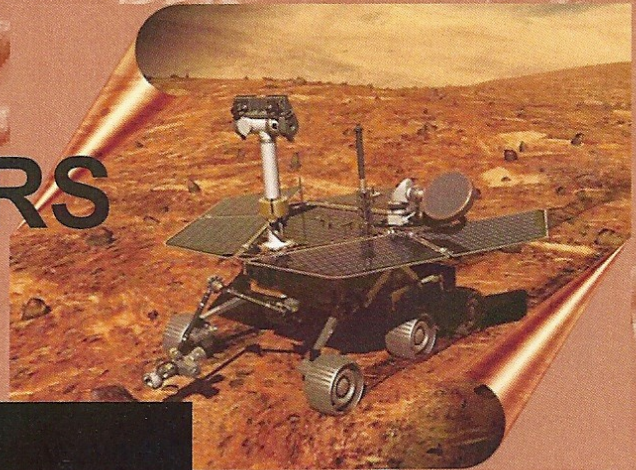
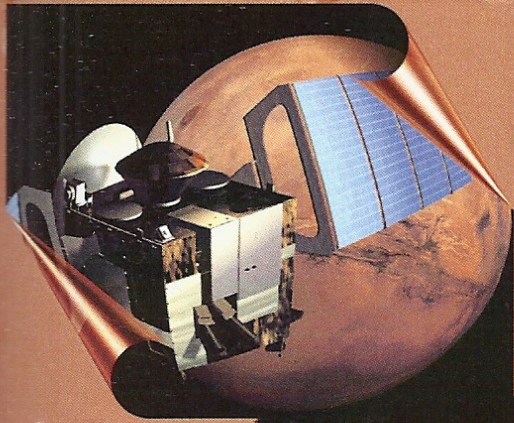


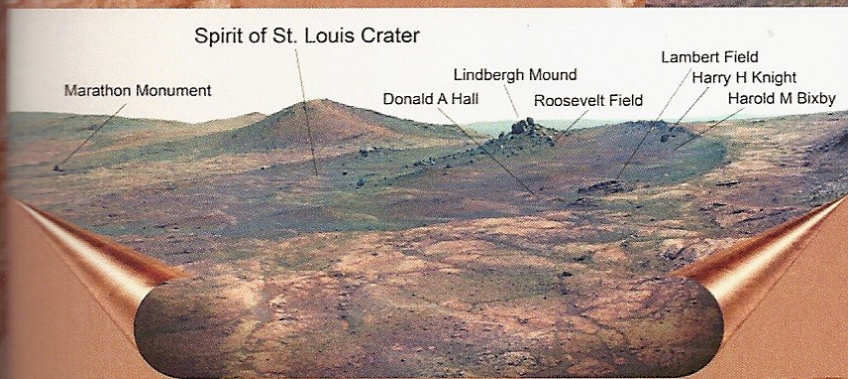
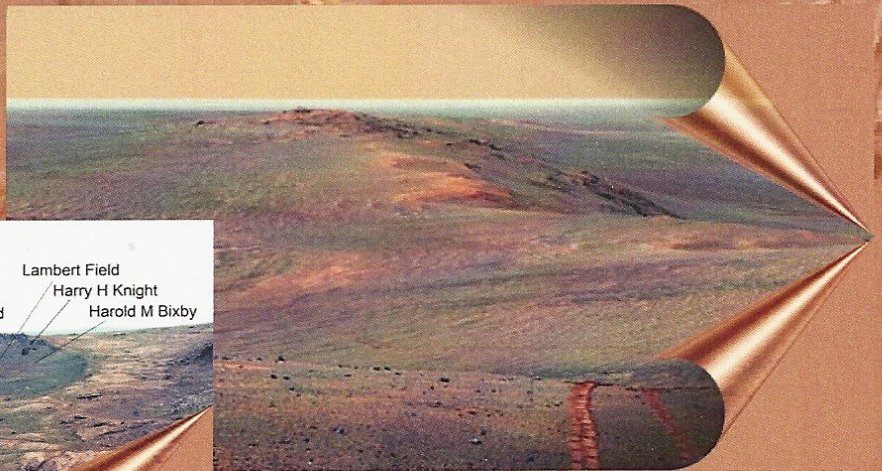
1  
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# ORBIT

MARS



EXPLORATION



March 2020


ASTRO SPACE STAMP SOCIETY

## Caveat Emptor! The notorious Baikonur fakes are still up and running!

*From Umberto Cavallaro—editor of our Italian sister journal AdAstra*

















“Lol !!” was the smug reply I received from the French dealer **COSMOPHILA** to my message informing them that at least 45 of the covers he was offering through its online shop on DELCAMPE were known as the illfamed “Baikonur-Karaganda fakes” (Btw, they are the most expensive among the items offered in the shop). Some examples shown below: there are many more...

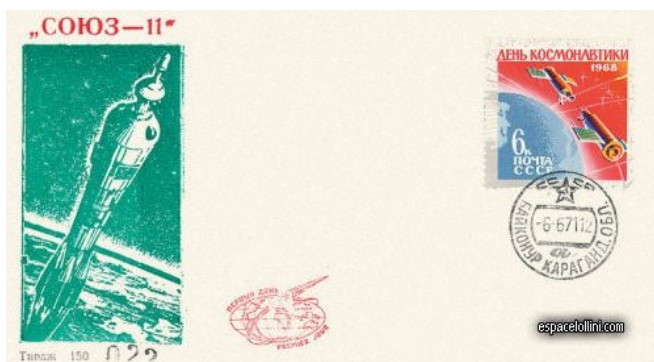
More chatty and amenable was **Alexandre Lollini** when I sent him a similar message informing him that among the (again very expensive) Soviet covers listed in the website [espacelollini.com](http://espacelollini.com), at least 350 items were “Baikonur-Karaganda fakes”: see opposite.



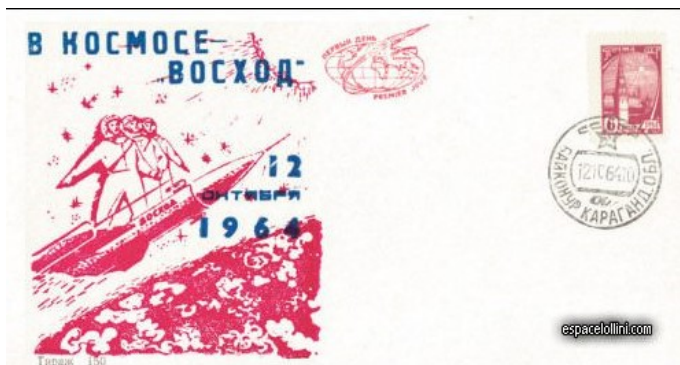
**Antonio M. Torres**  
London  
Francobolli e buste de gran qualitta de tutti el mondo  
Oltre 50.000 oggetti!  
Torres Italiani [Visita il nostro negozio](#)

La tua pubblicità qui?

 <p>URSS / SALIOUT 4 / BAIKONO UR / LANCEMENT / 26.12.197</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 80,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>	 <p>URSS / SOYOUZ 16 - SALIOUT T 3 / BAIKONOUR / LANCEME</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 180,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>	 <p>URSS / SOYOUZ 15 - SALIOUT T 3 / BAIKONOUR / RETOUR /</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>	 <p>URSS / SOYOUZ 15 - SALIOUT T 3 / BAIKONOUR / LANCEME</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>
 <p>URSS / SOYOUZ 15 - SALIOUT T 3 / BAIKONOUR / LANCEME</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p>	 <p>URSS / SALIOUT 3 - SOYOUZ 14 / BAIKONOUR / LANCEMEN</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p>	 <p>URSS / SALIOUT 3 / BAIKONO UR / LANCEMENT / 25.06.197</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p>	 <p>URSS / SOYOUZ 13 / PANEVE LYZ / PLI LANCEMENT CACH</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 40,00 €</p>
 <p>URSS / SALIOUT 3 / SOYOUZ 10 - LANCEMENT/ BAIKONOU</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 120,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>	 <p>URSS / SALIOUT 1 / SOYOUZ 10 - LANCEMENT/ BAIKONOU</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>	 <p>URSS / SALIOUT 1 / SOYOUZ 10 - LANCEMENT/ BAIKONOU</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>	 <p>URSS / SALIOUT 1 / SOYOUZ 10 - LANCEMENT/ BAIKONOU</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 200,00 €</p> <p>Venditore <b>cosmophila</b></p> <p>Acquistare Più</p>
 <p>URSS / SOYOZ 9 / FDC / BAIK ONOUR / 07.07.1970 / 150 EXE</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 90,00 €</p>	 <p>URSS / SOYOZ 9 / LANCEMEN T/ MAGADAN / 01.06.1970 / 10</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 80,00 €</p>	 <p>URSS / INTERCOSMOS / PRO GRAMME INTERCOSMOS / 19</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 1,00 €</p>	 <p>URSS / INTERCOSMOS 2 / BAI KONOUR - LANCEMENT - 25.1</p> <p>Prezzo fisso 40,00 €</p>



On the left: Soyuz 11 (Lollini € 500,00). On the right Soyuz 11 (Cosmophila - € 250,00)



On the left: Voskhod 1 (Lollini € 195,00). On the right Soyuz 11 (Cosmophila - € 150,00)

"This is a political issue. – is the surprising answer I received from Alexandre Lollini– Those covers were made in Russia at the time of issue, and the postal cancels are genuine and authentic. The creators of those covers have been sidelined because the Russian government did not want freedom of expression and business with the outside world at that time. The covers were made outside of the law, and it is precisely why those were added to the catalogue, promoting a free world.

Those covers have been present in our catalogues from the outset. Since the creators of the covers "disappeared", there are STORIES. (a story is just a story, different from a real cover). Until now we were never convinced that one story is better or have more merit than the other. (...)

We can read stories that the Earth is flat, and that Apollo missions never reached the Moon. (...) Those covers are mostly out of stock and we keep records of them only for the glory of astrophilately, and for the owners of those to be aware we fully support them."

Also in the same websites the collector may find other covers with the forged Baikonur Cosmodrome postmark, prepared by the same producer of the "Baikonur-Karaganda fake" covers, with the same format (unusual at that time in Soviet Union), the same glossy paper (not used in the Soviet Union), sometimes the same drawing on the cover cachet, and finally the same logo.

As every alert collect knows, this is – again – a well known forged postmark. Unlike the cancels of the "Baikonur-

Karaganda fakes", this was a counterfeiting of a postmark actually used at the Baikonur Cosmodrome.



It can be easily identified by few small details. The basic characteristic features of this forgery are the letter ЙК in the word "БАЙКОНУР", as shown in the picture above. Also the letters used in the forged stamp are larger than the original.

The logo of such covers refers to the "first day of issue", even if these are covers "commemorating" (in their own way) space events, and have nothing to do with the issue of specific stamps.

Even if we know that the covers were neither produced in France nor by Lollini (which however has offered hundreds of them in its catalogue for many years and still offers them on its website [espacelollini.com](http://espacelollini.com), as seen before) nevertheless we must note with surprise that the logo bears something of a likeness to the historical logo of Lollini.





On the left: Soyuz 15 (Lollini € 208,00). On the right Soyuz 15 (Cosmophila - € 90,00)



On the left: Soyuz 18 (Cosmophila - € 90,00). On the right Soyuz 19/ASTP (Lollini € 200,00).

**Further reading**

Soviet "Baikonur covers" numbered cachets <http://www.collectspace.com/ubb/Forum20/HTML/000815.html>  
 Les fausses enveloppes de Baïkonour / Fake Baïkonur Covers <http://spacerelics.blogspot.com/2013/02/les-fausses-enveloppes-de-baikonour.html>

<http://www.collectspace.com/ubb/Forum20/HTML/001458.html>  
 The Baikonur-Karaganda fakes in ORBIT # 95, October 2012, pp. 25-27  
 Umberto Cavallaro, *The Race to the Moon Chronicled in Stamps, Postcards, and Postmarks*, Springer 2018, pp. 17-23

If you have to ask the Price, you can't afford it !

As seen in Buckingham Covers' Cover Lover for Feb 2020

**SP(A16)01A £3500**

**Flexi Pay** £350 per month for 10 months

**John Young, Charlie Duke, and Ken Mattingly** signed 1972 Apollo 16 Insurance cover with a 16th April launch day Kennedy Space Centre postmark, certified on the reverse as being from John Young's personal collection