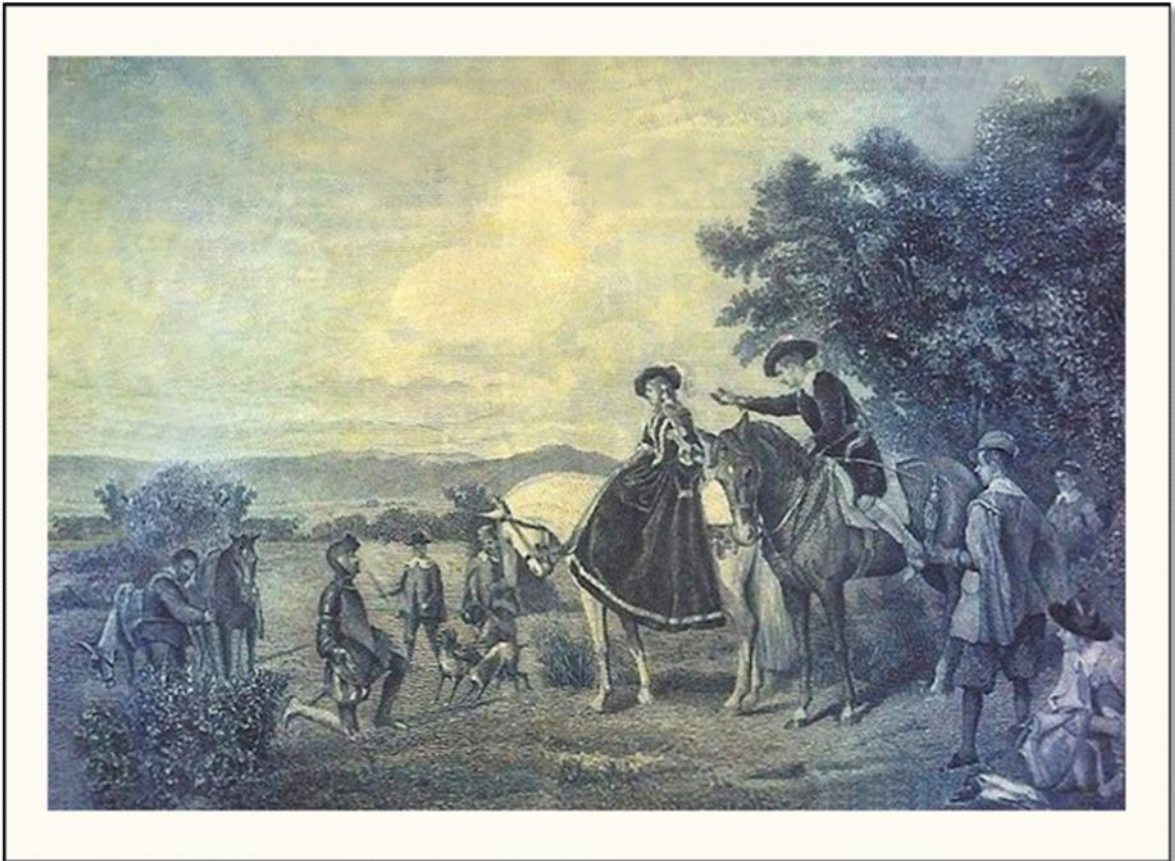


Miguel de Cervantes

Portraits, Monument & 'Don Quixote' On Spanish Banknotes



**400th Anniversary of the Spanish Masterpiece
'Don Quixote' (1615-2015)**

**By Miguel Chirinos
Member IBNS, NC-IBNS
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Miguel de Cervantes

Brief Story

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616) was a Spanish novelist, poet, and playwright. His magnum opus, *Don Quixote*, considered to be the first modern European novel, is a classic of Western literature, and is regarded amongst the best works of fiction ever written. His influence on the Spanish language has been so great that the language is often called *la lengua de Cervantes* ("the language of Cervantes"). He was dubbed *El Príncipe de los Ingenios* ("The Prince of Wits").

In 1569, Cervantes moved to Rome where he worked as chamber assistant of Giulio Acquaviva, a wealthy priest who became a cardinal during the following year. By then, Cervantes had enlisted as a soldier in a Spanish Navy Infantry regiment and continued his military life until 1575, when he was captured by Algerian corsairs. After five years of slavery he was released on ransom from his captors by his parents and the Trinitarians, a Catholic religious order. He subsequently returned to his family in Madrid.

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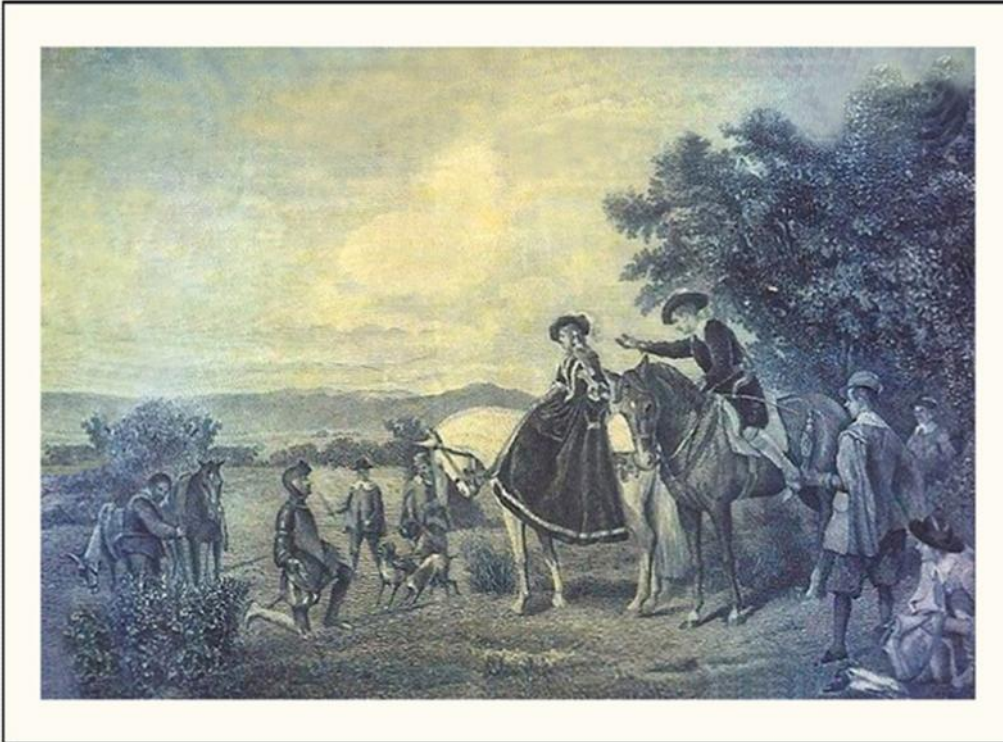


Cervantes, engraving by Mackenzie, c. 1600.

he worked as a tax collector, traveling from town to town collecting back taxes due the Spanish Crown. Then he applied unsuccessfully for "one of four vacant positions in the New World", one of them as an accountant for the port of Cartagena, Nueva Granada (present day Colombia). 1597, Cervantes had discrepancies in his accounts of three years previous landed him in the Crown Jail of Seville. In 1605, he was in Valladolid, just when the immediate success of the first part of his *Don Quixote*, published in Madrid, signaled his return to the literary world. In 1607, he settled in Madrid, where he lived and worked until his death. During the last nine years of his life, Cervantes solidified his reputation as a writer; he published the *Novelas Ejemplares* (*Exemplary Novels*) in 1613, the *Journey to Parnassus* (*Viaje al Parnaso*) in 1614, and in 1615, the *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses* and the second part of *Don Quixote*. Carlos Fuentes noted that, "Cervantes leaves open the pages of a book where the reader knows himself to be written."

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Luis Menéndez Pidal's Painting 'Encuentro de D. Quijote con los Duques'

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The Spanish Golden Age (Spanish: *Siglo de Oro*, Golden Century) is a period of flourishing in arts and literature in Spain, coinciding with the political rise and decline of the Spanish Habsburg dynasty. *El Siglo de Oro* does not imply precise dates and is usually considered to have lasted longer than an actual century. It begins no earlier than 1492, with the end of the *Reconquista* (Reconquest), the sea voyages of Christopher Columbus to the New World, and the publication of Antonio de Nebrija's '*Gramática de la Lengua Castellana*' (Grammar of the Castilian Language). Politically, it ends no later than 1659, with the Treaty of the Pyrenees, ratified between France and Spain. The last great writer of the period, Pedro Calderón de la Barca, died in 1681, and his death usually is considered the end of *El Siglo de Oro* in the arts and literature.

Miguel de Cervantes & Sancho Panza

1,000 Pesetas (1878)

The Glorious Revolution (Spanish: *La Gloriosa*) took place in Spain in 1868, resulting in the deposition of Queen Isabella II. Leaders of the revolution eventually recruited an Italian prince, Amadeo of Savoy, as King. His reign lasted two years, and he was replaced by the first Spanish Republic. That also lasted two years, until leaders in 1875 proclaimed Isabella's son, as King Alfonso XII in the Bourbon Restoration.

At the beginning of the 1840s, a number of private banks briefly issued paper money in Spain.

After the Revolution of 1868, the provisional government of Spain adopted 'Peseta' as its currency unit in 1869. The name of the currency comes from *peseta*, the diminutive form of the word *peça*, which is a Catalan word that means piece or fraction. The first non-official coins, which contained the word "peseta" were made in 1808 in Barcelona.



Spain P.19 1,000 Pesetas 1.1.1878

In 1874, *Banco de España* was established

and introduced notes for 25, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 pesetas. Except for the 250 pesetas notes only issued in 1878, the denominations produced by the Central Bank of Spain did not change until the Civil War, when both the Republicans and Nationalists issued Bank of Spain notes.

On front of 1,000 notes appears author Miguel de Cervantes in an oval at left. Also, appears Sancho Panza is riding on a donkey at center. Sancho Panza is a fictional character in the novel *Don Quixote* written by Spanish author Don Miguel de Cervantes in 1605. Sancho acts as squire to Don Quixote, and provides comments throughout the novel, known as *sanchismos*, that are a combination of broad humor, ironic Spanish proverbs, and earthy wit. "*Panza*" in Spanish mean "belly." Around 75,000 banknotes printed by the *Casa Real de la Moneda* (Royal Spanish Mint). Dimensions are 186 x 122 mm.

Cervantes, Monument & Painting

100 Pesetas (1928)

Plaza de España (in English: "Spain Square") is a large square, and popular tourist destination, located in central Madrid, Spain, at the western end of the *Gran Vía*. It features a monument to Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, and is bordered by two of Madrid's most prominent skyscrapers. Also, the *Palacio Real* (Royal Palace) is a short walk south from the plaza.

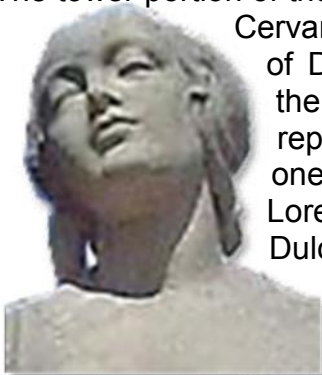


Spain P.76 100 Pesetas Madrid 15.8.1928

In the center of the plaza is a monument to Spanish novelist, poet and playwright Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, designed by architects Rafael Martínez Zapatero and Pedro Muguruza and sculptor Lorenzo Coullaut Valera.

Most of the monument was built between 1925 and 1930. This monument was finished between 1956 and 1957 by Federico Coullaut-Valera Mendigutia, the son of the original sculptor.

The tower portion of the monument includes a stone sculpture of Cervantes, which overlooks bronze sculptures of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Next to the tower, there are two stone representations of Don Quixote's "true love", one as the simple peasant woman Aldonza Lorenzo, and one as the beautiful, imaginary Dulcinea del Toboso.



Aldonza Lorenzo

In 1928, *Banco de España* issued banknotes of the following denominations: 25, 50, 100, 500 and

1,000 pesetas dated August 15th, 1928 but these banknotes start to circulate until 1937. Spain was under the dictatorship of Gen. Primo de Rivera. Don Miguel Primo de Rivera y Orbaneja, 2nd Marquis of Estella, 22nd Count of Sobremonte, Knight of Calatrava (1870-1930) was a dictator, aristocrat, and military



Dulcinea - Girl from La Mancha

officer who served as Prime Minister of Spain from 1923 to 1930 during Spain's Restoration era. He deeply believed that it was the politicians who had ruined Spain and that governing without them he could restore the nation. His slogan was "Country, Religion, Monarchy." Historians depict him as an inept dictator who lacked clear ideas and political acumen, and who alienated his potential supporters such as the Army. He did not create a base of support among the voters, and depended instead on elite elements. His actions discredited the king and ruined the monarchy, while heightening social tensions that led in 1936 to a full-scale Spanish Civil War.

On the front of 100 pesetas appears a portrait of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547 - 1616) at left. A Monument to Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra on Plaza de España in Madrid is at center. Also, the head of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra in profile is a watermark. In addition, the signatures on this banknote are, as follow: Don Carlos Vergara Cailleaux (Governor - *El Gobernador*, Feb. 1924 - Oct. 1929); Adolfo Castaño Orejón (The Auditor - *El Interventor*), and Bonifacio Burgos Delgado (Cashier - *El Cajero*). The dominant colors are: Purple and blue. The date of issue is 15 August 1928 (circulated from 1937). Material: Cotton paper. Around 20 million banknotes printed by Bradbury Wilkinson, New Malden and Co. Ltd., New Malden, Surrey, England. Dimensions are 130 x 90 mm.

On the back is the famous painting "Encounter of the Dukes by Don Quixote" ("*Encuentro de Don Quijote con los Duques*") by Luis Menéndez Pidal. Duke and Duchess encounter Don Quixote and Sancho and decide to invite them to their palace for amusement and practical jokes. Luis Menéndez Pidal (1860–1932) was a Spanish genre painter, brother of Juan and Ramón Menéndez Pidal. He was born at Oviedo, studied in the *Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San*



Spain P.76 100 Pesetas 15.8.1928 Back, Don Quixote by Pidal

Fernando at Madrid, and took part in the National Exhibition held there in 1887. In the exposition of 1890 he won a second-class medal for '*A buen juez mejor testigo*', and another picture attracted the attention of the Queen Regent, who bought it. In 1892 his '*La cuna vacía*', when published in *El Liberal*, obtained the first-class medal without a dissenting vote. His '*Salus infirmorum*', hung in the General Exposition of Bellas Artes at Madrid in 1899, won a first medal. His style was eminently personal, and he was considered one of Spain's best colorist. In 1906 he was elected a member of the Academy of San Fernando. He died in 1932.

Battle of Lepanto

500 Pesetas (1940)

The Battle of Lepanto took place on 7 October 1571 when a fleet of the Holy League, a coalition



Spain P.119 500 Pesetas 9.1.1940

of southern European Catholic maritime states, decisively defeated the main fleet of the Ottoman Empire in five hours of fighting on the northern edge of the Gulf of Corinth, off western Greece. The Ottoman forces sailing westwards from their naval station in Lepanto met the Holy League forces, which had come from Messina, Sicily, where they had previously gathered.

The victory of the Holy

League prevented the Ottoman Empire expanding further along the European side of the Mediterranean. Lepanto was the last major naval battle in the Mediterranean fought entirely between galleys and has been assigned great symbolic importance by Catholic and other historians. Some assert that Turkish victory could have led to Western Europe being overrun, as the Byzantine Empire had a little more than a century earlier.

By 1570, Cervantes had enlisted as a soldier in a regiment of the Spanish Navy Marines, *Infantería de Marina*, stationed in Naples, then a possession of the Spanish crown. He was there for about a year before he saw active service. In September 1571 Cervantes sailed on board the *Marquesa*, part of the galley fleet of the Holy



Spain P.119 500 Pesetas 9.1.1940 BACK

League (a coalition of Pope Pius V, Spain, the Republic of Venice, the Republic of Genoa, the

Duchy of Savoy, the Knights Hospitaller based in Malta, and others, under the command of Phillip II of Spain's illegitimate half brother, John de Austria) that defeated the Ottoman fleet on October 7 in the Battle of Lepanto, in the Gulf of Patras. Though taken down with fever, Cervantes refused to stay below, and asked to be allowed to take part in the battle, saying he

would rather die for his God and his king than keep under cover. He fought on board a vessel, and received 3 gunshot wounds – 2 in the chest, and one, which rendered his left arm useless (later he was nicknamed as '*Manco de Lepanto*').



The Battle of Lepanto by Paolo Veronese



Juan de Austria (1547-1578), Naval Commander of the Holy League, at right and also as watermark.

On back it shows a fragment the Naval Battle of Lepanto with old ships. Almost 3 million and half of these banknotes printed by Calcografia & Cartevalori in Milan, Italy. Dimensions are 155 x 86 mm.

In *Journey to Parnassus* he was to say that he "had lost the movement of the left hand for the glory of the right" (he was thinking of the success of the first part of *Don Quixote*). Cervantes looked back on his conduct in the battle with pride: he believed he had taken part in an event that would shape the course of European history.

The first Nationalist Bank of Spain issues were made in 1936, in denominations of 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 pesetas. 1 and 2 pesetas notes were added in 1937. From the mid-1940s, denominations issued were 1, 5, 25, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 pesetas. The 1, 5, 25 and 50 pesetas were all replaced by coins by the late 1950s.

In 1943, *Banco de España* put in circulation a note of 500 Pesetas (P119) but dated January 9, 1940, where appear the portrait of Don

Portrait of Don Quixote

1 Peseta (1951)

Don Quijote is the knight-errant in search of adventure. He dons an old suit of armour, renames himself “Don Quixote,” and names his skinny horse “Rocinante.” He designates Aldonza Lorenzo, a neighboring farm girl, as his lady-love, renaming her Dulcinea del Toboso, while she knows nothing of this.



Spain P.139 1 Peseta 19.11.1951

In 1951, Bank of Spain issued a note of 1 Peseta showing the portrait of Don Quixote at right by Spanish artist Jose Lopez Sánchez (1902-1975). He was born in a typical middle-class family in Madrid on April 30th 1902 and entered the College of Fine Arts in Madrid. He then joined Fábrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre(FNMT) in 1924 and remained until his retirement. He designed and recorded over 100

stamps, and most banknotes issued since 1937. He was the head of FNMT Engraving and was a professor at the National School of Graphical Arts. In 1969 he published the book ‘The Art record label.’



Spain P.139 1 Peseta 19.11.1951 BACK

On the back shows the belongings of Don Quijote de la Mancha, such as: shield, armour, helmet, sword, books and lance. There is no watermark. On the front appear the following signatures: Don Joaquín Benjumea Burín (Governor - *El Gobernador*, Sept. 1951 - Dec. 1963); Antonio Victoriano Martín Martín (The Auditor – *El Interventor*); Unidentified (Cashier - *El Cajero*). The dominant color is dark brown. Date of issue: 19 November 1951 (circulated from 11 March 1952). Over 190 million banknotes printed by Fábrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre, Madrid. Dimensions are 75 x 52 mm.



Don Quixote of La Mancha on Spain KM.1063 2 Euros 2005



Don Quixote of La Mancha on Argentina M.1215 2 ¼ Pesos 1975



Miguel de Cervantes on Spain KM.1044 20 Centavos Euro 1999

Conclusion

The peseta was replaced by the Euro (€) in 1999 on currency exchange boards. Euro coins and notes were introduced in January 2002, and on 1 March 2002 the peseta lost its legal tender status in Spain as well as in Andorra. The conversion rate was 1 euro = 166.386 ESP. Prices in many Andorran supermarkets and other retail establishments are still shown dual-priced in

euros and pesetas or in euros and French francs. Peseta notes issued since 1939 and coins that were legal tender on 31 December 2001 remain exchangeable at any branch of the Spanish Central Bank until 31 December 2020. According to that entity, pesetas to a value estimated at 1.7 billion euros were never converted to the Euro.

Author

Miguel Chirinos, Member IBNS, NC-IBNS (miguelchirinos09@hotmail.com) is originally from Venezuela, but has been living with his family in North Carolina, USA since 1996. His numismatic interests extend beyond collecting to include historical research. He has been contributing articles about Latin American paper money to several numismatic societies for the past two decades. This article was first published on the IBNS -NC Chapter website.



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