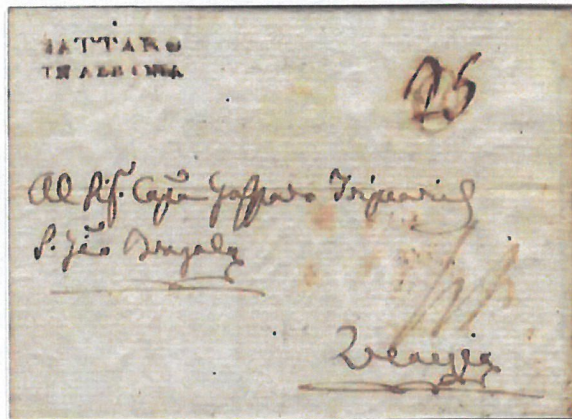


TURKISH ALBANIA AND ITS RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN POWERS [1697-1870]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to Cairns, the beginning of a postal service in Albania are to be sought in the period of Venetian ownership of Antivari (Bar), Alessio (Lezhë), Scutari (Shkodër), San Giovanni di Medua (Shëngjin), Dulcigno (Ulcinj) and Durazzo (Durrës), which ended in 1571 when the remaining Albanian coast was conquered by the Ottoman Empire. The "Cattaro" (Kotor) land-sea route connecting Constantinople to Venice was established on 1535 and remained active until 1786. Therefore, the Turkish Albania was crossed by the Venetian couriers from/to the port of Kotor (Cattaro) that was the terminal of both the sea Adriatic route and the land Balkan route connecting these two final destinations. Starting from 17th century since the beginning of 19th century the rare correspondence consisted of privately carried letters without postal markings as the Courier Service "Compagnia dei Corrieri della Serenissima Signora" hadn't any agency opened in Albania. Following a Peace Treaty signed on 12 April 1740 a Constantinople-Durrës postal service was opened and managed by the Consul of the Reigns of Naples and Sicily established by the French King Charles BORBON. The few letters originated directly from Albania until the 19th century, were mainly coming from religious missions, noble families (generally rich traders) and diplomats that manage the related correspondence through their trustful forwarders and private operators working on that territory. From the beginning of 19th century the correspondence from "Turkish Albania" (included in 4 Ottoman "vilayets") began to increase in parallel to the commercial traffics along the Adriatic Sea coast. On 1849 the Turkish administration opened its first Postal Office (P.O.) in Ishkodra (Shkodër), followed by 34 P.O.s opened in other centres within the actual Albanian borders. The first Austrian Consular Post Office was opened in Shkodër on 1820 and starting from 1854 also the Austrian Kingdom, through a specific agreement signed with the Austrian Lloyd Maritime Agency, opened some postal offices in the main ports of Turkish Albania, i.e. in Valona (Vlorë) and Durazzo (Durrës), followed by the P.O.s opened in Shkodër, Santi Quaranta (Sarandë) and San Giovanni di Medua (Shëngjin), all in actual Albania, as well as in Dulcigno (Ulcinj) and Antivari (Bar), now in Montenegro. Starting from 1863 and in addition to Turkish stamps, other special stamps were issued by Lombardo Veneto Kingdom and Austrian Empire to be used in the European Levant territories (Albanian vilayets included).



1810 - Entire sent to Venice [19.05] from Dobrota [09.05] through the French Military Post Office opened in the Montenegrin Port of Kotor ("Cattaro in Albania") taxed for "25" Italian lire

KNOWLEDGE AND PERSONAL STUDIES

The exposition was prepared analysing the contents of original letters and documents from the owned collection and from the main archives (Venice, Trieste and the Vatican) further checked by studying more than 60 history and postal history books mentioned in the text, some of which are: (1) E. MÜLLER: "Handbook of Austria & Lombardy-Venetia Cancellations on the postage stamp issues", (2) S.D. TCHILINGIRIAN and W.S.E. STEPHEN: "Austrian Post Offices Abroad-Part Four-Albania", (3) U. DEL BIANCO: "The Austrian Lloyd and the maritime cancellations of Austria-Hungary-Vol.I, Vol.II, Vol.III", (4) P. FERCHENBAUHER: "Austria 1850-1918-Handbook and Specialised Catalogue", (5) J.H. COLES & H.E. WALKER: "Postal Cancellations of the Ottoman Empire-Part I-Europe", (6) J.S. PHIPPS: "Stamps and posts of Albania and Epirus / 1878 to 1945".

EXHIBITION PLAN

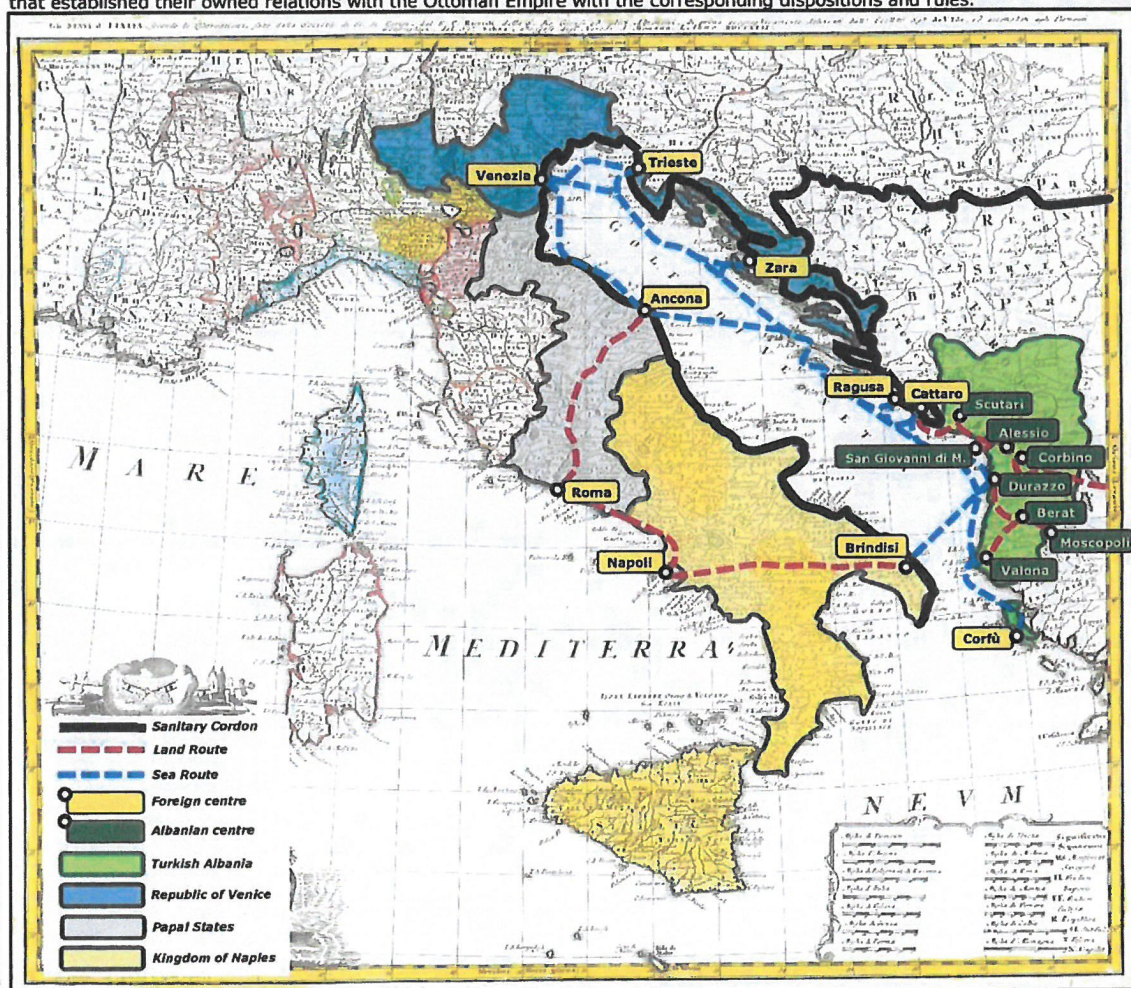
THE RELATIONS WITH THE REPUBLIC OF VENICE [1697-1797]	
THE RELATIONS WITH THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES [1735-1797]	
THE RELATIONS WITH THE PAPAL STATES [1622-1797]	
THE TURKISH ALBANIA [1797-1849]	
THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE RELIGIOUS MISSIONS AND PAPAL STATES [1797-1849]	
THE AUSTRIAN ANNEXATION OF TERRITORIES OF VENETO [1797-1805]	
THE RELATIONS WITH THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES AND SICILY [1797-1849]	
THE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF VENETIAN POSSESSIONS [1807-1815]	
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LOMBARDO-VENETO KINGDOM [1815-1849]	
THE ANNEXATION OF ADRIATIC TERRITORIES TO THE AUSTRIAN EMPIRE [1815-1849]	
THE RELATIONS WITH THE SARDINIA KINGDOM [1814-1849]	
THE TURKISH ALBANIA [1849-1870]	
THE RELATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND [1849-1870]	
THE RELATIONS WITH SARDINIAN STATES [1849-1861]	
THE AUSTRIAN EMPIRE POSTAL ADMINISTRATION [1849-1870]	

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INTRODUCTION

The collection of Professor Giuseppe Razza included in this Volume 1 is entitled **"Pre-philatelic Postal History of Turkish Albania and of its relations with the Republic of Venice, the Kingdom of Naples and the Papal States [1540-1797]"**. It refers to the period from 1540, when Venice signed a capitulation agreement with the Sultan maintaining the possession of vast majority of Eastern Adriatic coast (around two decades before the Lepanto battle of 1571, when the whole Albanian territory definitely passed under the Ottoman Empire domain), until 1797 when the so-called "Serenissima" Republic ended.

In the beautiful map below of Homann Heirs printed in 1742 further re-elaborated by Prof. Razza to underline the territories of interest, the overall Turkish Albania is shown (in light green colour on the centre-right of the map). From 1571 to 1797 such territory was included in an area bigger than the actual Albania, surrounded by the territories still possessed by the Republic of Venice (in blue-grey colour in the map below), i.e., bordered by the Montenegrin lands in the north and in front of the Ionian Islands in the south, separated by Adriatic Sea from the other Kingdoms, Duchies and States of pre-unified Italy. During that time, the rare letters coming or crossing the Turkish Albania were mainly written by diplomats, members of rich and cultured trading families or by ecclesiastic authorities that were operating in the few religious (Catholic) missions opened in that area. Usually, these letters were transported by land couriers when they were addressed directly within the Ottoman Empire, while when they had to reach a place outside the Turkish territory they were generally transported by land in a foreign port before being loaded on board of the ships and transported abroad by sea couriers. Therefore, the history of the postal communications with Turkish Albania during the analysed period was strongly influenced by these neighbouring Republics, Kingdoms and States that established their own relations with the Ottoman Empire with the corresponding dispositions and rules.



1742 - Map of Italy and its neighbouring territories, including the Turkish Albania within the Ottoman Empire, in a map of Homann Heirs further elaborated by Mr. Razza to underline the borders of neighbouring Republic of Venice, Papal States and Kingdom of Naples

Turkish Albania and its relations with foreign Republics, Kingdoms and States [1540-1797]