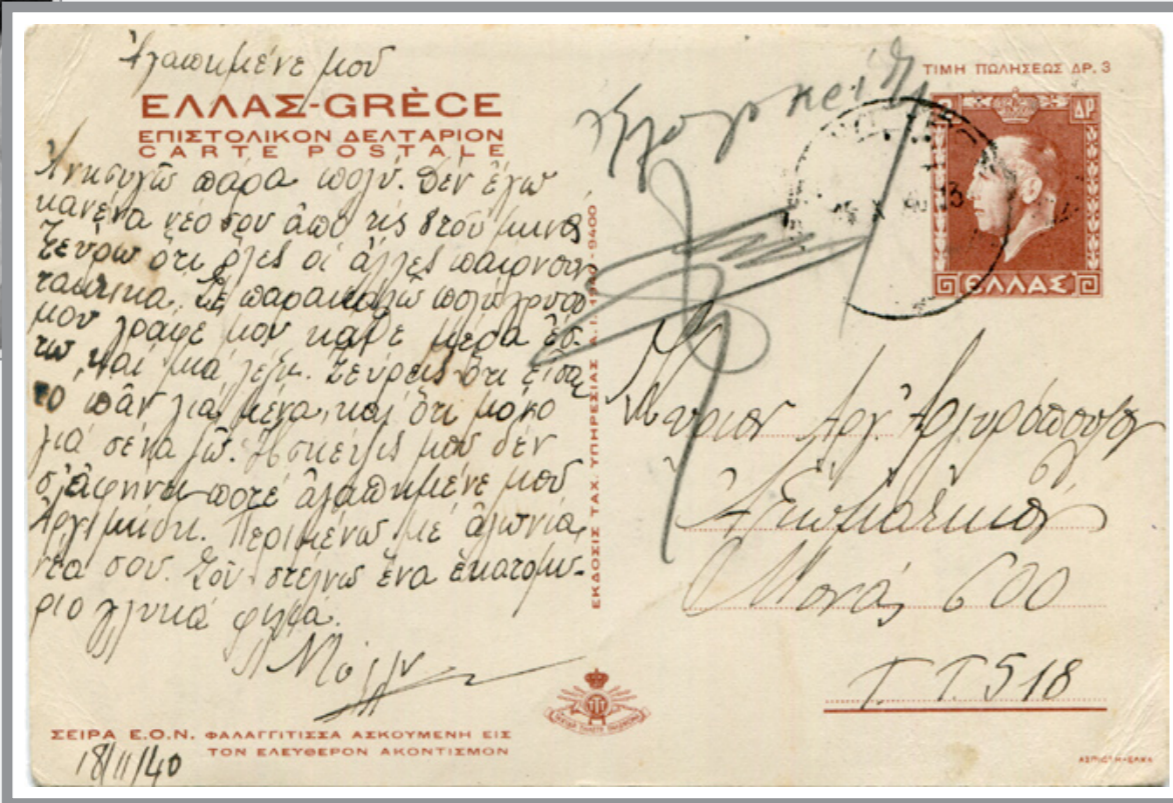
From Patra (29 Nov. 1940) to Kifissia (2 Dec.).
Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.
• Patra censorship.





50%

From Polygyros (18 Nov. 1940) via Army Central P.O. Γ (21 Nov.) to Military P.O. 518 (24 Nov.).
Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.
 • Handwritten in Greek 'censored' and signed.



50%

From Athens (5 Jan. 1941), sent in-town.
Rates: Postcard 2D; social welfare 10L; total 2.10D.
 • Athens censorship.



50%

From Elateia village (20 Nov. 1940) to Thessaloniki.
Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.
 • Elateia censorship.



50%

From Thessaloniki (15 Nov. 1940) to Psychiko, Athens (illegible postmark).
Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.
 • Thessaloniki censorship.





50%

From Athens (7 Feb. 1941), sent in-town (8 Feb.).

Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.
• Athens censorship.



50%

From Thessaloniki (13 Nov. 1940) to Athens (22 Nov.).

Rates: Postcard 2D; missing social welfare.
• Thessaloniki censorship.



4.5. NATIONAL YOUTH POSTAGE (EON) STAMPS



The 3D ordinary stamp

From Corfu (5 Aug. 1940) to Athens (7 Aug.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50L; total 3.50D.

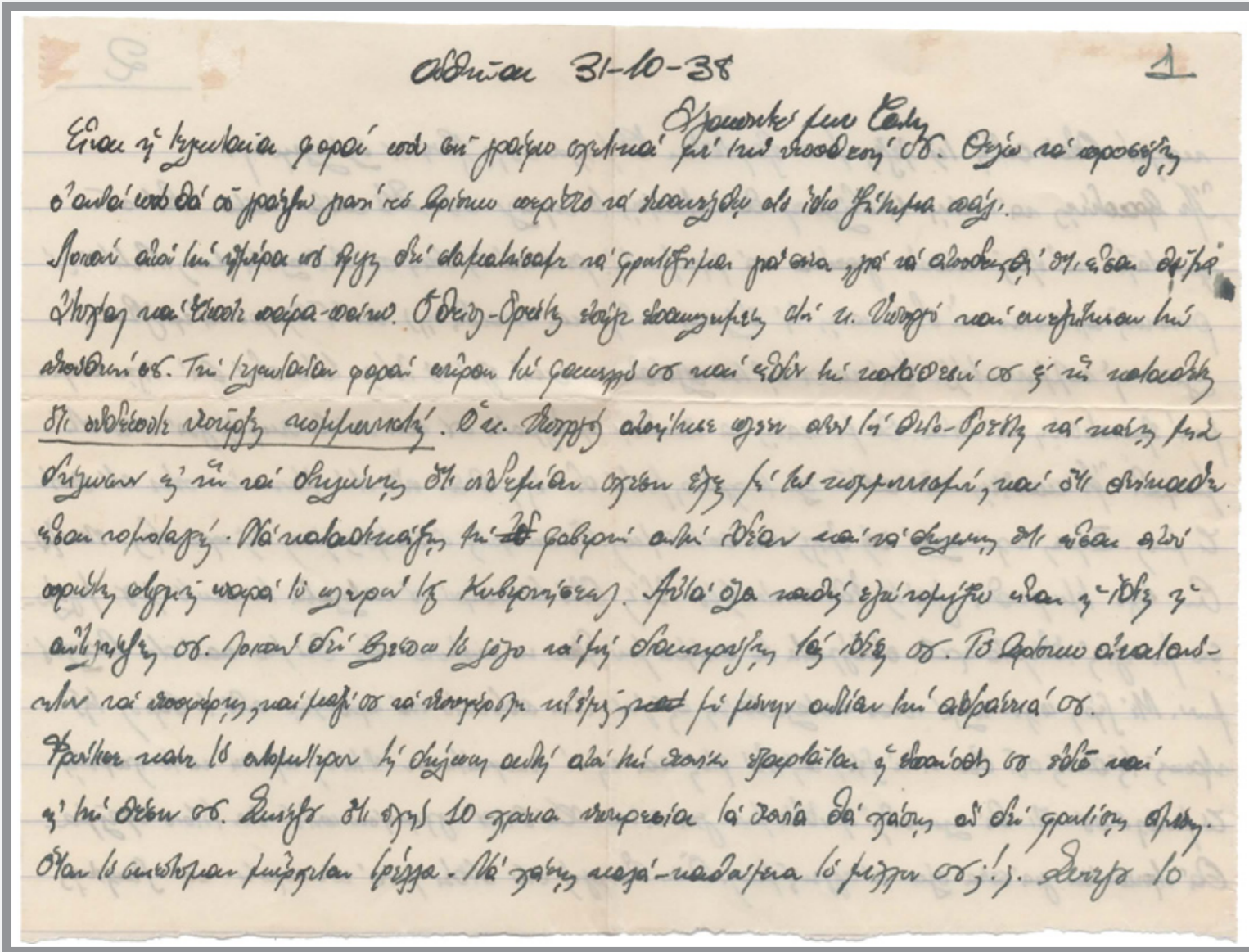
- Twenty stamps comprised the ordinary and airmail EON sets, which were valid for postal use for three days (3-5 Aug.).
- The stamps were sold in complete sets, except the 3D stamp of the ordinary set and the 2D stamp of the airmail set, which were also sold individually.



The 2D airmail stamp

From Heraklion (3 Aug. 1940) to Athens (3 Aug.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; registration 4D; airmail up to 20g 1D overpaid at 2D; social welfare 50L; total 9.50D.



Letter No. 1: From Agisilaos to displaced Takis
 My dear Takis,
 This is the last time I am writing to you about your case. I want you to pay close attention to what I am about to say, because I find it pointless to return to this subject again...
 ...Uncle Orestes has visited the Minister on several occasions, and they have reviewed at your case. Most recently, they retrieved your file and examined your testimony, in which you stated that you were never a communist...
 ...The Minister is now demanding that you sign a written statement declaring that you have no affiliation with communism, that you are a law-abiding citizen, that you repudiate this dreadful ideology, and that from the very beginning you have stood on the side of the government...
 ...If you remain there for the entire year, you will have no place in society, nor in our home. Every one of our relatives will be ashamed of you. The Minister is giving you an opportunity to cleanse yourself of this dishonour. If you ignore it, there will be nothing that can restore your name nor return you to your home or to society with your reputation intact...



From Athens (31 Oct. 1938) to Folegandros remote island (4 Nov., on the reverse).
Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; total 3.50D.

4.6. REJECTS OF THE REGIME

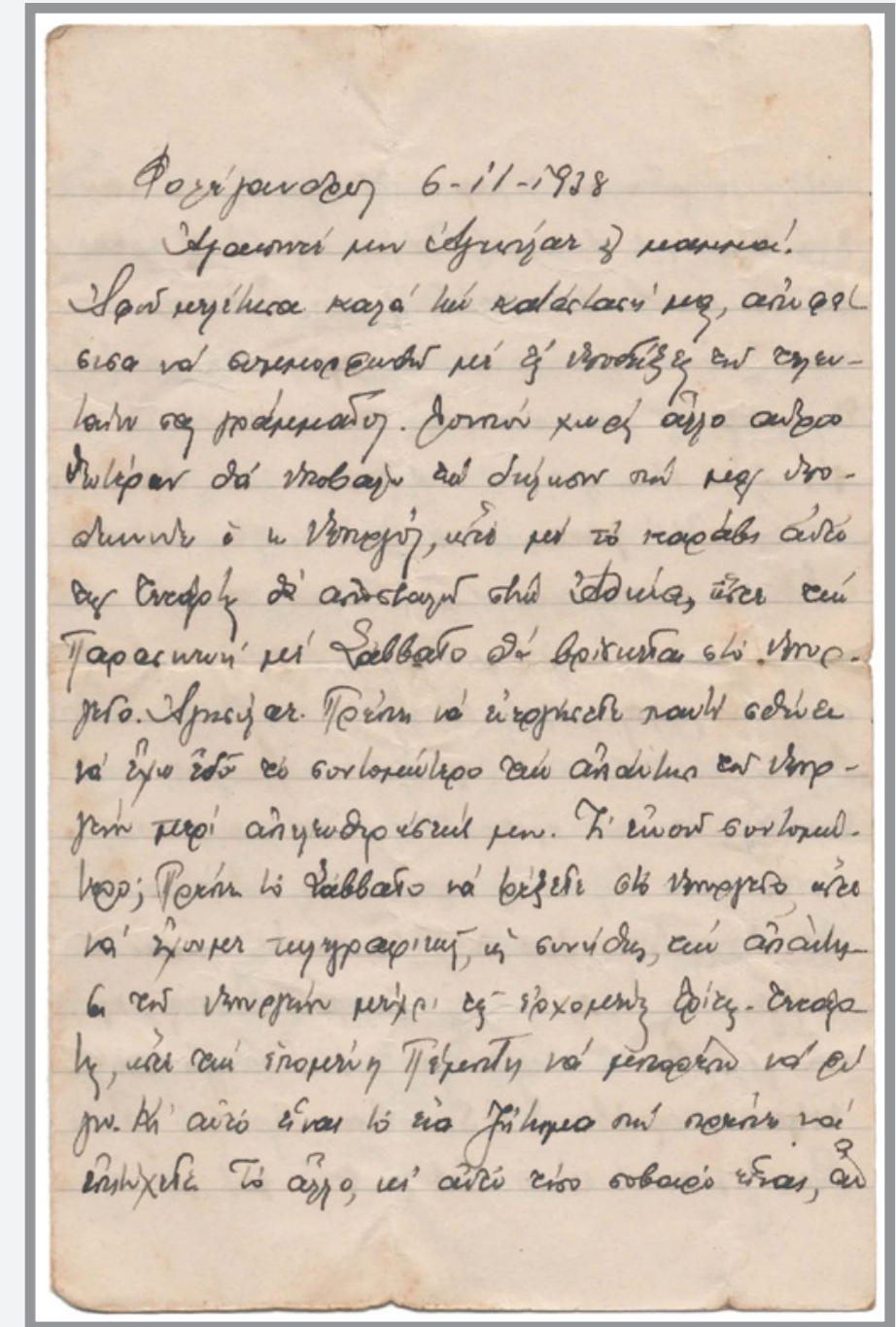
Enemies of the regime, particularly communists, were imprisoned or displaced on remote islands until they signed a written statement renouncing communism and declaring their wholehearted support for their government.

The depicted cover, sent to Folegandros—part of the Cyclades islands—revealed two letters exchanged between brothers at a critical moment in their family's life.

In letter No. 1, Agisilaos put pressure on his displaced brother Takis to change his mind and sign the declaration renouncing communism.

In letter No. 2, Takis replied to Agisilaos' letter, saying he would finally sign.

Reported by the exhibitor in *Philotelia* No. 733/2022.



Letter No. 2: From displaced Takis to Agisilaos
 My dear Agisilaos and mother,
 After carefully considering our situation, I decided to follow the instructions of your last letter. Without further delay, tomorrow—Monday—I will submit the statement as indicated by the Minister, so that it can be sent to Athens on Wednesday's boat, and reach the Ministry by Friday or Saturday...
 ...Agisilaos, you must do everything you can to secure the Ministry's response regarding my release as soon as possible. What do I mean by as soon as possible? You must rush to the Ministry on Saturday so that we can receive the response by telegram, as usual, by next Tuesday or Wednesday. That way I will be able to leave the following Thursday...
 ...Agisilaos, think of the agony I will endure these days, having made a statement and waiting anxiously for the Ministry's reply. Your actions must be swift. Think also of the anguish of not having any money if the order for my release arrives before the next ship departs [...] I cannot bear it!



Commemorative handstamp: Hygiene Exhibition
From Athens to Zurich, Switzerland (30 Dec. 1938).

Rates: Postcard surface 5D.

- The exhibition was held at the Zappeion, Athens, from 13 Nov. to 31 Dec.

5.1. SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE POSTMARKS, HANDSTAMPS, AND POSTER STAMPS

Several instances of rarely encountered items of commercial mail bearing various types of post office products issued to commemorate significant events.



Commemorative postmark: Missolonghi centenary

From Missolonghi (26 Apr. 1937, based on the sender's note on the reverse) to Patra.

Rates: Postcard surface 2D; social welfare 10λ overpaid at 50λ, i.e., the letter rate; total 2.50D.

- The postmark was used on 25 and 26 Apr.



Commemorative postmark: Athens University centenary

From Athens (17 Apr. 1937) by air to Niamey, AOF (Afrique Occidentale Française), then overland to Kano, Nigeria (21 Apr.), Osmogbo (22 Apr.) and Ede (22 Apr.) to final destination, Ife (23 Apr.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; second weight airmail 10–20g 44D (2x22D) from 31 Oct. 1936 to the summer of 1937; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 53D.

- Athens currency control.



Special mechanical franking and censorship hands-tamp: The Royal Wedding

From Athens (9 Jan. 1938) to Voerde, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; anti-TB rate (optional for abroad) 20λ; total 9.20D.

- Red ink was used for postal cancellations and stamp obliterations on 9 Jan. to commemorate the Royal Wedding of Crown Prince Paul of Greece and Princess Frederica of Hanover.



Poster stamp: Thessaloniki International Fair

From Athens (15 Nov. 1937) to Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D overpaid at 9D; airmail up to 10g 7D from 8 June 1933 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 17D.

- The annual Thessaloniki International Fair was promoted through mechanical cancellations and poster stamps in various languages.
 - Athens currency control.



Commemorative postmark: International Postal Convention

From Athens (31 May 1938) via Marseille (11 June, on the reverse) to Paris, France.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 6D from 1 June 1938 to Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 15D.

- The 31st of May was thus verified as the earliest day of circulation for the overprinted social welfare 50λ. green stamp, previously believed to be the 1st of June. Reported by the exhibitor in 'Philotelia' No. 648/2008.
- The postal convention was held in Athens from 24 May to 1 June.
- Athens currency control.



50%

First Flight Athens–Heraklion

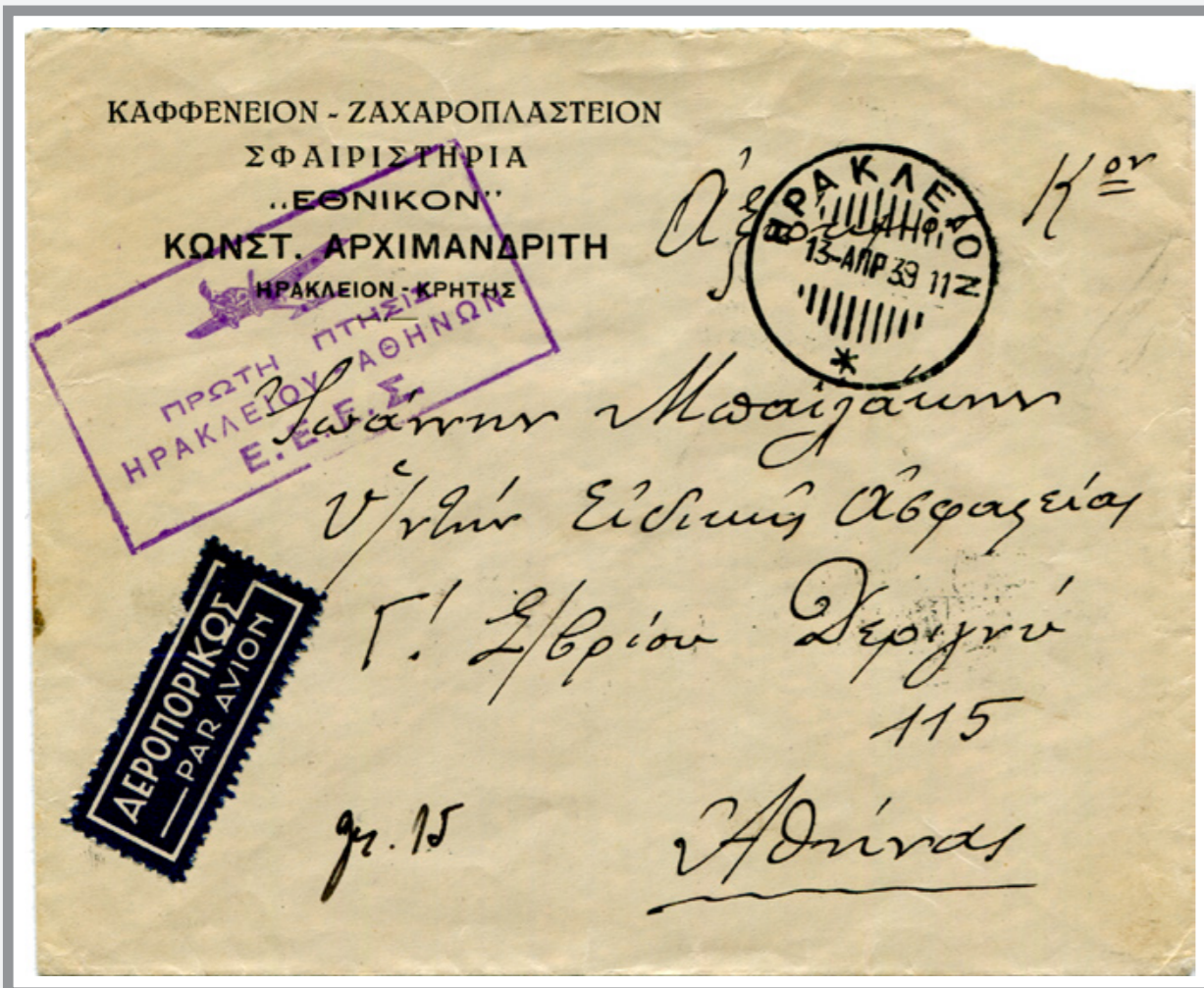
From Athens (12 Apr. 1939) to Heraklion (13 Apr.), back to Athens (18 Apr.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; registration 4D; airmail up to 20g 1D; social welfare 50λ; anti-TB rate, compulsory during the Easter fortnight 50λ; total 9D.

- ΕΕΕΣ is the abbreviation for the Hellenic Company of Air Transportation.



50%



50%

First Flight Heraklion–Athens

From Heraklion (13 Apr. 1939) to Athens (13 Apr.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; airmail up to 20g 1D; social welfare 50λ; anti-TB rate compulsory during the Easter fortnight 50λ; total 5D.



The maiden voyage of ocean liner NEA ΕΛΛΑΣ [New Hellas]

From Athens (19 May 1939) to New York (2 June); returned from New York (10 July) to Athens (3 Aug.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- The cover was sent to obtain the deep purple, three-line boxed cachet in Greek for the maiden voyage from Athens to New York of the ocean liner Ν(ΕΑ) ΕΛΛΑΣ [New Hellas]. The sender, P. Angelakis, was appointed Director of the Hellenic Post in 1943.

5.2. ILLUSTRATED POSTMARKS

Illustrated postmarks first appeared in 1937. They were distributed at museums, archaeological sites, recreation parks, etc. They were rarely used, and very few postal items bearing these postmarks have survived to date.



Heraklion museum



Parnitha shelter



Acropolis on the postcard

From Athens (12 Aug. 1937) to Zidlochovice, Czechoslovakia.

Rates: Reduced postcard rate 2D for five-word text or less.

- The stamps were cancelled at the nearby Makrygianni P.O.



Acropolis on the stamps

From Athens (15 Apr. 1938) to Hermsdorf, Germany.

Rates: Postcard surface 5D; social welfare (optional for abroad) 10λ; total 5.10D.

- The postcard was also cancelled at the nearby Makrygianni P.O.
- Athens currency control.

5.3. POSTAL STATIONERY

On 1 September 1939, two preprinted covers were introduced: one for domestic use (3D+0.50D) and one for international use (8D+1D). They were intended to serve rural areas, relieve postal customers from having to buy covers and stamps, and protect them from dishonourable postmen. The domestic covers were scarcely used.



For domestic use

From Athens (26 Nov. 1940) to Vytina village (29 Nov.).

Rates: Preprinted cover 3D+50λ to pay the surface rate 3D and social welfare 50λ.

- Athens censorship.



For international use

From Thessaloniki (7 Mar. 1941) to Belgrade (10 Mar., on the reverse).

Reduced rates to the Petite Entente: Preprinted cover 8D+1D to pay the surface rate 6D and social welfare (optional) 1D; registration 6D; total 13D.

- Thessaloniki censorship.

5.4. SHIP MAIL

In late 1939, mailboxes were placed aboard 31 domestic liners. Upon mail collection, the stamps were cancelled using handstamps of a uniform type, inscribed in Greek **Joint Directorate of Coastal Transport / Steamship / Act no. 1652**, along with the liner's name.

Although 31 steamships were licensed to use this 'hybrid' post office on board, very few postal items from this period have survived to date.

Reported by the exhibitor in *Philotelia* No. 704/2017.



50%



50%

Handstamp **ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣ** [SS HELLINIS]

From Piraeus to Lefkas (30 May 1940).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; total 3.50D.

- SS HELLINIS, with 876 gross tonnage, was owned by Lakoniki Steam Navigation Co. Her year of launch remains unknown.



From Arta (21 Dec. 1940) to Piraeus (24 Dec.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; total 3.50D.

- The cover was sent from the **Joint Directorate of Coastal Transport's (ΚΔΑΣ)** agency in Alyki village, Arta, Epirus, to its central offices in Piraeus. It was erroneously typed **ΑΚΤΟΠΛΟΪΚΩΝ** instead of **ΑΤΜΟΠΛΟΪΚΩΝ**.
 - Arta censorship.



Handstamp **ΦΩΚΙΩΝ** [SS FOKION]

From Lemnos to Athens (14 Sep. 1940, on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ (on the reverse); total 3.50D.

- SS FOKION, with 1158 gross tonnage, was launched in 1910. She was owned by Epirotiki Steamship Navigation Co. George Potamianos.

The Directorate of Supervision of Coastal Transport (ΔΕΕΑΣ) takes over the Joint Directorate of Coastal Transport (ΚΔΑΣ)

From Thira (better known as Santorini, 30 Nov. 1940) to Piraeus (25 Dec., on the reverse).

Rates: 5th weight surface 80–100g 11D (3D + 4x2D); social welfare 50λ, total 11.50D.

- On 4 Oct. 1940, three weeks before Greece entered WWII, the Ministry anticipated the requisition of the domestic liners. At the same time, the parent company was renamed from ΚΔΑΣ to ΔΕΕΑΣ. The cover was sent from the ΔΕΕΑΣ agency in Santorini to the central offices in Piraeus.



Handstamp ΦΡΙΝΤΩΝ [SS FRINTON]

From Rethymno via Piraeus (22 June 1940, on the reverse) to Athens (22 June, on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50λ; total 3.50D.

- SS FRINTON, with 1361 gross tonnage, was launched in 1903. She was owned by D. Inglessi Fils S.A. Navigation de Samos.

6.1. PERFINS

In Greece, perfined stamps were rarely used. The first parliamentary act regarding perfins was not issued until 1930.

Over the period in question, only five companies were licensed to use perfins. These were:

- Office for the Protection of Greek Figs (1936–37)*
 - Agricultural Bank (1936–40)
 - Naxos S.A. Industrielle (1937–41)
 - Ford Motor Company of Greece (1936–41)
 - Bank of Greece (1936–41)
- * Licensed annually from 1 April to 31 March.

Of the first two, a single cover has yet to be reported. A handful of covers have been recorded bearing Naxos or Ford perfins.

Similarly, Bank of Greece covers with perfins from branches other than Athens, Piraeus, and Thessaloniki are hard to come across.

NAXOS (Naxos Société Anonyme Industrielle)



60%

Φ.Ε. (Ford Motor Company)



50%



From Syros (29 Mar. 1939) via Athens (30 Mar.) to New York, NY, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail to Paris up to 10g, 6D from 1 June 1938 to Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 15D.

- Athens currency control.



From Athens (24 May 1940) via New York, NY (15 June), to Dearborn, MI, USA (17 June).

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 13D (8D+5D); registration 8D; total 21D.

- Athens currency control.

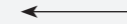


**T.E. (Bank of Greece)
Athens branch**

From Athens (2 Feb. 1938)
to Vienna, Austria.

Rates: Surface up to 20g
8D; anti-TB rate optional
for abroad 1D; total 9D.

- Athens currency control.

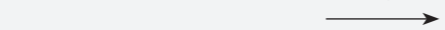


**T.E. (Bank of Greece)
Thessaloniki branch**

From Thessaloniki (7 June 1937)
to Hannover, Germany.

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20-
40g 13D (8D+5D); registration
8D; social welfare (optional)
1D; total 22D.

- Thessaloniki currency control.
 - The German label *Zur de-
visenübermachung zol-
lamtlich geöffnet* translates
into English as 'opened by
customs for foreign currency
transfer'.

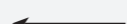


**T.E. (Bank of Greece)
Piraeus branch**

From Piraeus (6 Jan. 1939) to
Neustadt, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D;
social welfare (optional) 1D;
total 9D.

- Piraeus currency control.

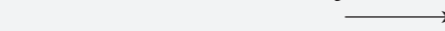


**T.E. (Bank of Greece)
Kalamata branch**

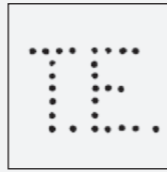
From Kalamata (28 Mar.
1937) via Patra (30 Mar.) to
Nuremberg, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D;
social welfare (optional) 1D;
total 9D.

- Kalamata currency control.



T.E. (Bank of Greece): Volos branch



50%



From Volos (5 July 1940) via Athens (6 July) and Lisbon, Portugal (6 Aug.), to London, UK.

Rates: Surface to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail to Lisbon 10–20g 36D (2x18D) from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 45D.

- First day of implementation of new airmail rates.
- Volos currency control and British censorship.

From Heraklion (21 Aug. 1938) via Athens (21 Aug.) and Berlin (24 Aug.) to Buenos Aires, Argentina (26 Aug.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 3rd weight airmail 10–15g, actually 13g according to the manuscript, 216D (3x72D) from 1 Mar. 1938 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 225D.

- Heraklion currency control.

T.E. (Bank of Greece): Heraklion branch



T.E. (Bank of Greece): Patra branch



From Patra (7 Oct. 1938) via Athens (8 Oct., on the reverse) to Dortmund, Germany (10 Oct., on the reverse).

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 13D (8D+5D); registration 8D; fourth weight airmail 30–40g 28D (4x7D) from 8 June 1933 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 50D.

- Patra currency control.

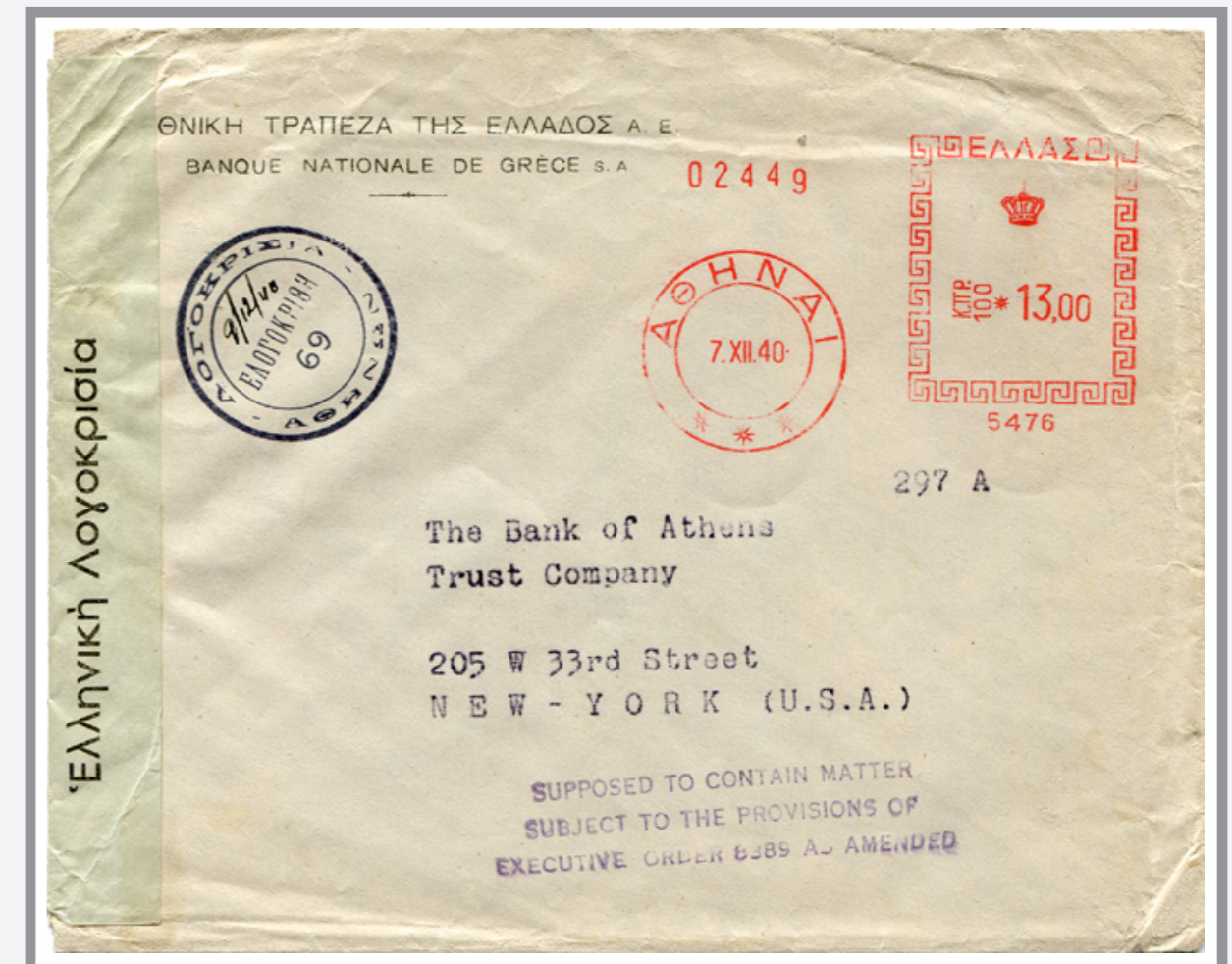
6.2. FRANKING DEVICES

The first franking devices appeared in Greece quite late. Eight of them were installed in 1938–39 in the Bank of Greece's central and two regional branches, the National Bank, the Bank of Athens, and three major private companies (electricity, telephone, and fertilisers).

Seven out of the eight devices were manufactured by Hasler (in Switzerland). The eighth, the one installed in the telephone company, was manufactured by Frankotyp (in Germany). Both companies were established and introduced their franking machines in 1923.

The red meter stamps produced by the franking devices are considered the logical replacement of perfined stamps.

Hasler device No. 5476 used by the National Bank of Greece



From Athens (7 Dec. 1940) to New York, NY, USA.

Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 13D (8D+5D); social welfare (optional) 1D; total 14D.

- This is a rare case of US currency control: The Executive Order 8389, mentioned on the purple handstamp, was issued on 10 Apr. 1940 to protect the funds of victims of aggression when it became known that Denmark and Norway were invaded by the Axis.

Reported by the exhibitor in 'Philotelia' No. 667/2011.

- Athens civil censorship.

Hasler device No. 5479 used by the Bank of Athens



Cover front from Athens (23 Dec. 1940) to Cape Town, South Africa.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- Athens censorship.

From Athens (17 Sep. 1940) to Berlin, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 6D from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 15D.

- Athens currency control.

Frankotyp device No. 30587 used by the Greek Telephone Company



Hasler device No. 5324 used by the Bank of Greece



From Athens (12 July 1940) via Lisbon, Portugal (8 Aug.), to London, UK.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 25D from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 34D.

- Athens currency control and British censorship.

First airmail postmarks in a foreign language



7. AIRMAIL POSTMARKS AND CACHETS

Depicted here are the first Greek airmail postmarks in French and the various types of explanatory handstamps. They were used during the second half of the 1930s, a period which witnessed an explosion in air transportation and, consequently, a dramatic increase in airmail communication.

Dual circle postmark

From Athens (21 Feb. 1937) to Holzhausen, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 7D from 8 June 1933 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 16D.

- Athens currency control.

Bridge postmark 10 mm wide

From Athens (21 May 1938) to Brussels, Belgium.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 7D from 8 June 1933 to Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) 50λ; total 15.50D.

- Athens currency control.



Mechanical cancellation

From Athens (3 June 1938) to Cottbus, Germany.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 7D from 8 June 1933; social welfare (opt.) 1D.

- Athens currency control.

Bridge postmark 12 mm wide

From Athens (29 Dec. 1938) to Lincoln, UK.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 10-20g 14D (2x7D) from 8 June 1933 to Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 23D.

- Athens currency control.



A misspelt airmail cachet

The misspelt airmail cachet ΑΕΡΟΠΡΙΚΩΣ instead of ΑΕΡΟΠΟΡΙΚΩΣ was used in the Syntagma Square P.O. in Athens. It is recorded in dark violet and dark red.



From Heraklion (27 July 1939) to Brno, Moravia, part of the newly established Third Reich-controlled protectorate.
Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail to Athens up to 20g 1D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 10D.
 • Heraklion currency control.

PAR AVION JUSQU' à ATHINAI [by air up until Athens]; in French



ΑΕΡΟΠΟΡΙΚΩΣ ΜΕΧΡΙ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ [by air up until Athens]; in Greek



In dark red

From Athens (6 July 1940) to Vienna, Austria.
Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g 12D (2x6D) from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 21D.
 • Athens curr. control.

In dark violet

From Athens (15 Dec. 1939) to Chicago, IL, USA.
Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 3rd weight airmail 10–15g 72D (3x24D) from Oct 1939 to 15 Mar. 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 81D.
 • Athens curr. control.

From Heraklion (28 Dec. 1939) to Zurich, Switzerland (1 Jan. 1940).
Rates: 2nd weight surface 20–40g 13D (8D+5D); 2nd weight airmail to Athens 20–40g 2D (2x1D), overpaid at 3D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 17D.
 • Heraklion currency control.



Early plane departure



From Thessaloniki (15 Jan. 1939) to Prague (19 Jan., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g (reduced to the Petite Entente) 6D; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g 8D (2x4D) from 1 Mar. 1938 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 15D.

- AVION PARTI cachet, indicating that the cover was deposited after the plane's departure.
- Thessaloniki currency control.

From Thessaloniki (17 Nov. 1937) to Vienna, Austria.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g 14D (2x7D) from 8 June 1933 to 28 Feb. 1938, underpaid at 7D (1st weight airmail up to 10g) as indicated by the manuscript in blue grs 12; social welfare (opt.) 1D; total 16D.

- The airmail label was crossed out and a bilingual multi-line cachet was applied, stating *By surface route because of underpayment of the airmail rate.*
- Thessaloniki currency control.

Sent by surface



50%

From Thessaloniki (6 Oct. 1937) to Athens (7 Oct.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; airmail up to 20g 1D; social welfare 50λ; Thessaloniki rate 20λ; total 4.70D.

- Dual-line cachet in Greek indicating that the cover was deposited after the plane's departure.



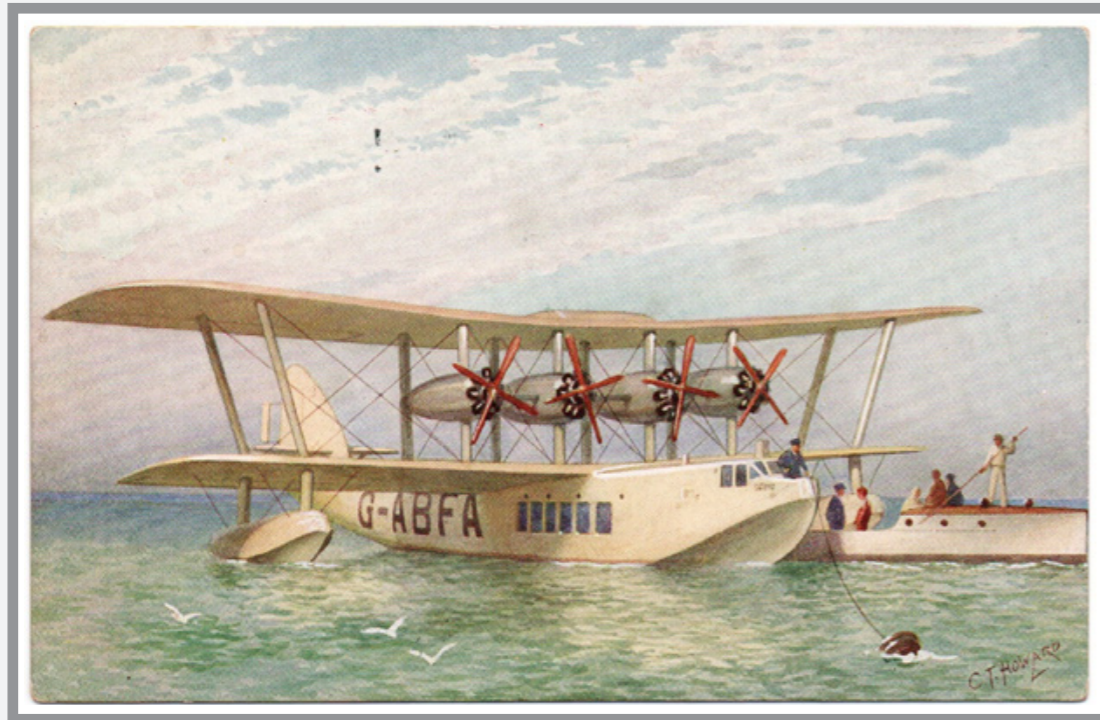
From Athens (7 Mar. 1939) via Budapest (8 Mar., on the reverse) to Prague (10 Mar., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g (reduced to the Petite Entente) 6D; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g 11D (2x5.50D) from 21 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 18D.

- Airmail label crossed out, indicating that the cover was sent by surface mail.
- Athens currency control.



Crash mail: *SCIPIO* flying boat
Mirambella Bay, Crete, Greece
22 Aug. 1936



Postcard No. 4106 of the Salmon Series, watercolour by C. T. Howard (c. 1934),
printed and published by J. Salmon Ltd., UK.

Crash mail: *COURTIER* flying boat
Faliron Bay, Athens, Greece
1 Oct. 1937



50%



From Bombay, India (17 Aug. 1936), to New York, NY, USA.

Rates: Surface up to ½oz 3 anna / 6 pies; airmail to the UK up to ½oz 6 anna; total 9 anna / 6 pies.
One 3-anna stamp was washed out.

- Salvaged from Imperial Airways' Short S.17 Kent Flying Boat, G-ABFA 'Scipio', which sank during landing at Mirambella Bay, Eastern Crete, Greece, on 22 Aug. 1936.
 - Boxed handstamp **DAMAGED BY SEA / WATER**, upon its arrival in England.
- Two wide red bars indicate that the cover was transmitted to the US by surface means.



From Port Said, Egypt (30 Sep. 1937), to Athens (10 Oct.).

- Salvaged from Imperial Airways' Short S.23 Empire Flying Boat Mk I, G-ADVC 'Courtier', which sank during landing at Faliron Bay, Athens, Greece, on 1 Oct. 1937.
 - Boxed bilingual handstamp in Greek **εκ βυθισθέντος υδροπλάνου**, and in French **De l'hydravion coulé** [from a sunk hydroplane].

8.1. AIRLINES IN WEST AFRICA

French Régie Air Afrique and Belgian Sabena alternated weekly flights to Central Africa. In 1939, the service became biweekly. Régie Air Afrique flew from Paris all the way to Tananarive (Antananarivo today), Madagascar. Sabena flew from Brussels to Elisabethville (Lubumbashi today), Belgian Congo (Democratic Republic of the Congo today).

In West and Equatorial Africa, Aéromaritime, a French airline, operated routes from Niamey, Niger, via Cotonou, Dahomey (Benin today), westbound to Dakar, Senegal, and eastbound to Pointe Noire, French Congo (Republic of the Congo today).

When the Niamey–Cotonou leg was suspended following the breakout of WWII, mail from Europe was carried to Dakar by Air France.

Greek airmail to West Africa was initially transported by Imperial Airways from Athens to Marseille.

Reported by the exhibitor in *Philotelia* Nos. 682–683/2013 and 684–685/2014.



— Air France
 — Air Afrique or Sabena
 — Aeromaritime

First on Air France to Senegal, then on Aéromaritime to French Guinea (AOF)



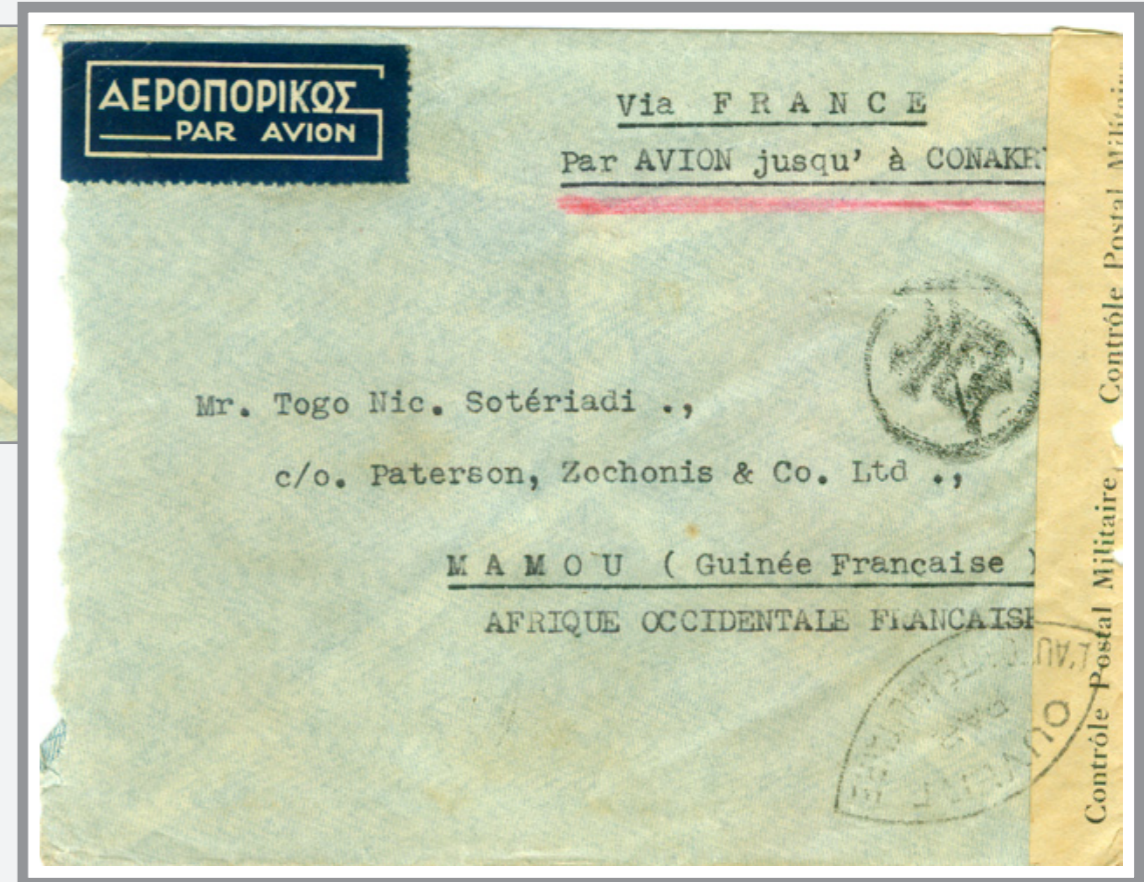
50%

From Athens (4 May 1940) via Marseille and Dakar to Conakry, French Guinea (Guinea today, 1 June).

Next, overland to Mamou, 100 km towards the interior of the colony.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 21D from 30 Mar. to 14 May 1940; total 29D.

- Athens currency control and French censorship.



50%

From Athens (15 May 1940) to Mamou, following the same route as the cover on top. It was sent on the day of the implementation of new rates.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 23D from 15 May to 4 July 1940; total 31D.

- Athens currency control.

On Air Afrique, or Sabena to Belgian Congo



From Athens (4 June 1939) to Elisabethville, Belgian Congo (3 July, on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 16D from 21 Jan. to 30 Sep. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 25D.

- Elisabethville, Belgian Congo, is today Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Athens currency control.

First on Air France to Senegal, then on Aéromaritime to Cameroon



70%



From Patra (6 Dec. 1939) via Marseille (9 Dec.) and Dakar to Douala, Cameroon (17 Dec.). Then, by surface means to Abong Mbang, a further 500 km to the east.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 20D from 1 Oct. 1939 to 14 May 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 29D.

- Athens currency control and French censorship.

8.2. AIRLINES IN EAST AFRICA

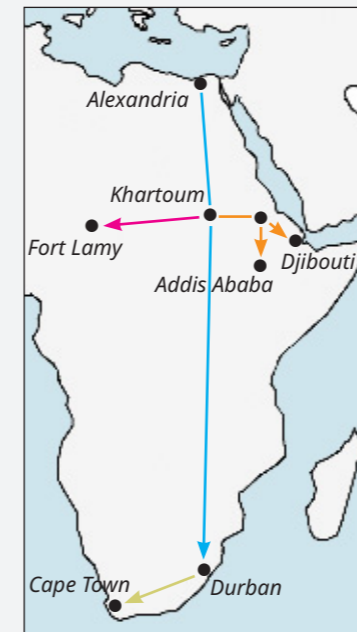
Imperial Airways flew from Southampton to Alexandria, Egypt, and Khartoum, Sudan, all the way to Durban, South Africa. From Khartoum, there was also a westbound line service that reached Lagos, Nigeria.

When Italy captured Ethiopia in 1936, Ala Littoria, which already served Tunis and Tripolis, added several destinations in the Horn of Africa to its regular schedule.

A few local airlines were established in the 1930s to handle local transportation and grew very quickly. Such an example was South African Airways.

Greek airmail to East Africa was transported by Imperial Airways.

Reported by the exhibitor in *Philotelia* Nos. 682–683/2013 and 684–685/2014.



- Imperial Airways
- Imperial Airways (Khartoum-Lagos line)
- Ala Littoria (ALSA)
- South African Airways

On Imperial Airways Khartoum-Lagos line to Chad (AEF)



From Athens (2 Feb. 1938) via Khartoum (5 Feb., on the reverse) to Fort Lamy (N'Djamena today), Chad (10 Feb., on the reverse), AEF.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 22D from 31 Oct. 1936 to 28 Feb. 1938 erroneously overpaid at 34D (17D/5g) for AOF (Afrique Occidentale Française) instead of 22D/10g for AEF (Afrique Equatoriale Française); social welfare (optional, on the reverse) 1D; total 43D.

- Athens currency control.

On Ala Littoria via Assab to Djibouti, or via Dessie to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

On Imperial Airways to Southern Rhodesia, and onwards to South Africa



From Athens (22 June 1938—V instead of VI on the postmark, as the 50 lepta stamps were released on 1 June) to Djibouti (26 June, on the reverse), French Somaliland (Republic of Djibouti today).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 12D from 1 Mar. 1938 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 21D.

- Athens currency control.



From Thessaloniki (10 Oct. 1939) to Gwelo, Southern Rhodesia (Gweru, Zimbabwe, today).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g 32D (2x16D) from 1 Oct. 1939 to 15 Mar. 1940, underpaid at 26D (2x13D) according to the previous tariff valid until 30 Sep. 1939; total 34D.

- Thessaloniki currency control.
- P.B.C.: Passed By Censor (in Southern Rhodesia).



From Athens (10 June 1938) via Alexandria (11 June, on the reverse) to Addis Ababa, AOI (Africa Orientale Italiana, Ethiopia today, in June, with illegible postmark on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D (on the reverse); registration 8D (on the reverse); 3rd weight airmail 10–15g 36D (3x12D) from 1 Mar. 1938 to 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional, on the reverse) 1D; total 53D.



From Athens (26 Feb. 1938) to Durban, South Africa, on Imperial Airways, and then to Cape Town, on South African Airways.

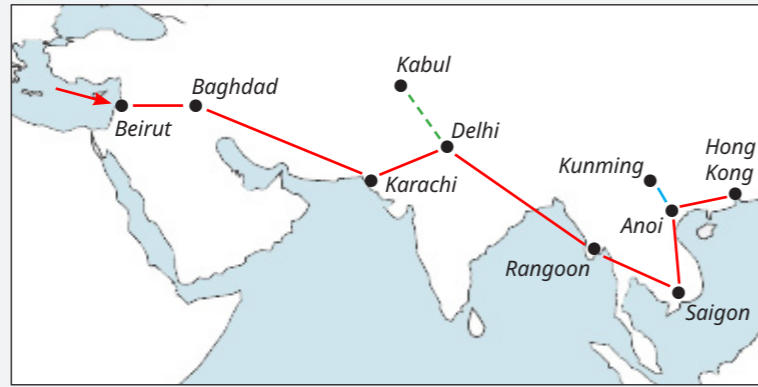
Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 5–10g 34D (2x17D) from 31 Oct. 1936 to 28 Feb. 1938; social welfare (optional, on the reverse) 1D; total 43D.

- Athens currency control.

8.3. AIRLINES IN ASIA

Air France flew from London and Paris via Marseille and Athens to the French Mandate in the Middle East (Beirut), and then on to Iraq, India, and French Indochina (Saigon and Hanoi). On 5 October 1938, the line was extended from Hanoi to Hong Kong.

In the British territories of Iraq, India and Burma, which were serviced by three airlines (Air France, KLM, and Imperial Airways), the Greek airmail was sent by priority on Imperial Airways.



→ Air France
 → CNAC (China National Aviation Corporation) or Eurasia
 - - - Over land

On Air France to the Middle East



From Piraeus (6 Apr. 1940) via Athens (6 Apr., on the reverse) to Beirut, Syria (Lebanon today, 13 Apr., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 13D from 16 Mar. to 14 May 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 22D.

- Athens currency control.

On Imperial Airways, KLM or Air France to India



70%



From Athens (5 Apr. 1939) to Karachi, India (in Pakistan today).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 5–10g 20D (2x10D) from 21 Jan. to 30 Sep. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 29D.

- Athens currency control.

First on Air France to Hanoi, then on Eurasia to China



70%



From Piraeus (1 Apr. 1939) via Athens (1 Apr.) and Hanoi, French Indochina (Vietnam today, 18 Apr.), to Yunnan-Fu, also known as Kunming, China (19 Apr.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 27D from 21 Jan. to 30 Sep. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 36D.

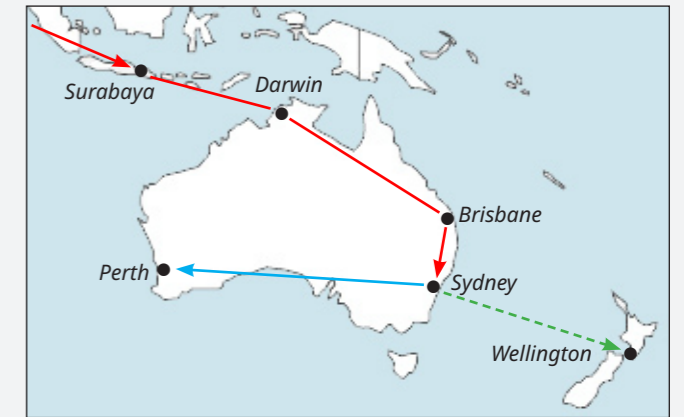
- Athens currency control.

8.4. AIRLINES IN THE FAR EAST AND OCEANIA

Three airlines carried mail from Europe to the Far East, each prioritising their colonial interests: Air France to French Indochina, KLM to the Dutch East Indies, and Imperial Airways to Australia.

When the war broke out, Air France changed its route from the north to the south of the Mediterranean, no longer using Athens as a night stop. At that time, KLM moved its terminal from Amsterdam to Naples and continued to use Athens as a stopover.

In June 1940, following the German invasion of the Netherlands and France, Air France suspended its services, and KLM moved its terminal to Lydda, Palestine. As a result, during the war, most of the Greek mail was carried to the Far East by Imperial Airways.



- Imperial Airways or KLM/KNILM
- Quantas
- by sea to April 1940, then on TEAL

On Imperial Airways, or KLM/KNILM to the Dutch East Indies



From Athens (8 Mar. 1940) to Surabaya, Dutch East Indies (part of Indonesia today).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 21D from 1 Oct. 1939 to 15 Mar. 1940, underpaid at 13D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 22D.

- Athens currency control.

First on Imperial Airways, then on Qantas to West Australia



70%

On Imperial Airways to East Australia



From Piraeus (14 Feb. 1939) via Athens (14 Feb., on the reverse) to Brisbane, Australia (22 Feb., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 5–10g 50D (2x25D) from 21 Jan. to Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D, overpaid at 1.50D; total 59.50D.

• Piraeus currency control.



From Patra (22 Apr. 1939) via Athens (24 Apr.) and Sydney (2 & 3 May) to Perth, Australia (4 May).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; registration 8D; 3rd weight airmail 10–15g 75D (3x25D) from 21 Jan. to Oct. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 92D.

• Patra currency control.



60%

From Mytikas village (23 Jan. 1939) cancelled with the village's Telegraph Office postmark to Wellington, New Zealand.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 5–10g 50D (2x25D), underpaid at 40D according to the previous tariff valid until 20 Jan. 1939; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 49D.

• Athens currency control.

First on Imperial Airways to Sidney, then by sea to New Zealand



On LATI to Brazil

8.5. AIRLINES IN SOUTH AMERICA

Before the war, flights from Europe to South America alternated weekly between Air France from Paris and Deutsche Lufthansa from Berlin.

When the war broke out, Lufthansa immediately suspended its flights. On 21 November 1939, the Italian LATI, flying from Rome, took over to complement Air France. The last Air France flight to South America left Marseille on 23 June 1940. Over that period, Greek mail was first forwarded from Athens to Marseille by Imperial Airways and then transferred onto either Air France or Lufthansa.

Airmail from Asuncion to Europe was handled by the Brazilian Panair, from Santiago by the Chilean Línea Aérea Nacional (LAN) or the Brazilian Condor, and from Montevideo by Condor to Rio or directly by Air France.



- Air France, Lufthansa, or LATI
- Panair (Brazil)
- LAN (Chile), or Condor (Brazil)



60%

From Athens (19 June 1940) to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (11 & 12 July).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 114D from ?? June to 4 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 123D.

- Transported by LATI, as indicated by the manuscript *Voie Lisbonne*.
- Athens currency control.



On Air France to Argentina



From Athens (2 Nov. 1939) to Buenos Aires, Argentina (9 Nov., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 105D from Oct. 1939 to 14 May 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 114D.

- At that time, Air France operated alone from Europe to South America.
- Athens currency control.

From Chile, first on LAN to Argentina or Condor to Brazil, then on LATI to Europe



From Santiago, Chile (?? Feb. 1941), to Athens (24 Feb., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g \$1.80; airmail up to 5g \$10.80 from 15 Feb. 1941; total \$12.60.

- Athens censorship.

From Paraguay, first on Panair to Brazil, then on Air France or Lufthansa to Europe

From Uruguay, on Air France all the way, or Condor to Brazil, then on Lufthansa to Europe



From Asuncion, Paraguay (14 July 1939), to Athens (25 July, on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 18 pesos; airmail up to 20g 102 pesos; total 120 pesos.

- The flights between Asuncion and Rio de Janeiro were operated by Panair, a Brazilian carrier.

From Montevideo, Uruguay (29 Nov. 1937), to Athens (7 Dec., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 12 centésimos; airmail up to 5g 50 centésimos.

8.6. AIRLINES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Mail on the first leg of the journey from Central America to Europe was transported by Pan American flying clippers to Brownsville, Texas, and then onwards to New York.

Until the introduction of the Pan Am service FAM-18 on 20 May 1939, which crossed the Atlantic, mailbags were next loaded onto steamers bound for Le Havre, France, transferred by rail to Marseille, and finally carried by air to their final destinations.



→ Pan American Airways
 - - - - - by sea

From Costa Rica, first on Pan Am to the USA, then by boat to Europe



From San Jose, Costa Rica (23 Mar. 1937), via Brownsville, TX, USA (Mar. 25), and New York, NY, USA (26 Mar.), to Athens (9 Apr.). Transit and arrival postmarks on the reverse.

Rates: 5th weight combined surface and airmail 20–25g 1.45 colon (0.45 colon + 4x0.25 colon); registration 0.40 colon; total 1.85 colon.

- Apparently, official correspondence between the Greek Commercial Attaché in San Jose and the Finance Minister in Athens was not subject to currency control.



9. PRELUDE AND ACT I OF WWII

The drums of war in Europe were heard long before the official outbreak of WWII, notably during the Spanish Civil War, when the major European powers were indirectly involved. This section traces the routes of mail to and from Greece that passed through, or were otherwise connected with, the Spanish Civil War.

Prelude to WW II: The Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War lasted from July 1936 to April 1939 and, as expected, censorship was applied to regular correspondence, whether on the Nationalist side (San Sebastián and Burgos), or the Republican side (Madrid and Barcelona).

From Athens (7 June 1938) to San Sebastián, Spain.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

- Athens currency control with black single-circle handstamp, and San Sebastián censorship with purple boxed *Censura Militar / San Sebastian*.



From Madrid, Spain (20 Jan. 1938), to Athens (29 Jan., on the reverse).

Rate: Surface up to 20g 0.60 Pts from 1 Apr. 1937 to 31 Mar. 1938.

- Madrid censorship with linear *CENSURADA*.



From Burgos, Spain (1 Mar. 1938), via Vienna, Austria (5 Mar., on the reverse), to Athens (8 Mar.).

Rate: Surface up to 20g 0.50 Pts from 1 Jan. 1935 to 31 Mar. 1937. underpaid at 0.40 Pts.

- The handwritten mark *Par Avion* was irrelevant as airmail rates were not paid an additional 1.25 Pts to 28 Feb. 1938, or 1.50 Pts from 1 Mar. 1938.
- Burgos censorship with boxed *CENSURA MILITAR BURGOS*.



From Barcelona, Spain (29 Jan. 1937), to Athens.

Rate: Surface up to 20g 0.50 Pts from 1 Jan. 1935 to 31 Mar. 1937.

- Barcelona censorship with boxed *REPÚBLICA ESPAÑOLA / CENSURA*.

ALSA flights grounded for two months at the beginning of WWII

ALSA aircraft were grounded as of 3 Sep. 1939. The Italian carrier resumed its pre-war Rome–Athens–Rhodes–Haifa route on 26 Oct.

The cover was postmarked at the Syntagma Square P.O. on 3 Oct. It was postmarked again on the 25th at the Athens Central P.O. with the mechanical **ATHINAI – POSTE AERIENNE** cancellation.

It is reasonable to assume that the second postmark was applied on the day it was confirmed that flights to Rhodes would resume. It was postmarked in Rhodes two days later.

From Athens (3 & 25 Oct. 1939) to Rhodes, Italian Dodecanese (27 Oct.).

Rates: Surface up to 20g **8D**; airmail up to 10g **2D** from 31 Oct. 1936; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **11D**.



50%

10 May 1940: Germany attacked the Netherlands, Belgium & France

On 10 May 1940, the Swedish airline ABA discontinued the Stockholm–Berlin line. Greek mail to Sweden was subsequently routed by LARES to Bucharest, then by AEROFLOT to Moscow (with **VIA RUSSIA** typewritten on the cover), and finally by ABA to Stockholm.

9 April 1940: Germany invaded Denmark and Norway

Before the German invasion of Denmark and Norway, Greek mail destined to the UK and France was transported by DLH to Berlin, and from there to its final destinations by KLM via Amsterdam. Immediately after 9 April 1940, when KLM suspended these routes, BOAC took over the transportation of Greek mail to the UK, while Air France handled mail to France using direct flights at significantly higher rates. On 14 April, postal rates to the UK and France were increased from 8D/10g to 18D/5g. On 15 May, they were further increased to 20D/5g.



50%

From Athens (4 June 1940) to London.

Rates: Surface up to 20g **8D**; 2nd weight airmail 5–10g **40D** (2x20D) from 15 May to 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **49D**.

• Athens currency control.



From Loutra Aedipsos (1 Oct. 1940) to Gothenburg, Sweden.
Rates: Surface up to 20g **8D**; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g **24D** (2x12D) from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) **1D**; total **33D**.

10 June 1940: Italy declared war on Great Britain—suspended communications



From Athens (8 June 1940), destined for London by rail. Intercepted in Turin, Italy, and censored to be returned to Greece.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D.

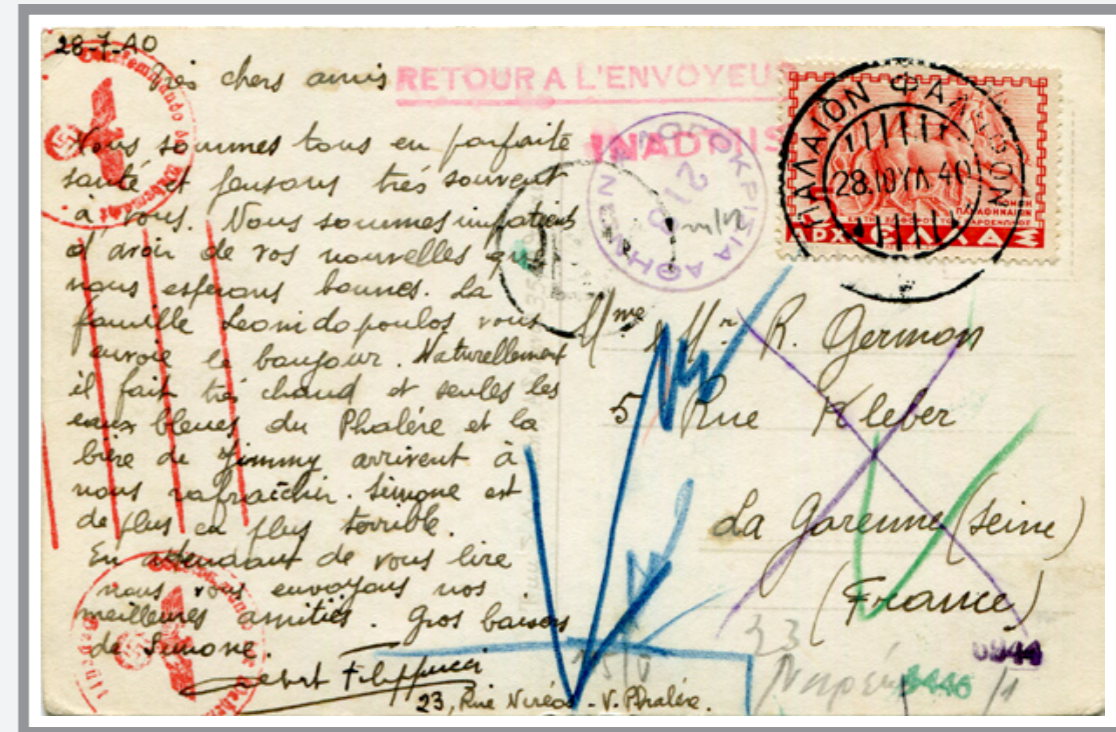
- Handstamped ΕΠΙΣΤΡΕΦΕΤΑΙ ΛΟΓΩ ΔΙΑΚΟΠΗΣ ΣΥΓΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΩΝ [Returned due to suspension of services]. This is the earliest known use of this rubber handstamp, which continued to be applied in similar circumstances until April 1945.

22 June 1940: The fall of France—suspended communications with the North
Communication between Northern France and Greece was immediately suspended.

From Palaio Faliro (28 July 1940), destined for La Garenne, Paris, France.

Rates: Postcard surface 5D.

- The postcard was intercepted and hand-stamped RETOUR A L'ENVOYEUR and INADMIS, as mail to northern France was not permitted. It was returned to Greece via Vienna, where it was censored.
- The card was inspected by currency control prior to departure and by censors upon its return.



22 June 1940: The fall of France—regular communications with the South

Communication between Vichy France and Greece continued regularly until the latter was occupied in April 1941.

19 July 1940: Ala Littoria (ALSA) resumed its flights and took over the transportation of Greek mail to West Europe



From Aegion (16 Sep. 1940), via Lisbon, Portugal (19 Sep. on the reverse), to Aberdeen, UK.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail until Lisbon up to 10g 18D from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D.

- After ALSA resumed operations, Greek mail to the UK was routed to Lisbon, from where it was forwarded either by sea at 18D/10g or by air at 25D/10g.
- Athens currency control and British censorship.

From Athens (8 Nov. 1940) to Marseille, Vichy France.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 9D.

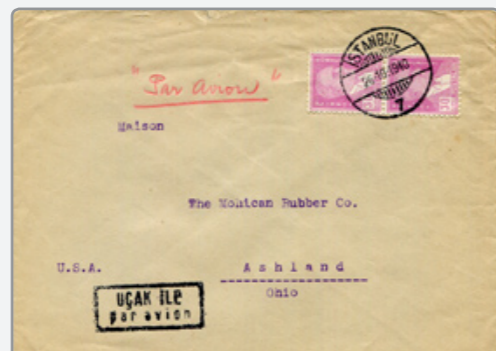
- Censored in Athens and Vienna, before arriving in Marseille.



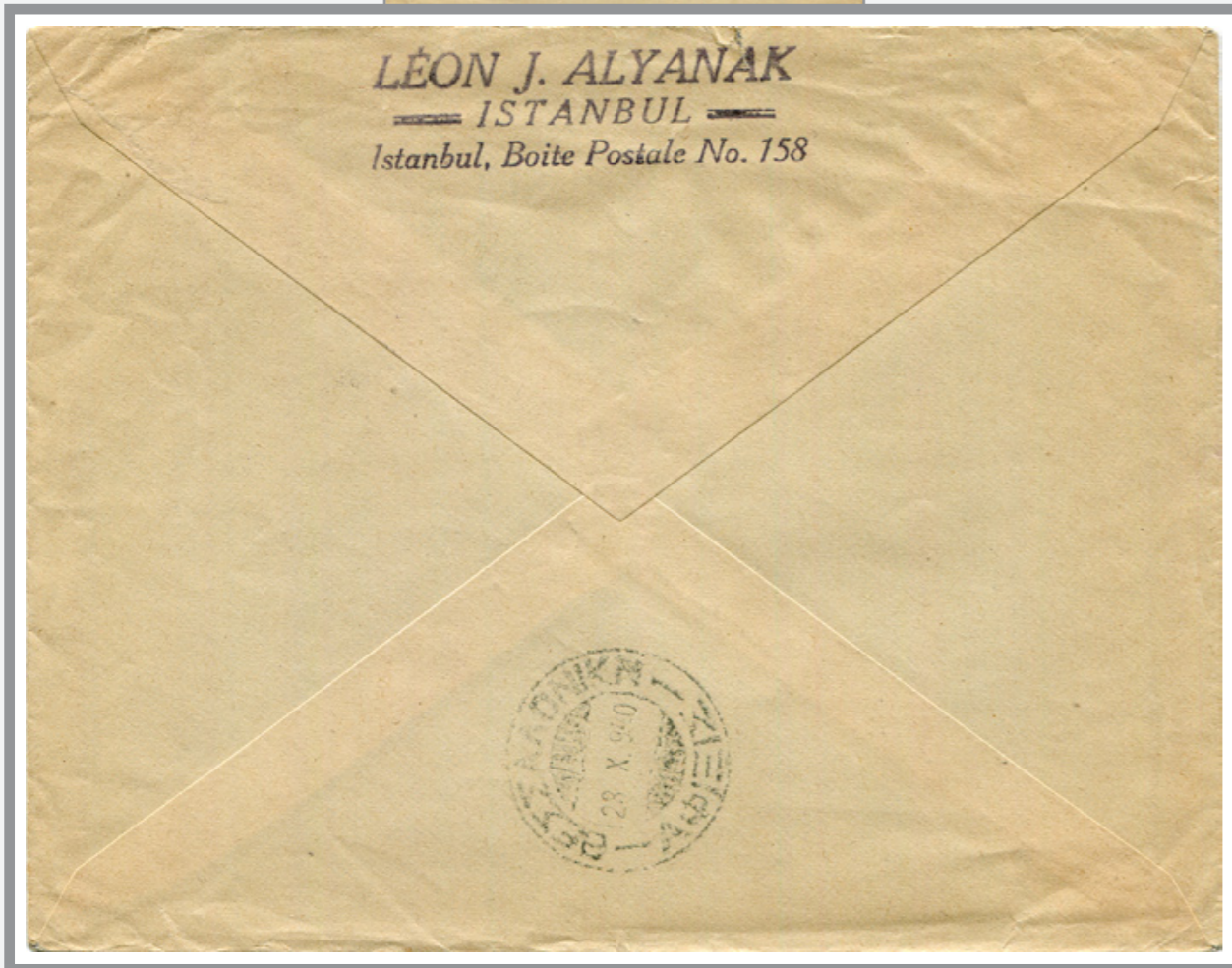
10. GREECE ENGAGED IN WWII

The Axis powers declared war on Greece on 28 October 1940, when the Italian army launched an attack along the Greek-Albanian border. After five months of hostilities, the Greek army had secured territory in Southern Albania (also known as Northern Epirus). On 6 April 1941, the Wehrmacht invaded Greece from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Despite support from Allied forces, the Greek army capitulated, and the Wehrmacht marched into Athens on 27 April 1941.

28 October 1940: Greece at war but business as usual



40%



From Istanbul, Turkey (26 Oct. 1940) via Thessaloniki (28 Oct.) to Ashland, OH, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 10 kuruş; airmail up to 10g 50 kuruş, both from 1 July 1940; total 60 kuruş.

- Cancelled in Thessaloniki on its way to Lisbon and then to the USA. It missed the suspended ALSA flights Thessaloniki–Rome–Lisbon. It probably reached Lisbon by rail via Germany.
- The sender, Leon J. Alyanak, was a renowned philatelist and stamp dealer in Istanbul.

Suspended flights

Long-term suspension of ALSA flights to and from Greece

From Athens (26 Oct. 1940) to New York, NY, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 32D from 15 May to ?? Oct./Nov. 1940; social welfare (opt.) 1D; total 41D.

- The cover was destined for Rome on ALSA's scheduled flight of 29 Oct., which never took place. Instead, it was transported by rail and intercepted in Trieste. It is doubtful whether it ever reached Lisbon, let alone its final destination.
- Athens currency control and Italian censorship in Trieste.



Long-term suspension of DLH flights to and from Greece

From Athens (27 Oct. 1940) to Sofia, Bulgaria (8 Nov., on the reverse).

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 10–20g 6D (2x3D) from ?? Oct. 1939; social welfare (opt.) 1D; total 15D.

- The cover was intended to be transported on the DLH flight of 28 Oct., which was suspended. It eventually reached Sofia ten days later, most likely by rail.
- Athens currency control.

Suspension of mail services between Greece and Italy



From Athens (27 Oct. 1940), mailed to Milan, Italy.
Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 8D from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 17D.
 • The cover was cancelled at 24:00 hrs on 27 Oct. Only a few hours later, at 5:00 am the next morning, Greece received the ultimatum, and, shortly after, hostilities broke out.
 • The cover was hand-tamped ΕΠΙΣΤΡΕΦΕΤΑΙ ΛΟΓΩ ΔΙΑΚΟΠΗΣ ΣΥΓΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΩΝ [Returned due to suspension of services], making it undoubtedly one of the first postal casualties of the war.
 • Athens currency control.

Mail captured in Trieste, later released

The depicted cover was mailed during the Greek-Italian War. Instead of the usual route via Cairo, it was sent north by rail. Intercepted by the Italians, the cover remained in Trieste until the Italian occupation of Greece was firmly established in June 1941. It was then released and eventually reached its destination in September.

Italy maintained regular postal relations with the United States until Japan's attack at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941.



60%

Regular mail services between Greece and Germany



From Athens (14 Nov. 1940) to Munich, Germany. **Rates:** Postcard surface 5D.
 • The Greek-Italian War did not affect the postal relations between Greece and Germany, which were temporarily suspended in April 1941 following the Wehrmacht's invasion of Greece.
 • Censored in Athens and Vienna.



From Corinth (12 Dec. 1940) to New York. Received on 2 Sept. 1941, as indicated by the recipient's handstamp.
Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 23D from ?? Oct./Nov. 1940; social welfare 1D; total 32D.
 • Greek censorship in Corinth and Italian in Trieste.

Censorship took over from Currency Control Protection

Italy's invasion of Greece and the country's subsequent engagement in WWII led to the establishment of a widespread network of censorship services across Greece. These effectively replaced the existing currency control protection schemes.

Whether civil or military, the censors were instructed to open all incoming or outgoing mail, both domestic and international.

Words or phrases containing sensitive information that could potentially compromise Greece's defences were crossed out or scraped away.

Censorship was equally applied to smaller and larger items



From Syros (3 Dec. 1940) to Athens. **Rate:** Visiting card 1.50D from 26 Nov. 1940. • Syros censorship.



From Heraklion (10 Dec. 1940) to Tavannes village, Switzerland (4 Aug. 1941, according to the recipient's note in pencil). **Rates:** Postcard surface 5D.

- Similar situation here with the cover on the previous page, suggesting that the postcard was captured in Trieste. The date noted by the recipient supports the assumption that it was released after the establishment of the Italian occupying forces in Greece, in June 1941.
- Greek censorship in Heraklion (in purple) and Italian in Trieste (in red). Two lines were crossed out by the Greek censors, apparently containing sensitive information.

Candia, le 9/12 1940
 Ma bien chère Hélène
 et ma bien chère Loulou!
 Votre message d'affection et de sympathie m'a vivement touché. C'est un tel réconfort que de savoir que là-bas au pays vous pensez à nous! Vous voilà donc en guerre, et engagés dans la lutte de tous nos efforts et de toute notre âme. Question de vie ou de mort!... Heureusement nos soldats sont victorieux et notre moral très élevé. Malgré la menace des bombardements je reste en ville et avec mes enfants je travaille de tout mon cœur à des œuvres de guerre. Vous lui... et pire que ce qu'on imagine. Priez Radio Athènes - 13 1/2 h. en français pour vous renseigner. A travers la souffrance et la tempête je vous tends amicalement la main et vous demande vos pensées, vos prières.



Newspaper from Athens to Mytilene, not postmarked but censored, as was the normal procedure. The censor's handstamp No. 262 is one of a unique type within a numbered series from 1 to 513, applied in Athens. It was considerably larger in diameter and was used on larger printed matter.

The official postcards of the Army postal service



From Army P.O. 912 (III Infantry Division, 14 Apr. 1941) to Kifisia, Athens (21 Apr.).

- Sent and received between the fall of the front to the Wehrmacht (6 Apr.) and their arrival in Athens (27 Apr.).
- One of six different illustrations and sixteen different messages of encouragement at the bottom. Army censorship.

The official franchise postcard of the Hellenic Post



From Valtessiniko village (8 Mar. 1941) to the 4th Military Hospital in Athens.

- The civil postal service issued a franchise postcard for use by civilians wishing to communicate with military personnel.

The scarcely used official postcard of the Navy postal service



From Naval Unit 212 (most probably the Navy HQ, Athens, 21 Feb. 1941) to Army P.O. 652 (Provisions Centre B).

- In a completely different philosophy of the Army, which issued large quantities of various postcard types (see above), the Navy issued only the depicted type in very limited quantities.
- Athens civil censorship.

The British and Commonwealth Army in Greece



From British FPO 193 (6 Dec. 1940) to Bournemouth, Dorset, UK.

- Four Field Post Offices (FPOs) were set up by the British and Commonwealth Forces that fought in Greece, namely, 192 (Souda Bay), 193 (Tatoi airport), 194 (mainland Greece), and 195. Postal items from the first three are hard to come across, while from the fourth (195), an item has yet to be reported.
- British censorship in Cairo.

The Greek counter-offensive in South Albania (Northern Epirus)

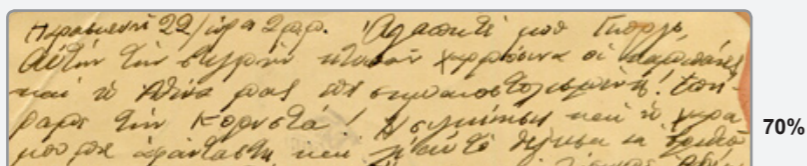


The Greek counter-offensive started two weeks after Italy's invasion. On 22 November 1940, the Greek army marched into Korçë (Korytsa), a small town with a significant Greek population. Much of South Albania fell in the following days: Sarandë (Ag. Saranda) and Delvinë (Delvino) on 6 December and Gjirokastër (Argyrokastro) on 8 December.

The Greek army remained in South Albania until the capitulation on 20 April 1941. Four post offices opened in the occupied area, three of which are presented here. All four post offices were closed between 11 and 15 April.

New postage stamps (issued on 10 December) and postal stationery (issued on 1 January 1941) were released, all overprinted with ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ [Greek Administration].

Ringin bells! The fall of Korytsa



70%



From Athens (22 Nov. 1940) to Istanbul, Turkey.

Rates: Postcard surface 3.50D (preferential rate to the Petite Entente); social welfare (opt.) 10L; total 3.60D.
 • The first lines of the text, written in Greek, read: 'Friday 22, 2:00 pm. Right now, the bells are ringing joyously, and, in Athens, the flags are everywhere. We took Korytsa! My emotions and joy are unimaginable...'
 • Athens censorship.

Korytsa (Korçë) post office

The P.O. opened on 5 December 1940 and closed on 11 April 1941. Both depicted items are franked with stamps overprinted with ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ [Greek Administration].



From Korytsa (11 Feb. 1941) to Athens. Rates: Surface up to 20g 3D; social welfare 50L; total 3.50D.
 • Korytsa No. 4 censorship.



From Korytsa (22 Feb. 1941) to Athens. Rates: Postcard surface 2D; social welfare 10L; total 2.10D.
 • Korytsa No. 3 censorship.

Argyrokastro (Gjirokastër) post office

The P.O. opened on 18 December 1940 and closed on 13 April 1941. The postal stationery (postcard) is overprinted with ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ [Greek Administration]. Very few properly used overprinted postcards have survived to this day.



From Argyrokastro (1 Feb. 1941) to Athens.
Rates: Postcard surface 2D; missing social welfare.
• Argyrokastro censorship.

Official Italian Army postcard used at the front



From Military P.O. 37 (Divisione Modena, 6 Feb. 1941) to Baura, Italy (14 Feb.).

Agioi Saranda (Sarandë) post office

The P.O. opened on 7 January 1941 and closed on 13 April. The postal stationery (preprinted cover) is overprinted with ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ [Greek Administration]. Even fewer properly used overprinted covers have survived to this day.



From Agioi Saranda (4 Mar. 1941) to Mytilene (18 Mar.).
Rates: Preprinted cover 3D+50λ to pay the surface rate 3D and social welfare 50λ; registration 4D; total 7.50D.
• Agioi Saranda censorship.

Italian Army postcard used by a Greek soldier



From Military P.O. 212 (3rd Army Corps, 22 Jan. 1941) to Athens.
• The label 'Cartolina postale per le Forze Armate' in Italian was crossed out and overwritten with 'Hellenic Army' in Greek.
• Greek military censorship (rhomboidal T/212/A and signature).

Greece to the UK via a route around Africa

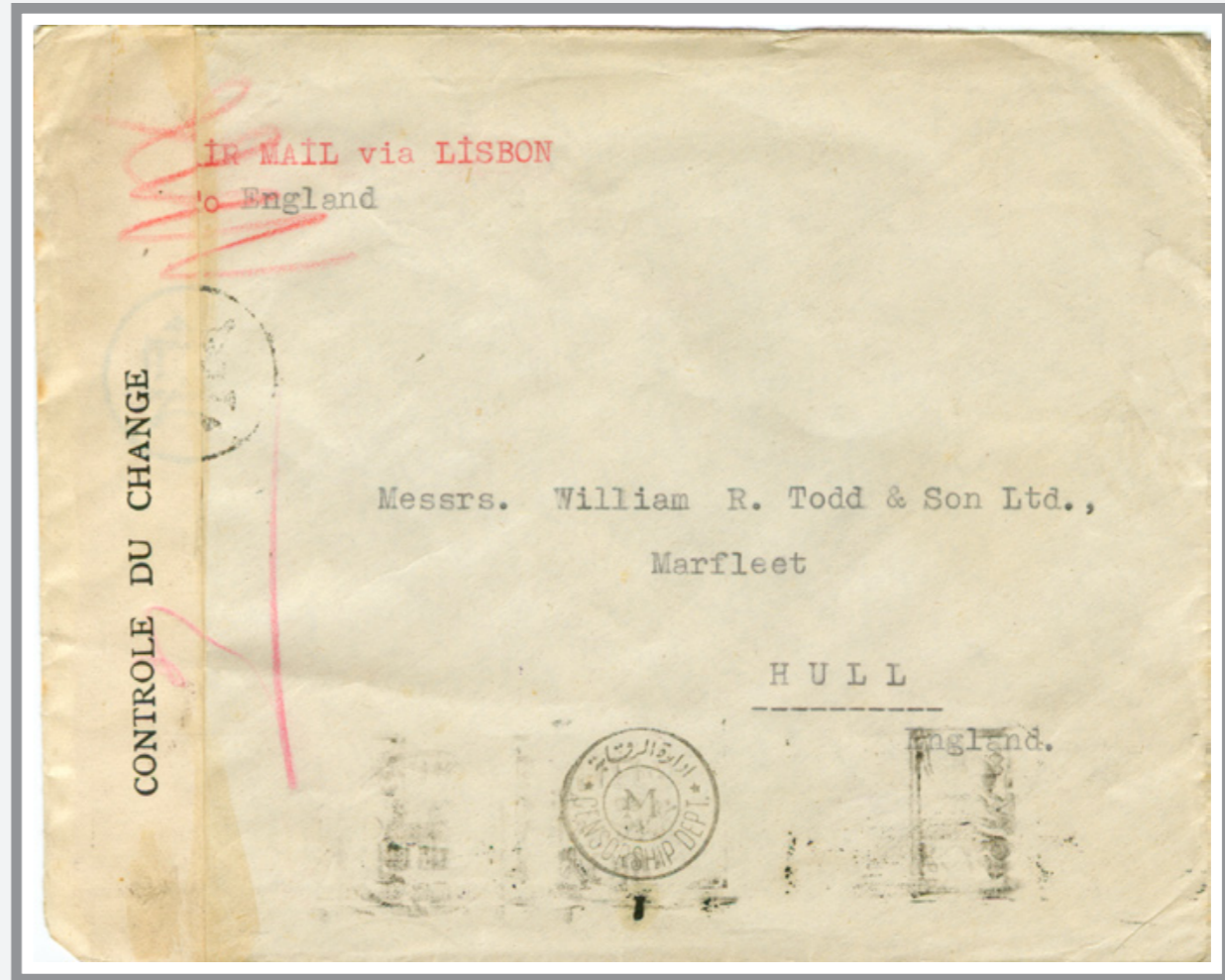
The most expensive route from Greece to the UK after June 1940, when Italy entered WWII, involved transport by boat to Egypt, onto the southbound leg of the Horseshoe Route to Durban, by boat to Lisbon and, finally, to the UK on the first available carrier.

From Athens (31 Oct. 1940) via Cairo, Egypt (19 Nov.), to Hull, UK.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 10g 25D from 5 July 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 34D.

- Athens currency control tape and handstamp (instead of censorship); also Cairo censorship.

70%



Last pieces of mail to the free world: Via Istanbul-Basra railway

When Greece entered the war, mail transportation from Greece to Egypt by boat became unsafe. An alternative route was occasionally chosen via railway through Istanbul to Baghdad, then overland to Jerusalem, and by rail again to Port Said.

Last pieces of mail to the free world: The Atlantic route

On 28 October 1940, ALSA suspended its flights to and from Greece. Subsequently, mail to the USA was forwarded by rail via Germany to Portugal and then by air to the USA. Postal rates were reduced from 32D/5g to 23D/5g.



From Athens (8 Apr. 1941) to New York, NY, USA.

Rates: Preprinted cover 8D+1D to pay the surface rate 8D and social welfare 1D; total 9D.

- Two days before the letter's despatch, the Wehrmacht had launched its attack on Greece. This could be the last mail sent on the Istanbul-Basra route.
- Censored in Athens and Cairo.



40%

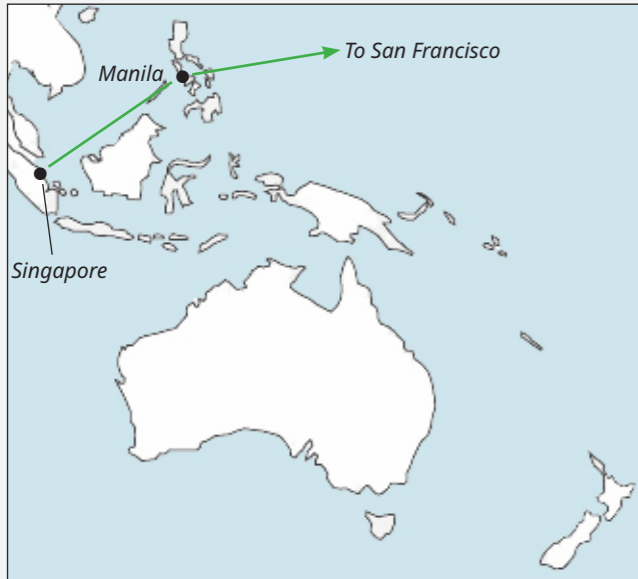
From Neo Faliro (21 Mar. 1941) to Cleveland, OH, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; 2nd weight airmail 5–10g 46D (2x23D) from Oct./Nov. 1940; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 55D.

- Athens censorship.

*Last pieces of mail to the free world:
The Pacific route FAM-14*

The Pacific route was added as a second option in January 1941. The airmail rate for a letter to the USA was considerably more expensive at 64D/5g, compared to 23D/5g via the Atlantic route. Although it required a longer journey, it was deemed more secure. The mail was transported by sea to Egypt and then on the BOAC Horseshoe route to Singapore. The flight across the Pacific was operated by the Pan Am service FAM-14, which travelled via Hong Kong, Manila, Guam, Wake, Midway, and Honolulu to San Francisco.



→ Pan Am FAM-14



70%

*Last pieces of mail to the free world:
The Pacific route FAM-19*

In late March 1941, the Hellenic Post made arrangements to use Pan Am FAM-19 from Auckland, New Zealand, to San Francisco, due to escalating hostilities in South East Asia. Mail continued to be sent to Egypt and then along the BOAC Horseshoe Route—this time as far as Sydney. From there, it was transported to Auckland by TEAL before boarding FAM-19 to reach San Francisco via New Caledonia, Fiji, Canton, and Honolulu at even higher rates of 75D/5g.

When the Nazis occupied Greece, mail to the free world was suspended altogether and remained so until well after the liberation on 1 Nov. 1944.



→ TEAL
→ Pan Am FAM-19



From Amarousion, Athens (21 Mar. 1941) to Mobile, AL, USA.

Rates: Surface up to 20g 8D; airmail up to 5g 64D from 25 Jan. 1941; social welfare (optional) 1D; total 73D.

- Amarousion (purple) and Cairo (blue) censorships.



From Athens (13 Apr. 1941) via Cairo, Egypt, to New York, NY, USA.

Rates: Preprinted cover 8D+1D to pay the surface rate 8D and social welfare 1D; 4th weight airmail 15–20g 300D (4x75D) from 25 Mar. 1941; total 309D.

- Censored in Athens and Cairo.

Temporary suspension of communications with Germany

One of the first casualties of Germany's descent into the Balkans, the depicted cover never reached its destination. It was censored in Athens, as was compulsory during the Greek-Italian War, but was delayed following the events in Yugoslavia and the subsequent unavailability of the railway to Central Europe.

Germany attacked Greece on 6 April 1941, and, four days later, communications between the two countries were temporarily suspended. Correspondence with Germany was re-established on 30 May.

It remains uncertain whether the dual-line handstamp marking **ΕΠΙΣΤΡΕΦΕΤΑΙ ΛΟΓΩ ΔΙΑΚΟΠΗΣ ΣΥΓΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΩΝ** [Returned due to suspension of services] was applied on the cover before or after the Wehrmacht's arrival in Athens on 27 April.



70%



From Athens (2 Apr. 1941) sent to Berlin.

Rates: Preprinted cover 8D+1D to pay the surface rate 8D and social welfare 1D; registration 8D; total 17D.

- Dual line handstamp **ΕΠΙΣΤΡΕΦΕΤΑΙ ΛΟΓΩ ΔΙΑΚΟΠΗΣ ΣΥΓΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΩΝ** [Returned due to suspension of services].

27 April 1941: Athens fell to the Nazis, marking the start of a four-year occupation of Greece

'Alekos, I am telling you that today, 27 April 1941, at 10:00 am, the German flag was raised on the Acropolis.'



From Athens (27 Apr. 1941) to Piraeus.

Rates: Postcard 2D; anti-TB 50λ compulsory during Easter fortnight, 14–27 Apr. 1941; total 2.50D.



60%

A message of hope overtaken by history

'Dear Sylva, I wish you a Happy New Year, 1941. Kisses, Dora.'



60%

From Athens (31 Dec. 1940) sent in-town.

Rates: Postcard 1.50D; anti-TB 50λ compulsory during the Christmas and New Year fortnight, 23 Dec. 1940 to 6 Jan. 1941; total 2D.