

DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE AS ONE OF THE SYMBOLS OF THE RUSSIAN STATE**Ptitsyna Veronika Dmitrievna**

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An important feature of any state is the presence of state symbols that reflect in their content the historical, political, military, and cultural traditions of the past and present. The emergence of a state is almost immediately marked by the appearance of a certain image that reflects, first of all, the sovereignty and power of this state. The double-headed eagle is present in the state and tribal heraldry of many countries and peoples, but so far there is no single and generally recognized version of its widespread use in symbolism.

The double-headed eagle is not one of the signs widely known to the Russian tradition before the end of the XV century. Images of double-headed eagles are found in Russia, but they are so few in number that they are more likely not the rule, but the exception.

The first known images date back to the tenth century: these are plaques (costume decorations) from the Gnezdovsky mound and from the Osip Desert. A well-known decorative tile with a double-headed eagle, found on the bank of the Dniester River in the town of Vysileve (Northern Bukovina) (see fig. Figure 1) - it dates from the XII-XIII centuries, double-headed eagles in the paintings of the Rozhdestvensky Cathedral in Suzdal (XIII century) (see Figure 2). A coin with the original figure of a man with two heads and eagle wings is dated to the XIV century [4, p. 153].



Figure 1. Decorative tile with double-headed orloM. Vysilevo (Northern Bukovina)



Figure 2. Double-headed eagles in the paintingsof the Rozhdestvensky Cathedral in Suzdal (XIII century)

Having established his power in the new, unified Russian state, Ivan III took care of the press as a means of demonstrating his rights and greatness. With its help, it was possible to determine that the document was really issued on behalf of the person who attached the seal to it. Such a seal is the seal of 1497. It has a front and back side. The obverse of the seal of 1497 shows the sign of the Moscow princes – a horseman striking a dragon (snake) with a spear. On the reverse side is a double-headed eagle, each head of which is crowned with a crown.

The double-headed eagle had a fundamentally new meaning. If earlier on the reverse sides there were symbols associated personally with the prince, now the reverse side of the seal is occupied by the symbol of the state that the prince governs. The double-headed eagle became this symbol, and the seal thus acquired a coherent logical meaning: the obverse side indicated who exactly owns this seal, and the reverse side indicated which country the owner of the seal controls [1, p. 18].

Here it is appropriate to ask the question: why the double-headed eagle? What considerations guided Ivan III, choosing this sign as a symbol of our country? The answer to this question is complicated: history has not preserved for us sources that allow us to draw an accurate conclusion. We can only make assumptions and analyze their probability.

From the history of the appearance and existence of the double-headed eagle in other countries, several assumptions can be made:

- The double-headed eagle was adopted following the example of the Holy Roman Empire.
- The double-headed eagle was adopted by Russia from the Balkan countries.
- The double-headed eagle was borrowed by Russia from Byzantium.

The first version is contradicted by the fact that Russia has adopted the wrong form of the double-headed eagle, which was adopted in the West. The Russian eagle had attributes not known to the West – crowns on their heads, and a different color scheme (golden eagle on red, on gold – black eagle on gold) [2, p. 2-7].

The third version is the most preferred. The version is explained by the sixth volume of the "History of the Russian State", according to which "John, according to the property of the Greek tsars, also adopted their coat of arms, the double-headed eagle, combining it on his seal with the Moscow one" [3, p. 46], as well as the commentary accompanying this text (No. 98): "The Grand Duke began to use this coat of arms from 1497; until 1472, his seal depicted an Angel holding a spear in his hand and a man with a drawn dagger; and from this time until 1497, a lion tormenting a snake: work Greek, and probably a gift from Sofia" [3, p. 22]. N. M. Karamzin insists that already in 1472 there were grounds to claim more than supremacy among the Russian princes, which was formalized by the adoption of the coat of arms of the "kings of Greece" a quarter of a century later.

Thus, each of the versions of the reasons why Ivan III chose the double-headed eagle as a state symbol is thorough and unprovable. In fact, something else is important: in those years when the united Russian state was born, the state emblem of the new country was created. It became a double-headed eagle – and this symbol is inextricably linked with Russia to this day, for more than 500 years.

List of literature:

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4. Lebedev V. A. Derzhavny orel Rossii [The Sovereign Eagle of Russia]. Moscow: Rodina Publ., 1995, 239 p. (in Russian).