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ON THE HISTORY OF THE EMERGENCE OF LITHOGRAPHIC PRINTING HOUSES IN KHOREZM

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ABSTRACT

The article provides information about the emergence of book production in Central Asia, its developmental stages, and unique features, as well as the history of the creation of lithographic books.

KEYWORDS

Lithography, manuscript, "rag paper," calligraphy, ink, papermaking.

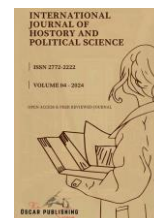
INTRODUCTION

Historically, it is known that Khorezm has always shown a great interest in science and education. In particular, during the early 11th century, the Khorezm Mamun Academy emerged, where numerous scholars worked in various fields of science. During this period, Khorezm flourished both economically and culturally. Even after the unstable political, socio-economic, and cultural conditions of the 18th century, the interest in science and education in Khorezm persisted, with special emphasis on the reign of Muhammad Rahim Khan II (1865–1910), the ruler of Khiva.

Muhammad Rahim Khan II gathered enlightened scholars and intellectuals around him, enriching the

palace library with rare books brought from various parts of the world. He established a unique school of translation, where books in Arabic, Persian-Tajik, and Azerbaijani languages were translated into Uzbek.

With his efforts, Muhammad Rahim Khan II continued the legacy of the scholars of the Mamun Academy. In 1874, he became the first in Central Asia to introduce book printing using lithographic methods. Alongside establishing a printing house, he actively participated in the printing process and published numerous books himself. Prominent scholars such as E.K. Betger, G.N. Chabrov, A.A. Semyonov, V.V. Bartold, R.Kh. Makhmudova, A.G. Karimullin, and M. Rustamov have



written about this printing house. T. Ernazarov, A. Bobokhonov, and other scholars have provided a number of insights. One significant contribution by Muhammad Rahim Khan II was his initiative to bring lithographic equipment from Iran to Khiva with the purpose of publishing rare manuscript works preserved in the palace library in book form. This endeavor was of great importance. A specialized Iranian lithographer, Ibrahim Sultan, carried out the initial printing operations, and he was assisted by Otajon Abdalov, who thoroughly mastered the craft under his mentorship. Otajon Abdalov later became popularly known among the people as "Otajon Bosma."

According to T. Ernazarov, the Khiva lithographic printing house was established in 1893 by Otajon Abdalov. However, an article in the 16th issue of the newspaper *Inqilob Quyoshi* (The Sun of the Revolution), published in 1924, states that O. Abdalov was not the founder of the Khiva printing house but rather a typesetter and craftsman. It was Ibrahim Sultan, an Iranian native residing in Khiva, who taught O. Abdalov the art of lithographic printing. O. Abdalov worked at the Khiva lithographic printing house from 1874 to 1878. Bekjon Rahmon o'g'li and Muhammad Yusuf, in their work *A Brief History of Khorezm Music**, provide the following information: they state that Muhammad Rahim Khan II brought a lithographic printing press from Iran between 1874 and 1880 and printed books under the name of I. Sultan.

Additionally, an article titled *The Khiva Khan*, published in the *Tarjimon* newspaper, contains the following information: "His Excellency Sayyid Muhammad Rahim Bahodirkhan, during his visit to and inspection of the Nizhny Novgorod fair (region – M.A.), attentively observed printing presses and ordered one with a sufficient set of type to be transported to Khiva," as

reported in the *Pochtovaya Gazeta* newspaper. This press was endowed to one of the Khiva madrasas, where it was intended to be used for teaching printing and publishing to students. "If this comes to fruition, then His Majesty the Khan will have rendered his beloved homeland its greatest service and fulfilled one of its most vital needs."

From the information provided, it is evident that the founder of the Khiva lithographic printing house was Muhammad Rahim Khan II. During his reign, printing equipment was brought to Khiva not only from Iran but also from Russia. As a result of the Khan's negotiations with the Iranian government, a lithographic printing house was established in Khiva. Muhammad Rahim Khan II successfully brought both the lithographic equipment and the printer Ibrahim Sultan from Iran. The printing house was allocated space in the ancient Ark fortress. Muhammad Rahim Khan II also employed O. Abdalov, a talented young man who graduated from the Russo-Indigenous School in Petro-Aleksandrovsk (Turtkul), to work alongside Ibrahim Sultan.

After Ibrahim Sultan taught O. Abdalov the art of lithographic printing, he returned to Iran, leaving the responsibilities of the printing house to O. Abdalov. By the early 20th century, the printing house was moved to Qiblatuzabag, a location associated with Muhammad Rahim Khan II.

In 1908, the renowned Russian scholar A.N. Samoylovich, during his scientific visit to Khiva, noted that the lithographic printing house consisted of three rooms. In the first room, a secretary copied manuscripts using lithographic ink; in the second, the manuscript was placed on a printing stone, printed, and dried; and in the third room, which served as a storage area, the printed sheets were kept. Initially, the lithographic press could print only on a single sheet. However, by the early 1900s, the printing

stone's size had been increased to accommodate four sheets. The press was manually operated, and the work was carried out by a team of three people. One person rotated the press wheel, another replaced the paper, and the third applied ink to the roller.

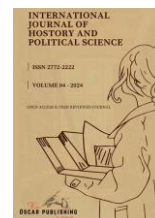
There were differing opinions regarding the first book published by the Khiva lithographic press. Scholars interested in lithographic works, such as E.K. Betger and G.N. Chabrov, wrote in their articles that the first book printed at the Khiva press was Alisher Navoi's Khamsa in 1880. However, R. Makhmudova and A. Bobokhonov, in their studies, identified the first book as Nisab us-Sibyan by Abu Nasr Farrohi, published in 1876. Nevertheless, these claims have not been substantiated. The fund of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan contains numerous books published in Khiva, among which the earliest is Devoni Munis, printed in 1874. This book, written in Uzbek, comprises 668 pages. No earlier printed books from Khiva have been found in libraries. Therefore, it is evident that the first work published by the Khiva printing house was Devoni Munis in 1874. This book is considered not only the first lithographic publication in Khiva but also the first in Central Asia. Devoni Munis is notable for having been reprinted several times at the Khiva printing house. One of the earliest books published in Khiva was Nisab us-Sibyan, written by Abu Nasr Farrohi and printed in 1876. This book served as an educational manual for teaching Arabic and Persian to children. Abu Nasr Farrohi, originally from the city of Farrah in Afghanistan, was a renowned poet and educator in Central Asia. His work was widely used as a reliable manual in schools and madrasas.

The book primarily takes the form of a vocabulary guide. It begins with a foreword by the author, providing brief information about the book and its size. The book's dimensions are 20x14.5 cm, printed on light

yellow paper in large black script. The textbook consists of 53 pages. The manuscript was copied by Ibrahim Sultan in the Nasta'liq script.

Additionally, several significant works were published by the Khiva lithographic press, including the following:

- In 1878: Alisher Navoi's Hayrat ul-Abror, published under the editorship of Pahlavon Devonbegi Komil, and Munis's Devon Savodi Ta'lim and Devoni Munis.
- In 1879: Alisher Navoi's Khamsa and Muhammad Yusuf Mahdum's Devoni Roji.
- In 1880: Devoni Kholis, Chor Kitob, Chahor Devon, Devoni Komil, and Devon, a work attributed to Muhammad Rahim Khan II.
- In 1881: Badoye' ul-Valat, G'aroyib us-Sigor, Navodir ush-Shabob, and Chahor Devon.
- In 1882: Badoye' ul-Valat and Devoni Fuzuliy.
- In 1883: Devoni Bedil (including Umar Khayyam's rubaiyat).
- In 1890 (1308 AH): Rashahot Ayn ul-Hayat by Ali Safiy (15th century).
- In 1891: Sharh va Tarjimai Fiqhi Qaydoni Musammi ba Targir ul-Musammin by Litfullo Nasafiy and the Arabic text of Fiqhi Qaydon translated by Muhammad Rasul Akhund and Mufti ibn Shermuhammad.
- In 1895: The second, expanded edition of Devoni Komil.
- In 1902: A compilation Majmuat ush-Shuaro by Poet Ahmad Tabibiy, published under the decree of Muhammad Rahim Khan II.
- In 1905: Devoni Ogahiy.



- In 1906: Devoni Bayoniy and *Majmaut Ash-Shuaro-i Feruzshohiy* (a collection featuring works of 30 poets).

- In 1909: Devoni Komil va Tavorikh Shokhon Khorezm by Kamolkhon ibn Maqsudkhoja.

This extensive publishing activity highlights the cultural and intellectual vibrancy of Khiva during this period, showcasing the dedication of Muhammad Rahim Khan II and the Khiva printing house to preserving and disseminating literary and scholarly works.

In 1909, works such as Devoni Tabibiy Forsiya and Ahmad Tabibiy's Devoni Tabibiy Hayrat ul-Oshiqqin were published. In 1910, Devoni Tabibiy (Munis ul-Ushshoq), Devoni Tabibiy Hayrat ul-Oshiqqin, and Muntahab ul-Lughat Rizoii (56 pages in Uzbek, publication year unknown) were also printed.

From the information provided, it is evident that the Khiva printing house predominantly focused on publishing devons (collections of poetry). Notably, the Devonlar Majmuasi (Collection of Devons) was published four times. All editions were in Uzbek and differed in volume and, to some extent, in the selection of poets. The first edition was published in 1906, the second in 1907, the third in 1908, and the fourth in 1909. All these editions are preserved in the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan (UzR FA SHI).

The Devonlar Majmuasi stands out for being published annually from 1906 to 1909. According to G.N. Chabrov, the Khiva lithographic press was unique compared to other presses in Central Asia, as it was established within the palace premises, not for commercial purposes but to reproduce the rare manuscripts of a nation with a millennia-long history.

The printing house, organized by Muhammad Rahim Khan II, facilitated the widespread dissemination of

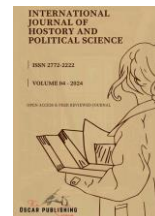
works on various topics among the population. Muhammad Rahim Khan II himself took an active role in publishing works, prioritizing not only his own writings but also the works of numerous intellectuals in Uzbek, Persian, Arabic, and Azerbaijani languages. Among these were contemporary authors such as Ahmad Tabibiy, Munis, Ogahiy, Bayoniy, Yusuf Mahdum, and others, whose works were printed in lithographic form.

From this information, it becomes clear that Muhammad Rahim Khan II was not only a statesman and poet but also an enlightened patron who supported the publication of numerous books, leaving a significant legacy in the field of education and culture. One of Muhammad Rahim II's greatest achievements was gathering a community of enlightened intellectuals around him, while the establishment of the Khiva lithographic press was another of his notable contributions. These two factors played a key role in creating an important cultural and educational environment in Khiva during his time, for which his efforts were unparalleled.

The books published by the Khiva lithographic press were widely disseminated among various segments of the population, contributing to the cultural and educational development of society and fostering the emergence of many scholars and intellectuals.

While the Mamun Academy primarily focused on the natural sciences, during the era of Muhammad Rahim Khan II, the prominence of social and humanitarian scholars became evident, a fact that is reflected in the content of the books published in Khiva.

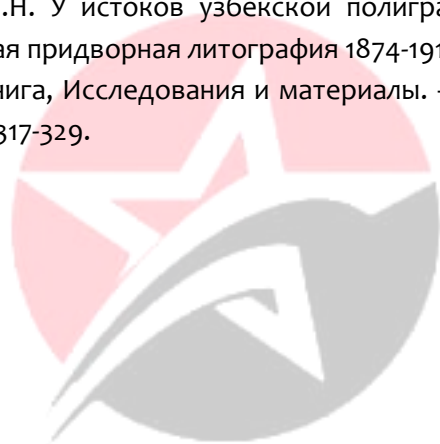
In general, regardless of the field to which the works published in Khiva belong, they hold significant importance for the life, culture, and history of the people. Studying and analyzing these works reveals



new aspects of history, enriching our understanding of the past.

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