

Russian Coat of Arms

The Russian Coat-of-Arms is a Golden two-headed eagle mounted on a red shield. It has the three crowns of Peter The great above it. The Eagle has, in his talons, a sceptre and an orb and on his chest a red shield with St. George slaying a dragon with his spear.

The basis of the Arms was created some five centuries ago in Muscovy after Russia put an end to the Tartar rule. When Ivan III, sovereign of all Russia married Sophia the niece of Constantine XI, he accepted for a coat-of arms the black two-headed eagle with two crowns on a golden background. In 1625, it received three crowns symbolizing the three great areas subjugated by Russia, namely, Kazan, Astrakan, and Siberia. In 1685 the eagle gained royal insignia, the sceptre and orb. In 1721, when Peter the Great became Emperor, the Eagle's Royal Crowns became Imperial Crowns and six years later, the rider on the Eagle's chest was officially called St. George.

Alexander II, in 1857, added the helmet of Prince Alexander Nevsky to the top of the shield framed in the chain of the Order of St. Andrew. All was well until 1917 when the Provisional Government, after the February Revolution, stated that the Eagle could become the republican Coat-of-arms, but must not have any monarchist emblems on it.

By 1918 the Bolsheviks had disbanded it.

The two-headed Eagle was returned as the Russian coat-of arms with Boris Yeltsin's decree of November 30th. 1993.

It is interesting to note that many of the statues of the two-headed Eagle did have, and some still do have, three heads. This is so that from which ever direction you look at it, you can see two heads. You cannot see three heads. A very good example of this is in St Petersburg, on the rails round the Alexander Column in Palace Square. Each corner has an Eagle with three Heads.



Терб