Postal history of the Black Sea 1798 - 1918

This collection describes the postal history of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov between 1798 and 1918.

Motivation and aims:
The Black Sea is the **most neglected area** for the conveyance of postal goods from Western and Central Europe via the Levant to the East. If postal historians think about the important hubs involved in the transfer of mail of that time, Marseille, Trieste, Constantinople, and Alexandria come into their mind while Varna, Kustendje or Odessa are not on the list. This collection aims to bring together meaningful covers which help to show the importance of the Black Sea as a place where East and West met.

The first aim of this presentation is to present the **structures** involved in postal activity at the Black Sea, i.e., post offices, ships, and ship lines as well as railway lines. These sections will highlight a major feature of all Levant postal history which is the involvement of many foreign postal administrations which existed aside the domestic ones, often dominating the flow of postal goods.

In a second step the **importance** of Black Sea postal services not only for the local communities but for communication far beyond its shores will be elucidated. Such a presentation would be incomplete, if the dark side of human activity, the **war** would not be included.

Sequence of the collection:
In a **first chapter** the post offices in the **seaports** are described, following a **clockwise direction around the Black Sea with Odessa as starting point**.

The Bosporus and Constantinople are excluded as they are not part of the Black Sea. For each port the inland offices and the foreign offices are documented. In **chapter 2 ships and ship lines** and their cancellations are presented, again separated for domestic and foreign services. **Chapter 3** shows the **railway lines** from the Black Sea. The significant role of these waterways as a **link between East and West** is documented in **Chapter 4**. The last **chapter 5** deals with the **wars** fought at and around the Black Sea.

Own Publications:
- Die Poststempel von Odessa (1798-1917): 6 articles in DZRP 86 - 91 (2007-2009).
- Registered mail from Odessa up to 1917; Rossica 153 (2009) (Steve Volis & Thomas Berger)
- Stempel der Stadtpostabteilung (Otdelenie) von Odessa 1847; DZRP 92 (2010)
- Eingeschriebene Schiffspost; DZRP 94 (2011) (Mikhail Lapushkin & Thomas Berger)
- ROPiT - Postämter am Schwarzen Meer 1864 -1899; DZRP 95 (2011)

Remarkable items:
This collection includes several interesting and remarkable items. The rarity of these covers is due to the provenance from post offices with small mail volume, rare destinations also outside the Black Sea and rare routes. In addition, the combination of different postal systems involved resulted in elusive postal history.

Items in this collection which have been certified show a ⊛ nearby. The most remarkable items have a frame in a burgundy nuance.

Rarity:
A census has been compiled by the collector to give a rarity index for the Austrian, French & Russian post offices with RRRR = 1-3 examples known, RRR = 4-12 ex., RR = 13-24 ex., R = 25-50 ex., and C = more than 50 ex.

Southern

Dnestr Bug Dnepr Don Taganrog Mariupol Berdiansk

Odessa

Sea of Azov

Crimea

Danube Sulina Kerch Novorossiysk Topography of the Black Sea

Sevastopol Yalta

Kustendje Tuapse Sochi

Black Sea

Varna Ochemchiri

Burgas Batum

Ineboli Sinop

Samsun Ordu Rizeh Trebizonde Kerrasunde

Constantinople / Bosporus

The position of the respective seaports is marked on the top right corner of each sheet.

## 1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - Russia - Odessa

Chapter 1 describes the post offices in the seaports, following a clockwise direction around the Black Sea with Odessa as starting point. The port's location is marked on the map at top right. For each harbour inland and foreign offices are documented.

Although not the oldest Russian foundation, **Odessa** was for sure the most important one in Novorossiya ("New Russia") on the northern bank of the Black Sea. It was founded in 1794; being a free port from 1819 to 1859 led to its enormous economic success.

1804, Odessa to Amsterdam. Transport by forwarder Hausner & Violland in Brody (then the border office to Austria), further routed via Austria and Germany. Ex collection Baillie.
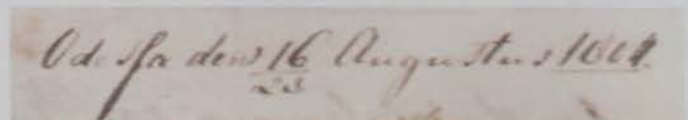
Intaglio ODESSA Postmark (x 2)
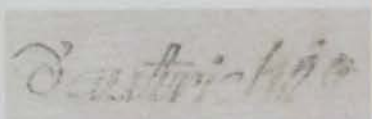
d'autriche struck at the exchange office between Thurn & Taxis and France in Kehl (x 1.5)

1804, Odessa to Tarragona (Spain), on reverse the first postmark from Odessa, Dobin type 1.01 intaglio "ОДЕССА" used from 1798. Routed via Austria, Thurn & Taxis (*d'autriche*, vdL 928) and France to its rare destination. Ex collection Baillie.

1822, Odessa to Genova. Transport by the forwarder Basilio Paserli in Brody. Further routed via LEMBERG and VOGHERA (border between Lombardy-Venetia and Sardinia). In exception fully paid by the sender.
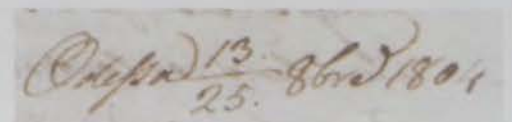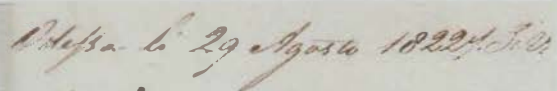
Marseille and Genova have been the harbours to which a substantial proportion of grain, the main export product of the Ukraine, were shipped. The related correspondence between Odessa and these cities constitutes most of the mail abroad.

Odessa harbour about 1860,
quarantine port at left,
commercial port at right.

1831, Odessa to Leipzig. It shows on the reverse the first datestamp from Odessa, Dobin type 1.02 "ОДЕССА 1831 ДЕК 18" with fleuron used since 1824. Routed via Austria ("Russie." handstamp struck at the office in Krakow; vdL 2470).
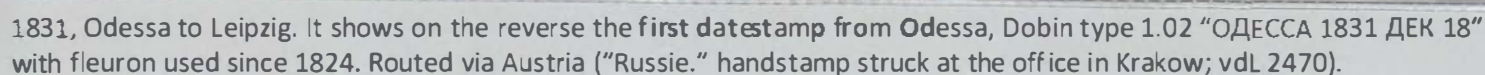
1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - Russia - Odessa

From 1830 to 1877 Russia suffered from a series of cholera epidemics. Therefore, a cordon of quarantine services was established, e. g. in Odessa, Kerch, or Feodosiya.
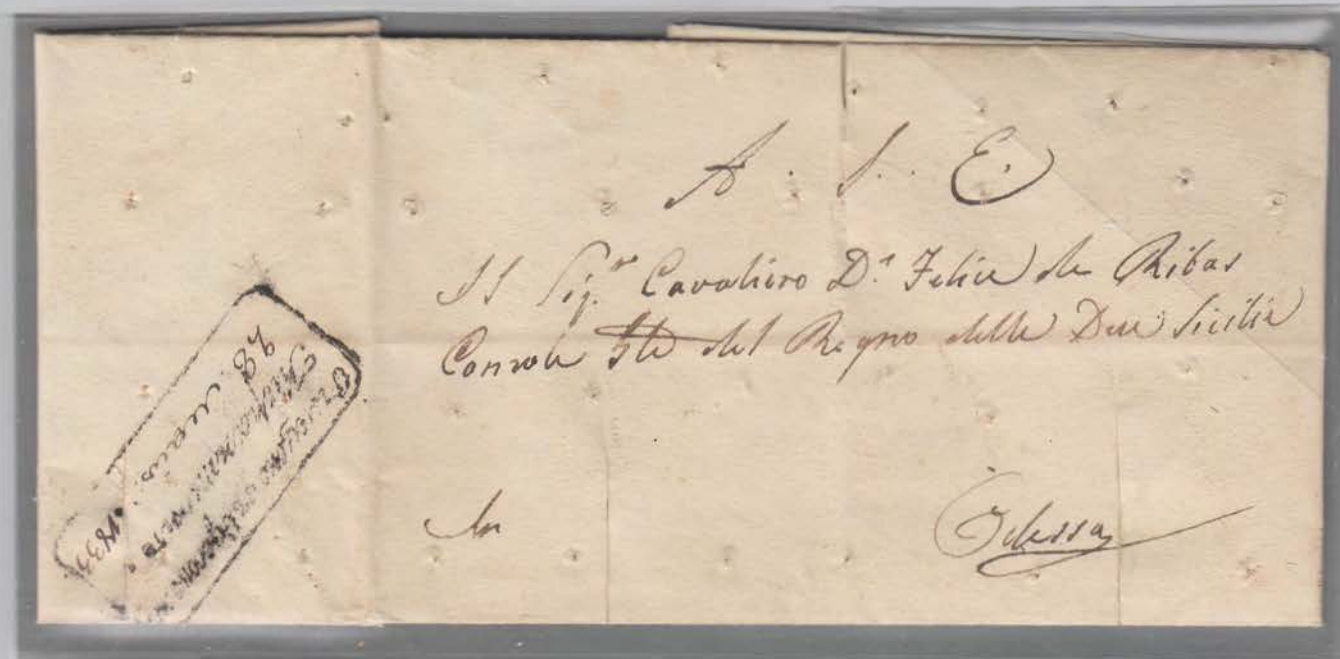
1833, Ingoing to the consul of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in Odessa. Upon arrival in Odessa, the cover was fumigated with three slits and additional punches, the typical procedure for the Odessa quarantine station. Reverse shows the **first Odessa quarantine handstamp** "Очишэновъ Одесскомь Карантинь" (Cleaned by the Odessa Quarantine, Dobin type 9.01) with handwritten date 28 May 1833. **First month of use** for a quarantine mark.

Front (x 0.75)

Combined Russian and Austrian quarantine.

1836, Outgoing Odessa to Vienna. Slitted, punched and fumigated, use of the first Odessa quarantine postmark. The Austrian quarantine service cleaned the entire again and added its wax seal. Ex collection K. F. Meyer.

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - Russia - Odessa

To manage the increasing amount of mail sent abroad from Odessa and other Black Sea ports, in 1844 a **border post office** was opened in Odessa.

1844, Odessa border post office to Paris. Struck by oval "ОДЕССА 6 / 5" (month on top, Dobin type 1.07) datestamp of the border P.O. and a "*Port*o" mark. It passed BERLIN ("AUS RUSSLAND") and the border to France in Aachen (Prussian "C.R.p.P." ("Correspondence Russe per Prusse" and French "PRUSSE GIVET 1 JUIN 44" entry cds in red). Ex collection Ian Baillie.

This is the **first year of use for any Odessa border P.O. handstamp**.

For internal mail within Russia, the Imperial postal administration introduced adhesives in 1858. Mail abroad could be stamped since July 1864. The majority was sent franco after this date.

1870, Odessa to Marseille. Franked with 1866 Arms five 10 k. and two 3 k. showing variety "V instead of 3". The resulting 56 k. reflected the fully paid double rate to France following the postal convention of January 1866. Russian "ФРАНКНРОВАНО" and "P.P." in red show full pre-payment. French "PRUSSE ERQUELINES" entry cds in blue.

1875 (April), Odessa to Genova. The 26 k. franking paid the full double pre-UPU rate to Italy.

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Russia - Odessa</u> - DDSG P.O.

The Austrian **Donau-Dampfschifffahrts-Gesellschaft (DDSG, DSNC)** ran Offices in Kiev and Odessa. The Odessa office was opened in 1836 and used the adhesives of the DDSG from 1868 to 1871. Then, the Russian government banned this use of foreign stamps on Russian territory. However, DDSG stamps were again used in Odessa in 1876/77.

Rare usage of DDSG adhesives in Russia

1868, Odessa to Galatz with 1867 DDSG adhesive 10 kr. green, cancelled with oval "D.D.S.G. ODESSA 14/11" datestamp in blue. Reverse with GALATZ arrival datestamp in blue (16/11).

Ex collections Jerger & Casey.

RR, census includes 14 covers between 1868 and 1877, this being the 2nd earliest one.

Front (x 0.75)

1884, Odessa to Regensburg. Sent registered with Russia pair 1879 Arms definitive 7 k., tied by ОДЕССА cds. The reverse was struck with an oval "D.D.S.G. ODESSA" datestamp in blue used as closing vignette.

The Crimean ports had no large economic importance in comparison to the port in Odessa, to those at the Dnepr estuary, and at the Sea of Azov. Large part of the correspondence was sent by tourists.

1876, Yalta to London, bearing 1875 8 k. adhesive, tied by ЯЛТА cds. ODESSA transit and LONDON arrival cds's on the reverse.

Receiver was Corry Montagu in 10 Downing Street, with full name Montagu William Lowry-Corry, 1st Baron Rowton (1838-1903), at that time the private secretary of the British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1898, Sevastopol via Constantinople to Galati (Romania). 1889 Arms 4 k. adhesive tied by СЕВАСТОПОЛ cds. Mailed with steamship (indistinct ПАРОХОД cds) to ODESSA, and further to the ROPiT P.O. in Constantinople. There it was re-addressed to Galati at the lower Danube.

Early "Greetings from Crimea" picture postcard with motifs from Gursuf and Alupka.

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Russia - Crimea</u>

The importance of the Crimean Peninsula as a touristic resort in Imperial Russia was primarily due to the presence of the czar's family.

1904 (Dec), Yalta to Vevey (Switzerland). Picture postcard with the photograph taken ('kodaked') in September 1904 by Prince Gabriel Konstanti-novich Romanov (1887-1955). The picture displays four of his five brothers and an officer in Livadia.

Gabriel was the son of Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich Roma-nov, a grandson of czar Nicholas I of Russia. On this photograph from about 1900 Gabriel at top right is seen with his five siblings.

The text speaks about the surrender of Port Arthur to the Japanese just a few days ago and the resulting dejection.

1903, Yalta to Bornmouth UK. Embossed picture postcard depicting the Czar's palace Livadia nearby Yalta.

SOUVENIR DE CRIMÉE

LIVADIA

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - Russia - Sea of Azov

The cities at the Northern side of the **Sea of Azov** - Berdiansk, Mariupol, and Taganrog - were main harbours for the export of grain and flour from the Ukraine.

The first Russian stamp on piece tied by
pre-adhesive datestamp of БЕРДЯНСК
used on May 19, 1858.

Russia #1 was cancelled with pen in January / February
1858, with pre-adhesive handstamps in March to May
and thereafter with dotted numeral marks.

1844, Mariupol to Genova, struck by МАРIУРОЛI despatch datestamp (Dobin type 1.01), presumably routed via Odessa and Vienna, transit via Milano, and arrival datestamp on the reverse.

Front (x 0.75)
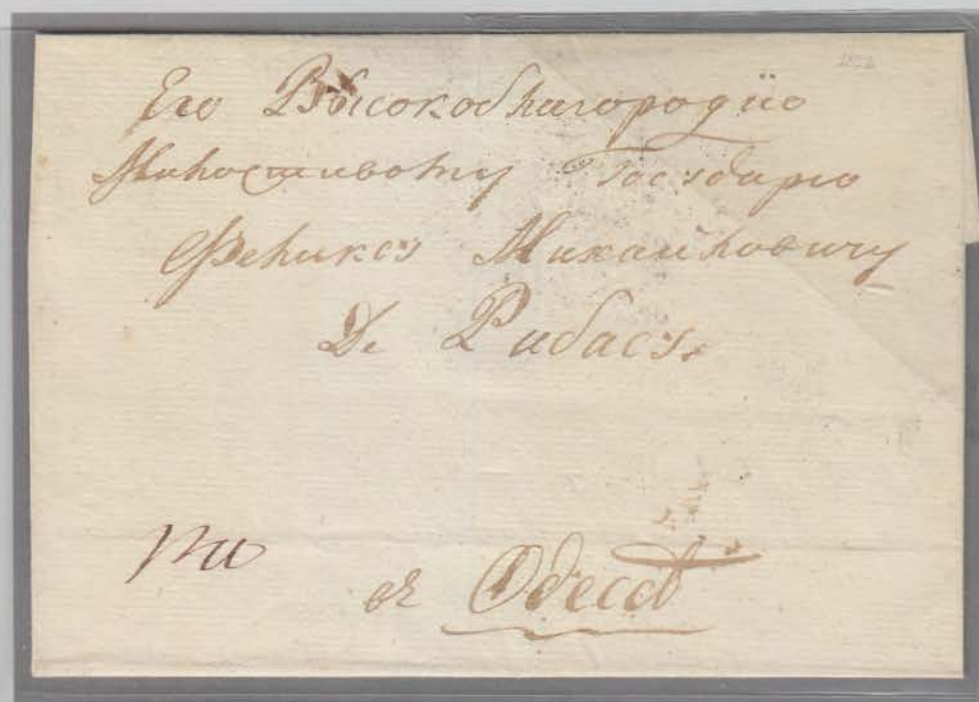
on reverse

1826, Taganrog to Odessa, addressed to Felix de Ribas. Fleuron TAΓAHPOΓ despatch datestamp on reverse. Ex collection Herry Schaefer.

Felix de Ribas was the brother of José de Ribas, the founder of Odessa.

1857, Taganrog to Marseille. TAΓAHPOΓ despatch mark (Dobin type 1.05) on reverse and blue "*Porto*" mark in circle (Dobin type 8.02) on front. Routed via NOVOSELYTSIA (then the border to Austria; two-line horse carriage station mark in blue), MYSLOVITZ (Prussian T.P.O. on reverse), "PRUSSE VALENCIENNES" (blue French entry mark), PARIS to MARSEILLE.

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - Russia - Sea of Azov

Kerch at the Kerch Strait connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov is an important transit city between North and South but also between East and West (Kuban and Crimea).

1876, Kerch to the Marine Station in Orebić (Dalmatia, then Austria-Hungary), bearing 1875 Arms 8 k. paying the UPU rate of 1875, tied by КЕРЧ cds. On the reverse ZARA transit and OREBICH arrival cds's.

Combination cover Imperial and Zemstvo administration postal services.

1885, Imperial stationery envelope Kerch to Ardatov zemstvo. Indicium cancelled at KERCH-ENIKOL, transit SEVASTOPOL, MOSCOW, and NISHNI-NOVGOROD. Sent to the rural postal zemstvo administration of the Ardatov district in Mordovia, there franked with a zemstvo adhesive, tied by matching figurative handstamp in blue.

The rural zemstvo districts were partially independent administrative units which could run postal services and issue their own adhesives.

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Russia - Black Sea Province</u>

Except Novorossiysk, the ports in the Black Sea Province of Russia (Черноморской Губерния) were of minor importance for trading.

1913, Registered postcard from Novorossiysk to Vienna. Indicium and adhesives cancelled by "ПОРТЪ НОВОРОССIИСК ЧЕРНОМ." cds of the harbour P.O.

1915, Registered cover from Tuapse train station to Petrograd. Tuapse was the terminus of the Armavir - Tuapse railway line connecting the Kuban and the Black Sea.

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Russia - Abkhazia</u>

Abkhazia is the westernmost part of nowadays Georgia which had a long history of tourism.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1917, Gudauti (today Gudauta in Abkhazia, Georgia) to Helsingfors. Franked in the raised Kerenski postcard rate with 1917 Arms 5 k. adhesive, tied by "ГУДАУТЫ СУХУМ" cds. Petrograd censor.

1910, Registered cover from Otshemtshiri (Sukhumi Okrug) to the Turkish consul in Tiflis, showing "ОЧЕМЧИРЫ СУХУМ." cds.

1.1. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Russia - Adzharia</u>

Batum in the easternmost part of the Black Sea is an important port, especially for the shipment of oil from Azerbaijan. In addition, this region at the border to Turkey became a tourism resort following the turn of the century.

Batum including the surrounding area (Adzharia) was Turkish until 1878 when it came to Russia. At the end of World War I, Turkish troops conquered the city between April and December 1918, before British troops came in. In these few months under Turkish occupation, most of the Turkish mail was brought to Constantinople and sent from there. Only two incoming covers are known which were handled by the Turkish Fieldpost Office no. 33 and five outgoing covers with postmarks of the Batum post office.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1918 (June), Picture postcard from Batum to Edirne, the Turkish adhesives tied by "BATUM 1" cds (Coles & Walker no. B2), additional Constantinople transit and Edirne arrival datestamps.

Ex collection Herry Schaefer.

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - Turkey - Rizeh - Russian P.O.

Small port on the Anatolian coast between Batum and Trabzon. Population ~5'000 in 1900. Turkish P.O. since 1872, Russian ROPiT P.O. from the 1880s, no other foreign P.O.'s. **One of the rarest port offices.**

RRRR

1890, Rizeh to Trebizonde. ROPiT adhesives 1 k., 2 k., and 7 k., tied by large oval "Р.О.П.иТ. АГЕНТ. РИЗЭ" datestamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 92). Extremely rare, **only two covers from Rizeh known until 1900.**


1913, Stationery postcard 20 p. / 4 k. Romanov Tricentenary issue from Rizeh to Paris, cancelled by "Р.О.П.иТ. РИЗЭ" cds, cross-shaped type (Tchilinghirian fig. 93).

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Turkey - Trebizonde</u> - Turkish P.O.

Its safe harbour and the predominantly Greek and Armenian population of about 35'000 in the 19th century made it the most important Ottoman port at the Black Sea. Turkish P.O. marks known from 1842. In addition, Austrian DDSG and later Lloyd P.O.'s, also French and Russian P.O.'s.
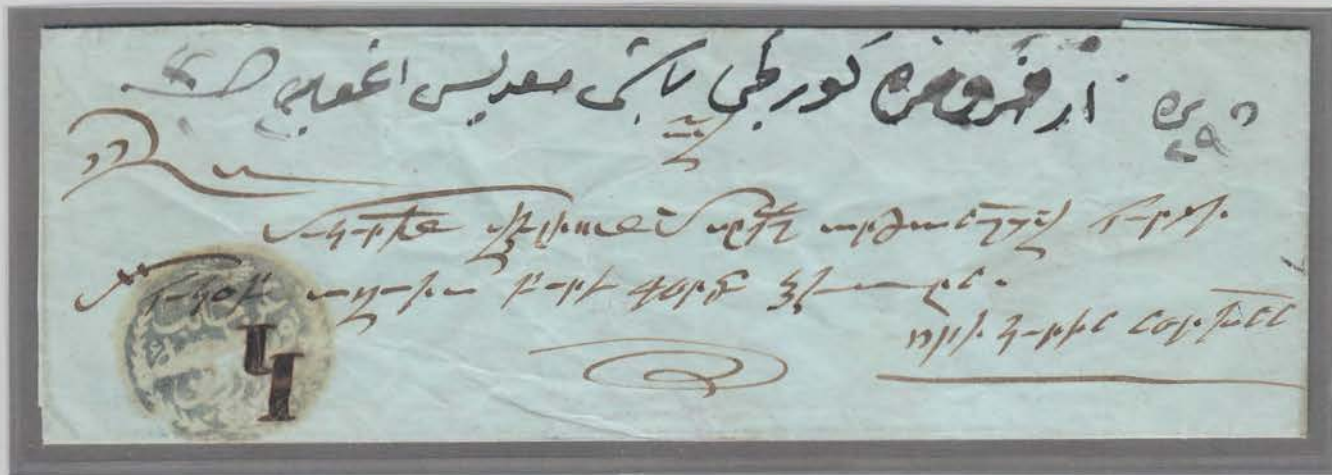
1852, Trebizonde to Erzurum, Arab negative "An Canib-ı posta Trabzon" (on behalf of Trabzon post office) mark (Coles & Walker fig. 79).

Ex collection Herry Schaefer.
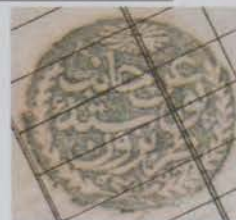
1915, Trebizonde to Leipzig, Turkish stationery postcard 20 para, cancelled with bilingual "Trebizonde 1" cds (Coles & Walker fig. 94). In addition, oval censorship mark (Sansür Istanbul, Bayındır no. 396) in violet, unknown two-line censor handstamp in pink, and transit STAMBOUL datestamp.

The first Austrian P.O. was operated by the DDSG (since 1837) which became a Lloyd office in 1845. This P.O. was closed in September 1914.

Talisman for a good journey

Trebizonde to Constantinople, registered cover, unknown year of despatch bearing on front and reverse two pairs of the 1867 COARSE WHISKERS 5 so. red adhesive, tied by "TREBISONDA 22 / 2 ⎯" (Tchilinghirian fig. 983, the blocked year slug in this cds is known from 1870 to 1877). Registration mark "RACOM." with hand-written registration number, Constantinople Lloyd arrival cds.

This item shows the tariff for a registered letter within the Levant: 10 soldi from port to port plus 10 soldi for registration. Registered mail is in general a **rare postal service** in the period and area under study.

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - Turkey - Trebizonde - French P.O.

The French post office opened after the end of the Crimean War in November 1857 and had to be closed in August 1914.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Rare use of the Bordeaux issue in the Levant, new Levant rate of 80 c. raised in July 1871

1871 (Aug), Trebizonde to Lyon, bearing Bordeaux 80 c. rose, tied by Gros chiffres '5100' numeral, cogwheel "TREBISONDE TURQ. D'ASIE" cds alongside. Framed PD shows full prepayment, endorsed *"par paquebot Français Mersey"*.

Ex collection Berkinshaw-Smith.

1874 (March), Trebizonde to Aix-en-Provence, bearing strip of four Siège 40 c. orange paying the double rate, tied by Gros chiffres '5100' numeral, cogwheel "TREBISONDE TURQ. D'ASIE" cds and framed PD, all in the same blue shade alongside. Adhesives struck by "PAQUEBOTS DE LA MEDITERRANÉE" in red.

Ex collection David Franco.

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Turkey</u> - <u>Trebizonde</u> - Russian P.O.

The Russian post office opened after the end of the Crimean War in 1858 and had to be closed in October 1914. Russian occupation during WW I.

RRRR

Rare use of Imperial Russian adhesives in Black Sea harbours.

1866 (March), Trebizonde to Constantinople, bearing vertical pair 10 k. Imperial Arms adhesives, tied by "ПОРТЪ ТРЕБИЗОНДЪ" (Tchilinghirian fig. 736) cds in blue. Same strike on reverse.

There are **only three covers from the Black Sea** known with Imperial frankings, one from Kerassunde (Jan. 1864), and two from Trebizonde (March 1866 & Oct. 1867). Interestingly, already in December 1865 the second ROPiT issue was in use in Trebizonde (see sheet 111 in frame 7).

Ex collection Herry Schaefer.

۲۹٠ = 290 =
1290 = 1873

1873 (Aug), Trebizonde to Constantinople, bearing Russian Levant 5 k. adhesive for mail from port to port, tied by "ПОРТЪ ТРЕБИЗОНДЪ" cds with inverted date slug (Tchilinghirian fig. 96).

The full content gives the year of despatch. Ex collections Sklarevski and Mehrtens.

1881 (March), Trebizonde to Constantinople, bearing Russian Levant 2 k. and 5 k. adhesives, tied by ТРАПЕЗУНТЪ cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 97) in blue. On reverse Constantinople arrival mark.

1898 (Aug), Trebizonde to Constantinople, bearing Russian Levant 1k., 2 k., and 7 k. adhesives, tied by ТРАПЕЗУНТЪ cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 97) in black. On reverse Constantinople arrival mark.

Small port, named today Giresun, ~130 km west of Trebizonde, Population ~8'000 in 1900.
Turkish P.O. marks known from 1865. French P.O. since 1857, Russian P.O. since 1863, Austrian Lloyd P.O. since 1872; all closed in 1914.
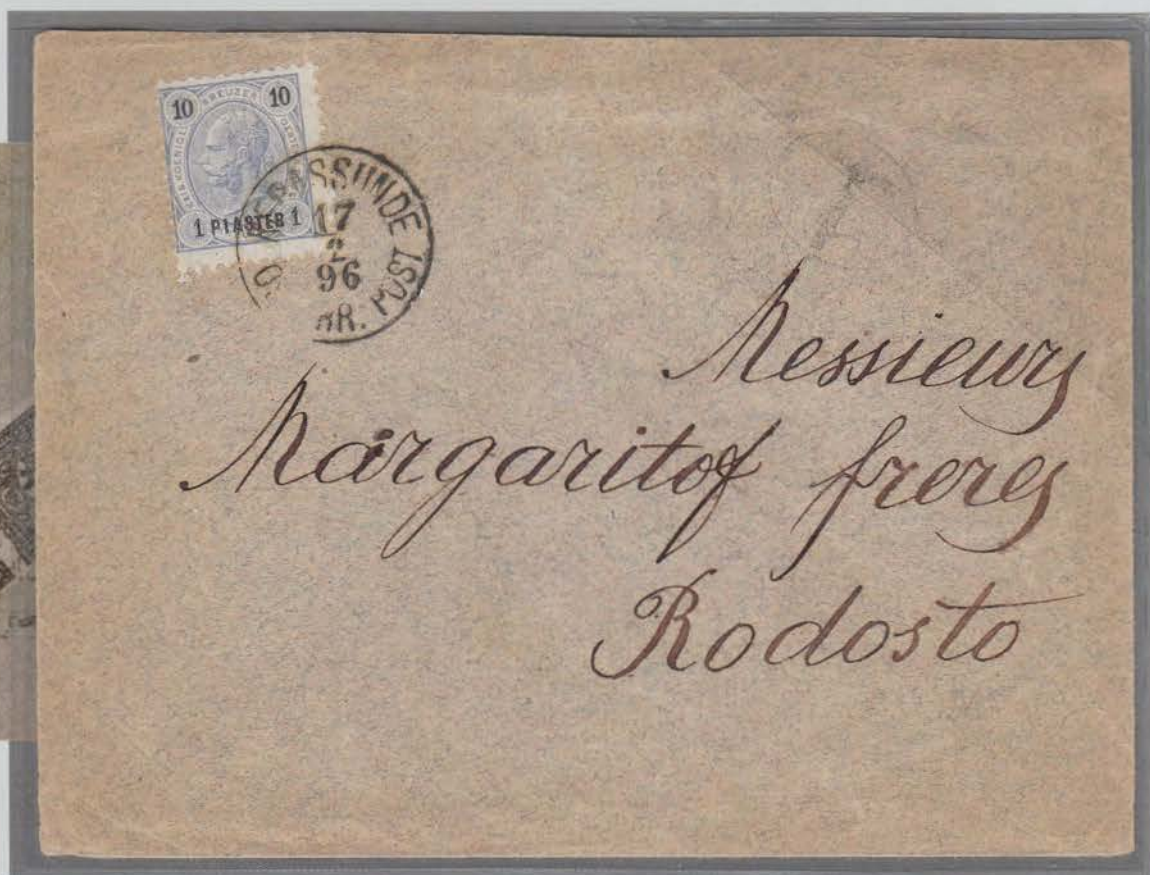
French P.O.: 1867, Kerassunde to Constantinople, cover front bearing Napoléon perforated 40 c. orange paying the single rate, tied by Gros chiffres '5090' numeral, cogwheel "KERSASSUNDE TURQ. D'ASIE" cds alongside.

Ex collection David Franco.

Reverse (x 0.75)
1 pia. postage & 1 pia. fee

Austrian Lloyd P.O.: 1896, Kerassunde to Rodosto (today Tekirdağ in Turkish Thrace), bearing 1 pia. / 10 kr. blue, tied by "KERRASUNDE ÖSTERR. POST" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 989). Galata transit. Austrian franking not accepted, oval Turkish taxation mark "T" on front and postage due on reverse; 20 para grey-black 1892 issue, two pairs, one showing variety missing perforation between stamps, tied by bilingual RODOSTO cds (Coles & Walker fig. 116).

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Turkey</u> - <u>Kerassunde</u> - Russian P.O.

ROPiT P.O. opened 1863 and closed in 1914.

First despatched for a Russian ROPiT shipmail service, then sent presumably overland through Anatolia in the stormy winter season and making its final journey with a French Mediterranean service.

1877 (Jan 18), Kerassunde to Marseille. Blue Russian КЕРАСУНДЪ cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 110) on front, Russian adhesives removed. Posted again on a French vessel (oval "BM" = Boîte mobile on front), franked at the French P.O. in Smyrna with Sage 1876 30 c. brown, tied by "SMYRNE TURQUIE 9 FEVR. 77" cds. Further routed with steamer on the Mediterranean (red boxed "PAQUEBOTS DE LA MEDITERRANEE") to its destination.

1912, Kerassunde to Bétou (French Congo), "Р.О.П. и Т. КЕРАСУНДЪ 29 IV 1912" despatch cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 115). Sent via Lisbon (May 20), Boma at the mouth of the Congo River (June 18), Brazzaville in French Congo (June 22), and thereafter forwarded to Courbevoie (France, June 30) and Cherbourg (July 4).

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - Turkey - Ordu - Russian P.O.

Small port, ~160 km west of Trebizonde. Population ~5'000 in 1900.
Turkish P.O. marks known from 1868. Russian P.O. since the early 1860s, French P.O. since 1857; both closed in 1914.

Only known cover from this office from the 19th century.

Ordu to Trebizonde, bearing Russian Levant 7 k., tied by "ОРДУ 18 ІЮН" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 750). Despatch year unknown, from the early 1880s.

Ex collections Liphschutz and Cihangir.

RRRR

Only known cover with this oval postmark.

1901 Ordu to La Chaux de Fonds, bearing Russian Levant 10 k., tied by large oval "Р.О.П.иТ. ОРДУ 2 ФЕВ. 1901" datestamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 752).

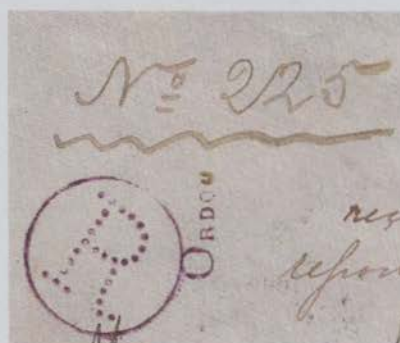Ex collections Liphschutz and Cihangir.

RRRR

1905, registered from Ordu to Constantinople, bearing 2 pia. / 20 k. light blue & rose, tied by "Р.О.П.иТ. ОРДУ" cds, cross-shaped type (Tchilinghirian fig. 753). ROPiT arrival postmark of Constantinople on reverse.

The cover was struck by the 'R' in dots registration mark and a provisional "Ordou" handstamp, although UPU-type labels should have been available. This lack of labels may be due to the fact that Ordu was a port of minor importance with a low volume of mail.

Ex collections Liphschutz and Cihangir.

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Turkey</u> - <u>Samsun</u> - Turkish P.O.

Active port involved in tobacco trade, ~270 km west of Trebizonde. Population ~30'000 in 1900.
Turkish P.O. marks known from 1842. Austrian DDSG P.O. since 1837, transformed into a Lloyd P.O.
in 1845, French P.O. since 1857, Russian P.O. since 1858; all closed in 1914.

1903 (July), Samsun to Vauroux-Bevaix (Switzerland), stationery postcard with additional franking,
cancelled by bilingual SAMSOUN cds (Coles & Walker fig. 17). Bevaix arrival datestamp.

1918 (Jan), Samsun to Berlin, stationery with additional franking, cancelled by bilingual SAMSOUN
cds (Coles & Walker fig. 19). Turkish censor handstamp.

Austrian Lloyd P.O.: 1869, cover from Amasya, posted at Samsun to Constantinople bearing 1867 10 so. adhesive tied by "SAMSUN 4 / 8" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 994) in blue, arrival mark on reverse.

The SAMSUN single circle datestamp is in in general struck in blue.

French P.O.: 1872, Samsun to Constantinople, bearing three examples of Napoléon perforated 80 c. rose paying the triple rate, the adhesives cancelled by Gros Chiffres '5096' numeral, cogwheel "SAMSOUN TURQ. D'ASIE" cds alongside.

RRR

Rare usage of 1865/68 ROPiT adhesives on Black Sea mail.

1868 (April), incoming cover from Constantinople to Samsun bearing ROPiT 1868 adhesive 2 pia. deep blue & rose, tied by lozenge in blue with "Р.О.П.иТ. КОНСТАНТИО НОП. АГЕНТ." despatch cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 8) in the same shade alongside, "ПОРТ САМСУН" arrival mark in blue on reverse.

ROPiT adhesives are only very rarely found on Black Sea mail. There exist **three outgoing covers** from Trebizonde to Aleppo (Dez. 1865, this collection, see sheet 111 in frame 7), Samsun to Constantinople (July 1867), and Kerassunde to Constantinople (Aug. 1868), also **two incoming covers** from Constantinople (March & April 1868, this cover) to Mr. Dulcet, who had been consul for France and the UK in Samsun.

Ex collections Cengiz Arsman & Gregory Frantz.

1879, Samsun to Constantinople, bearing Russian Levant 1 k. and 5 k. stamps, tied by CAMCYH cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 124) in blue. On reverse Constantinople arrival.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1883, Samsun to Marseille, bearing Russian Levant 7 k. adhesive, tied by CAMCYH cds in blue (Tchilinghirian fig. 124). Obverse with French entry cds, reverse with oval "ROPiT KONSTANTINOPOL" and ODESSA transit as well as PARIS arrival datestamps.

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - Turkey - Sinope - Turkish & Austrian P.O.

Small port situated ~110 km west of Samsun on a peninsula. Population ~5'000 in 1900.
Turkish P.O. marks known from 1868. Austrian Lloyd P.O. from 1854 to 1868, French P.O. from 1857
to 1869, Russian P.O. from 1863 to 1914. One of the rarest Black Sea ports.

GENERAL VIEW OF SINOPE.

Austrian Lloyd P.O.: Arms 10 soldi
detached stamp with
"SINOPE 16 / 4" cds.
Only two covers known.

The city of Sinope situated on a peninsula at the northernmost point of Anatolia. The Russian attack on the Ottoman fleet situated there initiated the Crimean War in 1853.

Ottoman P.O.: 1918, Sinope to Berlin, stationery envelope with additional franking, cancelled with bilingual cds of SINOP (Coles & Walker fig. 105). Turkish censor handstamp.

French P.O.: 1858, Sinope to Constantinople, written April **22**, 1858, manuscript *"Sinope"* despatch at top left and endorsed for conveyance by s.s. *"Nil"*. Letter prepaid with framed "P.P." in blue being crossed out on arrival in Constantinople and replaced with framed "PD" in red, "MER NOIRE" in black in addition. On reverse, arrival datestamp of the French P.O. in Constantinople (May 5, 1858).

The vessel "Nil" did not use postmarks on any of its four sailings on the Trebizond line in 1858.

A very rare entire from the second year of this elusive post office, only three stamped covers known from the French P.O. in Sinope.
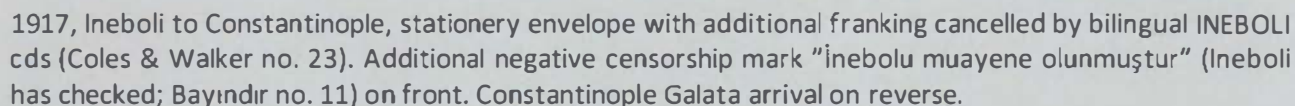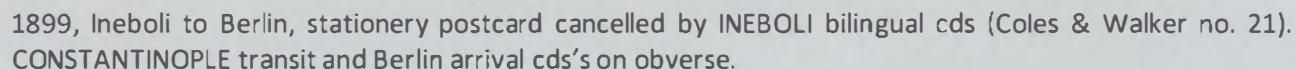
RRRR

Ex collection Berkinshaw-Smith.

One of three postcards known from the Sinope ROPiT post office, this being the earliest one.

RRRR

Russian P.O.: 1909, Russian Levant stationery postcard from Sinope to Paris, postmarked with "Р.О.П.и Т. СИНОПЪ 11 ОКТ. 1909" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 132).

Ex collection Tevfik Kuyas.

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Turkey - Ineboli</u> - Turkish P.O.

Small port situated ~240 km west of Samsun. Population ~8'000 in 1900.
Turkish P.O. marks known from 1855. Austrian Lloyd P.O. from 1854 to 1914, French P.O. from 1857 to 1876, Russian P.O. from the early 1860s to 1914. One of the rarest Black Sea ports.

1899, Ineboli to Berlin, stationery postcard cancelled by INEBOLI bilingual cds (Coles & Walker no. 21). CONSTANTINOPLE transit and Berlin arrival cds's on obverse.

1917, Ineboli to Constantinople, stationery envelope with additional franking cancelled by bilingual INEBOLI cds (Coles & Walker no. 23). Additional negative censorship mark "İnebolu muayene olunmuştur" (Ineboli has checked; Bayındır no. 11) on front. Constantinople Galata arrival on reverse.

5 soldi detached adhesive with "INEBOLI 28 / 1" cds in blue
(Tchilinghirian fig. 1006).

RRRR

Ineboli and Sinope are the rarest Austrian post offices on the Anatolian coast, this cover being one of two known pre-1900 items.
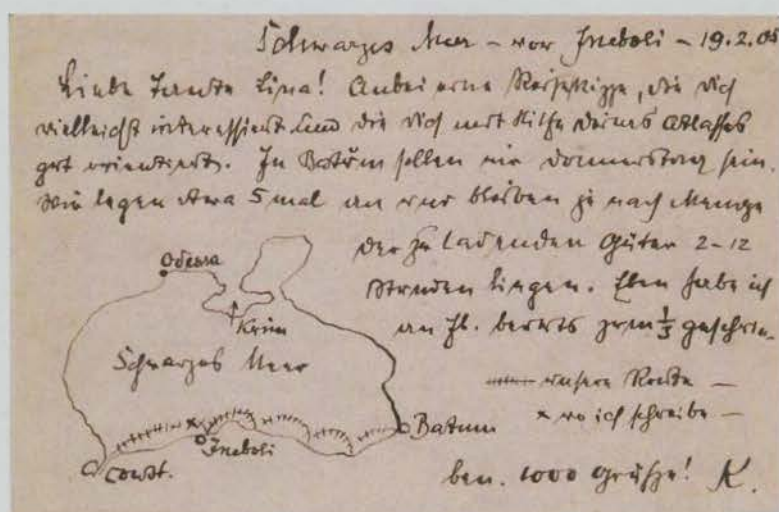
1878, registered from Ineboli to Constantinople, bearing pair of 1876 fine whiskers 10 so. blue, tied by "INEBOLI 29 / 8" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 1006) in black. "RECOM." alongside and Constantinople Lloyd arrival mark on the reverse.

Ex collection Dr. Jerger.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1905, Ineboli to Hamburg, Turkish stationery postcard franked with Austrian 20 pa. / 10 h. carmine, stamp tied by "INEBOLI OESTERREICHISCHE POST" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 1008). HAMBURG arrival mark alongside.

The text describes the travel of the sender from Constantinople to Batum, the duration of stops and so on. He travelled on a vessel of the slow Trieste - Constantinople - Batum line with calls in Ineboli - Samsun - Kerassunde - Trebizonde - Batum leaving Constantinople on Saturday, reaching Ineboli the next day and Batum on the Thursday thereafter.

Tourism became an important reason for travelling on the Black Sea at that time.

Reverse (x 0.75)

RRRR

Only two covers known at all from the Russian post office at Ineboli.

1899, Ineboli to Leipzig, bearing Russian Levant 10 k. carmine & green, cancelled by "Р.О.П.и Т. 4 СЕН 99 ИНЕБОЛИ" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 134). On reverse transit datestamps of ROPiT Constantinople and ODESSA as well as Leipzig arrival mark.

Ex collections Kurt Adler, Liphschutz, and Cihangir.

1.2. The port cities of the Black Sea - Turkey - Amasra and Eregli - Turkish P.O.

Amasra's port is only of importance for local fishing boats, it is even today just a larger village. Eregli was a small port, population ~5'000 in 1914. Both ports are situated ~170 and ~270 km, respectively, west of Ineboli.

Turkish P.O. marks known from 1871 for Amasra and Eregli. No foreign P.O.'s in both ports.

1905, Eregli (Mer Noire) to Durban (South Africa), stationery postcard cancelled by bilingual cds (Coles & Walker no. 37). CONSTANTINOPLE and ADEN transit as well as DURBAN arrival cds's alongside.

1914, Amasra to Constantinople stationery envelope postmarked with bilingual cds (Coles & Walker no. 121). Constantinople Galata arrival on reverse.

Both ex collection Herry Schaefer.

Small port situated ~230 km west of Ineboli. Population ~2'500 in 1914.
A harbour for the shipping of coal was built in 1899.
Turkish P.O. marks known from 1901, no foreign P.O.

1909, registered picture postcard from Zonguldak to Constantinople, bearing 20 pa. and 1 pia. tied by bilingual cds in violet (Coles & Walker no. 10). Violet registration handstamp on front.

1913, registered from Zonguldak to Canton (Ohio), bearing two examples 1 pia. tied by bilingual cds (Coles & Walker no. 11). Turkish registration mark on front, Stamboul and New York transit and Canton arrival cds's on reverse.

Both ex collection Herry Schaefer.

1.3. The port cities of the Black Sea - Bulgaria - Burgas - Bulgarian P.O.

Most important port of Eastern Rumelia (Southern Bulgaria). From 1879 to 1885 Eastern Rumelia was an administratively autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire. Burgas population ~30'000 in 1878. Turkish P.O. from 1868 to 1878, thereafter P.O. of Eastern Rumelia, from 1885 Bulgarian office.

1886, Burgas to Dedeagach (today Alexandroupoli in Greece).

Newly introduced Bulgarian stationery postcard in combination with old Eastern Rumelian cds (bilingual Bulgarian - French). Constantinople transit on reverse and bilingual Dedeagach arrival mark (Coles & Walker fig. 2) on front.

Ex collection Herry Schaefer.

1898, Burgas to Munich, Bulgarian P.O. / Austrian Lloyd agency. Adhesive tied by small bilingual BOURGAS cds. Cachet of the Austrian Lloyd agency alongside and MÜNCHEN arrival cds on reverse.

An agency of the Austrian Lloyd was still active in Burgas, it did, however, have no postal function anymore.

1.3. The port cities of the Black Sea - Bulgaria - Burgas - Austrian P.O.

An agency of the Austrian Lloyd was opened there in 1854 and it may be that it was converted into a consular P.O. following the 1877/78 war. P.O. closed in May 1880. In addition to the Austrian office, a Russian P.O. started in 1878, first as Field post office, from 1879/80 to 1886 as ROPiT office.

Rare usage of the first Lloyd handstamp in Burgas, one of ten known from 1854 to the early 1860s, all directed to Constantinople.

1859, Burgas to Constantinople. Cover shows oval *"Burgas / AGENZIA DEL LLOYD AUSTRIACO"* handstamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 935). No further transit or arrival marks.

Ex collection Herry Schaefer.

RRR

Typical usage of small denomination adhesives in Burgas.

1873 (Aug), Burgas to Constantinople, bearing pairs of the 1867 coarse whiskers 2 so. orange and 3 so. green to pay the 10 soldi port to port rate. Reverse with arrival cds.

Such a combination is nearly unknown from other Austrian Levant offices, in Burgas five of these combination covers are known from 1873.

Ex collections Cihangir, Smith & Schindler.

1.3. The port cities of the Black Sea - Bulgaria - Varna - Ottoman Tatar Post

Main port of Bulgaria, population ~25'000 in the 1860s. Turkish P.O. from 1840 to 1878.

The Tatar messengers were the backbone of the Ottoman postal system. The mail they transported was noted in post forms struck by despatch and arrival handstamps.

Tatar Post form from NIŠ (today Serbia) to VARNA, despatch handstamp on front, arrival handstamp (Coles & Walker fig. 81) on reverse, folded for presentation reasons to the front.

Tatar Messenger, around 1853
Source: British Museum

1.3. The port cities of the Black Sea - Bulgaria - Varna - Bulgarian & French P.O.

During the Bulgarian War of Independence 1878/79 a governmental Russian P.O. was open in Varna.
Thereafter the Bulgarian postal administration took over this office.
A French P.O. opened during the Crimean War and closed in 1876.

Bulgarian P.O.: 1890 Varna to Pravady, stationery postcard struck by bilingual despatch and arrival datestamps of the second Bulgarian type.

French P.O.: 1864, Varna to Constantinople, double rate cover bearing Napoléon perforated 10 c. bistre and 40 c. orange, each twice. Stamps cancelled with Gros Chiffres '5103' numeral with matching cogwheel "VARNA TURQ. D'EUROPE" cds, also in blue alongside. Framed "PD" shows full prepayment, Constantinople arrival mark on reverse.

1.3. The port cities of the Black Sea - Bulgaria - Varna - Austrian P.O.'s

Austrian DDSG office from 1841, services transferred to the Austrian Lloyd in 1845. in addition, an Austrian consular P.O. from 1851.

Rare usage of the first Lloyd handstamp in Varna, one of ten known from 1854 to 1861, nine of them directed to Constantinople.

Austrian Lloyd P.O.: Varna to Constantinople. Undated cover struck with "*Varna* / AGENZIA DES LLOYD AUSTRIACO" handstamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 938).

RRR

Rare consular service via Austria to Italy.

Austrian consular P.O.: 1867, Varna to Genova via Vienna, bearing 1864 Arms pair 15 so. brown and two 3 so. green, cancelled by straight VARNA datestamp, WIEN transit and GENOVA arrival cds's on reverse.

Most of the mail from Varna to Italy was despatched at the Lloyd

RRR

P.O., while mail to Bulgaria, Romania and Austria was despatched at the consular P.O. This is because the rate with the Lloyd via Trieste / Corfu to Italy was only 28 soldi, while the overland route rate via Vienna was 36 soldi. In the period until the reduction of the rates to 25/23 soldi in October 1867, only three covers are known to be sent overland to Italy, but ten with the Lloyd via Constantinople & Corfu.

Ex collection Monte Napoleone.

Both Austrian offices closed during the 1877 war and finally in 1884, although their meaning was insignificant after Bulgarian independence in 1879.

Austrian consular P.O.: 1874, Varna to Livorno, bearing 1867 coarse whiskers 3 so. green, 5 so. red, and 15 so. brown to match the 23 soldi rate to Italy. All tied by thimble VARNA cds's (Tchilinghirian fig. 885) with PD alongside and Livorno arrival cds on reverse.

Austrian consular P.O.: 1880, Varna to Trieste, bearing 1867 coarse whiskers 10 so. blue to pay the UPU rate. Adhesives tied by VARNA cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 887). Transit and arrival marks on reverse.

Rare late use. The present census includes only three items post-1879 from the consular and two items from the Lloyd P.O.

1.4.   The port cities of the Black Sea - <u>Romania - Kustendje</u> - Romanian P.O.

Main port of Romania, later renamed Constanța, of no economic importance until 1860, when the Kustendje - Czernavoda railway line was built.

Turkish P.O. from 1869 to 1878, thereafter Romanian office.

Early usage of Romanian adhesives following the 1877/78 Russo-Turkish war and the Dobruja becoming part of Romania.

1880 (Aug), Kustendje to Constantinople bearing 1879 Prince Carol 25 bani blue, tied by early Romanian KUSTENDJE cds. Constantinople arrival mark on reverse.

1896, registered Constanța to Vienna bearing on reverse pair of King Carol 25 bani violet, tied by CONSTANTA cds and by WIEN arrival mark.

An Austrian DDSG office was active from the 1830s to 1845, followed by a Lloyd office not earlier than 1862, which was closed in 1879; in addition, French P.O. 1869 to 1879.

Erroneous Italy rate from Kustendje.

1870, Kustendje to Genova, bearing 1867 coarse whiskers 15 so. brown and 25 so. grey, tied by "LLOYD AGENZIE KUSTENDJE" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 844). VERONA transit and GENOVA arrival cds's on reverse.

From 1869 to at least 1874, the Lloyd P.O. in Kustendje **miscalculated the postal rate to Italy. It charged 40 soldi to the sender**, while the correct rate was 25 soldi from October 1867, and 23 soldi from 1872. The rationale for this **Kustendje-specific error** is unknown. The census knows five covers with Austrian Levant frankings and in addition four covers with combination frankings with DBSR adhesives (see sheet 72 in frame 5).

'Provisional' 1872 datestamp. 1867 coarse whiskers 5 so. red with partial strike of the oval datestamp "KUSTENDJE 15 O(KT. 1872)" (Tchilinghirian fig. 845). The circumstances of the short use of this postmark in October / November 1872 are not clear.

One cover and few adhesives with this datestamp are known.

1873, Kustendje to Constantinople, bearing 10 so. blue coarse whiskers, tied by "KUSTENDJE TURQUIE" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 846), the last postmark in use in the Kustendje Lloyd office. Constantinople Lloyd arrival mark on reverse.

1.4. The port cities of the Black Sea - Romania - Sulina - Romanian P.O.

Port at the mouth of the central and most important branch of the Danube delta.
Population ~6'000 in 1900.

Turkish until 1829, belonged with the entire delta to Russia from 1829 to 1856, Russian metropolitan office during that time. Turkish again with the entire delta from 1856 to 1878, no office known. Thereafter Romanian office.

During the Russian times, in Sulina a quarantine station was established which stopped every traffic for about two weeks. In addition, the Russian administration was eager to reduce the attractiveness of the Danube as a waterway, e.g. by not dredging it leading to the mere impossibility to ship on the river. This behaviour was motivated by the fact, that a less attractive Danube increased inversely the attractiveness of Odessa as a place to handle goods.

Vier Briefe

über die

freie Donau=Schiffahrt.

Title of a pamphlet for a free Danube trade, Leipzig 1855

This blockade of the free trade led to disgust throughout Europe. As a countermeasure, the Austrians established a transport system through the Dobruja from Czernavoda to Kustendje which was complemented by the DBSR railway line in 1860. After the Crimean War, the Danube estuary became Turkish again and an international Danube Commission was established in Sulina (1856-1921) to ensure free travel and shipping.

1895, registered Sulina to Galatz bearing King Carol 15 & 25 bani adhesives. Galati arrival on reverse. Receiver is the Italian Consul at the European Danube Commission.

1.4. The port cities of the Black Sea - Romania - Sulina - Austrian P.O.

The first foreign office opening there after the Crimean War, was a French one (1857-1879). As Sulina can be reached by low water Danube ships and by deep water Black Sea ships, post offices of both, the DDSG and the Austrian Lloyd co-existed there from 1858. The consular office was combined with the Lloyd office. Maybe all three offices were operated by the same person. They closed in 1879/80.

Lloyd P.O.: 1864 (Oct), Sulina to Livorno, prepaid in cash until its destination, struck by type 1 cds (postmark with day & month, month in Arabic digits, Tchilinghirian fig. 839). On reverse Galatz and Vienna transit and Livorno arrival mark.

Ex collections Cihangir and Heimbüchler.

Lloyd P.O.: 1874, Sulina to Trieste, bearing 1867 coarse whiskers 15 so. brown, tied by type 2 cds (postmark with day, month, and year, Tchilinghirian fig. 840). Itzkany transit and Trieste arrival cds's on reverse.

Ex collections Edwin Müller and Dr. Jerger.

Chapter 2 describes ships and ship lines, separated for domestic and foreign services, following a clockwise direction around the Black Sea with Odessa as starting point. Their location is marked on the map at top right.

Mail along the Russian shore of the Black Sea was transported by the steamers (parokhod) of the Russian Company for Steam Shipping and Trade (ROPiT). These ships had ambulant post offices on board which could handle ordinary and registered mail.

Unlike these domestic lines, Russian ships along the Turkish, Bulgarian, and Romanian coasts were not provided with T.P.O.'s and the letterboxes of these ships were emptied in the harbours, where the mail was cancelled by the local agents.

The domestic line Odessa - Batum was running at the beginning from Odessa only up to Poti. After the war of 1877/78 and the gain of Batum it was extended to this port. Five different types of datestamps are found and described hereunder.

RRR

1874 (July 18), Odessa to Sevastopol on the Crimea, despatched at the ship T.P.O. Odessa - Poti, bearing Imperial Arms 10 k. brown & blue, tied by "О,ДЕССА - КЕРЧЪ - ПОТИ" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 267, type OB-1 with arabesques). The numeral '1' in the date slug codes for the port in which this letter was obtained and marked, similar to the numbering system for train stations in train T.P.O. datestamps at that time. Number '1' codes for the first harbour Odessa. Sevastopol arrival mark on obverse.

In the literature there are **only ten items with this cancellation known** between August 1873 and March 1880, seven with the direction towards Odessa, three towards Poti (Berger, DZRP 89 (2008)).

2.1. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Russia - Odessa-Batum line

BATUM - ODESSA,
type 2; 1881 - 1900

BATUM / ODESSA,
type 3; 1895-1904

PAROKHOD /
BATUM-ODESSA,
type 4, 1898-1909

BATUM - ODESSA /
PAROKH.,
oval type 5,
1902-1914, 1919-1937

2.1. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Russia - Odessa-Batum line

ROPiT ran two domestic lines, an Odessa - Batum express line and a slower Odessa - Poti line calling at more ports. Registered mail was also accepted by the T.P.O.'s but it is evidently much scarcer than ordinary mail. Only 16 registered covers are known from the period under study.
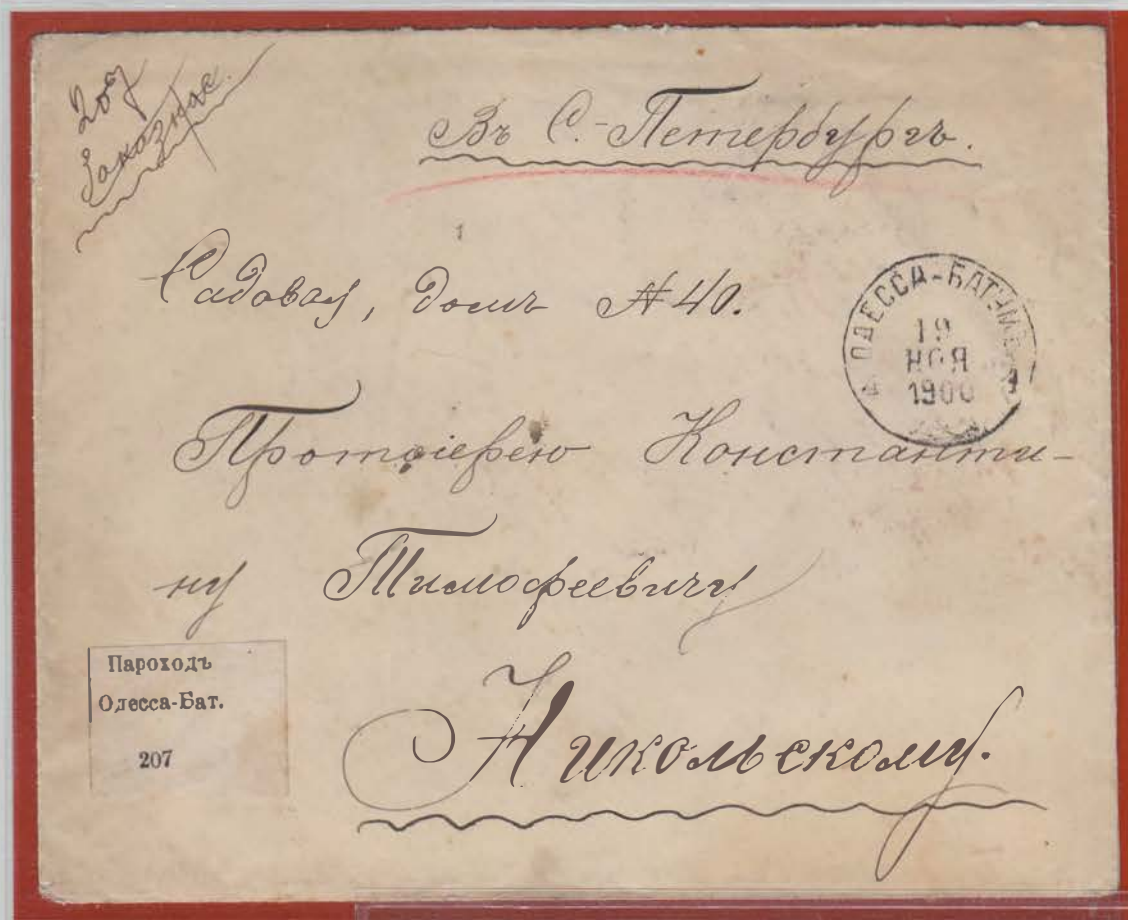
Rare provisional registration label

1900, registered to St. Petersburg bearing on reverse pair of Arms 7 k. adhesives cancelled by "ОДЕССА - ВАТУМЪ" cds. St. Petersburg arrival cds.

Only six registered items with this provisional label are known.

Ex collections von Hoffmann & Dr. Casey.

RRR

1912, registered from the palace of Prince Oldenburg in Gagry to St. Petersburg, despatched at the slow ship T.P.O. Odessa - Poti. Stamps on reverse cancelled by oval datestamp "ПОТИ - ОДЕССА ПАРОХ." datestamp. UPU-type registration label of the Batum - Odessa line alongside.

Only known registered item from the slow ship line ending at Poti which did obviously use the labels of the express line.

Ex collection Dr. Casey.

RRRR
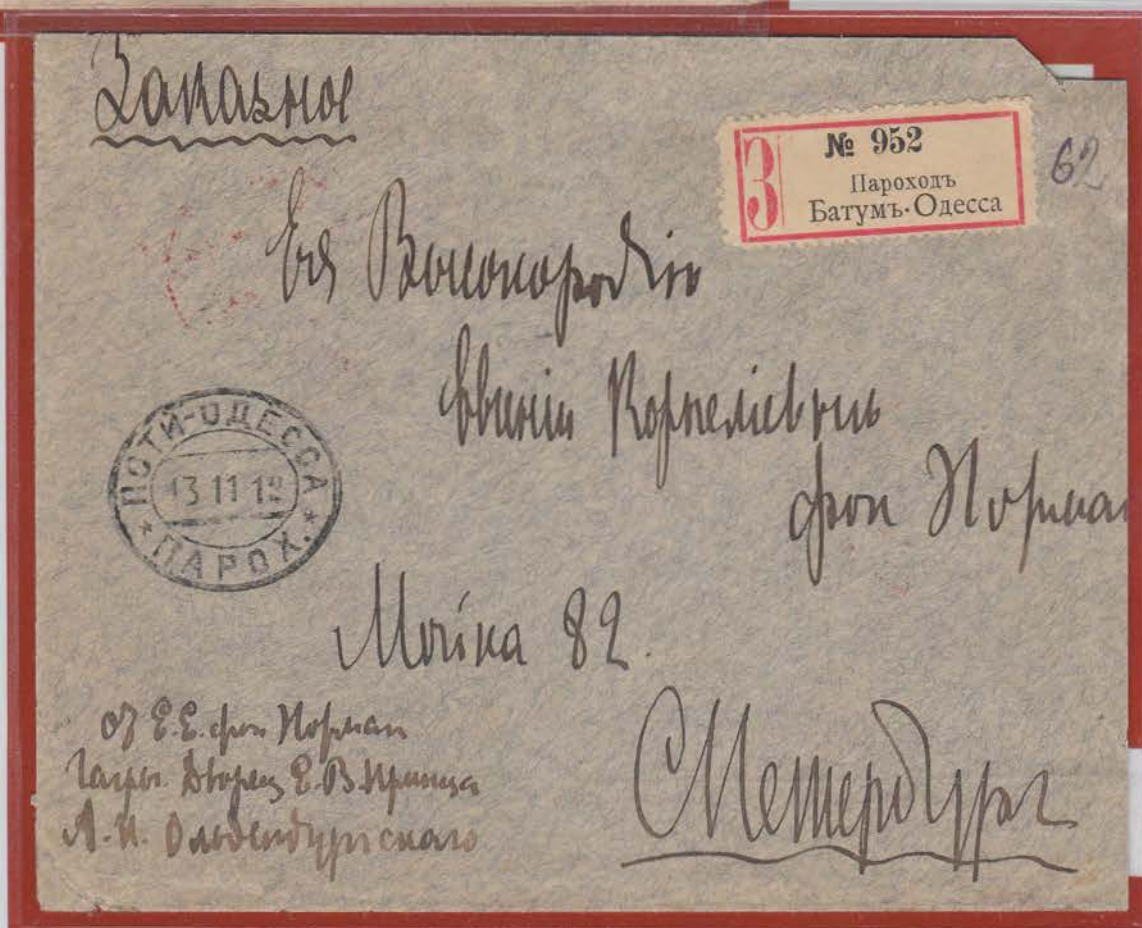
In the Dnieper-Bug estuary, T.P.O.'s were active on two ship lines: Odessa - Kherson in the Bug - Dnieper estuary and Odessa - Nikolaev in the Southern Bug.

Unique usage of imperforated stamps in Russian shipmail.

Bug - Dnieper estuary: 1887, despatched at the T.P.O. Kherson - Odessa and sent to Odessa. A pair of **imperforate** 7 k. Arms adhesives tied by "ПАРАХОДЪ ХЕРСОНЪ - ОДЕССА" cds, ODESSA arrival cds on reverse.

Ex collections Goss & Dr. Casey.

RRRR

Southern Bug

Nikolaev

Odessa

Dnieper

Bug - Dnieper estuary

Kherson

Black Sea

Southern Bug: 1913, despatched at the T.P.O. Odessa - Nikolaev and sent to Nikolaev. The 3 k. Romanov stamp tied by "ПАРАХОДЪ ОДЕССА - НИКОЛАЕВЪ" cds.

Only four items known from this ship line.

Ex collection Dr. Casey.

2.1. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Russia - Ship lines Dnieper

On the underflow of the Dnieper, T.P.O.'s existed on two ship lines: Kherson - Aleksandrovsk and Odessa - Aleksandrovsk (today Zaporizhzhia).

7 k. blue adhesive on piece, tied by special figurative mark of Aleksandrovsk - Kherson ship line without date reading "Александровскъ - Херсонъ" in the outer part and „Для Уничтожения Марок" (= for the cancellation of stamps) in the middle. Additional steamer design below.

Only about ten strikes known, three on cover.

Ex collections Liphschutz & Dr. Casey.

1913, despatched at the T.P.O. Aleksandrovsk - Odessa and sent to Vilna. The indicium was cancelled by oval "АЛЕКСАНДРОВСК - ОДЕССА ПАРОХОДЪ" datestamp.

Ex collection Dr. Casey.

1907, despatched at the T.P.O. Odessa - Aleksandrovsk and sent to Kherson. The indicium was cancelled by oval "ОДЕССА - АЛЕКСАНДРОВСК ПАРОХОДЪ" datestamp.
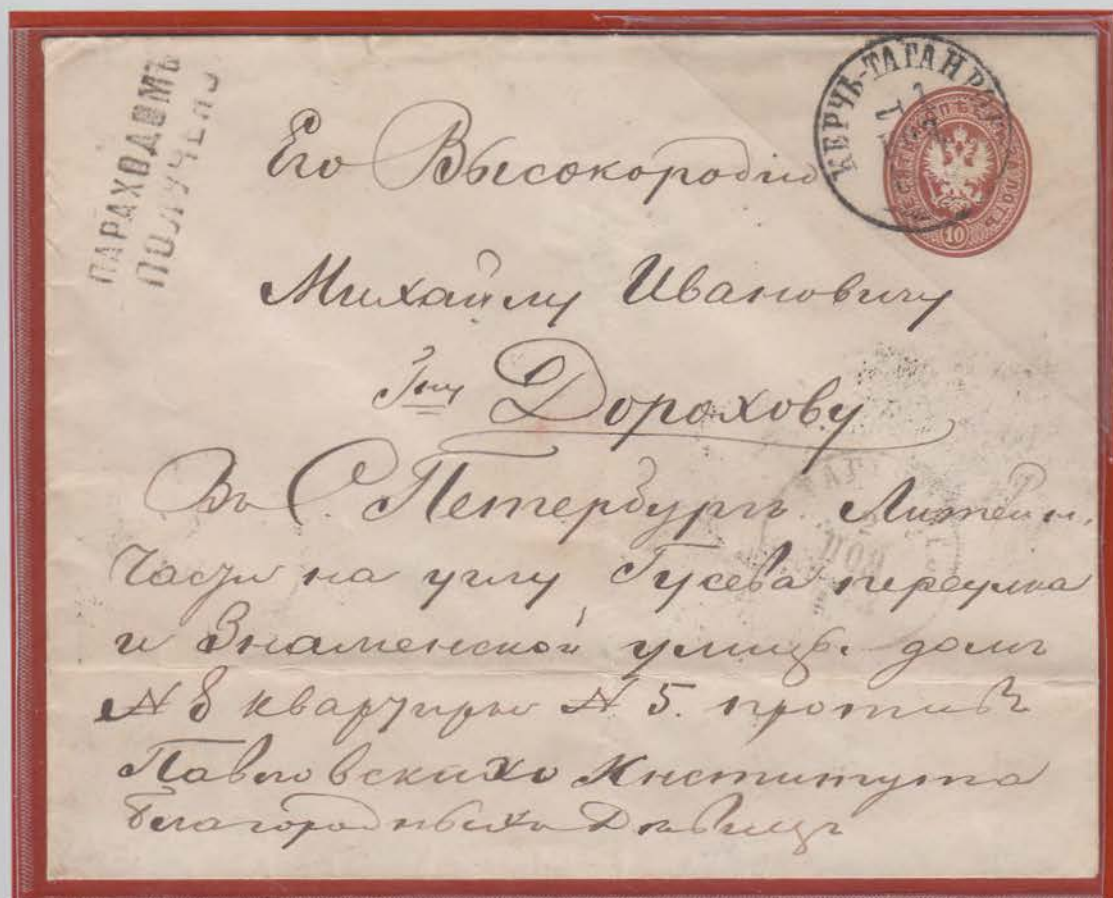
Ex collection Dr. Casey.

2.1. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Russia - Sea of Azov

This steamer branch line across the Sea of Azov from Kerch to Taganrog and vice versa is much rarer than the main Odessa-Batum line, **only nine items are known**.

RRR

First year usage.

1873 (Nov), Kerch to St. Petersburg, stationery envelope 10 k. brown, despatched at the T.P.O. Kerch - Taganrog. The indicium cancelled with "КЕРЧЬ - ТАГАНРОГЪ" cds, it shows a horizontally laid '1', meaning that this cover was posted at the first station, i.e., in Kerch itself. On board, a rare acceptance mark was struck ("ПАРОХОДОМЪ ПОЛУЧЕНО" = received on the steamer). Reverse with TAGANROG transit, railway T.P.O. mark (postal wagon no. 19-20, line Rostov-Kharkov), and St. Petersburg arrival cds's.

1903 to Bordeaux, despatched at the T.P.O. Rostov - Kerch, bearing pair Arms 2 k. green, tied by "РОСТОВЪ - КЕРЧЬ" cds. BORDEAUX arrival cds.

2.1. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Russia - Ship lines Kuban

Shipmail items can be found in rare cases from T.P.O.'s on the vessels on the river Kuban and from vessels not belonging to the ROPiT fleet, for example from the Crimean-Caucasian Line (ROSTRANS company) connecting the Black Sea Province of Russia with the Sea of Azov.

Kuban: 1915, despatched at the T.P.O. Temryuk - Ekaterinodar and sent to Vladikavkaz. The 3 k. Arms adhesive tied by oval "ТЕМРІОКЪ - ЕКАТЕРИНОДАРЪ ПАРОХ." datestamp.

Only three items from this rare T.P.O. are known.

Ex collection Dr. Casey.

1910, despatched at T.P.O. of **the Crimean-Caucasian Line**, the adhesive tied by framed "КРЫМСКО. КАВКАЗСК. ПАРОХ. ЛИНІ" handstamp in green. NOVOROSSIYSK and AZOV datestamps.

1908, despatched at T.P.O. of the Crimean-Caucasian Line and sent to St. Petersburg, the adhesive tied by oval "КРЫМСКО-КАВКАЗ. ПАРОХ." datestamp.

Ex collection Dr. Casey.

2.1. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Russia - Ship handstamps

Some mail transported by or posted on Russian vessels on the Black Sea were struck by handstamps such as "By steamer" or "Paquebot".

ПАРОХОДА

1900, Württemberg stationery postcard, from Giengen / Brenz via ODESSA to BATUM. On its journey across the Black Sea the postcard got a strike "By steamer" in pink.


Paquebot

1911, picture postcard, despatched on the vessel between Constantinople and Odessa bearing Russian Levant 20 pa. / 4 k. adhesive. A strike of a slanted "Paquebot" handstamp in black was added on the vessel and the stamp was tied upon arrival in ODESSA.

2.2. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Turkey

Between 1840 and 1862, Ottoman shipmail was transported either by official governmental ships, by semi-governmental maritime companies such as the 'Admiralty' company seen below or by private maritime companies. The main destinations have been ports on the Sea of Marmara or on the Aegean Sea.

RRRR
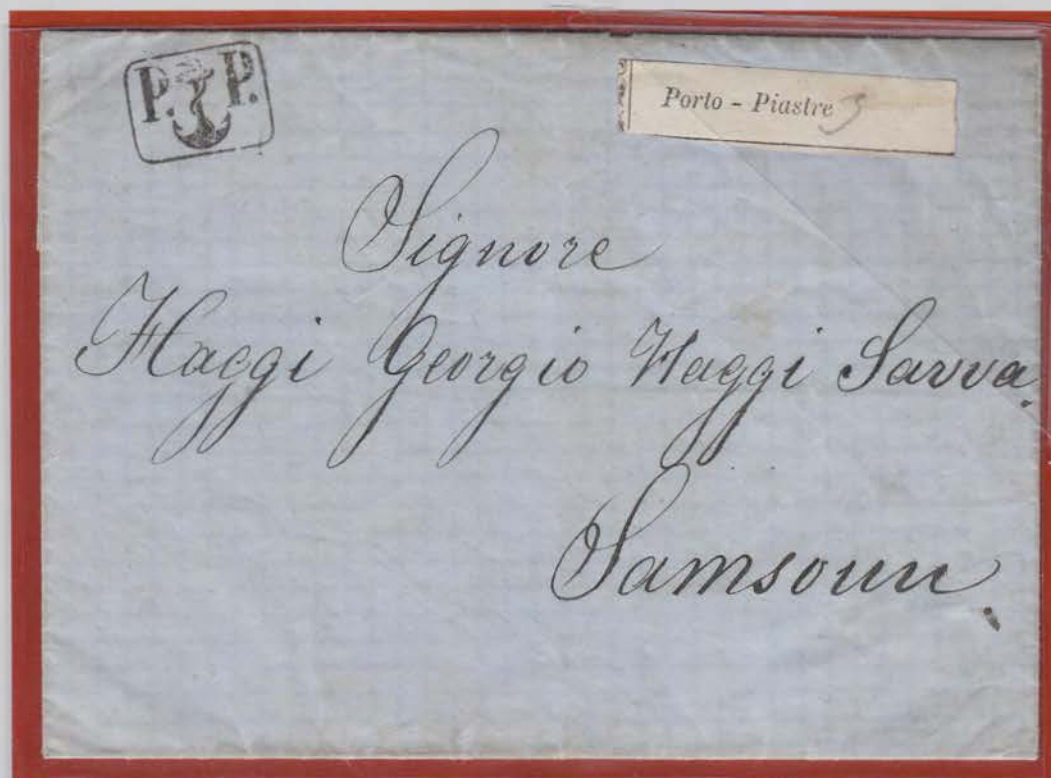
Extremely rare Ottoman shipmail on **the Black Sea.**

1859, Istanbul to Samsun, transported by the 'Piroscafi Ottomani Constantinople'. Entire struck by 'P.- Anchor - P.' marking with 'Porto - Piastre' label alongside showing handwritten '3' (piastre).

Between 1857 and 1862 two different labels were placed on the covers to note that the postage was paid in cash by the sender. The so called Admiralty label in a claret shade (depicted at right) was used at the head office in Istanbul, the 'Porto - Piastre' labels were used on the ships.

Only two entire Ottoman shipmail letters are known from the Black Sea, the present one and another one from the collection of Cengiz Arsman.

Ex collections Cengiz Arsman & Gregory Frantz.

2.3. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Bulgaria

A small fleet of four Bulgarian vessels named 'Boris', 'Bulgariya', 'Kiril', and 'Sofia' was active on the Black Sea at the turn of the century. Postal items despatched on these ships were postmarked with large oval datestamps inscribed with the abbreviation of the Bulgarian Trading and Steamshipping Company (BTPD) and the name of the respective steamer.

'Bulgariya': 1898 (Oct 6), Varna via Alexandria to East Africa, stationary card Small Lion 5 st. green with additional adhesives, cancelled by oval "Б. Т. П. Д. ПАРАХОДЪ БЪЛГАРИЯ" datestamp.

After arrival in ALEXANDRIA, the card was first held there, and was then forwarded via SUEZ and ZANZIBAR to BEIRA in Mozambique (arrival Dec 3 on reverse).

Picture postcard showing the vessels 'Bulgariya' and 'Boris' in the seaport of Varna.

'Boris': 1904, Varna to Therapia at the Bosporus. Picture postcard bearing Ferdinand 10 / 15 st. overprinted adhesive, tied by VARNA cds. Oval "Б. Т. П. Д. ПАРАХОДЪ БОРИСЪ" datestamp and cachet "ЧЕРНОМОРКО ПОДВ. ПИСАЛИЩЕ" (Black Sea T.P.O.), YENIDJAMI branch P.O. transit and THERAPIA arrival cds's alongside.

2.4.   The ship lines of the Black Sea - Romania

The Romanian fleet on the Black Sea was organized since 1895 by the SMR (Serviciului Maritim Român, Romanian Maritime Services). The first line ran from Constanta to Constantinople, later it was extended to Alexandria in Egypt.

Romanian shipmail as branch connection of the Orient Express.

1896 (April 20), Constantinople to Bucharest. Stationary postcard 20 para on 10 bani, issued for the Romanian shipmail line Constanţa to Constantinople (valid March - May 1896), cancelled with "POSTA ROMANA / COSPOL!" despatch cds. Oval "EXPRESS CONSPOLI - OSTENDA / CONSPOLI - CONSTANTA - BUCURESCI" datestamp from the same day (Marinescu type SMR-A, use **only known from that day**) alongside. Arrival mark on reverse.

1906, Constantinople to Bucharest bearing Austrian 20 pa. on 10 h. rose, tied on Romanian vessel by "CONSPOLI - CONSTANTA - BUCURESCI" (Marinescu type SMR-B). BUCURESCI arrival cds alongside.

2.4. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Romania

Romanian shipmail on the Danube was organized since 1900 by the NFR (Navigatia Fluviala Româna, Romanian River Services). Of interest are here the services within the Danube estuary.

1903, stationary postcard 10 bani red, cancelled with a pictorial ship datestamp of the TULCEA- GALATI branch, sent to Paris.

1914, stationary postcard 5 bani green, cancelled with a pictorial ship datestamp of the SULINA - TULCEA branch, sent to Vienna. Not taxed despite insufficient postage.

2.4. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Romania - Russian Lower Danube lines

The two Russian steamer lines Ismail - Galatz & Reni - Czernavoda at the lower Danube are originating in the Bessarabian i.e., Russian harbours of Ismail and Reni while the complete journey is on Romanian waters. These ship lines are not mentioned in the literature, items postmarked on these ships are **extremely rare**.

1911, formular postcard from Tulcea at the western end of the Danube delta, sent to Focsani, despatched at the T.P.O. of the vessel "Bessarabets" of the Russian Danube Steamshipping Company. Galatz transit and arrival cds's.

As the postcard was given to the postal services in Tulcea, Romania, a Romanian adhesive was used and tied aboard by a violet "Г. У. Т. М. и П. / РУС. ДУН. ПАР. / ПАР. БЕССАРАБЕЦЪ" handstamp (Chief Administration for Trade, Sailing and Steamshipping / Russian Danube Steamshipping / Steamer Bessarabets).

Ex collection von Hofmann.

taken from: Bessarabian Almanac 1911, giving the arrival and departure times of the lines Ismail (Russia, province Bessarabia, nowadays Ukraine) via Tulcea to Galatz in Romania and lists five steamers of this company, among them the "Bessarabets".

2.5. The ship lines of the Black Sea - Austrian Lloyd

The Austrian Lloyd was running three lines on the Black Sea, from Constantinople via Varna to Galatz, to Odessa, and to Batum.

In 1888, every ship of the Austrian Lloyd received its own postmark. Because the postmarks were attributed to ships not lines and because ships were transferred between lines as substitutes, one can deduce only from the adhesives used if a given ship was deployed on the Black Sea. This is due to the general rule that the adhesives of a given country had to be used in its territorial waters. Items with Russian, Romanian, and Bulgarian stamps and Lloyd cancels are definitively from Black Sea lines. Those with Turkish stamps had to be checked for additional Black Sea-related marks or text.

Two pieces with Russian adhesives, tied by Lloyd vessel datestamps. At left "LLOYD AUSTRIACO XVIII" in blue, allotted to the steamship 'Daphne' (Tchilinghirian type LA-18), at right "CARNIOLA ÖSTERR. LLOYD" (Tchilinghirian fig. 236).

Reverse (x 0.75)

1896, picture postcard with Constatinople Pera motif to Zagreb, bearing Turkey 20 pa. mauve, tied by "LLOYD AUSTRIACO XIII" cds in blue (Tchilinghirian type LA-13). BOURGAS transit and ZAGREB arrival cds's.

The postcard was despatched on the vessel 'Castore' serving on the Constantinople - Galatz express line. The Turkish adhesive was tied by the Lloyd shipmail cds, the card was struck in Burgas when the 'Castore' was calling there and made its further way to Zagreb.

French maritime services were running two lines on the Black Sea, from Constantinople to Galatz, and to Trebizonde.

Mail posted at T.P.O.'s on French vessels was postmarked in the next French port post office, Constatinople Galata in most cases. 'PAQUEBOT', framed 'MER NOIRE' and oval "BM" (Boîte Mobile, i.e., travelling postbox) marks are found on the mail.

1901, picture postcard with Constantinople motif, the French adhesive tied in the French office of Constantinople Galata, the card struck by 'MER NOIRE' (Salles fig. 917) and 'BM' handstamps, directed to Estavayer-le-Lac (Switzerland).

M. GIRAUD - SAMSOUN

1908, Samsun to Paris bearing French Levant adhesives, tied by "SAMSOUN TURQUIE" cds. 'MER NOIRE', 'BM', and 'PAQUEBOT' handstamps alongside, CONSTANTINOPLE transit and PARIS arrival datestamps.

2.6.   The ship lines of the Black Sea - France

In rare cases, French shipmail covers bear also foreign adhesives, for example from Russia, Bulgaria, or Romania.


Front (x 0.75)

1907, cover of unknown origin and directed to Hamburg, bearing Imperial Russian Arms 10 k. blue, tied by 'PAQUEBOT' handstamp. Obverse with 'MER NOIRE' and 'BM' handstamps as well as "CONSTANTINOPLE GALATA" transit cds, reverse with indistinct HAMBURG arrival cds.

> Chapter 3 describes the railway lines, following a clockwise direction around the Black Sea with Odessa as starting point. Their location is marked on the map at top right. This chapter finishes the description of the structures needed to transfer mail and goods.

Since the end of the 1860s, new Ship & Railway lines were established in the south of Russia with Odessa being the main transportation hub at the Black Sea.
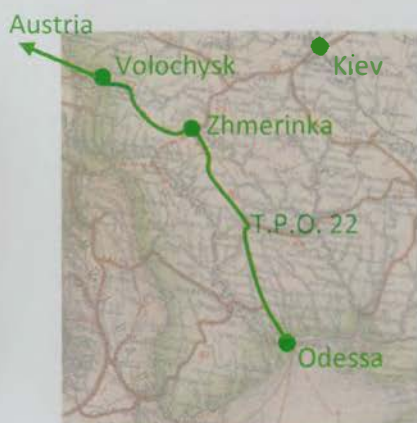
Source: Die Eisenbahnen Russlands, Wien 1885

1870 (Nov), Odessa to Marseille, double rate cover despatched on T.P.O. no. 22 to Zhmerinka, further via CZERNOWITZ and WIEN.

1872 (Oct), Odessa train station to Revel / Tallinn the adhesive tied by "ОДЕССКОЕ П.О. / Ж. Д 9 ОТДЕЛА" cds (9th railway department). Reverse with T.P.O. of the Kharkov - Moscow line and REVEL arrival cds.

The first activity of the Odessa train station P.O is known from September 1871.

3.1. Railway lines from the Black Sea - Russia

Two railway lines connected Odessa with Romania via Bessarabia, the first to Ungeni / Jassy started in 1871, the second to Reni at the Danube was constructed following the won 1877/78 war.

1873, Benderi to Odessa, despatched on T.P.O. no. 50 Ungeni - Kishinev - Benderi - Odessa. Front with ODESSA arrival cds.


1887, Strassburg, Alsace to Klöstitz, a German settlement in Bessarabia (today Vesela Dolina in Ukraine). German stationery postcard sent presumably via Austria to Odessa, finally on T.P.O. no. 75 Benderi - Reni, front struck by T.P.O. and indistinct arrival cds's.

3.1. Railway lines from the Black Sea - Russia

Mail from the Sea of Azov to Western Europe was during the 1870s conveyed by ship to Odessa and then forwarded with trains to its destination. In the 1880s direct railway lines from the Sea of Azov to the north were constructed.
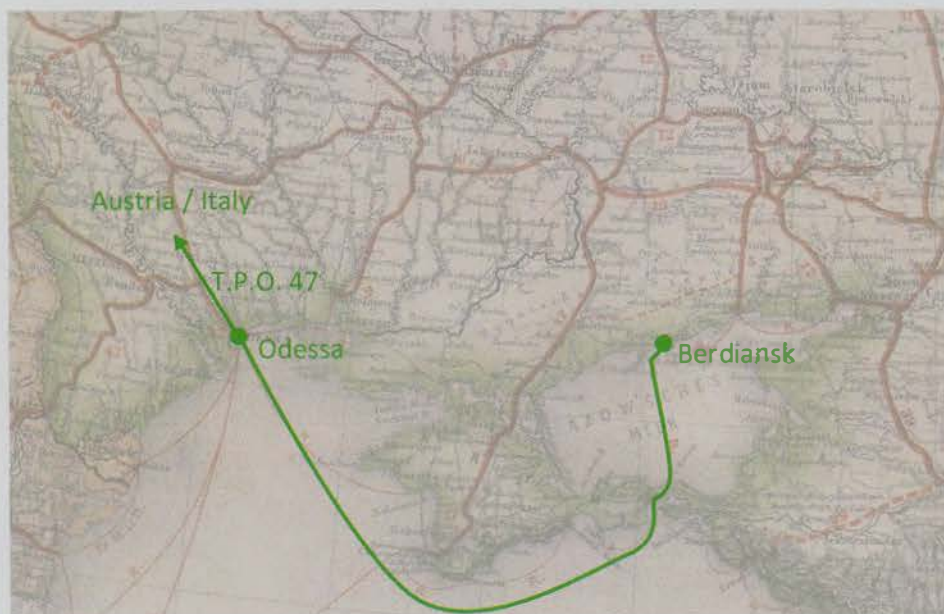

1874, Berdiansk to Genova, cover endorsed at top right in Cyrillic "with wagon no. 47", bearing Imperial Arms 10 k. brown & blue and pair 3 k. green & black, tied by БЕРДЯНСК cds, reverse with T.P.O. no. 47-48 and GENOVA arrival cds's.

3.1. Railway lines from the Black Sea - Russia

From the 1880s, the ports of the Sea of Azov and of the Russian Black Sea province were also connected to central parts of Russia.
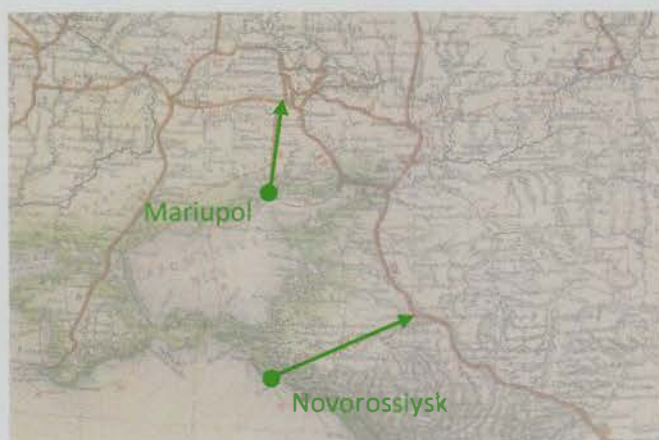
1889 to Meerane, Germany, stationery envelope with add. franking, despatched at T.P.O. 79, line Mariupol - Zverov

1905, Kotielnikovo to Zurich, stationery postcard despatched at the T.P.O. Tsaritsin - Novorossiysk, ZÜRICH arrival cds alongside.

3.1. Railway lines from the Black Sea - Russia

At the beginning of the 1880s, a railway connection between Batum on the Black Sea and Baku at the Caspian Sea was built. It was of particular importance for the transportation of oil from Azerbaijan.

Rare railway service during the construction of the Batum - Baku line.

1882, Kutaisi to Iglésias, island of Sardinia, bearing Arms 7 k. grey & rose, tied by "ПОЧТ. ВАГОНА ПОТИ ТИФЛИССК. Ж. Д." cds, an un-numbered T.P.O. for the part of the Batum to Baku railway line already finished between Poti and Tbilisi. Reverse with TIFLIS transit, T.P.O. Warsaw - Granitsa, LIVORNO transit and IGLESIAS arrival cds's.

First year of the completed Batum - Baku railway line.

1884, Kutaisi to Innsbruck, stationery envelope despatched at the T.P.O. no. 96, reverse with INNSBRUCK arrival cds.

3.2. Railway lines from the Black Sea - Bulgaria

The railway line Varna - Ruschuk connected the Black Sea and the Danube. It was built by British investors from 1864, was used since November 1866, was sold in 1869 to the Ottoman Empire and finally to Bulgaria in 1886.

After the unification of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia in 1885, a functional Bulgarian railway system had to be established including railway lines to the two main ports Varna and Burgas. This included the connection from Varna via Kaspichan to Sofia built in 1892, which complemented the Varna - Ruschuk line.
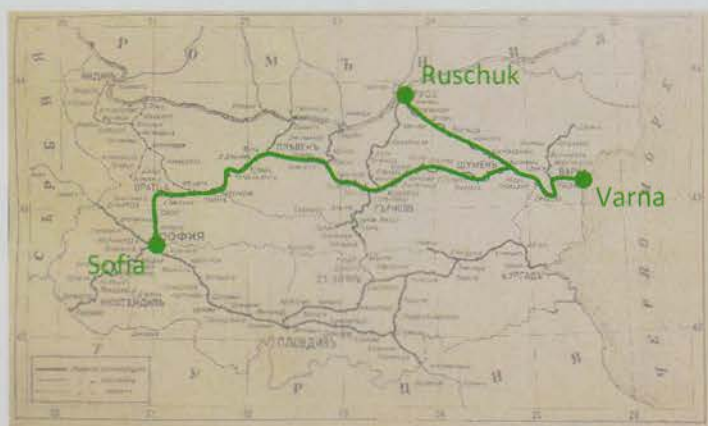
Map of the Bulgarian railways in 1911.

1904, Varna to Mannheim, Germany, stationery postcard with the indicium cancelled by "ПОДВИЖ. ПИСАЛИЩЕ / ВАРНА - РУССЕ" (Travelling Post Office / Varna - Russe) cds, MANNHEIM arrival cds alongside.

1903, Provadia to Berlin, stationery postcard with the indicium cancelled by bilingual PROVADIA despatch cds, bilingual "AMB. VARNA - SOPHIA No 2" T.P.O. cds, as well as SOPHIA transit and Berlin distribution cds's alongside.

3.2. Railway lines from the Black Sea - Bulgaria

The connection from the port of Burgas to Western Bulgaria was difficult as part of the railway lines stayed under Ottoman control although Eastern Rumelia was no more part of the Ottoman Empire following 1886.

1893 to Constantinople, despatched on the Burgas - Sofia railway line, the indicium cancelled by bilingual "AMB. BOURGAS - SOPHIA" cds in blue, Austrian CONSTANTINOPEL arrival cds alongside.

1905, Burgas to Vienna, the indicium of the stationery postcard cancelled by bilingual BOURGAS despatch cds, bilingual "AMB. BOURGAS - TZARIBROD" T.P.O. and WIEN distribution cds's alongside.

3.3.   Railway lines from the Black Sea - Romania

Kustendje / Constanta was the starting station of the Kustendje - Czernavoda railway line, inaugurated in October 1860. It was the first railway line in the Ottoman Empire and its main goal was to avoid the way through the Danube estuary (see 4.2.). This railway line was operated by the 'Danube and Black Sea Railway and Kustendje Harbour Company' (DBSR) which issued in 1867 their own stamps with a face value of 20 para for this short trip from the Black Sea through the Dobruja to the Danube.

The DBSR line with Kustendje harbour.

The DBSR adhesive, the first stamp worldwide depicting a train.

Combination usage of DBSR and Austrian Levant adhesives.

1869 (ca), piece with mixed franking Lombardo-Veneto 1864 Arms 15 so. brown and Austrian Levant 1867 coarse whiskers 25 so. grey in combination with DBSR 1867 20 para green. Adhesives tied by "LLOYD AGENZIE KUSTENDJE" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 844), in use between 1862 and 1872.

This franking pays the railway transport from Kustendje to Czernavoda at the Danube with the 20 para DBSR stamp, while the Austrian Levant adhesives paid the journey beyond Czernavoda to an unknown destination.

From other material existing in this and other collections one must assume that the original destination was Italy. The correct postage to Italy post-1867 was 25 soldi, but in Kustendje a wrong rate of 40 soldi was used (see page 46 in frame 3). 40 soldi would have been the correct rate to France, but there is no mail known to France originating from the Lloyd P.O. on Kustendje from the period under study, be it without or with an additional DBSR adhesive.

The census knows only 15 covers with combination frankings of Austrian Levant and DBSR adhesives.

Ex collections Capellaro and Heimbüchler.

The significant role of these waterways as a link between East and West is documented in Chapter 4, dealing with the process of postal transport towards, across, and away from the Black Sea. First early options by private hands or forwarders are shown. Then the history and development of the Austrian, French, and Russian shipping organisations is given, finishing with meaningful covers showing transit mail from Europe to the Levant, from the Levant to Asia and finally between Africa and Asia.

Before the Crimean War, there has been no effective mail transport across large parts of the Black Sea (e.g. between Turkey and Russia). Mail was transported either privately by passengers on merchant ships or by members of ship crews. Alternatively, transport had to be organized by forwarders leaving handwritten notes or handstamps on the covers they have forwarded.
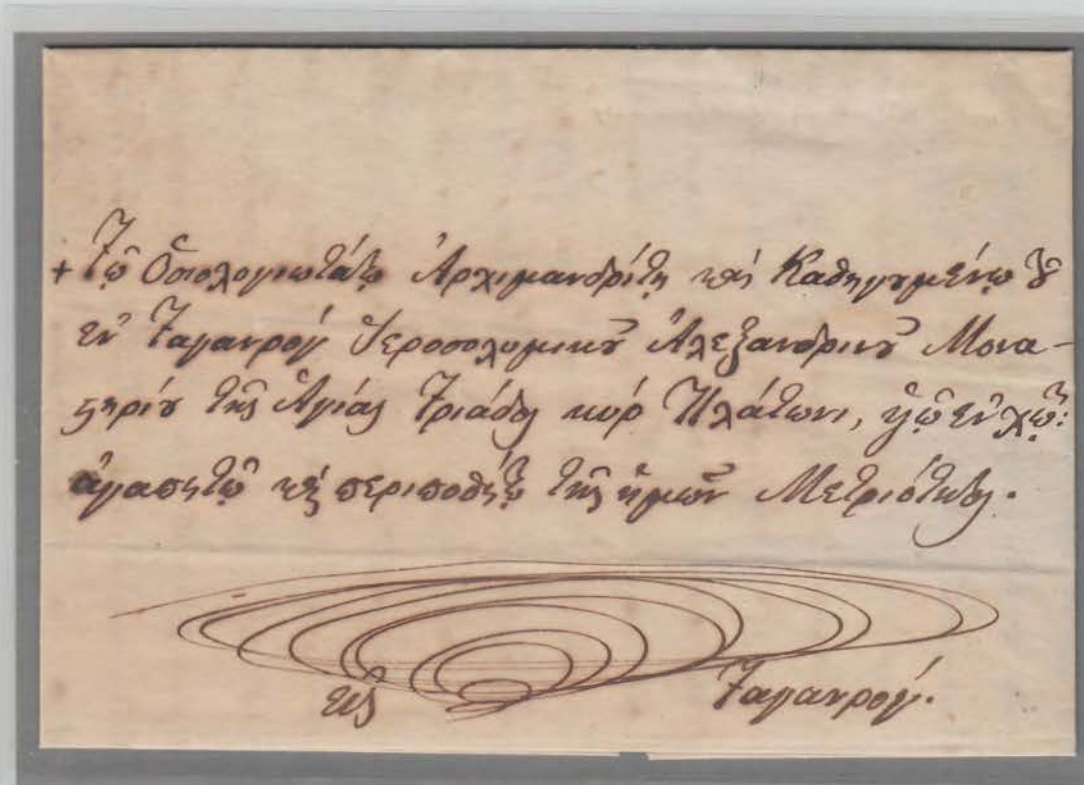
Private transport: 1851, from the Patriarchate of Constantinople to the Greek monastery of Taganrog at the Sea of Azov. Obviously transported and delivered by private courier, as there are no marks at all.

Forwarder: 1847, Odessa via Constantinople and Malta to Livorno. Forwarded by L. Lengnich to Constantinople. There it was given to the French P.O., struck by "CONSTANTINOPLE (TURQUIE)" cds, and sent to the Malta lazaretto to be purified. Livorno "Via di Mare - C" arrival handstamp on obverse.

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Austrian DDSG service

There have been **three Austrian mail services at the Black Sea** since the 1830s: The consular P.O. was active in Levant to Austria mail, while DDSG and Lloyd have been responsible in Levant to Levant mail. Up to 1845, DDSG services were active on the Danube and on the Sea with **Braila and Galatz being the ports were fluvial and maritime services were linked**.

RRR

Rare early DDSG handstamp, in use until 1845. Only ten covers known from Braila. This is the only type of DDSG marks found on maritime mail because these services were transferred to the Lloyd in 1845.

1844 (Sept), Braila fully prepaid to Constantinople, struck by circular "D.D.S.G. / IBRAILA / P.P." handstamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 802). Ex collection Provera.

RRR

Rare early DDSG handstamp, in use until 1845. Only five covers known from Galatz.

1844 (Aug), Galatz fully prepaid to Constantinople, struck by circular "D.D.S.G. / GALATZ / P.P." handstamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 808). Ex collection Capellaro.

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Austrian Lloyd service

In 1845, the Austrian Lloyd took over all maritime services of the DDSG on the Black as well as the Mediterranean Sea.

1849 (April), Braila to Constantinople, struck by oval "AGENZIA DEL LLOYD AUSTRIACO / Ibraila" (Tchilinghirian fig. 827) in blue.

1859 (Nov), Galatz to Santa Maura / Lefkada (Ionian Islands), struck by oval "AGENZIA DEL LLOYD AUSTRIACO / Galatz" (Tchilinghirian fig. 828) in blue. Endorsed "via Constantinople", "Sta MAURA" arrival datestamp on front. **Rare destination and route, journey to the Ionian Islands normally via Vienna and Trieste.**

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Interaction of different Austrian services

All three Austrian services were acting together to accept, transport and deliver mail.

1862, Galatz to Constantinople, struck with GALLATZ cds in blue (Tchilinghirian fig. 743) of the consular service. The letter was fully prepaid, as can be seen from the blue crayon cross, the consular FRANCO (Tchilinghirian fig. 746), and the oval "P.P." mark. Lloyd arrival cds of Constantinople on reverse. Although accepted by the consular P.O., the transport was done by the Austrian Lloyd.

Ex collection Cengiz Arsman.
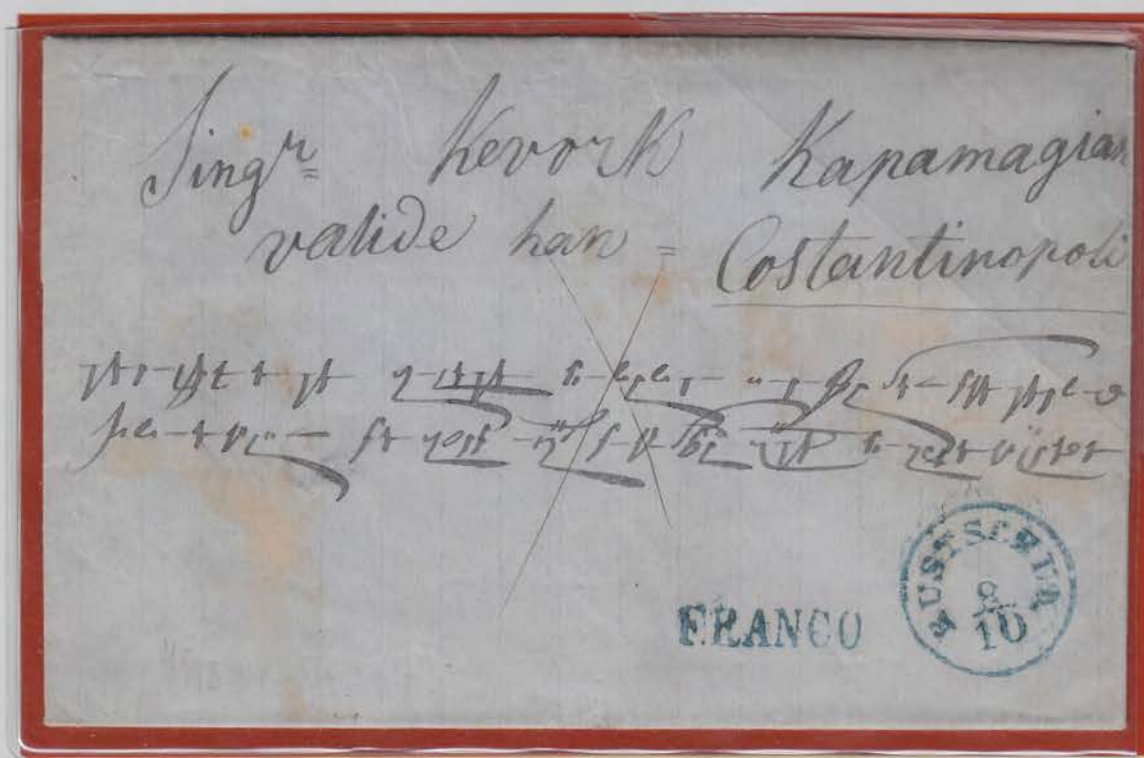
Combination of all three Austrian services.

1863, Ruschuk to Constantinople, struck with RUSTSCHUK cds in blue (Tchilinghirian fig. 876) of the consular service. The letter was fully prepaid, as can be seen from the ink cross and the consular FRANCO (Tchilinghirian fig. 881) mark. Lloyd arrival mark of Constantinople on reverse. Although accepted by the consular P.O., the transport was first done by the DDSG, presumably down the Danube to Galatz and then by the Austrian Lloyd to Constantinople.

Both covers are written in Solitreo, the scripture used by the Sephardic Jews, speaking Ladino, in principle the Castilian Spanish they were using when they were expelled from the Iberian Peninsula in the 15th century.

Mail was in some cases transported using the services of different postal administrations leading to different combinations of pre-payment and due.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Partial pre-payment from Moldavia to Greece.

1862 (May), Galatz to Syros, Greece. The Austrian Lloyd postage of '30' soldi to the Aegean prepaid in cash and noted in red crayon on reverse. The cover was charged with '20' lepta in red crayon on obverse upon arrival at the Greek post office in Syros, taxed with a Paris Print Large Hermes Head adhesive of 20 lepta blue, issued in October 1861.

An exceptional case, where the prepayment could not be shown with adhesives, as the Austrian Levant stamps did not come in use earlier than April 1864. The adhesive, in contrast, is not a postage stamp but a postage due.

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Via Kustendje

From October 1860, the railway line Kustendje / Constanta to Czernavoda (see sheet 72 on this frame) shortened the ways between the Levant and Europe considerably, resulting in large mail volume on ship lines between Constantinople and Kustendje. This mail was endorsed in manuscript or was struck by special postmarks in the respective harbours, not on the vessels.

1863, unpaid Constantinople to London, endorsed *"Via Kustendjie"*, additional routing mark "VIA KUSTENDJE & VIENNA" (Tchilinghirian fig. 113), applied in Kustendje. On reverse WIEN transit and LONDON arrival cds's.

1866 (May), Constantinople to Vienna, endorsed *"Via Küstendje"*, bearing 1864 Arms 10 so. blue & 15 so. brown, tied by CONSTANTINOPEL cds, reverse with WIEN arrival datestamp.

Rare 25 soldi rate from Constantinople which was correct only from January to mid-October 1866. On January 1st, 1866, the Austrian inland rate was unified to 5 kreuzer, while it took until October 15, 1866, when the Levant rate was reduced to 15 soldi from 20 soldi (except for the Principalities and Albania).

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Via Varna

Mail from the Levant to Europe between November 1866 and 1889 was sent with Lloyd vessels from Constantinople to Varna and from there via Ruschuk and Vienna to its destination. These items do normally not show postmarks identifying this postal route, but regularly endorsements such as "via Varna". In 1888, the Orient Express reduced the importance of this ship line drastically.

"VIA VARNA" handstamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 114) used to cancel mail primarily from Constantinople upon arrival in Varna. In use from the mid-1860s to 1870.
Rare combination to pay the 15 so. rate to Austria.
Ex collections Rivolta & Provera

1867, Constantinople to Genova, endorsed *"Via Varna per Vapore"*, bearing pairs Austrian Levant 1864 Arms 3 so. green & 15 so. brown, tied by CONSTANTINOPEL cds, reverse with TRIEST & VENEZIA transit as well as GENOVA arrival cds's.

Ex collections Dr. Jerger & Schindler

Rare 36 so. overland rate to Italy.

1867, Constantinople to Genova, endorsed *"Via Varna & Vienna"*, bearing Austrian Levant 1864 Arms 3 so. green & pair 15 so. brown, tied by CONSTANTINOPEL cds, reverse with TRIEST & VENEZIA transit as well as GENOVA arrival cds's.

Ex collections Schindler

Underpaid 36 so. rate, but not taxed.

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Via Varna

1868, Constantinople to Carouge (Switzerland), endorsed *"Voie Varna"* and *"par Vienne"*, bearing **mixed franking** Austrian Levant 1864 Arms 10 so. blue and 1867 coarse whiskers 25 so. grey. On reverse WIEN and GENEVE transit as well as CAROUGE arrival cds's.

Ex collection Sylvain Wyler.

1870 (ca.), Ruschuk to Constantinople, bearing 1867 coarse whiskers 10 so. blue, tied by RUSTSCHUK despatch cds, reverse with CONSTANTINOPEL arrival cds.
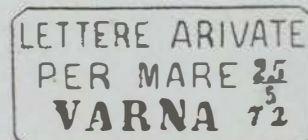
No endorsement needed, as the route via Varna was the only possible one.

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Via Varna

Alternatively, mail to Europe from the Levant could be transported by a combination of more than one foreign postal service.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Partial pre-payment from Turkey to Austria.

1872, Samsun to Trieste with combined Russian and Austrian services: Entire from a known correspondence, endorsed *"Vapore Austriaco"* but bearing 12 k. double port to port ROPiT rate, cancelled by pen crosses. The cover was first delivered to the ROPiT office in Constantinople showing arrival cds in blue on reverse (Tchilinghirian fig. 13). Transferred to Austrian services, struck in transit with framed "LETTERE ARIVATE / PER MARE / VARNA" datestamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 115), and sent further on to Trieste with arrival datestamp on reverse.

On arrival charged with '40' kreuzer due for a double weight letter with blue crayon. This 40 kreuzer due were calculated from twice 15 soldi for the Levant to Austria rate plus twice 5 soldi zutaxe (charging fee).

An exceptional part paid cover using prepayment for the first part of the journey until Constantinople and payment by the receiver for the part of the journey beyond Constantinople.

This second type of a Varna transit mark is known from 1870 until 1875 and always shows the Italian misspelling ARIVATE instead of ARRIVATE.

Ex collections Cihangir & Dr. Casey.

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Via Varna

1875, Constantinople to Netstal, Switzerland, bearing pair 1867 coarse whiskers 10 so. blue, tied in transit by framed "LETTERE ARIVATE / PER MARE / VARNA" datestamp (Tchilinghirian fig. 115). Transit and NETTSTAL arrival cds's on reverse.

1886, Bursa to Lyon, endorsed "*via Varna*", bearing Turkey 1884 issue 1 pi. blue & light blue, tied by Turkish "CONSTANTINOPLE-GALATA" cds, sent with Lloyd vessel to Varna. Transit and arrival marks on front and reverse.

Late use of the Varna route prior to the establishment of the completed Orient Express line in 1888.

4.2. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Austrian ship lines - Varna route

The Lloyd agency in Constantinople received a lot of mail from the Varna - Constantinople connection, also from Bulgarian, Romanian, Russian and French vessels with the adhesives not yet cancelled.

These foreign adhesives were cancelled by a handstamp, which simply mentioned that this item was coming from the high seas. It showed again the wrong spelling of the Italian word ARIVATE instead of ARRIVATE. This handstamp was introduced in 1870 and was used from time to time up to 1914.

```
LETTERE ARIVATE
   PER MARE
```


1911, picture postcard with Varna motif, written - as the Russian text says - on board of the Bulgarian steamer 'Prince Boris' on its way from Varna to Constantinople, and directed towards Ismail in Bessarabia. It was bearing a Bulgarian Ferdinand issue 10 stotinki red & black adhesive, tied in Constantinople with black framed "LETTERE ARIVATE / PER MARE" (Tchilinghirian fig. 116).

The postcard was missorted in Constantinople and directed to Ismailia in Egypt. It arrived one week later in ALEXANDRIA, Egypt, where the correct destination Ismail in Bessarabia was recognised. The card was obviously returned through the Mediterranean, sent the correct way through the Black Sea, and arrived in "ISMAIL BESSARABIA".

4.3. Mail beyond the Black Sea - French maritime services

Following the Crimean War, the French Compagnie des Services Messageries Imperiales opened post offices along the Western and Southern shore of the Black Sea and ship services have been offered to the public from Constantinople to Trebizonde and to Galatz.

Rare French shipmail entering the Black Sea.

1869 (Sept 18), Marseilles to Galatz, bearing Napoléon laureated 40 c. orange, tied by Anchor lozenge in blue (Salles fig. 836) with "LIGNE U PAQ. FR. No 3" cds (Salles fig. 881/3), in the same shade alongside. Reverse with "CONSTANTINOPLE TURQUIE" transit cds in black of the French P.O. and cogwheel "GALATZ MOLDAVIE" arrival cds in blue.

The ship line 'U' was the Levant line from Marseille to Constantinople and this letter was presumably taken with the vessel 'Amérique' leaving Marseille on September 18 and reaching Constantinople on September 26. There, mail was changed to a low-depth vessel which could enter the Danube estuary (presumably the 'Balkan').

Ex collection Berkinshaw-Smith.

4.4.   Mail beyond the Black Sea - Russian maritime services

The Russians opened the door to the Black Sea after the victory in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768 -
74, which granted them the same privileges other nations already had, e. g. the opening of a postal
service in the Ottoman Empire. By 1779 a Russian maritime mail service between the Consular Post
Office in Constantinople and Cherson, Kerch, and Azov, respectively, was established. In 1781, an
additional overland postal service was opened. The first postmarks came into use in the 1830s.

1842 (Jan), Constantinople to Odessa, reverse with despatch cds of the Consular Post
Office "КОНСТАНТИНОПОЛЬ" (Tchilinghirian fig. 2) in red, known to be in use between
1838 and 1852. Handwritten registry note "Ricevuto 16. Feb[io]".

4.4. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Russian maritime services

After the Crimean war the Russian Company for Steam Shipping and Trade (ROPiT) was founded. Thus, postal services on the Black Sea were offered by the consular office, but also by the ROPiT office in Constantinople

Reverse (x 0.75)

Late activity of the Russian Consular P.O. in Constantinople.

1862 (Oct 23), fully pre-paid from Constantinople to Jakobstad, Finland, reverse with КОНСТАНТИНОПОЛЬ despatch cds of the Consular Post Office (Tchilinghirian fig. 3) in blue and Jakobstad archive note (Nov 24).

Extremely late usage of this datestamp on stampless cover at the Consular Office in Constantinople - Pera, at which postage stamps were issued only three weeks later (November 12, 1862). The FRANCO mark (Tchilinghirian fig. 7) in blue on front was believed to have been used on Levant port to port letters. This cover establishes its use at the Consular P.O. rather than the ROPiT office in Constantinople to which it had been attributed in the past.

Ex collection Dr. Casey.

4.4. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Russian maritime services

Mail from Russia to the Levant was first conveyed to Odessa from where ROPiT steamers delivered it to Constantinople. Other North - South connections across the Black Sea did not exist.

1865, Taganrog to Constantinople, endorsed "Одесский пароход"(steamer from Odessa), bearing single 30 k. rate franking with late usage of three examples of 1858 10 k. brown & blue perf. 12½, tied by ТАГАНРОГЪ cds.

Ex collections Fabergé & Provera.

1866, Taganrog to Constantinople, endorsed "в Константинополь / Одесса пароход"(to Constantinople / with steamer from Odessa), bearing **triple 90 k. rate franking** with block of four 20 k. blue & orange and single 10 k. brown & blue, tied by ТАГАНРОГЪ cds.

Ex collection Provera.

4.4. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Russian maritime services

Mail from Constantinople to Russia was conveyed first to Odessa, from where it was distributed by the Russian inland lines of the ROPiT to the different harbours.

 forwarded to Kerch

Rare double rate cover with pair of ROPiT adhesives, scarce multiple.

1868 (April), from the ROPiT P.O. in Constantinople via Odessa to Nikolaev, forwarded to Kerch.

Cover bearing **pair** of 1868 ROPiT issue 2 pi. deep blue & rose, tied by mute lozenge of diamond obliterator (Tchilinghirian fig. 6) in blue, tied lightly in addition by "Р.О.Р.и Т. / КОНСТАНТИНОП. АГЕНТ." despatch cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 8) in the same blue shade. Reverse with ОДЕССА transit cds (April 19). Directed to Captain Pietro Leva of the Austrian brig 'Ino' in Nikolajev at the Southern Bug, where the cover arrived on April 20 and was struck by "НИКОЛIАЕВЪ ХЕРС." arrival cds. However, the brig including its captain had already left Nikolajev and the cover was therefore forwarded in manuscript to Kerch *"Керч Лева Австр. Судно Ино"* (Kerch / Leva / Austr. Vessel Ino).

Following the usage of Imperial Russian adhesives from 1862 to 1865 (and sometimes up to 1867, see sheet 21 in frame 2), ROPiT issues came into use from 1865 to 1868, followed by Russian Levant issues from 1868 to 1914.

An impressive provenance, ex collections Agathon Fabergé, H. C. Goss, Cengiz Arsman & Gregory Frantz.

4.4. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Russian maritime services

Adhesives of the Russian Levant were issued in May 1868 and have been in use up to 1914 in all Russian post offices under study. They show the inscription "Eastern Correspondence".

1872, Constantinople ROPiT P.O. to Taganrog, bearing Russian Levant 10 k. adhesive, tied by "КОНСТ-ПОЛІСК. АГЕНСТВО" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 13) in blue. ODESSA transit and TAGANROG arrival cds's alongside.

Ex collection Andrew Cronin.

1876, Constantinople ROPiT P.O. to Taganrog, bearing two Russian Levant 8 k. on 10 k. overprinted adhesives, tied by "КОНСТАНТИН." cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 12). ODESSA transit cds on reverse and TAGANROG arrival cds alongside. UPU double rate entire.

Ex collection Agathon Fabergé.

Following the establishment of the General Postal Union in 1875, the Russian Levant rates were reduced on 19 June 1875 (1st July 1875, gregorian) from 10 kopeks to 8 kopeks, in a second step on 20 March 1879 to 7 kopeks. In Constantinople, existing stock of the 10 kopeks adhesives were over-printed in 1876 with '8' k. (see sheet before), then in 1879 with a 'thick 7' or a rare 'thin 7'. Other Levant P.O.'s sold the 10 k. adhesives at 8 or 7 k., respectively, until in 1879 new adhesives were issued.

1880 (Aug.), Constantinople ROPiT P.O. to Odessa, bearing Russian Levant adhesive with the very rare **'thin 7' k. on 10 k. overprint,** tied by КОНСТАНТИНПОЛЬ cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 15). ODESSA arrival cds on reverse.

After the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877/78 the ROPiT post offices in the Levant were re-opened and got new datestamps. The present KONSTANTINOPOL cds was in use from 1878 to 1881, it is the only datestamp without outer circle which suggests a locally made emergency solution.

Ex collections A. Kohane & Provera.

4.4. Mail beyond the Black Sea - Russian maritime services

Mail across the Black Sea was sometimes directed to so called zemstvo postal districts. This is a group of partially independent administrative units acting in rural areas of Russia, where no Imperial postal services where available. Zemstvos could run postal services and issue their own adhesives. Mail going outside these zemstvos was given to the Imperial Post for further transport within Russia or abroad. The procedure was identical for mail coming from Russia or abroad and which was directed into a Zemstvo.

Part pre-payment from the Levant to a Russian zemstvo, interaction of three different Russian postal administrations.

1893 (Nov 11), Constantinople ROPiT P.O. to Merefa, a village located in the Kharkov zemstvo district, bearing 1890 Russian Levant 10 k. adhesive, tied by "Р.О.П.иТ. КОНСТАНТИНОПОЛЬ" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 17). ODESSA and KHARKOV transit cds's on reverse.

Upon arrival in the Zemstvo administration a 5 k. local stamp ultramarine & gold of the 1893 issue (Schmidt no. 29) was added and tied by the oval "KHARKOVSKAGO UEZD / ZEMSKAYA POCHTA" datestamp in purple (Nov 25). These 5 k. paid the way from the Imperial P.O. in Kharkov into the Zemstvo and can be seen in this case as postage due. The cover was refused by the addressee.

Ex collections Oleg Fabergé and Dimitriy Nikitin.

The German postal administration in the Levant used primarily Austrian maritime services via Trieste or via Varna but alternatively also Russian services via Odessa. Prior to the GPU, different rates had to be paid for these two ways.
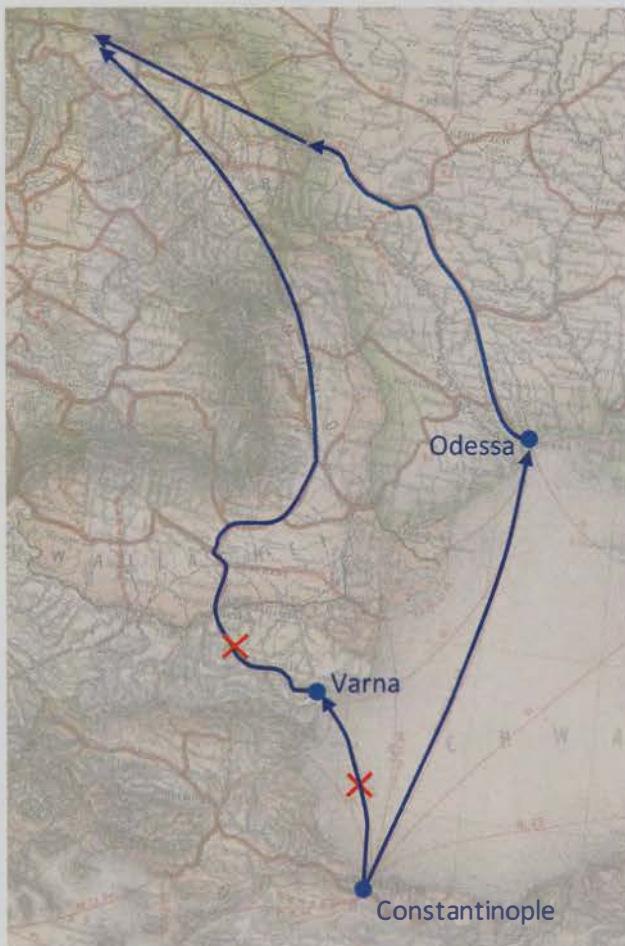
Two Routes on one cover. 1875 (Nov 8), German P.O. in Constantinople to Lyon in France, endorsed first *"Voie de Varna"*, then *"Odessa"*, bearing Imperial German 5 pf. mauve, 20 pf. blue , and 25 pf. brown adhesives, tied by "KAISERL. DEUTSCH. P.A. CONSTANTINOPEL" cds. French entry cds in blue alongside and LYON arrival cds on reverse.

As France did not become member of the GPU before January 1st, 1876, the bilateral contracts were still valid. For the transport via Varna with the Austrian Lloyd 45 pf. had to be paid, with the ROPiT via Odessa 50 pf. **This cover shows both routes at the same time in one cover.** The sender chose first the cheaper and faster service via Varna and franked it correctly with 45 pf. However, directly thereafter he changed his mind, the cover should now go via Odessa and an additional 5 pf. stamp was added. But why to choose a slower and more expensive service? This is simply because the vessel to Odessa left the same day, the one to Varna two days later. Using the faster Austrian service would have resulted in a later arrival.

Ex collection Herry Schäfer.

4.5. Mail beyond the Black Sea - From Europe to the Levant - Bulgaria

This subsection will describe meaningful covers transported from Europe to the Levant and vice versa, passing the Black Sea, and using different postal services described above.

Until October 1860 the only feasible way from south-eastern Europe to the Levant was down the Danube to Braila or Galatz and changing there to a vessel of the Austrian Lloyd or the French Messageries Imperiales heading for Constantinople.

In October 1860, the Czernavoda - Kustendje railway line was opened which shortened the way considerably. The cover shown below was mailed in November 1860 and could have therefore profited from the new railway line. As it does not show transit cds's from Czernavoda or Kustendje, this seems to be, however, not to be the case.
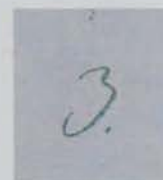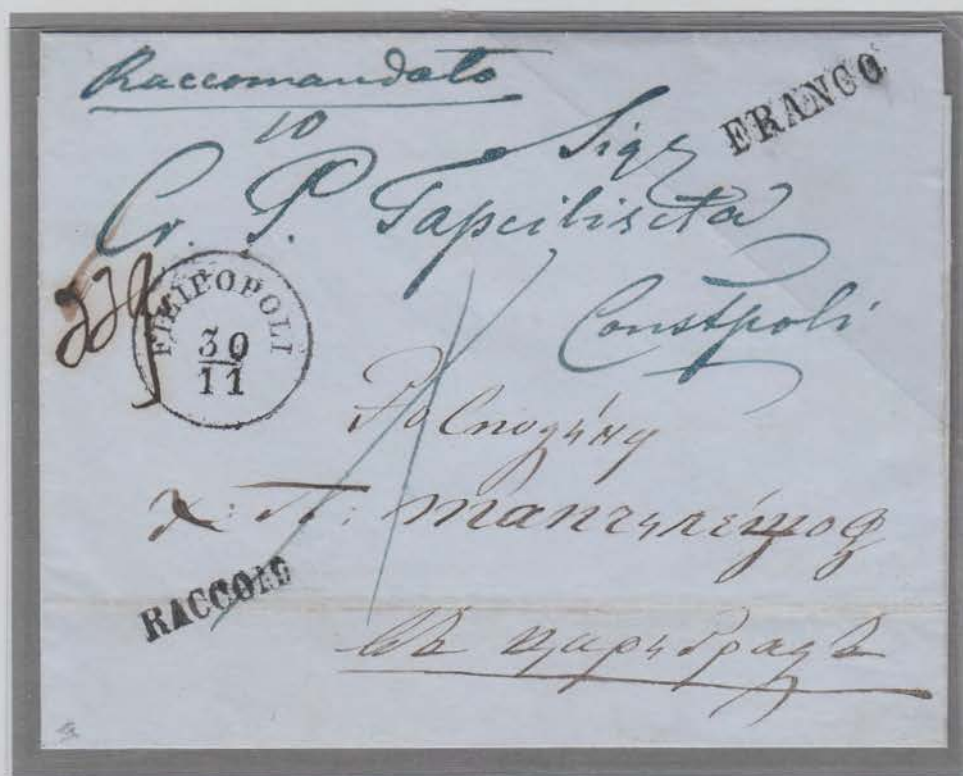
30 soldi
prepaid
(on reverse)

From later Bulgaria down the Danube and with shipmail to Constantinople.

1860 (Nov 30), registered Plovdiv to Constantinople, struck by FILIPOPOLI despatch cds as well as straight line FRANCO and RACCOM handstamps (Tchilinghirian figs. 868, 872 & 874), reverse by wreathed CONSTANTINOPEL arrival cds (Dec 3).

Fully prepaid with '3.' equal to 30 soldi noted on the reverse comprising 20 soldi Levant rate plus 10 soldi registration fee, these noted in addition with '10' on obverse below the handwritten endorsement "*Raccomandato*". **Rare registered mail.**

4.5.   Mail beyond the Black Sea - From Europe to the Levant - Bulgaria

The Ruschuk-Varna railway line changed the way from Europe to the Levant. Up to November 1866 mail was transported down the Danube to Galatz or Braila, changed to a vessel with deep draft and made its way to Constantinople. Alternatively, it used the Czernavoda - Kustendje railway. After that date, mail was transferred to the newly opened Ruschuk-Varna railway line shortening the way to Constantinople by three days.

Before the Ruschuk-Varna railway line 1866 (May 15), Svishtov (Sistov) to Constantinople, bearing pair of Austrian Levant Arms 10 so. blue, cancelled by pen strikes. Reverse with Constantinople arrival cds (30 / 5).
Transport time 15 days.

Few covers from the years 1865/1866 despatched at the Sistov DDSG office bear adhesives. These were not cancelled with the existing datestamp but instead **defaced by handwritten annotations such as "*von Sistov*" or with pen strikes.**

Via the Ruschuk-Varna railway line 1867 (Jan 28), Svishtov (Sistov) to Constantinople, internally dated '*from Svistov, Januar 28 1867*', obverse struck by "RUSTSCHUK 6/2" transit cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 877). Reverse with CONSTANTINOPEL arrival cds (Feb 8). Transport time 12 days.

Both ex collection Herry Schaefer.

From Eastern Rumelia with railway to Constantinople and then abroad.

After the treaty of Berlin in 1878, Eastern Rumelia (situated in the South-East of nowadays Bulgaria) was an administratively autonomous province in the Ottoman Empire. In September 1885 Eastern Rumelia became part of Bulgaria, a unification formally confirmed in April 1886. Mail from Eastern Rumelia sent abroad had always to be sent via Constantinople.

1884, formular postcard of Eastern Rumelia from Plovdiv to Livorno, bearing a 20 para Rumelian adhesive, tied by grill obliterator in green, bilingual PLOVDIV despatch and "CONSTANTINOPLE-GALATA" transit cds's alongside.

1884, formular postcard of Eastern Rumelia from Yambol to Moscow, bearing a 20 para Rumelian adhesive, tied by grill obliterator in bluish green. Bilingual "POSTE YAMBOL" despatch cds as well as "CONSTANTINOPLE-GALATA" & ODESSA transit cds's, and two arrival marks of Moscow alongside.

Incoming from Russia to Constantinople and then further with the Eastern Rumelia railway.

Front x 0.75

Rare railway mail in Eastern Roumelia.

1885 (Aug), incoming from Bolgrad (Russia) to Plovdiv (Philippople), bearing on reverse Imperial Russia Arms 7 k. blue, tied by BOLGRAD cds. Transit ODESSA and Turkish "CONSTANTINOPLE - GALATA" transit cds's. Scarce **"BUREAU AMBULANT DU TRAIN" T.P.O. cds of the Eastern Rumelian railway** and bilingual "PLOVDIV - PHILIPPOPLE" arrival cds, both in blue.

The railway line Constantinople - Plovdiv was part of the later Orient Express line which connected from August 1888 Paris with Constantinople via Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade & Sofia. However, from 1885 to 1888 the connection in the west between Nis in Serbia and Plovdiv was not yet finished. The part in the east from Plovdiv to Constantinople, however, was already in use.

From Romania with shipmail to Constantinople.

Until the 1860s, mail from Romania abroad could only be sent using foreign services. This changed with new postal conventions between Romania and Russia in November 1867, and between Romania and Austria in April 1869, respectively. These enabled Romania to send mail abroad without being forced to use foreign services. In the case of the cover shown below, however, Austrian maritime services were still used for the journey to Constantinople.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1871, Braila to Constantinople, bearing 15 bani & 25 bani of the so called 1869 'international issue', tied by BRAILA cds. Reverse with Constantinople arrival cds of the Austrian P.O.

Romanian 40 bani rate to the Ottoman Empire. '10' soldi in red crayon credited by the Romanian postal administration to the Austrian Lloyd reflecting the Oct 1866 Levant rate.

Ex collection Eduardo Cohen.

From Greece to Russia via Constantinople using different maritime services.

Mail between Greece and Russia via the Black Sea was always part paid mail. Fees from Greece had to be paid until Constantinople by the sender, the residual journey by the receiver in Russia as due. The Greek postage included the inland fee of 20 lepta per 15 grams plus 30 - 45 - 60 - 75 lepta up to 7.5 - 10 - 15 - 20 grams for the shipmail fee.

33 k. to be paid by the receiver and noted on obverse

1862 (Aug), Patras to Taganrog, letter of up to 7.5 grams bearing 1861 Paris print 40 l. lilac on blued plus 1862 10 l. orange on greenish, tied by dotted '9' numeral of PATRAS with matching despatch cds and "P.E.D." (Foreign Paid to Destination) in red alongside. Reverse with Athens transit cds.

63 k. double rate to be paid by the receiver and noted on obverse

1862 (Feb), Piraeus to Taganrog, double rate letter of up to 20 grams bearing 1861 Paris print 80 l. carmine & rose plus 1862 5 l. green on greenish, 10 l. orange on greenish, and 20 l. blue, tied by dotted '2' numeral of PIRAEUS with matching despatch cds and "P.E.D." in black alongside. **Rare four-colour franking, paying 40 lepta for Greece and 75 lepta for the shipmail to Constantinople.**

4.5. Mail beyond the Black Sea - From Europe to the Levant - Greece

From the Ionian Islands to Russia via Constantinople using different maritime services.

Since 1867 French maritime services and Austrian / Greek maritime services, respectively, had different rates and can therefore be distinguished. French rates were fixed at 45 lepta for 10 grams, Austrian & Greek rates were fixed at 40 lepta for 15 grams.

1872 (April), Argostoli on the island of Kefalonia (Ionian Islands) to Taganrog, endorsed "*Via Costantinopoli*", bearing 1861 Cleaned Plates 40 l. grey-mauve on blued, tied by dotted '110' numeral of "ARGOSTOLI (KERKYRA)" with matching despatch cds and framed PD in red alongside. Reverse with PATRAS transit and obverse with TAGANROG arrival cds.

Journey with Greek or Austrian vessel to Constantinople, the Russian due was not noted on the cover. Like with the two covers before the PED / PD handstamps were struck in error, as these covers were not fully prepaid.

Rare routing from the Ionian islands, as the majority from there to the Black Sea region and vice versa made its journey via Trieste and Vienna.

4.5. Mail beyond the Black Sea - From Europe to the Levant - Greece

From Russia to Greece via Constantinople using Russian & French maritime services.

Russian postage until Constantinople was prepaid by Russian adhesives, the residual journey had to be paid by the addressee with Greek adhesives used as due.

1872, Taganrog to Hydra, bearing pair Imperial Arms 10 k. brown & blue, tied by T.P.O. line no. 19-20 cds, KHARKOV train station and ODESSA transit cds's. Transfer from the ROPiT to the Greek postal system in CONSTANTINOPLE, further transit in PIRAEUS. On arrival in Hydra the cover was charged with 45 Lepta in red crayon, and Greek 40 & 5 l. adhesives were added.

1874 Berdiansk to Syra, bearing Imperial Arms 20 k. blue & orange and two examples of the 1 k. yellow & black, tied by BERDYANSK cds. ODESSA transit and SYROS arrival cds's on reverse. On arrival in Syra the cover was charged with 45 Lepta in blue crayon, and a pair of Greek 20 l. blue and 5 l. green adhesives were added.

From the Levant with Russian maritime services further to the United Kingdom.

1874, Constantinople to Manchester bearing combination franking Russian Levant 3 k. green with Imperial Arms 10 k. brown & blue plus pair 3 k. green & black, tied by "КОНСТ-ПОЛІСК" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 713) in blue. ODESSA and LONDON transit, as well as MANCHESTER arrival cds's. The cover was fully pre-paid ("оплачено" = paid, in circle), the rate was 3 k. for the Levant postage and 16 k. from Russia to England.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Odessa carantine
handstamp; regular
use 1853-54

1883, registered from Constantino-ple to a Turkish honey dealer in Brünn (Moravia), bearing pair Tur-key 1 pia. blue-grey & black. Sent to ODESSA, where it was disinfected, presumably with vinegar leading to its stained appearance. Odessa quarantine mark in extraordinary blue colour struck on the reverse (Dobin type 9.07, here without date), being an extremely late use of this mark. The Russian registra-tion mark "R in dots" was added to the envelope to clarify its registered nature. BRÜNN arrival cds.

From the Aegean Island of Chios with Egyptian maritime services to Constantinople, further with ROPiT and Russian railway through southern Bessarabia to Romania.

Reverse (x 0.75)
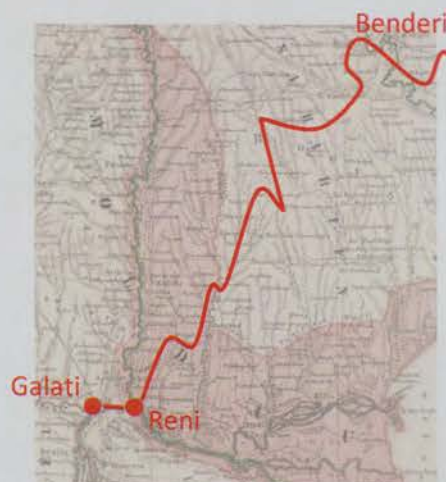
Southern Bessarabia :
Map shows the new railway line (Odessa -) Benderi at the border between Novorossiya and Bessarabia to Reni (T.P.O. line 75). The cover made its journey on this line, while the last miles from Reni to Galati at the Danube were done on a ship.

The area highlighted in red was ceded from Russia to Moldavia later Romania between 1856 and 1878.

Exceptional combination of Egyptian shipmail, Russian maritime and railway services for a cover to Romania, four postal administrations acting together with just the simple UPU rate paid.

1879, Egyptian post office in Chios to Romanian P.O. in Galati bearing Egyptian adhesive 1874/75 Bûlâq 1 pia. red, tied by "V. R. POSTE EGIZIANE / SCIO" cds (Smith type III-1.5). On reverse transit cds's of the Egyptian and the Turkish P.O.'s in CONSTANTINOPLE, of the Imperial P.O. in ODESSA, of the Russian T.P.O. no. 75 in Southern Bessarabia (Benderi to Reni, which is situated at the Danube nearby Galati) and GALATI arrival cds.

Reni belonged to a strip of Bessarabian ground, which had to be given to Moldavia after the lost Crimean War in 1856. This was done as a measure to prevent any Russian influence on the Danube estuary and thereby on this important European waterway. After the Russo-Turkish war of 1877/78, Russia got back this part of Southern Bessarabia, while the Danube delta became part of Romania. **Exceedingly early activity on the newly built Benderi - Reni railway line** directly after the war in 1879.

The **Egyptian Scio mark is known only on 17 covers**, with its majority directed to Constantinople.

4.5. Mail beyond the Black Sea - From Europe to the Levant - Mount Athos

From Russia to Mount Athos in the northern Aegean Sea.

Mount Athos (part of the Halkidiki peninsula in the northern Aegean) has been at the end of the 19th century a place where many orthodox monasteries were situated, primarily with Russian monks. Russians donated large sums of money.

The correspondence related to these donations was sent in four different ways. The most frequent way were forwarding addresses in Odessa or less frequently Constantinople.

Forwarder in Odessa: 1881, registered Temryuk, Kuban Oblast to merchant Butowich in Odessa, bearing two Arms 7 k. grey & pink adhesives, tied by TEMPIOK cds. On reverse Odessa arrival.

This cover was sent in favour of the Prior of the skite of Prophet Elias at Mount Athos. The merchant Butowich was an often used forwarder of this monastery. At the turn of the century, many monasteries opened townhouses in Odessa and Constantinople to simplify the forwarding process.

Direct mailing with ROPiT: 1893, Sunskaya, to the ROPiT P.O. at Daphni, Mount Athos, bearing 10 k. Imperial adhesive, tied by СУНСКАЯ cds. Transit ODESSA, "ROPiT P.O. KONSTANTINOPOL", and arrival "ROPiT P.O. AFON" (on front).
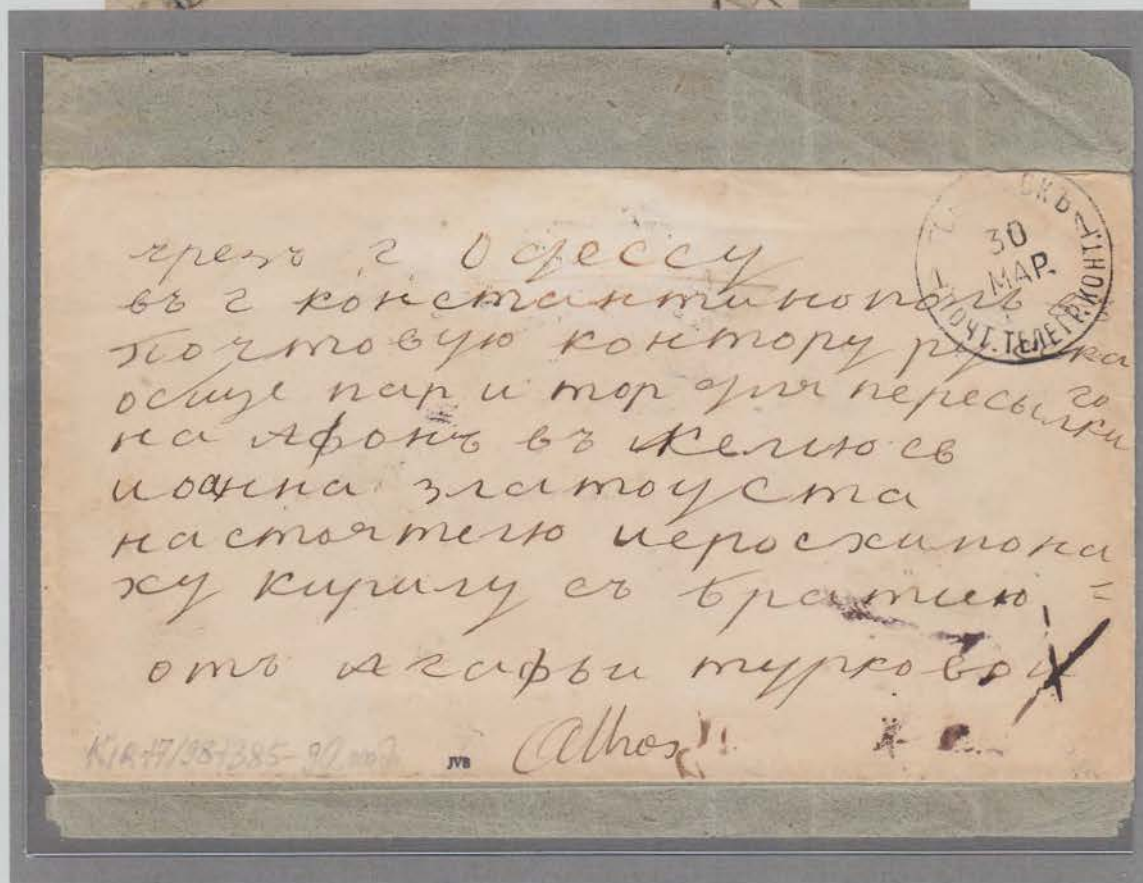
From Russia to Mount Athos in the northern Aegean Sea.

The most unusual way for correspondence with the monasteries have been vessels to Constantinople and then Turkish surface mail to the Ottoman Post office in Karyes, the capital of Mount Athos.

Reverse (x 0.75)

ROPiT plus Turkish surface mail: 1892, Tobolsk to the Ottoman Post office at Mount Athos, bearing Arms 7 k. blue adhesive, reflecting the Russian interior tariff. Stamp was tied by ТОБОЛСК cds. Transit ODESSA and ROPiT KONSTANTINOPOL, as well as arrival cds of Ottoman Post office "MONT-ATHOS" (Coles & Walker fig. 38) on reverse. The cover was taxed and 1 pia. **due** was attached to the reverse and cancelled by pen.

Glued to this cover is the front side of a value letter containing the original donation from Tobolsk from the same day to the townhouse of the monastery in Constantinople. It was normal practice to send the donation in a value letter and a separate confirmation letter, using two different routes. In the monastery, both covers were glued together and filed.

Ex collecction Agathon Fabergé.

From Mount Athos to Russia. This direction is much scarcer.

1894, ROPiT P.O. at Mount Athos to Vologda, bearing Russian Levant 10 k. adhesive, tied by "Р.О.П.иТ. АФОН" cds. On reverse ODESSA transit and VOLOGDA arrival cds's.

Ottoman P.O. at Mount Athos to Kazan province, bearing 1 pia. adhesive, tied by bilingual cds "ΑΥΙΟΝ OROS" (Coles & Walker fig. 39). Opened by the Russian customs at Odessa, printed matter was found as content, the cover was rejected and returned.

Ex collection Herry Schaefer.

4.6. Mail beyond the Black Sea - From the Levant to Asia - Lebanon

From Lebanon to Bulgaria with Lloyd shipmail.

Mail between distant parts of the Levant is scarce. Most of the correspondence made its journey to or from the trade centres in Western Europe, some between neighbouring harbours or as an exception to Constantinople.

Rare routing from Lebanon to Bulgaria.

1870, Beirut Lloyd P.O. to Ruschuk, franked with Austrian Levant 15 so. brown, tied by BERUTTI cds (Tranmer fig. 3), reverse with CONSTANTINOPEL transit cds.

The cover is despatched by Aron Jedid Levi, member of a famous Jewish family in Lebanon to a Sephardic Jew from Ruschuk. Aron Jedid Levi was presumably the father of Moise Jedid Levi, who is known to act as a forwarding agent of the Turkish post in Beirut in the 1890s. His grandson, also named Aron Jedid Levi was the owner of the J. Valero bank in Jerusalem, the first private bank in Palestine, operated until 1915.

From the Ottoman Empire to **Persia** with **ROPiT** shipmail and overland.

1880, Constantinople to Tabriz, bearing Russian Levant 'thick 7' on 10 k. overprint, tied by "КОНСТАНТИН." cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 12). TIFLIS transit and TABRIZ arrival marks on reverse.

1901, registered from Smyrna (nowadays Izmir in Turkey) to Isfahan, bearing pair Russian Levant 1 pia. on 10 k. blue adhesive, tied by "Р.О.П.и Т. СМИРНА" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 157) in violet. Cover shows "R in dots" registration handstamp in violet, although registration labels should have been available - especially in a post office of that importance. The cover was sent by ship to ODESSA, where it received a handwritten, provisional registration marking consisting of the number and the word "Odessa". Via TABRIZ in Persia the item reached its addressee.

From the Ottoman Empire to Persia with Austrian shipmail and overland.
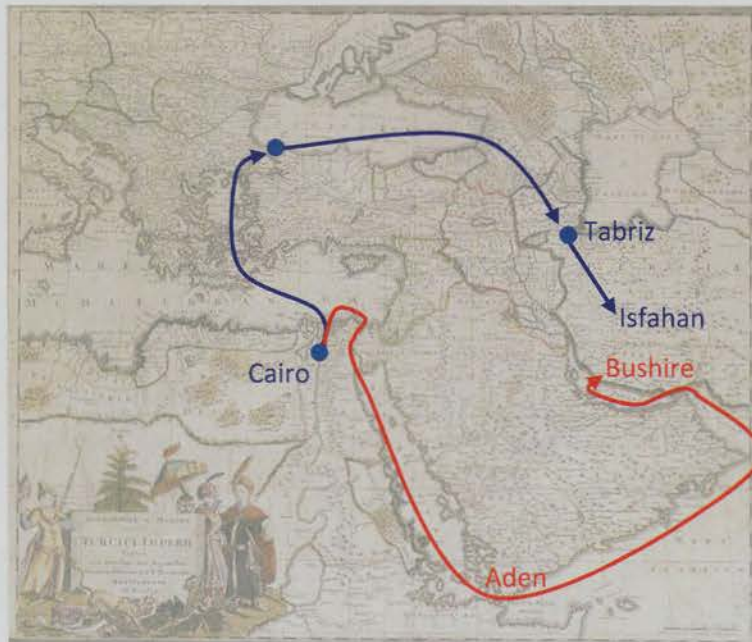

Reverse (x 0.75)

1893, Constantinople to Isfahan, bearing Austrian Levant 1 pia. on 10 kr. ultramarine. Transit Lloyd TREBISONDA (Tchilinghirian fig. 982), as well as Russian P.O.'s in BATUM and TIFLIS.

1896, Smyrna to Isfahan, bearing block of four Turkish 10 pa. green, tied by bilingual "SMYRNE-DEPARTS" cds (Coles & Walker fig. 58). Transit "CONSTANTINOPLE-GALATA" on front, TAURIS (= Tabriz in Persia), and TEHERAN.

Mail from Egypt to Persia or vice versa could be transported either via Constantinople and the Black Sea or alternatively via Aden around the Arabian Peninsula to Bushire. The collector knows 24 covers via Aden but **only four via Constantinople**. There are no obvious criteria for the selection of one or the other route.


Detail of reverse (x 0.75)

Rare mail from Egypt to Persia conveyed via the Black Sea.

1894, Chouria (Egypt) to Isfahan, bearing pair Egypt 5 mill., tied by "CHOURIA CAIRE" cds.
Transit CAIRE on reverse , "CONSTANTINOPLE-GALATA", and TABRIZ on front.

4.7. Mail beyond the Black Sea - From Africa to Asia - Egypt to Asia Minor

Mail from Egypt to Asia Minor or vice versa was always sent via Constantinople.
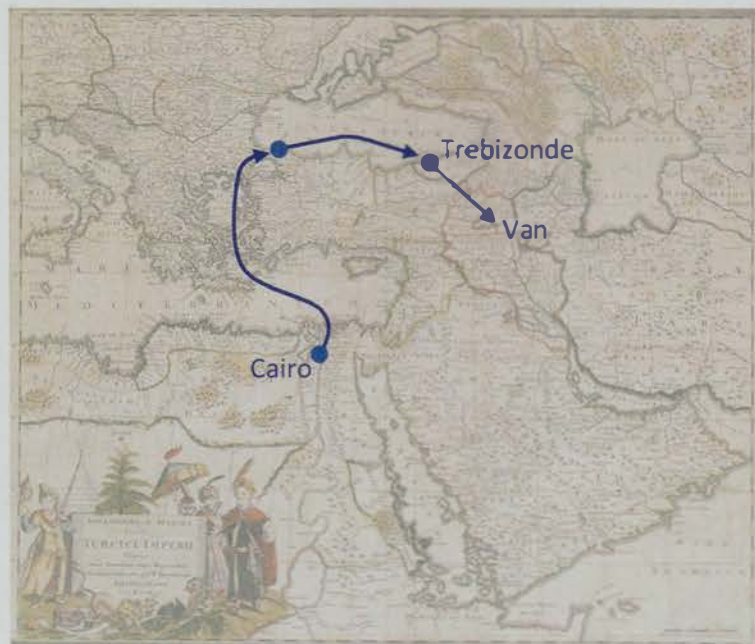
1905, Cairo to the British Vice-Consul in Van in Eastern Anatolia, endorsed *"Via Trebizonde"*, indicium cancelled by CAIRE despatch cds, reverse with "CONSTANTINOPLE-GALATA" transit cds, bilingual VAN arrival cds on front.

Ex collection Herry Schaefer

Mail from Asia Minor to Syria was always sent via Constantinople.

RRRR

**Exceedingly early ROPiT mail from the Black Sea to Syria, only known cover.**

1865 (Dec), opened out cover from Trebizond via Constantinople and Alexandretta on the Mediterranean Sea to Aleppo, Syria (Halep - Հալէպ in Armenian), bearing ROPIT 1866 2 pia. blue & rose. Adhesive tied by "ПОРТ ТРЕВИЗОНДЪ" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 96) in blue, letter sent via "ПОРТ АЛЕКСАНДРЕТТА" (Tchilinghirian fig. 198) in blue on revers. For the final leg of the journey beyond Alexandretta it was charged with red crayon with "1 / -" (piastre).

Ex collections Cengiz Arsman and Dr. Casey.

4.7.   Mail beyond the Black Sea - From Asia to Asia - India to Central Asia

Mail from British India to Russian Central Asia took long ways to avoid the Hindu Kush. One way was through the Arabian Sea, the Suez channel, Constantinople, the Black and Kaspian Sea, the other even longer via Brindisi, Vienna, and Moscow.
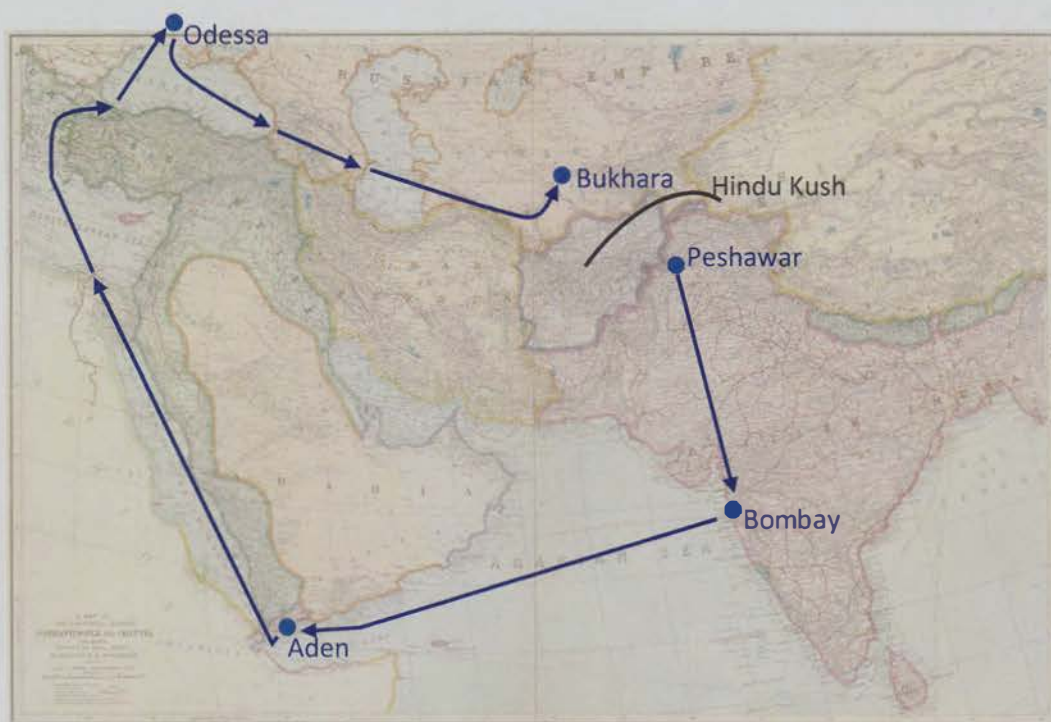
Detail of front (x 0.75)

1900 (April 3), Karimpura (part of Peshawar, British India) to Bukhara (Russian Central Asia, nowadays Uzbekistan).
KARIMPURA despatch cds, transit mark "SEA POST OFFICE" (Bombay - Aden - Suez line), ODESSA transit, and BUKHARA arrival (April 21).

Odessa ОБЕЗЗАРАЖЕНО quarantine handstamp.

5.1. Russo – Turkish War 1828/29

Between 1568 and 1918, in total twelve wars were fought between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires. The war of 1828/29 was a direct consequence of the Greek War of Independence.

1828, official cover from Riga to the pastor of Arrasch (today Araiši in Latvia), Riga despatch cds (Dobin type 2.04).

This cover includes the German translation of an official bulletin describing the first actions at the theatre of war with the successful crossing of the Danube, compiled on May 30, 1828. The bulletin is signed by general Diebitsch. These bulletins were sent to the different parishes in Livland to be read to the community.

Hans Karl von Diebitsch - Zabalkansky (1785-1831)

Nach dem Uebergange unserer Avantgarde über die Donau, am 27. dieses, fuhren die Truppen der 3ten Infanterie-Division fort, auf das rechte Ufer des Flusses überzusetzen, wobei sie von Seiten des sich entfernenden Feindes nicht beunruhigt wurden. Als die Truppen am 29. vor der Festung Jsaktschi ankomen, erhielten sie aus derselben die Nachricht, daß die Garnison dieser Festung, unter Anführung von Hassan- und Ejub-Pascha, bereit sey, sich auf Kapitulation zu ergeben, und am 30. dieses ergab sich dieselbe auch, in Gegenwart des Herrn und Kaisers, unbedingt. Beiden Paschas, die die Schlüssel der Festung übergaben, und der ganzen Garnison, welche die Waffen niederlegte, ist Allerhöchst gestattet worden, in ihr Vaterland zurückzukehren. 85 Kanonen, 18 Fahnen und eine sehr bedeutende Menge von Kriegs- sowohl als Mund-Vorräthen ist in die Hände der Sieger gefallen. Gegen 2 Uhr Nachmittags zog das Muromsche Infanterie-Regiment mit fliegenden Fahnen und unter Trommelschlag, von beiden Paschas geführt, in die Festung und besetzte sie, wobei die Einwohner ihren Handel und ihre gewöhnlichen Beschäftigungen ruhig fortsetzten.

Zur nämlichen Zeit, als die Garnison dieser Festung unseren Waffen sich ergab, ging von Seiner Kaiserlichen Hoheit dem Großfürsten Michael Pawlowitsch die Nachricht ein, daß am 29. dieses durch unsere Flottille die einzige Communication der Festung Brailow mit dem rechten Donau-Ufer völlig unterbrochen worden ist. 6 Fahrzeuge, unter Anführung des Capitains vom 2ten Range Resanoff und die Ufer-Batterie des Oberstlieutenants Mokalinski, haben, durch Ablenkung der Aufmerksamkeit der Festung, dahin mitgewirkt, daß 16 Fahrzeuge, unter Kommando des Capitains vom 1sten Range Sairadofsky die Türkische Flottille überfallen und sie fast gänzlich vernichtet haben. Bei dieser Gelegenheit sind 4 Schaluppen, 7 Kanonierböte, das Boot des Anführers der feindlichen Flottille mit der Flagge und wichtigen Papieren, und mit der ganzen Artillerie genommen worden; die übrigen Fahrzeuge sind zerstört und auf eine Sandbank gerathen, und nur 6 derselben ist es gelungen, sich in Matschin zu verbergen. — Der Verlust von unserer Seite beläuft sich, Dank sey es dem Höchsten, nur auf 10 Mann an Todten und Verwundeten.

Das Original ist unterschrieben: General-Adjutant Graf Dibitsch.
Den 30. May.

5.2. Crimean War 1853/56 - Austria

The Crimean war was a conflict between Russia on one side and the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain, France, and Sardinia on the other side. While Austria stayed "neutral" it occupied the Danubian Principalities, the later Romania in July 1854.
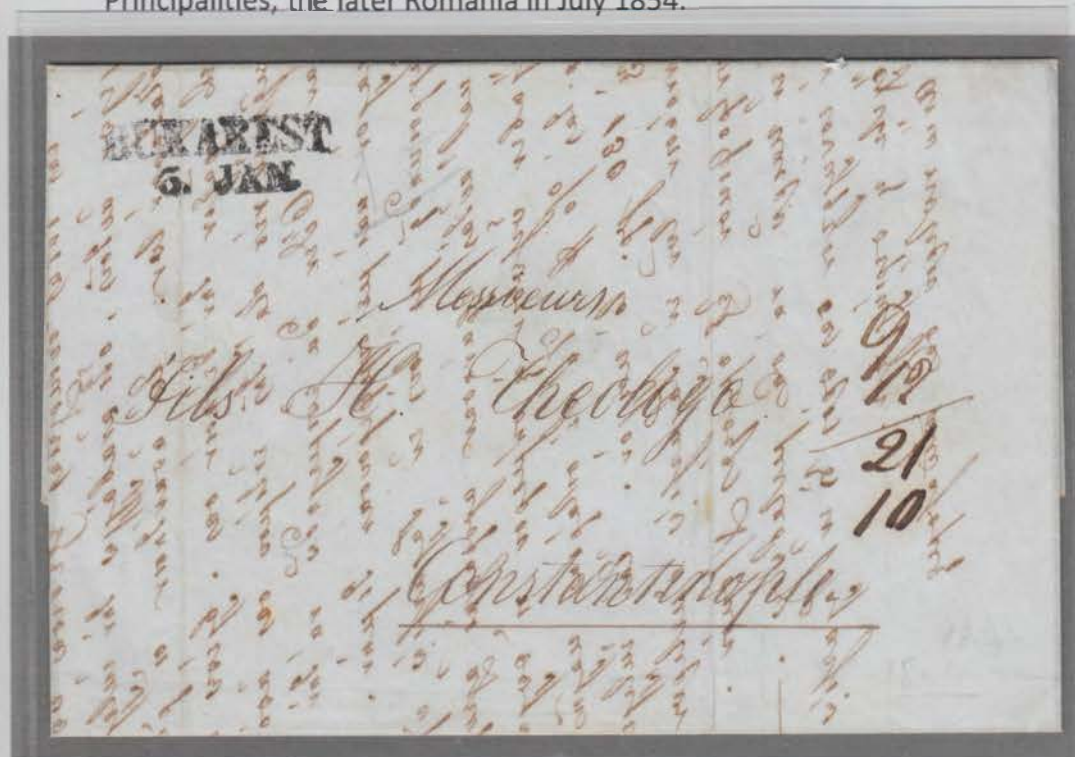
Porto cover with taxation of "9 + 12 = 21 + 10" (kreuzer) paying 9 kreuzer for the journey via Rothenthurm back to Transylvania, 12 kreuzer for the Levant rate via Semlin to Constantinople plus 10 kreuzer zutaxe.

1854 (Jan 3), unpaid Bucharest overland to Constantinople, despatched at the Austrian consular P.O. (Tchilinghirian fig. 710). At that time, prior to the Austrian occupation of the Principalities, there had been hostilities between Russian and Ottoman troops on Romanian ground at the Danube. This prevented a direct journey to Constantinople and resulted in a detour of the cover back to Austria and the overland mailing to Constantinople.

1855 (Aug 30), Bucharest franco to Constantinople, despatched at the Austrian consular P.O. (Tchilinghirian fig. 713). Aside this consular service, Fieldpost mail services were established.

5.2. Crimean War 1853/56 - Austria

The Danube campaign began when the Russians occupied the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Walachia in May 1853. Like the British, the Austrians realized that an intact Ottoman Empire was necessary as a bulwark against the Russians. Therefore, Austrian troops were concentrated in Transylvania forcing the Russians to abandon the Principalities in June 1854. In late July 1854, the Russian withdrawal was complete and their place in the Principalities was taken by the Austrians, as a neutral peacekeeping force.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1855 (June), Craiova in Walachia to Vienna, despatched at the Austrian Fieldpost office, bearing Imperial Austrian 6 kr. brown and 9 kr. blue adhesives, tied by „KK. ÖST. F.P. KRAJOVA" cds (Tchilinghirian fig. 735). Reverse with "gereinigt b. k.k. Rastelamte ALT-ORSOVA" quarantine, TEMESVAR and WIEN datestamps. A rare usage at Civilian rate through the Military Post Office during the Crimean War. 6 kr. postage for the Levant and 9 kr. for Austria.

Ex collection Piat-Dewavrin.

5.2. Crimean War 1853/56 - France

During the Crimean War, French vessels transported troops and material using Constantinople and Varna as their military bases. The "Armée d'Orient" built up an extensive postal system for their 400'000 servicemen and officers.

1855 (May 10), unpaid cover written in Constantinople and posted at the Main Fieldpost Office, sent to Ste. Foy-les-Lyon. Circular datestamp "ARMEE D'ORIENT / Bau. Gal." of the F.P.O., MARSEILLE transit and LYON arrival (May 20) cds's on reverse. The cover was taxed with 30 centimes upon arrival.


1854 (Aug 29), fully paid cover from the French camp nearby Varna and posted at the Main Fieldpost Office, sent to Paris, bearing Napoléon imperforated 10 c. bistre in a strip of four, tied by dotted 'AOQG' lozenge, matching "ARMEE D'ORIENT / QUARTe Gal." of the F.P.O. alongside, reverse with PARIS arrival cds (Sept 8). **Rare combination to pay the double rate.**

Ex collection Piat-Dewavrin.

5.2. Crimean War 1853/56 - Sardinia

The Kingdom of Sardinia provided the smallest contingent of the allies, joining them in May 1855. Fieldpost material from these troops is accordingly rarely seen.
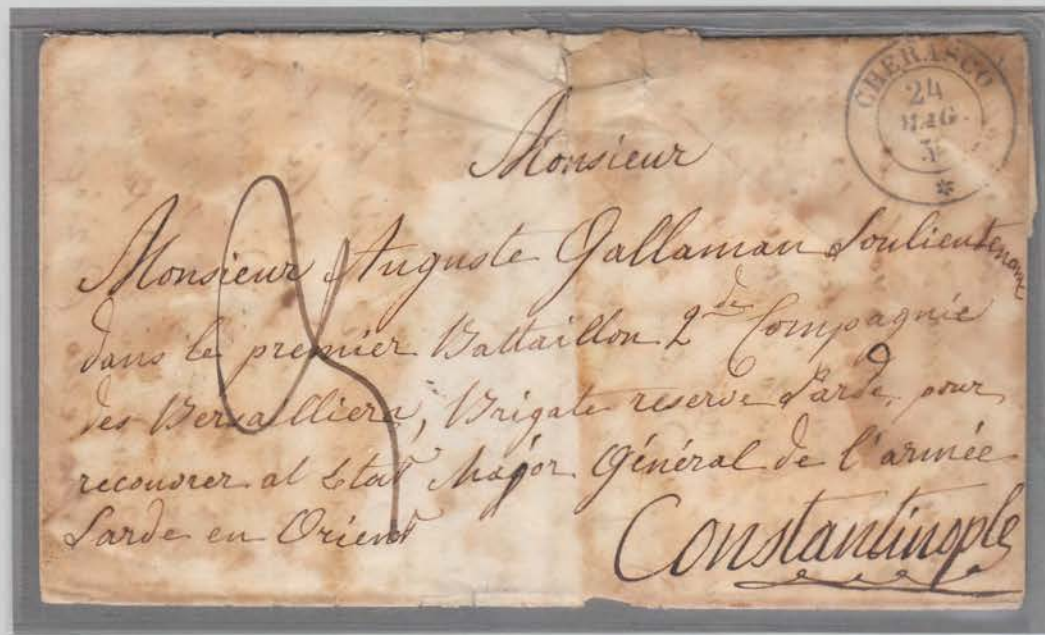
Incoming: 1855 (May 24), entire letter from Cherasco, Piemont to a Sardinian serviceman in the reserve brigade located in Constantinople. CHERASCO despatch cds on obverse, TORINO transit cds and rare Fieldpost "R. POSTA MILe SARDA 7 GIU 55" cds on reverse. The cover was cleaned with vinegar and taxed with 3 d. upon arrival.

An exceedingly early cover to the theatre of war, sent during the first month of the acting Sardinian troops.
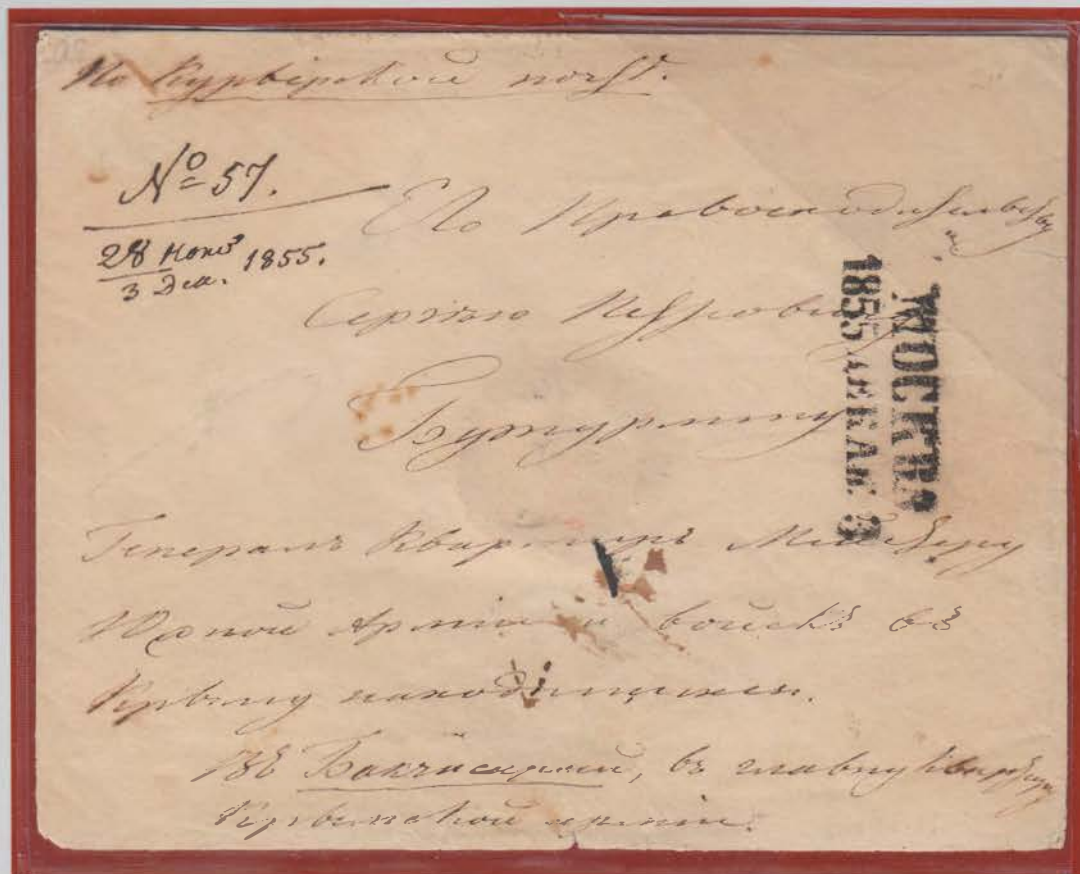

Outgoing: 1855 (July 10), entire letter to Albenga, "R. POSTA MILre SARDA" despatch cds, GENOVA transit and ALBENGA arrival (July 24) cds's on reverse.

Both ex collection Herry Schaefer.

5.2. Crimean War 1853/56 - Russia

Most of the mail from the Crimean War comes from French and British sources. Although 200'000 British and 400'000 French soldiers were fighting against about 700'000 Russian officers and servicemen, **mail from Russian sources is extremely rare.** This is due to the widespread illiteracy in Russia and the loss of archives in the past.

1855 (Dec), stationery envelope from Moscow to Bakhchysarai on Crimea, struck by two line "МОСКВА 1855 ДЕКАЯ 3" datestamp. Sent to „Quartermaster General Sergei Petrovich Buturlin - Southern Army - Bakhchysarai" from a member of his own family in Moscow, endorsed with handwritten „По Курьерсой Почте" (With Courier Mail).

The 10 k. stationery envelope paid the normal inland rate.

After the fall of Sevastopol on September 9, 1855, Russian headquarters were retracted from there to Bakhchysarai, only few kilometres away from Sevastopol.

Ex collection Piat-Dewavrin.

Wax seal on reverse with Coat of Arms of the Buturlin family

Sergei Petrovich Buturlin (1803 - 1873); picture from about 1870

5.2. Crimean War 1853/56 – United Kingdom

The British raised a smaller troop contingent in comparison to the French, but their fleet was essential in the theatre of war. Ingoing and outgoing military, naval, medical, and civil mail can be documented.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Ingoing military mail: 1854 (April 17), from Brighton to an ensign of the "Army of occupation, Gallipoli", three-colour franking of the **rare 1s-3d-rate**, sent via London and Calais and forwarded by the French "ARMEE D'ORIENT Beau SEDre" F.P.O. to its receiver.

Very early cover as British troops did not arrive in Gallipoli earlier than April 4, and the 3 d. concessionary rate was not introduced earlier than May 22. **One of the first ingoing British covers at all.**

Reverse (x 0.75)

Ingoing medical mail: 1854 (July 28), from London ex 'Pall Mall' to "Dr. Hall, Inspector General of the Hospitals, British Army Varna", 3 d. concession rate and 1 d. late fee placed sideways.

Dr. John Hall was the implacable foe of Florence Nightingale.

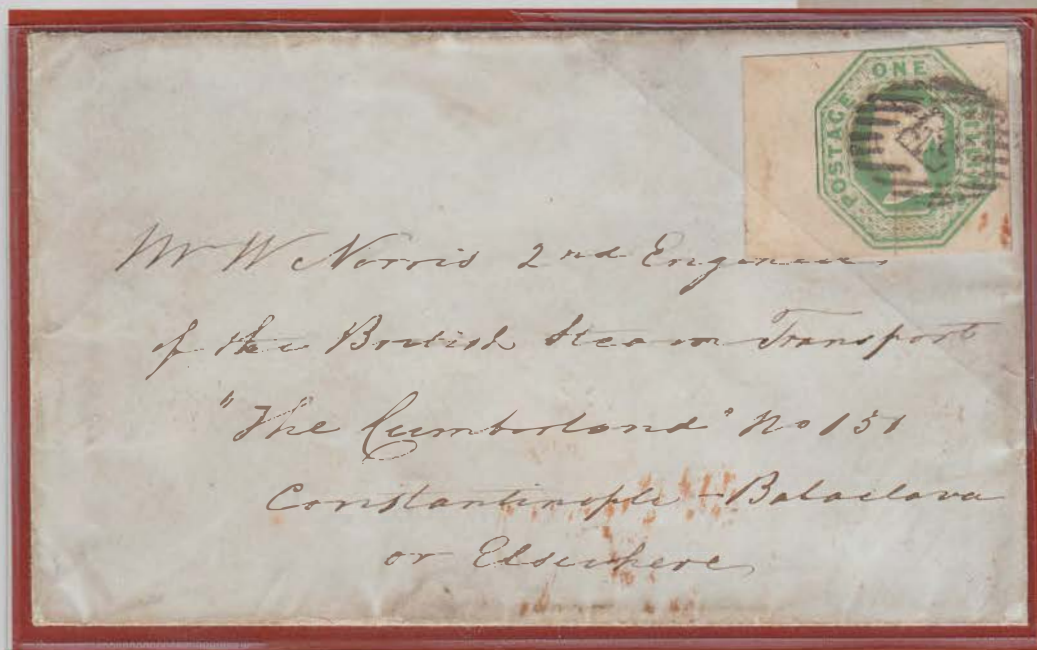Both covers ex collections Sybil Morgan and François Piat-Dewavrin.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Ingoing military mail: 1855 (March 27), from Cornhill, London to an officer of the "77th Regiment, British army, Crimea", bearing single 6 d. violet Embossed franking for a double 3 d. concessionary rate.

Ex collections Kelly Tighe and François Piat-Dewavrin.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Ingoing naval mail: 1855 (March 23), from Cornhill, London to a "2nd engineer on the Transport Ship 'The Cumberland' No. 151, Constantinople, Balaklava or Elsewhere", single 1/-green Embossed franking for a **quadruple 3 d. concessionary rate.**

Mail to transport ships is rare.

Ex collections Peter Chadwick and François Piat-Dewavrin.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Ingoing civil mail: 1855 (June 18), from London to "Mr. James Golborne, Kadikoi, Post Office Balaklava" via Calais and "ARMEE D'ORIENT / QUARTR. / GAL. 2 JUIL. 1855" French F.P.O. transit cds **Rare civilian 11d-rate cover** via Southampton to the heart of the Campaign area, 10 d. brown Embossed & 1 d. red franking.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Ingoing military mail to the Mediterranean Forces: 1855 (Aug 16), from Thirsk, North Yorkshire via London to "Major Crompton, 2nd West York Light Infantry, Gibraltar", bearing single 6 d. violet Embossed franking for a double 3 d. concessionary rate.

Relief troops for the theatre of war were transported via the Mediterranean with ports of call at Gibraltar, Malta, Ionian Islands, and Constantinople.

Both ex collection François Piat-Dewavrin.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Outgoing: 1855 (Oct 30), sent "from the Army in the Crimea" and "via Marseilles" to Liverpool, taxed "3" (d.), "BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE OC 30 1855" in green (type B for Balaclava), "GO NO 12 1855" of the London General PO in red, and "LIVERPOOL NO 12 1855" arrival cds in blue on reverse.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Outgoing: 1856 (March), to London, bearing pair and single of 1 d. red-brown, tied by "Star and Cyphers" barred obliterator, commonly called OXO mark in bluish shade. Red arrival (April 10) and handwritten notation "*Peace just proclaimed*" on reverse.

The peace treaty of Paris was signed on March 30, 1856.

Prisoner of war mail.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1854 (Aug), cover without content sent from Odessa to Cashel, Ireland. Odessa border post office oval mark "ОДЕССА" (Dobin type 1.08) on front and a "*Porto*" mark (Dobin type 8.01) on reverse. It passed the T.P.O. "BRESLAU BERLIN 20 / 8" where it received an "AUS RUSSLAND" mark. Additional red London transit marks on reverse.
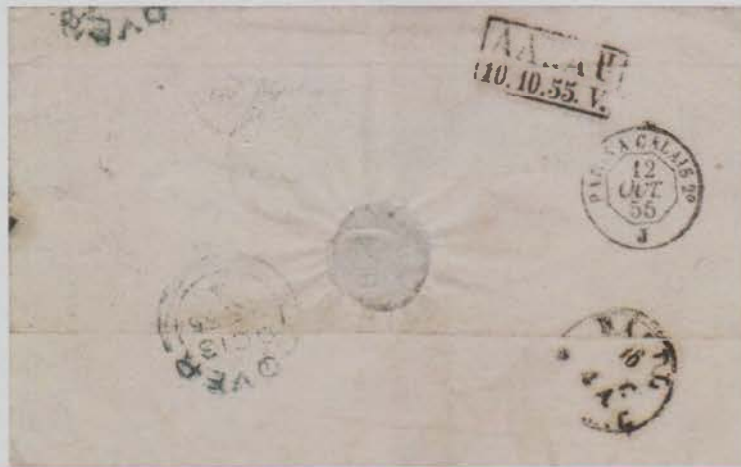
This cover was almost certainly sent by a British prisoner of war in Odessa as this was the only category of mail to be sent between the two countries between January 1854 and July 1857.

Ex collection Herry Schaefer.

5.2. Crimean War 1853/56 – United Kingdom

Swiss mercenary legion of the British Army in the Crimean war.

Reverse (x 0.75)

Rare mail to one of the mercenary units recruited by the British during the Crimean War.

1855 (Oct 9), fully pre-paid cover from Lenzburg to Dover, bearing Swiss Sitting Helvetia 'Strubel' adhesives, 40 rp. light green (Munich Print) and 15 rp. carmine (Bern print), both tied by black federal lozenge, LENZBURG despatch cds, a hand-written "Franco" and a "PD" handstamp alongside. On reverse transit marks of AARAU and BASEL, on front French "SUISSE St. LOUIS" entry cds. Again, on reverse French T.P.O. "PARIS A CALAIS" cds and blue DOVER arrival cds (Oct 13). In the same blue colour, on the front side, is a rare Dover "FOREIGN PAID" mark, as the letter did not go to London, but obviously remained in Dover.

Addressee is "Monsieur Dickson - Chef de la Legion Suisse à Dover", specifically Colonel Charles Sheffield Dickson, organizer of the British Swiss Legion. The British Swiss Legion was one of three British groups of foreign mercenaries, the others being the German and the Italian Legion, prepared to assist British troops in the Crimean War. The Swiss Legion was raised from May 1855 in Dover. In December, the troop strength reached 3'300 recruits, organized as a light infantry brigade. However, their training was not finished when the war ended in March 1856. The first regiment of the Swiss Legion was transported between December 1855 and February 1856 to Smyrna and worked in road construction.

Ex collection Richard Schaefer.

5.3. Russo – Turkish War 1877/78

This was a fast and successful Russian Campaign leading to the liberation of Bulgaria from Ottoman rule.

1877 (Oct 18), postage-free Russian formular postcard from "Jassy Moldau", struck by "ПОЛЕВОЕ ПОЧТ. ОТДѢЛЕНІЕ 5 8 ОКТ. 1877" (Fieldpost Agency no. 5, ulian calendar), located in Buzau, sent via St. Petersburg (Oct 14) to Helsingfors / Helsinki, Finland with arrival datestamp "ANK 27 / 10" (Gregorian calendar again).

Russia and Romania were allies in this war against Turkey and Russian troops had been in Romania since April 12, 1877.

Reverse (x 0.75)

1878 (March 16), from Helsingfors to the Active Army in San Stefano, franked with Arms 32 penni carmine adhesive, tied by "HELSINGFORS POSTSTATION" cds, sent via St. PETERSBURG (March 4) and ODESSA (March 11) to San Stefano.

In San Stefano the peace treaty was signed on March 3, 1878.

During WWI, large areas around the Black Sea were part of the theatre of war: Ukraine, Romania, Transcaucasia, and Eastern Anatolia.

1916 (Sept 18), postage-free cover from "ПОЛЕВАЯ ПОЧТ. КОНТ. № 56" (Fieldpost Office no. 56), located at that time in Constanza Dobruja, sent to Staraya Russa, arrival datestamp (Sept 27) on reverse.
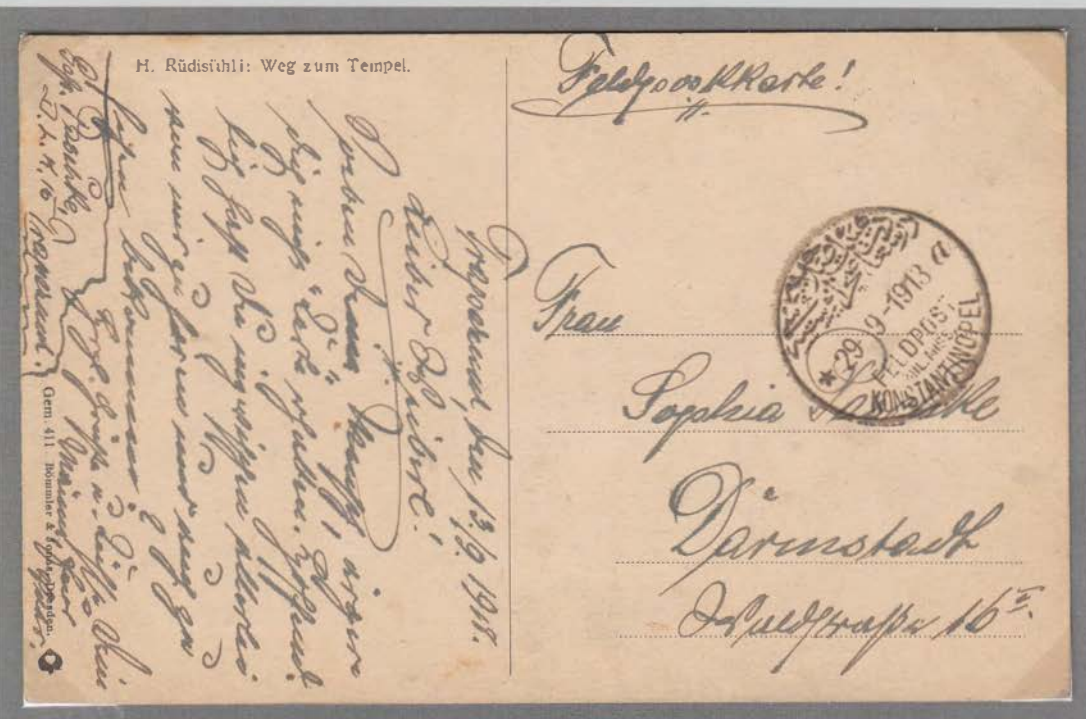
Romania entered the war at the side of the Allies in August 1916, but already in December a large part of Romania was under control of Central Powers' troops. The F.P.O. 56 was situated in Constanza only in September 1916, thereafter it was shifted to Braila and Reni.

1916 (June 14), stationery postcard from "ПОЛЕВ. КОРПУСК. ПОЧТ. КОНТ. № 45" (Corps Fieldpost Office no. 45), located at that time in Trebizonde, the card sent via St. Petersburg to Forest Grove, forwarded to La Grande, both in Oregon (July 24).

Large parts of eastern Anatolia were conquered by Russian troops. Trebizonde was occupied in April 1916.

1918 (April 15), from Odessa to Berlin, without arrival mark but with German taxation. Violet cachet "Waffenstillstandskommission für das Schwarze Meer" (Armistice committee for the Black Sea) and German Fieldpost datestamp. As the sender and the addressee were obviously banks, the cover was taxed in Germany with 25 pf.

Odessa was occupied by German and Austrian troops on March 14, 1918.

1918 (Sept 13), picture postcard written in Trapezunt, sent from "FELDPOST MIL. MISSION KONSTANTINOPEL 29.9.1918" to Darmstadt, Germany.

After the breakdown of Russia following the February Revolution 1917, Turkish and German units were heading towards Transcaucasia to secure the Azerbaijanian oil resources. This postcard was sent by a private presumably on the way to or back from Batum. The card was transported to Constantinople and given there to the German Fieldpost.

1918 (Apr 19), postage-free picture postcard from Odessa to Ada, Hungary, sent from "TABORI POSTAHIVATAL 402" (Fieldpost office no. 402), additional handstamp "K. u. K. Husarenregiment ".

1918 (Aug 24), picture postcard from Odessa to Vienna, sent from "K u K FELDPOSTAMT 423" with additional handstamp "K. u. K. HAUPTBAHNHOSKOMMANDO ODESSA".

Ukraine was occupied from March 1918 by German and Austrian troops which stayed there until the Armistice in November.