

# TCNews

BULLETIN OF THE FIP THEMATIC COMMISSION

N. 11 - SEPTEMBER 2000

## *FIP THEMATIC COMMISSION Meeting Madrid, 13 October 2000*

PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO A PROGRAM CHANGE AFFECTING  
COMMISSION MEETINGS  
THE CONFERENCE OF THE THEMATIC COMMISSION IS NOW SCHEDULED  
AT 14.30 IN THE CLASS PAVILLON – ROOM B

### Agenda:

1. Roll call of Delegates
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings in Istanbul and Paris
3. Report of the President
4. SREV and Guidelines
5. Composition of the Bureau
6. Elections of the President and Bureau
7. Miscellaneous

### NOTES ON THE AGENDA

#### Note on point 4:

Attached to this issue is the full text of the SREV submitted to the FIP Congress and the relevant Guidelines, presented together with the relevant articles of the GREV and the SREV.

#### Note on point 5:

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The FIP Board asked the Philatelic Commissions to take into account the changes proposed for the new FIP Statutes. It implies that the Bureau shall consist of the Chairman, the Secretary, and one representative of each Continental Federation, elected with three separate ballots by all delegates.

If the delegates choose not to take the proposal of the FIP Board, then the current procedure will

remain and seven members of the Bureau elected, including the President.

#### **Note on point 6:**

The following delegates have been proposed as candidates:

#### **For President:**

- Giancarlo Morolli (Italy)
- Ingolf Kapelrud (Norway)
- José-Antonio Hernan Sejas (Spain)

#### **For the Bureau**

- Nestor M. Ferré (Argentina)
- John Sinfield (Australia)
- Bernard Jimenez (France) (S)
- Damian Läge (Germany) (S)
- Francesca Rapkin (Great Britain) (S)
- Giancarlo Morolli (Italy)
- Ingolf Kaperlrud (Norway)
- Dan Dobrescu (Romania)

- José-Antonio Hernan Sejas (Spain) (S)
- Ann Trigg (U.S.A.)

(S) *Candidate as Secretary*

#### **Note on Proxy:**

According to the FIP Statutes each Federation can designate only ONE delegate; if he/she cannot attend, a representative (from the same or another Federation) can be appointed. In this case a written proxy, signed by an empowered officer of the same Federation, must be made in writing at latest by September 13th (art. 13.4 of the Regulations for the FIP Philatelic Commissions).

Federations without a permanent delegate do not have voting rights at the Conference (Art. 13.3).

"Observers" will be admitted only when the President has previously granted the approval; they must be already familiar with the work of the Commission.

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## **Curriculum Vitae of the Candidates**

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*In the Nomination form candidates supplied a short C.V., as follows:*

#### **CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT / BUREAU**

##### **Giancarlo MOROLLI (Italy)**

FIP Thematic Commission delegate since 1968; of its Bureau since 1972; Vice President in 1975-76 and President since 1977.

International Juror since 1972; Team leader; Jury President at Genova 92 & Italia 98.

O.C. Vice President at Genova 92; Chairman Philatelic Committee Genova 92 & Italia 98.

Seminar leader world-wide; author of many studies & articles on thematics; thematic editor of "il Collezionista" since 1970. Co-author of

"Thematic Bibliography" published by the American Philatelic Research Library.

Fellow & National Representative of the Royal Philatelic Society London.

##### **Ingolf KAPELRUD (Norway)**

Mr. Kapelrud is presumed to be well known to FIP.

He is an international juror and exhibitor.

He is at present President of FEPA.

##### **José-Antonio HERNAN SEJAS (Spain)**

As collector his exhibit "ANCHORS" was awarded with Gold Medal in ISRAFIL 85, STOCKOLMIA 86 and HAFNIA 87.

President Thematic Commission of Spain.  
Member Bureau Thematic Commission FIP.

Jury Team Leader.

Member Academia Hispanica Filatelia.

Fellow Royal Philatelic Society London.

Editor magazine "TEMAS FILATELICOS".  
Writer magazine "CRONACA FILATELICA".  
Author of "Introduction to Thematic Philately",  
"Education of collector" and "The Thematic  
Philately an innovatory way of collecting".

### **CANDIDATES FOR BUREAU**

#### **Nestor Manuel FERRE' (Argentina)**

Member of the Bureau since 1984; Past  
president of the FAEF.

Author of "Manual de Filatelia Tematica".

Performed many conferences and seminars in  
Argentina and other countries.

FIP accredited juror.

#### **John SINFIELD (Australia)**

National thematic, traditional, youth and postal  
stationery judge, and international FIP in postal  
stationery.

Chairman of the Melbourne thematic exhibitors  
group, and author of several published thematic  
articles.

Has presented thematic exhibiting/judging  
lectures in Australia, Taiwan, New Zealand.

Thematic collector on "Sheeps and Wool", "The  
environment" and "Whiskers", the latter received  
FIP/FIAP gold.

#### **Bernard JIMENEZ (France)**

Director of a Tourist Office.

International thematic juror from 1989 and team  
leader.

Secretary of the FIP Thematic Commission from  
1992.

Member of the Board of the French Federation.

Two exhibits at FIP gold medal level.

#### **Damian LÄGE (Germany)**

Juror since 1990; international juror since 1997;  
secretary to the Jury of WIPA 2000.

Active service in the German federations for  
thematic philately (DMG and VPhA); currently  
Vice President of VPhA, German delegate and  
Bureau member in the FIP thematic commission.

Author of several articles and lectures, and of  
„Thematische Ausarbeitung“ (the current  
guidebook for thematic development in the  
German speaking area).

Exhibitor since 1988 („Australasian Birdlife“,  
large gold at ITALIA'98 and CHINA'99).

#### **Franceska RAPKIN (Great Britain)**

Chairman British Thematic Association 1984-  
1995, President 1995-1999, Honorary Life  
member.

FIP Thematic Commission delegate from 1984,  
and Bureau member since 1992.

International Thematic judge since 1989 and  
exhibitor since 1980.

Awarded Congress Medal (GB) 1989. Signed  
Roll of Distinguished Philatelist 1998, Council  
member Royal Philatelic Society since 1994.

#### **Dan DOBRESCU (Romania)**

Collector since 1957, accomplishing many  
exhibits of thematic philately

Certified in Romania as jury committee member  
– speciality thematic philately for level I (1995).

Published over 90 studies and notes with  
philatelic character.

Model maker of about 150 cancellation destined  
to some events' commemoration.

#### **Ann TRIGGLE (U.S.A.)**

FIP Exhibitor.

FIP judge accredited in Thematics and Postal  
History.

APS/ATA accredited judge and exhibitor.  
Director-at-large on the APS Board.

Director on the Royal Philatelic Society of  
Canada Board

## **MEETING OF THE BUREAU - MADRID, FRIDAY 13 OCTOBER 2000**

The Bureau elected will meet immediately after the meeting of the Commission with the following agenda:

1. Election of the Vice President and of the Secretary
2. Working Program of the Commission for the period 2001-2004
3. Miscellaneous

## ***THE FIP THEMATIC COMMISSION***

We welcome a **new delegate**:

- **Estonia**

Prof. Rein-Karl Loide  
E. Vilde tee 52-9  
13421 Tallinn

Furthermore, the following addresses are to  
**updated**:

- **Australia**

John Sinfield  
PO Box 548  
Heathmont, Vic. 3135

- **New Zealand**

Mr. Doug South  
P.O. Box 20  
Wakefield, Nelson

**NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNE**

**Alma Lee, RDP, HonFRPSL, passed away on  
2 July.**

Her main collecting interest was Switzerland, but she collected also France, Israel, United Nations, Russian Zemstvos, and was awarded Large Gold at 4 FIP exhibitions. Alma was active in thematic philately as well and represented Great Britain in

the FIP Thematic Commission for several years. She was very keen in promoting our hobby and published "*Introducing Thematic Philately*" first published in 1983 and reprinted in 1984 and 1990.

### **International Thematic Seminar at HUNPHILEX.**

This national exhibition was a great success, not only for the Hungarian philatelists but also for the many foreigners from more than 20 countries that attended it or sent their exhibits. Giancarlo Morolli, Jury team leader in the thematic class, hold a seminar that was attended by about 60 people.

TCNews is published by the FIP Thematic  
Commission

President: Dr. Ing. Giancarlo Morolli,  
Seconda Strada 12  
I 20090 Segrate (MI) Italy  
[gmoroll@tin.it](mailto:gmoroll@tin.it)

Vice President: Gunnar Dahlvig  
[dahlvig@mail12.calypso.net](mailto:dahlvig@mail12.calypso.net)  
Secretary: Bernard Jimenez  
[rocamadour@wanadoo.fr](mailto:rocamadour@wanadoo.fr)

# NOTES FROM THEMATIC SEMINARS

## Introduction

The All China Philatelic Federation asked me to give a Thematic Seminar on the occasion of China 99. For that event I decided to put aside the usual presentation dealing with the analysis of philatelic material and its suitability for thematic exhibits, as I felt (and I am still feeling) that too much emphasis has been put on this subject. I am convinced that the discussion on the selection of material has carried away some attention from Plan and Development, and many exhibitors wrongly believe that acquisition of material is the best (and sometimes the only) way of increasing the marks obtained at the exhibitions.

I cannot bring individual examples, but just the average of the marks lost at Genova 92 and Pacific 97. The following chart shows that the greatest loss of points is in Development and not in Condition and Rarity. Considering Plan and Development together the total is still greater (in absolute value) than Philatelic Knowledge + Condition and Rarity. Therefore the criteria of Plan and Development should be given; at least, the same attention devoted to material.

	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Devel.</i>	<i>Phil. Knowl.</i>	<i>Cond. &amp; Rarity</i>
Genova 92	<b>3,50</b>	<b>6,67</b>	3,60	5,62
Pacific 97	<b>3,36</b>	<b>6,21</b>	3,00	4,42

I revised the Beijing presentation for the Seminars held in Brno and Budapest, on the occasion respectively of the Czech and Hungarian national exhibitions with international participation. As I had several requests for the paper presented, I promised to publish the content of the Seminar in a coming issue of TCNews; **the charts (MS PowerPoint for Windows) are available, on request, to the members of the Commission.**

## From "Subject" to "Theme"

Also because of semantic reasons there is a certain degree of confusion on "subject" and "theme" both inside and outside the thematic community. As an extreme case, how many times has another philatelist approached one of us saying "I am a

thematic collector as well, as I collect the Air Mail theme"?

Therefore it is necessary to start with some definitions.

"Subject" concerns the matter treated, the general area we refer to, whereas "theme" implies the personal elaboration of a subject, in all its main aspects or in a well defined section of it, according to the free choice of the collector. In Beijing I used the following example related to the subject "Chinese Art" that represent the source for a variety of themes, like:

- History of Chinese Art, or
  - Art of the Ming Dynasty (*time-based delimitation*), or
  - Visual Arts (*content-based*)
  - History of Chinese Painting (*time & content-based*)
- Art in Chinese Society
- Animals in Chinese Art
- Influence of Chinese Art in Asia (*relation based - it considers the influence of Chinese Art on other Asian cultures*)
- Relations between Chinese Art and other Asian countries (*it considers also the influence of other cultures, e.g. the Indian culture, on Chinese Art*).

Other examples can be easily developed, for instance by merging more criteria, e.g. "Visual Arts of the Ming Dynasty". Each represents a different "section" of the subject and implies a different treatment.

## From Subject to Thematic Exhibits - The evolution of Thematic Philately

Fifty years ago our discipline had different names, and collections/exhibits where mainly subject-oriented, in the sense that they consisted of material (predominately stamps) depicting a common subject or issued in relation to the same subject. Over time the evolution towards thematic exhibits has taken the following steps:

- A content-based delimitation of the subject, abandoning the so-called "general collections". At the beginning the subject collected (and exhibited) was "Fauna" (or "Flora") but gradually collectors delimited their exhibits to classes like "Birds" or "Mammals" or to a lower level (order, family and even species). Some exhibitors have gone straight to individual mammals like elephants, lions, horses, dogs, bears, oxen, and foxes. Among birds preference has been given to penguins, owls, swans, eagles. Similarly, have been built exhibits on insects as well as on coleopterans, butterflies and bees, and snakes have been selected among reptiles.

Similar delimitations characterise also the other subjects: from general "Sport" collectors have developed exhibits on "ball games" or "winter sports" and more often on single disciplines, from soccer to basketball, from volleyball to rugby. The "History" subject has been delimited to its most significant periods, to the history of individual nations and peoples, to great wars. In "Religion" the preferred subjects have been the history of the Church, the life of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, Martin Luther, Christmas, and Buddha. In parallel some pioneer subjects disappeared; "Famous Men" evolved into "Nobel Prizes" or were limited to individuals like Gandhi, Simon Bolivar, Columbus and Captain Cook.

The delimitation of content sometimes is derived by the combination of two subjects, the second being used as a filter of the general one, for example "religious music", "medical plants" or "sport architecture".

In several instances the key reason for delimitation has been the threat of the flood of new issues. Just one example: a general zoological catalogue published in 1955 in Italy consisted of 303 pages, whereas the Stanley Gibbons 1999 "Collect Fish on Stamps" has 327 pages that would have been around 800 if printed with the same page layout of the latter.

- A second delimitation is of "transversal" nature, as the classification of the subject becomes freer and follows some leading concepts that become the main criteria for the selection. This has been the first robust approach towards what we call today "thematic philately".

Most of the following initiatives have been stimulated and made possible by the thematic regulations approved by the first FIP Thematic Commission, and later modified under the chairmanship of Frans De Troyer. The concept of "mise en valeur du theme" (emphasising of the theme) has been very important to unleash

the ideas of many thematic exhibitors who, in turn, have provided examples that have convinced other collectors to take a similar approach.

In 1973 Frans de Troyer used to say that his famous "Madonna" exhibit was now closer to a silver medal rather than the gold one he was awarded just five year before, at Praga 68. Just a few examples of this evolution:

Maria Groer, member of this Commission for several years, struck the attention of the international thematic community with "Zoological Curiosities". Jean Louis Nagel, one of the greatest pioneers of our hobby, developed a collection on agriculture merging important aspects of the zoological and botanical subjects. Another direction is to prove a thesis: Biaggio Mazzeo, a Brazilian stamp designer that loves thematic philately, has shown a desecrating analysis of modern art compared to that of the masters of the Renaissance in "Evolution and Decadence of Painting". At Arphila 75 Ennio Giunchi presented "Beyond Life" that remains one of the milestones towards a "free" thematic development.

Forty years ago a subject collection on "The Mountain" consisted predominantly of stamps showing summits and uplands, chains and massifs, volcanoes and glaciers.

Nowadays an exhibit on "The Mountain" is still exploiting the above material, which is linked with other pieces that document, for instance, life, nature, economy, leisure, sport, culture, dangers, etc. Animals as inhabitants of the mountain play a specific role, as they do in other themes like "Hunting", "Fishing", "Conservation of Nature", "Ecology", "The Forest", "Flowers", "Vines and Vineyards", "Palm Trees", "Maize", etc. And they are, of course, the key players of every zoological exhibit. Today large-gold medals have been awarded to exhibits like "Man-Avis Relations" and "Life of Birds in Australasia".

### The Plan

The title of the exhibit defines the scope and the logic of the theme within a certain subject. The plan makes clear the idea summarised by the title, and presents the steps followed in order to present that concept through the pages of the exhibit.

The plan page offers the exhibitor the best opportunity to explain the key points of the development to the jurors and to the general public. In a certain sense, the exhibitor declares his/her own

intents and it is up to the jurors and to the visitors to understand if the content of the following pages matches this statement, i.e. the exhibitor has correctly implemented what he declared in the plan page. Hence the correspondence between the title and the plan is vital.

Unfortunately too many exhibitors still miss this point. Many titles are either too generic or hollow for the content displayed, whereas others are intriguing and "sexy" but do not fulfil their promises through the pages of the exhibit. It does not make sense to have a chapter on the organisations active in agriculture and then, in the real development, present only that of own country. If the title is "agriculture" without any adjective delimiting its scope geographically or time wise, hence all countries must be treated at the same level and the width given to each of them depends exclusively on their significance on the overall world-wide scope, that may vary along time.

The plan is structured through parts, chapters, sub-chapters, and paragraphs. The logic of this structure must be, first of all, in the mind of the exhibitor who has to implement it correctly and consistently along the pages of the exhibit.

It is very important to understand that title, plan, and development represent three views of the same reality, i.e. the material shown, just with a very different degree of detail.

The title represents the summary of the concept, whereas the plan is a first level breakdown of the same concept, which is fully blown-up, in every detail, in development. Unfortunately we not only see misalignments between title and plan, but also between plan and development.

If development activities show that the material does not allow representing the concept as planned, it is necessary to go back to the plan so that the relationship between plan and development remains smooth and logic. If the concept of the plan cannot be implemented as defined, it has to be reviewed, and the title as well, if that is necessary to keep the best consistency and coherence among the three levels.

Numbering systems like 1.1.1 *et similia* are not compulsory but they can be useful, if correctly used, for a faster understanding by the visitors. But implementing this numbers is not a big effort, as it can be done automatically by any word processor...

### Stages of the Plan

In the personal history of each exhibitor the plan goes through three different stages, in parallel with the growing knowledge and his/her ability to take

advantage from the same experience in order to improve the exhibit. Of course this path is normal for the first exhibit, as for the following ones it will be natural to capitalise on the past for building a suitable thematic plan from the beginning.

1. Classification by issuing country and by year of issue, common to checklists and specialised thematic catalogues.

This classification corresponds to the first approach taken by the collector, i.e. accumulating the items having a common subject, and fulfils the requirement of gaining full control over the accumulated material, for instance to avoid buying twice the same items.

2. Systematic classification, according to criteria deriving often from the subject, being of chronological (e.g. history, recurrent events), scientific (e.g. fauna and flora), organisational (e.g. international organisations), or other nature.

This type of classification has been implemented for almost all subjects as, for a number of years, it was considered the most advanced. In most areas the example of innovative exhibitors led the others towards more modern, creative and original plans, often built as variations of that of the leader(s). In some areas, like "Railways" and "Scouts" the traditional approach is still predominant, even if some advanced exhibitors showed new ways, like Michel Hecq, Grand Prix Winner at Brasiliana 79 with an exhibit on railways.

At a certain moment the exhibitor starts realising that there are either pieces he/she would like to include even if they do not depict the subject, and others that he/she that he would like to exclude. The answer leads into the following step.

My personal experience on this approach is given by an exhibit I presented at the end of the sixties on Atomic Energy, whose plan was later included in both De Troyer's *La Philatélie Thématique* and Bayle's *La Guide du Collectionneur Thématique*. Its plan was the following:

1. From Philosophers to Physicists (history)
2. Civil Applications
3. Organisations, Research & Industry
4. Military Applications
5. The Atom, symbol of our times

By the way, this plan follows a generic scheme valid for any type of scientific or industrial discipline: history, utilisation, organisation, symbols and conferences

### 3. Thematic development, according to the concept of the title.

The goal is the complete, correct, deep, personal demonstration of the concept declared in the title. The stage is based on a dynamic approach that makes treatment fluent and personal. In several cases putting the theme into an historical perspective could be very helpful.

At present a number of exhibits in the vermeil area (and some very close to the large one) are in a steady situation as the relevant exhibitors do not realise that they need to move from the second to the third stage, or they have moved to it in a partial, incomplete way. Additional material they include from one exhibition to the next will serve mainly to compensate the natural obsolescence of the exhibit rather than to obtain a higher award.

#### Thematic Development

A successful development implies a well thought plan, more fluent and intriguing, with a personal cut. It does not present facts in a fragmented way, but it analyses and connects them thanks to a consistent analysis that takes into consideration the following points:

1. The environment, the scenario in which the "story" is embedded
2. The pre-existing situation, the causes and the objectives

For example a U.P.U. exhibit can start with the presentation of the political and economical situation of the period when the first postal agreements and treaties were signed, the needs that motivated such agreements, and the objectives and the content of the same.

3. The ramifications
4. The direct and indirect relations

Ramifications, contacts, interactions are an important source for analysis and allow to demonstrate the individual study to deep the theme and to "dress" it with appropriate philatelic contents.

5. Consequences and effects

Back to my exhibit, already in 1970 I felt that his plan was too static and I took another direction, analysing the historical environment, describing relations between major international situations (e.g. "cold" war) and the race towards nuclear weapons. I removed the chapter on symbols, as I realised that very often stamp designers used them to document

the spirit of the time rather as a mere graphic element. I scattered these symbols in the most appropriate points for illustrating the different feelings of the general opinion. Similarly I revisited the points concerning organisations and congresses, according to their role and their place in the historical development.

#### Steps of Development

1. The base of development is the choice of the items most suitable for representing the thematic details that, together, make visible the concept of the plan. In a thematic collection the only criterion for the choice of an item is its effectiveness to support that detail of development. The rarity of the item has to be taken into account only when different items present exactly the same thematic information.

*E.g. To document Pascal's development of a calculating machine the most suitable item is the French stamps issued in 1962, which presents on the lower right a detail of this device. The alternative is the French stamp issued in 1944, that has a market value three times greater, but has a generic thematic information as it shows just a portrait of Pascal (but no reference to the machine).*

2. A correct development implies to give more importance to the most important thematic details and then to the accessory ones. Again, "important" is related to the thematic significance of a detail rather than to the number and/or the philatelic significance of the pieces documenting the same.

Development implies a constant and consistent approach along the whole exhibit. If a certain type of information is shown for a certain thematic detail, the same level of information should be given for all other similar details.

3. The place of each philatelic item is defined by the development of the plan and should not be changed. The thematic contribution of each piece requires the correct embedding of the same with the previous and the following one; therefore it is necessary to ensure the correct sequence of the items, in order of reading within the page.

A number of exhibits show a good breakdown of the plan up to the page level, but within a page items are not in the correct logical or chronological sequence. For instance, the various items related to the same person (or object, or event) are mixed with those related to other entities. Often items are arranged in order to obtain the best graphical layout of the page,

that certainly results into a more attractive page but makes the thematic thread confused and twisted.

4. The ordered structure of titles and subtitles related to parts, chapters, sub-chapter and paragraphs, up to the page title, makes development better understandable to visitors and jurors. They should never ask "what is this?" or "what is this item doing here?" because the correct positioning, the said titles as well the connecting thematic text and the thematic captions provide a clear understanding of the represented relations.

Sometimes a piece seems to be an "outsider" in the development as the relevant thematic information is not exploited correctly. In some situations it might be sufficient to present it in another light.

*Several meter frankings or advertising letters (e.g. B.L.P.) relate to small companies who played no visible role in the "history" of that branch (e.g. dealers of bicycles and cars, manufacturers of accessories). They just had the idea of using franking machines for their offices or to use the letters for advertising their activities. But these items document that the industry had a distribution network, made of dealers in large and in small towns, that products were exported or imported, that the manufacturing activities of the large companies (whose products and activities have a direct representation on stamps and other items) required the co-operation of suppliers for specific components.*

## Dynamics of Development

A thematic collection (and the related exhibit) is never finished. The search of the collector can lead to:

### 1. New philatelic findings

New items, found in a box at a dealer's booth or seen in auction catalogues, articles, other exhibits (sometimes in other competition classes), trigger this process that implies:

- The full understanding of the thematic significance of the item and, if necessary, of its philatelic characteristics.

*For example I recently acquired a German Ocean letter, mailed in Bremerhaven, Germany (1914) and addressed to Berlin, franked with US stamps, cancelled with US Seapost postmark, and I am still searching for more detailed postal regulations in order to fully understand the postal elements of this document.*

- The correct positioning of the item in the exhibit

This could start a snowball effect: the item could call for the inclusion of other items or could require some modifications in order to ensure the most effective flow of development.

*In my personal experience I have found that this search can bring to review the plan using material that opens new thematic possibilities. The chapter "Communications with the families" has been built using items documenting the links between soldiers, war prisoners and also private citizens. I refer to the "Funknachrichtenkarten" of the German Navy and Army, as well as to Airgraphs, V-mail, and the messages of the Red Cross, the Vatican Radio and other organisations all implying, or referring to, radio services.*

### 2. New thematic findings

Thematic sources (books, articles, etc.) as well as other exhibits can bring to the discovery of facts that can feed new developments.

Today, for instance, the wealth of multimedia material (e.g. the Encyclopaedia Britannica and the Der Brockhaus on CD-ROM) and of the related search engines can provide more evidence of links, connections, causes, and effects.

The process is similar to that above described, as follows:

- Validation of the information whenever the source is doubtful or unclear

This step is strongly recommended, as in a number of exhibits are found mistakes due to a superficial or passive use of the information received. One of the beauties (and the difficulties) of our hobby is its universality. It is impossible to know everything of any country, of any time. Hence the need for double-checking every information that is not clearly demonstrated by reliable sources as, for instance, the interpretation of names and facts concerning other cultures or based on other alphabets.

- Identification of the items needed to transform the information into real development and acquisition of the same

- Insertion of the concept in the current development, with the necessary changes and adjustments.

### Relation between material and theme

The thematic emphasis started in the sixties has strongly changed the concept of relation between material and subject that becomes relation between material and theme. Several items that, at a first glance, do not show any connection with the subject play a significant role in supporting precise aspects of the theme.

*Some examples drawn from my personal collecting experience:*

- In November 1899 Marconi was returning to Britain onboard of the U.S. steamer "St Paul". From the ship he transmitted several passengers' messages and received news from the mainland, that were printed on "The Transatlantic Times", the ship daily magazine. This Ocean steamer is shown on the 10-c. value of the U.S. set issued (1901) for the Pan-American Exhibition in Buffalo. Even if the stamp does not have a direct reference to Marconi, it enables to remember an important event for the development of radio that took place just on that ship.
- Florence hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> UNESCO General Conference (1950), commemorated by the Italian Post with two stamps showing Cellini's Perseus and the Pitti Palace, that are perfect for "art" themes. That Conference decided to start the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN). Hence, this issue refers also to themes concerning the European Union and Atomic Energy.
- In 1959 United States issued a stamp with the wording "World peace through world trade" on the occasion of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce in Washington. As shown by several meter cancellations, this slogan relates to IBM, at the time the largest manufacturer of electric typewriters and data-processing equipment in the world, that was using it since the mid-thirties as its motto.

### A new meaning for Completeness

The approach presented redefines the concept of completeness in thematic terms.

In fact, the standard for measuring completeness is established automatically when defining the title, as at this moment the main lines for the plan and for development are created. That enables to

distinguish between what is needed and what it is missing, what it is redundant and what it is useless.

There are two references for completeness:

- The Plan.

The title sets the requirements that are to be fulfilled by the plan; hence completeness means coverage of all the main aspects necessary to demonstrate the concept of the title. That implies that, if assumed by the title, a specific aspect must be there, and that some aspects are to be omitted, if they are outside the scope defined by the title.

- The Development.

Completeness means also full coverage of all the details deriving from the plan, in a balanced way. This implies that no point of the plan be either ignored or overemphasised in the pages of the exhibit. The second case is when a thematic point is given much more attention than he deserves according to the plan. The wealth of material concerning a certain point has to be managed considering the relative weight of that thematic point within the plan.

It may be that some details are depicted through items easier to acquire, but this is not a lack of completeness as long as they present an equivalent thematic information of the rare ones.

### Conclusion

I strongly believe that many exhibits are in a stagnant situation due to the fact that their plans and the relevant developments have not been pushed in order to exploit all the possibilities. I strongly recommend revisiting these aspects, also with a lot of attention to what has been achieved in the best exhibits and to the newer ones, not necessarily concerning the own theme. The successful implementation of such a process shall certainly exploit better the current material and will require the utilisation of additional items, with the result of an improvement of the philatelic aspects as well.

In summary, thematic philately means to use in the most effective and balanced way all the philatelic resources that are related to the chosen theme.

When we talk about plan and development we cannot leave out material, as even the best thematic ideas remain ineffective if they are not supported by the pieces which materialise the thematic concepts into philatelic items.

*Giancarlo Morolli*