

Comment and Controversy over Private Spanish Issues

Hi Don,

After reading your article in **Orbit #117 (page 21)** on sub satellites, I cannot add anything else to the text. As usual, thanks for your efforts in promoting our hobby.

However, it is necessary that I comment you some of the images illustrating this article.

In the page 21 you have shown five **Spanish stamped envelopes which are ABSOLUTELY PRIVATE and not OFFICIAL.**

These pre-stamped covers can be purchased from Spanish Post (Correos) in blank, and everyone can add them an image by using your own printer. This process cannot confirm the validity of the cover if is not postmarked with the correct date/place where the astronomical event occurs.

They are printed and produced by a collector/dealer or mixed and sold in Delcampe under the nickname jubortorspain1950.

These pre-stamped and illustrated covers have no relation to astrophilately as they are not postmarked in any Spanish post, and even they were, would not be from places with connection to the astrophilatelic event pictured.

Unfortunately for astrophilatelists, these are in the market and some cachet makers are issuing very beautiful covers, but without any relevance.

Another example is a collector/dealer or both that offers covers in eBay but such items are all cancelled in Helsinki (no relation with astronomic events).

Sincerely, I suggest not enclosing these Spanish stamped envelopes as such and if do, please specify that they are PRIVATE without astrophilatelic value. These "philatelic." items must be considered under level or philatelic stamps issued by countries/territories in black UPU lists.

Thanks for your time reading this email. **Antoni RIGO** 21.6.18

Antoni,

Thanks for taking the time to contact me regarding the Sub-satellites article published in *Orbit*. Garry and I appreciate your feedback.

Regarding the Spanish pre-stamped envelopes, I failed to specifically note in the article that these items are not cancelled. That was an oversight. I plan to go through our web pages and note their un-cancelled status, which certainly lowers their value for astrophilately.

We realize there are many philatelic items that are questionable as far as legitimacy, and the tolerance for such items varies greatly among collectors. Garry and I have taken a more liberal/accepting view of many of these items, preferring to not get into the debate about their legitimacy, rather pointing out their

existence, and allowing the reader or collector to decide what they want to include in their collections. We fully realize that such items can degrade the overall quality of a philatelic collection, and we both wish that such items would not be so common. But when there is little available to represent some aspect of astrophilately, we lean towards at least acknowledging these questionable items rather than ignore them entirely. What I can say, is that I'll try to be clearer in the future when utilizing non-cancelled items, as to their status, and therefore to their less-legitimate value.

Thanks again. **Don Hillger** 21.6.18

Don,

Many thanks for your email and for your quick and sincere response.

It was not my intention at any time to criticse you (orGary) about these Spanish items. I understand perfectly that you will use any illustration if necessary for better comprehension of the text. Any philatelic item (even of low value) can be used in the articles.

However, collectors should be advised that some items cannot be adjusted to philatelic guidelines.

Instead of using these Spanish stamped envelopes you can buy blank US prestamped covers and adding to them with your printer any available (and free) image on internet. The result will be the same.

I have been asked by non Spanish collectors if Spanish Post was very active in Astrophilately by seeing a lot of these Spanish illustrated envelopes. Unfortunately, these covers are private as well as nowadays everyone can produce a private stamp with little value.

Personalised stamps, private covers, etc must not be prohibited, just used with very moderation in articles, and always quoting this fact, and never used in competitive exhibits.

I cannot close without thanking Gary and you for all the immense time effort your expend in promoting our astrophilatelic hobby.

Best Regards **Antoni RIGO** 22.6.18

Footnote: Don commented to Jeff on 31.7.18

With Garry's help (as usual) we now note these Spanish pre-stamped envelopes as un-cancelled items (and therefore of less value to astrophilatelists). I'm not sure I told Antoni that I had completed that task, as there were a large number of these items on our pages. We thank Antoni for helping us clarify these items, which were previously a bit of a mystery to us.