

# WORLD NUMISMATICS NEWSLETTER

## U.S. MEXICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION 2016 CONVENTION AND EDUCATIONAL FORUM



The fifth annual convention will be held Thursday through Saturday, October 6-8, 2016 at the Hilton Scottsdale Resort, 6333 N Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, Arizona. The schedule of events is as follows:

### Thursday

Dealer Setup	12:00-5:00pm
Early Entry	2:00-5:00pm (\$10 Donation)
Welcome Party	5:00-7:00pm
Silent Auction	
Awards Ceremony	

### Friday & Saturday

Bourse Hours	9am to 6pm
Speakers	Three Daily at 10am, 1pm and 2:30pm

### Speakers will Include:

Dunigan / Sedwick / Ponterio	Counterfeit Detection 3
Carlos Jara	War of Independence
Phil Flemming	Mexican Onzas of 1711 and 1712

Peter S. Dunham, PhD (Associate Professor of Anthropology, Cleveland State University)	Ethnic and political history of Banknote Vignettes
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Augi Garcia	Tumbaga Bars
Cori Sedwick Downing	Carlos and Johanna Coinage

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## WORLD NUMISMATICS WILL BE IN LONG BEACH - JUNE 9-11, 2016 AT LONG BEACH CONVENTION CENTER

Stop by at the convention at Booth 922 and meet Benjamin Bell, Kent Ponterio, Cory Frampton and Max Keech. We will be showing our newest inventory from recent trips to Europe along with our regular Mexican and Latin inventories.

## VALIDATION STAMPS OF THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE, PART 2

By Max A. Keech

In Part 1 of this article, in the last issue of the journal, I suggested three "rules" that this series follows which can guide us to a better understanding of the mint casting stamps and counterstamps of the period. A quick summary of the rules are: (1) stamps are either casting stamps originating from the casting process or counterstamps used to validate provisional/necessity coins already in circulation, (2) they were applied only between 1811 and 1814 and (3) only provisional/necessity coinage was counterstamped (a detailed review of these rules can be found on pages 14-16 of Part 1 in the December 2014 issue). Part 1 also surveyed the most often encountered Royalist issues. To conclude, we will review a cross-section of the Insurgent validation stamps.

### INSURGENT VALIDATION STAMPS



Insurgent authority 1811-1812

The Insurgent validation stamps are much more diverse and uncertain than the Royalist issues. There is virtually no contemporary documentation to support assignment of these issues and what we know today is primarily Pradeau's speculation based on his observations first published in 1938. The fact that this still stands after 75 years speaks to his

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**Dealers will Include:**

Huston Pearson	Ennis, Texas
Lois & Don Bailey & Son	Hemet, California
Baja Numismatics	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Robert Briggs	Guadalajara, Mexico
Roberto Del Bosque	Brownsville, Texas
Dave Busse	Harlingen, Texas
Mike Dunigan Company	Fort Worth, Texas
Sal Falcone	San Jose, California
Angel Smith Herrera	McAllen, Texas
Mexican Coin Company	Carefree, Arizona
Dan Sedwick	Winter Park, Florida
Stacks Bowers	Irvine, California
Stephen Album Rare Coins	Santa Rosa, California
Dave Wagner	Fort Worth, Texas
Cris Bierrenbach	Dallas, Texas

**Counterfeit Detection Seminars.** Our most popular seminar has been the one on counterfeit detection, which is presented by some of the most knowledgeable professionals in the field, including Kent Ponterio, Dan Sedwick, and Mike Dunigan. This seminar will be continued each year covering new areas of counterfeit detection.

**EXHIBITS.** We would like to have approximately six displays on the convention floor. So far we have several excellent proposals. If you are interested in setting up a display, give me a call. Once again, we will be judging and giving out awards for the best displays.

**IAPN TABLE.** The International Association of Professional Numismatists graciously donated four microscopes a few years ago to the Association. The microscopes will be located at a special table on the bourse floor. On the table will be a tray of coins. Tell us which ones are real and which ones are counterfeit. The correct or closest response wins the prize.

**BOOK SALE.** We have received donations of books and auction catalogs from generous members and will be setting up a large table to sell these items at very reasonable prices which will benefit the Association. If you have excess books and auction catalogs in your library that you would like to donate, please send them to me at my office address below.

**WELCOME PARTY.** The welcome party will be held Thursday at 5pm on the pool area patio just outside the convention rooms. Appetizers will be served and the bar will be open for you to purchase beverages of your choice. Most of the members attending the convention show up in time to attend this party and it has become a highlight of the event.

**SILENT AUCTION.** The silent auction is made up of donations of coins, currency, books and other items from our members and supporters to raise funds for the organization. Last year we received generous donations from many of our corporate supporters including Heritage Auctions, Daniel Frank Sedwick LLC, PCGS, NGC and ANACS. Individual members who made generous donations included John Hughes, Alan Schein, Don Canaparo, Elmer Powell, Jeff Jennings, David Hughes, Jose Serrano, Don Bailey, Carlos Amaya, Richard Long, Joe Flores, Simon Prendergast, Rick Ponterio, Kent Ponterio, Mike Dunigan, Cory Frampton, and Max Keech.

The silent auction has been a resounding success and is a major source of income for the Association. Last year 25 donated items realized over \$6,000 for the organization. Please consider making a donation to this worthy cause.

**AWARDS CEREMONY.** Awards will be presented during the Welcome Party to various members of the organization for their contributions during 2015.

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS.** We have arranged a special room rate at the Resort of \$165 per night. The easiest way to make a reservation is to go to [usmex.org](http://usmex.org) and follow the links. You can make your reservations now and I strongly urge you not to wait. Last year, room rates were much higher after our block sold out.

**ADMISSION.** Admission to the convention will be free to members, \$5 to nonmembers and free to all family members and children under 15. Early entry is available to members only Thursday afternoon for a \$10 per person donation to the Association.

For More Information Contact:

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Send Book and Catalog donations to:

By USPS:	By FedEx and UPS:
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PO Box 5270	25 Easy Street Suite D
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**ABOUT US**

World Numismatics is located in Carefree, Arizona and owned by Kent Ponterio, Benjamin Bell, Cory Frampton and Max Keech. Scott Drummond manages the office which is open from 8 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday. Carlos Jara manages our Latin American operations and lives in Chile. Carlos travels throughout Central and South America and attends the major shows here. We are a leading buyer and seller of Mexican, Latin American coins and currency along with World and Ancient coins, and we stock one of the largest inventories in North America. Our primary focus is on quality material and rarities dated prior to 1930. Our inventory consists of hundreds of certified coins along with thousands of raw coins and thousands of notes. We are the publishers of "[Mexican Paper Money](#)", a 424 page color reference book on Mexican currency which is available directly from our website. We attend many of the major shows, including Mexico City, Long Beach, New York International, and the Money Show of the Southwest and others.

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## THE VENETIAN DUCAT:

THE WORLD'S MOST ENDURING INTERNATIONAL TRADE COIN

By Benjamin R. Bell

The Venetian Ducat is one of the world's first internationally recognized and respected gold trade coins, being an acceptable medium of exchange across the entire "known world" of the medieval period. Although in Roman times the denarius & solidus saw widespread use, it was more due to the expanse of the Roman Empire itself. Prior to this, the Athenian Tetradrachm and other competing currencies dominated trade in the Greek world, while silver-based monometallic currencies dominated Europe in the early medieval period. In other words, there was no copper coinage and no regular gold coinage at that time. The Ducat is the first gold coin struck with the intent to compete with other currencies in the international marketplace. It became the literal "gold standard" of reliability and uniformity in a period where money was a complicated local affair. One could argue that the Venetian Ducat was the international reserve currency of its day, and its effectiveness is marked by its 500+ year history of continuous production and demand. This far surpasses the longevity of the ubiquitous Austrian Maria Theresa thaler, issued since 1780 with few interruptions.

The history of this storied coin begins a bit earlier, not in Venice, but in the neighboring Florentine Republic. The city of Florence was a burgeoning metropolis and hub of trade that was the cultural center of Italy, birthing many of the innovations of the Italian Renaissance. It recognized the need for a very reputable and pure coin for trade, and pioneered the Florin, first struck in 1252- bearing the motifs of the Lily & St. John the Baptist. This coin type rapidly gained acceptance and spread into neighboring countries in continental Europe, eventually being struck in many countries including modern France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, and Spain.

Meanwhile, the Venetian Republic was growing into the leading center of maritime trade across the Mediterranean. Venice had blossomed from a swampy pirates' lair in the Dark Ages, into a highly organized capitalistic society, with political and economic tentacles reaching into nearby Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Holy Land. The government of Venice recognized a good thing, seeing the potential of the florin in facilitating international commerce, and resolved to make their own coin in direct competition with Florence. In 1284, the Great Council of Venice passed a resolution to strike a coin of pure gold, to a subtly higher weight and standard of purity than the florin, but bearing the image of Christ in glory on one side. In numismatic terms, this is called the "mandorla" or "almond" in English, owing to its shape. What is actually represented is a portrait of Christ appearing in the heavens, surrounded by stars. The beaded outline could be interpreted as a representation of a full-body halo, although it may only be a convenient artistic device to separate the portrait from the surrounding design. Christ already appears 'nimbate' having the traditional western depiction of a halo around his head. In the past, this side of the coin was considered the obverse (front of the coin) because Christ was hierarchically above the Doge, the 'temporal' or 'secular' ruler. The legend (circular inscription) around the Christ motif, 'SIT. T. XPE. DAT. Q. TV. REGIS. ISTE. DVCAT' even states the doge's loyalty & fealty to Christ. It is an abbreviation for 'Sit tibi Christe datus, quem tu regis, iste ducatus,' a Latin phrase for 'Let this duchy which thou rules be dedicated to thee, O Christ'. The other side, now generally considered the obverse because it bears the

title of the issuing authority, depicts a figure of the Venetian Doge (governor, or 'Duke') kneeling before St. Mark, the patron saint of Venice. St. Mark hands a *gonfalone*, or pennant (the medieval format of a flag) to the Doge. This side of the coin features a slightly abbreviated Latin form of the Doge's name, and the vertical inscription 'S. M. VENETI' for 'Sanctvs Marcvs Veneti' or St. Mark of Venice. Minor stylistic changes occurred over the years, first reorganizing the stars on the reverse (back of the coin) from a constellation to a linear format around 1311. Later, the 'X' in 'DVX' morphs from a rotated cross-potent to a floreate design, resembling a flower blossom in 1382. Next, in 1476 the doge wears a more pointed cap appropriate to the time, and the legend gets extended under the doge. In 1501, an exergue, or ground line is added below the scene of the Saint and the Doge. Also the number of stars depicted begins to change, gradually increasing to 16 stars. The flag gradually shrinks, becoming a cross on a staff, making it a scepter *cruciger*.

The Venetians were making substantial profits before the time the ducat, through purchasing goods in the Middle East and as far away as India, then importing them into Central and Northern Europe at large markups. Initially, they were paying for the goods with very pure Byzantine gold Solidi and Histamenon Nomismae. When the purity and reliability of Byzantine coinage faltered due to political unrest, Venice had to act quickly. The new Venetian coin drew its inspiration from the iconography of Byzantine coins (Venice had itself been a remote Byzantine outpost during the dark ages), copying the format of the positions of the ruler with a religious figure on the obverse, and featuring Christ (exclusive of Madonna or other saints) on the other side. The coin was struck in the purest possible alloy of gold available to medieval technology (roughly 99.47%) but theoretically nearly 101% through the now disproven idea of impaction (compressing the finished alloy). Demand for this coin skyrocketed, as it featured Christian motifs popular in Western Europe, the Crusader States, and Christian enclaves within India. Also, the Hindu population in India "recognized" the figures as representing characters from local lore, which combined with its thin & elegant manufacture, led to the coin having a premium value throughout India as an adornment in jewelry. Finds of ducats are known all over Southeastern Europe, the Greek Islands, the Levant, North Africa, and at least as far afield as India, where they are commonly encountered.



ITALY, AV ZECCHINO  
(DUCAT)  
(1553-1554)  
NGC MS66 - Fr. 1251  
SKU# 34580

Sharply struck with blazing luster, as the grade suggests. Very rare. Marcantonio Trevisani only ruled for roughly one year, making his coinage generally rare. This coin is also conditionally rare, being tied with an Alvisio Mocenigo IV (abundant) for the finest graded at NGC. This is the first Marcantonio Trevisani Zecchino graded at NGC.

Price is \$5,500.-

Continues on page 4

The widespread popularity of the coin caused other nations to replicate it, creating 'imitations' (local copies that circulated as legitimate currency)- often replacing the name of the Venetian Doge with the name of the local or colonial ruler. The first documented imitations that are of a known origin are from the Order of St. John on the island of Rhodes and the Roman Senate, both in the period around 1340-1350. The Roman Senate needed to establish a coin that would be equivalent to the Florin or Ducat.



**ITALY DUCAT**  
(1414-23)  
MS65 - Fr. 1231  
SKU# 33873

Venice, Tomaso Mocenigo.  
Bright, flashy luster.

Price is \$950.-

As the Florentine bankers controlled the finances of the Senate of Rome at the time, they ensured that the Florin was not used as the model. The only other logical choice was the ducat. The Genoese Republic, bitter political & economic rivals of Venice, led in production of imitation ducats, but imitations were produced on the Islands of Rhodes & Malta by the Knights of St. John, all across the Aegean & Black Seas by the Genoese, in Pera (Galata) by Constantinople, in Greece, Turkey, and later France, other Italian cities, and even India. In the case of imitations with a known place of issue (specified in the legend), the figures on the obverse are portrayed roughly the same, but the identities change. In the case of Rome, the portraits are St. Peter and the head of the Roman Senate. Rhodes & Malta depict St. John the Baptist and the Grandmaster of the Knightly

order. Ducats of Chios feature either St. Peter and the Doge of Milan, or later St. Lawrence and the Doge of Genoa, whereas the first anonymous issues are almost exactly like a Venetian ducat with St. Mark & the Venetian Doge, and the last issue of signed ducats depicts Charles VII of France, as Lord of Genoa. The Greek Islands do not specify which Saint (presumably St. Lawrence), naming the mint in place of his name, and depicting the Lord of the island instead of a Doge. The portraits were conventional and not very creative (to maintain uniformity), so the legends on the coins narrate who appears on them.

The name 'Ducat' draws from the end of the legend on the reverse of the coin, included in the Latin phrase *Sit tibi, Christe, datus, quem tu regis site ducatus*. Although the standard Venetian silver coin was originally called a 'Ducat', the gold coin quickly took precedence, leading the silver coin to be renamed the 'Grosso', or the "big coin". The ducat was both a physical coin denomination, and a unit of account, or a notional value based on equivalences with silver coins. When the ratio between gold & silver values was irreparably altered in 1567, Venice decided to maintain the weight and purity of the coin so as to not affect its acceptability as a world currency. Due to the new face value of the coin, it was renamed the '*Ducato de Zecca*' or "Ducat of the Mint" (as opposed to the Ducat of account), which was shortened by popular usage to "Zecchino" and corrupted in English, French and Arabic to 'Sequin'.

The Venetian government compelled all ships entering its port to have all gold coins and specie re-coined into ducats soon after landing & clearing customs. The mint was allowed a specific time frame to return the gold to its owners, taking a very small commission to cover the costs of refining & minting. The tradeoff was a standardized, recognized, & reliable coin that was good anywhere. Resultantly, many thousands of coins were made each year, which is why enough examples survive today to make them comparatively affordable. Actually, the Venetian Ducat is amongst the most inexpensive of all European Medieval hammered gold coins, in the case of the more common Doges. However, some of the coins of the short-lived Doges are quite rare, and the haste with which ducats were struck makes the most select examples rather sought-after as representatives of their type for modern collectors. There are a total of 73 different doges who had official Venetian Ducats or Zecchino pieces struck, plus the two varieties for Austrian Emperor Franz II (and I), resulting in a total of 75 different rulers. To this, several different legend varieties can be added, for a total of eighty some different types to collect, with even more minor varieties. This presents an attractive series for the entry level collector because the cheapest coins can be under two times their intrinsic value, and many doges are fairly affordable to collect. The series, although fairly uniform, offers more history and variety than date collecting, and many nuances for the connoisseur, and legend variants for the variety collector.

After 512 years of consistent mintage, Napoleon disrupted the mintage of the gold Ducat when he conquered the Venetian Republic. The last Doge to issue the Ducat was Ludovico Manin, but his issue was prodigious, and subsequently relatively convincing copies were struck in the Balkans, the Levant, and India for some time. Although Austria sought to revive the Ducat type under the Holy Roman Emperor Franz II (Francis II, and later Franz I of the new Austrian Empire), mintages were paltry and experimental. By that time, the Venetian trade routes had given way to the Portuguese, Dutch and later the English, and the Austrian ducat had taken over as the standard gold coin in European and Levantine trade. Although the demand remained for the Venetian Ducat, the reasons for Venice to manufacture it for her trade purposes had already been eclipsed by the primacy of foreign powers. And so ends a long chapter in numismatic history.

For further reading, the best reference for background information on the ducat is *Zecca, The Mint of Venice in the Middle Ages*, by Alan Stahl, and for imitations; *The Venetian Gold Ducat and its Imitations* by Herbert Ives & Philip Grierson. Additional information can be found on [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org). These are the primary sources consulted in the writing of this article.



**ITALY DUCAT**  
(1400-13)  
MS64 - Fr. 1230  
SKU# 33864

Venice, Michele Steno.  
Lustrous, slightly soft centers.

Price is \$750.-

monumental efforts which covered the entire numismatic history of Mexico. In this article, I will attempt to update some of that work. In so doing, I confess the (reasoned) speculation this requires and hope that this provides a stepping stone to additional study.



**CHILE - 1822  
8 REALES  
NGC XF45 - KM#3  
SKU# 31446**

Chile provisional Valdivia 8R.  
Medina plate coin, finest known  
of 3-4 pcs.

Price is \$7,000.-

To understand the various Insurgent issues it is informative to distinguish the four different authorities/geographies in central Mexico from 1811 to 1814. The Supreme Junta was in theory the governing body of all insurgent forces since its formation on 19 August 1811. On the ground, however, it was dominant over only the northern and western portions comprising the insurgent stronghold of Michoacán. Morelos swore allegiance to the Junta and there was constant communication, interaction and the sharing of resources between Morelos and President Rayón and the Junta, at least thru late 1812, but Morelos was always in control of the south. Morelos' theater of operation included the provinces of México (including present day Guerrero), Puebla and Oaxaca. The independents Villagrán

and Osorno operating in the eastern highlands, north of Veracruz, swore allegiance only to themselves and profit. The Supreme Junta and Morelos both issued struck, as well as cast, coinage in large quantities during the period between 1811 and 1814. They also independently counterstamped provisional/necessity issues circulating in their jurisdiction.

Once we distinguish mint casting stamps from counterstamps, we realize that the casting stamps are smaller in number and somewhat easier to place in chronological sequence and issuing authority. Each of the four Insurgent jurisdictions produced cast coinage and each, at least for their earliest casts, used mint casting stamps. Counterstamps are more challenging and the challenges occur within the Supreme Junta geography and jurisdiction (Michoacán). This is because the majority of the counterstamp issues occur here and the authority is confusing. The reasons are twofold.

First, the provisional mints and hence the provisional coinage were in Michoacán and areas north, primarily Zacatecas. If you concur that only provisional coinage was counterstamped then it follows that the counterstamps will occur where the provisional coinage circulated and this is Supreme Junta geography. In the south under Morelos' control there was little provisional coinage. The dominant circulating issue would be the fine and trusted coinage of Mexico City and this did not require validation. The proof of this "rule" is the extreme rarity of valid examples of counterstamps on Mexico City coinage. Morelos did counterstamp provisional/necessity

coinage including a wide variety of issues that made their way south. However, the majority of the coinage that Morelos counterstamped was the dominant circulating provisional coinage in the South and this was his own copper SUDs! Similarly, in the eastern highlands under Villagrán and Osorno's sway provisional coinage was not abundant and here we do not find valid counterstamps at all, just their casting stamps (at least as it relates to 8 reales).

Second, in late 1812 the Supreme Junta's authority (as expressed thru its President, Ignacio López Rayón) began to disintegrate and by early 1813 Insurgent leadership in Michoacán was fractured. This resulted in a host of independent chieftains, some of whom undertook independent counterstamping operations. In these cases identifying the issuing authority can be difficult.

After considerable study, I am convinced that organizing these issues by their four areas of authority and then trying to place them chronologically is a necessary approach to their correct attribution. This new approach sacrifices the traditional alphabetical simplicity for the promise of discovery. To my knowledge, there have been no past attempts at placing the validation stamps in sequence. So please accept this as a first step as we start with the most challenging issues of the Supreme Junta in Michoacán.

**METHODOLOGY**

In the area under the Supreme Junta's jurisdiction there was significant coinage circulating from the provisional mints of Zacatecas and Guanajuato, whereas there was little provisional coinage in Morelos' territory (the Oaxaca provisional issue was quite small). Consequently, Supreme Junta counterstamps are predominantly found on northern provisional issues while Morelos counterstamps occur on a wide diversity of provisional issues of both Royalist and Insurgent origin. For issues of uncertain authority this geographical association is useful in identifying what jurisdiction or region issued a particular counterstamp. If the stamp has a diverse and relatively equal mix of host coins, then it probably emanates from Morelos' jurisdiction in the South. On the other hand, if the host coins of a particular counterstamp are predominantly of Zacatecas and Guanajuato origin, then it is likely to be an authority within the Supreme Junta's geography. The dates of the host coins also tell a lot about when the validations may have taken place. While these dates do not tell you when a series started, they do tell you



**GREEK MACEDONIAN KINGS  
King Alexander III (The Great)**

**AV Stater  
336-323 BC  
NGC Ch AU  
SKU# 34286**

Torsos mint. Head of Athena facing right, wearing crested Corinthian helmet. Nike standing left. Well centered on a nicely round planchet that neatly houses the central design. Lightly toned with good luster.

Price is \$4,500.-

Continues on page 6

when their use ceased. The concentration of any particular year for the hosts also points to when the validation was issued. For instance, in mid-1813 a high percentage of the circulating provisional coins would be dated 1811 and 1812 (as well as 1813) so even for a 1813 counterstamp we would expect perhaps half of the hosts to be dated in prior years. While I do not know if half is the correct figure, it is reasonable to assume that validation stamps containing a higher percentage of latter hosts were validated later than stamps with earlier host populations. This same methodology applies for mint casting stamps. Here the cast coinage was produced from Mexico City Mint madres. If we have a reasonably large population to analyze, the latest dated coins and their percentage of the total gives us a good indication of when they were cast (or at least when casting ceased).

Utilizing this “distribution of hosts” I have attempted to list chronologically the Insurgent validation stamps by issuing authority rather than alphabetically. I have also attempted to provide an overview of a few key historical events to give these assignments context. In doing so, I am often in conflict with Pradeau (and hence most subsequent references) on many issues. This is an uncomfortable and risky undertaking that causes me much hesitation. I also believe it is the next step forward and I think Dr. Pradeau would approve. We have much available to us today that simply did not exist in Pradeau’s time including 75 years of auction catalogs and the ability to search virtually anything on the internet. In analyzing the host coins of the various validation stamps I have utilized a population from all major references and auction catalogs as well as my own collection and observations. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mike Dunigan and Don Canaparo, each of whom has graciously shared their own specimens and data collected over many decades. Together, I believe these coins tell their own story and sometimes it is simply different to what we have heard before. I anticipate these assignments will be the subject of some skepticism, additional revision and perhaps disagreement. I welcome your input as the work has only started.

**SUPREME JUNTA, United then Divided**



*Supreme Junta 1811 8 reales*

The Supreme Junta was established by a congress at Zitácuaro on 19 August 1811. The Junta elected Ignacio López Rayón as president, together with José María Liceaga and José Sixto Verduzco as Junta members. Morelos did not attend the Congress but, rather, sent Verduzco as his representative. From the initial establishment of the Supreme Junta Rayón endeavored to establish a functioning government, with its own departments and armies including trappings such as a printing press, and its own coinage. The first coinage of the Supreme Junta was the 1811 issue with a raptor on nopal cactus seated on a bridge on the obverse and a series of native arms on the reverse. I discussed this first issue in depth in “The First Issue of the Supreme Junta of Zitácuaro and Theories on Early Mexican Symbolism” in the March 2012 journal. Zitácuaro represented the Insurgent capital until the Junta was expelled

by Royalist forces under Calleja in January 1812.

The next “Capital” was established at Sultepec. In June 1812 the three leaders were forced to abandon Sultepec and split their forces into three separate commands. This was done to avoid congregating their forces and offering a single military target for Royalist adventure. Rayón set up the new Insurgent capital at Tlalpujahua. Liceaga was placed in charge of the northern military command and moved his forces to Guanajuato (and later Yuriria Island). Verduzco commanded the Supreme Junta’s southern forces from Huétamo. From the establishment of the Supreme Junta in Zitácuaro in August 1811 until late 1812 the Insurgents’ northern command was unified under President Rayón and Junta members Liceaga and Verduzco. After the separation of the Junta members and as military setbacks occurred the previous harmony turned to backbiting. By late 1812 the northern Insurgent alliance was dissolving and each began operating independently of the others. Rayón was incensed that Liceaga and Verduzco would not submit to his presidential authority and in particular cited Liceaga’s insubordination. On 30 January 1813, in an act of complete defiance, Verduzco and Muñiz attempted to overrun Valladolid with a force of 15,000 men. Rayón had not approved the attack but, rather, had ordered them to wait for his forces to ensure success. Verduzco and Muñiz’s forces attacked anyway and were thoroughly routed by Lt-Col. Antonio Linares, Royalist commander of Valladolid (the Linares counterstamp is discussed in Part 1). By February Verduzco and Liceaga were in full revolt, claiming sovereignty of the Supreme Junta resided in them. Rayón called for their arrest: Liceaga and Verduzco declared Rayón a traitor. Only the intervention of Morelos prevented all out armed conflict.

**Supreme Junta mint casting stamp, 1811 – early 1812**

In my opinion this is the first Supreme Junta. The stamp features a replica of the native arms (bow, arrows, sling, javelin and quiver grouped together) depicted on the Supreme Junta coinage. This stamp is only found as a casting stamp. It is not found as a counterstamp used to validate circulating provisional coinage. Pradeau and all subsequent references assign this to Chilpancingo after the Congress of 13 September 1813 and it is traditionally referred to as the “Chilpancingo A” counterstamp. No support for this assignment was provided by Pradeau and, to my knowledge, any subsequent authors. I believe both this and the supposed “Chilpancingo B” stamps belong to the Supreme Junta and were utilized almost two years earlier than previously reported. There are three compelling reasons to place this issue with Rayón’s Junta in 1811 and not the Congress in late 1813:



*Supreme Junta & Morelos mint casting stamps*

1. The hosts, or casting madres (models) tell us that this issue was primarily cast in 1811 and that casting concluded in early 1812. Casts showing a Ferdinand VII draped bust (which began being produced in Mexico City in late 1811) are rare and I am only aware of two examples bearing a

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date of 1812 with no examples dated 1813 or later.

- The imagery of the stamp is identical to that of the Supreme Junta's which was created following formation of the Junta on 19 August 1811 and immediately appeared on both struck and cast Junta coinage.
- By 1812 both the Supreme Junta and Morelos were casting coinage of their own designs. It does not seem logical that in late 1813 they would revert to casting money with the King's portrait when it was just as expedient to cast their own. It is also unlikely that Morelos would proclaim for the King after the initial months of insurrection and his casting stamp is contemporary to the Junta's.

This casting stamp is often found in combination with a Morelos and/or Lva casting stamps. Why would the Insurgents begin applying sometimes one, sometimes two and often three casting stamps to the same cast coin? In the first year of the Junta's formation all the insurgents with the exception of the independents Osorno and Villagrán were united as a common revolutionary government. This certainly included Morelos' forces who were in constant communication with Rayón and who shared resources, including money. It seem probable to me that these stamps were meant to designate an insurgent group that participated in acquiring a shipment of silver or was for other reasons intended to share in it when casting was complete. The stamp or stamps were intended to designate ownership. The Supreme Junta, Morelos and Lva stamps were related and all were produced in this 1811 to early 1812 period. The relationship probably involved geography. At least 50% of the Junta casts bearing the Supreme Junta stamp also contain a Morelos casting stamp. The Supreme Junta stamp was likely used south of Zitácuaro in areas under joint operation with Morelos. The Supreme Junta also cast silver coinage of the struck "raptor on bridge" design pictured above in Zitácuaro in 1811. This overlap is what leads me to believe the casting stamp might have been utilized elsewhere by the Junta.

The Supreme Junta and Morelos stamps provide clear identification but who did the "Lva" stamp represent during this early period? The "Lva" mint casting stamp is rarely found by itself. It almost always occurs in combination with the Supreme Junta stamp, the Morelos stamp or both. In my opinion no reasonable assignment has yet been offered for the "Lva" stamp. Some (including myself) believe the stamp

may have been inverted when cataloged by Pradeau and should be read as "Ta" or "Tva" instead. For a lively discussion of this topic, I would refer the reader to Sociedad Numismática de México bulletins 165-170 published in 1994-95.

**Supreme Junta counterstamp, Ensaie, 1811 – January 1812**

I believe this to be the first counterstamp of the Supreme Junta at Zitácuaro. The counterstamp consists of the word "ENSAIE" (Assay) under a raptor and above a native sling surrounded by a circular wreath of "arrow points". This stamp incorporates key elements of both the obverse and reverse of the first Supreme Junta coinage of 1811: you will immediately recognize the resemblance of the raptor. It is almost always found on Zacatecas hosts. Most are of the LVO type and are dated 1811 with a few dated 1810. There is one, or perhaps two, outliers on Zacatecas hosts dated 1812.



*Ensaie Counterstamp*

Interestingly, there are at least eight different punches of this type indicating wide use over a short period of time. The punches differ primarily in the direction and style of the arrow points. This attribution is consistent with the Supreme Junta's first residence in Zitácuaro from 19 August 1811 thru 2 January 1812. Given the number of punches used over this 4½ month period, it seems reasonable to infer that they were used in Zitácuaro and many other areas under the Junta's control. None of the other Insurgent counterstamps exists on such an early density of hosts, lending considerable support to my theory that these were the first and probably only counterstamp used while the Junta resided in its first capital of Zitácuaro. The lack of use after 1811 could indicate that most of the punches were lost or destroyed in the Junta's hurried evacuation to Sultepec ahead of Calleja's army. The 1812 outlier(s) might be explained by a surviving punch, perhaps elsewhere in surrounding Michoacán? In any event, its use barely saw 1812.

Pradeau did not attempt to assign this issue beyond identifying it as of the Insurgent army.

**Supreme Junta counterstamp, 1812 – 1813**



*Supreme Junta Raptor on Bridge (incorrectly cataloged as Chilpancingo)*

The reader will probably know this counterstamp as an issue of Chilpancingo following the Congress of 13 September 1813.

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I believe this attribution to be incorrect and would suggest it be assigned to the Supreme Junta while under Rayón's command 18 months before the Congress. Based on an analysis of hosts, the counterstamp coincides with the Junta's united command at Sultepec and Tlalpujahua. The stamp presents a raptor on a nopal cactus on a three-arched bridge. This stamp is clearly designed to mimic the obverse of the Supreme Junta's coinage. There are approximately ten different punches of the Supreme Junta design with the most common hosts being the 1811-12 coinage of Zacatecas and the 1813 bust 8 reales of Guanajuato. This 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 distribution is consistent with a concentrated use in Michoacán (the Supreme Junta's geography) in 1812 and 1813. It appears to be the primary counterstamp of the iSupreme Junta prior to its splintering and also of Rayón's forces following this event.

Pradeau first described this (and the preceding Supreme Junta casting stamp) as being created at the Congress of Chilpancingo. Chilpancingo is located in the current state of Guerrero, far from the provisional mints of Zacatecas and Guanajuato. The Congress first met there in September 1813, after the fall of Tlalpujahua (March 1813) and the second fall of Zitácuaro (September 1813). The Congress transferred executive powers from Rayón to Morelos and declared independence from Spain. Morelos' battlefield adventures from this point soured and by January 1814 the fleeing Congress returned authority to Rayón along with Cos and Rosains. The Insurgents were in steady decline. Pradeau does not offer any support for his Chilpancingo Congress assignment. It has being repeated ever since in virtually every reference book and auction catalog and this is where you will find it in Krause today. In my opinion this attribution is impossible based on the host coins and the stamp itself. The issue is somewhat common and, given its numbers, could not have occurred in the brief period from September 1813 to the end of that year. In addition, we only find it on 1811-13 northern hosts and not on provisionals of the south and coast such as SUDs, Oaxaca or Villagrán. Finally, the stamp's symbolism speaks for itself in identifying the Supreme Junta's authority.

**SUPREME JUNTA Divided, late 1812 – 1813**



Supreme Junta Authority, 1813

From late 1812 onwards Liceaga, Verduzco and numerous sub-commanders acted independently, running their own commands similar to Osorno and Villagrán in the east. This occurred even though Rayón and the Junta continued to run the insurgent government and even strike significant amounts of coinage in Tlalpujahua. This is the key event that explains the large number of later, mostly unidentified northern counterstamps. It is at this time that we see independent stamps such as JML (José María Liceaga) first appearing. Many of the unattributed Insurgent counterstamps are found almost exclusively on northern hosts of latter average date. Nothing similar occurs in the south and east. Morelos, Osorno and Villagrán's leadership remains unchallenged until they are subdued by the Royalists and we do not find competing issues. It is hard to imagine Liceaga, Verduzco or any sub-commander counterstamping or casting their own coinage before this split. We will now examine two of the divided Junta issues, saving the remainder for future articles.

**José María Liceaga, Independent Chieftain, late 1812 – 1813**



Zs 1811 LVO with JML counterstamp



JML counterstamp enlargement

Almost certainly acting as an independent chieftain in late 1812, José María Liceaga began counterstamping provisional/necessity issues under his own name. The Liceaga counterstamp consists of the initials J.M.L. across a staff and flag above two olive branches(?). Below J.M.L. is a subscript of two to three letters. Liceaga was quite a self-promoter, so it is no surprise that his counterstamp consisted of his initials. About ten different sets of subscripts are known, often with a capital letter followed by small letters. As yet we do not know what they mean. Like alphabetical soup, many a numismatist (including this one) has tried to align these subscripts with sub-commanders or cities under Liceaga's jurisdiction. Can you be the first to solve this puzzle?

Host coins with the JML counterstamp are predominately Zacatecas and Guanajuato provisional issues. About a third of all these counterstamps occur on the very scarce 1813 Guanajuato 8 reales. There are more than 20 different punches displaying the JML stamp making this issue somewhat common. Some of the individual subscripts, however, can be quite challenging to locate.

Pradeau correctly assigns this issue to Liceaga but reports that the counterstamps were used during Liceaga's stay on Yuriria Island from 9 September to 31 October 1812. Pradeau supported this assignment with historical accounts that indicate coinage activities occurred during Liceaga's stay. The problem with this assignment is the short period involved, given

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the surviving population of JML counterstamps. Even more damaging is the large number of 1813 Guanajuato hosts which were minted post-Yuriria. As an alternative I would suggest that Liceaga used the JML counterstamp after his separation from President Rayón in late 1812.

**Supreme Junta Army of the North, 1813**



*Go 1813 8 reales with NORTE counterstamp*

The Army of the North counterstamp consists of the word NORTE below a raptor of stronger and more militarized style than the Junta stamp previously seen. To the left of the raptor is an eight-pointed star and to the right a small fleur-de-lis in the crenulated border. There are two other Norte types: one has the star in the right field and no fleur-de-lis, the third has the initials M.L.N. replacing NORTE and a fleur-de-lis in each field. The

most common host for the Norte counterstamp is the 1813 issue of Guanajuato. This host represents about 50% of the known examples with the remainder on 1811-12 Zacatecas coins. Given the higher percentage of 1813 dated hosts is it probable that this counterstamp was used only in 1813 and was one of the last Insurgent stamps? Pradeau assigns this to Rayón and that is probable but not certain. We find examples of this scarce stamp over both JML and Supreme Junta stamps. This creates a couple of interesting possibilities. Following the breakup, Liceaga and Cos established themselves in separate locations within the Bajío (lowlands) of Guanajuato. Shortly thereafter, Rayón sent his brother Ramón into this region to both recruit and counter Liceaga and Cos' influence. Given the "NORTE" proclamation it seems probable that Rayón's divided Junta utilized the Norte stamp as part of their outreach into the Guanajuato Bajío, either as a replacement of the Junta "Raptor on Bridge" stamp or concurrently. There is also a small possibility that Cos could have used this stamp while the Junta continued with the "Raptor on Bridge" stamp.

**JOSE MARIA MORELOS**

Morelos operated somewhat independently from the Supreme Junta. In 1811 Morelos controlled much of coastal Michoacán and what is now Guerrero. In mid-1811 he was headquartered in Tixtla near Chilpancingo and it is believed that he first started coinage with the copper SUD issue about this time in Tixtla. Morelos was in constant communication with the Junta, at least thru mid-1812 and resources, including money, were shared. Morelos occupied Cuautla on 24 December 1811. From this time until 2 May 1812 his forces were trapped in Cuautla under siege by the Royalist army under Calleja. Morelos was forced to flee the siege and barely escaped. It is believed that Morelos did not issue coinage while in Cuautla. By November 1812 Morelos had taken Oaxaca, where significant coinage was produced.



*Morelos, Supreme Junta & Lva mint casting stamps*

Morelos used both mint casting and counterstamps.

**Morelos mint casting stamp, 1811 – Early 1812**

Morelos' mint casting stamp consists of his monogram "Mos" and two eight-pointed stars in a circular punch. It is of the same design as his counterstamp. Morelos is the only significant commander to utilize the same stamp for both casting and counterstamping and hence, this stamp represents the exception to the "one use only" rule. Morelos' mint casting stamp was only used between 1811 and early 1812. As with the Supreme Junta mint casting stamp discussed above the vast majority of casting hosts are dated 1811 or before with only a few outliers dated 1812. This is clear evidence that this casting stamp was discontinued very early in 1812. Morelos first started casting silver SUDs in 1812 and it is my belief that his mint casting stamp was discontinued in favor of the better quality SUD casts. In this respect Morelos' mint casting stamp should be thought of as the evolutionary father of the SUD. This illustrates an important consideration. Mint casting stamps should be studied and evaluated as cast provisional coins rather than counterstamps.

The cast coin pictured shows the Morelos stamp together with a Supreme Junta and "Lva" casting stamp. All three casting stamps were applied at manufacture and prior to release for circulation. Where we find such multiples mint stamps it was probably a book-keeping exercise, with the silver bullion cast into coins which were then divided up between the identified commanders.



*Zongolica 1812 8 reales with Morelos counterstamp*



*Zs 1811 8 reales with Morelos & Ensaie counterstamps*

**Morelos counterstamp, 1811 – 1813**

Morelos also used the same punch design to counterstamp provisional/necessity issues within his jurisdiction. This is one of the most commonly encountered counterstamps. Due to Morelos' southern location his counterstamp is encountered on a wide variety of provisional coins while the Supreme Junta's contemporary counterstamp is only encountered on northern hosts. It appears that this counterstamp was not used after 1813 since it is unknown on hosts dated 1814 or later.

**VICENTE BERISTAIN, Mid-1812**

Vicente Beristáin's casts contain two stamps, S.M. and .VB., each in an oval border, indicating the source and location of their production. Beristáin was an insurgent commander in the state of Puebla, under the command of Osorno. On 23 April 1812 Beristáin attacked the Royalist mining town of Pachuca and captured 164 bars of silver. Reportedly 30 bars were sent

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*Vicente Beristain mint casting stamps*

to the Supreme Junta under Rayón and 108 bars were reserved for Morelos. Under the order of Osorno, Vicente Beristain was instructed to cast the bars into money. This was done at Osorno's foundry in the village of San Miguel Tenango near his headquarters at Zacatlán. For a great in depth look at the history of this issue and its attribution see Ralf Böppe's article in the June 2013 journal, "Misattributed and overlooked: a rare necessity issue

is looking for its rightful place among the Mexican War for Independence issues".

As a side note, it seems that Osorno was in no rush to deliver the bars "reserved" for Morelos. Considerable friction arose and it was not until November of 1812 that delivery was finally completed

**JULIAN VILLAGRAN, 1812 – Mid-1813**

The colorful insurgent commander Julián Villagrán rose in arms as soon as Hidalgo started his revolution and by 1812 controlled a large area on the east coast above Veracruz. He was as much a highwayman and bandit as he was a revolutionary leader. He proclaimed himself Julian I, Emperor of the Huasteca, the indigenous Indian tribe, and created a palace in Zimapán. Villagrán had bullion but needed species to pay his troops and for supplies. Hence, he created a cast coinage, always with a Mexico City host, and applying his mint stamp as the final step in the process before release for circulation. Villagrán's mint casting stamp consists of his name in two lines encircled by a border of dots. It is only found as a mint casting stamp and not as a valid counterstamp. All Villagrán counterstamps that I have seen are, in my opinion, fakes.

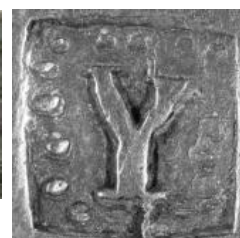


*Villagrán mint casting stamp with Morelos counterstamp*

In April 1813 Julián's son, Chito, was captured by the Royalists who tried to use him as a pawn in negotiations with the "Emperor". Julián refused to submit and exhorted his son to die with dignity. Julián himself was later betrayed and executed at Huichápan in June 1813.

**Conclusion**

I hope you have enjoyed this survey of the most commonly encountered and certainly most interesting mint casting stamps and counterstamps of the War for Independence. There are a number of other stamps that have not been tackled here that I hope will be addressed in future issues of the journal. Some are known while a number are still awaiting attribution.



*A selection of counterstamps awaiting attribution*

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**MEXICO - 1823 MO  
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Shield reverse type. Attractive lustrous reddish golden surfaces with some adjustment marks. Top pop NGC (Mar 2016).



**MEXICO - 1823 MO JM  
4 ESCUDOS  
NGC AU58 - KM#312  
SKU# 33618**

Scarce denomination, no MS examples graded at NGC (Mar 2016). Hints of luster in legends with some softness in center details and adjustment marks on obverse.



**MEXICO - 1822 MO  
8 REALES  
NGC MS63 - KM#304  
SKU# 33614**

Deep golden toning over lustrous surfaces with iridescent blues at periphery. Highest NGC grade (Mar 2016).



**MEXICO - 1822 MO JM  
8 REALES  
NGC MS62 - KM#309  
SKU# 33616**

Subdued luster, light golden toning on obverse and deeper red/gold on reverse with a bit of peripheral color.



**MEXICO - 1823 MO JM  
8 REALES  
NGC MS61 - KM#310  
SKU# 33617**

Lustrous surfaces, medium golden toning.



**MEXICO - 1823 MO JM  
2 REALES  
NGC MS62 - KM#303  
SKU# 33613**

Lustrous satiny surfaces with just a hint of light golden toning. Typical softness in central details.



**MEXICO - 1822 MO JM  
1/2 REALES  
NGC MS65 - KM#301  
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Gorgeous deeply toned surfaces with iridescent blue highlights. Highest NGC grade (Mar 2016).



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