

**PRE STAMP AND STAMPED MAIL IN**

# **PARTITIONED TERRITORIES OF POLAND**

**1772 TO 1918**

Poland lost its independence when three neighboring powers: Prussia, Austria and Russia embarked on expansion policies and taking advantage of internally weak and defenseless nation conducted three partitions: first in 1772, second in 1793 and third in 1795.

Despite of these events the postal service in formerly Polish territories continued to develop in tune to the trend in rest of Europe. The Polish Philately encompasses the pre-stamp covers with Polish town post office postmarks and in some cases with dates of accepting mail. In some instances the receiving post offices hand stamped the back of the envelopes.

The exhibit includes the mail during the existence of the KINGDOM OF POLAND (1815-71) since in fact the freedom envisioned by the Vienna Congress slowly eroded and the oppression and russification policies continued under the Russian patronage, and de facto the Partition continued.

The exhibit excludes the mail during the period of DUCHY OF WARSAW (1807-15) and the related mail of Polish Legions during the Napoleonic era since the Polish Philately in this period is very rich and deserves special consideration. Excluded is also mail of COMMONWEALTH OF KRAKOW (1815-41).

When World WAR I started, the advancing armies of Germany issued overprinted "Germania" stamps that were used in occupied former Russian territories. In case of Austria, military stamps of Austria and Bosnia-Herzegovina were used. Those issues with Polish town cancels were collector items both as stamps and covers and are included in the exhibit along with local town issues sanctioned by this occupying authorities.

Rare stamps or covers of particular interest are mounted on a color background.

The exhibit is arranged in four parts showing maps of the territories and list of categories:

**AUSTRIA**  
**PRUSSIA/GERMANY**  
**RUSSIA**  
**POLISH KINGDOM**