

Khiva — Va-PoReg Country Report

Kailitz, Steffen, et al., 2026: Varieties of Political Regimes (Va-PoReg). Country Report Khiva, Dresden: Hannah Arendt Institute for Totalitarianism Studies.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/JYEL7U>

08/12/1873 Start Autocratic Monarchy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under Russia, Autocratic Monarchy]: In 1848, the Russians established a permanent presence on the Aral Sea by constructing Fort Aralsk near the Syr Darya's mouth. Their military dominance was so overwhelming that the Central Asian principalities of Khiva, Bukhara, and Kokand could not resist the Russian expansion despite years of resistance. After Russia's conquest of significant cities like Tashkent and Samarkand in 1873, General Von Kaufman led a 13,000-strong force to attack Khiva. As a result, Khiva fell on 06/10/1873, and a peace treaty was signed on 08/12/1873, designating Khiva as a quasi-independent Russian protectorate. Later, after the conquest of Turkmenistan in 1884, Khiva and Bukhara found themselves surrounded by Russian-controlled territory.¹

11/07/1917 Continuation Autocratic Monarchy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under Russia, Democratizing Regime]: On this date, the Russian Soviet Republic was proclaimed.² Following the October Revolution the Khanat of Bukhara enjoyed a higher degree of independence. While Soviet power was consolidated in Turkestan in 1917-1918, the regimes in Bukhara and Khiva were openly hostile towards the Bolsheviks (Becker 2004: 206, 211). The Slavic and European troops controlling Tashkent then worked to remove the khan of Khiva in 1920.³

02/02/1920 End Autocratic Monarchy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under Russia, Communist Ideocracy]/Start Part of Other Country [of Russia, Communist Ideocracy]: On this date, Sayid Abdullah, the final Kungrad khan of Khiva, stepped down from power, leading to the establishment of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (Fedorenko 2015: 3).⁴ This regime change event is coded as a rebellion, since Sayid Abdullah Khan was compelled to step down by Turkmen tribes sympathetic to the Soviets in Turkistan. However, it should be noted that the rebels could not have deposed him without the assistance of Soviet forces (Adele/Palat 2005: 311). The First Khorezm Kurultay officially declared its creation on 04/26/1920. This newly formed republic emerged from the territory previously belonging to the old Khanate of Khiva.

12/30/1922 Continuation Part of Other Country [of USSR, Communist Ideocracy]: With the establishment of the USSR, the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic became a part of the Soviet Union.⁵

09/20/1923 End Khiva [Part of Other Country of USSR, Communist Ideocracy]: On this date, Khiva was transformed into the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic.⁶ In 1924 the former khanate's territory was divided between the newly created Turkmen SSR and Uzbek SSR.⁷ FH, LIED and V-Dem do not provide data for Khiva.

For the time after 09/20/1923, see Russia.

Notes

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khanate_of_Khiva#Russian_Empire_period

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Soviet_Federative_Socialist_Republic

³ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Uzbekistan/Russian-and-Soviet-rule>

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sayid_Abdullah

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union#Treaty_on_the_Creation_of_the_USSR

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bukharan_People%27s_Soviet_Republic

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khanate_of_Khiva

References

Adle, Chahryar/Palat, Madhavan K. (Hrsg.) (2005): History of Civilizations of Central Asia: Towards the Contemporary Period. Volume VI. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Becker, Seymour (2004): Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Fedorenko, Vladimir (2015): Timeline of Central Asia (1918-2014). Washington: Rethink Institute.