

# Balkan Entente

## - The joint issues of 1937/8 and 1940

The **Balkan Entente** was created with the **Balkan Pact of 1934** between **Greece, Yugoslavia, Romania and Turkey**.

A limited **Postal Union of the Balkan Entente** was created by the Belgrade Postal Convention (April 9, 1935). This Convention provided for a joint issue of postage stamps with common design. The value of each Country's postage stamp, should be the reduced postage applied with the Convention (about 20% less than the international postal rate). A first common issue circulated in 1937/38 and a second one in 1940.

These issues were the **first joint issues worldwide**.

This exhibit shows specimens of the stamps issued and their postal history.

- i. **The Balkan Conderence in Constantinople (1931)**
- ii. **The first joint issue (1937-38)**
- iii. **The second joint issue (1940)**

*After the end of the First World War there was a lively political movement to create broader supranational organizations that would lead peoples to closer understanding and cooperation, but mainly would remove the possibility of new wars, through an interstate arbitration. One such organization was the League of Nations (forerunner of the UN), under the umbrella of the winners of the First World War (USA, England, France). In the Balkans, a similar initiative was developed in the late 1930s to create a Balkan federation of all the nations of the peninsula, including Turkey. The first official discussions took place in early October 1929 in Athens and Delphi where the 27th World Peace Conference met. Each Balkan country approached the debate with a different approach, reflecting its national aspirations.*

*The conferences of Athens (October 1930), Constantinople (October 1931) and Bucharest (October 1932) followed. The results at these conferences have been meager to insignificant mainly due to the different pursuits of the participants' representatives. It was clear that at least Bulgaria was participating purely to achieve a revision of the territorial status quo of the Balkans in order to secure an exit to the Aegean, but the rest of the representatives were also just trying to promote the aspirations of their governments which were involved in their selection as representatives at these conferences. At the conferences, commissions were organized to examine the Balkan interstate relations by category, but the conclusions of the work on the one hand were general and consisted of different opinions, on the other hand they could not bind their governments.*

*It is also characteristic that even on the issues on which there was unanimity (**postal union**, legal equality of the two sexes, the right of a married woman to choose her nationality, establishment of a Balkan Chamber of Agriculture) no agreement was signed and absolutely nothing was implemented because the participants could not to bind their governments as the nature of the Conferences was informal.*

*Ultimately, all the efforts of the Conferences were partially utilized by only four Balkan states with the signing of a Balkan Pact on February 8, 1934 in Athens. The Balkan Pact mainly concerned the effort of the states that favored the maintenance of the existing territorial arrangement (Greece, Turkey, Romania, Yugoslavia), excluding Bulgaria, but also Albania, which had clearly joined Italy's sphere of influence.*



Balkan Pact of 1934

## The Balkan Conference in Constantinople (October 1931)

The **Second Balkan Conference** was held in **Constantinople** (October 23, 1931) and the Turkish Post issued a beautiful set of 9 postage stamps depicting a tree with roots above the Balkan countries.



Corner cover with contents, franked with 12½Krş (rate to aborad), single franking with a stamp of the "2ème Conférence Balkanique" issue.

Tied with **İZMİR 27.1.1932** (Smyrna).

Arrival the next day in **ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΑΦΕΙΕΙΣ 28.ΙΑΝ.32** (Athens).

**GEORGES FALBO**

TABACS EN FEUILLES

İZMİR

TELEPHONE 2265  
TELEGR.: FALBO

60 Yambakur 1922.

CODES: BENTLEYS  
A. B. C. 5TH ED.

Αγαπητή μου Σίαρρα,  
Η εὐναριστὴν σοὶ μὲς τὸ λεγόμενον τὸν πρῶτον

Letter with special symbolism for the Balkan Entente.

Send by a Levantine (Italian surname **Falbo**) with Greek education, to his relative who moved to Athens. Georges Falbo remained in Smyrna, after the Catastrophe of 1922, engaged in the tobacco trade.

# The first joint issue (1937-1938)

These stamps were issued on **29 October 1937** (Yugoslavia and Turkey, two values per country), **8 February 1938** (Greece, one value) and **10 February 1938** (Romania, two values).

## Postal rates in 1938

country	Rates to abroad (first weight)	Reduced rates to the Balkan Entente countries		
		(first weight)	(second weight)	(registration)
Greece	8 Drachmas	6 Drachmas	+3.50 Drachmas	+6 Drachmas
Romania	10 Lei	7.50 Lei	+4.50 Lei	+10 Lei
Yugoslavia	4 Dinars	3 Dinars	+1.50 Dinars	+3 Dinars
Turkey	12½ Kuruş	8 Kuruş	+5 Kuruş	+8 Kuruş



Perfins:  
Romanian Credit Bank



The 8 Krş Turkish stamp  
in combination with a 7 Лева Bul-  
garian, tied on fragment with  
ΓΑΡΑ ΣΟΦΙΑ - SOFIA GARE  
17.XII.37



Forged dotted  
overprint **AKYPON**  
(=not valid)



**White patch**  
behind Σ of  
ΕΛΛΑΣ



**White dash on Σ**  
of ΕΛΛΑΣ



**Break**  
in base line

## The first joint issue (1937-1938)



Both values, 8 Krş & 12½ Krş of the Turkish set in combination with a 20pa Atatürk {in total 21 Kuruş: second weight [8+5] registered letter [8] to the **Small Entente**: Czechoslovakia}, tied on corner cover with GALATA ISTANBUL 51 13.12.1937, sent to PRAHA 7 CIZINA (ÉTRANGER) 15.XII.37.

# The first joint issue (1937-1938)



**Issue date** for the 6δρχ Entente Balkanique (and the 1δρχ value of the Royal Wedding), tied on FDC with ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΣΥΣΤΗΜΕΝΑ 8.ΦΕΒ.38 (Athens), sent to WIEN 66 11.ΙΙ.38.



The 6δρχ Entente Balkanique & pair of 50λ Charity stamps, tied on corner cover with ΑΘΗΝΑΙ 22.ΙΙΙ.38 (Athens), sent to Celje (Yugoslavia). Examined by the Hellenic Exchange Control, with small circular YSE marking. Special rate of 6δρχ to **Balkan Entente** country.

## The first joint issue (1937-1938)

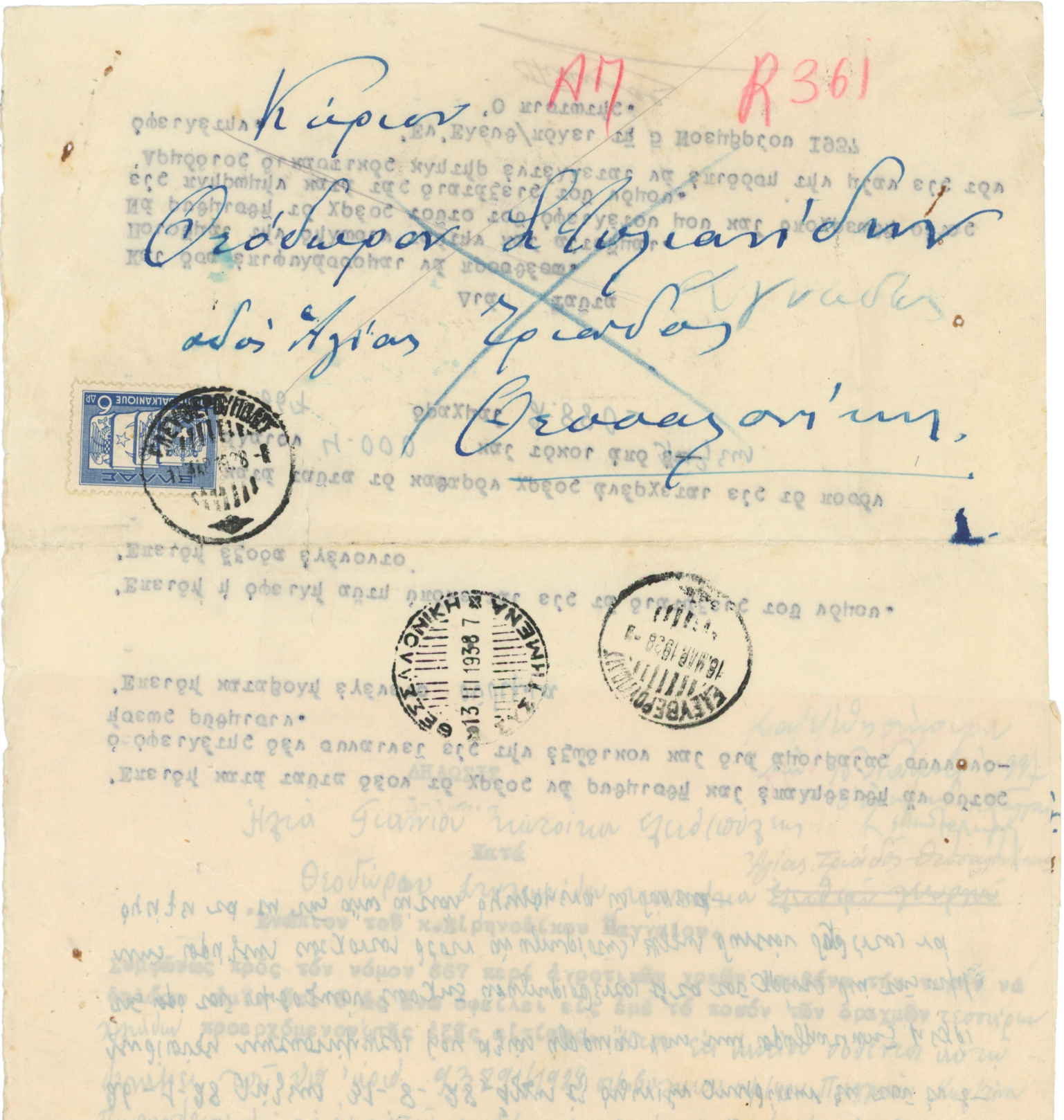


The 6δρχ Entente Balkanique and 2δρχ Historical & pair of 50λ/5λ Charity stamps, tied with ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ 16.X.38 (Florina, Macedonia), sent to Toronto Canada, via ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ-ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ ΚΙΝΗΤΟΝ 1Α 17.X.38 (Ambulant P.O. Florina-Thessaloniki). Examined by the Exchange Control of Florina, with circular violet marking ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ - ΦΛΩΡΙΝΗΣ. 8δρχ rate to abroad.



The 6δρχ Entente Balkanique (1st weight) & pair of 50λ Charity stamps, together with pair of 7δρχ airmail stamps (2nd weight: 14 drachmas), tied on corner cover with ATHINAI POSTE AERIEENNE 14.II.38 (Athens), sent to Prague (Czechoslovakia) via WIEN 1 FLUGPOST 16.II.38. Examined by the Hellenic Exchange Control, with small circular ΥΣΕ marking. Special rate of 6δρχ to **Small Entente** country.

The first joint issue (1937-1938)



The 6δρχ Entente Balkanique, single franking (inland Business documents 2 drachmas + registration 4 drachmas), tied on folded document with ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ 11.ΜΑΡ.1938 (Eleftheroupolis, Cavalla Macedonia), sent to ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ ΣΥΣΤΗΜΕΝΑ 13.ΙΙΙ.1938 (Thessaloniki), returned to sender ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ 16.ΜΑΡ.1938.

## The second joint issue (1940)

These stamps were issued on **1st January 1940** (Turkey)  
and on **27 May 1940** (Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia).



**Issue date** for the 6δρχ & 8δρχ Entente Balkanique, Greek issue,  
tied on FDC with **ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΚΕΝΤΡΙΚΟΝ 27.V.40** (Athens),  
"sent" in town, with **ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΑΦΙΕΙΣ 27.ΜΑΙ.40**.

*Philatelically inspired "correspondence"*



## The second joint issue (1940)

The 6δρχ Entente Balkanique & 2δρχ Historical issue tied on corner cover with **THESSALONIKI** 11.X.40, sent to Mannheim Germany. Examined by the Exchange Control of Thessaloniki, with circular violet marking **ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ - ΘΕΣ/ΝΙΚΗ** and censored by the Germans in Vienna, with red machine marking **Oberkommando der Wermacht Geprüft** on censored tape **Oberkommando der Wermacht g.** 8δρχ rate to abroad.



The 6δρχ Entente Balkanique & 2δρχ Historical issue tied on corner cover with **ΠΕΙΡΑΙΕΥΣ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΗ 21.X.40** (Piraeus), sent to Alexandria, Egypt, via **CAIRO 3 6.NOV.1940** and **ALEXANDRIA CAIRO & V.V. 6.XI.19**. Examined by the Exchange Control of Piraeus, with circular violet marking **ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ - ΠΕΙΡΑΙΩΣ** and censored by the British in Egypt, with bilingual censored tape **EGYPTIAN CENSORSHIP / OPENED BY CENSOR**. 8δρχ rate to abroad.

## The second joint issue (1940)



reverse  
70%



Both values, 2x6δρχ + 8δρχ Entente Balkanique + 1δρχ King George issue & 1δρχ Charity (Queens) tied on registered corner cover with **ΑΘΗΝΑΙ (ΣΥΣΤΗΜΕΝΑ) 24.ΑΥΤ.40**, sent to **SAN ANGELO TEX. SEP.21.1940, USA**.

Examined by the "Postage Stamps Control" of Athens, with violet markings **KENTP. TAX. ΑΘΗΝΩΝ - ΕΛΕΓΧΟΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΣΗΜΟΥ** - ο ελέγξας (Main Post Office of Athens - Postage Stamps Control) and **ΚΑΤΕΤΕΘΗ ΥΠΕΥΘΥΝΟΣ ΔΗΛΩΣΙΣ** (declaration filed), with small circular **ΥΣΕ** marking.

**Second weight** rate to abroad (8δρχ + 5δρχ) + registration (8δρχ).

## The second joint issue (1940)



reverse  
60%



Three copies of 8δρχ Entente Balkanique + 2δρχ Historical issue & 1δρχ Charity (Queens) tied on registered corner cover with **ΑΘΗΝΑΙ (ΣΥΣΤΗΜΕΝΑ) 4.ΣΕΠ.40**, sent to **KÖLN-NIPPES 30.9.40**, Germany.

Opened by the Bank of Greece Exchange Control, with large red marking **ΕΠΙΤΡΕΠΕΤΑΙ Η ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΗΣΙΣ / EN ΑΘΗΝΑΙΣ ΤΗ 24. SEP. 1940 / ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ / ΤΜΗΜΑ ΕΛΕΓΧΟΥ ΣΥΝΑΛΛΑΓΜΑΤΟΣ / Ο ΤΜΗΜΑΤΑΡΧΗΣ** (Postage allowed, Bank of Greece...) and sealed with label **ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ 1928**.

Passed by the Hellenic Exchange Control, with small circular **ΠΕΝ** marking. Censored by the Germans in Vienna, with red marking **Geprüft / Oberkommando der Wehrmacht** on censortape **Oberkommando der Wehrmacht g - Geöffnet**.

**Third weight rate to abroad (8δρχ + 5δρχ + 5δρχ) + registration (8δρχ).**

## The second joint issue (1940)



6δρχ Entente Balkanique + 2δρχ Historical issue & 2x50λ Charity (Queens), together with 1δρχ+2δρχ+5δρχ+10δρχ airmails (Mythological) tied on airmail cover with **ΦΙΣΚΑΡΔΙΟΝ 8.ΟΚΤ.40** (Fiscardo, Cefalonia) sent to Salisbury, Rhodesia. Examined by the Hellenic Exchange Control, with small circular **ΠΕΝ** marking. Censored in Egypt, with black marking **CENSORSHIP DEPT.** and upon arrival in Rhodesia, with red triangular **PASSED BY CENSOR S. RHODESIA 1** and linear handstamp **OPENED BY CENSOR** on blank censor tape. First weight rate to abroad (8δρχ) + airmail (18δρχ).

## The second joint issue (1940)

8δρχ Entente Balkanique + 1δρχ Charity (Queens), together with 10δρχ airmail (Mythological) tied on airmail cover with **ΠΕΙΡΕΙΕΥΣ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΗ ΑΕΡΟΠΟΡΙΚΩΣ 5.VI.40** (Fiscardo, Cefalonia) sent to **SFAX TUNISIE 26.XII.40**.

Examined by the Hellenic Exchange Control of Piræus, with circular violet marking **ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ - ΠΕΙΡΑΙΕΥΣ**.

Censored in Italy, with violet readers' markings **103 & 106** and **GE** (commission) on **Verificato per censura** censors tape.

First weight rate to abroad (8δρχ) + airmail (10δρχ).



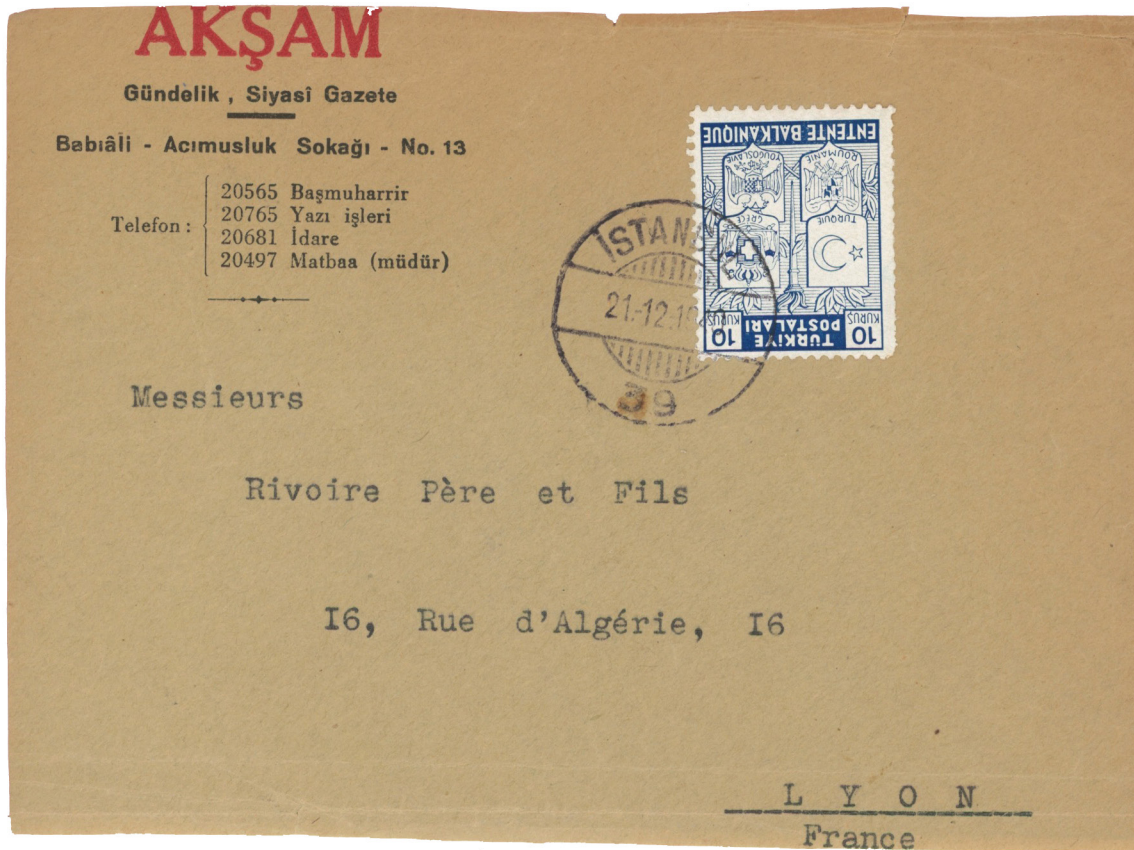
6δρχ Entente Balkanique + 2δρχ Historical issue, together with 2δρχ+30δρχ airmails (Mythological) tied on airmail cover with **THESSALONIKI 19.X.40**, sent to New York, USA. Postal clerk's handwritten notice "jusqu'a London". Examined by the Hellenic Exchange Control of Thessaloniki, with circular violet marking **ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ - ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ**. Censored in London, with **OPENED BY CENSOR EXAMINER 4804 / P.C. 90** censors tape.

First weight rate to abroad (8δρχ) + airmail (32δρχ).

## The second joint issue (1940)



Two shades of the 10 krş value



10 krş Entente Balkanique issue single franking, tied on corner cover sent to Lyon France with **ISTANBUL 39 21.12.1940**.  
First weight rate to abroad (10 krş).

## The second joint issue (1940)

For each value (3 and 4 dinars) of the Yugoslavian two varieties are printed, one in Latin and one in Cyrillic alphabets:

**JUGOSLAVIA - DIN**  
**ЈУГОСЛАВИЈА - ДИН**



4 Din Entente Balkanique issue single franking, tied on cover with БЕОГРАД 2 44 БЕОГРАД 2 16.X.40, sent to ΙΩΑΝΝΙΝΑ (ΑΦΙΕΙΣ) 19.X.40 (Janina, Epirus). Examined by the Hellenic Exchange Control of Janina, with circular violet marking ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ - ΙΩΑΝΝΙΝΩΝ.

First weight rate to **Balkan Entente** country (4 dinars).



3 Din + 4 Дин Entente Balkanique issue & 1 Дин Royalty, tied on registered cover with LJUBLJANA 4 1 ЛЈУБЉАНА 4 3.IX.40, sent to ΜΕΣΟΛΟΓΓΙΟΝ 7.ΣΕΠ.40 (Mesolonghi). Examined by the Hellenic Exchange Control of Mesolonghi, with circular violet marking ΝΟΜΑΡΧΙΑ ΑΙΤΩΛΙΑΣ & ΑΚΑΡΝΑΝΙΑΣ / ΥΠΗΡ. ΠΡΟΣΤ. ΕΘΝ. ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ.

First weight rate to **Balkan Entente** country (4 din) + registration (4 din).

## The second joint issue (1940)



reverse  
70%



3 Din + 3 ДИН Entente Balkanique issue & 4x0.25 ДИН + 1 ДИН Royalty, tied on registered cover with **LJUBLJANA 4** 1 **ЛЈУБЉАНА 4** 12.X.40, sent to **ΜΕΣΟΛΟΓΓΙΟΝ** 16.ΟΚΤ.40 (Mesolonghi), via **ΕΙΔΟΜΕΝΗ-ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ ΚΙΝ. 1Α** 14.X.40 (Idomeni-Thessaloniki, Ambulant 1A) and **ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ-ΠΕΙΡΑΙΕΥΣ ΚΙΝ. 1Γ** 14.ΟΚΤ.40 (Thessaloniki-Piraeus, Ambulant 1C).

First weight rate to **Balkan Entente** country (4 din) + registration (4 din).