

CHAPTER ONE

Amlākdārs, Khwājas and Mulk land in the Zarafshan Valley after the Russian Conquest

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Introduction

A crucial question when considering the transition to colonial rule in any non-settler colony (as most of Russian Turkestan was until the early 1900s) is the relationship with pre-existing elites, whether landed, commercial, religious, rural or urban. No colonial regime can survive by means of force alone, and the form it takes will often be determined by the nature of the groups it chooses to co-opt and co-operate with.¹ This question is usually intimately linked with revenue collection, the most basic and fundamental activity of the state. In their early years, at least, colonial regimes rarely seek to do a great deal more than collect taxes, whether at the same level as or at a higher level than their predecessors.² In agrarian societies these are usually taxes on the land or on the harvest, necessitating either very good local connections or detailed knowledge of patterns of landownership, irrigation and crops in order to be effective.³ In British India, for instance, until at least the mid-19th century the military-fiscal garrison-state was much more concerned with maintaining the flow of agrarian tribute than with opening up the country

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¹ R. Robinson, "Non-European foundations of European Imperialism: sketch for a theory of collaboration." In *Studies in the theory of Imperialism*, ed. Roger Owen and Robert Sutcliffe (London: Longmans, 1972): 132-7; C. Newbury *Patrons, Clients and Empire* (Oxford: OUP 2003): 47-76, 256-284.

² E. Stokes, "Northern and Central India" and D. Kumar, "The Fiscal System." In *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. II (Cambridge: CUP, 1983): 45-9, 67, 917.

³ See C. Dewey, *The Settlement Literature of the Greater Punjab* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1991): 21-32 for a brief description of the elaborate 'science' of land assessment in British India which reached its peak in Punjab in the 1870s and 80s.

to trade and investment, and in this respect bore some resemblance to its Mughal predecessor.⁴ The removal or reinforcement of existing elites, and transformations in the system of tax collection are often the first changes to affect the mass of the population after the initial period of military conquest. For the new rulers the immediate priorities are understanding how and by whom taxes are collected, and who wields influence in local society and why.

This paper attempts to examine the transition from Bukharan to Russian rule in the Zarafshan Valley, and early Russian attempts to understand and adapt Bukharan systems of taxation and land tenure to their purposes. It concentrates in particular on the decision to abolish an important Bukharan tax-collecting office, that of *amlākdār*, and the refusal of the Russians to recognise the tax privileges attached to certain types of *mulk* land in the region, a related but (as I now belatedly realise) a separate question.⁵ What links them, however, is precisely this issue of how the newly-introduced Russian military administration related to pre-existing elites, whether landholders who claimed exemption from taxes (often on religious grounds) or officials of the Bukharan administration. However, in order to judge how the Russians responded to and altered (or sought to alter) the status of these groups, we need to have at least some idea of the status quo before the conquest, and this presents many difficulties even for historians who (unlike me) have the requisite linguistic and palaeographical skills. As Florian Schwarz has recently noted, we still know very little about the nature of taxation and land tenure in the nineteenth-century Bukharan emirate.⁶ The Persian and Chaghatai chronicles which are the focus of most existing work on Islamic Central Asia contain little information on such questions;⁷ many of the standard Soviet authorities have proved to be unreliable,⁸ and only

⁴ D. Peers, "Gunpowder Empires and the Garrison State: Modernity, Hybridity, and the Political Economy of Colonial India, circa 1750-1860." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27/2 (2007): 245-58.

⁵ And here I should note that in this paper I intend to revise and correct some of my earlier conclusions in A.S. Morrison *Russian Rule in Samarkand 1868-1910. A Comparison with British India* (Oxford: OUP, 2008): Chapter 3, in which I failed to recognise that an *amlākdār* and an owner of *mulk* land were two different things. I include some of the same source material here, but it is interpreted differently.

⁶ F. Schwarz, "Contested grounds: ambiguities and disputes over the legal and fiscal status of land in the Manghit Emirate of Bukhara." *Central Asian Survey* 29/1 (2010): 33-42.

⁷ The best-known and most easily-accessible 19th-century Bukharan chronicles are by anti-Manghit intellectuals, and have little to say about fiscal or commercial matters: Aḥmad Makhdūm Dānish, *Risāla yā Mukhtaṣarī az tā'rīkh-i sulṭanat-i khānadān-i Manghītiya*, ed. A. Mirzoev (Stalinabad: Nashriyat-i Daulati-yi Tajikistan, 1960) and translated as *Istoriya Mangitskoi Dinastii*, trans. I. A. Nadzhafova (Dushanbe: Donish, 1967); Mirza 'Abd al-'Azīm Sāmī, *Tā'rīkh-i salāṭīn-i Manghītiya. Istoriya Mangitskikh Gosudarei Pravivshikh v Stolitse, Blagorodnoi Bukhare*, ed. L.M. Epifanova (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoi Literatury, 1962); 'Abd al-'Azīm Bustānī [Sāmī] Bukharāyi, *Tuhfa-yi Shāhī*, ed. Nādira Jalālī (Tehran: Anjuman-i athār va mafākhir-i farhangī, 2010).

⁸ The unadorned list of different taxes in Bukhara in A.A. Semenov, *Ocherk pozemel'no-podatnogo i nalogovogo ustroistva byvshego Bukharskogo Khanstva*, Trudy Sredne-Aziatskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta Seriya II *Orientalia*, Vyp.1 (Tashkent: SAGU, 1929) raises almost as many questions as it answers, and much of it appears to be based on N.A. Khanykov *Opisanie Bukharskogo Khanstva* (St Pb.: Tip. Imp. AN, 1843): 114-20 or, in translation N.A. Khanikoff *Bokhara, its Amir and People*, trans. C. de Bode (London: James Madden, 1845): 148-54.

with large-scale quantitative research on documents recording land transactions, mortgaging agreements and tax payments from the exceptionally rich archives of the region will it become possible to say anything definitive about the administration of the emirate.⁹ Nevertheless, however inadequate it may be, some brief description of the situation before the conquest is necessary to make sense of the policies the Russians pursued subsequently.

Most historians of the late Bukharan state seem to agree that it had become increasingly strong and centralised since at least the reign of Amir Naṣrullāh (1826 - 1860), and that, although the *bīks* and *hākims* (regional governors) in more remote areas such as Hissar and Shahrīsabz preserved considerable autonomy, in regions within easy reach of the capital (such as the Zarafshan Valley) official appointments and the right to collect taxes were firmly under the control of the Amir, not least because of the creation of a Persian Shiite administrative and military class which made the Manghit dynasty less dependent on the Uzbek tribal nobility.¹⁰ By the 19th century one of the most important Bukharan tax-collecting officials was the *amlākdār*, whose precise status and role has attracted little scholarly attention and presents the historian with numerous problems. An early reference to this title, (if such it then was) can be found in a document establishing the boundaries of a *waqf* in the Samarqand *tumān* of Shavdor in 1686, in which the signatories described themselves as 'Niyazbek *amlākdār*' and 'Ashurbek *amlākdār*,' but it is unclear what meaning the term had at this date.¹¹ The title is mentioned in the appendix to the *Majma' al-arqām*, a late-eighteenth century Bukharan "manual of administration" but without any explanation of the precise role or status which attached to it.¹² M. A. Abduraimov,

⁹ Philipp Reichmuth, *Semantic Modeling of Islamic Legal Documents: A Study on Central Asian Endowment Deeds*, unpublished PhD diss. (Institut für Orientwissenschaft/Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Saale, 2010): 7-8. See also Andreas Wilde's contribution to this volume, and his *What is Beyond the River? Power, Authority and Social Order in 18th and 19th Century Transoxania*, unpublished PhD diss. (Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung/University of Bonn, 2012), whose publication is eagerly anticipated.

¹⁰ O.D. Chekhovich, "O Nekotorykh Voprosakh Istorii Srednei Azii XVIII-XIX vekov." *Voprosy Istorii* 3 (1956): 84-95; A.F. Faiziev, *Istoriya Samarkanda pervoi pol. XIX veka* (Samarkand: Izd. SamGU, 1992): 12-16; W. Holzwarth, "Relations between Uzbek Central Asia, the Great Steppe and Iran, 1700-1750". In *Shifts and Drifts in Nomad-Sedentary Relations*, ed. S. Leder and B. Streck (Wiesbaden: L. Reichert, 2005): 179-216; *Id.*, "The Uzbek State as Reflected in Eighteenth-century Bukharan Sources." *Asiatische Studien* LX/2 (2006): 321-53; Yuri Bregel, "The new Uzbek States. Bukhara, Khiva and Khoqand c.1750-1886". In *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chingissid Age*, ed. N. Di Cosmo, A.J. Frank, and P.B. Golden (Cambridge: CUP, 2009): 403; Kimura Satoru, "Sunni-Shi'i relations in the Russian protectorate of Bukhara, as perceived by the local 'ulama." In *Asiatic Russia. Imperial power in regional and international contexts*, ed. T. Uyama (London: Routledge, 2012): 192-4. For a contrasting point of view see R. Sela, *The Legendary Biographies of Tamerlane. Islam and Heroic Apocrypha in Central Asia* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011): 117-140, however Sela is referring to the early eighteenth century, and does not appear to appreciate that the political situation had stabilized somewhat from the late 1700s.

¹¹ *Dokumenty k istorii agrarnykh otnoshenii v Bukharskom Khanstve*, ed. A.K. Arends and O.D. Chekhovich, Vyp. I (Tashkent: Izd. AN UzSSR, 1951): 66, 68.

¹² B.A. Vil'danova, "Podlinnik Bukharskogo traktata o chinakh i zvaniyakh." *Pis'mennye Pamyatniki Vostoka* 1968 (Moscow: Nauka, 1970): 43; Bregel has pointed out that the date of composition of this text, and the identity of its author are still obscure, and it cannot be considered reliable. Yuri Bregel, *The Administration of Bukhara under the Manghits and Some Tashkent Manuscripts*, Papers on Inner Asia No.34 (Bloomington, IN: RIFIAS, 2000): 16-18.

basing his assertion on the late 18th-century *Risāla-yi Habībīya* of 'Ibadullāh b. Khwāja 'Ārifī Bukhārī, writes that the *amlākdār* was a senior tax-collector responsible for collecting *kharāj* and other taxes on the land through local officials (*āqsaqāls* and *amīns*) which the *amlākdār* was then responsible for remitting to the local *bīk*, something echoed by Saidqulov on the basis of colonial sources.¹³ Semenov wrote that in the last years of the Bukharan protectorate an *amlākdār* was a salaried tax-collecting official, earning the equivalent of 2,500 rubles a year, but frustratingly he did not devote any more attention to this office, preferring instead to concentrate on the judicial branch of the Bukharan administration.¹⁴ More recent work suggests that in the late 19th-century Bukharan protectorate *amlākdārs* were usually members of the Uzbek tribal nobility, and were amongst the most powerful officials of the fiscal administration, although their appointment and dismissal remained within the power of the Amir.¹⁵

Another element of confusion concerns the apparent overlap between the roles of the *amlākdār* and another tax-collecting official, the *sarkār*, a shadowy figure in the literature on Bukhara but more commonly mentioned in that on the Khanate of Khoqand, where this official was apparently responsible for collecting *kharāj*.¹⁶ The Soviet scholar R. N. Nabiev, who worked extensively with documents relating to the patrimonial estates of the Khans of Khoqand, asserted that the *sarkārs* were the most important officials in Khoqand, renters of Government revenue on a large scale and with an additional 'roving' judicial remit, although this last observation seems to be based on just a single example.¹⁷ As well as collecting *kharāj*, they could settle disputes over land and water, acted as confidential advisors to *bīks* when they were posted in towns and directed construction projects for the Khan. Thus Nabiev argues that it was the *sarkār* who in Khoqand provided the mobile link between the rural officials on the land, and the *hākims* and *bīks* in the towns—in other words, who performed the role of a Bukharan *amlākdār*.¹⁸ However, Nabiev's work was based solely on documents relating to the Khan's own estates, and it seems unlikely that the division of titles neatly followed the political division between the khanates (which was itself blurred and contested), even if the title of *amlākdār* does

¹³ M.A. Abduraimov, *Ocherki agrarnykh otnoshenii v Bukharskom Khanstve v XVI – pervoi polovine XIX veka*, vol. II (Tashkent: FAN, 1970): 11-12, 25; T. S. Saidkulov *Samarkand vo vtoroi polovine XIX – nachalo XX vekov* (Samarkand, 1970): 37-42.

¹⁴ A.A. Semenov, *Ocherk ustroistva tsentral'nogo administrativnogo upravleniya Bukharskogo Khanstva pozdneishego vremeni* (Stalinabad: Izd. AN TadzhSSR, 1955): 11.

¹⁵ S.A. Dudoignon, "Les "tribulations" du juge Ziya. Histoire et mémoire du clientelisme politique a Boukhara (1868-1929)." *Annales: Histoire et Sciences Sociales* 59/5-6 (Sept.-Dec. 2004): 1112; Franz Wennberg, *An Inquiry into Bukharan Qadimism. Mirza Salim-bik* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2002): 24-5.

¹⁶ A.L. Troitskaya, *Materialy po istorii kokandskogo khantsva XIX v. po dokumentam arkhiva kokandskikh khanov* (Moscow: Nauka, 1969): 33; V.M. Ploskikh, *Kirgizy i Kokandskoe Khanstvo* (Frunze: Izd. Ilim, 1977): 152, 192, 259; Kh. Bababekov *Istoriya Kokanda* (Tashkent: FAN, 2006): 119-39. B.M. Babadzhanov *Kokandskoe Khanstvo: vlast', politika, religiya* (Tokyo-Tashkent: TIAS, 2010): 609.

¹⁷ R.N. Nabiev, *Iz istorii Kokandskogo Khanstva. Feodal'noe khozyaistvo Khudoyar Khana* (Tashkent: FAN, 1973): 228.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*: 229-34.

seem to have been less commonly used in Khoqand than in Bukhara. According to Beisembiev's work on the *Tā'rikh-i Shahrukhi*, the hierarchy of titles and duties in Khoqand was extremely confused, but most positions in the state administration were based on Bukharan precedent,¹⁹ whilst Nabiev himself refers to the collection of *kharāj* by *amlākdārs* in Khoqand.²⁰ Beisembiev's index to the Khoqand chronicles lists only four occurrences, two of which are in the *Tā'rikh-i 'Ālimqulī Amīr-i Lashkar*, where they refer to the collectors of *kharāj*, although this is a late source composed thirty years after Khoqand's dissolution.²¹ Another mention, overlooked by Beisembiev, occurs in the Khoqandi *Tā'rikh-i Jadida-yi Tāshkand* (composed ca.1867-1886), where the term is being used in connection with tax-collection around Ura-Tepe, a region which had long been contested between Bukhara and Khoqand.²² Ultimately these terms are generic (in principle an *amlākdār* can mean anyone with control over property, a *sarkār* anyone in authority), and by the 19th century, at least, they seem to have become interchangeable, at least in Russian usage. In the absence of detailed work on taxation registers, *yārliqs* of appointment and other documents, it is difficult to say anything more definitive about the role of the *amlākdār* or *sarkār*: as we shall see, however, in the 1870s the Russians came to associate it with what they saw as a particularly corrupt and inefficient method of collecting *kharāj*.

The question of what was or was not *mulk* land is if anything even more difficult to establish than the precise role of the *amlākdār*. This is partly because it has proved particularly hard to disentangle questions of taxation from those of land tenure in Central Asia. Much the most vexed question for Tsarist scholars and their Soviet successors was the existence (or not) of separate categories of private property (*mulk*) and state land (usually referred to as *mamlaka-yi padshāhī* or *amlāk*), their respective levels of fiscal liability and the relative proportions of each (together with religious endowments or *waqf*) within the overall quantity of arable land. One reason for this is that from their arrival in the region the Russians usually referred to state land as *amlyak*, creating a number of semantic traps for the unwary. One of these is the apparent link between *amlak* and *amlākdār*, which is probably coincidental. It is quite possible that an *amlākdār* could collect taxes on all forms of land, making no distinction between different forms of tenure. Another misleading point is that grammatically, *amlāk* is simply the Arabic plural of *mulk*, and when applied to land it can indeed function as a simple plural. O. D. Chekhovich, in her

¹⁹ T.K. Beisembiev, *Tarikh-i Shakhrukhi kak istoricheskii istochnik* (Alma-Ata: Nauka, 1987): 67-8.

²⁰ Nabiev, *Iz istorii Kokandskogo Khanstva*: 101-2.

²¹ T.K. Beisembiev *Annotated Indices to the Kokand Chronicles* (Tokyo: ILCAAS, 2008): 724; *Idem* (ed. & trans.) *The Life of 'Alimqul. A Native Chronicle of Nineteenth Century Central Asia* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) trans. 60, 68, text ff. 62a, 75a; On page 91 Beisembiev suggests that in Khoqand the *sarkār* only collected the minor cesses of *nikāḥāna* (marriage) and *tarikāna* (inheritance) tax, and that *amlākdārs* collected all taxes on the land, but this contradicts Troitskaya and Nabiev, and indeed his own earlier work on the *Tā'rikh-i Shahrukhi*.

²² Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Khwāja Tāshkandī, *Tā'rikh-i Jadida-yi Tāshkand* ff.57b-58a <http://zerrspiegel.orientphil.uni-halle.de/t386.html> (accessed 17/11/2009).

publication of fifteenth and sixteenth century *waqfnāmas* relating to the vast estates of the 15th-century saint and landowner 'Ubaydullāh b. Maḥmūd Khwāja Aḥrār,²³ writes that the standard formula which many of the documents use refers to the conversion of Khwāja Aḥrār's 'estates'—*amlāk*—into *waqf* for charitable purposes.²⁴ Throughout the volume she translates *amlāk* simply as the plural of *mulk* (*milki*, in Russian), and the context in which the term is used makes it quite clear that these are personal, private possessions of the Khwāja. For instance, in one *waqfnāma* of 1490 transforming some of his property around Samarqand and Tashkent and the Kashka-Darya region into a *waqf* for the use of himself and his descendants and for the support of the Suzangaran *madrasa* in Samarqand, the term used for Khwāja Ahrar's estates is *amlāk-i khwudash* ('his own property').²⁵ It was probably this kind of usage of the term which led V. V. Barthold to claim that even in the nineteenth century *amlāk* and *mulk* were simply greater and smaller quantities of the same thing: he gave the following definition which he said applied to both.

A common form of land tenure, that is land, which in theory is considered to be the property of the state, but is held in permanent and hereditary use by those landholders who have converted it, who have the right to sell their plots [...] that is in practice they can dispose of it as their own property.²⁶

Other than this brief passage, Barthold paid little attention to *mulk* land in Central Asia and as early as 1928 his conclusions were being questioned by Soviet historians, who argued that, at least by the nineteenth century, there was in fact a clear difference in the terms of tenure between *amlāk* and *mulk* land, the latter owing far fewer obligations to the state.²⁷ Whilst this conclusion, informed as it is by the ideologically-driven search for forms of 'feudal' landholding in Central Asia, must be viewed with some caution, it is supported by other evidence. Abduraimov writes that although grammatically *amlāk* is simply the plural of *mulk*, in Bukhara by the early nineteenth century it had a particular juridical meaning, and was state land subject to heavier taxation than that which was privately owned.²⁸ In the late 1950s the ethnographer K. Shaniyazov questioned elderly inhabitants of the former Bukharan Emirate on the subject of the

²³ On Khwāja Aḥrār, his life, possessions and descendants see further N.I. Veselovskii, "Pamyatnik Khodzhi Akhrara v Samarkande." *Vostochnye Zametki* (St Pb.: Tip. Imp. AN, 1895): 321-6; J.-A. Gross, *Khwāja Ahrar: a Study of the Perceptions of Religious Power and Prestige in the late Timurid Period* (New York University Ph.D. Thesis, 1982); J. Paul, "Forming a Faction: The *Ḥimāyat* System of Khwaja Ahrar." *International Journal of Middle-East Studies* 23 (1991): 533-48; M. Kadyrova, *Zhitiya Khodzha Akhrara* (Tashkent: IFEAC, 2007).

²⁴ She uses the term *imenie*: O.D. Chekhovich, *Samarkandskie Dokumenty XV-XVI vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1974): 35.

²⁵ Chekhovich, *Samarkandskie Dokumenty*: 238 (text), 265 (trans.).

²⁶ V.V. Bartol'd, *Istoriya kul'turnoi zhizni Turkestana* (Leningrad: Izd. AN SSSR, 1927): 193.

²⁷ I. Khodorov, "K voprosu ob istoricheskoi evolyutsii zemlevladieniya v Turkestane." *Istoriik-Marksist* 10 (1928): 137-40.

²⁸ Abduraimov, *Ocherki agrarnykh otnoshenii*, vol. II: 11-12, 25.

pre-revolutionary system of taxation. All his interviewees were in agreement that *amlāk* and *mulk* were two different things, the former state, the latter private land. The rate of *kharāj* on *amlāk* could be as much as ½ the value of the crop, and it constituted the principal source of income for the Amir. *Mulk* estates were apparently much smaller than *amlāk*, carried a lower tax burden (no more than 20% of the value of the crop), and were usually farmed by the beneficiary himself.²⁹ Barthold was thus in error on this point: full private property clearly did exist in Central Asia.³⁰ As Schwarz explains it, both Islamic legal theory and local practice in Central Asia presupposed a clear distinction between state land (*mamlaka* or *amlāk*) and full private property (*milk* or *mulk*).³¹ Chekhovich wrote that Barthold had also failed to appreciate that not only were all forms of *mulk* private property, some also carried significant exemptions from tax. She further argued that those payments which were made on *mulk* land in Central Asia were simply a tax paid by private property owners, but E. A. Davidovich disagreed, instead interpreting them as rent paid to the state as the ultimate owner.³² They did both agree, however, on a fairly rigid schema which classified *mulk* land into three different types: the most common, *mulk-i kharāj*, was land subject to the normal tax of 20%; *mulk-i 'ushrī* was subject to a lower rate of *kharāj* because it notionally belonged to the descendants of the Arab invaders or other religious elites and was subject to half the usual rate of *kharāj*, i.e. 10%; finally *mulk-i ħurr-i khālīṣ* was not subject to taxation at all.³³ Schwarz notes that these distinctions were probably less rigid in practice, but a more significant problem is that Chekhovich and Davidovich's work is based on documents from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it is far from clear whether these categories were still in use in the nineteenth century, or if they were, whether they still meant the same thing. Some forms of tax-exemption or reduction on *mulk* land clearly did still exist: Schwarz's research suggests that *mulk-i 'ushrī* was still widespread in the early

²⁹ K. Shaniyazov, "Ob osnovnykh vidakh zemel'noi sobstvennosti i razmerakh kharadzha v Bukharskom Khanstve v kontse XIX – nachali XX veka (po etnograficheskim dannym)." *Obshchestvennye Nauki v Uzbekistane* 3 (1962): 51-6.

³⁰ J. Paul, "Review Essay: Recent monographs on the social history of Central Asia." *Central Asian Survey* 29/1 (March 2010): 126.

³¹ "Legal tradition and legal practice are unequivocal about one thing: *milk* of any kind is full ownership, independent from fiscal and other financial obligations of the title holder or the fiscal or legal status of the peasants. Private land (*milk*) could however become state land (*mamlaka*) as the result of a historical process, and in this process the peasants who had been tax-paying owners would have become rent-paying tenants. It was also common practice that state land was (re)converted to *milk*, usually in combination with the granting of tax privileges. But the legal distinction between *milk* and *mamlaka* remained clear", Schwarz, "Contested grounds": 35.

³² O.D. Chekhovich, "V.V. Bartol'd i puti dalneishogo issledovaniya problemy mil'ka." In *Formy feodal'noi zemel'noi sobstvennosti i vladeniya na Blizhnem i Srednem Vostoke. Bartol'dovskie chteniya 1975 g.*, ed. B. G. Gafurov (Moscow: Nauka, 1979): 146-58.

³³ E.A. Davidovich, "Feodal'nyi zemelnyi milk v Srednei Azii XV- XVIII vv: Sushchnost' i Transformatsiya." In *Formy feodal'noi zemel'noi sobstvennosti*, ed. Gafurov: 40-1; O.D. Chekhovich, "K probleme zemel'noi sobstvennosti v feodal'noi srednei azii." *Obshchestvennye Nauki v Uzbekistane* 11 (1976): 38-9.

nineteenth century, although in legal documents its title was Persianised to *mulk-i dah-yak* (i.e. one in ten).³⁴

The Samarqandi topographer and historian Abū Ṭāhir Khwāja wrote in the 1840s that the lands in the hills around the Chupan-Ata mausoleum to the north of Samarqand were subject only to *‘ushr* because the inhabitants had converted to Islam voluntarily at the time of the Arab conquests and had later heroically resisted the infidel Mongols.³⁵ As this suggests, there was a connection between the enjoyment of tax privileges and high religious status, although the extent of this correlation is still unclear. Barthold and Nabiev both argued that much tax-exempt *mulk* land was in the hands of *khwājas*,³⁶ members of a religious elite on which there is a growing literature.³⁷ The term is often taken as more or less synonymous with *sayyid*, i.e. claiming descent from the Prophet's kin, and the originating figure in most *khwāja* genealogies was Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, a son of ‘Alī whose heirs had briefly had claims on the Shi'i imamate, although *khwāja* groups are firmly Sunni.³⁸ However, Central Asian *khwājas* derived their authority and influence in large part from belonging to local Sufi lineages within the three principal Sufi brotherhoods: the Naqshbandīya, Yasawīya and Kubrawīya. Of these the Naqshbandīya had become dominant by the 16th century, and within the Naqshbandiyya one of the most important lineages was that of *khwājas* claiming descent from Aḥmad Kāsānī Makhdūm-i A'zam, the pupil and spiritual heir of Khwāja Aḥrār.³⁹ Although he was born in Ferghana, Kāsānī spent most of his life in Samarqand and was buried in the nearby village of Dahbid, where in the 1890s there were still at least fifty households of *khwājas* claiming descent from him, some of whom still owned substantial amounts of land.⁴⁰ The true extent of landholdings in the hands of *khwājas* by the 19th century was probably less than it had been in

³⁴ Schwarz, "Contested Grounds": 35.

³⁵ *Samariya - Sochinenie Abu Takhir Khodzhi*, ed. N.I. Veselovskii (St Pb.: Tip. I Boraganskogo, 1904): 9.

³⁶ Bartol'd, *Istoriya kul'turnoi zhizni*: 192-3; Nabiev *Istoriya Kokandskogo Khanstva*: 101-2.

³⁷ See A.A. Khismatulin, "Kh'adzhagan." *Islam na territorii byvshei Rossiiskoi Imperii*, Tom I (Moscow: Vostochnaya Literatura, 2006): 417-25; D. DeWeese, "The *Masha'ikh-i Turk* and the *Khwājagan*." *Journal of Islamic Studies* 7/2 (1996): 180-207; *Idem*, "The Politics of Sacred Lineages in 19th-century Central Asia: Descent Groups Linked to Khwaja Ahmad Yasavi in Shrine Documents and Genealogical Charters." *International Journal of Middle-East Studies* 31 (1999): 507-30; J. Paul, *Die Politische und Soziale Bedeutung der Naqshbandiyya in Mittelasien im 15. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1991).

³⁸ M.F. Köprülü, *Early mystics in Turkish literature*, ed. and trans. Gary Leiser and Robert Dankoff (London: Routledge, 2006): 70 n.1; D. DeWeese, "Foreword.;" A. von Kügelgen and M. Kemper, "Preface.;" 'Prilozheniya 1.' In *Islamization and Sacred Lineages in Central Asia. The Legacy of Ishaq Bab in Narrative and Genealogical Traditions. Vol. 2: Genealogical Charters and Sacred Families: Nasab-namas and Khwāja groups linked to the Ishaq Bab Narrative, 19th-21st centuries*, ed. A. K. Muminov, A. von Kügelgen, D. Deweese, and M. Kemper (Almaty: Daik Press 2008): 14-16, 37-8, 277.

³⁹ Veselovskii, "Pamyatnik Khodzhi Akhrara v Samarkande": 321-6.

⁴⁰ N.I. Veselovskii, "Dagbid." *Zapiski Vostochnago Otdeleniya Imperatorskago Russkago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva* II (1888): 85-7.

heyday of Khwāja Ahrār or the Juibari Sheikhs of Bukhara (and certainly more fragmented).⁴¹ What is more important, as we shall see, is that the Russians came to believe that *mulk* land was predominantly used to support these and other religious elites.

The historiographical confusion surrounding these questions has its roots in the first attempts by the Russians to understand the nature of land tenure in the Zarafshan Valley immediately after the conquest. Erroneous as many of their conclusions will probably prove to have been, they nevertheless informed colonial policy on administration, taxation and attitudes towards Bukharan elites. Hence I am principally concerned with the *Russian* understanding of these subjects in the years immediately following the fall of Samarqand in 1868, and the perceptions, reasoning and motivations which led them to annul the privileges of groups who could potentially have been very useful collaborators in the construction of a colonial administration. As we shall see, for the Russians the key difference between *amlāk* and *mulk* lay in the tax privileges which they believed the latter enjoyed, not the fact that it was private, hereditary tenure. Whether this view was justified or not, it would form the core of the debate amongst Russian officials in the immediate aftermath of the conquest of Samarqand and the Zarafshan Valley. Central to this is the correspondence between the two officials who took the decision to reform the taxation system, namely Governor-General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman and the Military Commandant of the Zarafshan *okrug* (military district), Major-General Alexander Konstantinovich Abramov. I argue that their decision was partly fiscally motivated, as they struggled to understand and manage a tax-collection system based around the *amlākdār* and with apparently myriads of special exemptions, and that it also stemmed also from a deep suspicion that all Bukharan landowners belonged to religious descent groups, and were thus fosterers of 'Muslim fanaticism.'

I. Russian Encounters with *Amlākdārs* and *Kharāj*

Fifty years after the Russian conquest, Senator Count Pahlen, the leader of an Imperial commission enquiring into Turkestan's administration, wrote that to begin with the Russians introduced little by way of reforms to the land-tax system in Turkestan:

At first our power was not yet acquainted with the native revenue system and did not have the essential organs for the assessment of data, because of which the revenue was remitted to the treasury in very modest amounts. Out of a feeling of solidarity with the native population, and in accordance with their

⁴¹ On the Juybari Shaykhs, who also had vast landholdings (and who occupied hereditary positions at the Bukharan court) see P.I. Ivanov, *Iz Arkhiva Sheikhoi Dzhuibari* (Moscow-Leningrad: Izd. AN SSSR, 1938) and *Id. Khozyaistvo Dzhuibarskikh Sheikhoi* (Leningrad: Izd. AN SSSR, 1955).

own interests, both *sarkārs* and the *zakāтчis* took the side of the payers, which they were able to do without any danger to themselves, as the Russian power was unable to have any real control over them.⁴²

Von Kaufman had made a similar assertion, stating that for four and a half years after the conquest the administration of the Zarafshan *okrug* in particular was left unchanged from Bukharan times as far as taxes and their collection were concerned.⁴³ Although Pahlen was quite right about the small amount of revenue the Russians were able to collect immediately after the conquest, both were exaggerating the degree of continuity with the Muslim regimes even at this early stage. Despite the fact that the Zarafshan *okrug* was only formally annexed to the Russian Empire in 1886, eighteen years after the conquest, the Russians set about reorganising and altering its administration in 1871, though they continued to hint to Bukhara and to the British that they might be willing to hand it back.⁴⁴ The local *bīks* and *hākims* were immediately removed from the equation as most of them had fled to Bukhara or Khoqand before the Russian advance, and Samarqand was no exception, as General von Kaufman symbolically occupied what he described as the "Khan's palace, known in Asia under the name of the 'Kök-Tash' (blue stone)", which had once been part of the throne of Tamerlane.⁴⁵ Whilst some members of the old elite, notably Jura-Bek and Baba-Bek, the former *hākims* of Shahrisabz and Kitab, were eventually allowed to join the Army in largely honorary positions (one a major-general, the other a colonel),⁴⁶ they were not given any further role in the collection of land revenue or local administration. The Russians do not seem to have made any attempt to find substitute local dignitaries whom they could co-opt to their side.

Accounts of the fall of Samarqand tend to concentrate on the military campaign,⁴⁷ and by the time a chancellery had been established there and had begun producing documents the expropriation and expulsion of the Bukharan *bīks* was already a *fait accompli*. However the

⁴² Senator Gofmeister Graf K.K. Palen, *Otchet po Revizii Turkestanskago Kraya, proizvedennoi po VYSOCHAISHEMU Povelению. Sel'skoe Upravlenie, Russkoe i Tuzemnoe* (St Pb.: Senatskaya Tip., 1910): 6-7

⁴³ Gen.-Ad't. K.P. fon-Kaufman, *Proekt Vsepoddanneishego Otcheta Gen.-Ad'yutanta fon-Kaufmana po Grazhdanskomu Upravleniyu* (St Pb.: Voennaya Tip., 1885): 68.

⁴⁴ G.N. Curzon, *Russia in Central Asia in 1889 and the Anglo-Russian Question* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1889): 215-6.

⁴⁵ Von Kaufman to Alexander II 02.05.1868, RGVA, f. 1396, op. 2, d. 46, ll. 53-4ob; Ron Sela has suggested that both the idea of the Kök Tash as a symbol of sovereignty and its association with Timur were of relatively recent origin, as he has not found any explicit reference to it before the 18th century, R. Sela, "The "Heavenly Stone" (Kök Tash) of Samarqand: A Rebels' Narrative Transformed." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 17/1 (2007): 21-32; Von Kaufman's understanding of it was almost certainly based upon the account by Nikolai Khanykov, who visited Samarkand in 1841 and wrote that every Khan needed to sit on it in order to be legitimised: Khanykov *Opisanie*: 101-2; Khanikoff *Bokhara*: 131.

⁴⁶ Bartol'd, *Istoriya kul'turnoi zhizni*: 190; G.A. Akhmedzhanov, *Rossiiskaya imperiya v tsentral'noi Azii* (Tashkent: FAN, 1995): 28-9; Baba-Bek was the last independent Governor of Shahrisabz, Jura-Bek his relative and *hākim* of nearby Kitab. Both fled to Khoqand in 1870 but were extradited by Khudāyār Khan. Beisembiev *Life of 'Alimqul*: 26.

⁴⁷ See e. g. M. Lyko *Ocherk voennykh deistvii 1868 goda v doline Zaryavshana* (St Pb.: Tip. Dep. Udelov, 1871); A.P. Kh[oroshkhin], "Vesna 1868g v Srednei Azii." *Voennyi Sbornik* 9 (Sept. 1875): 154-87.

Russian attitude towards these governors or petty rulers, and the means by which they stripped them of their powers, can be gauged quite well by a decree from Major-General Abramov, conqueror of Samarqand and Commandant of the Zarafshan military district, issued after the brief Iskander-Kul campaign in August-September 1870 which resulted in the annexation of three mountainous *bekstvos* in the valley of the Upper Zarafshan. This reads as follows:

To all inhabitants of Magian, Farap and Kshtut. By order of the Governor-General, all the lands of Magian, Farap and Kshtut are united to the lands of the Zarafshan *okrug* and henceforth will be ruled by the Russian Government. The former *bīks* Hussein Bek, Shady Bek and Seid Bek are banished from this land for ever. The population must submit to its Government and pray to God for the White Tsar, who in his mercy has taken them under his high patronage. All *āqsaqāls*, *qāzīs* and *amlākdārs* are commanded to appear in Samarqand within a month in order to receive their marks of office. Those who do not appear within this time will be removed from their posts.⁴⁸

Hussein Bek and Shady Bek were the sons of the former *bīk* of Samarqand, who had fled to the mountains after the Russians took the city, and were still viewed as a potential subversive threat.⁴⁹ In response to this appeal several *qāzīs* and *āqsaqāls* appeared at Penjikent, swore allegiance to the White Tsar and were rewarded with *khalats* at a ceremony presided over by Von Kaufman, who was visiting the Zarafshan *okrug* at the time.⁵⁰ There was no further mention of the *amlākdārs*, who both here and elsewhere in the Zarafshan Valley were less fortunate. Although on the face of it they could have continued to play a key role in revenue-collection and constituted an important collaborative elite, rather like the *zamīndārs* of Bengal, within three years of the conquest of Samarqand their function had been abolished. All thirty-two *amlākdārstvos* in the Zarafshan *okrug* were absorbed, and revenue-collection was decentralised and devolved to a lower level of the administration, the so-called *sel'skoe obshchestvo* or agrarian community, which as in European Russia was meant to constitute the basic unit of taxation.⁵¹ Whilst there it was a formalisation of the existing peasant commune,⁵² in Central Asia, where this institution did not exist, the consequences were rather different. This was the earliest, and also perhaps the most profound change which colonial rule brought about in the Central Asian

⁴⁸ Decree from Abramov 03.09.1870, TsGARUz, f. I-5, op. 1, d. 35, l. 20. The document is available at <http://zerrspiegel.orientphil.uni-halle.de/t1384.html> (accessed 09/12/2009).

⁴⁹ A. Fedchenko, "Zametki o Magianskom Bekstve." In *Materialy dlya statistiki Turkestanskogo Kraya*, ed. N. Maev Vyp. II (St Pb.: n.p., 1873). In *TS* 60 (1873): 53.

⁵⁰ N. Maev, "Poseshchenie g. general-gubernatorom Zaravshanskogo Okrug." *TV* 17 (24th May 1871).

⁵¹ Bartol'd, *Istoriya Kul'turnoi zhizni*: 193; von-Kaufman, *Proekt Vsepoddanneishego Otcheta*: 69.

⁵² J. Burbank, "Thinking like an Empire: Estate, Law, and Rights in the Early Twentieth Century." In *Russian Empire. Space, People, Power 1700-1930*, ed. J. Burbank, M. von Hagen, and A. Remnev (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2007): 201.

countryside, but both its inception and its long-term consequences remain little-studied and poorly understood.

The first Russian scholar to examine the complex question of land rights and tax collection in the Zarafshan region in the immediate aftermath of the conquest was the orientalist Alexander Ludwigovich Kun, and his conclusions seem to have informed most subsequent Russian understandings of the *amlākdār* and his role. Kun had graduated from the Oriental Faculty of St Petersburg University in 1864, was assigned to assist Von Kaufman in Turkestan in 1867, and sent to the newly-established Zarafshan military district in 1868, where he participated in the Shahrīsabz and Iskander-Kul expeditions under General Abramov.⁵³ He gave the following definition of the *amlākdār*'s office:

Amlākdār (one who has *mulk*—a literal translation)—in reality means: a tax-collector. The *amlākdārs* are appointed by the *bīks*, from whom they receive *yarlīqs* (deeds of appointment): they constitute the administrative power in the *tumans* and have a number of assistants, called *dārugahs*.⁵⁴ Their duties are, at the time of the collection of grain, to seal up the portion of grain collected.

His detailed description of the *amlākdār*'s functions was composed and published in 1873, and I will attempt to summarise it here.⁵⁵

Depending on the size of the *tumān* (district) concerned, a newly-appointed *bīk* would in turn appoint one, two, three or more *amlākdārs* to collect the land taxes there. Occasionally he would leave the existing ones in place, but Kun's local informants assured him that this was a rare occurrence, and that very few *amlākdārs* remained in their posts even for two or three years. These *amlākdārs* would be issued with *tanap* registers for their *tumān*, collected by the *bīk* from their predecessors in the post, which recorded the fixed amount of tax to be paid per *tanap* of land under valuable cash crops such as fruit or cotton.⁵⁶ Occasionally the registers would need to be revised to remove inaccuracies, a task normally undertaken by a *muftī* (a member of the judicial branch of the administration), who would consult with the local *āqsaqāls* and *amīns* to draw up new registers indicating the ownership of land and the crops it carried. In early spring at the time of the first sowing, the *amlākdār* would proceed to collect the *qush-pul*.⁵⁷ He would be

⁵³ AV: f. 33, op. 1, d. 33, ll. 12ob–14ob; N. A. Maev, "A. L. Kun." *TV* 46 (22nd Nov. 1888).

⁵⁴ A superintendent or manager. The word appears to be derived from a Mongol term meaning 'Governor'.

⁵⁵ Part of the manuscript is to be found in AV, f. 33, op. 1, d. 20, ll. 1-2ob. It was published as A. L. Kun, "Bukharskie Poryadki. Zametki o poryadke vzimaniya pozemel'nykh podatei." *TV* 32 (14th August 1873).

⁵⁶ *Tanāb*, which the Russians wrote as *tanap*, was both a measurement of land (which varied widely between different regions, and was probably determined by the amount of water needed to irrigate it) and a Bukharan tax levied as a fixed charge by area rather than as a proportion of the harvest. It was applied to market-gardens, orchards, cotton and other particularly valuable crops, often in areas near cities.

⁵⁷ A money tax on the area of ploughed land. *Qush* means 'pair' or 'couple'. Here it is a measurement unit, probably the notional amount of land that could be ploughed by a yoke of oxen, known as *juft-i gāv* in Iran,

accompanied by his *mirzās* and *dārugahs*, and it was the responsibility of the local *āqsaqāls* and *amīns* to provide hospitality for him and his suite.

The collection of *kharāj* on the grain crop from *ābī* (irrigated) land would not take place until midsummer. Crucially, Kun writes that, unlike the *tanap* tax, there were no pre-existing registers for this tax, because the size of the harvest and grain reserves varied so much from year to year. Thus the register of those on whom the *kharāj* levy fell was drawn up anew every year, usually at the time when the crop was harvested. This was done under the supervision of the *amlākdār* and his assistants. The *dārugahs* would place their seals on pieces of damp clay attached to some of the *kharmān* (stooks or piles of grain)⁵⁸ in order to ensure that none of it was disposed of before the *kharāj* was collected.⁵⁹ All the men involved (who included a *nānwāy* or baker, who placed loaves of bread on the *kharmān* to wish a prosperous year ahead) were entitled to take a proportion of the grain away in the tails of their shirts or the skirts of their *khalats* as payment in kind, known as the *kifsen*.⁶⁰ The collection of tax on the harvest would finish at the end of October. The *amlākdār* would draw up a register in consultation with local *āqsaqāls*, stating from whom and in what quantities tax had been collected, and took these, together with all the tax (both in kind and that which had been commuted into money) to the *bīk*. He gave a full account of that which had already been disbursed to members of the fiscal administration in payment for their services, which was also his responsibility. Kun claimed that the tax on *lalmī* or *bahārī* (unirrigated, rain-fed) land was collected in the same way, although this seems doubtful given the greater variations in crop.

Kun's article is the most comprehensive account I have yet seen of the role of the *amlākdār* in the collection of taxes in Bukhara, but for the purposes of this paper it is useful primarily because it tells us how the Russians had come to understand a system of tax-collection which by the time he was writing had already been abolished. On this score the main points to take from

and in medieval and early-modern Europe as 'oxgang' or 'bovate'. I am grateful to Beatrice Penati for providing me with this explanation.

⁵⁸ Steingass defines this as "reaped corn, but unthreshed, and piled up in a large circular stack." Lambton writes that in Iran "the word *kharmān*, which means harvest in general, is also applied in particular to a heap comprising the grain harvest for a particular piece of land." A.K. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia* (Oxford: OUP, 1953): 361, 431. Kun refers to the grain already being threshed at the point when taxes were collected, and also employs the Russian term *gumna*, so it is probable that here it refers to threshed grain heaped on a threshing-floor. Kun was also the editor of *Turkestanskii Al'bom*, where in Part 3, pl. 34, no. 160, a photograph purports to show an official (an *amlākdār*?) measuring a pile of grain with a wooden implement, and the caption "*khirmenberdari*." It is unclear from the text of the article, but it seems probable that only a certain proportion of the *kharmān* (presumably 1/5 in most places) were set aside for the payment of tax.

⁵⁹ O.D. Chekhovich also describes the "archaic" practice in the 19th century whereby the *amlākdār* placed a seal upon the new season's harvest on what she refers to as *amlāk* (state) land to prevent the peasantry from disposing of any of it before taxes had been collected, *Dokumenty k istorii agrarnykh otnoshenii*, ed. A.K. Arends and O.D. Chekhovich: xiv-xv. According to Lambton a similar system of collecting taxes in kind from the threshing-floor existed in Iran and dated back to Sassanian times. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia*: 40-2.

⁶⁰ Derived from *kif*, which according to Steingass can mean both a 'handful' and 'hemming a garment.'

Kun's account are first, that the *amlākdār* was the single most important Bukharan tax-official (which may or may not have been true), but above all his statement that under the *amlākdārī* system the assessment for *kharāj* was carried out afresh every year. This was the aspect of Bukharan land-tax collection which the Russians would find most difficult to deal with, and which appears ultimately to have led to the system's abolition.

II. Pressures on the Fiscal System in the 1870s

Von Kaufman was under considerable pressure to raise revenue in Turkestan because of the immense cost of the annexation, and the degree to which the administration and military presence there was being subsidised by St Petersburg. In 1868 the Steppe Commission had complained that at least a half of the potential revenue from Turkestan was being lost through inefficiency, corruption and lack of control over collection, something the metropolitan press quickly seized upon.⁶¹ A year later Russian expenditure in Turkestan amounted to 4,233,482 roubles, and receipts to just 2,356,241 roubles. In the period 1868 – 1872 the revenue in Turkestan fell short of costs by 19,600,000 roubles,⁶² and this ratio of income to expenditure would if anything grow worse over the next ten years.⁶³ Von Kaufman was acutely aware that his enemies in Moscow and St Petersburg, led by the disgruntled General Chernyaev, were using these figures to mount bitter political attacks on him.⁶⁴ The Governor-General spent most of 1868 complaining about low *kharāj* returns from Samarqand and the fact that very little *zakāt* was being collected at the border with Bukhara. Abramov explained rather sheepishly that: "As the region was finally taken in June, a part of the *tanāb* and *qush-pul* levies, which in some areas are collected early—were demanded and carried off by the Bukharan officials."⁶⁵

The Russians found considerable difficulty in collecting taxes using the personnel they had inherited from the previous regimes. Not only did they decide that these agents were unreliable, the lack of any comprehensive survey of agricultural land in the region meant that the authorities had very little idea of what area was being harvested each year, and with what crop. This information was essential if they wanted to maintain a revenue system based largely on

⁶¹ "Po povodu uchrezhdeniya novogo Turkestanskogo General-Gubernatorstva i Voennogo Okruga." *Golos* 194 (1868). In *TS* 1 (1868): 171.

⁶² M.A. Terent'ev, *Rossiya i Angliya v Srednei Azii* (St Pb.: P. P. Merkulov, 1875): 323.

⁶³ F.K. Girs, *Otchet, Revizuyushchago, po Vysochaishemu Povelению, Turkestanskii Krai* (St Pb.: n.p., 1884): 366.

⁶⁴ D. Mackenzie, "Kaufman of Turkestan: an assessment of his administration 1867-1881." *Slavic Review* 26/2 (June 1967): 265-85; I disagree with Mackenzie's suggestion that it was only owing to malice inspired by Chernyaev that the figures for military expenditure were included on the debit side of Turkestan's balance-sheet. The military geographer M.I. Venyukov dismissed this argument at the time, calculating that the annexation of Turkestan had necessitated the stationing of at least 35,500 *additional* troops 'beyond the Urals' (i.e. in Asia). M.I. Venyukov, "Postupatel'noe dvizhenie Rossii v Srednei Azii." *Sbornik Gosudarstvennykh Znaniy*, vol. III ed. V. Bezobrazov (St Pb.: Tip. V. Bezobrazova, 1877): 82-3.

⁶⁵ Abramov to von Kaufman, (?06.1869), TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 15, l. 102; von-Kaufman, *Proekt Vsepoddanneishego Otcheta*: 69-70.

kharāj, which was now meant to be paid wherever possible in cash. An early example of such complaints comes from the region of Ura-tepe near Khujand, a few months before the Zarafshan Valley was annexed, in a region which by then had been under Russian rule for two years. Captain A. P. Chaikovskii, the then sub-commandant of the Ura-tepe division explained:

The *kharāj* cess [...] presents really the most equitable system of taxation, - since the people pay according to the goods they actually possess, taking into account the harvest, - but given the unsatisfactory result, gross abuses and the lack of control, we are forced to wish that the *kharāj* cess be replaced by a different tax, and in that case a land tax would be the most satisfactory [...] At the same time the *kharāj* cess requires an endless number of eyes and hands, in order to ensure that movable objects subject to tax should not be hidden, unpaid for etc.⁶⁶

He claimed that under the *ancien régime* (which in Ura-tepe could have been either Bukhara, Khoqand or local rulers at different times) *kharāj* had been collected primarily to support the military, and that because the tax-collectors were also drawn from the military, they had a direct interest in maximising receipts.⁶⁷ This was no longer the case, and now he thought the whole system should be replaced with a simple charge on the area of cultivated land, on the model of the *tanap* cess, as the Russians simply did not have the knowledge or the personnel to carry out the annual harvest assessments necessary for the maintenance of *kharāj*. The tax proposed by Chaikovskii was to be levied on all cultivated land, at a rate of 10% of the average harvest. As he said, this would require a comprehensive land survey (of a kind that would be unsuccessfully attempted in Ferghana in the late 1870s).⁶⁸ He calculated that 20 *tanābs* of wheat would produce an average crop of 21 *poods*, worth 6 roubles and 30 kopeks, of which 63 kopeks would be due in cash. Chaikovskii estimated that on this basis (and ignoring more valuable crops, such as rice), such a tax would bring in 249,000 roubles a year, or three times the current receipts.

Finally, using this means, we will do away with the abnormal position of our power, when—so far as tax is concerned—we do not have control in our hands, and have to be satisfied with what they give us. In this instance we will benefit in two ways, materially and morally, since the natives clearly see our failure and the ease with which they can deceive the authorities. This situation cannot be prolonged, we must, and are obliged to take into our hands that control, which at the moment, I can confirm we do not have.

⁶⁶ Chaikovskii to Abramov, 01.03.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 11, ll. 1-2.

⁶⁷ This offers some independent confirmation of Semenov's claim that the revenue from *amlāk* was used to pay the Bukharan military, although the connection is somewhat unclear. Semenov, *Ocherk pozemel'no-podatnogo i nalogovogo ustroistva*: 54.

⁶⁸ On this see B. Penati, "Notes on the birth of Russian Turkestan's fiscal system. A view from the Fergana oblast'." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53/5 (2010): 739-69; in the same article she notes that A.P. Chaikovskii (1841-1903) had participated in the 1866 military campaigns in Central Asia and in 1898 would become military governor of the Ferghana oblast'.

The sole means of verifying the current system of revenue collection, is to conduct a poll of names of all the inhabitants. It is necessary only to recall our religious difference, a few verses of the Koran, asiatic cunning—to see that the method outlined above has become a comedy, in which, once again, the comic role is played by us.⁶⁹

Chaikovskii's suggestions were not heeded immediately, but from 1871 the Russians began to make some sweeping changes in the structure of local government they had inherited from Bukhara. In 1874 Kun published a retrospective article about the *amlākdārī* system of tax-collection, saying that whilst he was unaware how well or badly the system had worked under the Bukharan regime, since the Russians had taken over the Zarafshan Valley in 1868 problems of corruption had become so acute that in 1872 a commission (of which he was a member) had been set up to look into their activities. This concluded that most *amlākdārs*, even if honest, had so many *kharmans* to assess (80-100 per day) that it was impossible for them to judge accurately how much grain they contained, and that peasants were withholding much of the harvest and avoiding assessment altogether. In many cases the *amlākdārs* and their assistants, the *dārugahs* and *amīns*, were taking a larger share of the harvest for themselves than was reaching the treasury. This was because, Kun wrote, the peasants considered the *kifsen*—the perquisite to which tax officials were entitled as their payment—to form a part of the *kharāj* tax, and deducted it from the amount they gave to the state. Furthermore, whilst the size of the *kifsen* was determined by the amount an official could carry away in the skirts of his *khalat*, the *kharmān* from which they were taken varied widely in size, so that sometimes the *kifsen* comprised the state's entire share of that particular pile. He gave a series of examples uncovered by the commission in Aforinkent and Aq-tepe: in the latter case, a *kharmān* of grain belonging to Mullah Raḥmat Raziqulov had been assessed by the *amlākdār* at eight *poods*. On being weighed it turned out to contain 9 ½ *poods*. The state's share of this amounted to 1 *pood* 36 *funts*. However, the *dārugah* took 1 *pood* 7 ½ *funts*, the *serker*⁷⁰ 13 *funts*, and the *amin* 10 *funts*, making two *poods* 13 *funts* altogether, the officials pocketing the difference. The further away from

⁶⁹ Chaikovskii to Abramov, 01.03.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 11, ll.5ob- 6.

⁷⁰ This is the first mention of a *sarkār* in Kun's writings on the Bukharan tax system, and in the other examples he cites in this article the equivalent official is an *amlākdār*. For him, at least, the terms seem to have been interchangeable. One article in the liberal St. Petersburg daily, *Golos*, which seems to be at least partly based on Kun's work, explicitly notes that a *sarkār* is "the same thing as an *amlākdār*": "Podatnaya sistema v Turkestanskom krae." *Golos* 134. In *TS* 152 (1875): 38; the term *sarkār* seems to have been more current among Russian officers before Kun conducted his researches, and *amlakdars* are not even mentioned in the description of the Bukharan tax system given by General Staff Officer L. F. Kostenko in *Srednyaya Aziya i Vodvorenii v nei Russkoi Grazhdanstvennosti* (St Pb.: Tip. V. Bezobrazov, 1871): 65, which bizarrely has *mīrābs* (irrigation officials) acting as the *sarkār's* subordinate. Kun himself would write about *sarkārs* in more detail a few years later when he was assigned to survey the newly-annexed lands of the Khoqand Khanate, where he described them as tax collectors, selected predominantly from amongst former slaves of the Khan: A.L. Kun, *Ocherk Kokanskogo Khanstva. Otdel'nyi ottisk iz izvestii Imperatorskogo Russkogo Geograficheskogo obshchestva*, vol. XII (SPb.: n. p., 1876): 6.

Samarqand, the more common such problems became. When the commission questioned the inhabitants in the bazaar of Aq-tepe as to why they had not petitioned the authorities about this abuse, they replied that they did not know that Samarqand was the seat of government, and that the *amlākdārs* had threatened them that the Russians would send them to Siberia if they petitioned: "how can we petition against the *amlākdārs*, they are powerful people."⁷¹ Babajanov notes that in Khoqand before the Russian conquest many of the Khan's fiscal practices were contested by the *ʿulamā* as arbitrary and contrary to the *sharīʿa*, whilst some *zakāṭchīs* seem to have been very successful at enriching themselves, so this emphasis on corruption may have been more than just a Russian trope.⁷²

After 1870-1 in Samarqand I have found no further references to *amlākdārs*, *sarkārs* and *zakāṭchīs* in Russian territory except as agents of the Bukharan Government, and the Pahlen report suggests that all these Bukharan-era posts were abolished in 1871.⁷³ In 1872 the Russians also began to simplify the tax-system itself, as von Kaufman recalled

Notwithstanding the more developed and energetic supervision of the Russian Administration, and all the attempts at betterment and improvement in the correct collection of taxes, the administration of *tumans* and *amlyakstv* [sic], under the old Bukharan system it turned out to be unsustainable. I was forced, having refused to consider it capable of further improvement, to decide on an essential reorganisation, which began to get underway in 1872, - after all attempts at improvement, based on the foundation of unchanged Bukharan conventions, had brought about all the useful results they could, they were unable to overcome the greatest insufficiencies in the system, which lay in its very fundamentals.⁷⁴

The Bukharan system of taxation was replaced in 1873, when it was simplified to *zakāt*, *tanāb* and 10% *kharāj* (reduced from 20%) and some detailed surveys were undertaken by Russian officials seconded from their normal duties. One of these, Ozerov, who had been the president of the Semirechie *oblast'* land commission, remarked in an unsolicited project for the reform of the revenue system in the Zarafshan *okrug*, that corruption amongst the *āqsaqāls* had been endemic under the Bukharans and that the Russians still had no means of imposing effective control over them.⁷⁵ Ultimately these investigations were supposed to have revealed that over the previous three years a total of 165,184 roubles had been withheld from the Russian authorities in the Zarafshan *okrug* by native revenue officials.⁷⁶ Writing in the late

⁷¹ A. L. Kun, "Zametka o pozemel'nykh sborakh v Zarafshanskom okruge." *TV* 1 (2nd January 1874).

⁷² Babadzhonov, *Kokandskoe Khanstvo*: 603-12.

⁷³ Senator Gofmeister Graf K.K. Palen, *Otchet po Revizii Turkestanskago Kraya, proizvedennoi po VYSOCHAISHEMU Povelению. Nalogi i Poshliny. Organy Finansovogo Upravleniya* (St Pb.: Senatskaya Tip., 1910): 50.

⁷⁴ Von-Kaufman, *Proekt Vsepoddanneishego Otcheta*: 69.

⁷⁵ Ozerov to Abramov, 07.10.1870, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 46, l. 1.

⁷⁶ Palen, *Nalogi i Poshliny*: 50-1; Ignat'ev, *Ob'yasnitel'naya Zapiska*: 100.

1870s, several years after the abolition of *amlākdārī* and the dismantling of the Bukharan system of revenue collection in the Zarafshan *okrug*, General von Kaufman later reflected that:

The reform began with the abolition of the *sarkārs* and *amlākdārs* at that time, when the weaknesses of native economic organisation in the Syr-Darya *oblast'* became clear. Deciding against introducing in the [Zarafshan] region the same unfortunate form of revenue establishment, I found it possible to hand over the matter of tax collections and the economic part of the administration to the direct management of *volostnye upraviteli* [canton administrators] and village headmen.⁷⁷

He went on to express his satisfaction with this move, pointing to the marked increase in the amount of revenue collected by his chosen intermediaries. This was certainly true (although it did not affect the overall deficit) and was in some ways quite impressive given the concurrent reduction in the rate of *kharāj*. However whilst overall it seems likely that the tax burden declined in Turkestan as a result of this change, it was no longer as responsive to the vagaries of the harvest as it had been. This led to complaints from some inhabitants. Commenting on a series of petitions from the inhabitants of the large town of Peishambe, Abramov wrote:

The substance of most of the petitions of the inhabitants of the *tumān* of Peishambe who are cultivating *amlāk* (state) land does not lie in the fact that they have been taxed unjustly with regard to the quantity of land and confirmed prices, but in the fact that, in their view, the *kharāj* tax should not have been levied in full in some areas of the Peishambe *tumān* where there was allegedly no harvest in 1871. [...] The reason for the petitions of the inhabitants of Katta-Kurgan about the onerousness of the collection of taxes above all lies in the sudden transition from the former *amlākdārī* system of collection, to the new order, more strict and just. In this respect the *amlākdārī* system entirely spoiled the people, accustoming them never to pay in full, that which was due from them.⁷⁸

Amongst the many things Abramov failed to acknowledge here was the fact that under Bukhara the tax burden in each locality had been set annually according to the actual size of the harvest, and determined at least in part by officials appointed by the centre who could monitor the activities of local *āqsaqāls*. The Russians, because they had neither the manpower nor the expertise to maintain a system of comparable flexibility and supervision, had simply devolved all these functions to the *sel'skoe obshchestvo* or 'agrarian society,' which in Central Asia was a new, and often rather artificial entity which might comprise one large village or several small ones which had never formed a unit before.⁷⁹ After 1875, when a rudimentary land survey was completed, each *obshchestvo* (also known as an *aksakalstvo*) was assessed for a certain amount

⁷⁷ Von-Kaufman, *Proekt Vsepoddanneishego Otcheta*: 69-70.

⁷⁸ Abramov to von Kaufman, 19.11.1872, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 70, ll. 101-101ob, 103.

⁷⁹ See B. Penati, "Swamps, Sorghum and Saxauls: Marginal Lands and the Fate of Russian Turkestan (c. 1880-1915)." *Central Asian Survey* 29/1 (2010): 61-78; Some Russian officials would claim to have identified forms of social organisation similar to the Russian *obshchina* in the Central Asian countryside, but this proved largely illusory. See S.N. Abashin, "Obshchina v Turkestane v otsenkakh i sporakh russkikh administratorov nachala 80-kh gg. XIX v." *Sbornik Russkogo Istoricheskogo Obshchestva* 5 (153): 71-88.

of land revenue on the basis of the land, crops and prevailing bazaar prices in that year.⁸⁰ This amount rapidly become out of date over the succeeding decade, so that in practice far less than 10% was being collected. More importantly, however, under this system the Russians effectively washed their hands of the trickiest element of all - the distribution of tax within villages and *aksakalstvos*. Instead this would now be determined by the *āqsaqāl* in collaboration with the *illikbāshīs* (electors, chosen from amongst heads of households) who had chosen him, which increased the possibilities of corruption and unfair distribution of the burden.⁸¹ In the absence of a detailed cadastral survey of arable land in the Zarafshan Valley, this decision ensured that the colonial regime would remain a shallow one, with only weak extractive capabilities.

III. Problems with *Mulk*

Apart from the basic means of assessing and collecting *kharāj* and other land taxes, the other major question facing the Russians as they sought to reform the land revenue administration in the aftermath of the conquest was that of pre-existing tax privileges and property rights. The new colonial regime seems to have found the complex patterns of landholding and tax privilege subsumed under the label *mulk* as inconsistent and confusing as later historians have done. Officials complained that *mulk* privileges eroded the tax base, and that much of the income thus diverted went to undesirable religious elites. It thus seems likely that when referring to *mulk* they were talking mainly about *mulk-i ħurr-i khālīṣ*, that exempt from all forms of taxation, and *mulk-i 'ushrī*, that which (according to Davidovich) paid half the usual rate of *kharāj*, although it is equally possible that many more types of *mulk* and justifications for exemption from tax had evolved. Kun's efforts to study and explain the Bukharan tax system do not appear to have extended to this question, and it was the orientalist M. N. Rostislavov, who had been assigned to the administration of the Zarafshan *okrug* shortly after Kun, and worked with him for a while both there and in the organisation of the 3rd World Congress of Orientalists in St Petersburg, who seems to have published the first substantial work on the subject.⁸² In two articles in *Turkestanskije Vedomosti* published in 1874, and a later pamphlet in 1879, he put forward a highly idiosyncratic view of property rights in the Zarafshan Valley. Rostislavov claimed that the region had a large number of very substantial landowners, with 300 or 400 *tanaps* (which he estimated at 100 *desyatinas*), but also that historically property rights under what he referred to as Islamic 'despotism' had been very weak. He added that even *mulk* was a form of state land,

⁸⁰ Ignat'ev, *Ob"yasnitel'naya Zapiska*: 100.

⁸¹ On this see, Morrison, *Russian Rule in Samarkand*: Chapter 5.

⁸² See *Istoriografiya obshchestvennykh nauk v Uzbekistane. Bio-Bibliograficheskie Ocherki*, ed. B.V. Lunin (Tashkent: FAN, 1974): 319.

albeit temporarily in private hands (possibly a confused reference to *tarkhān* status),⁸³ whilst what he called *amlyak* was state land from which all revenue was meant to go to the central treasury.⁸⁴ In the version of his text published in 1879, however, he claimed that in Turkestan the term *mulk* referred only to '*ushrī* lands (subject to a 10% tax), whilst *kharāji* land subject to the usual assessment was known as *amlyak*. He went on to state, on the basis of nine unspecified Islamic juristic sources, that *mulk* and *amlāk* referred respectively to private and state land, and that they were separate legal concepts. However given his apparent reliance on advice from the Samarqand *qāzīs* (who had probably produced an interpretation that suited their own purposes) it seems unlikely that he had consulted these sources himself.⁸⁵ The Girs Commission's Report was probably following this part of Rostislavov's interpretation in asserting that *amlāk* land was subject to the taxes of *kharāj* and *tanap*, whilst *mulk* land was entirely free of them, even if Girs did not agree with his interpretation of these terms as relating to property rights rather than fiscal privilege.⁸⁶ However, Rostislavov then went on to say that in contemporary Turkestan the difference between *amlāk* and *mulk* had been eroded even before the conquest, and that they were now, to all intents and purposes, the same form of tenure, largely thanks to the Russian decision to impose the same fiscal settlement on both:

In general the question of *amlyak* lands must be considered settled, in the sense that all *amlyaks* have now taken on almost entirely the character of *mulk* land, especially under our rule, when *mulk*, with regard to the imposition of taxes, is on an equal footing with *amlyak*. There can be no other resolution to the question, albeit, from the point of view of fiscal gains and the demands of justice, it ought to have been resolved somewhat differently.⁸⁷

Rostislavov was writing at the end of a decade in which the question of the legitimacy of *mulk* tenure and, above all, of the tax privileges it carried, had been a subject of fierce (and often frustrated) debate amongst Russian administrators. As this passage suggests, whatever exemptions from tax the owners of some types of *mulk* (whom the Russians, at least, generally

⁸³ Editorial note: A *tarkhān* grant was a conferral of fiscal privileges. This procedure usually involved descent groups such as *sayyids*, *ishāns*, *khwājas*, and *shaykhs*, cf. William Wood, *A Collection of Tarkhan Yarliqs from the Khanate of Khiva*, Papers on Inner Asia no. 38 (Bloomington, IN: RIFIAS, 2005): 30. The *tarkhān* grantees were exempted from the payment of various taxes, which instead fell on the rest of the population. Wood also suggests (Ibid.: 29) that these grantees were also freed from the obligation to the military service; in addition, it seems that *tarkhān* also conferred a sort of immunity with regard to a number of infractions. Though many royal warrants for the conferral of *tarkhān* status have been published, nothing is known of the way in which these grantees made use of fiscal privileges. See also, Paul, *Forming a Faction*: 535.

⁸⁴ M. Rostislavov, "Ocherk vidov zemel'noi sobstvennosti v Turkestanskom krae." *TV* 5 (29th January 1874) and 19 (14th May 1874).

⁸⁵ M.N. Rostislavov, *Ocherk Vidov Zemelnoi Sobstvennosti i Pozemel'nyi Vopros v Turkestanskom Krae* (St Pb.: Tip. brat. Panteleevykh, 1879): 5-7. My thanks to Paolo Sartori for this suggestion.

⁸⁶ Girs, *Otchet*: 344-5.

⁸⁷ Rostislavov, *Ocherk Vidov Zemelnoi Sobstvennosti*: 7.

referred to as *mulkdārs*)⁸⁸ might have had before the conquest, the Russians had decided not to recognise them.

In the earliest years of Russian rule in Turkestan three commissions were set up by von Kaufman to look into the question of land rights and taxation. The first, under Colonel M. N. Nikolaev, began work in January 1868 and concluded that a clearer definition of land rights was needed, not least in order to facilitate Russian settlement. This was followed by another concentrating on the Syr-Darya *oblast* under Major-General Gomzin, and finally, from 1871-2, a third land commission under the chairmanship of Major-General Abramov which drew its evidence from the Zarafshan *okrug*.⁸⁹ Once again, problems over the question of taxation and land tenure were already manifesting themselves in Ura-tepe before the conquest of Samarqand and the Zarafshan Valley. In April 1868 Captain Mikhailov, the commandant of the Ura-tepe division, wrote to the head of the Syr-Darya *oblast*' administration, asking if a blanket rate of *kharāj* could be applied to what he referred to simply as *mulk* land (presumably implying that it was a variety which had previously been exempted from *kharāj*) and some of the special tax privileges of its owners revoked. He remarked that the list of *mulk* owners which he had from the old regime included so many *mulks* that were in his view illegal, as their current owners had bought them rather than inheriting them, that the Russians need have no qualms about abrogating their privileges.⁹⁰ His subordinate in Ura-tepe, the afore-mentioned Captain Chaikovskii, disagreed, and argued that the introduction of *kharāj* on *mulk* land would mean considerable hardship for a class of tenant labourers:

Almost all these *mulkdārs* give their land in permanent rent, to peasants, *muzhiks*, who do not have their own land and who settle around their rented land, and give the impression of being serfs. In order to protect landless peasants from exploitation, customs are established and defined by *sharī'a*.⁹¹

Chaikovskii claimed that as these peasants already gave a proportion of their crop to the *mulk* owner they were in danger of being taxed twice if *kharāj* was levied by the state as well. Chaikovskii wrote that some inhabitants of Ura-tepe had told him they would prefer to see the general level of *kharāj* return to its previous level of 20%, provided it wasn't levied on tax-exempt *mulk* land, and he urged the Nikolaev Commission to consider the question very carefully first.⁹² Chaikovskii's objections to the levying of tax on *mulk* were rejected by his superior, Mikhailov, who wrote that it would severely reduce revenue receipts—always a

⁸⁸ The term is used in modern Samarqandi Tajik to refer to a property-owner or wealthy person.

⁸⁹ A.P. Savitskii, *Pozemel'nyi vopros v Turkestane: v proektakh i zakone 1867-1886 gg* (Tashkent: Izd. SamGU, 1963): 47-59.

⁹⁰ Mikhailov to the President Obl. Prav. Syr-Dar'inskoi Oblasti, 20.04.1868, TsGARUZ, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 11, l. 16.

⁹¹ Chaikovskii to Abramov, 22.04.1868, TsGARUZ, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 11, l. 11ob.

⁹² Chaikovskii to Abramov, 27.04.1868, TsGARUZ, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 11, ll. 12-13.

greater priority for the Russians than the maintenance of earlier privileges or rights on the land.⁹³

Slightly later that year the question of *mulk* land was considered in the newly-created Zarafshan *okrug*, where it provoked a correspondence with Tashkent that lasted three years. General Abramov estimated that there were 70,000 *tanābs* of *mulk* land in the Samarqand division,⁹⁴ plus an unknown quantity in Katta-Kurgan. Almost from the beginning, Abramov linked the question of *mulk* to the question of how to deal with the *khwāja* lineages of Turkestan. He reported to von Kaufman on the existence of a category of land:

Otherwise the private property of independent individuals acquired by purchase. One out of four of the owners have documents from the father of the current Amir, others from the previous owners of the property. The income from this land does not go to the treasury, but into the hands of *khwājas* and other private individuals.⁹⁵

He estimated that these taxes could potentially be worth 20,000 roubles a year, but that the Russian administration had no idea to whom they were being paid. Abramov added that the class of *khwājas* who were the main beneficiaries of *mulk* land were a hostile influence that needed to be contained.

these private individuals [who enjoy their land] on unknown grounds, without paying tax, especially *khwājas* [...] are trying to gather and arm the people against the Government, as they did under the Bukharan administration, - when they were the leaders of the popular movements, as for instance Omar-Khwāja of Dahbid, who agitated the town of Samarqand, at the time when we took that town. There is no doubt that others were not far behind, often bearing the title of *khwāja* illegitimately. There is no way of verifying their antecedents. Because of all this cossack elder Serov⁹⁶ proposes levying taxes on *mulk* land on the usual basis.⁹⁷

The Bukharan historian Sāmī's account offers independent confirmation of Īshān 'Umar Khan Makhdūm-i A'zamī's contribution to the attack on the Russian garrison of the Samarqand citadel in 1868,⁹⁸ but even without this concrete example of the threat presented by the *khwājas* and their influence over the people, given the prevailing Russian attitude towards Islamic elites, it is unlikely that they would ever have considered trying to make use of these sacred lineages, as the British did in Sindh.⁹⁹ Abramov suggested that the revoking of their taxation privileges might just be a temporary measure until their rights were established one way or the other. Von

⁹³ Mikhailov to the Pred. Obl. Prav. Syr-Dar'inskoi Oblasti, 27.04.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 11, l. 15.

⁹⁴ Abramov to von Kaufman, 22.04.1870, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 28, l. 19ob.

⁹⁵ Abramov to von Kaufman, 04.08.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 15, l. 1.

⁹⁶ Serov was one of those consulted by the Nikolaev Commission, based in Tashkent; Savitskii, *Pozemel'nyi vopros*: 22.

⁹⁷ Abramov to von Kaufman, 04.08.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 15, ll. 1ob-2.

⁹⁸ Sāmī, *Tā'rikh-i salāṭīn-i manghītiya*: trans., 85 text ff. 84b-85a.

⁹⁹ See Morrison, *Russian Rule in Samarkand*: Chapter 2; Sarah Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power. The Pirs of Sindh* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992): 36-56.

Kaufman was becoming increasingly impatient however, complaining that since Samarqand had been taken in June 1868 too little revenue had been collected in the Zarafshan *okrug*, totalling just 6,033 roubles to August 1868.¹⁰⁰

In August 1868 Abramov wrote indignantly to von Kaufman that "Some of the natives, receiving the revenues from *mulk*, do not even understand the meaning of the term *mulk*"¹⁰¹ and argued that in the vast majority of cases titles to *mulk* land were fraudulent. Von Kaufman's response gives a fascinating insight into the rigid Orientalist interpretation of religious status which informed his thinking on this question.

I suggest to Your Excellency that, apart from the documents giving them the right to use *mulks*, you also demand from those *khwājas* with pretensions to the income from *mulk* land their genealogical documents, which will then leave no doubts as to the descent of the *khwājas* from Hanafie¹⁰² and of the Sayyids from Fatima. For the analysis of these documents you should appoint a commission from amongst the '*ulamā*' of Samarqand, under the chairmanship of an inquiring and able officer or *chinovnik*. Those who are recognised as being legal *sayyids* or *khwājas*, should be placed on a special list, with a description of the size of the *mulk* ascribed to them and the quantity of money demanded from it. This list Your Excellency should present to me for the authorisation of any disbursement from taxes collected to be returned to *sayyids* and *khwājas*.¹⁰³

It is not wholly clear when and how von Kaufman had discovered the importance of the figure of Muḥammad al-Ḥanafīyya in *khwāja* genealogies. As early as 1827 the head of the Orenburg Frontier Commission, General Grigorii Fedorovich Gens (1787-1845), in one of his notebooks of researches on the steppe, had taken down an account of the origin of Khwājas amongst the Kazakhs from one Yasawul Khwāja Qaragul Babajanov of the inner horde, which described in some detail these two genealogies, one of which he called 'Sayyid Atai' descended from 'Alī and Fātima, and one 'Kuragan,' descended from Muḥammad al-Ḥanafīyya.¹⁰⁴ It is not clear however how widely Gens's writings circulated before the end of the 19th century. The only contemporary Russian reference to *khwāja* genealogies identified by DeWeese is in a description of the administration of Tashkent under Khoqandi rule by Alexander Geins, the War Minister's representative on the Steppe Commission, which was originally published in 1867 as an appendix to the new Turkestan statute which he had helped to draw up. Here Geins refers to precisely this division between a 'senior' line of *sayyids* descended from 'Alī and Fātima, whilst "from the other wife of 'Alī, Hanafie, was born a son, Imam Muhammad-Hanafie, who is held to

¹⁰⁰ Abramov to von Kaufman, 04.08.1868, von Kaufman to Abramov, 29.11.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 15 ll. 5ob-6.

¹⁰¹ Abramov to Kaufman, 04.08.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d.15, l. 2ob.

¹⁰² i.e. Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīya, the son of 'Alī from whom most *khwājas* claimed descent.

¹⁰³ Von Kaufman to Abramov, 29.11.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 15, ll. 7-7ob.

¹⁰⁴ "O proiskhozhdenie khudzhei *khwāja*," GAOO, f. 166, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 166ob-167.

be the ancestor of the junior line."¹⁰⁵ Geins's own sources of information are obscure—Gens's notebooks are a possibility, but Geins had spent most of 1865 and 1866 carrying out investigations in the southern steppe region around Tashkent, Chimkent and Turkestan, and although he does not seem to have spoken any local languages it is possible that he learnt of the importance of al-Ḥanafīyya from one of the *khwāja* groups of the region. His published and unpublished researches seem to have been extensively relied upon in the earliest years after the conquest, so he is the most likely source of von Kaufman's sudden and unexpected expertise in Islamic genealogy.¹⁰⁶ Von Kaufman was quite well aware that as far as the local population was concerned the definition of a *sayyid* or *khwāja* was a good deal less rigid than that which the Russians were now insisting upon, but this was evidently of little concern to him:

Individuals—bearing the title *sayyid* or *khwāja* because of descent from some holy man or other, or using this form of address because the people gave the title of *sayyid* or *khwāja* to a few generations of some family or other—do not, it would seem, need to enjoy freedom from taxation, unlike those who bear the title of *sayyid* or *khwāja* in the strict Mussulman sense.¹⁰⁷

If Abramov ever did establish the genealogical commission envisaged by von Kaufman, something unclear from this file, then the *khwājas* of the Zarafshan Valley were either unable or unwilling to provide it with a set of *nasab-nāmas* that would satisfy the Russian authorities - nor, one suspects, was it ever intended that they should succeed in doing so. Abramov and his fellow-officers evidently came to the conclusion that *khwāja* claims to special status and separate descent did not need to be taken seriously so far as landholding and taxation were concerned. By 1872 Captain Afanasii Grebenkin, the commandant of the Katta-Kurgan *otdel* and author of a number of ethnographical works on the Zarafshan Valley, could write contemptuously (and inaccurately):

Khwājas, as is well known, are descendants of Muḥammad through the female line. All those who consider themselves to be *khwājas*, are obliged to have a document confirming their descent. In the *okrug* there are no real *khwājas*: all those who call themselves *khwājas* are impostors; nevertheless, once they have been called *khwājas*, they try, so far as their strength and ability suffices, to confirm their titles. Thus, they give

¹⁰⁵ A.K. Geins, "Upravleniya Tashkenta pri Kokandskom Vladychestve." *Sobranie literaturnykh trudov Aleksandra Konstantinovicha Geinsa*, vol. 2 (St Pb.: Tip. M. M. Stasyulevicha, 1898): 494; DeWeese, "Foreword": 18.

¹⁰⁶ Geins, *Sobranie literaturnykh trudov*, vol. 1 (St Pb.: Tip. M. M. Stasyulevicha, 1897): 6-10.

¹⁰⁷ Von Kaufman to Abramov, 29.11.1868, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 15, l. 7ob. Von Kaufman here is perhaps referring to the supposed distinction between *Khwāja Sayyid-Ata* and *Khwāja Juybar* put forward by Khanikoff (whose *Opisanie Bukharskogo Khanstva* was extensively used by the Nikolaev Commission): the former having "documentary evidence of their extraction, whilst the others belong to such families as are known to have been constantly treated as such, though their titles are lost." Khanykov *Opisanie*: 182; Khanikoff *Bokhara*: 234-5, an assertion repeated by Schefer: Mir Abdoul Kerim Boukhary, *Histoire de l'Asie Centrale*, trans. & ed. C. Schefer (Paris, 1876): note to 95. This is an incorrect definition (both lineages held positions at the Bukharan court, but the former were Yasavi, the latter Naqshbandi) but it might have influenced von Kaufman.

blessings to the people, do not enter into marriage with ordinary mortals, at *tamāshās* [entertainments] strive to occupy the most honoured place, say little; and if they do speak, then try to turn the conversation towards their ancestors. They are all in large part stupid; they conceal their tribal origin, not calling themselves either Uzbek, or Tajik, but simply "*khwāja*", and assert that *khwājas* are a separate tribe.¹⁰⁸

Even if they had been able to furnish Abramov and von Kaufman with *nasab-nāmas* of the kind which related Kazakh descent groups were still producing in the 19th and 20th centuries,¹⁰⁹ it seems highly unlikely, given Abramov's hostile remarks about their influence, that this would have been used as a reason for preserving their tax privileges. On the contrary the very real authority which they clearly wielded, whether sanctioned by written genealogies or not, was much more likely to be seen by the Russians as a compelling reason for seeking to *reduce* their status. Other documents outlining rights to *mulk* land which might have satisfied the Governor-General also turned out to be few and far between. In August 1869 Colonel Nikolaev's Commission on the land question had concluded that in cases where there was no documentary proof of *mulk* status, all tax privileges would be removed and the land would be considered *amlāk*, 'state land'; this seems to have been based at least in part on the information with which Abramov supplied them from the Zarafshan Valley.¹¹⁰ The correspondence between Kaufman and Abramov suggests that they were seeking reasons for the abolition of the tax privileges attached to *mulk* land because they thought the income from it helped to sustain dangerous religious elites: a legal justification would not prove hard to find.

IV. A Legal Fig-leaf?

In September 1869 a group of landowners from Samarqand claimed that they were being deprived of their rents from the *chairikeri*¹¹¹ who farmed their land, because the state was now levying taxes on it:

All of us gave our plots—*mulks*, bought by us for money, assembled through much sacrifice—in rent to farmers and they carry out work, from the receipts they paid us out of four *batmans*,¹¹² one *batman*, and the other three *batmans* they used themselves. This order (law) has existed since ancient times; none of our rulers have interfered with it, and we cultivated this land ourselves. From last year up until the present time, the *sarkārs* have been using that, which ought to be used by us, the remainder is used by the farmers themselves, and nothing comes to us. Having lost both land and money, we have become poor. We

¹⁰⁸ A.D. Grebenkin, "Melkie Narodnosti Zarafshanskogo Okruga." *Russkii Turkestan: Sbornik, Izdannyi po povodu Politekhniyaeskoï Vystavki*, vyp.2 ed. V. N. Trotskii (Moscow: Univ. Tip., 1872): 117-8; I owe this reference to DeWeese, "Foreword": 23.

¹⁰⁹ A group of six of these are described, published and translated in *Islamization and Sacred Lineages in Central Asia*: 51-276.

¹¹⁰ Savitskii, *Pozemel'nyi vopros*: 23.

¹¹¹ The Russified term for the Tajik *Choryakkor* or sharecropper. Although, as the name suggests, conventionally they paid their landlords a quarter share of the crop, in practice it could vary considerably, and sometimes it was more than this. See N.N. Ershov, *Sel'skoe khozyaistvo Leninabadskogo raiona Tadzhikskoi SSR pered Oktyabr'skoi Revolyutsiei* (Stalinabad: Izd. AN TadzhSSR, 1960): 50-1.

¹¹² A measure of weight, which according to Dal's dictionary was equivalent to 12 *poods* (432 lbs) in Bukhara.

have turned a few times with petitions to our *hākims* and have received the answer that the Senior Governor is coming who will return your plots, and gladden you. [...] Now you have happily come into your domain, and have taken into your own hands all the affairs and hearts of us inhabitants. We turned to you about this matter, but you would not permit us and, leaving, now leave us poor ones with uneasy hearts. We await this from your Excellency: that you, in cherishing us, poor ones, and showing us, the inhabitants, your love—restore to us the ancient law and return us our *mulks*, so that we may not lose our welfare and property, and we would pray for the White Tsar and the Senior Governor-Lord, and occupy ourselves with our own affairs.¹¹³

There are a number of interesting questions which arise from this document. It dates from before any official reform of the fiscal administration had taken place, and interestingly it appears that the Russians were still using officials inherited from the previous regime to collect *kharāj*. The petitioners refer to the taxes being collected by *sarkārs*, something which was certainly possible as in 1870 the Russians were still using Bukharan-era revenue officials. This suggests that what was intended to be largely a fiscal measure, namely the removal of tax privileges from *mulk* land, could, in cases where the land was let out to sharecroppers, lead to the nominal owners losing all effective title over it, as their right to collect a tithe from those who farmed it had now been usurped by the state. It is possible that, as the petition claimed, these *mulkdārs* paid no taxes before the conquest, but that now Russian-backed *sarkārs* were collecting the taxes on their plots, and collecting them directly from the sharecroppers. The sharecroppers then refused to give the share due by them to the owner of the *mulk* because they had already given that as land-tax. This would only be the case, however, if the *mulk* had been totally exempted from land-tax before the conquest, and it is perfectly possible that this was not so and that *mulk* owners, knowing that this was what the Russians thought, were trying on a sob-story to be exempted from taxes they had previously been liable to.¹¹⁴ Unfortunately I have no means of knowing how common such cases were, and in any case petitions only ever offer a very one-sided view of any dispute.

What is more certain is that this plea provoked Abramov into writing a lengthy disquisition on the origin and legitimacy of *mulk* land in order to explain to von Kaufman why he did not think the pleas of these *mulk* owners should be countenanced, in which he offered the following conclusion:

The origin of *mulks*, it seems, was laid down by Amir Tamerlane. Legend has it, that Timur, needing some cash, after advice from his counsellors, sold into private hands a portion of Government land, with the right of hereditary ownership and freedom from taxes in the future.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Translation of a petition for the attention of the Starshii Gubernator (presumably von Kaufman) from 'some poor dwellers of Samarkand,' 18.09.1869, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 28, ll. 13-14. In *Russian Rule in Samarkand*: 109 I misinterpreted this petition as coming from the sharecroppers themselves.

¹¹⁴ I am grateful to Beatrice Penati for this suggestion.

¹¹⁵ Abramov to von Kaufman, 22.04.1870, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 28, l. 17ob.

Such, he argued, were the purest and most legal type of *mulk*. However, Abramov claimed that almost none of Samarqand's *mulk* owners had the necessary documentation to substantiate their claims. Too many *mulks* had changed hands by sale too many times, which in his view invalidated them altogether: "There are no *mulks* in first-hand ownership, none even in the hands of direct descendants of the first and therefore legal owner of the *mulk*. All of them have been re-sold through perhaps hundreds of hands and are being re-sold all the time."¹¹⁶

A. P. Khoroshkhin, a Ural Cossack officer who served in Samarqand at this time, tells a very similar story of Bukharan amirs "sometime in the distant past" returning from campaign in urgent need of money, and alienating the right to collect taxes on particular plots of land to powerful *qāzīs*, *khwājas* and *sayyids*. These rights were supposed to be supported by documents, and only to pass by descent from father to son. Now, however:

All the evidence shows that there are no grounds for considering such lands to be *mulk*, that is the property of private individuals, still less now because the latest pretenders have nothing in common either by blood or background with those on whom the Amir at some point bestowed the right to collect taxes. At the present time, furthermore, when we demand the original documents from them, it turns out that they struggle to produce them, because it would appear that they do not have them.¹¹⁷

The village of Saidan in the Aforinkent *volost'* seems to have acted as a sort of test-case for Russian policy towards *mulk* privileges. Abramov's own land commission, which began work in 1871, found that here most *mulk* owners had lost (or were concealing) their documents and could not prove descent from the original grantees of the *mulks* they claimed to own. Abramov's commission obtained its information on the existing tax-burden from an *amlākdār's* register (*daftar* or *tetrad'*), suggesting that these officials were collecting *kharāj* on all forms of land there.¹¹⁸ This register also shows that by 1871, at least in some places, a uniform level of *kharāj* was being levied on both *amlāk* and *mulk* land, at a rate of 1/5 of the crop.¹¹⁹ In 1872 the question had still not been officially settled, but in practice it seems that *kharāj* was consistently being levied from *mulk* land at the same rate as from *amlāk*, despite the protests of owners that it infringed the privileges they had enjoyed before the conquest. Abramov's comments to von Kaufman when the *mulkdārs* in the large town of Peishambe petitioned against being taxed make this clear enough: he stated that these were simply expressions of discontent by the richer classes of society who had previously evaded their fair share of tax, and now did everything they could to encourage and organise petitions against the reform of the taxation system amongst the

¹¹⁶ Abramov to von Kaufman, 22.04.1870, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d.28, l. 18.

¹¹⁷ A. Khoroshkhin, "Dolina Zerafshana." *Sbornik statei kasayushchikhsya do Turkestanskogo Kraya* (S. Pb.: Tip. A. Transhelya, 1876): 167-8.

¹¹⁸ Savitskii, *Pozemel'nyi vopros*: 49-51.

¹¹⁹ I am grateful to Beatrice Penati for showing me her copy of an *amlākdār* register for Aforinkent, almost certainly the same one referred to by Savitskii, together with a Russian translation of a different register, both of which she found in the Uzbek archives in files relating to Abramov's land-tax commission.

poorer classes. Whilst suggesting the question was still open, he clearly also had little time for the legal claims that certain types of *mulk* should be exempt from taxation.

The former owners of *mulk* land, founded on documents some of which are in their hand, and some of which in Bukhara—deem the demanding of taxes from them an unlawful action, and petitioned to be freed entirely from taxes. [...] The pretensions of the owners of *mulks* that tax demands on them are unlawful are widespread. The degree to which such pretensions are justified—is a question which is unresolved for the time being.¹²⁰

Although in principle the Commission's draft plan on the land question recognised *mulk-i ḥurr-i khālīṣ* as private property "in cases where it has not been occupied by outsiders and is in the direct use of the owners", it made no mention of other forms of *mulk*, or indeed of the continuation of the tax privileges attached to it. Savitskii suggests that the commission's eventual recommendations set the burden of documentary proof so high as effectively to deprive *mulk* owners of any possibility of proving either their proprietary rights or exemption from taxation.¹²¹ Three years later the explanatory appendix to the temporary Turkestan statute, which was probably summarising the commission's findings, acknowledged that under Bukharan rule the loss or disappearance of documents had not meant the automatic revocation of tax privileges on *mulk* land because everyone knew its extent and to whom it belonged. However, it added that now *mulk* owners would be obliged to pay the full amount to the treasury unless they could produce documents entitling them to exemption or reduction.¹²²

Whether such demands for documentary proof sprang from a genuine Russian belief that there was a 'pure' Islamic judicial notion of rights in *mulk* which had become corrupted over time, or whether (perhaps more likely) this was simply a cynical excuse for removing awkward tax privileges and undermining a troublesome and untrustworthy group of elite intermediaries whom they no longer wanted and suspected of being religious 'fanatics,' there seems little doubt that the view of *mulk* expressed above was far more rigid and legalistic than the reality. It is still unclear to me whence the idea arose that *mulks* could not be transferred by sale, or why the Russians would not accept more recent documents from Bukharan rulers as proof of the right to exemption from taxes. Possibly they confused *mulk* with the status of *tarkhān*, a temporary grant of tax exemption, although there are no references to it in Russian documents. Whatever the

¹²⁰ Abramov to von Kaufman, 19.11.1872, TsGARUz, f. I-1, op. 14, d. 70, ll. 101ob-102.

¹²¹ Savitskii *Pozemel'nyi vopros*: 51-6, 157; he does not however give any evidence for this assertion.

¹²² "O pozemel'nom ustroistve v Turkestanskom Krae." In *Poyasnitel'naya Zapiska k Proektu Polozheniya ob upravlenii v Oblastyakh Turkestanskogo General-Gubernatorstva*, vol. 1 (St Pb.: Voennaya Tip., 1874): 61, 69; puzzlingly, this essay also says that the measure is 'necessary in order to free the population from the dependence which currently exists between them and the owners of *mulk* and *waqf* land.' Most *waqf* continued to remain free of tax notwithstanding, whilst it is not at all clear that the majority of *mulk* plots were let out to tenants or sharecroppers. Perhaps what is meant here is that '*mulkdārs*' would give up their right of ownership to those who farmed the land if they found that otherwise they would be liable to pay the tax on it, but this is unclear.

precise reason, they quickly decided that the institution of *mulk* as they encountered it was corrupted and illegal.¹²³ The new tax regime in the Zarafshan Valley would not become fully operational until 1875 after the completion of a rudimentary agricultural survey, and the thorny question of land rights would only be settled under the new Turkestan statute of 1886 (and not fully even then). In practice however, well before this date the Russians had substantially altered the taxation system: they had abolished the office of *amlākdār* and thus the practice of carrying out fresh annual assessments for *kharāj*, abolished the tax privileges formerly enjoyed by the owners of *mulk* land, and, at least in theory, severely weakened the property rights of *mulk* owners. The long-term social and legal consequences of this policy are more difficult to establish.

V. Abandoning the Aristocracy?

Despite the protests of some officials that this represented a gross misreading of Islamic law, Russian legislation would formally refuse to recognise that any kind of *mulk* land in Central Asia constituted absolute private property, and instead asserted that all land in Turkestan other than *waqf* belonged to the state. The discontinuities with the situation before the conquest were, however, less severe than this would suggest, largely because there were limits to what state ownership of land actually meant in practical terms.¹²⁴ Under the 1886 Turkestan statute the Russians chose to recognise, if not full property rights, then at least effective occupation of the land by Turkestani cultivators with full rights of sale and inheritance subject to pre-existing Islamic law and custom.¹²⁵ Only land which was left idle could be assumed by the state, and in sedentary regions this happened very rarely, if at all: on the contrary, peasants seem to have been able to occupy and cultivate wasteland and acquire effective ownership rights over it more

¹²³ Savitskii suggests that on questions of Islamic law the Russians were relying on the work of the Orientalist Nikolai Egorovich Tornau, *Izlozhenie Nachal Musul'manskogo Zakonovedeniya* (St Pb.: Tip. Sobst. E. I. V. Kants., 1850). This may have been true in the case of *waqf*, but Tornau only makes very brief reference to *mulk*, and the context is the ownership of slaves, rather than land. Tornau, *Izlozhenie*: 352-3; Savitskii, *Pozemel'nyi vopros*: 22; Ekaterina Pravilova also notes the importance of Tornau's work (E. Pravilova, "The Property of Empire. Islamic law and Russian Agrarian Policy in Transcaucasia and Turkestan." *Kritika* 12/2 [2011]: 361-6): but goes on to assert that the work of French orientalists and translations of the Ottoman Law Code were the decisive influences on Russian thinking, which was not the case in Turkestan in the 1870s, when the most important debates took place. Instead, as we have seen, it was the work of home-grown orientalists—Khanykov, Geins, Kun and Rostislavov—together with information obtained from local informants and pre-existing prejudices about Muslim 'fanaticism,' which proved most important.

¹²⁴ P. Sartori, "Colonial legislation meets *Shari'a*: Muslims' Land Rights in Russian Turkestan." *Central Asian Survey* 29/1 (2010): 43-60.

¹²⁵ Article 255 of the statute refers to this as *zemli amlyakovye*. PSZ: sob.3, vol. VI, no. 3814 12th June 1886, 338; Beatrice Penati has argued that it effectively constitutes a formal *renvoi* to Islamic law on the question of property rights in her "Swamps, Sorghum and Saxauls": 61.

or less at will.¹²⁶ Ekaterina Pravilova is thus correct in stating that the colonial project to extend the state domain in Central Asia proved to be a 'bust': the principle was asserted, but it was impossible to put into practice, not because of opposition from St Petersburg, but because of local conditions.¹²⁷ So far as we know, land transactions continued to be regulated by the *qāzīs'* courts which the Russians had preserved, although changes in legal practice did start to emerge.¹²⁸ In nomadic and semi-nomadic regions, the claim to state ownership of land would come to form the legal basis for the expropriation of land for Russian settlement, and was thus of considerable significance, although even this was challenged by some Tsarist officials, most notably Count Pahlen.¹²⁹ However, it was never used systematically to oust settled cultivators and create large, state-owned tracts of land for colonisation or cotton plantations. In sedentary areas with dense population, at least, the claim to state ownership of land in Turkestan remained largely a dead letter, although this situation was under a concerted challenge from the newly-created *Glavnoe Upravlenie Zemleustroistva i Zemledelie* by the early 1900s.¹³⁰

The abolition of what the Russians referred to generically as *mulk* was thus primarily a *fiscal* measure, rather than an abrogation of property rights. Those who had formerly enjoyed the privilege of lighter taxation or none at all, had now lost it. It thus proceeded from the same concerns which caused the Russians to abolish the system of land-tax collection based upon the *amlākdār*—namely, the desire to simplify revenue collection, and to undermine Bukharan-era elites. The Russians made no attempt to preserve or create a class of Muslim landowners and rentiers in Turkestan who could act as agents of the colonial state. Instead, they often claimed that a landed aristocracy as such did not exist in the Turkestan, at least not as it would be understood in Europe: General Staff Officer L. F. Kostenko confidently asserted, (perhaps following Alexander Burnes), that "in Central Asia an aristocracy and in general a privileged class does not exist."¹³¹ V. P. Nalivkin also wrote that there was nothing that could be described

¹²⁶ In 1884, for instance the *Nachal'nik* of the Katta-Kurgan *otdel* reported to the head of the Zarafshan *Okrug* that not only did the natives in his district enjoy *de-facto* ownership not only of land they already farmed (which they could buy, sell and inherit "in accordance with customary rights", regulated by the *qāzīs*) but that they seemed automatically to acquire the same rights over any wastelands which they occupied and cultivated, even though these nominally belonged to the Government: 23.08.1884, TsGARUZ, f. I-5, op. 1, d. 893, ll. 22-24ob.

¹²⁷ Pravilova, "The Property of Empire": 376-82.

¹²⁸ See P. Sartori, "Behind a Petition: Why Muslims' Appeals Increased in Turkestan under Russian Rule." *Asiatische Studien* LXIII/2 (2009): 401-34.

¹²⁹ Senator Gofmeister Graf K.K. Palen, *Otchet po Revizii Turkestanskago Kraya, proizvedennoi po VYSOCHAISHEMU Povelению. Pereselencheskoe Delo* (St Pb.: Senatskaya Tip., 1910): 35-43, 51-61, 280; A. Morrison, "'Sowing the Seed of National Strife in This Alien Region": The Pahlen Report and *Pereselenie* in Turkestan, 1908-1910." *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 31 (2012): 1 -29.

¹³⁰ See the manifesto set out in A. Krivoshein, *Zapiska Glavnoupravlyayushago Zemleustroistvom i Zemledeliem o poezdke v Turkestanskii krai v 1912 godu* (St Pb.: Gos. Tip., 1912).

¹³¹ Kostenko, *Srednyaya Aziya*: 67; A. Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara*, vol. II (London: John Murray, 1836): 366.

as a landed aristocracy in Khoqand;¹³² but this is open to question. In fact these seem to be *ex post facto* judgements delivered after the Russians had decided they had no interest in working through landowners, senior Bukharan officials or other 'aristocratic' or pseudo-aristocratic intermediaries. Instead they would attempt to create a class of petty officials who owed their influence, such as it was, to their positions within urban and village hierarchies, and increasingly the access they had to the power of the Tsarist state.

Why did this happen? The correspondence between von Kaufman and Abramov reveals that they believed that a substantial proportion of those landowners claiming tax privileges in the Zarafshan Valley were *sayyids* or *khwājas*: the idea that lower taxation under the Muslim regimes was closely linked to high religious status was far from wholly erroneous, but what is more important in this context is that the Russians *thought* this was the case.¹³³ Whilst they were wary of interfering directly with *waqf*, they decided that *mulk* land could and should be tackled more aggressively, not least because the religious lineages which they believed it sustained were more dangerous than the 'organized' Islam of the mosque or *madrassa*. In his posthumously-published draft for a new Turkestan statute von Kaufman recalled that immediately after the conquest the native population had had little confidence in Russian authority or justice, and had looked to traditional leaders in the countryside, particularly the *ishāns* of the Sufi brotherhoods, who were trying to whip them up for a *ghazawāt* or holy war.¹³⁴ Von Kaufman considered the whole population of Turkestan to be fanatical, but its elites, whether political or clerical, particularly so. This helps to explain his refusal to countenance claims to exemption from tax on *mulk* land, and his use instead of an extremely tendentious reading of Islamic law and custom to dismiss them. Von Kaufman, in common with many other officers in Turkestan, cut his teeth fighting in the Caucasus, a war which in general seems to have deeply coloured Russian attitudes towards Islam, fostered a deep suspicion of all forms of Sufism (or *myuridizm*, as the Russians called it) and brought about a sea-change in the imperial policy of trying to co-opt local elites.¹³⁵ Once a key tactic in securing newly-conquered regions for the Empire, by the latter half of the 19th century the incorporation of local aristocracies into the Russian nobility had been decisively abandoned.¹³⁶

Instead the Russians tried to marginalise pre-existing elites when they created what Ronald Robinson called the 'Non-European foundations of European Imperialism' in Turkestan. They attempted to ensure the loyalty of their agents by choosing people who would owe everything to

¹³² V. Nalivkin, *Kratkaya istoriya Kokandskogo Khanstvo* (Kazan': Tip. Imp. Univ., 1885): 210.

¹³³ The idea would be repeated by Pahlen forty years later: Pahlen, *Nalogi i Poshliny*: 45.

¹³⁴ Von-Kaufman, *Proekt Vsepoddanneishego Otcheta*: 10.

¹³⁵ A. Knysh, "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm." *Die Welt des Islams* 42/2 (2002): 139-73.

¹³⁶ D. Lieven, *Empire. The Russian Empire and Its Rivals* (London: John Murray, 2000): 274-5; A. Morrison, "Metropole, Colony, and Imperial Citizenship in the Russian Empire." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13/2 (2012): 342-6.

the Russians, and giving them judicial and tax-collecting powers as *qāžīs*, *volostnye upraviteli* and *āqsaqāls*. Whether they succeeded in this or not is another, more complex question. Understanding Russian policies and purposes in Turkestan is always a great deal easier than establishing their actual consequences for local society. Certainly as they created their land-revenue system the Russians sought to break the power both of Uzbek tribal elites—represented by the *amlākdārs* - and of religious elites, namely the *sayyids* and *khwājas* who, they believed, were the main beneficiaries of the tax exemptions on *mulk* land. However, as yet we do not know how far these elites managed to reconstitute themselves within the structures of the fledgling Russian colonial state, and in the offices which it created or adapted. This will require detailed prosopographical study, and may prove difficult even with the extensive use of vernacular sources.

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Abbreviations

AV: Sankt-Peterburgskii Filial Instituta Vostokovedenii Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk: Arkhiv Vostokovedov

GAOO: Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Orenburgskoi Oblasti

PSZ: *Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii*

RGVIA: Rossiiskii gosudarsvennyi voenno-istoricheskii arkhiv

TS: *Turkestanii sbornik*

TsGARUz: Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Respubliki Uzbekistan

TV : *Turkestanikiya Vedomosti*

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