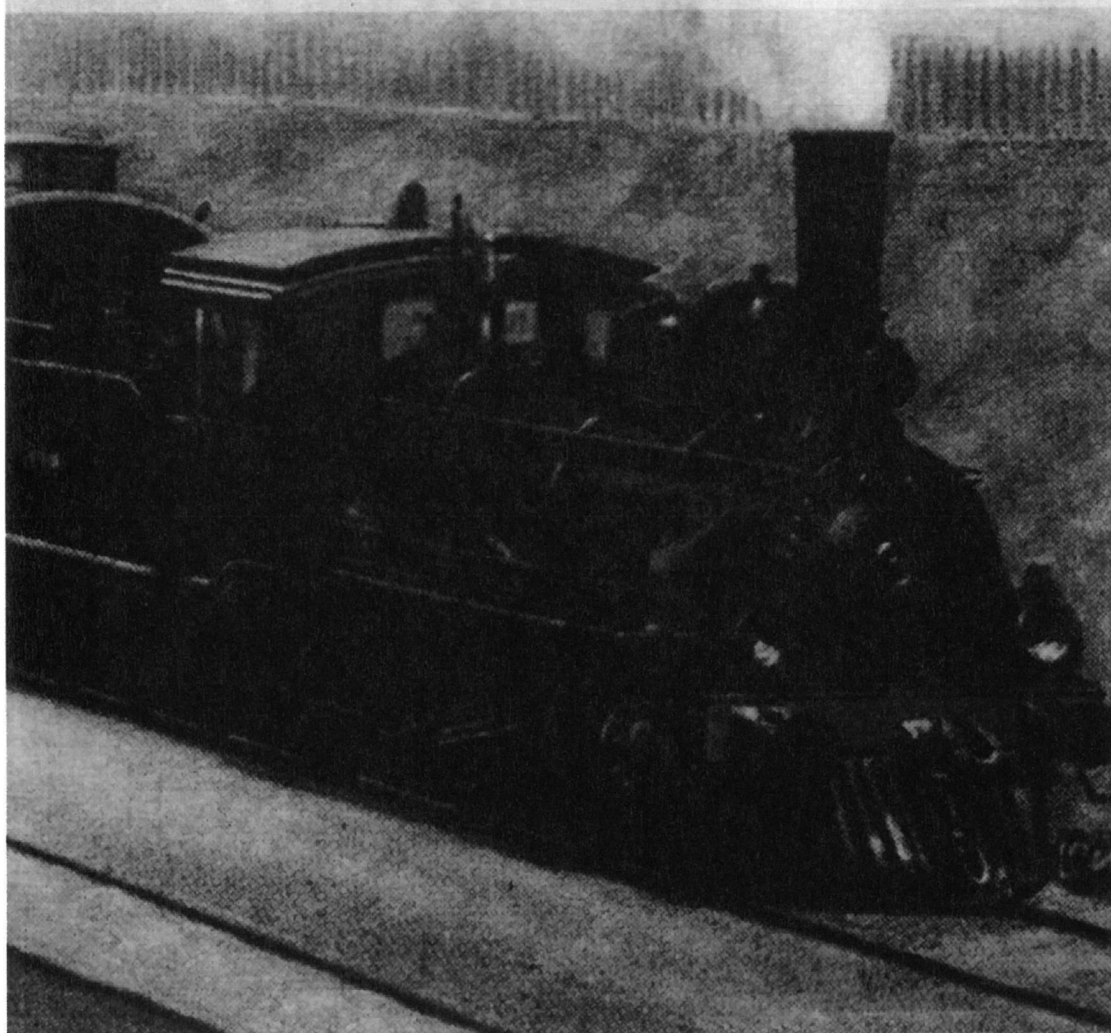


Ute Dorr FRPSL
Dr. Elmar Dorr FRPSL

The Orient Express

1883-1914



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The Authors' Foreword

The authors started – as is so often the case – with a vague idea of commencing a collection on the theme of the Orient Express. This was nourished through a love of criminal literature in general and Agatha Christie in particular. But how should one approach this theme philatelically? The Orient Express vignettes and markings provided the first bridges to a philatelic start, and with this – let's call it philatelic discipline – it was also clear: it should be a postal history collection. We quickly became aware that the postal historian's usual tools, whether they be postal agreements or marcophilatelic studies of railway markings, are not enough and cannot work. The Orient Express items are not railway mail! Approaches such as postal routes and rates do help to interpret the postal items in the customary way, but are not, and will not be, at all appropriate for the theme of the Orient Express.

No, we had to develop a new approach of our own to analyse and classify these postal items transported by the Orient Express. We finally determined three significant elements for the structure:

1. The post-offices of the various nations (including the Ottoman post-offices) in Constantinople.
2. The variants of the train route of the Orient Express (the authors have devised this terminology in order to be able to describe the theme uniformly). We mean the routes that the Orient Express followed between Constantinople and Paris, respectively Constantinople and Berlin or Ostend, at the different times. A route variant is comparable with a postal routing in postal history, but must be quite differently developed. The study of timetables of the individual railway companies was here indispensable.
3. The various types of Orient Express postal items are differentiated according to vignettes or markings. This approach corresponds to "classic" postal history most closely in the case of the markings with a marcophilatelic approach. In the case of the vignettes it is quite different since these are not of a postal origin; but with this theme represent a large part of the fascination for the collector.

Once an approach to the structuring has been established, one wishes to bring the findings achieved on the basis of one's own collection onto a generally meaningful basis. From this point on, scientific criteria and the creation of an empirical basis, which extends beyond one's own collection, are necessary. That was the starting point for this book.

The empirical basis for this was – apart from our own collection – data and information regarding Orient Express postal items from further collections, which were kindly made available by their owners. We further evaluated the auction results of various auction houses in Europe and overseas in order to complete the empirical basis as far as possible regarding the question of what postal material exists.

In addition, we could use transmitted light microscopy in order to examine the coloured vignettes in more depth. The ultimate goal and purpose were to obtain reference material to make it possible to differentiate between genuine and fake vignettes. This area, with its fascinating possibilities – as regards questions and investigations – will not be concluded for a long time and therefore has the potential for future investigations. However, with the results published here, we wish to establish the basis for this field of the Orient Express.

This book is here as a result; and the reader may draw his own conclusions as to the extent to which the venture has been successful.

One may add that an author is always pleased if the fruits of his findings can be utilized for other questions and investigations. Thus, for example, Wolfgang Maassen could demonstrate on the

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The title page is a collage from two advertising post-cards in the collection of Ute Dorr

basis of the variants of the train route that Philipp de Ferrari made his journeys also via the Orient Express. When researches cross-fertilise each other, the gains in knowledge are multiplied.

In this sense, we wish the reader an exciting and entertaining "intellectual" trip with the Orient Express!

Schwäbisch Gmünd, Berne 2020

Ute und Elmar Dorr



III. 1: Award of the "Silver Post-horn 2017" to Ute Dorr
for her exhibit "Orient Express 1883–1914"
(from left to right: Dénes Cziráok, Ute Dorr and James van der Linden)

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Copies from reference collections

- Kurt Kimmel RDP
- Karl Louis FRPSL, Kartei-Registratur Großbritannien 1840–1901
- Rainer von Scharpen FRPSL, Generalsekretär AIJP
- Martin Rhein, 1. Vorsitzender der ARGE Ungarn
- Paul Wijnants FRPSL
- Martin Camerer, ARGE Bayern klassisch

Information regarding forms of markings, post-offices, postal routings and others

- Tilmann Nössig, Geschäftsführer der Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Sammler Deutscher Kolonialpostwertzeichen e.V.
- Dr. Andreas Birken, 2. Vorsitzender der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Osmanisches Reich
- Rainer von Scharpen FRPSL, Generalsekretär AIJP
- Dr. Wolf Hess RDP
- Dr. Jürgen Glietsch, ehemaliger 1. Vorsitzender der ARGE Italien

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We therefore express our special thanks to:

Auction houses

- the auction house, Heinrich Köhler in Wiesbaden, which made a member of its staff available to undertake research in the firm's own databank
- Dieter Michelson FRPSL and Karl Louis FRPSL of the auction houses Köhler and Corinphila for their provision of microscopic reference-examinations of a vignette of the Orient-Express by Tobias Huylmans
- further auction houses in Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Great Britain and the USA, whose databanks and holdings were made available to us for online research for our empirical examination

Timetables

- Museumsstiftung Post und Telekommunikation
Museum für Kommunikation Frankfurt
Sandy Lang, Librarian
- National Railway Museum
York YO26 4XJ, UK
Arranged by Barrie A. Wright, FRPSL
- Post- und Telegraphen- Verordnungsblätter des K. u. k. Handelsministeriums
Private collection Martin Rhein, 1. Vorsitzender ARGE Ungarn

Copies from private collections

- Collection Kurt Kimmel RDP
- Collection Werner Schindler
- Collection Thomas Hitzler, ARGE Bulgaria
- Collection Alexios Papadopoulos, GB Overprint Society