

33 – The Magion Series Satellites

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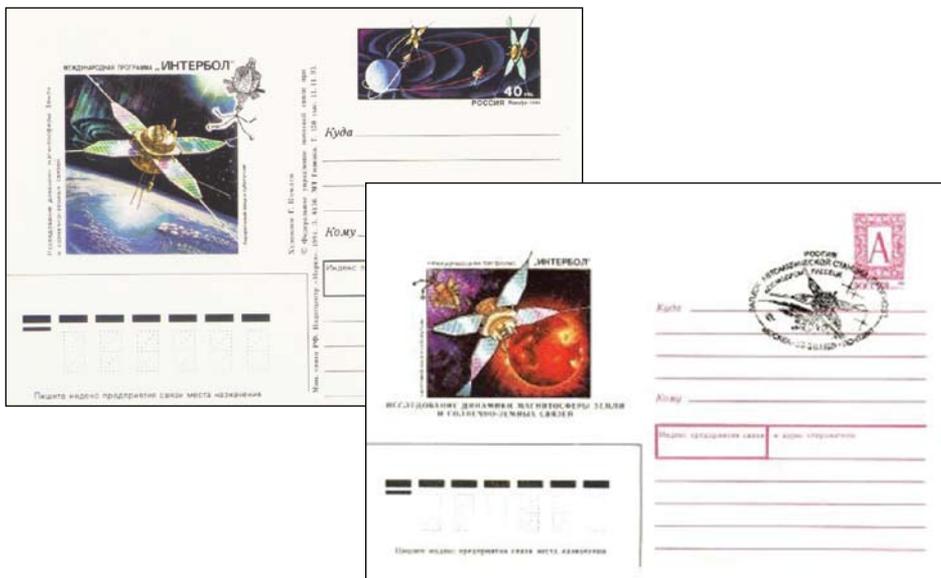
This is the thirty-third in a series of articles about un-manned satellites on postage stamps. This article features the Czech/Russian Magion (MAGnetospheric and IONospheric satellite) series satellites. Five Magion-series satellites were successfully launched, starting with Magion-1 on 24 October 1978, and ending with Magion-5 on 29 August 1996.

The Magion satellites were manufactured in the Czech Republic and launched as hitch-hikers, piggyback with other Russian scientific spacecraft. Magion-1, 2, and 3 were launched together with Interkosmos-18, 24, and 25, respectively. Magion-4 and 5 were launched together with Interbol-1 and 2, respectively (and in fact the Interbol-2 launch included a third satellite in addition to Magion-5). Magion-1 was shaped like a flattened box with attached antennas and probes, and had a mass of only 15 kg. Magion-2 thru 5 had a different shape: they were symmetrical polyhedrons with folding booms for sensors and solar panels. Magion-2 and 3 had masses of about 50 kg each, while

Magion 4 and 5 were a little heavier, at about 60 and 65 kg, respectively.

The Magion satellites were designed to measure ionospheric space plasma by being paired with two satellites launched at the same time, the two moving slowly away from each other. The Magion scientific measurements were part of the International Magnetospheric Study, whose goal was to examine the relationship between the Earth's magnetosphere and ionosphere.

Magion satellites appear on several postal items, mostly from Czechoslovakia and Russia. While most of the items show Magion-1, there are also a few items with Magion-2 and Magion-4/5. 



A checklist of postal items showing Magion satellites is on the next page and also at <http://www.cira.colostate.edu/ramm/hillger/Magion.htm>, a website developed by the authors for un-manned satellites at <http://www.cira.colostate.edu/ramm/hillger/satellites.htm> E-mail is welcome. Don Hillger can be reached at hillger@cira.colostate.edu and Garry Toth at garry_toth@hotmail.com.

Checklist of Russian/Czech Magion Series Satellite Postal Stamps and First Day Covers

Country	Catalog No.	Type of Item	Issued	Notes
Cambodia	868 (Mi946)		1988	Magion-2
Cuba	2931 (Mi3086)		1987	Magion-1
Czechoslovakia	2307 (Mi2562)		1980	Magion-1
Czechoslovakia	2304+2307 FDC	One of two stamps and cachet on FDC	1980	Magion-1
Czechoslovakia	2653 (BL69)	In lower-left margin of MS2 (2x 2653a)	1987	Magion-1
Czechoslovakia	2825 (Mi3084)		1991	Magion-2
Guinea-Bissau	470 (Mi671)		1983	Magion-1
North Korea	2747a (Mi2931)	On selvedge of MS4 (4x 2747)	1988	Magion-1
Russia	Not Applicable	Stamped envelope	1994	Magion-4/5
Russia	Not Applicable	Postal card	1994	Magion-4/5

*Scott catalog number, unless prefixed with Mi or BL for Michel; "i" prefix denotes imperforate version.
 SS# = souvenir sheet, MS# = miniature sheet, where # = stamps in sheet, and numbers in parentheses are the catalog numbers of the stamps.

