

Finding aid for Khudaibergen Divanov, Views and people of Khiva, 1910-1924 2022.R.22

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Special Collections

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Summary Information

- Repository:** Special Collections
- Creator:** Divanov, Khudaibergen , 1879-1938
- Title:** Khudaibergen Divanov, Views and people of Khiva
- ID:** 2022.R.22
- Dates:** 1910-1924
- Extent:** .05 Linear Feet (18 photographs in 1 box)
- Request Materials:** Request access to the physical materials described in this inventory through the [catalog record](#) for this collection. Click here for the [access policy](#).
- Language:** Russian , Uzbek .
- Abstract:** The collection comprises 18 salted paper photographs by pioneer Uzbek photographer and filmmaker, Khudaibergen Divanov. Fifteen of the images are photographs Divanov made prior to the fall of the Khanate of Khiva, and depict the city of Khiva, the capitol of the Khanate of Khiva in western Central Asia, and its inhabitants. The remaining three photographs were taken after the fall of the Khanate of Khiva in 1920.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Khudaibergen Divanov (1879-1938; Uzbek: Xudoybergan Devonov; variously: Khudaybergen Divanov; Hudaibergen Divanov; Hudaybergan Devonov), the son of Nurmuhammad Divani, a court secretary to the Khivan Khan Muhammad Rahim Bahadur II, was Uzbekistan's first native photographer and filmmaker. Divanov learned photography from William Penner, a teacher at the German Mennonite

settlement at Ak Metchet. Divanov's landscape photographs and portraits of his family caught the attention of local authorities who objected to them on religious grounds. When their complaints reached Muhammad Rahim II, the Khan responded by asking Divanov to take his portrait. Satisfied with the result, he gave Divanov a job at the Khivan mint and made him the official court photographer. In 1907, Divanov accompanied the Kahn's vizier to St. Petersburg where he was able to further his photography studies, returning to Khiva with a Pathé motion film camera and other photography equipment. In 1910, he filmed and produced the first Uzbek documentary film which featured Asfandiyar Khan, who had succeeded his father as Kahn of Khiva, riding in a phaeton. Divanov's other early films included *Architectural Monuments of Our Land* (1913) and *The Sites of Turkestan* (1916).

After the fall of the khanate in 1920, Divanov was installed as finance minister for the new People's Soviet Republic of Khorezm. An imprint of his seal is found on bank notes issued by the republic in 1922. He also continued his work as a photographer and filmmaker and was attached to the Central Documentary Film Studio as a correspondent. His studio was located in Tashkhovli, the summer palace of the former khan. During Stalin's Great Purge, Divanov was denounced as an "enemy of the nation" for his membership in the Mladokhivintsi "Young Khiva" movement during the reform period prior to the fall of the khanate. He was executed in a Yangiyul prison camp on October 4, 1938 at the age of 60.

Following the death of Joseph Stalin in 1958, Divanov was posthumously "rehabilitated" and a museum was established in his home in Khiva, where a cinema was also named after him. Although most of Divanov's archive was destroyed at the time of his arrest, the museum contains some of his documents and effects such as his first Pathé camera and a handful of glass plate negatives.

Sources consulted:

Anahita Photo Archive. "Hudaibergen Divanov, First Central Asian Photographer." <http://www.anahitaphotoarchive.com/19th-and-early-20th-c-pre-revolutionary-photography/divanov-first-central-asian-photographer>.

Fitz Gibbon, Kate. "Emirate and Empire: Photography in Central Asia 1858-1917. Posted September 29, 2009. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1480082> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1480082>.

Golender, Boris. "The First Uzbek Photographer." *Sanat*, issue #4 (Januray 10, 2009). https://sanat.orexca.com/2009/2009-4/boris_golender-3.

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Scope and Content of Collection

The collection comprises 18 photographs (direct contact salted paper prints) by Khudaibergen Divanov. Fifteen of the images are photographs Divanov made prior to the fall of the Khanate of Khiva, and depict the city of Khiva, the capitol of the Khanate of Khiva in western Central Asia, and its inhabitants. Views of Khiva include mosques and minarets, the fortress, and its city gates. Portraits of kurash or belt-wrestlers, a noble man with his hawks, and women spinning cotton threads are present in the collection as are depictions of popular entertainments such as aerial rope-walking and ram fighting. Other scenes

show local crops and irrigation techniques. Commerce is represented by merchants transporting their wares by canals and a large gathering of bullock carts at a trade market. The remaining three photographs were taken after the fall of the Khanate of Khiva in 1920. One image depicts the First All-Khorezm Kurultai Assembly of People's Representatives held on 30 April 1920, which proclaimed the end of the Khivan Khanate and the formation of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (PSRK; Uzbek: Xorazm Xalq Sovet Respublikasi; Russian transliteration: Khorezmskaya Narodnaya Sovetskaya Respublika).

The photographs were formerly in an album owned by an unidentified Soviet officer who served in Turkestan in the 1920s. Annotations in Russian are present on the versos of 14 of the photographs. Captions in Uzbek are present on five of the photographs, written either in the negative or directly on the print. The titles of the individual photographs are from the translations of the Russian annotations included in the dealer's inventory. Their unusual Russian orthography, which hints at phonetic transcription based on Central Asian pronunciation, suggests that the annotations were added by Divanov himself. The Uzbek captions in the negatives were inscribed there by Divanov.

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Arrangement

Arranged in a single series: Series I, Khudaibergen Divanov, Views and people of Khiva, 1910-1924.

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Administrative Information

Access

Open for use by qualified researchers.

Publication Rights

Contact [Library Reproductions and Permissions](#).

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Acquired in 2022.

Processing Information

Beth Ann Guynn processed the collection and wrote the finding aid in 2022.

Existence and Location of Copies

The collection was digitized by the repository in 2023 and the images are available online:

<http://hdl.handle.net/10020/2022r22>

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Controlled Access Headings

Subjects - Topics

- Gates -- Uzbekistan -- Khiva
- Mosques -- Uzbekistan -- Khiva
- Uzbeks -- Portraits

Subjects - Places

- Khiva (Uzbekistan) -- Description and travel
- Khivinskoe khanstvo -- Description and travel

Genres and Forms of Materials

- Group portraits -- Uzbekistan -- 20th century
- Photographs, Original
- Salted paper prints -- Uzbekistan -- 20th century

Collection Inventory

Series I. Khudaibergen Divanov, Views and people of Khiva, 1910-1924

[\[Views and people of Khiva\] \(digitized version: 1910-1924\)](#)

Arrangement:

Arranged according to the dealer's inventory.

Title/Description	Containers
2022.R.22-1: [Alta Darvaza Gate], between 1910 and 1924	Box 1

Scope and Contents:

Depicts Khivan men seated before the main gate to Ichan Kala, the inner city of Khiva.

2022.R.22-2: View of Khiva 1st Fortress, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> Rooftop view across the city.	
2022.R.22-3: The Main Prayer Mosque in Khiva, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> View of the minaret of the Juma or Friday Mosque from the surrounding streets with the Islam-Khodja minaret (built 1910) in the background.	
2022.R.22-4: Cemetery of the Holy Uzbek in the Center of Khiva, Kalvon-Ata, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> View of the mosque of the Pahlavan Mahmud from behind looking towards the Khodja minaret and complex. Uzbek caption inked on the photograph in the sky area.	
2022.R.22-5: A Well Called Khivan [Existed] before the Construction of Khiva on [this] Spot, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> Depicts a Khivan elder standing next to a well. According to folk legends the city of Khiva was built around a well that was dug with the help of Noah's son Shem. Preserved to this day, it can be seen in the Itcha-Kala, the inner walled part of the city. Uzbek caption in the negative.	
2022.R.22-6: Khivans Hunt with the Help of Hawks and Greyhounds, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> Depicts a Khivan noble on horseback with two hawks on his right hand. A dog sits next to the horse and a retainer lies at his feet. Uzbek caption in the negative.	
2022.R.22-7: [Portrait of Two Wrestlers], between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> Depicts two practitioners of kurash or belt-wrestling, one of the most popular national sports of Uzbekistan, standing with their hands on each other's shoulders.	
2022.R.22-8: Uzbek Women. One Closed, One Open, between 1910 and 1919	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> Studio portrait of two women in front of a painted backdrop depicting a well-appointed room. A seated woman wearing headgear, but with her face unncovered, wears a quilted silk robe, while the woman standing behind her is enveloped in a paranja with chachvan and a horsehair veil. Veils were banned under Soviet rule, which dates this photograph to before 1920.	
2022.R.22-9: Circus Acrobat in Khiva, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<i>Scope and Contents:</i> Annotation continues: 15 sazhen fathoms high. The Uzbek caption in the negative refers in part to Navruz, the Uzbek New Year celebrations.	

The photograph depicts a dorbozlik or rope-walking act taking place on a show ground outside the walls of the city. The ropewalker ascends the rope leading to the top of a tall pole, balance stave in hand,

2022.R.22-10: Novy Urgench, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> Depicts a large gathering of Uzbek arba or bullock carts outside the city of Urgench, a major trade center of the Khivan Khanate about 35 kilometers from Khiva.</p>	
2022.R.22-11: Pumping Water for Crops, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> Depicts a horse-driven waterwheel with ceramic pots pumping water into an irrigation ditch.</p>	
2022.R.22-12: Cogs on the Shavat River in Tashauz, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> View of small merchant boats moored by the towpath on the Shavat Canal in Da#oguz.</p>	
2022.R.22-13: Uzbek Women Make Cotton Threads, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> Portrait of two women sitting against a wall with a spinning wheel and distaff.</p>	
2022.R.22-14: Ram Fights in Khiva, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> Shows handlers and rams in an arena ringed by crowds of spectators.</p>	
2022.R.22-15: Grains of the Dzhugara Plant in Khiva, between 1910 and 1924	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> Depicts an agricultural worker holding a flowering head of sorghum alongside a field of head-high plants.</p>	
2022.R.22-16: 1st Meeting... during the Khiva Khan for Power, 1920	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> Depicts what is most likely First All-Khorezm Kurultai Assembly of People's Representatives, held on 30 April 1920, which proclaimed the end of the Khivan Khanate and the formation of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic. Representatives are seated on rugs under a pavilion. A couple of Russian soldiers stand in the background. Uzbek caption in the negative.</p>	
2022.R.22-17: Gate with Assembled Officials, between 1920 and 1924	Box 1
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i> A group of Russian officials stand in front of the Kosha Darvaza, the main entrance to Dishan Kala or the outer town of Khiva. A banner in Russian over the gate on the left reads: National demarcation will help us to organize the multi-million masses of the oppressed East to fight world imperialism. Yes to National Demarcation! A banner</p>	

in Arabic hangs over the gate on the right. An Uzbek caption in the negative appears beneath the banner.

2022.R.22-18: Kunha-Ark, the Palace of the Penultimate Khiva Khan, Currently a Military School, between 1920 and 1924 Box 1

Scope and Contents:

Depicts the gateway to the citadel. Painted in Russian and Arabic on the tympanum over the portal: Revolutionary Military Council, Military Nazirat leader. Uzbek caption in the negative.

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