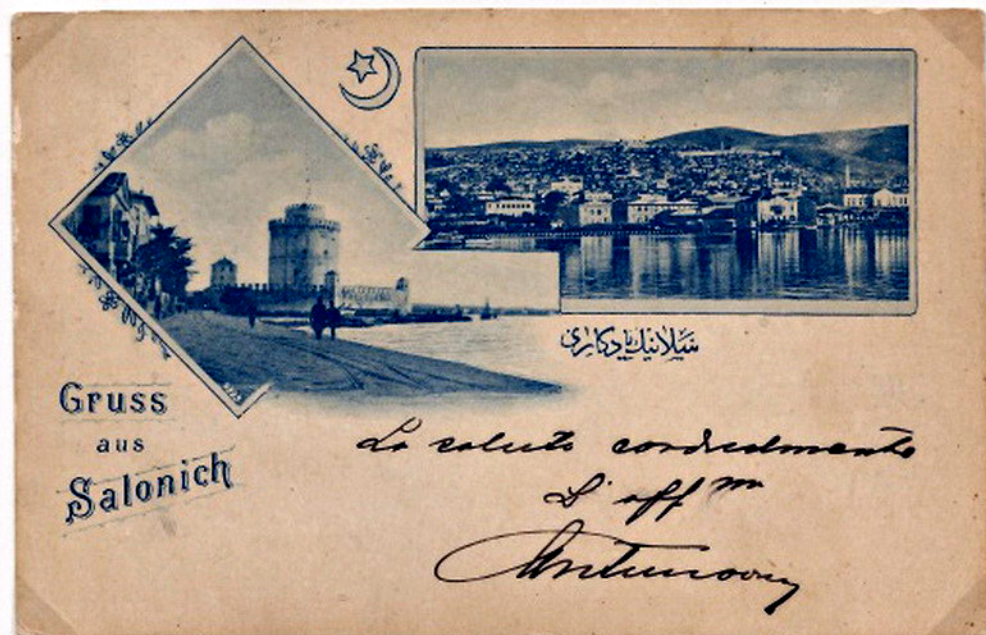


INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The City

Thessaloniki is a major Port of the Aegean Sea. It was founded 23 centuries ago, by Cassandros the son of Antipatros, one of the Generals of Alexander the Great. Since then, Thessaloniki has always been an important city of the Balkan Peninsula, the 2nd in importance city of the Eastern Roman empire, of the Byzantine Empire, of the Ottoman empire, and today the 2nd in importance and size city of Greece.



The Subject of the Collection

The collection shows the development of the Postal Services of Thessaloniki from the Dark Ages of the Ottoman conquest in 15th Century to 1914, with the end of capitulations, the closing of the foreign post offices and the establishment of the Greek rule.

Thessaloniki saw rapid growth during the 19th century, being the main port of entrance to the Balkan Interior. With a multinational population of about 120.000 inhabitants during the last quarter of the 19th C., the City flourishes financially and, with a progressive administration, it is at the forefront in the struggle for social and constitutional reformations of the decaying Ottoman Empire.

The development of the City during the 19th century coincides with the huge growth of Human Communication through transportation, commerce, correspondence and mail. This fact, together with the capitulations – the special legal status that allowed the operation of foreign post offices in various cities of the Ottoman Empire -, makes the Postal History of Thessaloniki a very attractive subject for the philatelist. Not less than 9 different post offices operated in Thessaloniki during the 2nd half of the 19th century and up to 1914. Consequently the diversity and array of the philatelic material involved is great.

The Concept

The Postal History of Thessaloniki has been collected and presented in the past as a collection of the individual post offices and their consecutive postmarks. In my opinion, this is a traditional treatment of a Postal History subject. (Continues)

In the present collection, I have tried to show the important events, moments, decisions, changes etc. of the operation of the Postal System of Thessaloniki, mostly in a chronological order. Additionally, I have tried to show the development of the Postal Services in connection to the actual History of the era, i.e. the important events, the financial and commercial growth, the social evolution etc.

The Classification and Contents

In accordance with this concept, the collection is divided in the following Chapters:

Prephilatelics - 15 th to early 19 th C.	FRAME 1
The Opening of Post Offices - 1830-50s	FRAMES 1,2
The Introduction of Stamps - 1850-60s	FRAME 2
The Maritime Mail of mid 19 th C	FRAMES 2,3
The Increase in Correspondence - 1870s	FRAME 3
The Founding of the UPU - 1875	FRAME 3
A short period of decline - early 1880s	FRAME 4
The Period of Growth - late 1880 - 1890s	FRAME 4
The City has 4 P.O.s ! - The Operation of the Russian P.O. - 1890s	FRAMES 4,5
The Opening of Branch P.O.s 1890s	FRAME 5
The City has 5 P.O.s ! - The Opening of the British P.O. - 1900	FRAMES 5,6
The City has 6 P.O.s ! - The Opening of the Italian P.O. - 1900	FRAME 6
The Branch P.O.s of early 20 th C.	FRAME 6
Early 20 th Century Postmarks	FRAME 6
The End of Capitulations - 1914	FRAME 7
Maritime Mail - early 20 th C	FRAME 7
October 26 th 1912 - The City is Greek!	FRAME 7
Bulgarian + Serbian P.O.s - 1912 - 13	FRAME 7
Mail to or from Uncommon Destinations	FRAME 8
The introduction and use of Postal Stationery.	FRAME 8

The development of the Collection is mostly chronological, but some chapters (i.e. the mail to Uncommon Destinations) are treated as separate entities.

