

**ANALYSIS OF THE ACTIVITIES OF KHUDAYBERGAN DEVONOV AND
MUHAMMAD RAHIMKHAN IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENCE AND
PHOTOGRAPHY IN CENTRAL ASIA**

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ABSTRACT: This article is dedicated to the analysis of the activities of Khudaybergan Devonov and Muhammad Rahimkhan II Feruz in the formation and development of science and photography in Central Asia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The study examines the creative legacy of Devonov as the first Uzbek photographer, his photographs of historical, ethnographic, and cultural significance, as well as his scientific and technical approach. Additionally, the article provides analytical information about the scientific and educational reforms of Muhammad Rahimkhan II Feruz during the reign of the Khiva Khanate, his patronage of arts and culture, and his support for new technologies such as photography. The research analyzes the activities of these two figures in terms of their contribution to the development of modern science, art, and technology in Central Asia.

Keywords: science, photography, Khudaybergan Devonov, Muhammad Rahimkhan II Feruz, Central Asia, art, technology.

The introduction of photography to Central Asia was closely connected with the prevailing economic and social conditions of that era. The earliest photographs in the region began to appear in the late 19th century. During this period, the major cultural centers of Central Asia — Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva — formed an integral part of world civilization. It is important to emphasize the development of photographic technology and the growing interest in it within these cities. Today, photographic sources are valued not only as a form of visual art but also as a primary means of documenting historical events and preserving cultural heritage.¹

The introduction of photography to the peoples of Central Asia marked the beginning of a new era. During this period, photography played a significant role in social life and helped preserve the historical aspects of culture. Photography, in turn, influenced the development of

¹Karimov, N. The First Uzbek Photographer and Cameraman Khudaybergan Devonov, p. 39.

modern social and cultural concepts, aesthetic values, and the arts. Unlike other art forms, photographic sources provided a clearer reflection of the political and cultural landscape of the time.

Among the historical figures of the Uzbek people, Khudaybergan Devonov and Muhammad Rahimkhan II Feruz left an unforgettable mark not only in their own era but also throughout history up to the present day. Their political and social activities, struggles to defend national independence, contributions to the development of science and technology, and their aspirations for the freedom and prosperity of the people hold an important place in Uzbekistan's history. An analytical study of their heroic qualities, the historical context, and the reforms they implemented during their times is highly appropriate.

When analyzing the activities of Khudaybergan Devonov, the first Uzbek photographer, it is essential to take into account a range of social and cultural processes. However, the later part of Devonov's photographic career was not without challenges. His involvement in photography quickly spread around him. Devonov's friends observed his actions with great interest and admiration and followed him, but some people did not accept this innovation positively. Despite such a challenging situation, Devonov never ceased to develop his scientific reforms. In the second half of the 19th century, the Central Asian region underwent not only political but also cultural, social, and technological changes². Photography technology, as a new invention that emerged especially in the developed countries of the world, quickly became popular in Central Asia, and particularly in the territory of Uzbekistan. The introduction of photography became an important factor that, on the one hand, involved mastering new technologies, and on the other hand, reflected the cultural changes of that era³.

It is important to separately acknowledge the close connection between Khudaybergan Devonov's political and social activities and the introduction of photography in Central Asia. Alongside ensuring the freedom and independence of the people through his political work, Devonov contributed to the development of photography, which served to document modern culture and history, preserving major events of that era.

Muhammad Rahimkhan II Feruz holds a special place in the history of Uzbekistan due to his political and cultural reforms. He ruled in the second half of the 19th century and carried out many revolutionary reforms during his time. Feruz's reign brought significant changes not

²Tokhtayev, F. T., *Khudaybergan Devonov: A People's Hero*, Tashkent: 2010. Uzbekistan, p. 192.

³Tursunov, M. J., 2015. *Khudaybergan Devonov and Central Asia*, Tashkent: Science, p. 210.

only in political power and governance but also in culture, science, and the economy. Under his leadership, a new order was established in state administration and the social system.

Feruz's heroism is evident in his attention to culture and science and the reforms he implemented in these fields. He placed great importance on developing scientific and cultural centers. He actively promoted science, expanded education, and paid significant attention to preserving the national culture. Feruz's political and cultural reforms were genuine acts of heroism for him. His reforms aimed to improve the social welfare of the people and to introduce changes and innovations⁴.

The reforms carried out during Feruz's reign had a significant impact not only in his own time but also on future generations. During his rule, he regulated the economic system and stimulated the development of trade and industry. Many new buildings and infrastructure facilities were constructed under his leadership, and he sought to unite the people by promoting new values and ideas. Feruz's reforms were primarily aimed at introducing unique, progressive ideas and practices for his era.

Feruz endeavored to develop new sectors for economic growth. He implemented reforms in the trade and industrial sectors and strived to strengthen the country's economic stability. His policies also focused on ensuring social stability and improving people's everyday lives throughout this process.

The socio-political processes during the periods of Khudaybergan Devonov and Muhammad Rahimkhan II Feruz hold great significance in Central Asian history. The changes and political interactions of that time influenced the future development of Central Asia. Both figures remain central historical figures for their roles in managing political crises, social transformations, scientific achievements, and the struggle for national independence during their eras.

Conclusion A scientific analysis of Khudaybergan Devonov and the advent of photography allows us to gain a deeper understanding of the interconnection between the cultural and political transformations of that era. The introduction of photography into Central Asian culture played a vital role, particularly in preserving historical sources and strengthening

⁴ Qosimov, N. T., *Political Reforms and Culture During the Era of Feruz*, Tashkent: 2012. New Uzbekistan, p. 145.

national identity. Thus, examining political and cultural changes together provides us with a comprehensive analysis of the period.

Although the political developments during the eras of Khudaybergan Devonov and Muhammad Rahimkhan II Feruz share similarities, each period has its own unique characteristics. Devonov's activities were primarily focused on the advancement of science, the struggle for independence, and defending the people against external threats. In contrast, Feruz's period was marked by political and social reforms, cultural development, and the establishment of new economic systems. Despite the growing integration with Russia in social and economic spheres, Feruz strived to preserve his territory and culture through his reforms.

At the same time, both figures opposed the expansion of the Russian Empire and resisted its influence. Each of them operated in accordance with the political, social, and cultural realities of their time, and their efforts had a significant impact on the historical development of Central Asia.

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