



The History of Flags of States on the Territory of Uzbekistan

Isomiddinov Erali

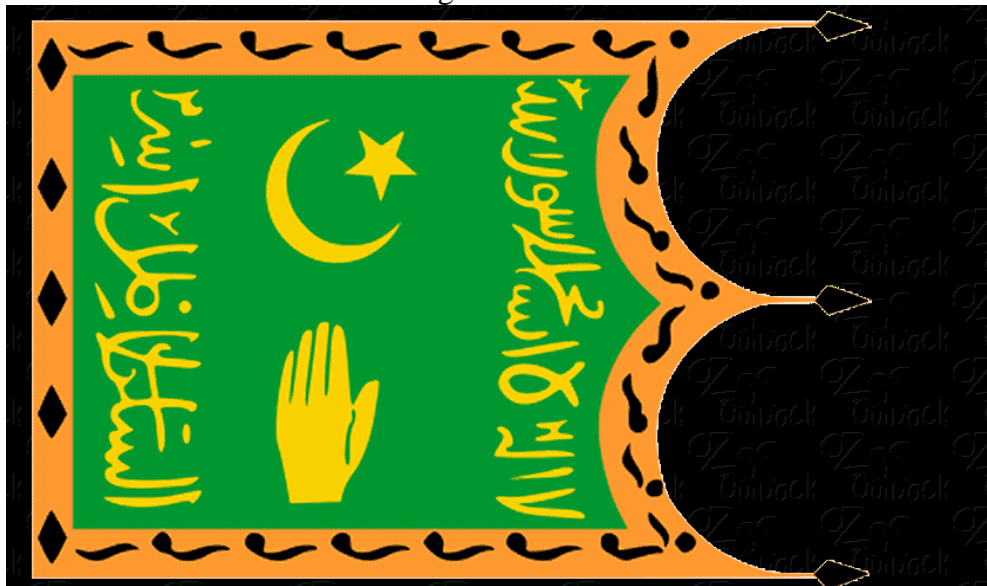
Master student of NamSU

Abstract. This article provides information and a comparative analysis of the national symbols and flags of the Golden Horde, the Timurid states, the Bukhara, Khiva and Kokand khanates and the Turkestan autonomy that exist in our country.

Key words: State symbols, flag, Hun Empire, Turkic states, image of a wolf's head, Timurid flag, image of three circles, period of the Khanate, crescent and five-pointed star, autonomy of Turkestan.

After the demise of the Timurid Empire the Khanate of Bukhara was established in 1533; it became an Emirate in 1785 which lasted until 1920. The only known flag from this period was the elaborate Royal Standard of the last Emir, Alim Khan. Meanwhile, in the western Khorezm area the Khanate of Khiva had existed since 1511. It was conquered by the Russian Empire in 1873 and became a quasi-independent Russian protectorate. It is not certain, but a white flag with a light blue crescent may have existed during that time. Meanwhile, the Khanate of Kokand in the western Fergana Valley had been established in 1709 but was annexed by the Russian Empire in 1883, becoming part of the vast territory of Russian Turkestan; there are no known flags of this period.

The flag of Emirate of Bukhara



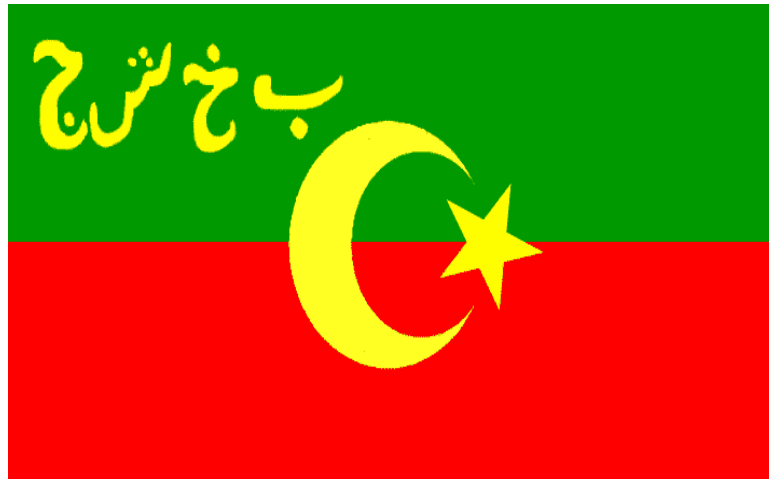
In 1550 the Khanate of Bukhara was established and it became an Emirate in 1785 upon the assumption of rulership by the Manghit emir, Shah Murad. It is not known if there was a national flag, but the Royal Standard of Emir Mohammed Alim Khan, who ruled from 1910 to 1920, displayed on a three-pointed green field the Islamic crescent and star, the Hand of Fatima (the Prophet Muhammad's daughter), a sign of protection and the name of the emir written in Arabic script near the hoist and the "Shahada", the Muslim Article of Faith, near the fly, all in gold. It had an orange border with black ornamentation and the three points of the flag also had black diamond shaped tassels.

After the Russian Revolution in 1917 there were also calls for reform in the traditional lands of Central Asia. In 1917 an anti-Bolshevik Kokand Autonomous State was proclaimed, hoisting a flag of red over dark blue with a white star and crescent in the centre. This lasted until 20 February 1918 when Soviet troops demolished much of Kokand and massacred thousands of its people. In Khiva a civil war broke out in 1917, between pro- and anti-monarchists; the latter joined with the Bolsheviks and in 1920 Khiva's last



Khan, Sayid Abdullah, abdicated, the Khanate was abolished and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic was declared. During this civil war a flag consisting of a black field within broad green stripes and a yellow crescent and star in its centre, was flown, followed by a flag showing a yellow crescent and star on a red field, with a green border and a red flag with, in a green canton, a yellow crescent and star; its points pointed towards the fly or upwards. This changed in 1922 when, in the canton, also a crossed spade, sickle and cotton plant appeared. In 1923 the country's name changed to Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic and its flag took on much more of a communist and Soviet symbolism.

Bukharan People's Soviet Republic (BXSR) 1920



When in 1920 the last Emir of Bukhara, Alim Khan, fled, the Bukharan People's Soviet Republic was established. It was reported there was a red flag with a crescent in the centre and the initials of the state, BNSR in Russian Cyrillic the hoist, in white or gold. That same year a flag, green over red with, in gold, the crescent and star appeared; both the green colour and the crescent and star are associated with Islam. In the hoist the initials of the state, in gold, were now in the Uzbek "Yanga imlâ" Arabic script: BKhShJ (Buxoro Xalq Sho'ro Jumhuriyati). A year later a small red hammer and sickle emblem appeared inside the gold star, combining Islamic and Soviet symbols. The initials of the state were again in Russian Cyrillic: BNSR (Bukharskaya Narodnaya Sovyetskaya Respublika). On 11 October 1923 a new constitution was adopted and the background of the flag was changed to red, with the initials of the state's name, in gold, again in the Uzbek "Yanga imlâ" Arabic script. A year later, on 19 November 1924 the name of the state was changed to the Bukharan Soviet Socialist Republic and 5 days later it was incorporated in the Uzbek SSR.

On 30 April 1918, following the Russian revolution of 1917, the Bolsheviks in Tashkent created the Turkestan Socialist Federative Republic, soon renamed the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR), an autonomous republic of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Its flag, possibly dating from 1919, was plain red with in the upper hoist in yellow, the letters "TASSR" in both Yanga imlâ Arabic lettering and Russian Cyrillic. Meanwhile in September 1921 the Union of Central Asian Islamic National Insurgent Organisations instituted an all-Turkestan flag, with nine alternating red and white stripes, an orange rectangle bearing a white star and crescent and a narrow light-blue border around it. This very popular flag was used until January 1924 when the last part of Turkestan territory fell to the Red Army. It was associated with the Basmachi movement, an uprising, since 1916, against Russian Imperial and Soviet rule by the Muslim peoples of Central Asia. Because the Bolsheviks excluded the Muslim people, they battled against Soviet rule.



Bukharan people's Soviet Republic



When after calls reform and Russia invasion, on 31 august 1920 Emir Mohammed Alim Khan fled to Dushanbe and later Afganistan, Bukharan People's Soviet Republic was established. It was reported to have flown a red flag qith a cresent in the centre and the initials of the state, BNRS (Buharskaya Narodnaya Sovyetskaya Respublika) in Russian Cyrillic at the hoist. Probably this was in white or gold.

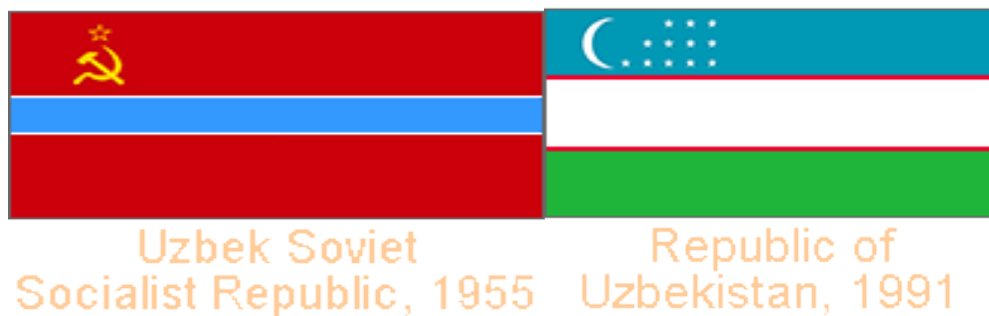


On 27 October 1924 the Uzbek SSR was proclaimed, one of the 5 Soviet Socialist Republics created along ethnic lines as determined by Joseph Stalin, Vladimir Lenin's Commissar for Nationalities, out of the Turkestan and the Bukharan and Khorezm Soviet Republics. Its capital was in Samarkand until 1930. The flag was red with in the canton the abbreviation of the republic's name, Uz.S.S.R., in both Yanga imlâ Arabic lettering (in which Uzbek was written) and Russian Cyrillic, surrounded by a thin border, all in yellow. It included the Tajik ASSR, that had its own flag, until 1929, when that autonomous republic was upgraded to a full SSR. In 1928 the modified Arabic script, new script or New Alphabet, was abolished in the Soviet Union and the Latin "Yangalif" (New Alphabet), that had been developed since 1924, was now mandated; the flags were changed accordingly. This lasted until 1941 when the Latin scripts were abolished and Cyrillic was mandated, causing the flags to be changed accordingly. In 1952 all Soviet Socialist Republics obtained flags with striped designs, based on the red flag of the USSR with at the upper hoist the hammer and sickle emblem in gold, with above it a gold-fimbriated red star. The new flag for the Uzbek SSR was adopted on 29 August 1952 and displayed a light blue horizontal stripe through the centre, with white fimbriation. The flag was slightly changed after the hammer and sickle emblem was redesigned.

On 20 June 1990 the Uzbek SSR became a sovereign state within the USSR and on 31 August 1991 it declared independence as the Republic of Uzbekistan. A new flag was adopted on 18 November 1991:



light blue over white over light green, with thin red stripes separating the three stripes. In the upper hoist is a white crescent and 12 white stars. Those may stand for Islam (or the rebirth of the nation) and the 12 districts of Uzbekistan; another interpretation is the zodiac and the historical traditions of the Uzbek people, as well as the ancient solar calendar. Blue stands for water as a source of life, white for peace, green for nature and red for the life force; there are other interpretations as well. The autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan, that had been added to Uzbekistan in 1936 and whose flags had also changed over the years, adopted a flag, similar to that of Uzbekistan, but with an ochre band as the central stripe and 5 stars, standing for the 5 districts of Karakalpakstan. The State emblems are similar too and retain some elements from the Soviet-era emblems.



References:

1. Grenoble, Lenore (2003). *Language Policy of the Soviet Union*. Kluwer Academic Publishers. p. 143.
2. Olufsen, Ole (1911). *The emir of Bokhara and his country; journeys and studies in Bokhara*. Gyldendal: Nordisk forlag. p. 282.
3. Golden, Peter B. (2011). *Central Asia in World History*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. p. 115.
4. Bregel, Y. The new Uzbek states: Bukhara, Khiva and Khoqand: C. 1750–1886. In N. Di Cosmo, A. Frank, & P. Golden (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chinggisid Age* (pp. 392-411). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009
5. Lee, Jonathan L. (1 January 1996). "Ancient Supremacy": Bukhara, Afghanistan and the Battle for Balkh, 1731-1901. BRILL. ISBN 978-90-04-10399-3.