

## WHEN HISTORY... MAKES SENSE

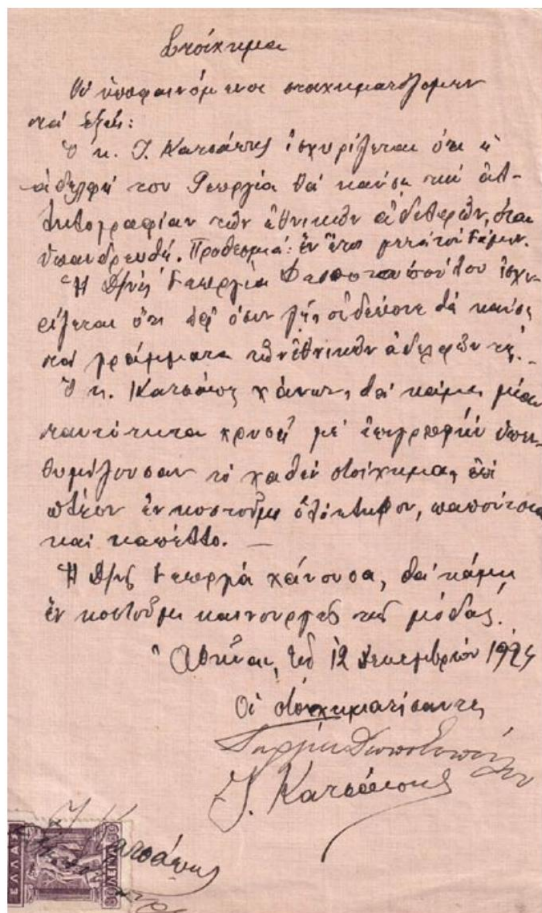
Costas Dimisianos writes

General Secretary of the FEA

I recently acquired (it was gifted to me in particular), a document-document, which of course belongs to the category of

"ephemeris" <sup>1</sup>, as a more specialized reader and collector would prefer to classify it, but whose fate was to be preserved over the years, not philatelic, but presumed historical. It is a pleasant moment in history, a document created perhaps around a table in a moment of cheerfulness and specifically for a bet that Georgia Despotopoulou had made with a military man in 1924, a time after the glorious period of the Greek Army that began with the Balkan wars and that ended, hélas! with the Asia Minor campaign.

I remind the readers that I had referred extensively to the Despotopoulos sisters in my related article in our magazine <sup>2</sup>. One of them, Georgia, was the most active in the "Sister of the Soldier" society (which all 3 sisters had infiltrated and communicated simultaneously with dozens of soldiers, the "brothers", encouraging them in the stressful conditions of the war, informing them about what is going on in Athens, even giving them advice and generally making them feel it



like their family, even commenting on their political views), she made a bet with a military man about the fate of the systematically classified correspondence she kept during all those years of her correspondence with the military.

This document is known, published by its previous owner, in the magazine "Filotelia"<sup>3</sup>. I bring it back up to date in order to inform those of our magazine readers who did not know about it, but also for those who had passed into the oblivion of history. This shows Georgia's love for her mail archive.

I report in detail the content of the document:

**Bet We  
bet the following:**

**Mr. I. Katsapis claims that his brother Georgia will burn the correspondence of the national brothers, when he takes office. Deadline: one year after marriage.**

**Miss Georgia Despotopoulou claims that as long as she lives she will never burn the letters of her ethnic brothers.**

**Mr. Katsapis Hanon, will make a golden ID card with an inscription reminding the lost bet, in addition to a full suit, shoes and coat.**

**Miss Georgia, loser, will dress up as a fashion innovator.**

**Athens, on December 12, 1924**

**The punters  
(signatures follow)**

In order to give the corresponding formality and validity to the document, they affixed an 80-minute lithograph, which they canceled with their signatures.

I did not manage to find information about the rank of I. Katsapis. I just found his letter, dated 1919 from the front (TT 915) ý. We do not know the fate of the bet, but we do know that it was won by Georgia, who kept the priceless and unique archive, a literary and historical treasure that she hid in her drawers and kept until her death in 1978.

This record was found and is of immense value, not only for the information it provides to historians about the living conditions of the soldiers, their psychology and the battles fought on the various fronts, but also for the philatelic information it provides to the philatelists with the variety of stamps it displays (administrative, censorship), but **above all** for the values it transmits to young people for their country!

My source... known. I thank her publicly...

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<sup>1</sup> According to ELIA, paper items that were made to serve a specific purpose, without the intention of being preserved after their use, are characterized as "ephemera"; seemingly insignificant items of everyday life - labels, tickets, bills, stationery, advertising material—illuminate aspects and capture the atmosphere of the historical period in which they were created.

<sup>2</sup> "TO GRAMMATOSIMO" magazine, Issue C, vol.21, May-August 2019, p. 1

<sup>3</sup> "FILOTELIA" magazine, vol. 565, March-April 1994, p. 91

<sup>9</sup> F. LADI "Rejoice through the battle", TROHALIA Publications, 1993, p. 74