



FLAGS III. OF TAJIKISTAN

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Before the establishment of Tajikistan. The royal standard labeled “drapeau nationale Boukhare” in a frontispiece of *La voix de la Boukharie opprimée* by Said Alim Khan (Amir Sayyed ‘Ālem Khan, Paris, 1929) is considered to be the state flag of the Bukharan emirate (see [BUKHARA iv](#)). The field and the cloth attaching the flag to the staff were light green. The phrase *al-soltān ẓell Allāh* “the sultan is the shadow of God” and the words of the Islamic confession of faith (*šahāda*) as well as an open hand and the star and crescent symbol appeared in gold ([Figure 21](#)). The border was orange with black ornamentation (*The Flag Bulletin* 1/1, 1962, pp. 16-17; Trembicky et al., p. 121).

Between the Russian revolutions of 1917 and the final establishment of Soviet power, a number of governments were formed in various parts of Central Asia, including the present territory of Tajikistan. The short-lived, anti-communist *Ḳoqand* (or *Turkestan*) Autonomous State (December 1917-February 1918) in *Farġāna* headed by *Mošṭafā Čokaev* (Pipes, pp. 88, 175-76) used the first flag in modern *Transoxiana*. It had red (top) and dark blue (bottom) horizontal stripes and a white star-and-crescent symbol at center (Trembicky et al., pp. 120-21). Afterwards, the *Basmachi* movement which fought Bolshevik rule, particularly in the *Farġāna* valley in the early 1920s, used a green flag bearing a crescent and an eight-pointed star and the words of the *šahāda*, followed by the phrase *enna’l-laḏīna ‘end’Allāha al-Eslām* (for an



illustration, see Solokov). Moreover, the Union of Central Asian Islamic National Insurgent Organizations instituted a flag for Turkestan at Samarkand in September 1921. It was composed of nine alternating stripes, five red and four white, with an orange rectangle placed at the left half, between the two upper and two lower stripes (PLATE XI). This field bore a white star and crescent. The nine horizontal stripes of the flag, according to one interpretation, presented the nationalities of Turkestan: five for Turkic and two for Iranian peoples, namely, Tajiks and the Pamiris (Trembicky et al., pp. 122-24). The Central Asian nationalists used this flag extensively in the early 1920s and occasionally in the post-Soviet years.

When the Red Army finally seized Bukhara in September 1921, the amir fled and the independent Bukharan (Soviet/Social/Conciliar) People's Republic was announced. The constitution, ratified a year later (23 September 1921), adopted a state flag consisting of two horizontal stripes, green on top and red on bottom, with a gold star and crescent at center and, on the upper left corner, the Russian initials *BNSR*, for Bukharskaya Narodnaya Sovetskaya Respublika. The fourth congress of the Bukhara Soviets, held in October 1923, changed the color of the upper stripe from green to red (Butler and Smith, pp. 89-90; cf. Trembicky et al., p. 122, where a red flag with a crescent at the center and the Russian characters *BNSR* as the initials is depicted for the same republic; cf. Allworth, p. 183, where a photographic illustration, dated August 1921, demonstrates a similar flag, but the initials are the Arabic letters *BKŞJ*). It appears that the initials alternated between Turkish and Russian languages. The Bukharan People's Republic was abolished in October 1924.

Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The Tajik ASSR (14 October 1924-16 December 1929) was formed as the eastern part of the Uzbek SSR. The 1927 Uzbek constitution made a provision for the Tajik Persian language to appear besides the Uzbek and Russian messages on its coat of arms: *Hama-ye prolētārḥā-ye donyā yak-šavēd!* "All proletarians of the world, unite!" and the state initials *J. Š. E. Ūz.* (*Jomhūrīyat-e Šūrāḥā-ye Ejtemā'ī-e Ūzbakestān*; Allworth, pp. 302-3; Romashkin et al., VII, p. 138). On 5 May 1929, the same initials, this time in the newly adopted Roman script ("Ç. Ş. b. Ūz." [*J. Š. I. Oz.*]) were also added on the upper left corner of the red-field flag of Uzbekistan below the Uzbek ("z. b. Ş. Ç.") and Russian (Uz.S.S.R.) initials. It was omitted in 1931 (Romashkin et al., VII, p. 202) because Tajikistan had already become a union republic independent of Uzbekistan.

Meanwhile, on 28 April 1929, the constitution of the Tajik ASSR adopted a state



arms and flag. The arms (PLATE XII) consisted of a hammer (*bālġa*) and local sickle (*dās*) symbol against a star, which depicts a blue sky brightened by golden rays of sun rising above snowy mountains. The star is encircled on each side by wreaths of wheat and cotton. The inscriptions appear in both Russian and Tajik Persian. The latter, in both Roman and Perso-Arabic scripts, reads: “proletorhoi hamaji ġihon jak ŧaved” *Prolētārġā-ye hama-ye jehān yak-ŧavēd* and “ġumġūrijati suŧsiolistiji ŧuŧraviji muxtori toġikston” *Jomġūriyat-e ejtemāī-e ŧūrawī-e moġtār-e Tājikestān*. The flag was a red (or scarlet) cloth with a width to length ratio of 1:2, depicting on the upper left corner the state arms (Romashkin et al., VII, p. 363). It is conjectured that these arms were influenced by the arms adopted in 1928 by the government of Afghanistan (W. Smith, “National Flags of Modern Afghanistan,” *The Flag Bulletin* 19/6, 1980, pp. 337-59, n. 9)

Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. The Tajik SSR (1929-91) used the former flag until February 1931, when the fourth congress of the republican soviets adopted a simple, red-field flag with the Russian inscription in gold letters *Tadzhikskaya SSR* (Nikolaeva, p. 28). The Tajik constitution of 16 January 1935 mentions a similar flag with the inscription abbreviated to *Tadzh. SSR* (Romashkin et al., VII, p. 714) apparently in Tajik, Uzbek, and Russian languages, just as stated on the state arms (see below). A few months later, a decree of the Presidium of the Tajik Central Committee dated 4 July 1935 called for a red flag with a gold sickle and hammer in the upper left corner, below which was the inscription “Ģ. ŧ. S. Toġikiston” in Roman Tajik and *Tadzhikskaya SSR* in Russian (Nikolaeva, p. 28; PLATE XIII a). The Tajik legend was changed to “RSS Toġikiston” (for illustration, see Ivanov, p. 30), perhaps in the late 1930s, when political terms were being Russified (PLATE XIII b). The Tajik inscription was further transformed to the newly adopted Cyrillic alphabet in 28 September 1940 (Butler and Smith, p. 180; Ivanov, p. 33).

The final version of the flag of the Tajik SSR, adopted on 20 March 1953, was a new modification of the flag of the Soviet Union. To the Soviet flag of red with its gold hammer and sickle and gold-bordered red star there were added two horizontal stripes of white and green, proportioning one-tenth and one-fifth of the total width, respectively (PLATE XIV; for the exact dimensions, see *Sbornik*, pp. 261-62; “Bayraqi davlati” [Beyraq-e dawlati], *İntsiklopediai* I, p. 353). The white is said to have symbolized the cotton production for which Tajikistan was renowned, and the green represented the orchards of the republic (Butler and Smith, p. 22; *The Flag Bulletin* 31, 1992, no. 149, p. 234).



The first state arms of the Tajik SSR as described in the 1935 constitution consisted of a large five-pointed star, in the upper part of which was depicted a hammer and a sickle in the rays of the sun; in the lower part drawings symbolized the socialist construction of the republic. The frame consisted of a wreath composed, on the right, the ears of grain and, on the left, the stems of cotton, and below, a vine tree. The inscriptions “Proletarians of all countries, unite!” and “Tadzh. SSR” appeared on the ribbons in three languages: Tajik, Uzbek, and Russian (Butler and Smith, p. 178; Romashkin et al., VII, p. 714). No illustration of this arms is available. The final form of the state arms (PLATE XV), designed by A. S. Yakovlev (“Gerbi davlatii Tojikiston” (Gērb-e dawlatī-e Tājikestān), *Īntsiklopediyai* II, p. 75), was adopted by the Tajik constitution of 1937 (Butler and Smith, p. 179). Compared with the former arms it lacks the industrialization symbols, the vine tree, and the Uzbek version of the inscription.

Independent Tajikistan. Tajikistan was the last of the ex-Soviet republics to adopt a new flag (24 November 1992). The flag has red, white, and green horizontal stripes from top to bottom, in a ratio of 2:3:2. At the center stands a figure in gold of a crown surmounted by seven stars (PLATE XVI). The symbol is said to have referred to the state sovereignty, friendship, and brotherhood among all nationalities and the unbreakable union of workers, peasants, and intellectual classes residing in the republic (*The Flag Bulletin* 32/2, 1993, no. 151, p. 97). The first coat of arms of the independent republic adopted a turquoise background, in which a yellow, winged lion stands before a scene of a mountain from which rays extended to the edge of the disk (Figure 22). An ear of wheat bound with red-white-green ribbons encircled the emblem. At the top were the same crown-and-stars figure found in the national flag (ibid.). The more recent coat lacks the lion figure, showing a tendency towards the revival of the Soviet symbols.

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