

# DESTINATION GUATEMALA: INSPIRATION BEHIND

## THE LITTLE PRINCE BY SAINT-EXUPÉRY



Commemorative stamp

Japan 1984 (adhesive)



Serbia (bottom)

Francophone

Translation:

Then you can  
imagine my  
surprise at  
sunrise, when  
strange little voice  
woke me up:

- Draw me a sheep.
- Huh

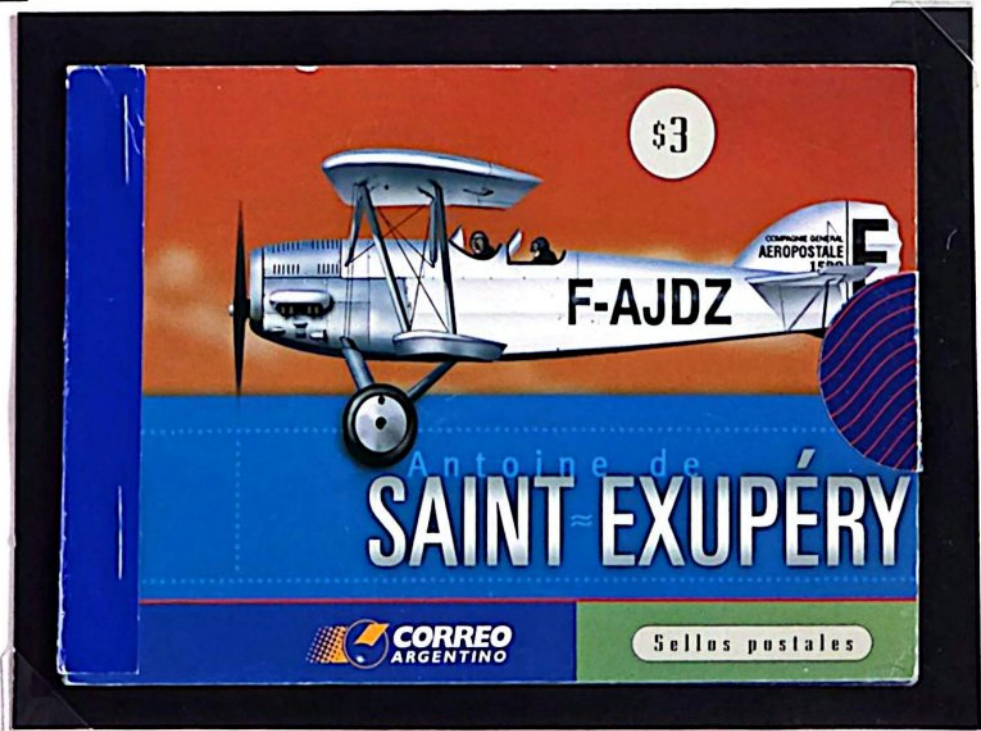
-Draw me a sheep

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The Little Prince is a short novel or poetic tale that appears to be a children's book, but with a philosophical theme by the French writer Antonie de Saint Exupéry. It is the second most-read book in the world. It was published on April 6, 1943, and continues to be successful after eight decades.

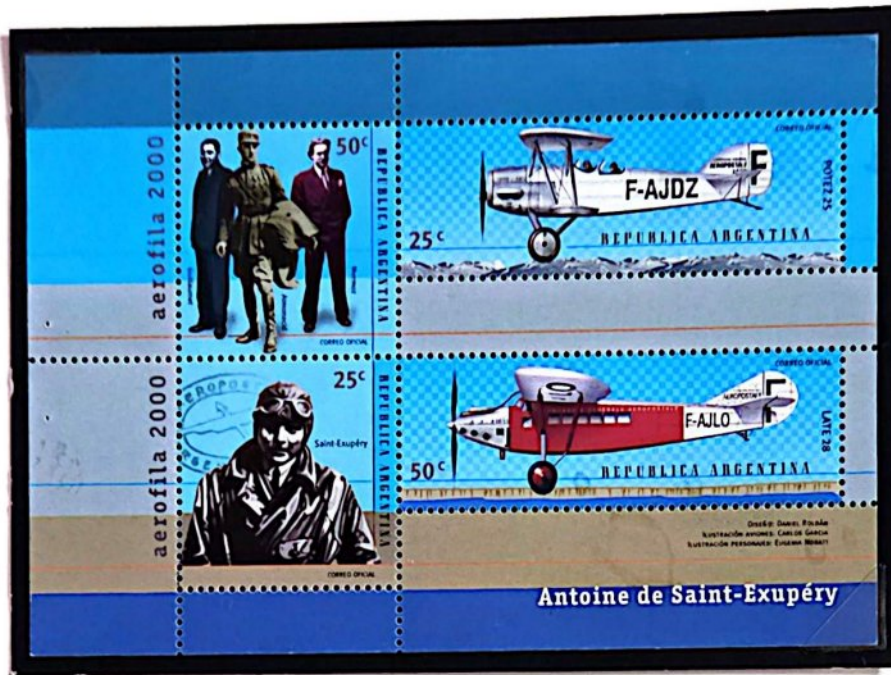
Within this context, the aim is to present the direct inspiration between this classic French work and the Republic of Guatemala. The story focuses on the little prince who travels across the universe. On this journey, he discovers the strange way adults perceive life, which ultimately leads him to understand the value of love and friendship.



Commemorative booklet: Antonie Saint Exupéry,  
June-29-1900 - July-31-1944; Argentine post; value 3.00

1.

# 1. ORIGIN OF THE HISTORY:



Pilots such as Guillaumet, Mermoz and Almonacid played a key role in inspiring Antoine de Saint Exupéry's vocation. This images also illustrate the types of aircraft used for airmail transportation and reconnaissance missions during that time.

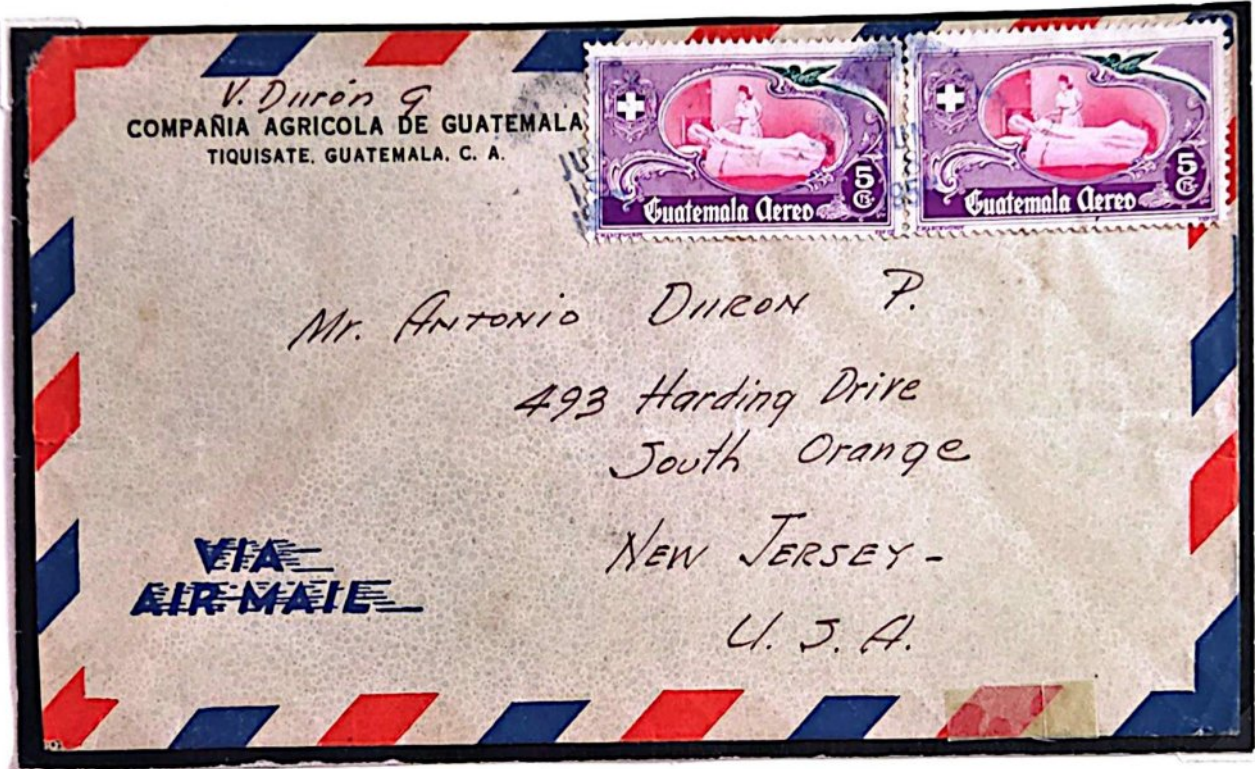
Saint Exupéry was born in Lyon, France, into an aristocratic family on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1900. At the age of twelve he experienced his first flight – an event that sparked a lifelong passion for aviation. He later joined the military and went on to build a career in commercial aviation, particularly in airmail routes. Driven by a strong spirit of adventure, he traveled extensively around the world. However, fate intervened when he suffered a serious accident, which led to a prolonged period of recovery in the City of Roses, Antigua Guatemala.

The Latecoere 25 aircraft was the last plane flown by Saint Exupery before his disappearance over the Mediterranean Sea.



The images shown here are two souvenir sheets, each valued at 1.50 Argentine pesos, taken from the interior of an Argentine Post commemorative booklet issued in the year 2000

During a journey to South America, Antoine de Saint Exupéry realized that his aircraft was running low on fuel and decided to refuel in Guatemala. Unfortunately his landing ended in a tragic accident, leaving him with serious injuries that forced him to remain for an extended period in Antigua Guatemala also known as the City of Roses. Antigua Guatemala is a place of remarkable colonial charm. Founded in 1543, it has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The city is distinguished by its Spanish Baroque architecture cobblestone streets, and the ruins of historical churches, all set against backdrop a surrounding volcanoes. It is also located approximately 40 kilometers away from the city.



Guatemala, New Jersey U.S.A June 8, 1950,  
 postage value 10 centavos international airmail

During his recovery, Saint Exupéry stayed in this colony city, which was formerly the capital of Guatemala. The capital was later relocated to the Valley of La Ermita as a result of the Santa Marta earthquakes in 1776.



Colonial city stamps  
 1972-1974

## 2. RELATIONSHIP OF THE STORY AND ITS INSPIRATION FROM GUATEMALA



The depiction of the three volcanoes: Fuego, Agua and Acatenango surrounding the city of Antigua Guatemala closely resembles the description of The Little Prince's home, asteroid B-612. Notably, both location feature two active volcanoes and one extinct volcano. Symbolically, these elements represent discipline, dedication, and perseverance.

The souvenir sheet illustrates these three volcanoes as part of the coat of arms of Nueva Guatemala de la Asunción.

The stamp displayed includes a tourism-themed issue (UPAEP 2017) as well as commemorative stamps featuring Lake Atitlán

Saint-Exupéry's period of convalescence proved to be a meaningful and enriching experience, allowing him to fully appreciate the beauty of these volcanoes. During these time, he also traveled to Solola, a region known for the stunning the Lake Atitlán. The lake framed by two volcanoes, offers a view of Cerro de Oro, wich is said to have inspired the famous image of the boa constrictor digesting an elephant -one of the most iconic symbols in The Little Prince. This imagery represents one of the region's myths an serves as an early point of connection between The Little Prince and the pilot (the autor).



Stamp details: Conservation-themed stamp: Lake Atitlan 1969

Atitlán Lake 1935 Solola U.P.U.

4.

The home of The Little Prince is inspired by the cobblestone streets of the colony city, Antigua Guatemala, where the author used to walk with his wife Consuelo Suncin Sandoval Zeceña, during her periods of recovery. He also adopted a national symbol as his own: the Ceiba Pentandra, a large strong and robust tree. In his story these are represented as Baobabs – trees that grows so large they could destroy his planet. Therefore, before embarking on his journey through the Universe, he ensures that any sprouts of these trees are removed.



This booklet of self-adhesive stamps from the 2014 German Postal Service (valued at 6 Euros) features one of the most beautiful farewell quotes from The Little Prince and the author: "When you look at the sky at the night, it will seem to you as if all the stars are laughing, because I will be living on one of them, You and only you will have stars that know how to laugh!"

**Etymology:** The name "Guatemala" means place of many "trees" or "forest"  
**Significance:** The Ceiba is the greatest among them due to its grandeur and strength; the author identifies it with the Baobabs



Artifact: An airmail stamp (4 cents) featuring the National Symbol, the Ceiba tree



Republic of  
Hrvatska stamp

A 3.80  
denomination stamp  
issued 1994



Registered mail from Serbia to Miami  
04/12/2023

Transported by private Courier Miami-  
Guatemala 04/12/2023

Asteroid B-612 is a minor planet located in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, it was given this name in honor of The Little Prince. It is said that the author was able to enjoy the starry nights of Antigua Guatemala particularly during summer season, which offers the clearest and most luminous views of the celestial bodies.



Postal stamp printing proof, France, 1998

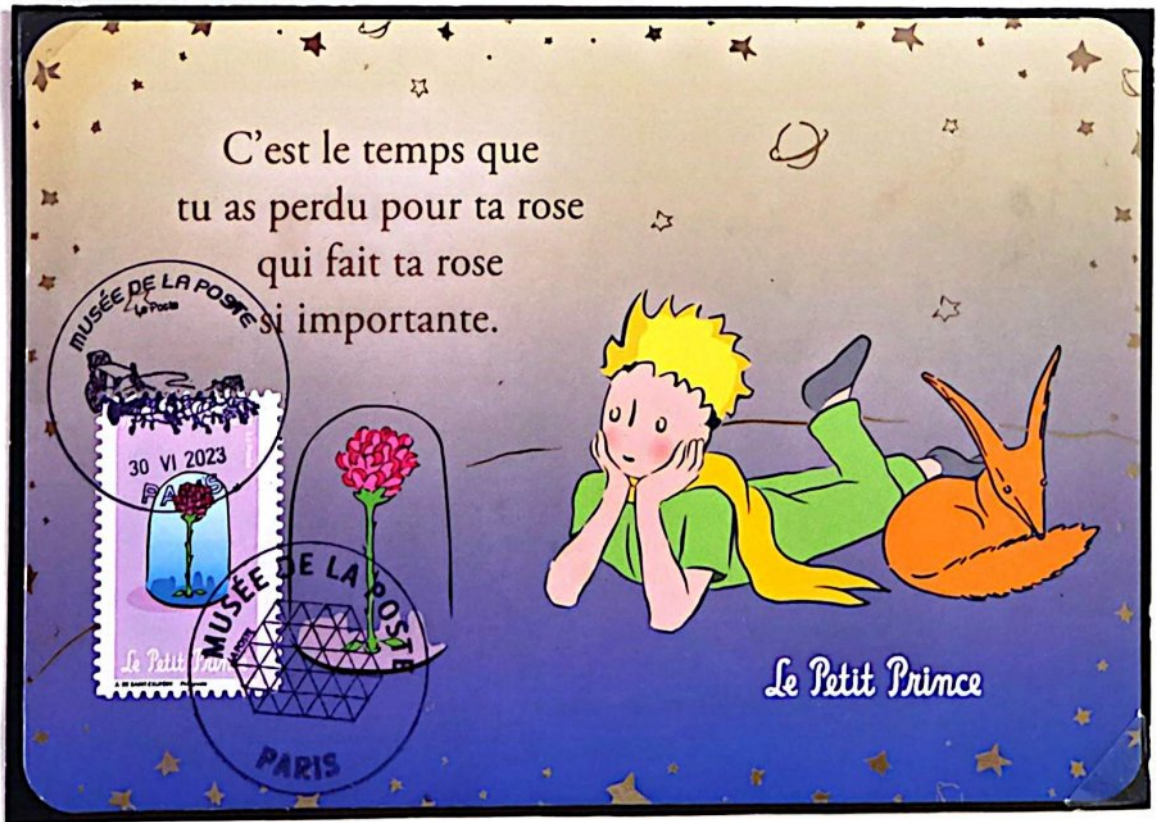


Hungarian stamp (10Ft)

Antigua Guatemala is also known as the “City of Roses”, due to the beauty of the roses it produces and exports.

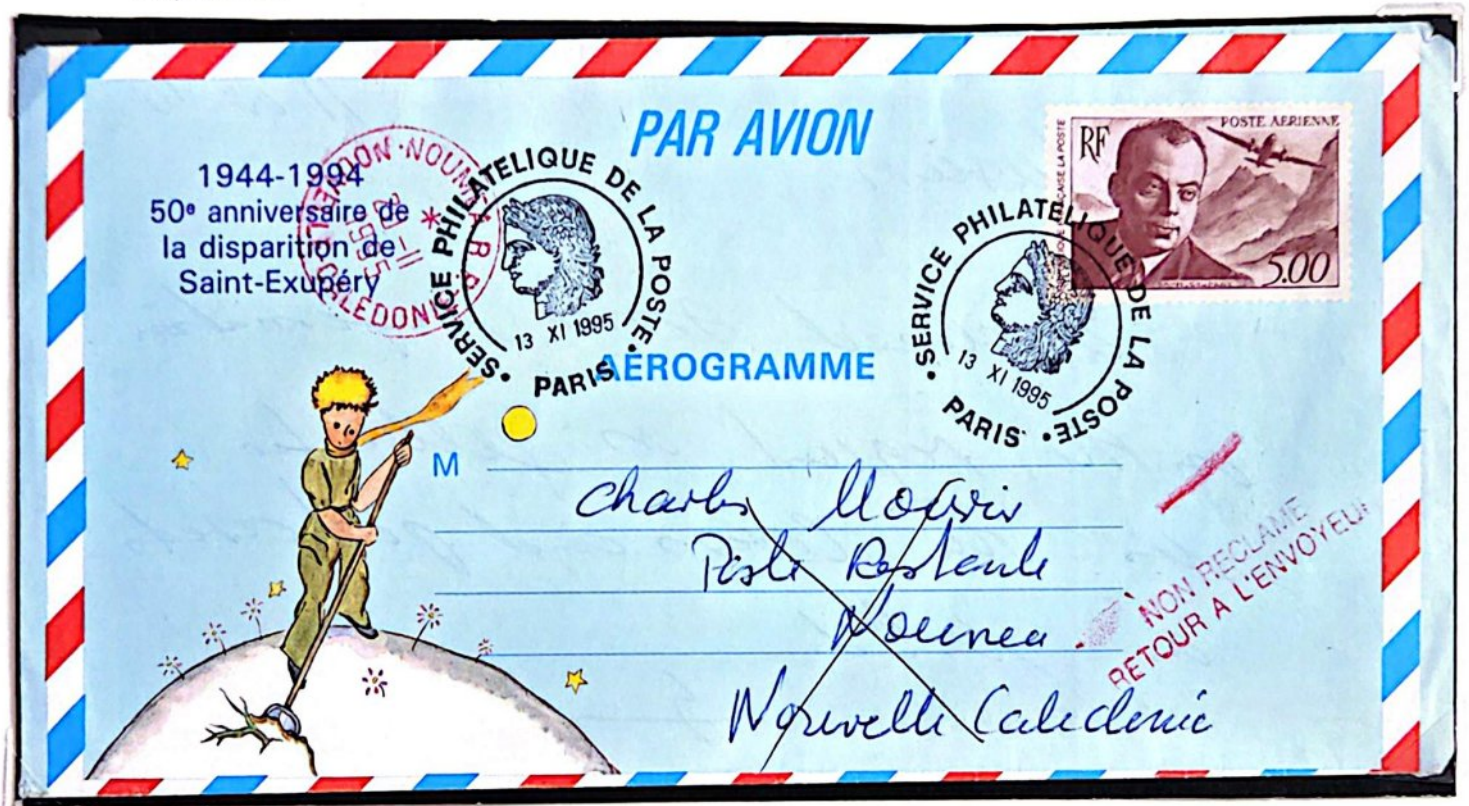
Another source of inspiration was his wife, who, although beautiful like roses, was – according to some critics- not a perfect relationship, just as roses have their thorns.

The Little Prince reflects on the restlessness of visiting other worlds, since his asteroid was very small. He only had a vain rose that demanded all his attention and care. THE ROSE symbolizes pure and selfish love, placed above one’s own interests. The image evokes his relationship with his wife, Consuelo Suncin Sandoval Zeceña



Máximum Card, French Post.  
 Phrase: " It is the time you have spent on your rose that makes your rose so important."

After witnessing the Little Prince's life on his small planet- occupied with its care and cleanliness and tethered to his demanding rose – he decides to take advantage of a bird migration to embark on a journey across the Universe and discover other worlds. This journey ultimately leads to his first encounter with the Author, who was stranded in the Sahara Desert due to a mechanical failure in his aircraft; for this reason, some attribute the child s appearance to a hallucination caused by dehydration.



Main aerogram Paris-New Caledonia 1995

Returned to sender due to being unclaimed 50th anniversary of the disappearance of Saint Exupéry

“It is madness to hate all roses because one pricked you. To give up on all your dreams because one did not come true”.



“It was the time you spent with your rose that made her so important”



Adhesive stamps from Japan 1984



### 3. JOURNEY FROM ASTEROID B-612 TO PLANET EARTH:

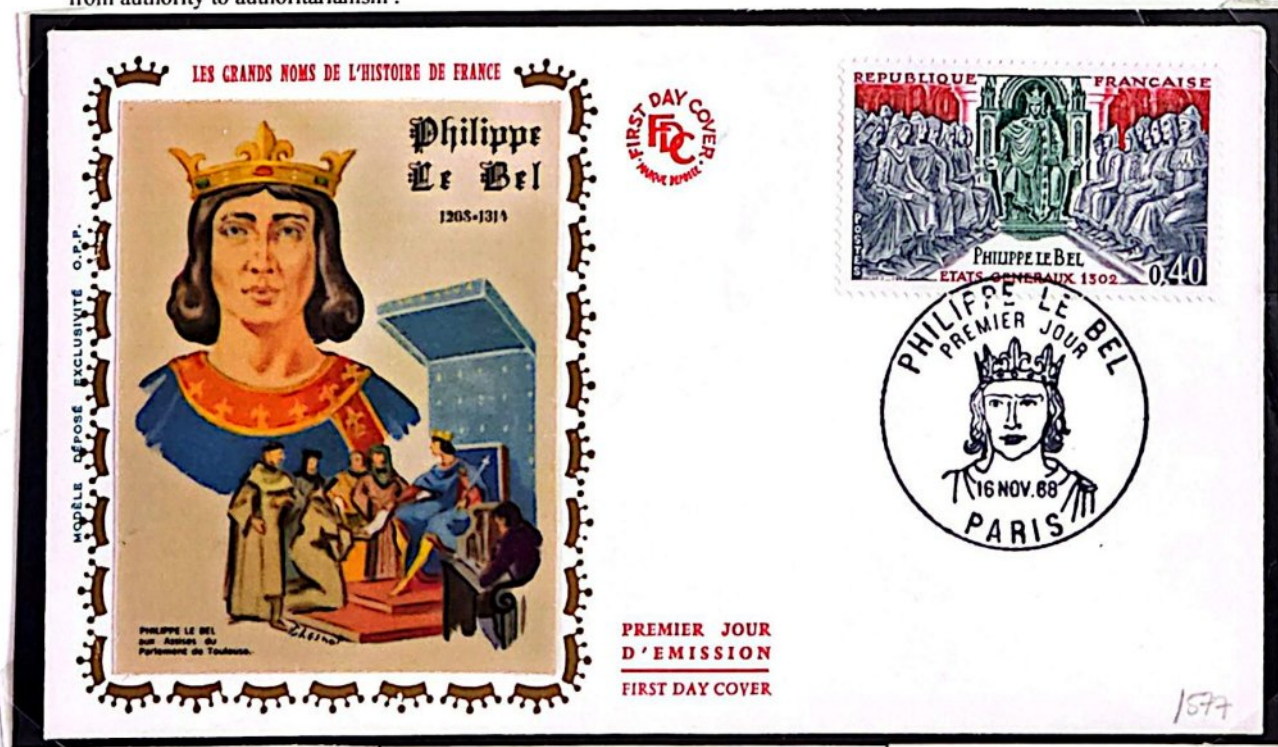
For the journey from Asteroid B-612 to the Earth he must first prepare his planet: cleaning the volcanoes, protecting his rose under a glass globe, and removing the baobabs.

In his first encounter in the desert with the pilot – who overcomes his frustration when shown his childhood drawing of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant (linked to the “Cerro de Oro” in Solola)- the Little Prince not only understands the drawing but also asks the pilot to draw a lamb for him to protect. Consequently, the pilot draws it inside a box. Furthermore, sheep and lambs are very characteristic of the territory leading of Solola, in the Western Highlands of Guatemala, due to the region's cold climate.



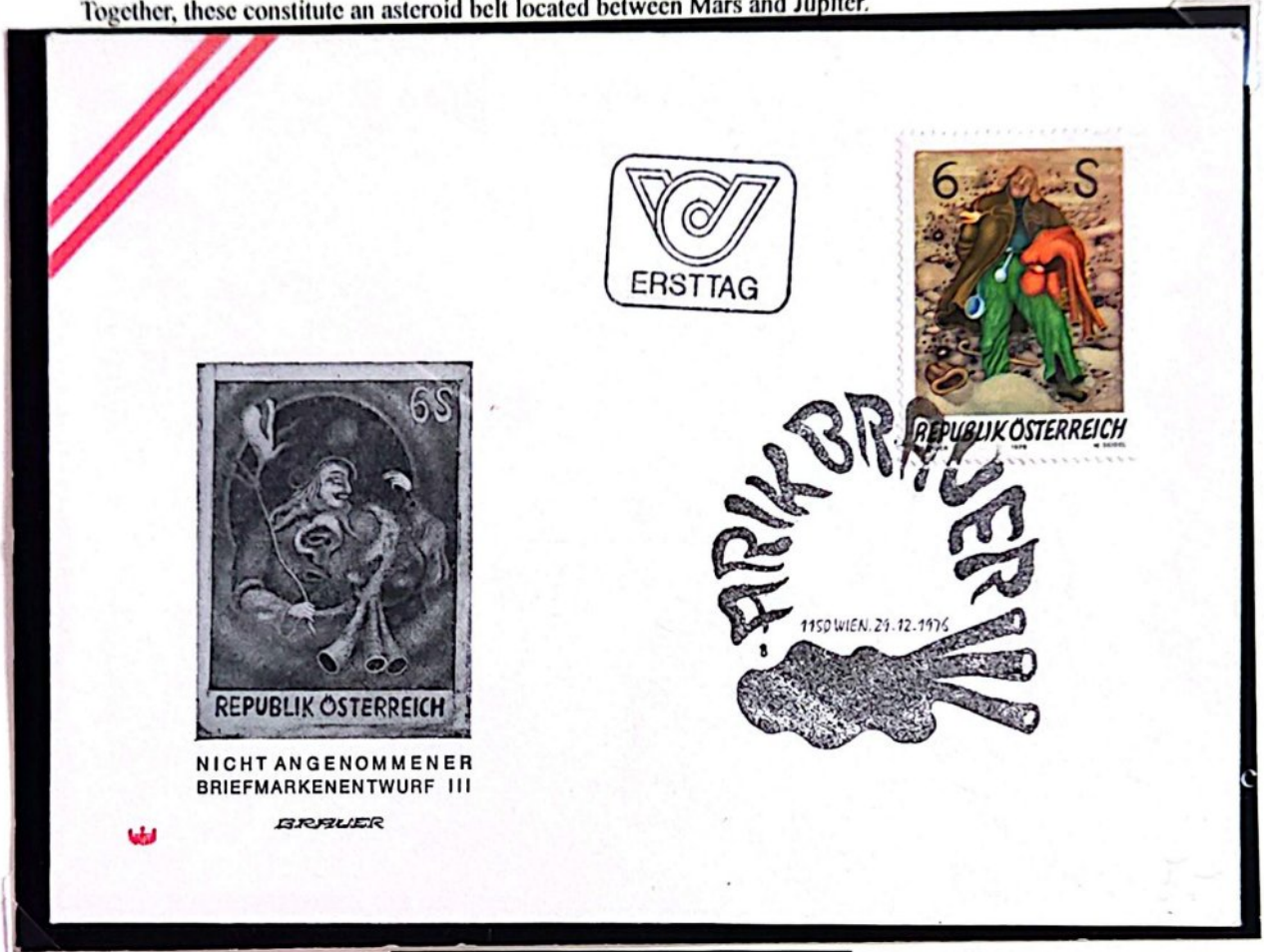
Adhesive Stamp Booklet from Japan 2019

His adventurous spirit, which led him to visit numerous countries, combined with the particular idiosyncrasy of Guatemala, inspired a series of metaphors that encapsulate his own vision of human existence. Thus, each of the asteroids he visits before reaching the Earth presents an “anti-value” such as: Asteroid 325, Planet #1 inhabited by a KING: which illustrates the transition from authority to authoritarianism.



First day Cover, Canada October 1964

Planet #2 (Asteroid 326) Inhabited by the Conceited Man: represents Egotism. **PLANET #3 AN ALCOHOLIC, WHO REPRESENTS THE LACK OF WILLPOWER.** Planet #4 (Asteroid 328), The Businessman: represents Avarice. Planet # 5 (Asteroid 329) the Lamplighter: the monotony of labor. Planet # 6 (Asteroid 330) inhabited by Geographer: incapable of valuing reality due to his obsession with security. Together, these constitute an asteroid belt located between Mars and Jupiter.



First day Cover - Austrian 1976

The greatest lesson learned at the end of his journey through the various planets was finding the fox, whom he tamed. This encounter allowed him to reach the depths of the heart punctuated by famous phrase: "WHAT'S ESSENTIAL IS INVISIBLE TO THE EYES"

It was the blend of culture and his passion for aviation that generated his wise teachings.



Postage stamp printing proof, France 1998 3.00 E value.



0.46 stamp,  
1900 - 1946

#### 4. ARRIVAL ON PLANT EARTH: New Characters

Upon his arrival on planet Earth, an encounter takes place between the pilot, – author of the book Saint Exupery- who is attempting to repair his crashed airplane, and the Little Prince, who asks him to draw sheep, symbolizing friendship. However, not accepting his artistic expression, the pilot instead draws the sheep inside a box to protect it from dangers such as wolves, thus allowing him to continue his work.



Maximum Card, June 2023  
Postal Museum France



Adhesive stamp from Switzerland

Representation of the Little Prince's farewell to his Rose



Commemorative stamp of the 75th anniversary, France 1946-2021

**5. PROFOUND THOUGHTS AND VALUES:**

Another character the Little Prince encounters is the fox: this event occurs when the Little Prince discovers a garden full of roses, leading him to think that his rose is not as unique as he believed, which makes him feel sad. The fox asks him: "Please, TAME me." From this point, the most profound dialogues of the work ensue, demonstrating the importance of creating bonds of friendship through the process of domestication. From this teaching arises one of the most famous phrases of the Little Prince: "IT IS ONLY WITH THE HEART THAT ONE CAN SEE RIGHTLY; WHAT'S ESSENTIAL IS INVISIBLE TO THE EYES"

"You become responsible, forever, for what you tamed".



Adhesive stamp from Japan 1984



Serbia stamp  
Francophonie 1985

"He was only a fox like a hundred thousand others. But I made him my friend, and now he is **UNIQUE IN THE WORLD**".

"I must endure the presence of two or three caterpillars if I wish to become acquainted with butterflies"

It is much more difficult to judge oneself than judge others. If you succeed in judging yourself rightly, then you are indeed a wise man"



Portugal stamp from the species and habitat of the Lisbon zoo

L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux.

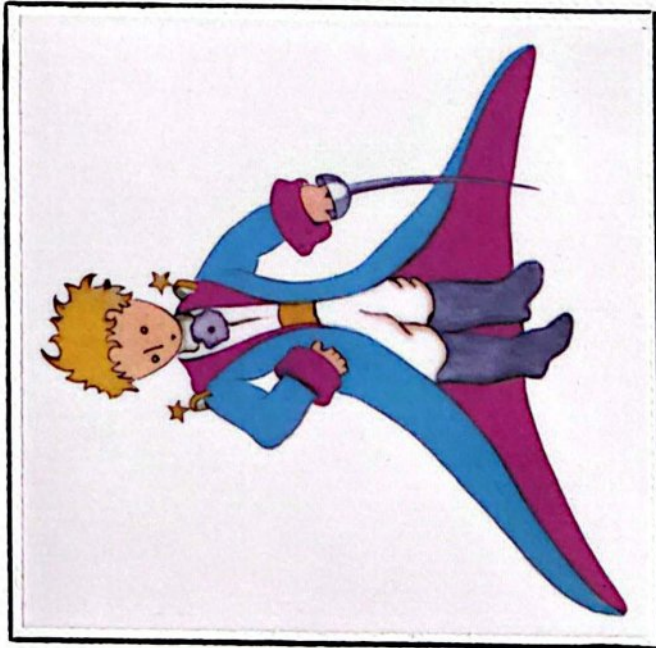


Máximum Card 2023  
Louvre Museum

6. GRAPHICAL SUMMARY OF THE STORY OF THE LITTLE PRINCE AND HIS JOURNEY THROUGH THE UNIVERSE  
Philexfrance 99- Paris Souvenir sheet, donated to the Association for the Development of Philately First Day Cover 1999 World s fair

# Le Petit Prince

## Antoine de Saint Exupéry



MODÈLE DÉPOSÉ EXCLUSIVITÉ E.P.P.



© Antoine de Saint Exupéry - 1998



PREMIER JOUR D'ÉMISSION FIRST DAY COVER



Philexfrance 99 • Paris • 2 au 11 juillet 1999 • Bloc-feuillelet 25F dont 10F reversés à l'Association pour le Développement de la Philatélie

**A**L'AUBE du troisième millénaire, l'exposition Philexfrance 99, "Mondial du timbre" se tiendra à Paris du 2 au 11 juillet 1999 au parc des Expositions de la porte de Versailles. Ce sera l'occasion de célébrer la naissance du premier timbre-poste français, voulue par l'Assemblée nationale le 24 août 1848. Ce sera aussi l'occasion d'une rétrospective historique où se côtoient les effigies de Cères, la déesse des moissons, dont le profil altier orne le premier timbre, de Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, de Marianne, symbole des Républiques victorieuses. En tout bien tout honneur, c'est ce visage de Marianne qui a accompagné le logo de Philexfrance 99, éclairant le timbre annonce de l'événement philatélique de juillet 1999. Mais à l'approche de cet événement de fin de siècle, l'hommage rendu au petit prince, et par lui à l'enfance et à son créateur Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, n'est pas une coïncidence. "Saint-Ex" comme se plaisaient à le baptiser ses compagnons, est né avec le siècle, le 29 juin 1900. Après des années d'études passées au Mans, puis en Suisse, c'est un échec au concours de l'École navale qui décidera de son avenir. Sa passion du dessin pourra alors s'exprimer. Il entre aux Beaux-Arts. Au cours de son service militaire, il apprend à piloter. Son premier écrit de 1925, *L'Évasion de Jacques Bernis*, situe déjà l'action dans le monde de l'aviation. En 1926, embauché à la compagnie Latécoère de Toulouse, il se voit confier l'acheminement aérien du courrier entre la ville rose et Dakar. Chef d'escale dans le Rio de Orio, il publie *Courrier Sud* (1929). Ses goûts pour l'aventure et pour l'écriture se conjuguent, désormais, intimement. Avec Mermoz et Guillaumet, il expérimente et ouvre de nouveaux parcours; il publie *Vol de nuit* en 1931, Prix Fémina, *Terre des hommes*, Grand Prix du roman de l'Académie française en 1939. De son expérience de pilote de reconnaissance aérienne dans les combats de 1939-1940 naîtra *Pilote de guerre* qui inaugure cette "trilogie" rédigée pendant le conflit mondial, trilogie à laquelle appartient *Le Petit Prince*, écrit à New York, un an avant le vol tragique du 31 juillet 1944 d'où il ne reviendra jamais. Dans cette œuvre poétique et philosophique, "Saint-Ex", sous l'apparence presque anodine d'un conte qui narre la rencontre d'un enfant venu d'un "ailleurs" imaginaire et d'un adulte "tombé du ciel", évoque les valeurs humaines du lien, de la responsabilité et nous apprend à donner un sens à notre vie.



World Stamp Exhibition Philexfrance, Versailles 1999. Celebration of the birth of the first French postage stamp, 1848.

A historical retrospective of the effigies that adorn the first Ceres stamp: goddess of the harvests; Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte; and Marianne: symbol of the victorious Republics. Furthermore, as the turn of the century approached, a tribute was paid to childhood through "The Little Prince" and its creator, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. In 1926, while working for Latécoère in Toulouse, Saint-Exupéry—alongside Mermoz and Guillaumet—pioneered the opening of new airmail routes. Drawing from these experiences, he authored the "War Pilot" trilogy, to which "The Little Prince" belongs. In this work, he evokes the human values that give meaning to life—all of which occurs just one year before his disappearance during a flight over the Mediterranean.



14.



7. ELEMENTS AND CHARACTERS:



Interior of the Commemorative Notebook Characters

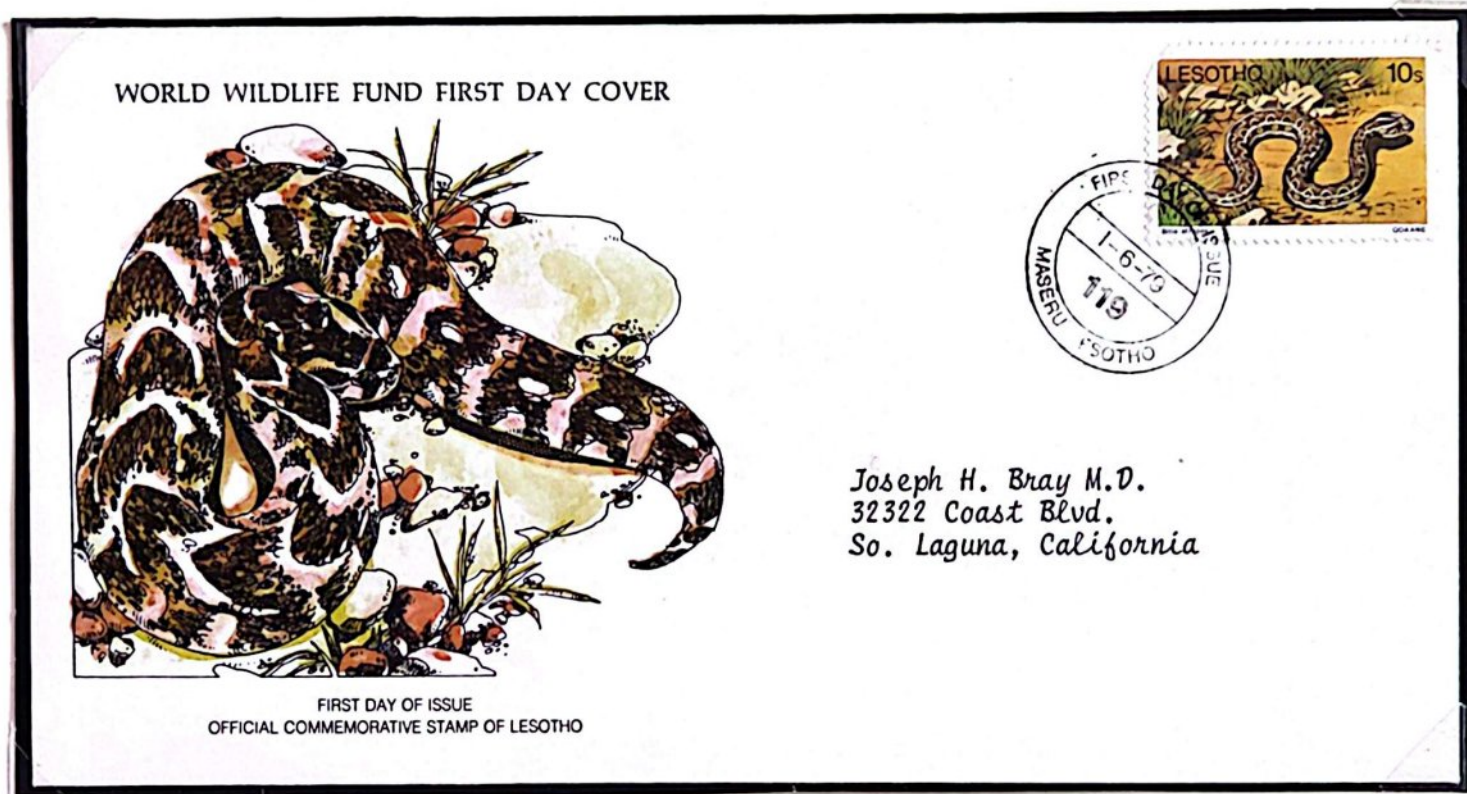
Main character: The Little Prince  
 Secondary Characters: The Lamb (sheep), the Rose, the Fox, the Pilot, the Snake  
 Tertiary Characters: The King, the Drunkard (the Tippler).  
 Setting: The Asteroid, the Earth and the Desert



Commemorative Notebook details  
 75 years in France

### 8. RETURN AND DEATH OF THE LITTLE PRINCE:

The setting of the Little Prince's arrival on Earth is the desert, where he meets the pilot; this is crucial because for his return, he waits beneath a particular star to encounter the snake. And if you are fortunate enough to see a beautiful child with golden hair who does not answer your questions, yet continues to inquire until he obtains answers, you will be in the presence of the LITTLE PRINCE...



Lesotho- California U.S.A. 06/01/1979 First Day Cover

### NARRATIVE OF THE ARRIVAL AND RETURN TO EARTH



Series of self autoadhesive stamps from Japan 1984