

2003-6 Mosque Variety

I was sifting through some China kiloware when I found what is apparently a postal forgery of the 80f mosque stamp, 2003-6 2-2.



There are plenty of differences, most notably the design on the tower of the mosque is very blurred on the used copy. The copy seems to have been printed by



photogravure, which needs specialised equipment. But the quality of the printing is lower than on the original stamp and the texture of the dot pattern is readily apparent in the larger coloured areas

Is this a previously reported known forgery?

I posted the information on Stampboards at

<http://www.stampboards.com/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=69387>

You can view the whole topic there. I thought the most important contributions were:

1) Check the stamp under UV light for security code printed in phosphorescent ink: yes, this used copy has a phosphescent code - 067838. (Stampboards comment by David Smitham. Phosphorescent ink is hard to forge).

2) The perforations are good and the same as the mint stamp. (Stampboards comment by AdmiralCollector. Perforations are hard to forge).

3) Details of design are different in the mint and used stamps - most notably the figures "2" in the imprint at the bottom of the stamp are in different fonts! (Stampboards comment by vikingeck). The Chinese script at the bottom also looks slightly different. Different script means different printings from different artwork! Other details differ, such spacing between various black parts of the printing, as well as the apparently coarser dot screen.

So at this stage it seemed the most likely explanation was that two different versions of the stamp were printed by the official printers. It was suggested that the Chinese Post Office may print high quality stamps for philatelic use and lower quality stamps for general postage use. (Stampboards comment by gavin-h).

I mentioned this to Leon Hai, the owner of xabusiness.com, a leading reseller of modern Chinese stamps, who said:

"Got your PDF file. The item 2003-6 (2-2) used in your PDF is fake. The stamp is obviously an offset printed copy with a postmark. No such release.

I had seen fake 2003-6 once on an exhibition about how to tell real and fake stamps here in China."

So that confirms it to my satisfaction, although I'm somewhat surprised by the identification of the printing process, but no doubt that is correct as well.

So much for UV phosphorescent security codes!