

The lithographic issues of 1913-1930¹

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FIG.1: The images of the lithographic series

Between February 1 (14) and early April 1911 the engraved series of the Aspiotis printing company in Corfu became available, printed from steel plates made by Thomas McDonald in London. When the Greek territory expanded as a result of the Balkan wars, the need for stamps increased enormously and Aspiotis was no longer able to keep up with his intaglio press with only one plate per value.

That is why successively the transition to lithography with a rotary offset press of such a size was made that a maximum of 3 x 2 plates of 100 stamps (later probably 2 x 2 x 100)² could be printed simultaneously.^{3 4} These large sheets were always cut into sheets of 100 stamps before delivery. Said method made it possible to also print different values, if of the same colour, from one printing. You can see an example of this in Figure 2, a strip of 8 ½ stamp of 10 lepta, a white margin and a stamp of 30 lepta, both stamps in the same colour. This typical "printer accident" is extremely rare.



FIG.2: "Printer accident", 10 and 30 lepta of the same stone

Such a combination is also known from the 1 and 5 lepta, albeit as a decalque on the back of a block of stamps.⁵

In 1923, a new photo lithographic rotary press was introduced with zinc or aluminium printing cylinders (in this article further referred to as the "new cylinder press"). The stamps that were printed on this new press had a greater mutual margin, so that the stamp size is larger than that of the stamps that came from the old rotary press. In figure 3 a block of 12 of the rotary printing press is placed on a sheet of the new cylinder press, so that the difference can be clearly seen.

¹ This article was previously published in Hermes, Journal of the Hellenic Philatelic Society of The Netherlands, no.73 (1991) pp. 17-24 and no.75 (1991) pp. 11-23 and also in translation in the ArGe Rundbrief no.53 (1992, pp.147-154 and nr.54 (1993), pp.9-22 and The Handbook of Hellenic Philately (HPSGB 1984-) and is slightly corrected, supplemented and provided for with some new illustrations by J. Meyer;

² See page 8 for this variety and the exception of the 80 lepta stamp (large format). Also see: A.Manoloudis, "The 4x100 printing plates of the 1912 Lithographic issue; a myth or a fact?" in Philotelia 684 (Jan-Feb 2014) pp. 47-56;

³ Aspiotis had also ordered printing presses from McDonald for the engraved stamps. These included a rotary offset press, made by the English company Linotype and Machinery factory in Altricham. This press had a size of 83 x 136 cm and was probably used for the first lithographic issues. See A. Manoloudis, "The definitive issue of 1911" in Opus XIII (2013), p.191;

⁴ As to the actual use of this format there is the witness report of A.Forbin from the beginning of 1914, shown in "Impressions de Voyage" in: L'Echo de la Timbrologie (1914, p. 437). He was present at the printing of the 25 lepta in sheets of 600 (3 x 2 x 100) pieces.

⁵ See A.Manoloudis, "The 4x100 printing", pp.53-54;

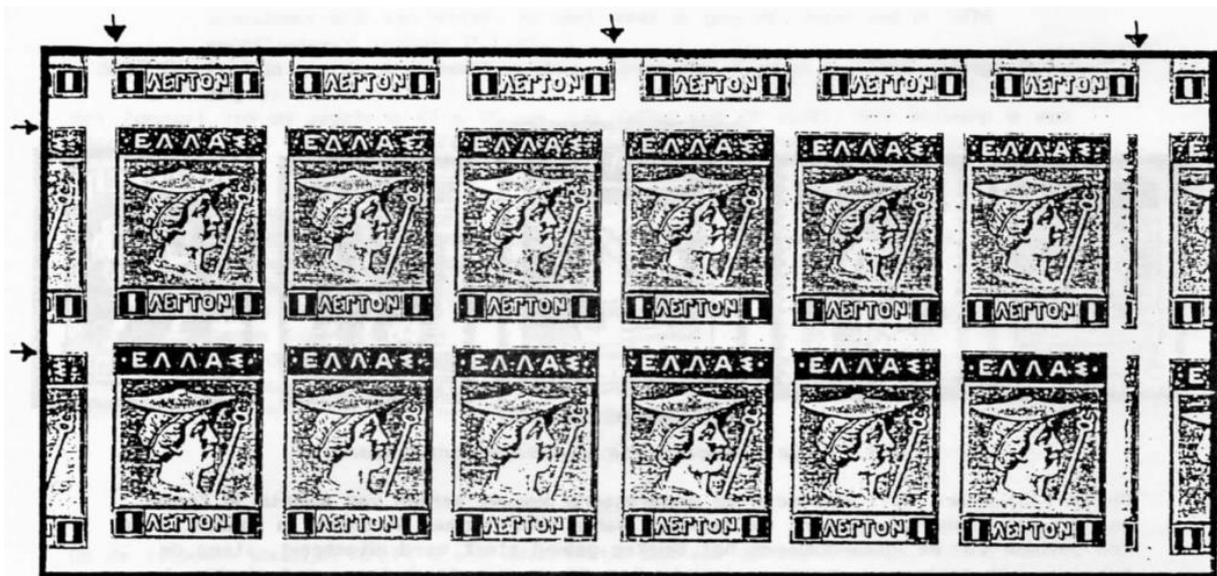


FIG.3: The smaller rotary press stamps on the larger new photo lithographic press stamps

The images on these stamps are the same as on the engraved series of 1911 (see FIG. 1). The 1, 3 and 10 lepta and 25 drachma show Hermes with his staff after a coin of 2 drachma from the 5th century BC, which was found near Rethymnon in Crete (Syvritos). On the 2, 15, 20, 25 and 40 lepta Iris, the messenger of the gods, is presented, after a coin from Terina in southern Italy. On the 5, 30, 50 and 80 lepta we see Hermes who puts on his sandals, after a coin from the 4th century BC, also found on Crete (again in Syvritos). This is an old acquaintance, because we already saw the same motif on the no.1 stamp from Crete from 1900. Finally, on the 1, 2, 3, 5 and 10 drachma we see Hermes with his brother Arcas, after a coin found in Pheneos in Arcadia dating from the 4th century BC.

The first lithographic stamps appeared in January 1913, namely the 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20 and 25 lepta. Of the 5 lepta we noted the date of December 30, 1912, of the 25 lepta we even encountered the unlikely date of September 25, 1912. The 40 and 50 lepta followed in January 1914, the 30 lepta in April 1914 and the supplemental value of 15 lepta in March 1918. Then came the 1 and 2 drachma in October 1919, the 3 drachma in October 1920, the 25 drachma in May 1922 and the 5 and 10 drachma in June / July 1922. The additional value of 80 lepta became necessary because the rate for foreign letters was increased from 50 to 80 lepta ; this stamp appeared in June 1923.

As with the engraved printing of 1911, the stamps were perforated by means of a zigzag perforation frame in the size of approximately $13 \frac{1}{4}$. Perforation errors are not so common, but cause very remarkable stamp shapes, as can be seen in figure 5.



FIG.4: 25 drachma, with no perforation on bottom side

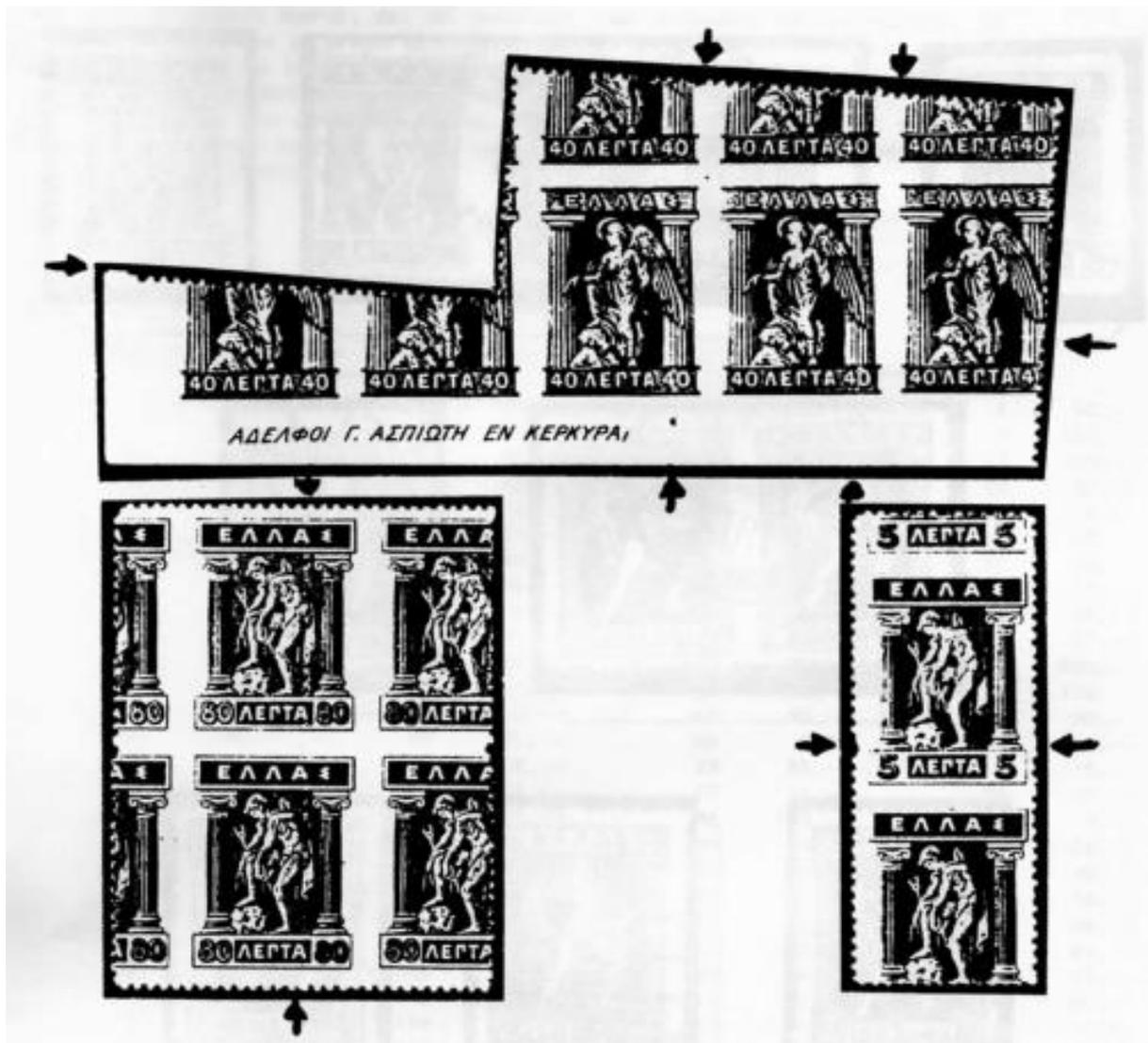


FIG.5: Perforation errors

Stamps that are not perforated in the middle (between the stamps) or on one side are even less common. The Kohl Handbook mentions a few of the 5 drachma, not perforated in between, and we ourselves noticed a 25 drachma, which remained without perforation at the bottom side (FIG. 4).

Another strange phenomenon is that if parts in the perforation frame had to be repaired, this did not happen with a piece of the normal $13 \frac{1}{4}$ zigzag, but with a piece in the deviating size $10 \frac{1}{2}$. Figure 6 shows some examples of this.



FIG.6: Examples of stamps with different zig-zag perforations 10 1/2

These deviating perforations can - as you see - occur below or above, below and above, left or right or even over a part of one of the sides. Up to now, the following stamps with this deviations have been found from the series (also see Hellas 2018, part I, pag.118):

	Bottom	Top	Bottom and top	Left	Right	L/R
1 lepton	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X	X	X
5 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X	X	X
10 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X	X	X
15 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X		X	X	X
20 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm			
25 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X	X	X
30 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X	X	X
40 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X	X	X
50 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X	X en over 5 mm	X	X	X
80 lepta	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X and about 5 mm	X	X	X
2 drachma	X and about 10 mm	X and about 10 mm	X and about 10 mm	X	X	X
3 drachma	X and about 10 mm	X and about 10 mm	X and about 10 mm	X	X	X

With the 2 and 3 drachma these deviations occur regularly, with the lepta values they are rare. Only once did we see a shifted perforation regarding the 1 lepton of the large format (Fig.7).



FIG.7: Shifted perforation

Stamps without perforation are known from the small format 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20, 25, 30 and 50 lepta and the large format 10, 20 and 80 lepta.⁶ Of the drachma values, the 2, 3 and 5 drachma are known. Figure 8 shows blocks of the 3 lepta small size and the 20 lepta in large format without perforation.



FIG.8: stamps without perforation: 3 l. small size and 20 l. large format

Texts on the margins and the plate numbers

Until 1923, the marginal inscription was exactly the same as that of the engraved series of 1911. On the left in Greek, ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ Γ. ΑΣΠΙΩΤΗ ΕΝ ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ and on the right in French: G. Aspiotis Frères. Corfu. With the 1911 issue, there was no need to state a plate number because there was only one plate of each value. With the

⁶ Hellas refers for period 4 also to the 1, 2, 3, 5, 30 and 40 lepta. It is not known if these are large or small format stamps.

lithographic printing, with several sheets of 100 from one printing cycle, this also did not occur with the first printings, but from 1918 it became common practice to include plate numbers, which occur in the middle of the lower margin of the sheet, as can be seen in figure 9a. and 9b.



FIG.9a-b: Printer name type a: G. Aspiotis Brothers, Corfu, without and with plate number

In 1923 the firm Aspiotis changed into a public limited company. As a result, the name was changed to ΑΝΩΝ.ΕΛΛ.ΕΤΑΙΡ.ΓΡΑΦΙΚΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΩΝ “ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ Γ. ΑΣΠΙΩΤΗ” ΕΝ ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ, which means Greek Graphic design Public Company “ Brothers G. Aspiotis ”in Corfu. The printer's name only appeared in Greek and the plate numbers were before or below the text (see Fig. 10).



Fig.10: Printer name type b: as a public limited company with plate number

Both types of margins (a and b) can be found with the lepta values, except for the 80 lepta, which only occurs with type b. Both types also exist in the drachma values, except for the 25 drachma, where the printer name in type b occurs vertically in the right margin (see Fig. 11). This is probably caused because the 25 drachma was printed in sheets of 50 instead of the normal 100 pieces.



Fig.11: Printer name type b in the right margin

Stamps from the lithographic printings of type a were frequently used for the ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ-, ΛΕΜΝΟΣ-, ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ 1914 ΧΕΙΜΑΡΡΑ, Ε.Δ etc. overprints, as they appeared at the same time as the first lithographic stamps. In our opinion, the stamps of the first printing therefor are rarer without than with an overprint. The margins of these overprinted stamps are the same as those of the non-overprinted stamps. With the ET-crown overprints of November 1916 the situation is different, here we see not only the normal marginal inscriptions type a in the lower margin of the sheet, but also vertical marginal inscriptions in the left margin of the sheet (see Fig.12). The same applies to the 2 lepta with overprint Β.ΗΠΕΙΡΟΣ.



FIG.12: Vertical border inscriptions with the ET-crown overprints

We never encountered these vertical marginal texts on stamps without overprinting. This is probably a separate (maybe trial) edition that has been used exclusively for these overprints. It is also remarkable that the lettering of the marginal texts is not always in the same place. Figure 13 shows two texts in the margins of the 50 lepta, the position of which is clearly different from both stamps.

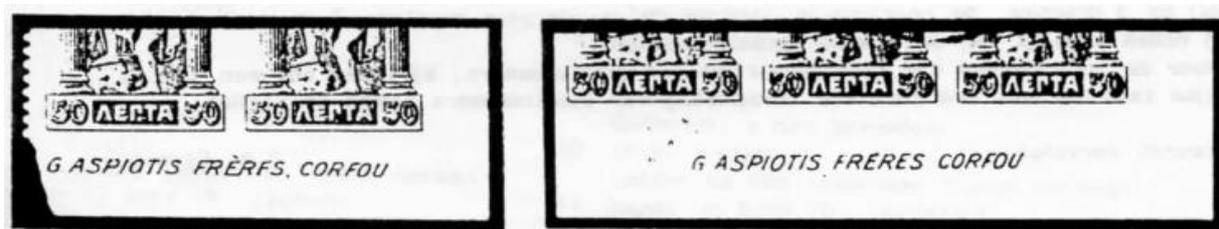


FIG.13: The marginal text in different positions

There is also a big difference in the letter types used for the plate numbers, as can be seen in the very different numbers 1 on figure 14.

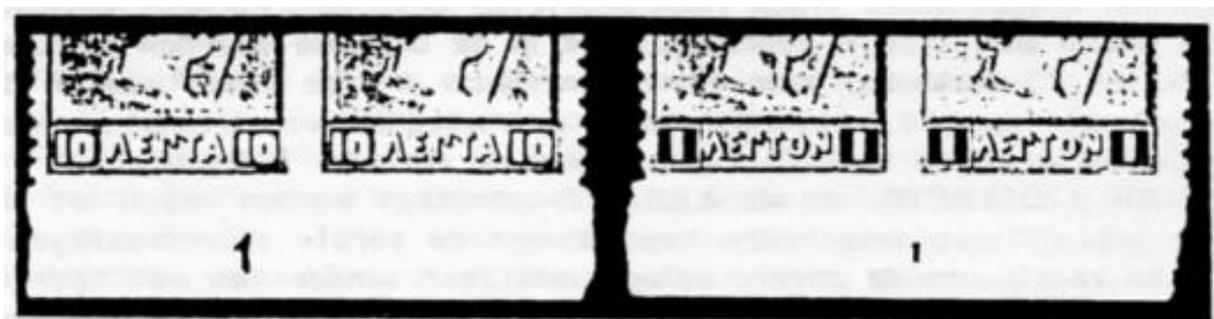


FIG. 14: Different types of plate numbers 1

We also noticed a complete 3-lepta sheet with no inscription in the lower margin, but with plate number 3 in mirror image in the upper left corner (FIG.15).



FIG.15: Plate number in mirror image

Finally, we noticed a marginal text type b, 5 lepta, where the plate number is completely missing. The plate numbers are difficult to find, not only because the counter staff usually removed the margins of the sheets beforehand, but also because the printers cut the sheets fairly tightly, leaving only narrow margins. In many cases the plate number and sometimes even the entire marginal inscription was cut away. With the type a marginal texts we saw about 15 examples in the values 1 - 50 lepta of the plate numbers 1 to 4 and never higher. This could lead to the assumption that the rotary press printing blocks in that period contain no more than 2x2 sheets of 100 stamps and not anymore 3x2, as mentioned above. With the drachma values we did not see any type a marginal texts. The marginal text type b is even more complicated, because we are dealing here with small-format stamps from the first rotary press and large-format stamps from the new cylinder press. With the rotary press stamps the highest plate number is 4, just like we found with the marginal texts type a, and also with the 80 lepta. With the large format stamps of the new cylinder press, however, we saw plate numbers up to 8 for the 80 lepta (FIG.16) and plate number 4 for the 3 drachma.



FIG. 16: Plate number 7

The conclusion is that probably 8 sheets of 80 lepta stamps were printed on the new cylinder press at a time.⁷ Due to the rarity of margins with plate numbers, it seems to us impossible to ever compile a complete collection of plate numbers.

The paper types

All paper types used for this issue have a grid that is sometimes clearly visible if you hold the stamp up to the light. Often, however, the stamp must be placed on frosted glass with a strong light behind it, to determine which type of paper we are dealing with. Figure 17 shows the grids of the different types of paper used, while image 18 shows the grids C and E greatly enlarged.

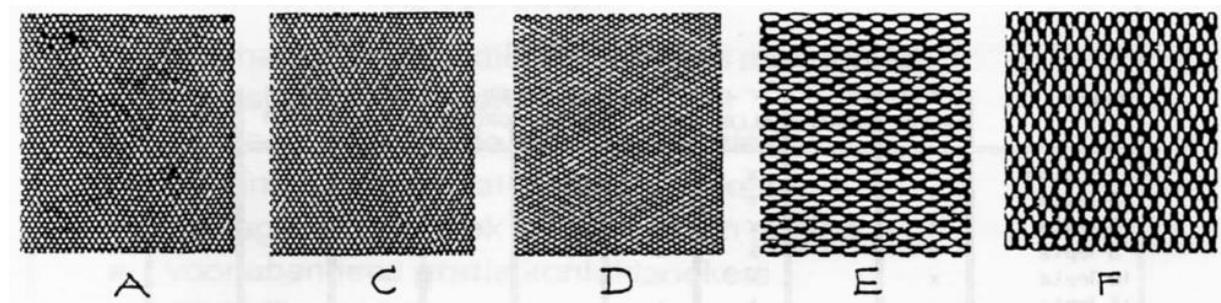


FIG.17: The grids of the different paper types

⁷ See also A. Manoloudis, idem, p.56.

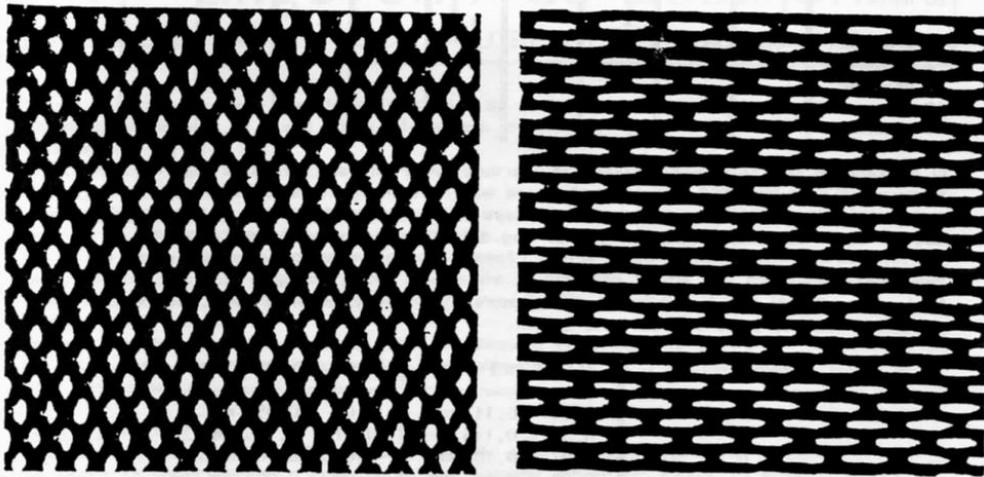


FIG. 18: One square centimetre of grids C and E enlarged five times

The A-paper has a grid below 60 degrees. It is a typical intaglio paper that was used for the engraved series of 1911. It feels somewhat rough and is cloudy when you put it in front of a light. This paper was used from the middle of 1913 to 1915.

B-paper, which was used among other things. for Hellas numbers 387 to 389, does not appear in this issue.

C paper has the same grid as the A paper, but is not cloudy when it is put in front of a light. It is typically lithographic paper, smooth and slightly shiny. It occurs in all values, from the beginning in the first months of 1913 to 1930.

D paper is actually the same as C paper, but the grid is rotated 90 degrees so that it is now at an angle of 30 degrees. It mainly occurs with the drachma values from 1919 to 1930. Both types of paper C and D give a diagonal impression when examined.

The E-paper has a different grid that looks more like a fabric, consisting of elongated stripes. It makes a horizontal impression when put in front of a light. The lepta values occur from 1919 to 1927 and the drachma values from 1925 to 1930.

F-paper is again the same as E-paper, but the grid is rotated 90 degrees, so that it makes a vertical impression when screened. It appears in the lepta values from 1919 to 1927 and the drachma values from 1923 to 1927.

Paper types

Value	A-Paper		C-Paper		D-Paper		E-Paper		F-Paper	
	Small	Large								
1 lepton	X		X	X	X		X			
2 lepta	X		X	X			X			
3 lepta	X		X	X		X	X		X	
5 lepta	X		X	X	X				X	X
10 lepta	X		X	X			X	X	X	X
15 lepta			X	X						
20 lepta	X		X	X					X	X
25 lepta	X		X	X	X	X		X		
30 lepta	X		X	X						
40 lepta			X	X						
50 lepta	X		X		X				X	
80 lepta			X	X	X		X			X
1 drachma			X		X		X		X	
2 drachma			X		X		X		X	
3 drachma			X		X		X		X	
5 drachma			X		X		X			
10 drachma			X		X					
25 drachma					X					

The table summarizes the result of examining a few thousand stamps, of which around 500 were clearly dated.

Apart from paper type, a distinction is made between small and large format stamps. It is of course possible that the table is not complete and that additions can still be found.

Paper thickness

Considerable thickness differences occur in the various types of paper, of which an overview of the thickness in mm is given below.

Paper type	Stamps with gum	Stamps without gum
A	0,08 – 0,11 mm	0,08 – 0,095 mm
C	0,08 – 0,115 mm	0,07 – 0,13 mm
D	0,07 – 0,10 mm	0,07 – 0,10 mm
E	0,08 – 0,10 mm	0,075 – 0,085 mm
F	0,075 – 0,12 mm	0,07 – 0,095 mm

The gum

During the many years in which this issue was printed, different types of gum have been used. As you will see later, a good knowledge of the gum is essential to be able to distinguish between the different printing periods. Moreover, this knowledge is important for identifying false ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ, ΛΕΜΝΟΣ, ΧΕΙΜΑΡΡΑ and other overprints.

During the first printings, in the first months of 1913, the gum was white and very strong, almost mirror-like, shiny (compare, for example, Hellas no. 230, 235e, 237 and 241).

As to the following printings, from 1914-1918, the gum was slightly tinted, still shiny, but not as strong as at the first printings (compare, for example, Hellas no. 357 to 359).

The printings of 1918-1922 have a gum that was thicker and applied diagonally, often with clear and deep ridges. However, here are a few exceptions. The gum of the drachma values, printed from 1919-1926, is generally mat and smooth, but diagonal gum is also found.

The (large format) stamps printed on the new cylinder press in the lepta values have a mat, off-white or slightly tinted gum. Sometimes with these stamps you also see diagonally applied gum, but the ridges are much less clear than with the prints of 1918-1922.

The gum of the Viennese prints of 1926 is shiny and yellowish-tinted.

The printings of the re-engraved plates of the 1, 2 and 3 drachma from 1926 have a mat and white gum.

Varieties and deviations

Regarding the 80 lepta, four different types can be distinguished for both small and large format stamps.⁸ The easiest way to keep them apart is to count the hatch lines in the two zeros, see figure 19.

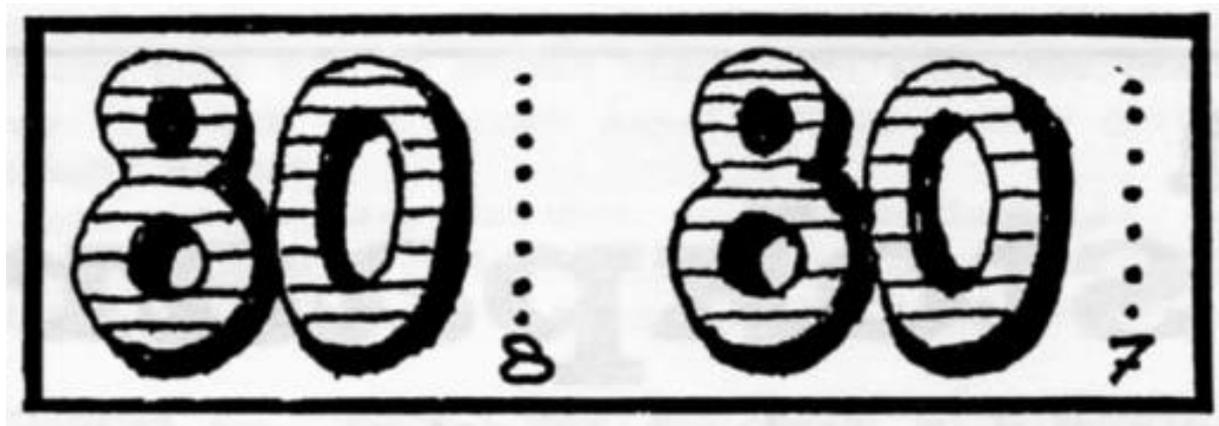


FIG.19: The types of the 80 lepta

⁸ See also A. Laskaridis, "Ποικιλια του 80λεπτου της λιθογραφικης σειρας του 1923" in Philotelia 399 (1966), pag.157-158;

The following types can be distinguished:

Type	Lines left	Lines right
I	7	7
II	7	8
III	8	8
IV	8	7

These types are distributed fairly randomly across the different plates..

In blocks of 12 from the bottom of the sheet, one of which is shown in Figure 20, we found the following combinations:

A. In the small format stamps

Plate 2	IV	II	IV	II	IV	II
	IV	II	II	IV	II	II

Plate 3	II	II	IV	IV	II	II
	II	II	IV	IV	II	II

B. In large format stamps

Plate 1a	IV	II	IV	II	IV	II
Plate 3a	II	IV	II	IV	II	IV

Plate 3	I	II	III	I	II	IV
	II	I	IV	III	II	II

If you take into account that there are at least four plates of the small format stamps and probably 2 x 4 of the large format stamps, it seems impossible to make a plate reconstruction. Nevertheless, it is interesting to search in pairs, blocks or strips.



FIG.20: Block of 12 of the 80 lepta large format plate 3, with a continuous scratch in the stamps position 83 to 88

Figure 20 also shows a scratch through the stamps, which is white in the coloured parts and sometimes coloured in the white parts. The scratch has a permanent character, because we saw other stamps with the scratch in the

same place.
 The same applies to the somewhat vague white line of Figure 21.



FIG.21: White line in positions 91 to 93

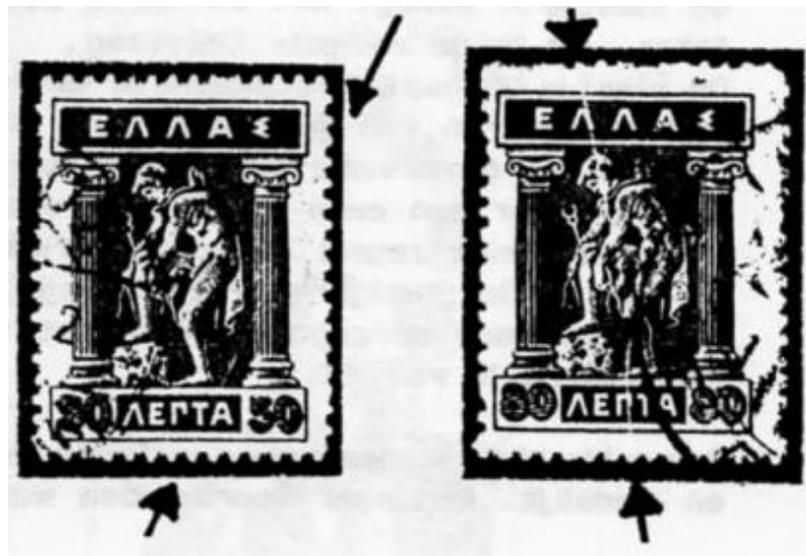
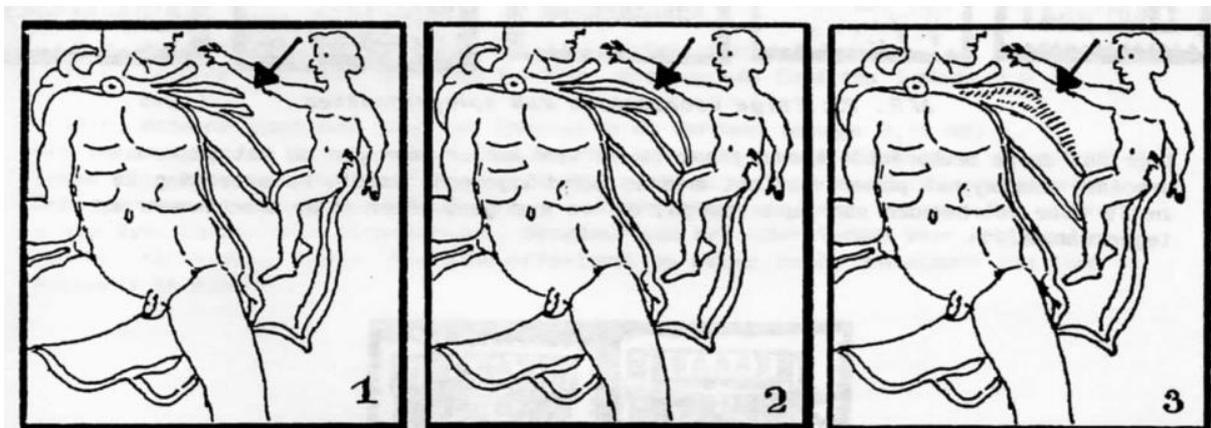


FIG.22: So-called hairlines

Figure 22 shows two examples of so-called hairlines. If a loose hair falls on the stone or slab during the lithographic process before the transfer, then this hair remains visible as a white line on the printed sheet. Examples of these hairlines have been found on stamps of 10, 25, 30, 50 and 80 lepta.



Normal

Cape variety

re-engraved plate

FIG.23: Differences in the 2 drachma stamps



FIG.24: pair without perforation with the cape variety

A typical deviation occurs in the 2 drachma, shown in figure 23.

On picture 1 the upper part of the cape of Hermes ends under the elbow of Arcas, this is the normal condition.

On image 2, the upper part of the cape extends to the Arcas thigh. We saw three specimens of this variety, all with cancellation data from 1920. It is not known whether this variety appears on a whole sheet, but it is at least certain that it appears on a sheet more than once. Have a look at the pair without perforation of figure 24, where both stamps have the "cape variety".

On the third image of figure 23 you can see the hatching in the cape as it is in the so-called re-engraved plate from 1926, which is entirely similar to that of the engraved stamps from 1911.

Mirror prints occur fairly regularly with these issues. They are often very sharp and clear. A few examples are given in Figure 25.



FIG.25: Some examples of mirror printing

Due to the dry printing process, paper folds are much less common than with the intaglio printing process, where the paper is first made wet before printing. Figure 26 shows two examples of paper folding, which we only encountered in the drachma values.



FIG.26: Paper folding

The entire series is known with the ANNULÉ - always up-standing - hand stamp, which means INVALID, the same as the well-known Greek AKYPON.

We saw this overprint on the 2, 20, 25, 40 and 50 lepta in small format and the 1, 3, 5, 10, 30 and 80 lepta in large format stamps.

Finally, these stamps appear with the imprint ΘΕΜΙΣ, these are tax stamps for legal documents of various types. We saw this print in black on the 10, 20, 25, 40 and 50 lepta and 1, 2 and 25 drachma and in red on the 50 lepta. In figure 27 a legal piece with a pair of the 1 drachma.⁹

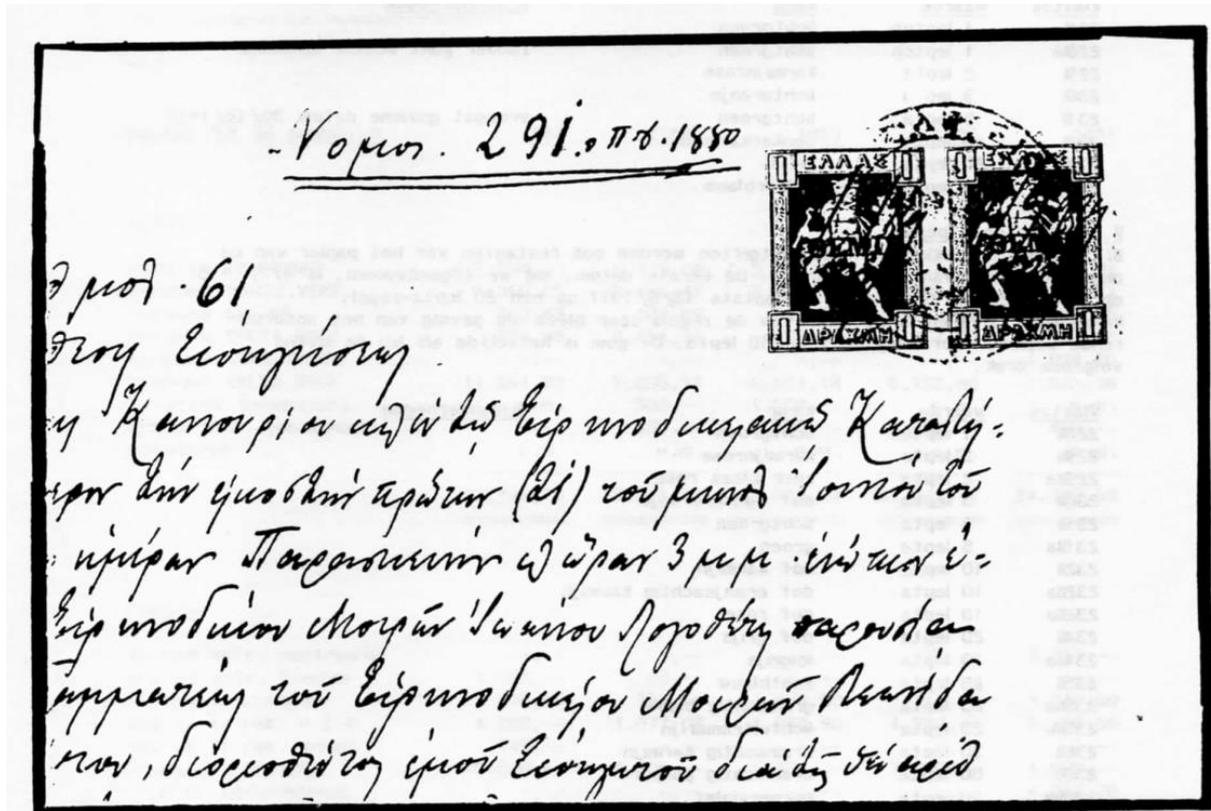


FIG.27: Tax stamps with overprint ΘΕΜΙΣ on a legal document

The different printing periods

The lepta values of these stamps were printed from 1913 to around 1926, but you often see stamps with cancels until about 1929, especially the 30 and 80 lepta, so it can be assumed that printing continued until 1927, perhaps even until 1928. There must have been an avalanche of different printings in those years. By means of the colours, the stamp dimensions, the paper, the gum and the dates of the cancels, it is possible to divide these stamps into 5 printing periods.

The drachma values were printed from 1919. We saw cancels on these stamps dating to 1935, and therefore we assume that these stamps were printed until at least 1930 and probably longer. It turned out not to be possible to split these drachma values into different printing periods, unless you want to take the 1, 2 and 3 drachma printed in 1926 from re-engraved plates separately.

The Viennese printing will be treated separately at the end.

The following cataloguing is based on the Hellas numbers.

I. Printing in the first months of 1913

The majority of the stamps printed during this first period were provided with overprints for the new territories, as a result of which non-overprinted stamps are scarce. In the first period only the values 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20 and 25 lepta were printed, exclusively on C-paper. The colours are clear and show little differences. The gum is white and very strong, almost mirror-like shiny (compare colour and gum with Hellas no. 230, 235e, 237 and 241).

⁹ See for more details: A. Galinos, "Ενσημα ΘΕΜΙΣ τέλος επιτηδεύματος δικηγόρων" in Philotelia (2018) nrs.710, pp.182-185, 711, pp.244-250, 712, pp.262-265 and 713, pp.328-335.

Hellas	Value	Colour	Remarks
219AI	1 lepton	Light green	
219AaI	1 lepton	Light green	Without dot behind ΕΛΛΑΣ
220AI	2 lepta	Carmine pink	
221AI	3 lepta	Light orange	
222AI	5 lepta	Light green	Earliest seen date 30/12/1912
223AI	10 lepta	Dark Carmine	
224AI	20 lepta	Grey	
225AI	25 lepta	Bright blue	

(*) Hellas also mentions the 30 lepta (226A), 40 lepta (227A) and 50 lepta (228A), but these are more likely from the third period, see section III;

II. Printings on A paper

During the first printings of these issues, remnants of the paper from the engraved issues of 1911 were also used. The first date we encountered is 4/7/1913 on a stamp of 5 lepta and the last 18/5/1917 on a 20 lepta stamp.

In some cases the colour of the stamps is very pale due to the absorbent paper, especially in the 2 and 10 lepta. The gum is the same as with the next printing.

Hellas	Value	Colour	Remarks
219BII	1 lepton	Light green	
220BII	2 lepta	Carmine pink	
220BIIa	2 lepta	Very pale pink	
221II(*)	3 lepta	Dull dark orange	
222BII	5 lepta	Light green	
222BIIa	5 lepta	Green	
223BII	10 lepta	Dull carmine	
223BIIa	10 lepta	Dull orange-coloured carmine	
223BIIb	10 lepta	Dull pink	
224II(*)	20 lepta	Dull grey	
224IIa(*)	20 lepta	Slate grey	
225BII	25 lepta	Light blue	
225BIIa	25 lepta	Greyish blue	
225BIIb	25 lepta	Light ultramarine	
236II(*)	30 lepta	Brownish carmine	
228BII	50 lepta	Brownish purple	
228BIIa	50 lepta	Purple Violet	

(*) not in Hellas.

III. Printings from 1914-1918

The colours are still clear with these printings. The paper is always C, with a thickness of 0.08-0.10 mm. However, regarding the 1 lepton thick paper of 0.13 mm occurs and the 2 and 3 lepta exist with thin paper of 0.07 mm. The gum is still shiny, but not as strong as the 1st printings, and is slightly tinted (compare with ET crown stamps, Hellas nos. 357+).

Hellas	Value	Colour	Remarks
219CIII	1 lepton	Yellow green	
219CIIIa	1 lepton	Light yellow green	
219CIIIb	1 lepton	Yellow green	On thick paper
220CIII	2 lepta	Carmine pink	
220CIIIa	2 lepta	Carmine pink	On thin paper
220CIIIb	2 lepta	Dark carmine pink	
221CIII	3 lepta	Light orange	
221CIIIa	3 lepta	Light orange	On thin paper
221CIIIb	3 lepta	Orange	

222CIII	5 lepta	Yellow green	
223CIII	10 lepta	Carmine	
223CIIIa	10 lepta	Light carmine	
224CIII	20 lepta	Grey	
224CIIIa	20 lepta	Slate grey	
225CIII	25 lepta	Light greyish blue	
225CIIIa	25 lepta	Dull Grey blue	
226CIII	30 lepta	Carmine	
227CIII	40 lepta	Slate blue	
227CIIIa	40 lepta	Dark slate blue	
228CIII	50 lepta	Brownish purple	
228CIIIa	50 lepta	Dark brownish purple	

IV. Subsequent printings of the lepta values 1918-1923

This period is characterized by many printings of all values, still printed on the rotary press in a small format. The colours are heavy and usually dull. The paper is mainly C, but occasionally you also come across paper D, E and F. The gum is thicker, applied diagonally and often with deep ridges. The D, E and F paper, but sometimes also with the C paper, have a gum that is smooth and of varying thickness, sometimes solid, sometimes uneven and often cracked.

Hellas	Value	Colour	Paper	Gum
219DIV	1 lepton	Yellowish green	C	Diagonal
219DIVa	1 lepton	Dark yellow green	C	Diagonal
219DVb	1 lepton	Dark green	C	Diagonal
219DIVc	1 lepton	Very dark green	C	Diagonal
219DIVd	1 lepton	Dark green	E	Smooth, even
219DIVE	1 lepton	Dark olive green	E	Smooth, uneven, cracked
220DIV	2 lepta	Dull pink	C	Diagonal
220DIVa	2 lepta	Light pink	C	Diagonal
220DIVb	2 lepta	Light pink	C	Smooth, even
220DIVc	2 lepta	Dull brownish red	E	Smooth, even
220DIVd	2 lepta	Dark dull red	E	Smooth, uneven, cracked
221DIV	3 lepta	Dark orange	C	Diagonal
221DIVa	3 lepta	Dark dull orange	C	Diagonal
221DIVb	3 lepta	Dark orange	F	Smooth, even
221DIVc	3 lepta	Dark orange	E	Diagonal
221DIVd	3 lepta	Light dull orange	F	?
221DIVE	3 lepta	Dull orange	F	?
222DIV	5 lepta	Light green	C	Diagonal
222DIVa	5 lepta	Dark green	C	Diagonal
222DIVb	5 lepta	Green	C	Smooth, even
222DIVc	5 lepta	Light green	F	?
223DIV	10 lepta	Carmine	C	Diagonal
223DIVa	10 lepta	Dark carmine	C	Diagonal
223DIVb	10 lepta	Orange-red	C	Diagonal
223DIVc	10 lepta	Light carmine	C	?
223DIVd	10 lepta	Carmine	E	Smooth, even
223DIVE	10 lepta	Dull orange-red	E	Smooth, even
223DIVf	10 lepta	Carmine red	F	?
223DIVg	10 lepta	Light carmine	F	?
390IV	15 lepta	Grey blue	C	Diagonal
390IVa	15 lepta	Grey blue	C	Smooth, even
390IVb	15 lepta	Light grey blue	C	Smooth, even
390IVc	15 lepta	Dark dull grey blue	C	?
224DIV	20 lepta	Dark grey	C	Diagonal
224DIVa	20 lepta	Slate Grey	C	Diagonal

224DIVb	20 lepta	Very dark grey	F	?
225DIV	25 lepta	Light blue	C	Diagonal
225DIVa	25 lepta	Dull blue	C	Diagonal
225DIVb	25 lepta	Dark dull blue	C	?
225DIVc	25 lepta	Greenish blue	C	?
225DIVd	25 lepta	Light greenish blue	C	?
225DIVE	25 lepta	Ultramarine	C	?
225DIVf	25 lepta	Dark dull ultramarine	C	?
226DIV	30 lepta	Light carmine	C	Diagonal
226DIVa	30 lepta	Carmine	C	Diagonal
226DIVb	30 lepta	Carmine pink	C	?
226DIVc	30 lepta	Brownish carmine pink	C	?
227DIV	40 lepta	Slate blue	C	Diagonal
227DIVa	40 lepta	Dark dull slate blue	C	Diagonal
228DIV	50 lepta	Brownish purple	C	Diagonal
228DIVa	50 lepta	Dark purple violet	C	Diagonal
228DIBb	50 lepta	Purple	D	Smooth, even
228DIBc	50 lepta	Brownish purple	D	?
228DIBd	50 lepta	Dark brownish purple	E	?
391IV	80 lepta	Brownish purple	E	Smooth, even
391IVa	80 lepta	Dark brownish purple	E	Smooth, crackled

V. Printings of the drachma values 1919 - ca. 1930

In this period we saw an increasing devaluation of the drachma, which increased the need for higher values. The printings followed each other quickly and that made it impossible for us to make a distinction between the various printings.

In 1926 the plates of the 1, 2 and 3 drachma were re-engraved. Stamps of these re-designed plates are mainly recognizable by the fresh colour and the thinner hatching lines behind Hermes and the value figures.

The colours vary greatly. The paper occurs with grids C, D, E and F. All values include both types of gum: smooth and diagonal.

Hellas	Value	Colour	Paper	Gum
392V	1 drachma	Light clear blue	C	
392Va	1 drachma	Blue	C, D, F	
392Vb	1 drachma	Light greyish blue	C	
392Vc	1 drachma	Greyish blue	D, E	
392Vd	1 drachma	Grey blue	E	
392Ve	1 drachma	Dark blue	D	
392Vf	1 drachma	Grey ultramarine	C, D	
392Vg	1 drachma	Ultramarine	C, D	
392Vh	1 drachma	Dark ultramarine	C, F	
392Vi	1 drachma	Light ultramarine	C, F	Fine print (re-engr plate)
393V	2 drachma	Dull orange	C, E, F	
393V 1	2 drachma	Dull orange	C	Cape variety
393Va	2 drachma	Brick red (vermilion)	C, D	
393Va 1	2 drachma	Brick red (vermilion)	C	Cape variety
393Vb	2 drachma	Brownish brick red	D	
393Vb 1	2 drachma	Brownish brick red	D	Cape variety
393IVc	2 drachma	Bright brick red	D, F	
393Vd	2 drachma	Orange	C, D	
393Ve	2 drachma	Light orange	E	
393Vf	2 drachma	Bright orange	E	
393Vg	2 drachma	Clear orange-red	D	
393Vh	2 drachma	Orange	C	Fine print (re-engr plate)
394V	3 drachma	Dull carmine pink	D, F	

394Va	3 drachma	Dark carmine pink	C, D, F	
394Vb	3 drachma	Light carmine pink	C, F	
394Vc	3 drachma	Dark dull carmine pink	C, D, E	
394Vd	3 drachma	Carmine pink	D, E	Fine print (re-engr plate)
395V	5 drachma	Pale grey-blue	C, E, F	
395Va	5 drachma	Light grey blue	C, D, E	
395Vb	5 drachma	Grey blue	C, D	
396V	10 drachma	Dull grey blue	C	
396Va	10 drachma	Dark grey blue	C, D	
396Vb	10 drachma	Blackish grey blue	C, D	
397V	25 drachma	Dark slate blue	D	
397Va	25 drachma	Dull slate blue	D	
397Vb	25 drachma	Dark blue	D	

VI. Printing of the large format stamps of the new cylinder press 1923-1928

The paper of these printings appears softer and tends to tear on the perforation. The grid C occurs at all values, but the types D, E and F are also found in various values. The gum is off-white, both diagonal and smooth. The 1, 2 and 3 lepta never came to the sales counters, because in 1922 the 1 and 2 lepta coins were withdrawn. However, significant quantities have reached the market. Used copies always are always cancelled to order.

Many of these low values were provided with false overprints by “packet fillers”.

Hellas(*)	Value	Colour	Paper	Gum	Remarks
219DVI	1 lepton	Green	C	Diagonal	
219DVIa	1 lepton	Dull light grey green	C	Diagonal	
219DVIb	1 lepton	Light yellowish green	C	Diagonal	
219DVIC	1 lepton	Olive green	C	Smooth	
219DVIId	1 lepton	Dark grey green	C	Diagonal	
220DVI	2 lepta	Light carmine pink	C	Diagonal	
220DVIa	2 lepta	Carmine pink	C	Diagonal	
220DVIb	2 lepta	Dull carmine pink	C	Diagonal	
220DVIC	2 lepta	Dark carmine pink	D	Smooth	
221DVI	3 lepta	Light orange	C	Diagonal	
221DVIa	3 lepta	Orange	C, D	Smooth	
221DVIb	3 lepta	Orange	C	Diagonal	
221DVIC	3 lepta	Dark dull orange	C	Smooth	
221DVIId	3 lepta	Orange-red	D	Smooth	
222DVI	5 lepta	Green	C	Diagonal	
222DVIa	5 lepta	Yellowish green	C	Diagonal	
222DVIb	5 lepta	Yellowish green	C	Smooth	
222DVIC	5 lepta	Yellowish green	F	?	
222DVIId	5 lepta	Dark green	C	?	
222DVIe	5 lepta	Very dark green	C	?	
223DVI	10 lepta	Carmine pink	C	Diagonal	
223DVIa	10 lepta	Carmine	C	Diagonal	
223DVIb	10 lepta	Carmine	C	Smooth	
223DVIC	10 lepta	Dark carmine	C	?	
223DVIId	10 lepta	Bright carmine red	C	?	
223DVIe	10 lepta	Dark carmine red	C	?	
223DVIIf	10 lepta	Dull orange-red	C	?	
223DVIg	10 lepta	Red	F	?	
223DVIh	10 lepta	Dark red	E	Smooth	
390VI	15 lepta	Grey blue	C	?	
390VIa	15 lepta	Dark grey blue	C	?	
390VIb	15 lepta	Dark dull blue	C	Smooth	
224DVI	20 lepta	Light grey	C	Diagonal	

224DVIa	20 lepta	Grey	C	Diagonal	
224DVIb	20 lepta	Dark dull grey	C	Diagonal	
224DVIc	20 lepta	Grey	F	?	
225DVI	25 lepta	Light ultramarine	C	Diagonal	
225DVIa	25 lepta	Light ultramarine	C	Smooth	
225DVIb	25 lepta	Ultramarine	C	?	
225DVIc	25 lepta	Dull ultramarine	C	?	
225DVI d	25 lepta	Dark ultramarine	C	?	
225DVIe	25 lepta	Dull blue	C	?	
225DVI f	25 lepta	Dull blue	D	?	
225DVI g	25 lepta	Dull blue	E	?	
226DVI	30 lepta	Light rose carmine	C	Diagonal	
226DVIa	30 lepta	Rose carmine	C	Diagonal	
226DVIb	30 lepta	Clear carmine	C	?	
226DVIc	30 lepta	Dark carmine	C	Smooth	
226DVI d	30 lepta	Dark red	C	?	
226DVI e	30 lepta	Dark dull carmine	F	?	
227DVI	40 lepta	Dull grey blue	C	Smooth	
227DVIa	40 lepta	Blue grey	C	?	
227DVIb	40 lepta	Dark dull blue	C	?	
227DVIc	40 lepta	Very dark blue	C	?	
391VI	80 lepta	Brownish purple	C	Smooth	
391VIa	80 lepta	Dark purple-brown	C	Diagonal	
391VIb	80 lepta	Dark purple-brown	C	Smooth	

(*) Hellas does not make a distinction between the small and large format stamps.

VII. The Viennese printing in the first months of 1926

In 1925, when Aspiotis could no longer keep up with the demand for stamps, it was decided to outsource a number of stamps to the Viennese printing company "Elbemühl Papierfabriken und Graphische Industrie A.G.". This firm only printed the 25 and 40 lepta, and the 1 drachma.¹⁰ Just like with Aspiotis, these stamps were printed in sheets of 100 copies, but without marginal inscription. Plate number 5 is known of the 1 drachma. The paper is white and has no grid, the gum is smooth and has a yellowish tint. The zigzag perforation is also different, because it has shorter perforation incisions, which are more vertical than with the Aspiotis-variety, see figure 28.



FIG.28: The Aspiotis and the Viennese perforations, respectively, 3 x enlarged

The colours show remarkably few differences, but the stamp dimensions and the drawings clearly differ from the Aspiotis plates. Figures 29, 30 and 31 show the most important differences.

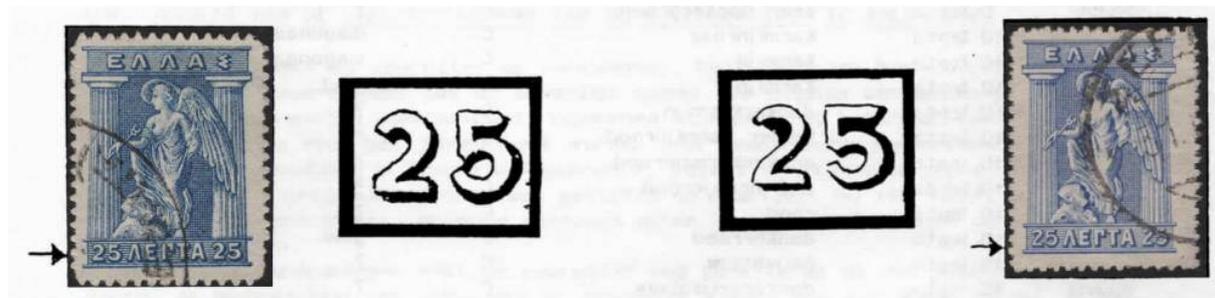


FIG.29: 25 lepta resp. Aspiotis (18x24.25 mm) and Viennese printings (17.5x24.75 mm)

¹⁰ In first instance the 1 lepton stamp was also ordered, but this order was revoked;

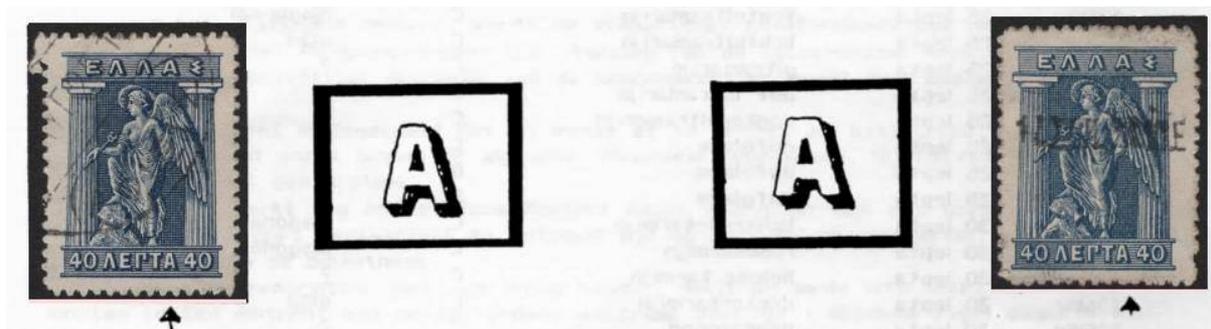


FIG.30: 40 lepta resp. Aspiotis (18x24.25 mm) and Viennese printings (17.5x24.75 mm)

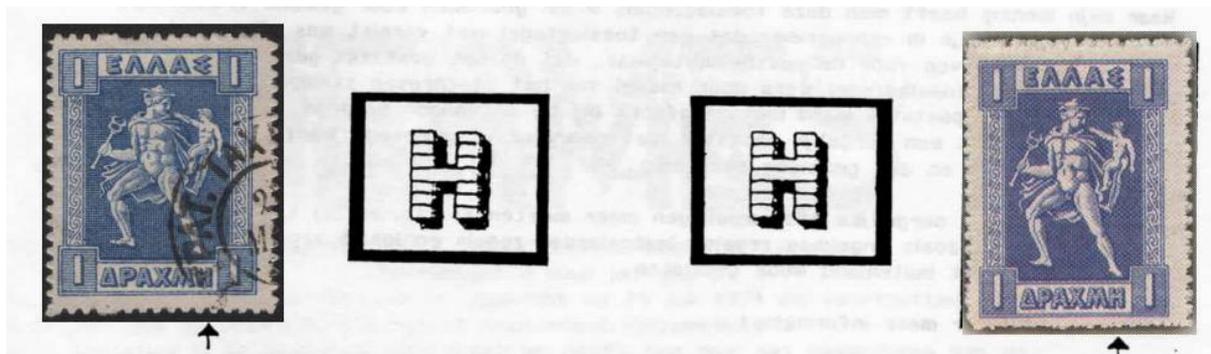


FIG.31: 1 drachma resp. Aspiotis (20.75x26.25 mm) and Viennese printings (20x26.75 mm)

Hellas	Value	Colour	Remarks
464VII	25 lepta	Ultramarine	
465VII	40 lepta	Dark grey blue	
466VII	1 drachma	Blue	

Finally

As many know, I have been investigating the lithographic stamp issue for many years. Much of what I have said in lectures has now become obsolete and has been corrected in this article. But this is probably not the final analysis and for example perhaps another method will be found to also make a difference between the successive drachma printings. Further information and corrections are therefore very welcome, such as filling in the many question marks for the used gum.

Many thanks to the late H.C. van Ginhoven, the late E. Hut, the late J. Koopmans and J.W.M van Welzen, who provided much information and in particular to the late C.A. Woods from our English sister society.

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