MEXICAN REVOLUTION - OVERPRINTS … its context

What is the historical context of each of the overprints used in the Mexican Revolution?
These overprints are presented in chronological order.
(This series of articles does not include overprints known as local or rubber) **(i)**

Barril (a)



(g)
Fig. 1

Print date (b): June 7, 1916

Place of issue: Ciudad de México.

SERIES SURCHARGED WITH GPM BARRIL

		
Fig. 2 Complementarios 1p/10c 1908	Fig. 3 Independencia 5c/1c 1910	Fig. 4 Denver 60c/1c 1914
These images are just one example from each participating series.		

Surcharged denominations (the colored ones), of each participating series See the meaning of each color at the bottom of this table											
Serie	Denomination										
Águilas 1899	1c	2c	3c	5c	10c	15c	20c	50c	1p	5p	
Águilas 1903	1c	2c	4c	5c	10c	50c					
Complementario 1908 **(j)**	1c	2c	4c	5c	10c						
Independencia 1910	1c	2c	3c	4c	5c	10c	15c	20c	50c	1p	5p
Ejércitos 1913	1c	5c									
Transitorios 1914	1c	2c	4c	5c	5c/p	10c	20c	50c	1p		
Denver 1914	1c	2c	3c	5c	10c	15c	50c	1p			

	Without color, it was NOT surcharged
	Identified postal use **(c)**
	Special philatelic issue **(d)**
	False or undocumented **(e)**

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TIMELINE OF ITS ISSUE

Maderismo	Contra el Usurpador	Lucha de Facciones	Consolidación Legal
Nov/20/1910 - Feb/22/1913	Feb/23/1913 – Jul/15/1914	Jul/16/1914 - Oct /12/1915	Oct/13/1915- May/20/1920



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ECONOMIC CHAOS.-

The “unforgeable”.-

From **July 1915**, the Carranza government, already in the midst of reorganizing the country, initiated a plan to unify the currency by issuing **a single banknote** to replace the bills that the various armed factions, including his own, had circulated to raise funds for the war. The plan, called the **"unforgeable banknote" plan**, had several objectives: to unify the currency under a single denomination, to control the number of banknotes in circulation, to back them with gold, and thus eliminate fiat currency **(1)**. The government assured that the issue was backed by gold for 20% of its value; it was determined that the banknotes would be accepted at an exchange rate of 20 gold centavos for 1 peso and would be exchangeable for old banknotes. During this process, the government acknowledged that the establishment of a Single Issuing Bank was imminent **(2)**. By **May 1916**, 500 million pesos of the banknote called "the unforgeable" had already been issued **(3)** and its massive circulation and legal implementation were consolidated.

The sources consulted indicate that the plan initially began to fulfill its objective of replacing the old banknotes by gradually withdrawing them from circulation. At first, the exchange rate of 20 gold cents to 1 peso was respected, but a black market emerged using a lower exchange rate, furthermore, when people had the paper money, they went to the banks to exchange it for coins **(4)**. The banknote depreciated due to the pressure on the government to meet the demand for coins, and by August of that year, the exchange rate was 4 gold cents to 1 peso, and the Ministry of Finance had to define a lower exchange rate every ten days.

On **August 1, 1916**, Venustiano Carranza issued a harsh decree against the workers, who, as previously mentioned, were formally organizing into unions and by pressing for better economic conditions through strikes; in this decree, he reprimanded them for their lack of cooperation in supporting the government in addressing the economic devastation the country was suffering, prioritizing their union interests over the well-being of the people. The decree stipulated the death penalty for those who incited or propagated strikes, presided over meetings, defended or supported, or approved work stoppages in factories or companies dedicated to public service, for those who, during a strike, destroyed or damaged factory property, public or private property; and for those who coerced or threatened other workers who did not support them.

The failure of the “unforgeable” was such that there were weeks when bartering was used; it was formally in **November 1916** that the government reversed course and returned to metallic currency when it issued decrees establishing that government taxes, salaries, wages and pensions would be paid in gold…

ACUMULATIVE CHART OF ALL OVERPRINTS (f)

Overprint (h)			Overprinted Postal Series (I) = valid postally, (II) = Philatelic, (III) False						
Nickname (a,h)	Date (b)	Image (g)	Águilas 1899	Águilas 1903	Comple-mentarios 1908	Indepen-dencia 1910	Ejércitos 1913	Transi-torios 1914	Denver 1914
Victoria de Torreón	3-Abr-1914							(I)	
GCM grande	27-May-1914				(I)	(I)			(III)
Dollar Sign $	1-Sep-1914		(I)		(I)	(I)			
Estado Sonora	3-Nov-1914		(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)
Monograma Villa	28-Dic-1914 11-Mzo-1915 16-Jul-1915		(I), (II)	(I), (II)	(II)	(I), (II)		(II)	(II)
Villa / $	11-Mar-1915					(I), (II), (III)			
Monograma Carranza	Dic-1914 Sep-1915		(I), (II)	(II)	(II)	(I), (II)			(II)
Carranza / $	Mar-1915					(II), (III)			
Corbata	Mar-1916		(II)	(II)		(I), (II)		(I), (II)	(I), (II)
Corbata / $	Mar-1916					(I), (II)			
Corbata / Carranza	Mar-1916			(I)		(I), (II)			
Corbata / Villa	Mar-1916			(II)		(I), (II)			
Barril	7-Jun-1916				(I), (II)	(I)			(I)
Barril / $									
Barril / Villa									
Barril / Carranza									
$2.50									

Philatelic notes:

(a) The name or nickname by which philatelists refer to them. "GP de M" stands for "Gobierno Provisional de Mexico" (Provisional Government of Mexico). Colloquially, it is called "Barril" (Barrel)—a term that appears in widely circulated philatelic literature discussing this surcharge.

(b) **On June 7, 1916, the** Director General of Posts, Mr. Cosme Hinojosa, ordered this surcharge on certain existing stamps..

(c) Circulated postal items are known.

(d) They were printed within the official workshops, under orders from higher authorities, but were not made available for sale to the general public at post offices; they were intended for direct sale to philatelists. The examples known to have been used are believed to have been caused by the philatelists themselves.

(e) The pieces exist, but there are no genuinely considered postal uses.

(f) It will be added with each publication of this series of articles.

(g) The image size does not correspond to the actual size of the surcharge.

(h) In the case of “Barril” and “2.50”, technically the correct term is “Surcharge” rather than “Overprint”, because these overprint modify the face value of the stamp.

(i) "Local" or "Rubber" overprints are those printed in some towns and cities that were conquered by a particular faction, and were only used locally. The device was usually made of rubber, hence the name "Rubber"

(j) The **5c value** was surcharged with “Un peso” and is known to have been used for postal purposes, but it was also surcharged with a 25c value, which was intended for special philatelic use.

Historical notes:

(1) The government came to recognize 21 different fiduciary banknotes, which were those that were only valid for people because of the trust in who issued them; they were issued by local governments, private entities, military leaders.

(2) This project was **embodied** in article 28 of the 1917 Constitution (original text), but it did not **materialize** until 1925, during the government of President Calles when the Bank of Mexico was founded.

(3) As its name indicates, the banknote was manufactured with measures that reinforced that it could not be counterfeited; it had several denominations, from $1 to $1,000.

(4) People distrusted paper money, fearing economic instability and the unreliability of the payment system. Full **acceptance** of government-issued paper money, or fiat currency, was not achieved in the country **until** around **1935**, 10 years after the founding of the Bank of Mexico.

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