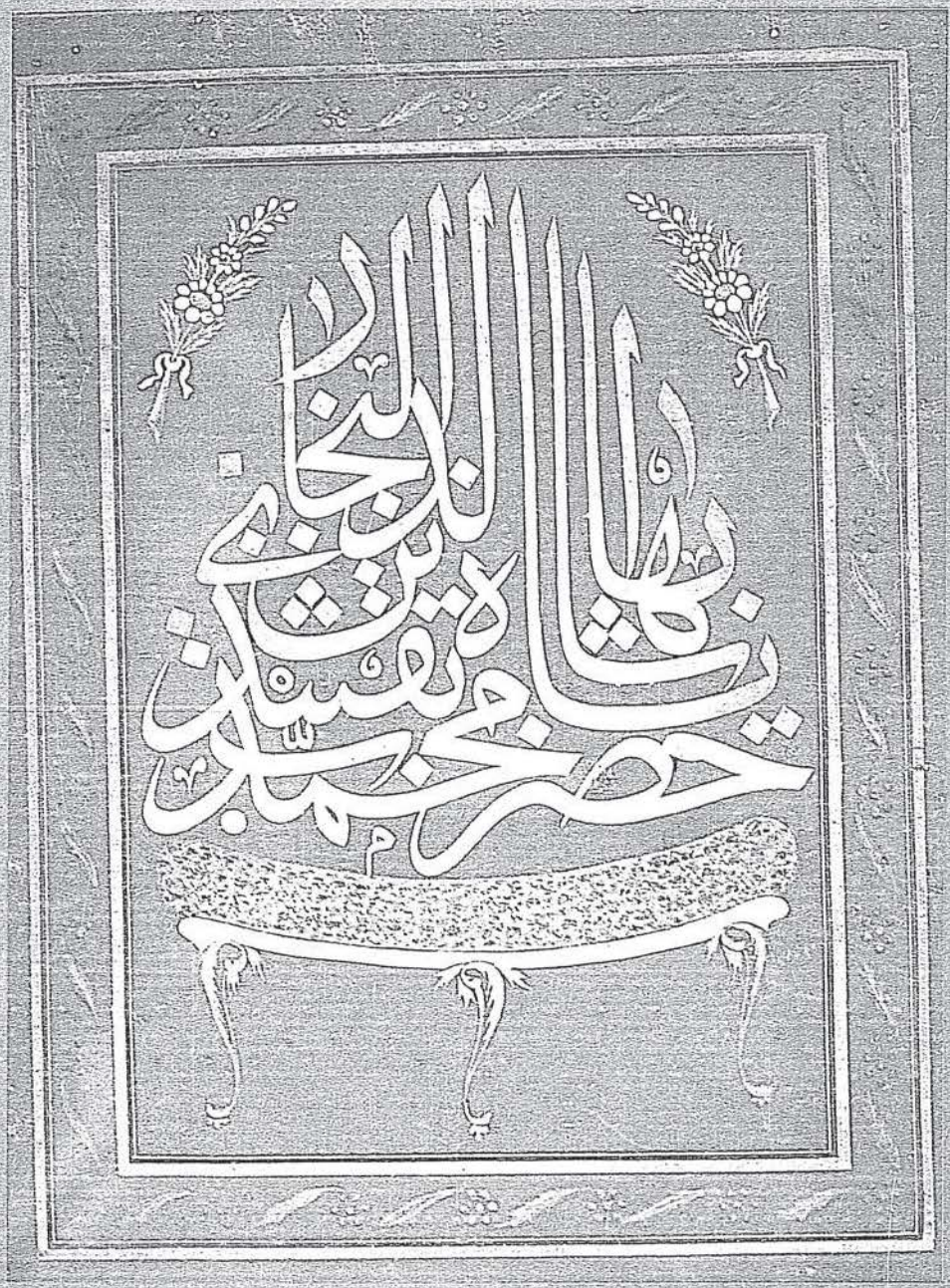


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# NAQSHBANDIS

## IN WESTERN AND CENTRAL ASIA



Edited by Elisabeth Özdalga

SWEDISH RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN ISTANBUL 1999



**NAQSHBANDIS  
IN WESTERN AND CENTRAL ASIA  
CHANGE AND CONTINUITY**

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# The *Waqf* of Khoja ‘Ubayd Allah Aḥrār in Nineteenth Century Central Asia: A Preliminary Study of the Tsarist Record

JO-ANN GROSS

The renowned Naqshbandī *pir*, Khoja ‘Ubayd Allah Aḥrār (1404-1490), is buried at his *khānaqāh*-shrine complex in the village of Khoja Kafshūr on the outskirts of Samarqand, and his burial place has been the object of pilgrimage for over five hundred years since his death in 1490. The Arabic inscription on his gravestone likens his grave to the garden of paradise and a cultivated field.<sup>1</sup>

This is a meadow that is made joyous by glorious flowing rivers  
and a garden that is ornamented with divine holiness.  
Allah was pleased by its proprietor after He gave him [Aḥrār] rest  
and sought Allah’s perfumes of nature in the morning and the evening.  
And the Sovereign, All Knowing, comforted his soul.  
[There is for him] rest and satisfaction and a Garden of Delight.<sup>2</sup>  
It is He who created the field of the world as a means to increase  
the cultivation of the hereafter,  
And He gave him [Aḥrār] his outward and inward blessings.

These words paint a metaphorical image of an abundant nature, one blessed by Allah with prosperity. Subsequent verses also speak to the great esteem and respect in which Khoja Aḥrār was held by his contemporaries. Indeed, by the late fifteenth century, the Naqshbandī order was deeply integrated into the socioeconomic, political, and religious fabric of rural and urban life in both Khorasan and Transoxiana.<sup>3</sup> The eminent state of the order at that time marked a turning point in the history of Sufi communities in the Eastern Islamic world. Sufis acquired great status, enjoyed remarkable benefits, and established networks of philanthropy and economic activity that continued up to the Soviet period. The history of the Naqshbandiyya during the Timurid period not only attests to its power and significance, but also provides a

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1 My English translation is based on N. Veselovsky’s transcription of the Arabic and Persiancriptions, “Pamyatnik Khoji Akhrara v Samarqande,” *Vostochnye zametki* (1895), 321-335.

2 Qur’an, 65: 89.

3 The Naqshbandiyya was particularly active in the urban centers of Herat and Samarqand during the Timurid period. For studies of the Naqshbandiyya in the Timurid period, see O. D. Chekhovich, *Samarkandskie Dokumenty XV-XVI vv.*, Moskow, 1974; Jo-Ann Gross, “Khoja Ahrar: A Study of the Perceptions of Religious Power and Prestige in the Late Timurid period,” Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, 1982; idem., “The Economic Status of a Timurid Shaykh: A Matter of Conflict or Perception?” *Iranian Studies*, 21 (1988), 84-104; idem., “Khoja Ahrar: An Interpretative Approach to Understanding the Roles and Perceptions of a Sufi Shaykh in Timurid Society,” in Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic, and Thierry Zarcone (eds.), *Naqshbandis*, Editions ISIS, Istanbul/Paris, 1990, 109-122; Jürgen Paul, *Die politische und soziale Bedeutung der Naqshbandiyya in Mittelasien im 15. Jahrhundert*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1991; idem., “Forming a Faction: The *Himayat* System of Khwaja Ahrar,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23 (1991), 533-548.

paradigm for the expansion and institutionalization of a religious community. Although the active political and economic role of the Naqshbandi Sufi community in Timurid society is not unique to the history of Sufism, the example of Khoja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrār and the Naqshbandiyya offers a compelling model of the efficacy of sheikhly authority and the strength of an organizational structure that was based upon the religious authority of individual sheikhs; the endowment of shrines, mosques, and *madrasahs*; genealogical ties; and the personal charisma exerted by influential sheikhs.<sup>4</sup> The current restoration of Sufi shrines and the revival of lines of descent in present-day post-Soviet Uzbekistan is a conspicuous example of the continued relevance of the Naqshbandiyya's cultural legacy in modern Central Asian society.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to the remarkable period of growth during the Timurid period, little research has been done on the social and economic history of the Naqshbandiyya in the nineteenth-century, following the Russian conquest of Central Asia. What work has been done has been produced mainly by Central Asian scholars, most notably the work of Zakir Abdurakhman Kutbaev, and more recently, that of Bakhtiyar Babadjanov.<sup>6</sup> One of the most promising avenues of research for the study of the persistence of Ahrār's trust and his descendants in Central Asia is a collection of tsarist documents housed in the Central State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan concerning the *waqf* properties of Khoja Ahrār.<sup>7</sup> These documents attest to the continued claim to and management of extensive *waqf* properties as originally founded and stipulated by Ahrār himself in the late fifteenth-century. Three trust deeds drawn up between 1470 and 1490 (the year of his death) enumerate Khoja Ahrār's endowments and their beneficiaries, which were Ahrār's male heirs; a mosque and *madrasah* in Tashkent; a *madrasah* in Samarqand in the Suzangaran quarter; and the *khanaqāh*-shrine complex on the outskirts of Samarqand where Ahrār is buried.<sup>8</sup> Twelve docu-

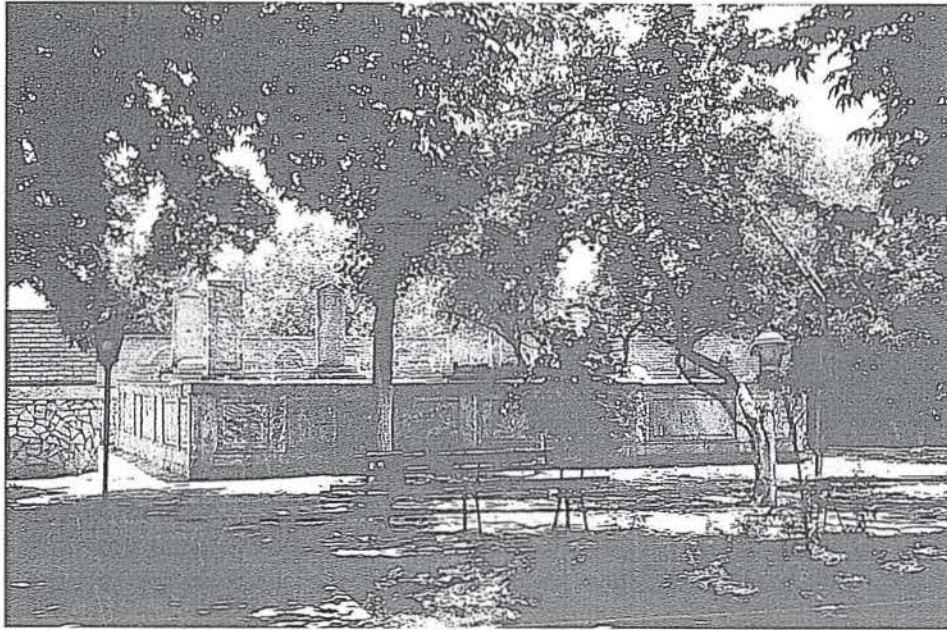
4 For comparative examples of sheikhly authority and Sufi communal organization, see Sarah Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power The Pirs of Sind, 1843-1947*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992; Julia A. Clancy-Smith, *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters (Algeria and Tunisia, 1800-1904)*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1994; Richard Maxwell Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978; Michael Gilson, *Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt: An Essay in the Sociology of Religion*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1973; Robert D. McChesney, *Waqf in Central Asia: Four Hundred Years in the History of a Muslim Shrine, 1480-1889*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1991.

5 Along with the restoration of shrines and the ideological rehabilitation of prominent Sufis, a number of pamphlets and books have been published in Uzbek on Sufism and Sufi pirs. Among those concerning Khoja Ahrār are: Boturkhon Valikhudjaev, *Khojda Akhrori Vali*, Samarqand, 1993; Boturkhon Valikhudjaev, *Khojda Akhror Tarikhi*, Samarqand, 1994; Zokir Kutboev, *Khojda Akhror Valii*, Tashkent, 1996.

6 O. D. Chekhovich's pioneering work on *waqf* influenced a whole generation of scholarship on the socio-economic history of Sufism in Central Asia. Her student, Zakir Abdurakhman Kutbaev, wrote a dissertation on the *waqf* of Ahrār's descendants, "K istorii vakufnykh vladeniya Khoji Akhrara i yevo potomkov," *Akademiia Nauk Uzbekskoi SSR, Institut Vostokovedniia*, no. 579, Avtoferat, 1970. I am grateful to Z. A. Kutbaev for making his avtoferat available to me. The current ideological climate in post-Soviet Uzbekistan has led to a more open scholarly inquiry into the history of Sufism in Central Asia that includes questions of politics, culture, Sufi polemic, and social organization. See, for example, Bakhtiyar Babadjanov, "On the History of the Naqshbandiyya Mugaddidiya in Central Māwāra'annahr in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries," in Michail Kemper, Anke von Kügelgen, and Dmitriy Yermakov (eds.), *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries*, Berlin, 1996. Devin Deweese is one of the few scholars in the west working on nineteenth century material, for example, "Shrine, Waqf, and Holy Families: Descent Groups Linked to Khoja Ahmad Yasavi in the 19th Century," unpublished paper delivered at the Middle East Studies Association Conference, November 1997.

7 Fond 18, opis' 1, nos. 10476 and Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10477, Central State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Uzbekiston Respublikasi Markaziy Davlat Arkhivi).

8 See documents 5, 10, 11, and 12 in Chekhovich, *Samarkandskie dokumenty*. The Samarqand mosque is usually referred to in the Russian protocol as the Safid *madrasah*.



At the graveyard of Khoja 'Ubayd Allah Aḥrār in the village of Khoja Kafshir on the outskirts of Samarqand (Jo-Ann Gross, 1997).

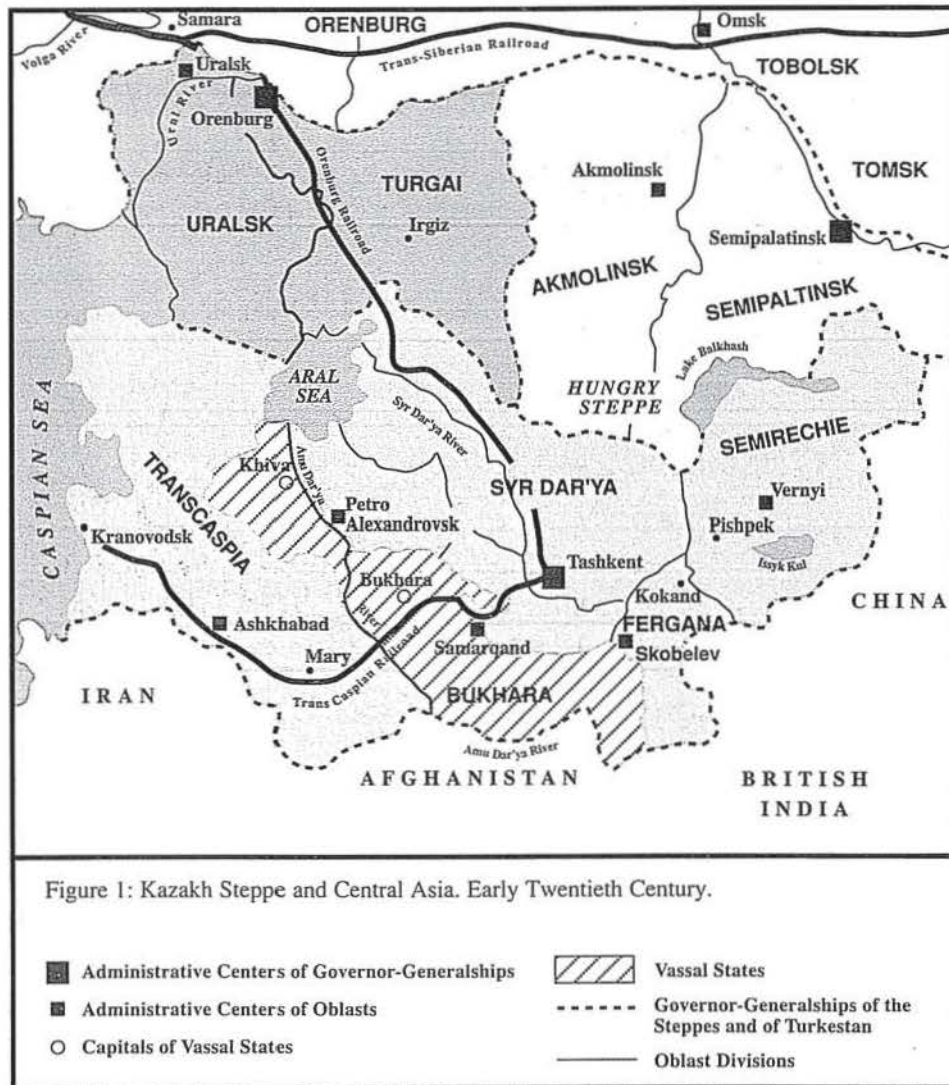
ments were drafted during Aḥrār's lifetime, which include eight purchase deeds (three of which have *waqf*-conversion codicils) and four *waqf* charters. Often, land that was donated to or bought by Aḥrār remained in the use of the former owners, thus initiating new forms of economic relationships between the sheikhs and those working the land. All of the original deeds stipulated that Aḥrār was to be the *waqf* administrator, *mutawalli*, and that after his death, his sons, Khoja Muhammad 'Abd Allah and Khoja Muhammad Yahyā and their heirs, would become the beneficiaries and administrators of the *waqf*.

Based upon these documents, it is apparent that during the late fifteenth century, Aḥrār converted a large number of small parcels of land into *waqf* for the use of *madrāsahs*, mosques, and *khānaqāhs*. He also established the future control of the administration and collection of revenues of these endowments for himself and for his heirs in the line of his son, Muhammad Yahyā. Although it is beyond the confines of this paper to trace the history of the Aḥrārī family after Khoja Aḥrār's death in 1490, later historical sources reveal that the Aḥrārī family continued to exert its influence on the local economy of Samarqand through the perpetuation of the endowment and the authority of the Aḥrārīs as managers, *mutawallis*, of the *waqf*, as *qādīs*, and as elders of the community.<sup>9</sup> An article in *Turkestankie Vedomosti*, published in 1884, for example, reports that in the city of Tashkent, 800 tenants inhabited houses valued at 300,000 rubles belonging to the Aḥrārī trust.<sup>10</sup> In her fieldwork in the village of Khoja Aḥrār in the 1920s, Olga Sukhareva reports that several hundred people claimed descent from Khoja Aḥrār; this in a period during which the family trust had already been liquidated by the Soviet administration, and, as a result, their roles as administrators had been discontinued.<sup>11</sup>

9 For a discussion of the shrine and its administration, see Robert D. McChesney, *Central Asia: Foundations of Change*, The Darwin Press, Princeton, 1996, pp. 98-109.

10 "Vakufy v Turkestane," *Turkestankie Vedomosti*, 1884. Cited in McChesney, *ibid.*, p. 108.

11 O. A. Sukhareva, "Potomki Kodzha Akhrara," in G. F. Kim, G. F. Girs, and E. A. Davidovich (eds.), *Dukhovenstvo i politicheskaiia zhizn na Blizhnem i Srednem Vostoke v period feodalizma*. Bartol'dskoe chtenie, 1982, Nauka, Moscow 1985, p. 161. Cited in McChesney, *ibid.*, p. 108.



Source: Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzarini, *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917* (Indiana University Press, 1997), p. 136.

Along with the Russian conquest of Central Asia in the 1860s came a reorganization of the conquered territories and the extension of the imperial administration.<sup>12</sup> On July 11, 1867, by decree of Tsar Alexander II, the Governor Generalship of Turkestan was established. Initially three Governor-Generalships were established in Central Asia in Orenburg, Semipalatinsk, and Turkestan (see figure 1). General Konstantin von Kaufman was appointed Turkestan's first Governor-General on July 14, 1867; General M. G. Cherniaev succeeded him after his death in 1882.<sup>13</sup> In accordance with Russian administrative organization, territory was partitioned into a hierarchy of divisions, the largest of which were five *oblasts*, including Samarqand and Syr Darya (the latter of which encompassed Tashkent). Tashkent served as the

12 Each of the Governor-Generalships was headed by a Governor-General who was responsible to and appointed by the tsar: subordinate to him was a hierarchy of officials and regional administrators who operated the affairs of the districts and dealt with taxation, economic issues, communications, and law.

13 For a discussion of von Kaufman's administration, see David MacKenzie, "Kaufman of Turkestan: an Assessment of His Administration 1867-1881," *Slavic Review*, XXVI (June 1967), 265-285.

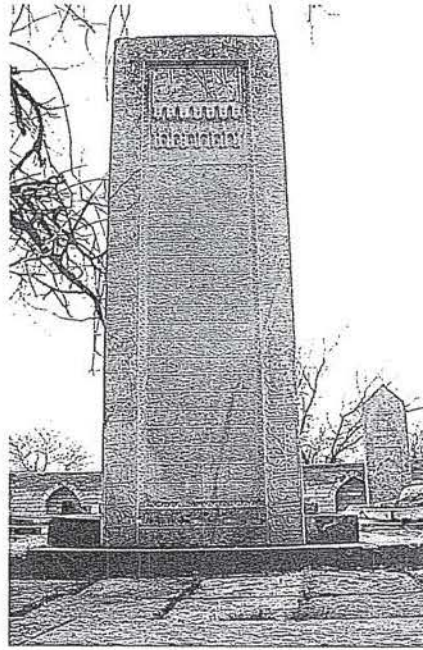
administrative center of the Syr Darya *oblast* and as the Governor-Generalship of all of Turkestan. The functions of the *oblast* government were coordinated through an administrative board, and general meetings were held to deal with specific problems.

The *oblast* was, in turn, subdivided into several *uezds*, each of which was headed by an *uezd* commandant along with an administrative staff.<sup>14</sup> The *uezds* were divided into smaller districts called *uchastok*, each of which was headed by an officer in charge of an administrative force. All of the administrative divisions were based on the provincial administration of European Russia, with one significant distinguishing feature: in Turkestan, the military and civil administration were combined.<sup>15</sup>

On the village level, the authority of the local elites was more apparent, and was, by necessity, recognized by the Russian administrators. Here local governance was effected through a village council which was headed by an elected elder, *aksakal*. Several villages comprised a *volost*, which in turn was administered by a *volost* council with an elected elder serving as the chief official; the *volost* council was organized with the participation of one representative from every fifty households.<sup>16</sup> It is through this administrative structure and those local officials that the investigations into the *waqf* lands of Khoja Ahrār were carried out.

It is commonly acknowledged that the institution of *waqf* is of prime importance for the establishment of social services in Islamic society, among them the financing of education through the construction of building and support of teachers, prayer leaders, Qur'ān reciters, and the like, and the funding of specific institutional budgets, particularly the *madrasah*. In the case of the Naqshbandi community in Central Asia, Khoja Ahrār, and after his death, his progeny, managed and directed the shrine, public buildings, and trusts while preserving stipulated revenues for the use of education, commerce, agricultural production, and philanthropic purposes. A whole network of socio-economic relationships, therefore, emanated from the Ahrārī trust.<sup>17</sup>

Given the colonial impetus of the tsarist administration to regulate the Central Asian economy and to ensure its authority in those territories, and given the extensive economic role played by the endowed properties in the local economy, a kin-based regional organization such as the Ahrārī family naturally was perceived as a challenge to tsarist authority and control. Obtaining knowledge of the exact extent of the Ahrārī trust and its revenues was therefore of great interest to the Governor-General. Between 1893-99 the tsarist government carried out investigations into the



The tombstone of Khoja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrār, (Jo-Ann Gross, 1997).

<sup>14</sup> Richard Pierce, *Russian Central Asia 1867-1917*, University of California, Berkeley, 1960, p. 96.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76. The Tashkent *uezd* was part of the Syr Darya *oblast*, while the Samarqand *uezd* was part of the Samarqand *oblast*.

<sup>17</sup> See Jo-Ann Gross, "The Economic Status of a Timurid Sufi Shaykh: A Matter of Conflict or Perception?" *Iranian Studies*, 21 (1988), 84-104; Jürgen Paul, "Wirtschaftliche Tätigkeit und Organisation," in *Die politische und soziale Bedeutung der Naqshbandiyya in Mittelasien im 15. Jahrhundert*, pp. 89-112.

*waqf* properties located in the Samarqand and Tashkent *vilayat*. One component of this project was a series of inquiries into the *waqf* properties of Khoja Aḥrār that were carried out by the Land-Tax Commission (Pozemel'no-Podatnaya Kommissiya) of the Tashkent Governor-Generalship. The record of their reports sheds light on tsarist administrative policy with respect to land tenure, taxation, and settlement issues.

For the remainder of the paper, I will examine a small portion of the extensive paper trail of over three hundred pages included in the two document collections under investigation.<sup>18</sup> Included in the two collections are records of meetings of the Land-Tax Commission, Russian translations of *waqf* documents, records of on-site visits by commissioners to villagers, testimony of *mutawallis* and villagers, measurements of properties and descriptions of property boundaries, decisions of the commissioners, inquiries into taxation, *iqrārs* (affidavits of property sold) presented to the commissioners by villagers, and letters written by *mutawallis* to the commission.<sup>19</sup> This study necessarily is a preliminary one that focuses on the tsarist government's investigation of the *waqf* properties of Khoja Aḥrār in Samarqand, and only briefly with Tashkent.<sup>20</sup> I hope to demonstrate that the Aḥrārī trust indeed persisted into the late nineteenth century in the Samarqand and Tashkent regions; that the *mutawallis* of the a *waqf* were both central to the investigations and prominent members of their communities; that the high level priority given to the investigation of the Aḥrārī *waqf* properties is indicative of their importance and magnitude; and that the ultimate goals of the Land-Tax Commission were to weaken the social-economic hold of the Aḥrārīs, and to increase control as well as the tsarist tax base by privatizing some of the *waqf* properties.

Judicial and political reviews of *waqfs* and their administrations was a matter of course in Central Asia. However, in contrast to those reviews of Muslim administrations which were, in theory, based upon Hanafī law and the concept of the "general good", *maslahah*, of the *waqf*, the reviews of the tsarist administration were based upon a concept of "imperial good" and the secular concerns of statecraft.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, one intriguing aspect of the investigative process of the tsarist administrative officers is their predicament of relying heavily on the *mutawallis* of the Aḥrārī trust as well as the local population for their information (including native village elders), while often mistrusting their motivations.<sup>22</sup> This was indicative of the profound effect that the imposition of a non-Muslim, Christian government would have on the formerly close relationship between Sufis and the state in Central Asia. In former times, the ruling elite supported the Sufis, often patronized them, and looked to them for spiritual, moral, and even political advice. The tsarist conquest ushered in a period of mutual mistrust between Sufis and the state, although not to the extent so pervasive in the Soviet period, when Sufis were considered threats to the Soviet state and forced underground, endowments were confiscated, and shrines and mosques closed down.<sup>23</sup> Inherent in the Russian protocol is a palpable, although not surprising, sus-

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18 Apart from documents submitted to the investigators by *mutawallis* and villagers, which are written in Persian and/or Uzbek, all of the records are written in Russian.

19 Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476 and Fond 18, opis' 1, no 10477, Central State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan, are the basis of this study, as stated above.

20 The enormity of the two fonds and the detailed information contained in them requires further research, and is the subject of a much broader study of the nineteenth century materials on the Aḥrārī trust by this author.

21 See McChesney, *Waqf in Central Asia*, pp. 10-11. It should be noted that during the 1880s and 1890s, the religious class and the Shari'ā remained in place, although their authority began to be contested by secular authority and law.

22 There are indications that many of the local native officials participated willingly in the investigations since it was in their best interest to do so.

23 See Jo-Ann Gross, "The Polemic of 'Official' and 'Unofficial Islam': Sufism in Soviet Central Asia," in Frederick De Jong (ed.), *Islamic Mysticism Contested*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, forthcoming.

piciousness on both sides. The Russian inspectors suspect that the *mutawallis* are hiding information from them and even committing fraud, especially concerning revenues, while the *mutawallis* suspect that the inspectors are out to confiscate the trusts as well as undermine their authority.

In order to investigate the *waqf* properties of Khoja Ahrār, a special commission composed of influential officials of the Land Tax Commission of the Tashkent Governor-Generalship was organized in Samarqand under the chairmanship of A.N. Chernevsky.<sup>24</sup> The protocol dated September, 1883 records that the commission requested the *mutawallis* to submit existing *waqf* documents concerning the Ahrārī trust, which they did on May 4, 1887.<sup>25</sup> At the beginning of the protocol, two *mutawallis* of the *waqf* of the *khanaqah*-shrine complex of Khoja Ahrār are named, Ishan Bakir-Khoja, son of Muhammad Yusuf-Khoja, and Sultan-Khoja, son of Inayat-Khoja.<sup>26</sup> The *mutawallī* of the "Safid" *madrasah* in Samarqand, Awliyā-Khoja, son of Buzuruk Khoja, is also named.<sup>27</sup> The *waqf* documents that the *mutawallis* submitted to the Land-Tax Commission were organized by the Russian administrators into three categories, labeled letters "A," "B," and "V."<sup>28</sup>

On July 16, 1893 a special meeting was convened concerning the *waqf* economy of Khoja Ahrār that marked the beginning of the investigation of the properties in the Samarqand *oblast*. At the meeting it was decided that an investigation be carried out to determine the exact location and boundaries of those properties. In the course of the investigation, the *waqf* properties were divided, for convenience, into separate parcels, sometimes as settlements, other times as an entire *volost* or administrative division. It followed that the various commissioners were assigned to establish the locations and borders of these properties, and it is clear from the protocol and the mentioned documents, that they relied heavily on the testimony of the *mutawallis*, who were often unable to provide the documentation and precise information that

24 Kutbaev, *ibid.*, 96-97.

25 Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, fol. 1a; 43a.

26 Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, fol. 1a; 5a. Although the Russian protocol refers to Ishan Bakir Khoja and Sultan Khoja as *mutawallis* of the *madrasah* of Khoja Ahrār, they may have been the *mutawallis* of the shrine complex rather than the *madrasah*, since only two *madrasahs* are included in the endowments of Ahrār, one in Samarqand (in the Suzangaran quarter, which is always referred to as "Safid" *madrasah* in the Russian protocol) and the other in Tashkent. There are also other *mutawallis* named in the document. For example, later on fol. 68b is a letter (in Uzbek) addressed to the Commission written by the *mutawallī* of Khoja Ahrār, Hajjī Muḥammad Rahim, and the *mutawallī* of the Safid *madrasah*, Awliyā' Khoja. Elsewhere Hajjī Muḥammad Khoja signs his name simply as "the custodian of [the *waqf*] of Khoja Ahrār, fol. 57b.

27 Although it cannot be certain, it is likely that the *mutawallis* were descendants of Khoja Ahrār, as stipulated by him. See Chekhovich, *Samarkandskie dokumenty*, 35, for a discussion of the *mutawallis* as stipulated in documents 5, 10, 11, 12, and 17.

28 Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476. fol. 1a. Letter "A" was apparently a copy of the original *waqf* document 323, opis' 1, 1202 presently housed in the Central State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan, but then kept in Bukhara. See document nos. 10, 11 and 12 in Chekhovich, *Samarkandskie dokumenty*, 107-299. The Russian translation of document "A" which was made by S. Lenin and O. Dmitrievsky is composed of 72 pages, but begins only with line 25 of the Persian *waqf*, since the first 24 lines were unreadable. Kutbaev notes that the Russian translation of document "A" "fully conforms to the original *waqf* document no 323, opis' 1, no. 1202," Kutbaev, 98-99. A closer examination of the correspondence of the Russian translation with document no. 323 is needed to fully examine their relationship. Kutbaev also notes that many of the place names are transliterated incorrectly in the Russian. Document letter "B" was based on the original *waqf* document, and conforms to *waqf* document no. 9 in the Institute of Oriental Studies of Uzbekistan. On the reverse side of the Persian document the following words are written in Russian, "Document letter B is included in file (dela) no. 54 of the Land-Tax Office (Otdelenie), 1893." See document no. 17 in Chekhovich, 316-372. Document letter "V" is not a *waqf*, but rather a *yarliq* of the Bukharan Amir Haidar dated 1825 concerning the *waqf* property of Khoja Ahrār in Kamanganar, which corresponds to document no. 9a in the Institute of Oriental Studies of Uzbekistan. See document 18 in Chekhovich, 373-319. On the reverse side of document 9a there is an inscription indicating that it was presented to the Commission on March 4, 1887.

they were seeking, and secondarily, on the testimony of local inhabitants and the various documents they presented. For example, Protocol no. 70 describes Commissar P. Aprelev's meeting with the *mutawallis* in November, 1893. This meeting concerned the *waqf* documents of Khoja Aḥrār and their correspondence with actual lands presently in use in the villages of Kamangaran, Shirbut, and Mirganch.<sup>29</sup> The *mutawallis* claimed that the land was being utilized by people who came from different places and had acquired hereditary rights to the property. They claimed that they did not know why the lands were occupied contrary to the will of the testator.

Concerning Aprelev's interrogation of the village elders of Khishraw in November, 1893, Protocol no. 72, he makes note of conversations with the *mutawallis* about document "A" and appeals to those elders to establish the current locations of the properties described in the *waqf*; included also is the testimony of the village elders of Khishraw.<sup>30</sup> Three of the villagers stated that, "Several old men know from their father's and grandfather's properties, that those who occupy the agricultural land of the village of Khishraw have done so for more than 400 years, passing it from generation to generation."<sup>31</sup> This statement suggests that lands occupied by tenants during the lifetime of Aḥrār had been passed on through families long after the death of Aḥrār. According to one village elder, "the inhabitants of the village are not all descendants of Khoja Aḥrār 'Ubaydullah Sheikh Zahid, known as Khoja Ahrar, but are people who have arrived from different places, and occupied it as vacant land on an ordinary basis..."<sup>32</sup> Another individual reports that, "At the present time, the *waqf* lands are the legal property in the use of 266 households of the village of Khishraw, and include Arabs, Turks, newcomers from Bukhara, Uzbeks from the Urgench and Naiman clan, and also eleven Persians."<sup>33</sup> Although these statements may reflect the desire of some individuals to prove their legal rights to occupy these lands, they also illustrate a fluidity in settlement patterns as well as the ethnic diversity of the population occupying the Aḥrārī *waqf* lands.

Included in the records are also numerous documents brought to the investigators by villagers, many of which record the sale of rights to the use of lands of the Aḥrārī *waqf*.<sup>34</sup> Two *iqrārs* were presented in the village of Khishraw, one of which is an *iqrār* (see figure 2) recording the sale in 1289/1872 "by Bābājān Bey to Bāzar Bey of the uncultivated assets, *sukniyāt*, of 24 tanābs of *waqf* land [belonging to] the revenues of a *waqf* which are intended for the specified purpose."<sup>35</sup> In Miyankhaw, villagers presented three documents to the inspector in order to demonstrate that some small parcels of lands in this village, which were considered as *waqf*, had been sold.<sup>36</sup>

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29 Kamangaran is located approximately two kilometers from Samarqand. I have thus far been unable to locate Shirbut and Mirganch.

30 Fond 18, opis' 1, 10476, fol. 10b, 11a. All of the elders' names are listed here. At this time Aprelev also discussed with the *mutawallis* the absence of a seal on document "B," which the *mutawallis* claimed was a result of the copying of the document every 10 years, as stipulated by the *waqf* testator. *Ibid.*, fol. 11a:

31 *Ibid.*, fol. 15b.

32 *Ibid.*, fol. 16a

33 The Russian term used is "Persian," but hand written next to the Russian word, in Arabic script, is Irānī. *Ibid.*

34 Kutbaev notes that such testimony doesn't always conform to fact, since the primary motivation of such individuals was to prove their legal rights to the use of these lands. Thus they would sign any forged document in order to support their testimony. Kutbaev, *ibid.*, pp. 108.

35 *Sukniyat* is the rights to use the land or property, or things on that land or property that may already exist. Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, ff, 19b-20a. This document has the seal of the *qaḍī*, Damullah Zaman Muhammad Ziyayev, along with a list of six witnesses. Note that the Persian text on the left side of the page is accompanied by a Russian translation on the right side. See fol. 25a for a survey of the *waqf* properties in the Samarqand region made by the Land-Tax Commission.

36 *Ibid.*, fol. 24a-24b.

Although the commission found the small number of documents submitted as insufficient to consider the entire village as private property, Aprelev used the existence of such documents to cast doubt on the validity of the *waqf* lands of Aḥrār as described in document “A” and “B,” and he used them as a basis for rejecting the position of the *mutawallis*.<sup>37</sup>

Another villager testified that whereas Kamangaran was a settlement from time immemorial, the villages of Shirbut and Mīrganch were founded only sixty-three years before by emigrants from the village of Urgut. Although they had no legal right nor did they ask permission for it, they continued to live on it for several generations, knowing that one-third of the property belonged to the Aḥrārī *waqf*, and 2/3 made up the *amlaka* (land previously unirrigated and unoccupied reclaimed land).<sup>38</sup> It appears from this example, and others, that lands of the Aḥrārī trust that had been left fallow were settled, and that local knowledge and the actions of the *mutawallis* assured its recognition as part of the *waqf*, thus those revenues were given over to the *mutawallis* for the benefit of the *waqf*. Clearly, these kinds of arrangements frustrated the Russian administrators, and only fueled their suspicions of wrongdoing.

After nine months of investigation, a meeting of the Land-Tax Commission was convened by Aprelev on August 10, 1894 to explain his conclusions regarding his findings concerning the *waqf* properties of the Aḥrārī trust that were located in the second land parcel of the Samarqand *uezd*.<sup>39</sup> He concluded that document letter “A” could not be considered as authentic since there were signs of forgery, gaps in the text, inconsistencies, and the lack of an official copy corresponding to this document.<sup>40</sup> Document letter “B”, it was concluded, was also problematic since it lacked any official seal, and, despite the stipulations of the *waqf* document to preserve a copy of the document by the *qādi*, no copies were found.<sup>41</sup> Based upon the on-site visits, the testimony of the villagers and the *mutawallis*, and the documents submitted by the *mutawallis* and the villagers, the commission concluded that a portion of the lands located in the villages of Kamangaran, Miyankhaw, Khishraw, Shirbut, and Mīrganch did not belong to the *waqf* of Khoja Aḥrār because they did not coincide with parcels bequeathed by Aḥrār for the use of the *waqf* as established by him in the fifteenth century (as detailed in the questionable documents “A” and “B”). The *mutawallis* of the *waqf* of Khoja Aḥrār, moreover, did not clarify these questions with any reliable information about the legality of the *waqf*. This conclusion interestingly views the estate of Khoja Aḥrār as frozen and based solely on the fifteenth-century record, in effect denying the validity of changes that would most likely have taken place over time. Property transactions affecting the original endowment would have been recorded, but not all of those documents may have survived, thus the predicament of the *mutawallis*.<sup>42</sup> As Kutbaev notes, the *mutawallis* asserted that, despite the absence of the emir’s seal in the document named letter “B,” this docu-

37 Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 111.

38 Protocol no. 38, 1894, fond 18, opis’ 1, no. 10476, fol. 25b, 26a.

39 *Ibid.*, 36a-38b. Kutbaev, *ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

40 *Ibid.*, fol. 36a; Kutbaev, *ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

41 *Ibid.*, The original, the *mutawallis* argued, was in Bukhara.

42 In a later investigation into the properties named in document “A” conducted by the tax inspector, Voronets, which included the Safid *madrasah* in the Suzangaran quarter of Samarqand, he reports that the *mutawallis* did not know how much income was received for each *waqf*, nor did they keep receipts or have any account books. It is not surprising that the *mutawallis* did not want to submit their record books to the tsarist administrators, although, as Kutbaev notes, this led the administrators to conclude that the *mutawallis* were holding on to revenues. Following interviews with villagers in Vang, Laish, and Chaukh, measurement of the borders of the *waqf* properties, and reports of the *mutawallis*, Voronets concluded that those *waqf* lands had always been settled and “freely passed on as inheritance, and were alienated. And the borders of the present time do not conform to the borders mentioned in the *waqf* document.” Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 119; fond 18, opis’ 1, no. 10476, fol. 144a-b.

ment was copied every ten years in accordance with the stipulation that it be done so by the *waqf* testator.<sup>43</sup> But routinely, when portions of documents were unclear or lacked legible seals, they were considered by the commission to be invalid. The inspectors also used many of the documents presented by various villagers to conclude that they were privately owned and therefore not *waqf* properties, despite the fact in many cases it was the *sukniyat* of the *waqf*, not the land itself, that was being sold.<sup>44</sup> Aprevel and the commission did not appear to accept the testimony of the *mutawallis* of the *waqf* as valid; however, he did appear to accept the *iqrārs* as authentic. Kutbaev notes that it is possible to suppose that these people were hereditary tenants of the *waqf* properties of Khoja Aḥrār.<sup>45</sup> But, as he also notes, it is also possible that some of these reports were simply not factual.<sup>46</sup> The documentary record for administrative decisions such as those described above highlight the complexity of issues concerning the historical transformation of endowments through time and space. It also makes a strong argument for the need to consider not only the documents themselves, but the socio-political and economic dimensions of them.

The preservation of the Aḥrārī trust, as stipulated by Aḥrār himself, was naturally of great concern to the *mutawallis* whose prestige, status, and subsistence rested largely upon their positions as administrators of the trust. Under the tsarist administration, it was customary for the Russian officials to distribute the *waqf* revenues on an annual basis to the *mutawallis*. As part of his contribution to the investigation, Voronets examined the incomes from the *waqf* properties described in document letter "A."<sup>47</sup> After meeting with the *mutawallis* of the *khanaqāh* complex of Hazrat-i Khoja Aḥrār and the *mutawallis* of the Safid *madrasah*, the properties in the villages of the Shakhabski (Shahabski) Volost were accepted by Voronets as *waqf*.<sup>48</sup> The protocol dated November 29, 1894, which lists the expenditures, attests to the persistence of the Aḥrārī family as well as the organization of its communal activities.

For the Safid *madrasah* in Samarqand in the Suzangaran district, it is recorded that the *mutawallis* distributed 1774 rubles and 30 kopeks in the following manner: 1/10 for himself (the *mutawalli*), 255 rubles 50 kopeks for the *mudarris*, 37 rubles 7 kopeks for the upkeep of each of the 28 rooms of the *madrasah*, 30 rubles for the *mullah*, plus one ruble 15 kopeks for entertainment and the upkeep of the Provincial Administrative Office (Uznaya Upravleniya).<sup>49</sup>

The remaining revenues were distributed for the use of the *khānaqāh* complex (called Hazrat-i Khoja Aḥrār in the protocol) and for the maintenance of Khoja Aḥrār's descendants in the following manner:

43 Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 104. See fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, fol. 11a. At another meeting of the Land Tax Commission convened by Aprelev on November 23, 1893, the *mutawallis* were questioned about document "A," mainly regarding the places names and the size of the land parcels. These discussions were to establish the next phase of the on-site investigations. In doing so, as Kutbaev notes, the commissars of the Land-Tax Commission were granted "unlimited rights," and were provided with administrative officials and services to help the investigation process. Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 106.

44 Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, fol. 19a, b. See also "Tsenii dokument o vakufnikh vladeniya Khoji Akhrara," *Akademiya Nauk Respubliki Uzbekistan Institut Vostokovedeniia, Sobornik statei: Molodikh uchenikh i samnurani instituta vostokovedeniia*, Tashkent, 1970.

45 Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 115.

46 It should be noted that within one month of the meeting, the investigative materials were translated into Uzbek, including the testimony of the *mutawallis*. Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 116; fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, fol. 37a.

47 Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, fol. 39a. Voronets was looking into the properties listed as no. 54 in the *dela* of the *oblast* government.

48 The villages were Vang, Laish, and Chauk. The protocol states that the *mutawallis* did not know how much income was generated from each of the *waqf* properties. It does state that they received about 10,000 rubles from the uezd government annually from the properties in the Samarqand *oblast*. *Ibid.*, fol. 39b.

49 Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476, fol. 39b-40a.

1000 rubles for the two above-mentioned *mutawallis*, 400 rubles for the mosque and food to be served at fast time, 80 rubles for the *imam*, 20 rubles for the *muezzin*, 40 rubles for two *mustarahān*. In addition, what remained after the expenditures is to be distributed to the 500 descendants of Khoja Ahrār, to be divided into 317 portions, one portion for each male, and 1/2 portion for each female, thus averaging to 27 rubles for each portion.<sup>50</sup>

Some two years later, in response to the Commission's conclusions regarding the validity of the *waqfs*, the *mutawallis* were firm in their disagreement with the tsarist decision that put their revenues in peril. Awliyā' Khoja and Muhammad Rahim Khoja lodged a formal written protest to the Commission in which they stated (in Uzbek), unequivocally, that the revenues of the *waqf* properties were used to support the Safid *madrasah* in Samarqand, four *mullāhs*, and 500 of the descendants of Khoja Ahrār as stipulated in the original *waqf* deed of the fifteenth century (see figure 2) and they requested that this be maintained (see figure 3).

We the *mutawallis* of [the *waqf*] of His Eminence Khoja Ahrār, Hajji Muhammad Rahim son of Khoja Subhānqūli and the *mutawalli* of the Safid *madrasah*, Awliyā Khoja, son of Buzurg Khoja, with all due respect to the respectable Governor, beg you to note that the aforementioned late Eminence (meaning Ahrār), may God bless him, had given.... [lacunae] for the daily maintenance and...[lacunae] equal to approximately 500 persons to include adults, minors, women and surviving descendants. They have no... [lacunae] they cannot even maintain the hired workers specified by His Eminence for his progeny. The said *madrasah* has four *mullāhs* whose studying and support is due to that *waqf*. We hope that Your Highness will reactivate (*jori bulub*) that old *waqf* (of long years). This will take care of the aforementioned inheritors (*tirikchilik*) and the *mullāhs* of the *madrasah*. Respectfully, we place our mark and give our words herein, I the *mutawalli* of the Safid *madrasah* Awliyā Khoja, son of Buzurg Khoja; Muhammad Rahim Khoja, I give my word.<sup>51</sup>

The *mutawallis* also argued that those inhabitants who, over the course of more than 400 years, occupied and/or claimed the usufruct of properties within the legal *waqf*, and continued to divert a portion of the revenues as stipulated for the use of the *waqf*, confirmed the status of these properties as legally part of the *waqf*.<sup>52</sup>

Detailed investigations into the *waqf* properties of Khoja Ahrār such as those described above also provide evidence concerning the resettlement of Russians in the Tashkent *vilayat*, and the possible vulnerability of the *waqf* lands of Khoja Ahrār to tsarist settlement policy. The Resettlement Administration was formed in 1896, mainly in response to the Siberian Railroad Project that brought many Russian immigrants into the region. The main centers of Russian peasant colonization in Central Asia were in the steppe *oblasts* and Semirichie, outside the confines of Tashkent and Samarqand, although the influx of colonists did have some affect on the Governor-Generalship of Turkestan.<sup>53</sup>

50 *Ibid.*, fol. 40a, 40b. Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 117-118. The protocol also notes that the *mutawallis* had no account book and did not keep receipts.

51 *Ibid.*, fol. 68a, 68b. Note that several words were unclear in the Uzbek text. The Russian protocol above the letter only generally describes the dissatisfaction of the *mutawallis*. Following the Uzbek text is a Russian translation of it, which incorrectly states that there were 300 persons for whom maintenance was to be provided. Fond 18, opis' 1, 10465, fol. 68b.

52 Another aspect of the investigations concerned the taxation of *waqf* properties. For example, while P. Gorskii carried out a broad topological survey in a number of villages, he also collected information about the taxes paid for the use of *waqf* properties of Khoja Ahrar. Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 22-23. Fond 18, opis' 1, no. 10476. The conclusion that *waqf* letter "A" was fraudulent was partially based on P. Gorskii's investigation.

53 In 1911, according to Pierce, only 6 percent of the population in the Governor-Generalship of Turkestan was Russian, most of which was located in the urban areas, or 407,000 Russians out of the total population of 6,493,000 in 1911. Pierce, *ibid.*, p. 137.



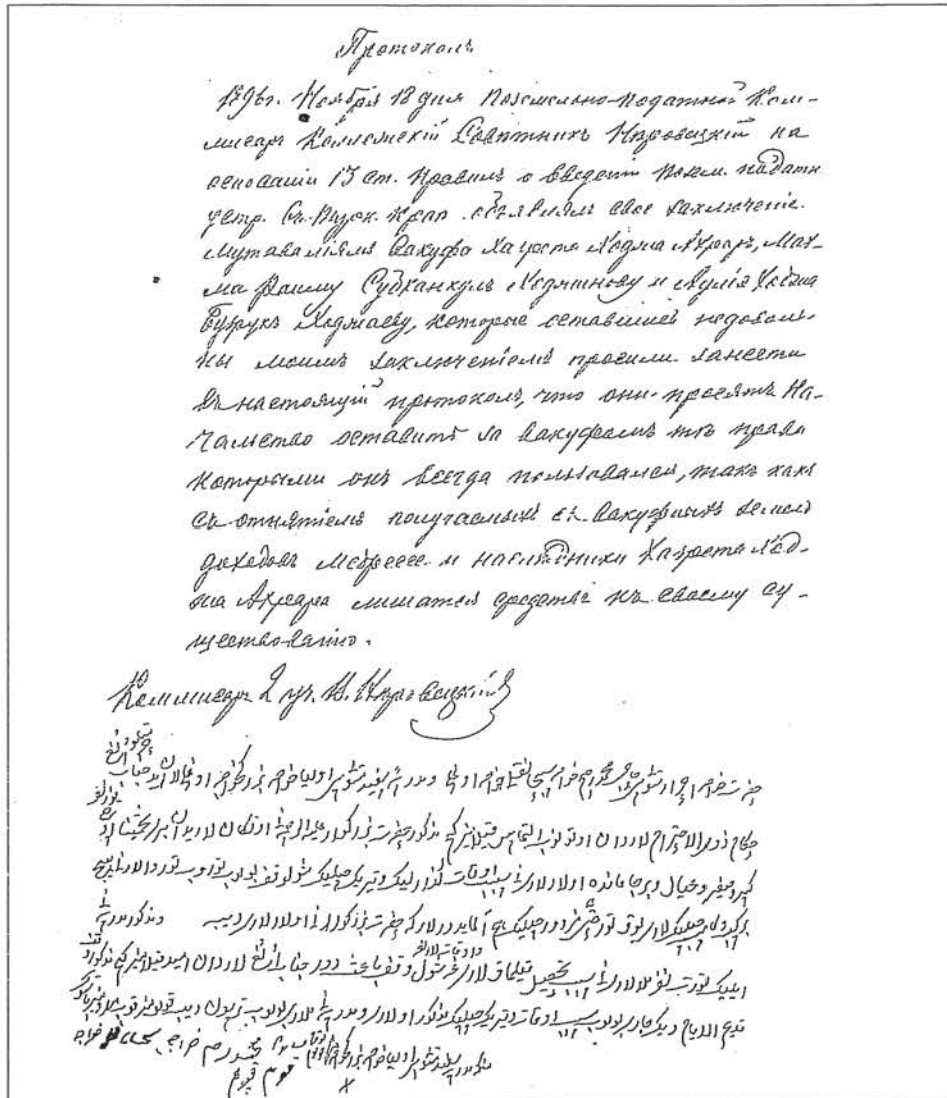


Figure 3: Central State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Fond 18, op. 1, no. 10476, fol. 68a.

these lands who will resell their rights to the use of this land to the Russians.”<sup>54</sup> It is not clear to what extent such transactions actually took place or whether the land itself may have been sold, but it is likely that, over time, not only was the authority of the *mutawallis* undermined, but the actual endowment itself may have been violated.

Despite these transformations, much of the Ahrārī patrimony survived through the nineteenth century, and most probably until its final liquidation under Soviet rule. Evidence of this is found in a copy of a map of the Tashkent *waqf* of the descendants of Khoja Ahrār that was compiled by tsarist officials in 1890.<sup>55</sup> The map, measuring 8 feet by 4 1/2 feet, is currently housed in the Central State Archives in Tashkent, and dramatically illustrates the extensive agricultural land in the region, which included a proliferation of canals that ran through the territory. According to a table

54 Fond 17, opis' 1, no. 18103, fol. 111, 112. Kutbaev, *ibid.*, p. 152.

55 Fond 277, opis' 1, no. 4020, Central State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan. See Z. A. Kutbaev, “Tsennii dokument o vakufnikh vladeniya Khoji Akhrara,” *Akademiya Nauk Respubliki Uzbekistan Institut Vostokovedniia. Sbornik statei: Molodikh uchenikh i sammurani instituta vostokovedniia*, Tashkent, 1970.

recorded on the map, the total land area of the properties of the *waqf* comprised more than 55,116 *tanābs* of land, and included large fruit orchards and vineyards. This alone is proof of the extraordinary role of the descendants of Khoja Aḥrār in the agricultural economy of the Tashkent region.

In conclusion, the abundance of information generated by tsarist administrative policy provides the historian with valuable insight into the relationship between the tsarist administration and the Aḥrārī communities of late nineteenth-century Central Asia, and attests to the persistence of the patrimony of Khoja Aḥrār through the agricultural economy, through the community network that was involved in this agricultural economy, and through the administrators of the *waqf*, many of whom are likely to have been Aḥrārīs themselves. The visibly high priority given to the investigation of these properties by the Turkestan Governor-General further reflects the survival, prominence, and influence of the Aḥrārī family in the nineteenth century.

The Russian protocol, and the Persian and Uzbek documents that are included in it, support three conclusions. First, that the *waqf* of Khoja Aḥrār was remarkably durable, and survived over five hundred years after its original foundation. The embrace of the garden of paradise on earth, so eloquently described in the words carved on Aḥrār's gravestone, persisted through his progeny despite the challenges posed by the vestiges of conquest and change, including the tsarist conquest. Second, the Naqshbandi community, due to its extensive endowment, as well as the prestige and status of its leadership, played a central role in the local economy and social organization of nineteenth-century Central Asia. And third, colonial rule in Central Asia introduced a previously unknown threat to the existence of the Naqshbandi communities: that of a non-Muslim state authority that recognized neither the sanctity of the community nor the spiritual authority of its leadership. The colonial policy of reclamation of land and resettlement threatened the endowment of Khoja Aḥrār as founded by him. The supervision of the *waqf* properties, particularly in the distribution of revenues, was further undermined as it was taken over by Russian administrators. The history of Sufism in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Central Asia remains understudied, as does the utilization of the wealth of documentary sources contained in the state and local archival collections of Central Asia such as those examined here. It is hoped that the preliminary findings of this study illustrate the value of such documents not only for the local history of Sufism, but for the comparative history of *waqf* as well as Sufi-state relations.