

# PHILATELIC LAXITY

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## THE ICAO EMBLEM: TO ERR ...



Figure 1

Artists who design stamps should take immense care in producing their subject in great detail from the correct background information. Much poor artistic work has been noticed in the thematic collection related to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations (UN) Specialized Agency headquartered in Montreal since 1945; several articles previously published in *The Canadian Connection* had already highlighted errors in this collection. This article focuses on incorrect emblem designs found in the ICAO collection.

An early emblem designed for the *United Nations Conference on International Organization* held in 1945 in San Francisco can be found on the first day cover issued by the 1st Chinese Embassy (see Figure 1). It shows a circular representation of a map of the world extending to the 40<sup>th</sup> parallel south and with the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian west of Greenwich in the lower vertical position. On 7 December 1946, the United Nations Assembly approved a slightly modified emblem, consisting of a world map on polar azimuthal equidistant projection surrounded by two olive branches. ICAO adopted its emblem in 1956 based on the UN emblem with a pair of wings added on top.

Cameroun became a Contracting State of ICAO in

January 1960 immediately after the proclamation of its independence. In 1967, this country issued a set of stamps to honour two UN Agencies; one of these stamps commemorated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ICAO. The stamp and related first day cover designs (see Figure 2) show the ICAO emblem with only three concentric circles, whereas the actual design requires four of these circles.



Figure 3

Another interesting case is the stamp issued by Mali (see Figure 3) in 1975 for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Charter, ratified on 24 October 1945 by China, France, the





Figure 2

Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States, and by a majority of signatories. The diagonals of the emblem must cross the inner circle of the UN logo. More-

over, the olive branches must be curved according to the roundness of the outer circle. The acronyms of the various Agencies form the letters ONU, that is the French acronym



Figure 4





Figure 5



Figure 6



of the United Nations; the French acronym of ICAO, OACI, can be noticed on the right vertical of the letter *N*.

Turkey celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ICAO by releasing a first day cover (see Figure 4). This cover displays a mix of emblems: the cancel shows the ICAO logo that was in use at that time in 1977, whereas the cachet shows an early unofficial logo in use for some time in 1954 and 1955 with longer wings set lower on the globe.

To commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ICAO, the Yemen Arab Republic issued in 1979 a set of stamps showing a view over the city of Sanaa; these were of excellent quality. However when it came for this country to honour the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Organization, a poor

design of ICAO's logo was represented on the stamps (see souvenir sheet at Figure 5). It looks like the logo was drawn manually; the wings are not correctly hooked to the centre part of the logo and hence offer an overall uneven and unappealing representation of the design.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the Aero-philatelic Club "Aurel Vlaicu" in Romania issued on 7 December 1994 a postal stationery in black and in red (see Figure 6) for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ICAO. The emblem printed on this item presents a major error; the wreath of olive-tree branches is shown under the wings, when the ICAO official logo depicts the wings over the branches. This same error appears on the cancel as well.

### CHECKLIST

Cameroun	457	1967 Mar 15	20th anniversary of UN agency ICAO
Mali	248	1975 Nov 10	30th anniversary of United Nations
Yemen	352-353,353a	1979 Nov 15	30th anniversary of ICAO
Yemen	438-441,441a	1985 Sep 20	40th anniversary of ICAO

