

THE 1878 "0.0625" DE PESO ISSUE

by Don J. Peterson

On January 1, 1878, a "0.0625" de peso stamp was issued in Manila along with four other values depicting the effigy of King Alfonso XII of Spain. Expressing the value of that stamp as a decimal was unusual in that it was the only such case on a postal issue during the Spanish period (decimal values were common on some revenue issues, however). The "0.0625" de peso value was equivalent to 62 1/2 *milesimas de peso* or 6 2/8 *centavos de peso*. In the Scott current catalogue, this stamp is listed as #62 and # 62A, to distinguish a difference in color; gray and lilac, respectively.

Should there be two listings in the Scott catalogue? The fact that Scott lists the lilac issue as #62A rather than 62a suggests that Scott considers it more than just a color variation. A review of the literature, however, indicates that the listing of two separate issues may not be warranted and that the gray and lilac colors were probably only color variations of the same issue.

Two of the earliest catalogues, Argilies (1879) and Duro (1881), list only one issue -- lilac. However, Lopez (1890) was the first to list two issues -- one lilac and the other *violeta*. From then on, the cataloguers cannot agree. Some catalogues list one issue, (or one issue with a variation) such as Cotter and Quinto (1895), Bartels et al. (1904), and Hanciau (1905). In fact, the 1902 Scott catalogue differs from the current catalogue by listing it as gray (#45) with a lilac variation (#45a). Others such as Mencarini (1896), Galvez (1900), Palmer (1912), and Harradine (1977) list two issues. In all of these catalogues, the date of issue was listed as either 1878, or January 1878. In no case has any catalogue indicated that there was more than one printing.

Based on this review of the literature, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence to support the listing of two separate issues. Rather, the gray and lilac colors and other shades appear to be color variations of the same issue; in fact, of the same printing. Bartels et al. (1904) aptly attests to this diversity by listing a single issue in five color variations -- pale dull lilac, pale grayish lilac, pale lilac-gray, deep gray, and lilac slate.

I suggest that the Scott catalogue change "62A" to "62a", as listed in the 1902 Scott catalogue, to clearly reflect that the lilac and gray colors and other shades are merely color variations of the same issue.

Also, it does not appear important as to which color, lilac or gray, should be listed as the variation. Both colors appear to be equally prevalent.

One further note on current catalogues. The Stanley Gibbons catalogue is consistent with my suggestion, in that it lists a #68 lilac and a #68a gray. The Edifil Espana catalogue simply lists one entry -- a #37 gray.

If anyone has any comments on this matter, please contact IPPS, or Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 22012.

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