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*Stylized bird and tree from a
Safavid brocade.*

Artisans and Guild Life
in the later Safavid period

by

Mehdi Keyvani

Ph.D. Thesis submitted to the School
of Oriental Studies, Durham University.

April, 1980.



*borders from Safavid
brocades.*



14. MAY 1984

ABSTRACT

In the social and economic history of Iran, as of other Moslem countries, bazaars and guilds of craftsmen and tradesmen working in them have always played an important part. After a discussion of the historical background, this thesis examines the functions of the guilds in the later Şafavid period (c. 1597-1722 A.D.), when Iran was a large and generally stable empire administered on bureaucratic rather than feudal lines. Guild practices and traditions from the period endured into the 19th and 20th centuries.

Evidence is adduced to show that the guilds had a dual role as spontaneous associations for defence of their members' interests and as agencies used by the Şafavid government for collection of taxes, control of prices, and procurement of goods and labour. Among the subjects which are examined are the functions of responsible officials and headmen, the taxes and the tax collection methods, the apprenticeship system, price supervision, judicial and penal matters, and guild restrictions.

Attention is also given to the Şafavid government's intervention in economic life through royal industrial establishments and royal monopolies.

Although merchants were not organized in guilds, they influenced the life of the bazaars, and so too did the East India Companies which established "factories" in Iran during the period. Attention is therefore given to the activities of Muslim Iranian, Armenian, Jewish, and Hindu merchants and financiers, and of the English and Dutch East India Companies.

The stagnation of the Iranian economy in the later part of the period, the lack of technical innovation, and the non-appearance of large-scale forms of industrial and economical organization are considered in the light of the available evidence. The conclusion which is reached is that the Safavid regime's restrictive and monopolistic policy was one of the main causes of this decline.

The guilds played an important part in religious and social as well as commercial and industrial life. Religious and ethical traditions and social and ceremonial functions of the guilds are therefore discussed in this thesis.

Material for the thesis has been gathered from a comprehensive survey of Iranian and foreign sources; but for many topics, adequate evidence to support firm conclusions has not been obtainable. The thesis is therefore offered as a tentative contribution to understanding of a hitherto unstudied phase of Iranian history.

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PREFACE

The importance of the Şafavid period in Iran's historical evolution is acknowledged by modern scholars. Although the stability and the unity, more or less within the traditional frontiers, which the Iranian people enjoyed under the Şafavid regime came to an abrupt end with its fall, nevertheless many cultural and social institutions of the period endured into the 19th and 20th centuries, and some have survived through the modernizing processes of the Pahlavi period right up to the present day. The beliefs and ideals, and also the customs and folklore, of Twelver Shī'ism have remained an integral part of the national heritage ever since Shī'ism was officially established by the Şafavid Shāhs and popularly accepted by most Iranians in the course of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Study of Şafavid Iran has been focussed on international relations and wars and on religion, art, and literature. Economic and social matters have hitherto received less attention. The research which has been done into such matters has generally been based on European records and travel diaries and primarily concerned with the history of European economic expansion overseas. Neither the foreign nor the indigenous sources throw adequate light on the internal economic and social history of Iran in the period. The scarcity of data may well be the main reason for the relative neglect of this field. The importance of the field nevertheless becomes apparent when relevant considerations are taken into account. As already mentioned, social institutions of the Şafavid period endured for another two centuries

or more. During the period, the Iranians first entered into regular relations with the Europeans and acquired some awareness of the European economic and military strength which was to overshadow them in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In spite of the advantages of political unity and relatively long lasting stability, the Iranians under Şafavid rule were unable to develop new techniques of production and forms of organization at a time when the Europeans were laying the foundations of their future industrial revolution.

Research into aspects of this important field can be pursued through investigation of all possible sources and assessment of all retrievable data. The present thesis is the outcome of an effort to find and interpret all available information on one of the chief social institutions of Iran in the Şafavid period, namely the guilds of the craftsmen and tradesmen of the bazaars. Since these people were engaged not only in the production and sale of goods but also in religious and cultural activities, the thesis goes beyond the socio-economic field to touch on such matters. As far as the author knows this is the first detailed study of the subject which has been undertaken and put into writing. While well aware of the incompleteness of the data and consequent questionability of the conclusions, the author hopes that the thesis will contribute something of value to future multi-dimensional study of the social and economic history of Şafavid Iran.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work could not have been undertaken without the encouragement of the University of Iṣfahān and the Iranian Ministry of Science and Higher Education, for whose grant of leave of absence and financial support for four years the author will always be grateful. The author is also grateful to his supervisor, Mr. F. R. C. Bagley, for encouragement to enter the University of Durham and for valuable help in regard to research problems and the arrangement and English composition of the material. Others to whom thanks are due are Dr. J. D. Gurney of the Persian Department of Oxford University, for valuable suggestions and comments; Dr. W. M. Floor of The Hague, a scholar of Iranian history and author of articles on the Iranian guilds, who kindly made useful comments and provided some copies of documents; to Mrs. Barbara Nestor of Mansfield, England, who served as a Librarian in Tehran and compiled a bibliography of European sources on Ṣafavid history which she kindly made available; to Professor J. D. Harris, Director of the School of Oriental Studies of the University of Durham, for many kinds of practical help; to Mrs. J. Butterworth, Librarian in charge of the Persian, Arabic, and Turkish collections of the Oriental Section of Durham University Library, for valuable help in bibliographical and library matters and in the English composition; to Mrs. K. Glavanis and Mr. M. Ferguson of the same Library; and to members of the staffs of the British Library and India Office Library in London, the Bodleian Library at Oxford, the John Rylands Library at Manchester, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and the Central Library and Documentation Centre of the University of Tehran. For the careful typing of

the thesis, gratitude is due to Mrs. C. Bates. Last but not least, the author is deeply indebted to his wife Nāhīd for very useful help as well as constant encouragement and patience.

Mehdi Keyvani

TRANSLITERATIONConsonants

ا	ا	ص	ʃ
ب	ب	ض	ẓ
پ	پ	ط	ṭ
ت	ت	ظ	ẓ
ث	ث	ع	r
ج	ج	غ	gh
ح	ح	ف	f
خ	خ	ق	q
د	د	ک	k
ذ	ذ	گ	g
ر	ر	ل	l
ز	ز	م	m
ژ	ژ	ن	n
ش	ش	و	v or w
س	س	ه	h
ش	ش	ی	y

Long vowels

آ	أ	ā
او	و	ū
ای	ی	ī

Diphthongs

او	و	aw
ای	ی	ay

Short vowels

ا	ا	a
و	و	u
ی	ی	i

INDICATION OF SOURCES

Written primary and secondary sources which were used in the work are generally cited in footnotes and listed under the author's name in alphabetical order in the Bibliography; but mosque inscriptions and certain manuscripts are only cited in footnotes and are not included in the Bibliography.

In addition to written sources, oral information was used. Since Işfahān was the administrative and commercial centre of Şafavid Iran, most of the thesis concerns the bazaar and guilds of Işfahān; and since members of the present bazaar of Işfahān conserve traditions which they trace back to Şafavid times, the author has made cautious use of statements given by them in reply to inquiries.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>C.A.R.</u>	<u>Central Asian Review.</u>
<u>D.M.</u>	<u>M. Dānishpazhūh, ed., Dastūr ul-Mulūk-i Mīrzā Rafī'ā va Tazkirat ul-Mulūk-i Mīrzā Samī'ā.</u>
<u>ECON.H.R.</u>	<u>Economic History Review.</u>
<u>E.I.(1)</u>	<u>Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st ed., Leiden, 1913-38.</u>
<u>E.I.(2)</u>	<u>Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., Leiden, 1954-</u>
<u>English H.R.</u>	<u>English History Review.</u>
<u>Int.J.M.E.Stud.</u>	<u>International Journal of Middle East Studies.</u>
<u>J.E.S.H.O.</u>	<u>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient.</u>
<u>L.R.</u>	<u>W. Foster, Letters received by the East India Company from its servants in the East.</u>
<u>M.D.A.T.</u>	<u>Majalla-yi Dānishkada-yi Adabiyāt va 'Ulūm-i Insānī-yi Dānishgāh-i Tehrān.</u>
<u>Q.</u>	<u>Qamari (lunar), specifying the lunar hijri calendar.</u>
<u>Sh.</u>	<u>Shamsi (solar) specifying the solar hijri calendar.</u>
<u>T.M.</u>	<u>V. Minorsky, ed., Tazkirat ul-Mulūk.</u>
<u>Z.D.M.G.</u>	<u>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.</u>

CHRONOLOGY

In the text of the thesis, years according to both the lunar hijrī (Islamic) and the solar Gregorian (Christian) calendars are given without specification, the hijrī date being put first and separated by a stroke from the Gregorian date. In the Bibliography, years according to the solar hijrī calendar in use in Iran since 1925 are specified with the abbreviation Sh. and similarly followed by the Gregorian equivalent.

Dates of reigns of Iranian rulers from the Tīmūrīds to the Pahlavīs are normally omitted in the text, but are given in the dynastic tables which appear below.

DYNASTIC TABLES

(Based on C. E. Bosworth, The Islamic Dynasties,
Edinburgh 1967).

Tīmūrids (772/1370-912/1506)

771/1370	Tīmūr
807/1405	Khalīl
807/1405	Shah Rukh
850/1447-853/1449	Ulugh Bēg

Tīmūrid rulers in Samarqand

853/1449	'Abdul-Laṭif
854/1450	'Abdullāh Mīrzā
855/1451	Abū Sa'īd
873/1469	Aḥmad
899/1494-906/1500	Maḥmud b. Abū Sa'īd

Tīmūrid rulers in Khurāsān

853/1449	Bābur
861/1457	Maḥmud b. Bābur
863/1459	Abū Sa'īd
873/1469	Yadgār Muḥammad
875/1470	Husayn Bayqarā
912/1506-913/1507	Badī' uz-Zamān

Qara Qūyūnlū (782/1380-873/1468) in Āzarbāyjān
and Iraq

782/1380	Qara Muḥammad Turmush
791/1389	Qara Yūsuf
802/1400	Tīmūrid invasion
809/1406	Qara Yūsuf (reinstated)
823/1420	Iskandar
841/1438	Jahān Shāh

Āq Qūyūnlū (780/1378-914/1508) in
Diyārbakr, Azarbāyjān, and western Iran

780/1378	Qara Yuluk 'Uthmān
839/1435	Ḥamza, in dispute with his brother 'Ali till 842/1438
848/1444	Jahāngīr
857/1453	Uzun Ḥasan
882/1478	Khalīl
883/1478	Ya'qūb
896/1490	Bāysunqur
898/1493	Rustam
902/1497	Aḥmad
903/1497	Murād (in Qum)
903/1498	Alwand
903/1498	Muhammad Mīrzā
907/1502-914/1508	Murād (latterly sole ruler)

Şafavids (907/1501-1145/1732)

907/1501	Ismā'īl I
930/1524	Tahmāsb I
984/1576	Ismā'īl II
985/1578	Muḥammad Khudābanda
996/1588	'Abbās I
1038/1629	Şafī I
1052/1642	'Abbās II
1077/1666	Sulaymān I
1105/1694	Ḥusayn I
1135/1722	Tahmāsb II
1145/1732	'Abbās III)
1163/1749	Sulaymān II)

1163/1750	Ismā'īl III	} nominal rulers
1166/1753	Ḥusayn II	
1200/1786	Muḥammad	

Afshārīds (1148/1736-1210/1795)

1148/1736	Nādir
1160/1747	'Alī Qulī ('Ādil Shāh)
1161/1748	Ibrāhīm
1161/1748-1210/1795	Shāh Rukh (in Khurāsān)

Zands (1163/1750-1209/1794)

1163/1750	Karīm Khān
1193/1779	Abū'l Fath
1193/5-1779-81	Ṣādiq Khān (in Shīrāz)
1193-9/1779-85	'Alī Murād (in Iṣfahān)
1199/1585	Ja'far
1203/1789-1209/1794	Luṭf 'Alī

Qājārs (1133/1779-1343/1925)

1133/1721	Fath 'Alī Khān	} tribal chiefs in Māzandarān
1163/1750	Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān	
1184/1770	Ḥusayn Qulī Khān	
1193/1779	Āqā Muḥammad Khān (crowned in 1211/1796)	
1212/1797	Fath 'Alī	
1250/1834	Muhammad	
1264/1848	Nāṣir ud-Dīn	
1313/1896	Muzaffar ud-Dīn	
1324/1907	Muḥammad 'Alī	
1327/1909-1343Q(1304Sh.)/1925	Aḥmad	

Pahlavīs (1304 Sh/1925-1357 Sh/1979)

1304/1925-1320/1941	Riżā
1320/1941-1357/1979	Muhammad Riżā

Dedicated to the artisans and craftsmen
of Iran.



*A peacock from a Qalamkari
design.*

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1. Survey and Assessment of the Sources
of Data on the Guilds in Safavid Iran.

I.2. The Historical Background of the
Iranian Guilds.

I.1. Survey and Assessment of the Sources of
Data on the Guilds in Safavid Iran.

Study of the Safavid period is in an early phase. Scholars have shown interest in the dynasty's rise and fall, in the establishment and popularization of Shi'ism in Iran, and in international aspects such as the Ottoman-Iranian wars and the start of European diplomatic and commercial relations with Iran. The development of the Iranian fine arts during the period has also received attention. As yet, however, very little research has been done into the internal economic and social history of Iran under the Safavids. One reason for this is the scarcity and inaccessibility of data from contemporary Iranian sources, which to some extent is compensated by the existence of pertinent information from contemporary European sources. Another reason is the influence still exerted on Iranian historical study by the content and periodization of the traditional chronicles, which seldom record social and economic events or changes, and when they do so, treat them as episodes in the career of a king or a dynasty. These factors can give rise to questionable judgements, such as that of the modern historian Abu'l-Qāsim Tāhirī who has written, in a popular work on the 10th/15th and 11th/16th centuries, that "the security and peace which the bulk of the Iranian population enjoyed in Shāh 'Abbās the Great's reign gradually made them the most tranquil and prosperous of the Eastern countries. The increase in commercial activity, the intercourse with various nationalities, and the Shāh's regard for the artistic professions, all gave solidity to the Iranian



social institution."¹ Research since Minorsky's edition and translation of the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk, a manual of Safavid administration, in 1943 has not yet invalidated his remark in the foreword that "studies of political events, chronology, literature, religion, and art all have their importance, but the picture is likely to remain incomplete and to lack unity until there has been a more thorough examination of the ethnological factors, reflecting as they do the respective positions of the social groups."² The present study is an attempt to gather and analyse data from Iranian and European sources on one of the social groups of Safavid Iran, namely the artisans and tradesmen of the bazaars, and on their guild institutions. The sources and the relevant works of modern scholars are discussed in this chapter.

Among the works of modern scholars, the explanation and comments on the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk by V. Minorsky, who also had a close acquaintance with the European sources, are uniquely valuable and have laid the foundation for subsequent research. Also important are L. Lockhart's The fall of the Safavid dynasty (Cambridge 1958), which includes studies of social and economic factors; J. Emerson's unpublished thesis on Some European sources on the economic structure of Persia between 1630 and 1690 A.D. (Cambridge 1971), and S. Schuster-Walser's Das Safawidische Persien im Spiegel Europäische Reiseberichte 1502-1711 (Baden-Baden 1970), which are pioneering essays in economic historiography and the investigations of M. Roelofz,³ R. W. Ferrier and W. C. Palmer⁴ respectively into the archives of the Dutch and English East

India companies, which in addition to the reports on the businesses of the companies give some information about the economic and social conditions of Iranians. A. K. S. Lambton's Landlord and peasant in Persia (London 1955) is the most important work yet written on the social and economic history of the rural and tribal populations, but is not concerned with the urban population. A History of Iran written by Russian scholars,⁵ who had a close acquaintance with the Armenian, Georgian and Russian sources, in addition to the other sources, is also important; its section on the guilds in Şafavid Iran is a useful analysis and explanation of the social and economic role of the working people as the main part of the urban population. Among the works by modern Iranian scholars, the most valuable are N. Falsafī's 5 volume Zindāgani-yi Shāh 'Abbās-i Avval (Life of Shāh 'Abbās I),⁶ which contains a large amount of scattered data from Iranian and European sources on economic and social matters, and M. I. Bāstānī Pārīzī's Siyāsāt va iqtisād-i 'aṣr-i Şafavī,⁷ a political and economic history of the period, which is based on solid research even though it is written in a fluent and popular style with many touches of the author's keen sense of humour. A. Ṭāhirī's Tārīkh-i siyāsī va ijtimā'i-yi Irān,⁸ which is a relatively short popular general history, pays attention to religious and cultural changes but is weak on economic and social matters. Murtaẓā Rāvandī, in the section on the Şafavid period in his Tārīkh-i ijtimā'ī-yi Irān⁹ (Social history of Iran), has only a rather brief discussion on the urban workers derived mainly from

Minorsky, Chardin, and Tavernier, but gives an interesting and original interpretation of their position, which he considers to have deteriorated as the result of governmental exploitation.

The scarcity of documentary evidence concerning the urban craftsmen and trader and their guilds in the Şafavîd period may perhaps explain why this subject has received little attention from modern scholars with the exception of J. Emerson. The reason for this scarcity is that documents such as account books and transaction records of shopkeepers and artisans, tax papers, price lists, endowment deeds (vaqfnāma), records of appointments of guild officials, judgements of guild courts, etc., were destroyed in the internal conflicts which followed the fall of the Şafavids. The late 18th century historian Āşaf mentions that in the last days of the Şafavid rule, all the account books and documents of the Şafavid and pre-Şafavid kings which had been kept in a palace belonging to the Shāh called the Sarā-yi Chār Hawż were burnt on the order of 'Abdullāh Khān, the governor of Işfahān.¹⁰ The 19th century historian Jābirī Anşārī states that on orders of Maḥmūd, the first Ghazāy Afghān ruler of Işfahān, all the account books and important papers of the tradesmen and artisans of the bazaar were cast into the Zāyanda Rūd and that as the result of this barbaric action the records (dafātır) disappeared.¹¹

Nevertheless some relevant Şafavid documents have survived and are accessible, being now in the possession of public libraries, especially the British Library in

London and the Central Library of Tehrān University, and of scholarly private collectors. For the most part they are royal decrees, and in some cases they throw light on matters such as guild appointments and the duties of the kalāntar, naqīb, muhtasib, bāshī etc. In the British Library there is a uniquely informative scroll (B.M., Sloane 4094), undated but probably from Shāh Sulaymān's reign.

The sanctity of the mosque saved a number of Ṣafavid royal decrees (farmāns) and vaqfnāmas which had been inscribed on the wall of the principal mosque in certain towns, notably Iṣfahān, Kāshān, Ardistān, Yazd, Tabrīz, and Astarābād (now Gurgān). Some of these inscriptions are valuable and unique sources of data on matters such as the crafts and trades of the town, the rates of the taxes and other impositions, and the role of the guilds. Inscribed tombstones from the Ṣafavid period are another useful source, because some of them give information about the deceased person's craft or trade and pictures of his tools.

The source materials used in the present study may be classified in eight main categories. Particulars of the various printed books and manuscripts are given in the Bibliography. The categories are as follows:

1. Documents

1a. The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk (T.M.) and Dastūr ul-Mulūk (D.M.). These two manuals of Ṣafavid administration, written to instruct Ashraf, the second Ḡhalzāy ruler, and the Afghān conquerors in the arts of court protocol

and imperial government as practiced during the reign of the last Šafavid monarch, are not strictly contemporary. Tazkirat ul-Mulūk of Mīrzā Samī'ā and has been edited with a commentary and a translation by the late Vladimir Minorsky. This work is a concise but detailed and purely factual compendium of the machinery of the government at the end of the Šafavid period by an unknown official. It contains reliable data on guild organization and related matters, and has been used extensively in the present study. The Dastūr ul-Mulūk of Mīrzā Rafī'ā, very similar in design and wording, appears in general to be better organized and more accurate; a printed edition, with an excellent introduction by Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh, has appeared in consecutive issues of the journal of the Faculty of Literature and Social Sciences of Tehrān University. Both are listed in the bibliography under the name of the respective editors.

2b. Manuscript documents (mainly royal decrees).

3c. Mosque inscriptions.

2. Historical works

2a. General histories. These are royal chronicles written in traditional form and ornate language. Accessions, power struggles, wars, revolts, appointments, etc. are recounted in chronological order and generally without explanation, and (as already mentioned) economic and social matters are seldom brought into the picture; but scattered reports of political incidents, tax changes, etc. involving the guilds are to be found in these works. The most important of these works, which were written by official secretaries

(munshīs), are listed below. (1) The Aḥsan ut-Tavarikh, written in 980/1573 except for a portion at the end which was added in 985/1578. The Author, Ḥasan Rūmlū, gives a history of Iranian affairs from 900/1464 to 985/1578. He appears to have been a conscientious inquirer, though he usually fails to explain the real causes of the expeditions and historical events which he describes. (2) The Tārīkh-i 'Ālamārā-yi 'Abbāsī, written in 1025/1616 by Iskandar Munshī, a history of the life and reign of 'Abbās I with an introductory section on his Ṣafavid predecessors. (3) The Ẓayl (appendix) of the 'Ālamārā-yi 'Abbāsī, written around 1043/1634 by Iskandar Munshī and Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālih-i Muvarrikh. (4) The 'Abbāsnāma, a history of the reign of 'Abbās II by Muḥammad Ṭāhir Vaḥīd, a secretary (munshī) employed by the grand vazīrs Mīrzā Ṭaqī ud-Dīn Muḥammad and Khalīfa Sulṭān.

Much more valuable as a source of information on social matters is the Rustam ul-Tavārīkh of Muḥammad Ḥāshim Āṣaf, who held the title Rustam ul-Ḥukamā'. He states in his foreword that his father's cousin and his grandfather Amīr Shams ul-Dīn Muḥammad both served the Ṣafavids, the latter as master of the royal manufactories (kārkhāna-bāshī) to Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn. His father was in the service of the Vakīl (Karīm Khān Zand) and later, after an imprisonment, of Āqā Muḥammad Khān Qājār. The work consists of a collection of historical and socio-biographical anecdotes culled from his father's and grandfather's reminiscences, extending from the start of the reign of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn to the end of that of 'Alī Murād Khān Zand in 1199/1785 and continuing to the time of Faṭḥ 'Alī Shāh, written in a simple and pithy

style which his father recommended to him.¹² This work contains very valuable information on the social and economic history of 18th century Iran.

All the above mentioned works have now been printed.

2b. Local histories and geographies. The works of this type which were written in the Safavid period contain information about bazaars and guilds. The Ihyā ul-MULūk is a history of Sīstān in 'Abbās I's reign written in the early 17th century by Malik Shāh Husayn, who held high official positions and carefully observed what went on. The Tārīkh-i Gīlān, a history of Gīlān, written around 1039/1630 by 'Abd ul-Fattāh Fūmānī, recounts political and economic events from 923/1517 to 1038/1629, and includes a very clear account of the Gīlānī resistance against the silk monopoly established by 'Abbās I and afterwards revoked by Shāh Safī. The Jāmi'-i Mufīdī (only part of which has been published)^{12a} is a history of Yazd written in 1090/1679 by Muḥammad Mufīd Mustawfī of Yazd, who was appointed collector (mustawfī) of the vaqf (religious endowment) revenue of Yazd in 1077/1666. The Tazkira-yi Shūshtar, a compilation by Sayyid 'Abdullāh ibn-i Nūr ud-Dīn Shūshtarī, is an account of Shūshtar from the earliest times to A.H.1169/1756, with notices of its celebrated men and memoirs of the author's life; the author notes changes in the town's economic fortunes, and enumerates more than seventy professional organizations which existed in it in the 12th/18th century.¹³

Later histories and geographies written in the 13th/19th century containing information from contemporary sources are useful for the light which they throw on the evolution of the

Iranian guilds. They also give details, which are not recorded elsewhere, about local traditions and about families, many of whom were members of craft and trade guilds. The Farsnāma-yi Nāṣirī of Mīrzā Ḥasan Fasā'ī, which was first printed (lithographed) at Tehrān in 1312/1895 and has been partially translated into English by H. Busse,¹⁴ contains data on the rise of powerful merchants and the relative decline of small traders and the consequent increased dependence of craftsmen on merchants.¹⁵ The Tārīkh-i Kāshān of 'Abd ul-Raḥīm Zarrāb¹⁶ and the Rūznāma-yi Kalāntar¹⁷ both give much useful information about different aspects of the craft and trade guilds. The Tārīkh-i Iṣfahān va Ray, written around 1359/1941 by Ḥasan Jābirī Anṣārī,¹⁸ contains valuable scattered data on the guilds from Ṣafavid to Qājār times. 'Abd ul-Waḥhāb Shahshahānī's Baḥr ul-Javāhir,¹⁹ written in 1261/1851, gives a complete list of the guilds of Iṣfahān and the social status of each. The Jughrāfiyā-yi Iṣfahān of Mīrzā Ḥusayn Khān Tahvīldār, written in 1308/1891, is unique in the detailed data which it gives about more than one hundred guilds still active at Iṣfahān in his time.

3. Literary works.

Certain works in the genre of the literary tazkira (collection of biographies and selected writings of poets and scholars) include sections on craftsmen who were also poets. The most important is the Tazkira-yi Naṣrābādī of Mīrzā Ṭāhir Naṣrābādī, who as he states in his preface commenced the work in 1083/1672 and dedicated it to Shāh Sulaymān whose patronage he evidently enjoyed. He presents a large number of poets who were craftsmen and guild members. A small number appear

in the Tuhfa-yi Sāmī, a literary tazkira compiled in 957/1550 by a Ṣafavid prince, Sām Mīrzā, who was one of the sons of Ismā'īl I.

Certain poets of the Ṣafavid period, who knew something about the techniques of the crafts, tools, raw materials, and manufactured products of various guilds, composed verse in a special genre called shahr-āshūb, ostensibly about youths whose beauty disturbed the city. These are of interest, because they mention professional traditions, tools, materials, products, etc. The best known shahr-āshūb poet is Mīrzā Tāhīr Vahīd who wrote in 'Abbas II's reign. His dīvān (collection of poems) survives in a manuscript in the Central Library of Tehrān University.²⁰ A selection of shahr-āshūb poems from various manuscripts with a valuable introduction and notes has been published by the modern scholar Ahmad Gulchīn-Ma'ānī of Mashhad.²¹

4. European official records.

During the Ṣafavid period, diplomatic conducts between Iran and the states of Europe, through temporary embassies because permanent embassies were not then customary, became more frequent than ever before, while commercial relations acquired considerable importance and were to a large extent conducted by the European East India companies which obtained permanent establishment rights in Iran. Certain Catholic Christian missionary orders also obtained permanent establishment rights. The East India companies were privately owned but had been constituted through special state privileges and in principle enjoyed the support of their governments; they may therefore be regarded as semi-official

bodies. Among the European visitors to Iran who wrote travel accounts, some came as official envoys or semi-official representatives, others came in pursuit of private business, and others came as tourists. The agents of the East India companies reported on general political and economic conditions as well as on their own commercial activities in their correspondence with their head offices, and some of the travel diarists and missionaries were percipient observers of the general political, economic, and social scene. The various European writings differ in quality: some are commonplace and superficial, some are fanciful, and others are of great importance for the history of Şafavid Iran.²² They can be classified into official reports, travel accounts, and missionary reports, but it will be convenient to include the accounts of both the official and unofficial travellers in the second of these three categories and to limit the first category to the records of the English and Dutch East India companies.

The English East India Company's records and the State Papers (SP) which are of inestimable value, are preserved in Archives of the East India Company at the India Office Library in London.²³ Further material on Iran has been printed and explained in the works of W. Foster,²⁴ E. B. Sainsbury,²⁵ and J. Bruce²⁶ which are listed in the bibliography.

The Dutch East India Company. The records of the Oost Indische Compagnie in the Colonial Archives Department of the Rijksarchief at The Hague are hardly less valuable for the period of the Dutch company's activity in Iran, i.e. 1623-1769. Some of the material on Iran has likewise been printed

and explained in an important work by H. Dunlop.²⁷ More recently a valuable study of this material by M. Roelofz has been published.²⁸

The English Muscovy and Levant companies were also interested in trade with Iran in the 16th and 17th centuries. The reports of the journeys of Sir A. Jenkinson, A. Edwards, M. Salbancke, and other agents of the Muscovy Company are listed in the bibliography.²⁹

5. European travel accounts.

A list of the accounts of European travelers, with brief indications of their contents, is included in J. Emerson's work Some European sources on the economic structure of Persia between 1630 and 1690, and in Sibylla Schuster Walser's work.³⁰ The most useful for the purposes of this study were the accounts (listed in the Bibliography) by the following ten travellers.

I. Pietro della Valle. A wealthy Roman nobleman who travelled for pleasure and recorded his impressions in letters to his friend Mario Schipano. He arrived in Iṣfahān in 1617 and stayed nearly five years. He vividly describes 'Abbās I's Maydān and bazaar and certain aspects of the city's commercial life (listed under Valle).

II. Fedor Kotov. A Muscovite merchant who was sent to Iran to sell goods from the Russian imperial Treasury and arrived at Iṣfahān around 1624. His enumeration of the guilds and report of the locations of different trades in the bazaar and the Maydān-i Shāh is comparable with Chardin's account.

III. Thomas Herbert. A member of the first English embassy to the Ṣafavid court in 1627, led by Sir Dodmore Cotton and accompanied by Sir Robert Sherley, which after a journey

through Bandar 'Abbās and Iṣfahān was received by 'Abbās I at Ashraf (now Bihshahr) in Māzandarān. Herbert has not only recorded the fortunes of this mission (on which Cotton and Sherley died), but has also left valuable observations on social and economic conditions.

IV. Jean Baptiste Tavernier. An expert jeweler of Walloon (Belgian) origin, who made six journeys to Turkey, Iran, and India between 1631 and 1665 in pursuit of his craft and met 'Abbās I and 'Abbās II at Iṣfahān. His observations of many aspects of the economic and social scene throw light on the position of Iranian craftsmen and their guilds.

V. Adam Olearius. A learned German who was the secretary of a mission sent by Duke Frederick III of Holstein-Gottorp to investigate the possibility of silk importation through Russia and the Baltic Sea. The mission, under the leadership of Otto Brüggemann, a merchant of Hamburg (who ^{was} hanged) was unsuccessful, but Olearius's account of its experiences in Iran in 1637-38 justifies J. Emerson's description of him as "the first modern scholarly observer of Iran".³¹ He carefully describes the royal bazaar and the caravansarais and also the coffee houses of Iṣfahān.

VI. Jean (Sir John) Chardin (1643-1713). An expert jeweler of French origin and Protestant Christian faith who settled in England in 1681. He first arrived in Iran at the end of 'Abbās II's reign, and altogether spent ten years at Iṣfahān in two stays (1665-1669 and 1671-1677), doing business and practising his craft. In his voluminous account he attempted to describe and assess whatever was important, including the religion, the system of government, and the types of education

as well as the trades, manufactures, arts, crafts, and professional organizations such as guilds. Volumes 2, 5, 6, 8 and 10 of his "Voyages" provide a huge mass of reliable data on social and economic conditions in 17th century Iran.

VII. John Fryer. An English surgeon in the service of the East India Company of London who came to Iṣfahān in the summer of 1676 and stayed until 1678. His account contains interesting observations of market matters such as price controls, interest rates, and usury, but his comments are superficial. Emerson rightly judges that his "lack of knowledge of the language and somewhat contemptuous attitude towards Muslims did not allow him to penetrate very deeply into Iranian civilization".³²

VIII. Engelbert Kaempfer. A German doctor of medicine who accompanied a Swedish embassy to Iṣfahān, where he joined the service of the Dutch East India Company. He was at Iṣfahān in 1683 and afterwards at Bandar 'Abbās and Hurmuz. In his carefully written discussion of social and economic conditions, he gives a list of the existing guilds and original data on matters such as price control, guild officials, and royal guilds.

IX. Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Carreri. An Italian traveler who sojourned at Iṣfahān in 1694 during a journey around the world. His account of his stay in Iran contains scattered but reliable information about the craft guilds.

X. Cornelius Le Brun (De Bruin). A Dutch scholar and artist who twice stayed at Iṣfahān, in 1704-1705 and 1706-1707. His drawings of Iṣfahān and his descriptions of Iranian society at that time are valuable. He notes the role of the guilds and of

the responsible officials such as the muhtasib and the kalāntar.

6. European missionary reports.

These are valuable in spite of their Christian bias because the authors spent large parts of their lives in Iran and became very well acquainted with the Persian language and with local conditions. The works which have been most used in the present study are those of:

- i. Raphaël Du Mans. A French Catholic monk who lived at Isfahān from 1644 until his death in 1696 and during most of that time was head of the mission of the Capuchin order (which had been established with 'Abbās I's permission in 1628). He was also an expert mathematician. He was highly respected at the Safavid royal court, where he acted as French interpreter, and he helped many of the French and other foreign visitors. The report on the state of Persia in 1660, which he wrote for King Louis XIV's finance minister Colbert, deals with economic, social, governmental, and cultural aspects and contains valuable data on the number and the nature of the guilds and the systems and techniques of certain craft industries.
- ii. Martin Sanson. A French Catholic priest of the Jesuit order who was sent to learn the language and work as a missionary and spent the years 1683-1692 in Iran. His report deals mainly with the Safavid administrative system and gives information on governmental control of the guilds.
- iii. The Carmelite Chronicle. The monks of the different Catholic Christian orders, such as Dominicans, Jesuits, Capuchins, Augustinians, and Carmelites, which maintained missionaries in several Iranian cities from the time of

'Abbās I onward, learned much about various features of Safavid Iran. Interesting reports on political and social as well as religious matters can be found in A chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia and the Papal mission of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries, edited by H. Chick. This valuable work is a collection of letters from the archives of the order's Casa Generalizia in Rome.

(Listed under Carmelites).

iii. Tadeusz Krusinski. A Jesuit Catholic priest of Polish nationality who stayed in Iran from 1707 to 1725 and was put in charge of the Jesuit mission in the country in 1720. He negotiated with the government of Shāh Sulṭān Husayn and the first Ghalzāy Afghān ruler Maḥmud, and was in Iṣfahān and Julfā during and after the Afghān siege. His memoirs, which were published in somewhat modified and divergent French and Latin versions by different editors, provided a valuable eye witness's account of the Ṣafavid collapse and its disastrous social consequences.

7. Armenian sources.

Petros Di Sarkis Gilanentz. Author of a journal of the years 1722-1723 in Armenian consisting partly of material on the battle of Gulnābād (12 miles east of Iṣfahān) and the Afghān victory and siege of Iṣfahān given to him by a fellow-Armenian, Joseph Apisalaimian, who was an eyewitness, and partly of material on events in Georgia and the Caucasian provinces; completed in August/September 1723 for the Russian commander in Gīlān, General Levashov. An English translation by Dr. C. O. Minasian of Iṣfahān was published

in Lisbon in 1959. The journal gives information on matters such as food prices at Işfahān and the position and wealth of merchants.

Notes I

1. Abu'l-Qāsim Tāhirī, Tārīkh-i Siyāsi va Ijtimā'i-yi Iran az marg-i Timūr tā marg-i Shāh 'Abbās I, p.324.
2. T.M., p.I.
3. Roelofz, Persica, vol.6 (1974) pp. 1-50.
4. Palmer, The Activities of the English East India Company in Persia and the Persian Gulf, 1616-1657; Ferrier, British-Persian Relations in the 17th century; Ferrier, The Armenians and the East India Company in Persia in the 17th and early 18th centuries, Econ. H. R., vol.26 (1973) pp. 38-62.
5. Petrushevski, Tārīkh-i Iran, vol.2, pp. 519-526, 570-581.
6. Falsafī, 5 vols., Tehran, 1353/1973.
7. Bāstānī Pārīzi, Siyāsat va Iqtisād-i 'aṣr-i Ṣafavī.
8. Tāhirī, Tārīkh-i Siyāsi va Ijtimā'i-yi Iran.
9. Rāvandī, vol.3, pp. 390-399.
10. Āṣaf, pp. 59, 210.
11. Jābirī Anṣārī, pp. 33-34.
12. Āṣaf, pp. 62-63.
- 12a. By Iraj Afshār in Farhang-i Iran-zamīn, 11. Tehran, 1342/1963. pp. 193-228.
13. Shūshtarī (Faqīr), Tazkira-yi Shūshtar.
14. H. Busse, History of Persia under Qājār rule, translated from the Persian of the Fasā'ī's Fārsnāma, New York, 1972.
15. Fasā'ī, Fārsnāma-yi Nāsirī, 2 vols.
16. Zarrābi, Tārīkh-i Kāshān.
17. M. Kalāntar, Rūznāma-yi Mīrzā Muḥammad Kalāntar az 1142 tā 1199.
18. Jābirī Anṣārī, pp. 378-381. See *Bibliography*.
19. Shahshahānī, Bahr ul-Javāhir fi 'ilmud-Dafātir, pp. 95-100.
20. Vahid Qazvīnī, Divān-i Rizvān, ms. Kitābkhāna-yi Markazi Dānishgāh-1 Tehrān.

21. Gulchīn Ma'ānī, Shahr-āshūb.
22. R. Stevens, European Visitors to the Šafavid Court, Iranian Studies, vol.7, (1974) pp. 421-457; Osborne's Collection (printed by Thomas Osborne), 2 vols., London 1745; S. Purchas, Purchas his Pilgrims, vols: 3, 4, 10, 12, Glasgow 1905; Churchill's Collection, vols 1, 4, London 1744; R. Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations and Voyages, 12 vols., Glasgow, 1903-5, vols. 3, 5, 6; J. Pinkerton, Pinkerton's Collection, vols. 5, 9 London 1811.
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31. Emerson, pp. 34ff.
32. Ibid. pp. 58-60, 165.

I.2. The Historical Background of the Iranian Guilds.

Study of the social and economic history of Iran, particularly in the earlier centuries, is hampered by scarcity of data. For much of the post-Islamic period, the only substantial sources are court chronicles, which mainly record the wars and victories or defeats of Kings but seldom touch upon matters of social, economic, municipal, tribal, or even military organization. Although study of the history of the guilds has hardly begun, it will probably never be able to find wholly satisfactory answers to the questions when and how the guild organization of urban craftsmen and tradesmen first came into being. The only certain fact is that their structure and behaviour were strongly influenced by Islam.

One of the recent investigators of Iranian guild history is the Russian scholar N. K. Kuznetsova. Her two articles on the guilds in the 18th and 19th centuries are based on Persian, European, and also Georgian and Armenian source materials from those centuries and also from the 17th century, and are concerned with the guilds in Iran and also in the Russian-ruled Caucasian territories formerly belonging to Iran.¹ The Dutch scholar W.M. Floor attempted in a first article to sketch the whole history of the Iranian guilds from the advent of Islam² up to 1972, but in fact wrote mainly on the guilds in the 20th century; his summary of the early periods is conjectural and not well supported by documentary evidence. In a

dissertation², entitled The guilds in Qājār Iran,³ which is a fully documented analysis of all aspects of 19th century guild life, he has made a very valuable contribution. The subject has also been studied by an Iranian researcher, Kāẓim Rūhānī, in his doctoral thesis XVI-XVII Yüzyillarda Osmanlı ve Safevi Esnaf Teşkilatı (Ottoman and Şafavid guild organization in the 16th and 17th centuries) presented to Istanbul University in 1976-77; most of the thesis is devoted to the guilds in Ottoman Turkey, while the passages concerning the guilds in Iran are based only on the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk and the statements of Chardin, Tavernier, and Kaempfer.⁴ These first steps leave the field of Iranian guild history wide open for further research.⁵

There is no direct or indirect evidence of the existence of guilds in Iranian cities in pre-Islamic times, and the supposition of their existence in those times by scholars such as Petrushevsky⁶ is purely conjectural, even though it may seem inherently probable. The Macedonian conquest probably stimulated trade and urban growth,⁷ and the Sāsānid Shāhs founded several cities which became centres of handicraft industry and commercial exchange.⁸ Although archaeological excavations have not revealed the pattern of urban layouts, it is probable that there was a commercial section in every city (as at Bīshāpūr)⁹ and possible that the commercial section had something of the shape and character of the later Islamic bazaar. If so, it is possible that the craftsmen and tradesmen of pre-

Islamic times had already begun to form collective organizations prefiguring the later Islamic guilds. This hypothesis would accord with Sjoberg's observation that pre-industrial societies, despite their cultural differences, display essentially similar basic structures.¹⁰

Whether or not the guilds of post-Islamic Iran had pre-Islamic antecedents, it is clear from the available evidence that they were basically similar to those of other Islamic countries. Their essential characteristics, like those of many other institutions (e.g. mosques, madrasas, bazaars) and offices (e.g. those of the qāzī and the muhtasib), were determined by the common Islamic ideology. The terms sinf (guild) and bunīcha (guild tax), and the titles naqīb, kadkhudā, bāshī, ustād, khalīfa, and shāgird were used in other Muslim countries besides Iran.¹¹ Bernard Lewis, in a brief article on the Islamic Guilds, thinks that they had a "material framework or organization inherited or imitated from the Greco-Roman world and a system of ideas coming essentially from the Syro-Persian civilization, giving as a result a movement at once Islamic, Hellenistic, interconfessional, philosophical and corporatist."¹²

Under the 'Abbāsīd caliphate, the capital Baghdād and a few other cities became important centres of handicraft industries and commerce.¹³ Although Baghdād's founder, the caliph Mansūr, did not include a commercial district with specialized bazaars in his plan for the city, not many years passed before factors such as population growth and rises in monetary circulation, purchasing power, and living

standards caused an upsurge of demand for the services of artisans, traders, and labourers. The influx of members of these classes into Baghdād transformed the city's original shape. New fixed and specialized markets and craft workshop quarters grew up around the original military settlement.¹⁴ At the same time the opulence derived from provincial tribute payments to the caliphal government and from private commercial profits brought into being a type of urban society which did not conform with Islamic principles and ideals of justice. It appears that little of the new wealth reached the artisans and labouring classes,¹⁵ and that their discontent with the ruling bodies was one of the main reasons for Baghdād's notorious turbulence.¹⁶ The appointment of a muhtasib did not apparently deter the "market people" (ahl al-sūq) from causing trouble for the caliph,¹⁷ who decided in 157/774 to move them to al-Karkh, south west of the original fortified city. Al-Karkh became the main business centre, and was gradually subdivided into many bazaars, each specializing in one kind of trade.¹⁸ Neither this subdivision nor the surveillance by the muhtasib prevented the further growth of opposition from the side of the artisan class. Opponents of the régime could enter the city in the guise of traders and pass on information about activities. The continuing unrest among the artisans and traders, as well as the turbulence of the garrison troops, prompted the Caliph Mu'tasim to move the capital in 221/836 from Baghdād to Samarrā, where it remained until 278/892. In later times

the presence of many Shī'ite believers at al-Karkh gave rise to frequent religious disturbances.¹⁹ Ṣūfī movements with anti-caliphate and anti-governmental tendencies also won followings among the artisans and tradesmen. It appears, however, that the common interests of all the members of this class generally kept them united in spite of the differences between the various Shī'ite and Ṣūfī sects. A tendency to synthesize the beliefs of these sects can be observed from the 'Abbāsīd period right up to the Ṣafavid period. At different times, groups of urban workers had links with Ismā'īlī sects, with Ṣūfī sects and orders, with movements combining Ṣūfī beliefs and veneration for the Imām 'Alī such as the 'ayyārān' and and later futūvat movement of the 6th/12th-8th/14th centuries,²⁰ and finally with the Shī'ite Ni'matī and Ḥaydarī darvīsh orders in Ṣafavid Iran.²¹

The question of the origin of the Islamic guilds is linked with the question why independent municipal institutions did not arise in the Muslim countries. Max Weber wrongly attributes the non-existence of such institutions to the tribal tradition of the Arabs.²² S. D. Goitein, in an otherwise valuable study of Islamic institutions, holds that the Islamic guilds were not real guilds because they were not independent; if real guilds had existed, there would have been a specific term for them (whereas the term sinf, plural asnāf, which is used in Arabic and Persian, means only category, i.e. of workers). Basically Goitein's argument rests on a comparison of the Islamic

with the European guilds. He defines guilds as "medieval unions of craftsmen or tradesmen which supervised the general affairs and technical standards of the members and occupations, and which by certain rules controlled the education of apprentices and their admission into the union."²³ This fits the guilds of the Western European countries. Goitein's finding that the Islamic guilds differed from this European model is certainly correct; since they were authentically Islamic, it would be surprising if they had not differed. These two premises, however, do not justify his conclusion that the medieval Islamic realm had no real guilds at all.

C. Cahen in his article "Did professional guilds exist in the classical Muslim world?" has perceived that the problem is not so much one of definition as one of degree. "Nobody," he writes, "can challenge that the fact the Muslim world, since the time which we are considering (i.e. the 'Abbāsid period), has had some form of professional organization. The problem is to find out whether and to what extent it was a corporate organization consisting of spontaneous associations... or whether we are discussing organisms which emanated from the administrative system and were under state control."²⁴ Cahen finally reaches the conclusion that institutions free from state control did not exist in the classical Islamic world. This is true in the sense that medieval Muslim governments, and likewise the Safavid government, were distrustful or jealous of all holders of any independent political

or economic power and therefore attempted either to eliminate or to control them. On the other hand, the ideology of Islam, particularly in its Shī'ite but also in its Sunnite form, strongly emphasizes the independence of the faith and the sacred law (sharī'at) from any sort of governmental control. Not only must the state authorities enforce the sharī'at; they themselves, like all Muslims, are bound by it. Logically the sharī'at is prior to both the community and the state.²⁵ In theory, a legitimate and properly constituted Islamic government is entitled to intervene in all the community's affairs. In historical fact, however, such a government only existed in the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime and for a short time in the period after his death. Ever since then, devout Muslims have generally been inclined to oppose or at least to disapprove of the ruling government. The governments, for their part, have generally sought justification for their rule and for their interventions in the people's affairs by claiming to act as defenders of Islam and maintainers of law and order. It can be taken for certain that the Islamic states did not create the Islamic guilds, but attempted to control the activities of the guilds, and of the urban populations generally, through the appointment of supervisory officials.²⁶

In the opinion of L. Massignon, labour organization and worker incorporation in the Muslim cities date from the 3rd/9th century and were "closely connected with a movement half religious and half socialistic in origin,

that of the Karmaṭians."²⁷ This opinion is supported by B. Lewis, who holds that the development of handicraft industries and urban agglomerations in the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries led to a rapid growth of large-scale capitalism with social effects which gave rise to widespread discontent and were not compatible with Islamic principles. The Qarmaṭī movement attracted many discontented people and disseminated its rather revolutionary principles among all classes, particularly the artisans.²⁸ The name Qarmaṭī was given to the whole Ismā'īli or Sevener Shī'ite movement in its earliest phase, but afterward only to certain Ismā'īli groups who did not recognize the claims of 'Ubaydullāh al-Mahdī and his successors of the Fāṭimid dynasty.²⁹ The greatest successes of the Qarmaṭī and Ismā'īli da'vā (propaganda) were in fact the conversion of Arab and Berber tribes. On the other hand, it is known that their propagandists were active in Baghdād, Ray, Nishāpūr, and Sīstān;³⁰ and the composition of the Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā (Letters of the Brethren of Purity) by Qarmaṭī intellectuals in the middle of the 4th/10th century shows that the movement had a following among the literate classes in the cities.³¹ In general, however, the rulers of Iraq and Iran regarded Qarmaṭism and Ismā'īlism as a dangerous revolutionary heresy or at least as a threat to the 'Abbāsīd caliphate which they recognized.³² Contemporary governments, if they were strong enough, would therefore have prevented the artisans and shopkeepers from forming associations or guilds overtly linked with Qarmaṭī or Ismā'īlī sects.³³ Nevertheless it seems quite likely

that the ideology of these sects had some influence on the ideology of the Islamic guilds. Besides calling for social justice, the Qarmaṭīs and Ismā'īlīs, being Shi'ites, greatly venerated the Imām 'Alī, whom the guilds have always taken as their model of justice, honesty, courage, and true faith. Since the Imām 'Alī is venerated not only by Shi'ites but also by Ṣūfīs, it seems equally likely that the ideology of the Islamic guilds was influenced from the start by the ideology of Ṣūfī saints and preachers, many of whom stemmed from the artisan class, e.g. the martyred Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Hallāj (244/857-309/922) who was the son of a cotton carder,³⁴ or Shaykh Abu Sa'īd ibn Abī'l-Khayr (357/967-440/1049) who was the son of a druggist.³⁵

The emergence of 'ayyārān, groups of urban youths who in times of anarchy or oppression acted as an unofficial police in defence of the common people, is an interesting feature of the social history of the early post-Islamic centuries. The most notable 'ayyārān leader was the copper-smith Ya'qūb Lays, who became the ruler of Sīstān (247/861-265/879) and later of all southern and eastern Iran. S. Nafīsī, a 20th century Iranian scholar, defines the movement of Ya'qūb Lays as insurrection of Sīstān's coppersmiths' guild and other artisans against the oppression of 'Abbāsīd caliphate.³⁶ In general the 'ayyārān groups were ephemeral, because the local governments were sooner or later able to establish regular police (called shurṭa before the Saljūq Turkish conquest). The guilds, on the other hand, proved to be durable. For the 'ayyārān, as well as for the guilds,

the Imām 'Alī was the model of courage and good conduct. The moral and religious ideas of both the 'ayyārān groups and the guilds were summed up in the Arabic word futūwa (futūvat) and the Persian word javānmardī, both meaning literally youthfulness and by implication chivalry on the model of the Imām 'Alī.³⁷

The Russian historian I. P. Petrushevsky also places the rise of the Islamic guilds in the 3rd/9th century and notes they had become well organized by the 5th/11th century.³⁸ Their progress was probably connected with the continuance of industrial and urban growth, which went on until the Mongol invasion. Under the relatively stable regime of the Sāmānids (263/875-395/1005), their capital Bukhārā prospered and large numbers of craftsmen and tradesmen settled in its rabaḡ, i.e. suburbs outside the walled city. There is some evidence of the guilds into which they were grouped. One of these was the guild of scribes and copyists, whose membership was confined to experts in calligraphy (khattāṭī) holding a certificate of proficiency in this highly esteemed art from an established master. Other craftsmen such as shoemakers, silversmiths, etc. had their own professional organizations.³⁹ Under the Būyid or Daylamite regime (320/932-447/1055), Iṣfahān acquired a well built bazaar consisting of several lanes, each occupied by a particular ṣinf of artisans and tradesmen, while Shīrāz was endowed by 'Aẓud ud-Dawla (338/949-372/983) with the Sūq ul-Amīr, a once famous but now vanished bazaar in which different sections were occupied

by different guilds (aṣnāf).⁴⁰ A story told by Nizām ul-Mulk Ṭūsī (408/1017-485/1092) in his Sīyāsatnāma suggests that the bakers' guild of Ghaznī was a well organized and effective body. In protest against the hoarding of wheat and flour by the baker of the royal court, they closed their shops, i.e. went on strike, and the city's inhabitants suffered from a bread shortage. The Sulṭān Ibrāhīm (451/1059-492/1099), after hearing the people's complaints, summoned the bakers and heard their testimony against the court baker. Finally Sulṭān Ibrāhīm sentenced the offender to be trampled under the feet of an elephant.⁴¹ Under the rule of the Turkish Saljūq Sulṭāns, the political stability and road security in the reigns of Alp Arsalān (455/1063-465/1072) and Malik Shāh (465/1072-485/1092) gave a further stimulus to urban industry and trade, particularly at their capital Iṣfahān.⁴² Nāṣir-i Khusraw (394/1004-470/1077), the Ismā'īlī philosopher and poet, mentions in his Safarnāma (Travel Diary) that the main bazaar at Iṣfahān was occupied by many different guilds and that there were also fifty caravansarais occupied by specific categories of traders; the number of the money changers in the bazaar was 200.⁴³ Ray was also a prosperous city, divided into many quarters such as those of the camel-drivers (sārbānān), hatters (kulāh-dūzān), and broom-makers (jārūb-bandān).⁴⁴

The Nizārī Ismā'īlī movement of the so-called "assassins", whose chief Iranian propagandist (dā'ī), Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ, captured the fortress of Alamūt in the Alburz mountains in 483/1090 and set up an independent anti-Saljūq state, made a great effort to win converts among

the bazaar people and other city dwellers. Ahmad ibn 'Abd ul-Malik 'ibn 'Attāsh, their propagandist in Isfahān, who seized the nearby mountain fortress of Shāhdiz and held it for six or seven years before he surrendered and was put to death in 500/1107, apparently had many secret followers in the city.⁴⁵

The massacres and destruction which accompanied the Mongol invasion did immense damage to Iran's urban and industrial development. Among the formerly great cities, some never again became important, others slowly revived with smaller populations, but only Tabrīz and Shīrāz suffered no damage. Nevertheless the Islamic guild system remained intact and sometimes played an important role in social and political matters. Sayfī Haravī, the author of the Tārīkh-nāma-yi Harāt, a reliable source of information on Harāt in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries, relates that when Ghingīz Khān threatened Harāt in 618/1221, the 1000 strong guild of the weavers (bāfandagān) decided to seek an agreement with the Mongol commanders in the hope that the city might be saved from massacre and destruction or looting. The guild's head (muqaddam), 'Izz ud-Dīn, was chosen to be the delegate of all the citizens. He offered lavish gifts to the Mongol generals, but they rejected any peaceful compromise. The Mongols then plundered Harāt and killed many of the people who had not fled from the city, but in accordance with Chingīz Khān's regulations, they sent the remaining weavers as captives to Mongolia. The weavers and other citizens who had escaped into the

countryside kept up a guerrilla resistance for several years and smuggled food into the city for the starving people whom they had left behind; they were led by guild heads and elders such as Fakhr-i Ḥaddād (blacksmith), Shams-i Dabbāj (brocade weaver), Majd-i 'Aṣṣār (oil seed crusher), and 'Alamshāh-i Biryānī (liver-griller). Their action enabled the city's remaining inhabitants to survive for four years until life returned to normal. Since the economy of Harāt depended on the handweaving industry, the Mongol authorities eventually sent back the weavers whom they had deported to Mongolia.⁴⁶

In the first four decades of the Ilkhānid dynasty (654/1256-736/1336), the weapons which the Mongol troops in Iran required were supplied by governmental armouries. This policy was changed by the first Muslim Īlkhān, Ghāzān Khān (694/1295-703/1304). On his order, the officers in charge throughout the country assembled the swordmakers, bowmakers, arrowsmiths, and quiver-makers (qurbān-sāzān), and organized them into groups each headed by an amīn (i.e. a responsible representative). The various craftsmen were in fact wage-paid workers, because they possessed no personal capital and relied on raw material supplied by their amīn to execute the army's orders. The arrangement did not work satisfactorily and was soon ended.⁴⁷ In general, the urban working and trading classes suffered from severe exploitation under the Ilkhānid régime, because they were subjected to heavy new taxes payable in cash or in kind;⁴⁸ the fiscal reform attempted by the

great minister and historian Rashīd ud-Dīn Faḡlullāh, who held office from 697/1298 until 717/1317, only improved their position partially and temporarily.⁴⁹

The Moroccan traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who stopped at Shīrāz and Isfahān in 727/1328 and again in 743/1347, gives an interesting description of the craft guilds. In the latter year the two cities were ruled independently by Shāh Abu Ishāq Injū (d.758/1357), the patron of Ḥāfiz, and in the former year they had been ruled by Abū Ishāq's father, Sharaf ud-Dīn Mahmūd, who was the Ilkhānid régime's governor general. According to the Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Abū Ishāq had decided to build a palace at Shīrāz matching the Ṭāq-i Kisrā (palace of Khusraw Anūshīravān) at Ctesiphon and had ordered the people of Shīrāz to dig the foundations. When the work began, artisans of the rival guilds used to come to the site to display their wares, and Shāh Abū Ishāq used to watch from a balcony.⁵⁰ At Isfahān, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa found the guilds to be well organized. Each had a chief who was elected at a general meeting and was called the kilū, by which Ibn Baṭṭūṭa probably meant qulī (Turkish for "its slave", i.e. its loyal servant). The different guilds used to invite each other's members to their special banquets, at which each would give proof of its dignity by displaying valuable chattels, such as dishes, which belonged to it. He was told that the different guilds used to rival each other in the lavishness of their ceremonial banquets.⁵¹

Tīmūr, through his repeated raids and many massacres, caused further damage to the cities of Iran; but his

successors, particularly Shāhrukh, Ulugh Bēg, Abū Sa'īd, and Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, through their maintenance of order for quite long periods and through their patronage of Iranian architecture and arts, stimulated a revival of urban industries and trade.⁵² Their capital Harāt attracted large numbers of the best craftsmen and artisans, and its many well organized guilds played an important part. A document from Ṣultān Ḥusayn Bāyqarā's reign, which is preserved in the Central Library of Tehran University, gives some particulars of important guilds and of the guild regulations which the members were required to observe. The heads (muqaddamān or pishvāyān) of the city's guilds were charged with the supervision of the similar guilds throughout the Ṣultān's domains (Harāt va mamālik-i maḥrūsa).⁵³

This sketch of Iranian guild history before the Ṣafavid period is very rudimentary, but sufficient to show that the artisans and tradesmen had already acquired a long experience of professional organization and a capacity for the exertion of influence in municipal and political affairs. It is to be hoped that, in spite of the scarcity of source material, future researchers will be able to portray and interpret this important aspect of Iranian history more adequately.

Notes (I.2)

1. N. A. Kuznetsova, Guild Organization, in The Economic History of Iran, pp.285-292; also N. A. Kuznetsova, Urban Industry, in C.A.R. vol.2, pp.308-321.
2. W. M. Floor, The Guilds in Iran, in Z.D.M.G., Band 125, Heft 1, pp.99-116.
3. Floor, The Guilds in Qājār Persia, Leiden, 1971.
4. Rūhānī, pp.141-181.
5. Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, pp.10-14.
6. Petrushevsky et al, vol.I, pp.141-144.
7. M. Rāvandī, vol.I, pp.545-550.
8. Ibid., vol.I, pp.668-673.
9. Abū Ishāq Istakhrī, Masālik va Mamālik, pp.91-113; Ibn ul-Balkhī, Fārsnāma, passim; H. Mustawfī, Nuzhat ul-Qulūb, pp.137 ff.
10. Sjoberg, p.5. Sjoberg (pp.190-194) defines guilds in pre-industrial society as having the following functions, irrespective of the time and place. (1) Every guild had a monopoly of a particular trade or craft. (2) The guild members were selected under special regulations. (3) Personnel in the particular occupation were trained through the sole agency of the guild. (4) The members had to maintain a certain standard of workshop. (5) The guild's machinery was used as a channel for the political demands of its members. (6) The guild members might help each other in economic life by pooling resources. (7) The guild members tried to avoid mutual strife through conciliation. (8) The guilds had their own traditions, which were expressed in religious and ceremonial functions.
11. Baer, Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times, passim; Rūhānī, passim.
12. Lewis, The Islamic Guilds, in Iran H.R., vol.8, p.26.
13. Ibn al-Ukhūwwa, pp.29-58.
14. Lapidus, The Evaluation of Muslim Urban Society, in Comparative Studies, vol.15, pp.21-50; Saleh Ahmad el-'Alī, The Foundation of Baghdad, pp.87-102; J. Lassner, The Caliph's Personal Domain, pp.103-118.
15. Gibb, The Heritage of Islam, in I.J.M.E.S., vol.2, pp.141-142.

16. Lewis, An Epistle on Manual Crafts, in Islamic Culture, vol.17, pp.142-152.
17. Ibn al-Ukhūwā, p.45.
18. S. A. el-Ālī, p.101.
19. Lassner, p.117.
20. E. I. (2nd ed.) vol.2, pp.961-969; Gibb, The Heritage of Islam, in I.J.M.E.S. vol.I, pp.225-226.
21. Z. Ṣafā, vol.I, pp.246-260.
22. Weber, The City, tr. D. Martindale and G. Newirth (Glencoe, Ill., 1958), p.100, quoted in The Islamic City (ed. by A. Hourani), p.30.
23. Goitein, p.267; Stern, The Constitution of the Islamic City, pp.26-43. There is a short history of the European Guilds in medieval times in H. Pirenne, Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe, pp.185ff.
24. Cahen, Ya-t-il eu des corporations professionnelles dans le monde musulman classique?, p.52.
25. Gibb, I.J.M.E.S. Vol.I, pp.10ff.
26. Baer, Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East, pp.11-13.
27. Massignon, E. J. (1st ed.), vol.4, pp.436-437.
28. Lewis, An Epistle on Manual Crafts, pp.142-152.
29. Bosworth, The Medieval History of Iran, chap.XI, p.59.
30. Ṣafā, vol.2, pp.163ff.; Bosworth, The Medieval History of Iran, chap.XI, pp.60ff.
31. Niẓām ul-Mulk Ṭūsī, pp.262-267; Ṣafā, vol.2, pp.163-180.
32. M. G. S. Hodgson, in The Cambridge History of Iran, vol.5, pp.423ff.
33. Kishāvarz, Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ, pp.13-14.
34. Mīr Fuṭrūs, Ḥallāj, passim.
35. Abū Sa'īd Abī'l-Khayr, p.15.
36. S. Nafīsī, Tārīkh-i Khāndān-i Ṭāhirī, pp.324-325; Tārīkh-i Sistān, pp.193, 198.
37. Rāvandī, vol.3, pp.576-582.

38. Petrushevsky, Tārīkh-i Iran, vol.2, p.570.
39. Nārshakhī, Tārīkh-i Bukhārā, p.28.
40. Māfarrukhī, pp.17-18.
41. Niẓām ul-Mulk Ṭūsī, p.58.
42. Zahīr ud-Dīn Nishāpurī, pp.31-32.
43. Nāṣir-i Khusraw, p.138; Māfarrukhī, pp.53-58.
44. Karīmīyān, Tārīkh-i Ray-i Bāstān, vol.I, pp.167ff.
45. Kishāvarz, Hasan-i Sabbāh, pp.13ff.
46. Sayfī-yi Haravī, pp.91-109.
47. Rashīd ud-Dīn Faẓlullāh, vol.3, pp.542-545.
48. Ibid., vol.3, p.533.
49. Petrushevsky, in The Cambridge History of Iran, vol.5, pp.494-500.
50. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, vol.2, p.310.
51. Op.cit., vol.2, pp.295-296, 309-310.
52. Petrushevsky, Tārīkh-i Iran, vol.2, pp.465, 486-490; Ṭāhirī, pp.20-27.
53. Munsha'āt-i Sulṭān Husayn-i Bāyqarā, (Central Library of Tehrān University), pp.3ff; Rāvandī, vol.3, p.385.

Chapter 2.

Description and Number of the Guilds

1. Description and Classification of the Guilds.
2. Number of the Guilds.

2.1. Description and Classification of the Guilds.

There is no precise Persian equivalent of the word "guild" as it is used in European languages, although European writers generally agree in so translating the word şinf.¹ This practice has been followed in the present study. It should, however, be noted that in Persian literature the word şinf (plural aşnāf) has a very wide and often ambiguous application, being used to designate any category or association of people in society who are distinguished or brought together by common activity or interests.² For example, the historian Iskandar Munshī, writing in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign remarks that the expression aşnāf-i ra'āyā (groups of the subjects) usually means the different occupations including 'ulamā, poets, army, urban working people, government officials, agricultural workers, etc.³ According to a decree of Karīm Khān Zand, the founder of the Zand dynasty, the aşnāf-i khalq or aşnāf-i nās (groups of the people) are classified as four şinfs, namely officials, agricultural workers, traders, and artisans. Karīm Khān's classification was intended to comprise the entire working population of Iran, including the higher ranks of the administration and excluding only the non-employed.⁴

Beside the term şinf, literature relating to the guilds in the pre-Şafavid and Şafavid periods contains various synonyms which are frequently used by writers. In the Tīmūrid period, one of these terms was jamā'at; a

member of a guild was ahl-i jamā'at, and the chiefs were called pīshvāyān or muqaddamān-i jamā'at.⁵ The word ahl appears in the organizational terminology of the futūvat and Ṣūfī orders and in Ṣūfī tradition and literature; while retaining its Ṣūfī significance, it was also applied to artisans and traders holding membership in the futūvat.⁶ (The religious aspects and functions of the guilds are discussed in chapter 7 of this work). In the Ṣafavid period, the designations ahl-i kasb, (traders), ahl-i muḥtarafa (craftsmen) and ahl-i ṣanā'at (artisan) were widely used;⁷ but in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, they were relegated to literary⁸ or formal usage,⁹ and gradually lost their specific meanings, while the word ṣinf became the normally used term for "guild" and retained this meaning until later times.¹⁰

The meaning of ṣinf in the 17th and 18th centuries may be defined as a group of city-dwellers engaged in the same occupation, working in the same bazaar, headed by their own chiefs, and paying a regular guild tax to the local authorities. This strict and limited definition must be used if the activities of organized industrial and commercial groups in the cities of Ṣafavid Iran are to be discussed with any precision. On the other hand, this definition may perhaps in itself be a source of confusion, since contemporary sources apply the word "ṣinf" to groups of people who were not guild members in the above sense. For example, there is no evidence that the guild system was fully developed in small towns and

villages, and there is some evidence that not all workers in cities were included in it. Nevertheless, in general descriptions of society, these looser groupings were referred to as aṣnāf. There were also certain guilds which did not possess an independent chief (bāshī), having been placed together with other guilds under a single joint supervisor. According to a decree of Shāh Tahmāsb I, Mullā Ḥasan Muzahhib was appointed the chief (bāshī) of a number of book-related but technically distinct guilds in Tabrīz, namely illuminators, copyists, binders (mūjallidān), painters, gilders, and paper sellers.¹¹ Similarly, the goldsmiths, workers in gold leaf, and gold wire-drawers were under supervision of a single chief called the zargarbāshī (chief of goldsmiths).¹² Some guilds had no independent chief of their own because they came under the control of a single government official. Thus at Iṣfahān, the different groups of public entertainers were headed by the mash'aldār-bāshī, who was the ṣāhib-jam' (chief book-keeper) of the torch-bearers.¹³ Some occupations were not liable for the regular guild taxes (bunīcha), e.g. the barbers, public entertainers, bath attendants,¹⁴ and ambulatory craftsmen at Iṣfahān,¹⁵ who did not have shops in the main bazaars but operated in the Maydān-i Shāh (Royal Square).¹⁶ Finally, in considering the scope of the term sinf, it must be remembered that there were also the many craftsmen and tradesmen of the outlying villages who had no connection with the urban guilds but held a considerable share in the

production of manufactured goods and articles. Olearius, who accompanied a Holsteinian ambassador to Iran in 1636-38, states that the inhabitants of the villages near Iṣfahān were employed in the making of textiles and tapestries of wool, cotton, and silk.¹⁷ The inhabitants of the villages surrounding Kāshān and small towns along the caravan route between Yazd and Mashhad were similarly engaged in the making of textiles and carpets and also of pottery.¹⁸

It is difficult to determine the relative social ranking of the different guilds in Ṣafavid Iran, since in the Islamic doctrine there is no nobility except the nobility of devotion to God (Qur'ān, 49,13: "the noblest among you in God's sight are the most pious"). Moreover, the available sources do not clearly state what criteria of social worth were acknowledged at that time. In Ṣafavid Iran, where almost all the people were believing Muslims, the Islamic doctrine was of course accepted. Class distinctions were not recognised in law, and were not considered right in practice. Thus the social structure of Ṣafavid Iran differed from the social structures of the European countries and cannot be analysed by comparison with them. A definition of the word class which appears to be applicable to the social groups of Ṣafavid society has been suggested by G. Sjöberg. According to him, a social class is "a large body of persons who occupy a position in a social hierarchy by reason of their manifesting similarly valued objective criteria including

kinship affiliation, power and authority, possessions and material evidences of wealth, moral attributes including religious and ethical beliefs and actions, and personal attributes involving speech and personal mannerism."¹⁹

The very scattered available evidence concerning the social and economic life of 17th and 18th century Iran shows that the population of the large cities consisted of: (a) an élite or upper class which manifested the characteristics of Sjöberg's definition and which comprised feudal magnates (khāns), high-ranking officials, military commanders, religious leaders, and wealthy merchants, in short the ruling class. (b) The ruled class, which differed markedly in composition from the upper class and comprised small-scale traders (kasaba), artisans, unskilled manual labourers, simple soldiers, and other humble groups.²⁰ According to the text of the already mentioned decree of Karīm Khān Zand which is reported in the Rustam ut-Tavārīkh, the four categories into which this ruler divided the people at the beginning of his reign were (a) ahl-i mulāzamat (governors and civil servants), (b) ahl-i ḥirfa va kasb (artisans and tradesmen), (c) ahl-i bay' va sharā (merchants), (d) ahl-i zirā'at (farmers).²¹ Tavernier, writing in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, mentions that the craftsmen and tradesmen were considered to occupy the third place in the social classification of Ṣafavid Iran.²² Although neither Āṣaf nor Tavernier specifically states that the artisans and tradesmen had an inferior social status, their accounts indicate that the

military commanders, senior bureaucrats, and leading 'ulamā constituted the élite, and that the artisans and tradesmen, who were the largest elements of the urban population, served this élite and did not belong to it. However, this lower social status paradoxically did not deprive the craftsmen (pīshavarān) of dignity and esteem, or deprive individuals from amongst them of social mobility and opportunities to raise their status.

Islamic doctrine and law (sharī'at) hold craftsmen in high respect. The theologian Muḥammad Ghazzālī (d.505/1111) declared that God loves craftsmen (kāsib ḥabīb-i Khudā'st) because they not only earn their livelihood in a good way but also supply the needs of their community.²³ It is interesting to note that knowledge of a craft was regarded as a merit and excellence for members of the élite, even for Shāhs. Simon, a Carmelite priest who was in Iran in 1608, states that "Shāh 'Abbās I was proud of his knowledge of several crafts; he enjoyed making scimitars, arquebuses, and bridles and saddles for horses, weaving cloth, and distilling salts, oranges, flower water, and medicaments; and in short, with all mechanical crafts, if not perfect, he is at least somewhat conversant". "It is not a matter for surprise to learn of Shāh 'Abbās I's pleasure in mechanical arts, because in the Levant and especially Persia a man is considered ignoble and is not esteemed, even when of high rank, if he does not know some arts or crafts; and often the fathers have been asked what crafts they practised".²⁴

Karīm Khān Zand boasted of his proficiency in bricklaying

(bannā'ī), carpet-making, and stocking-weaving, while Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī, an eminent contemporary religious scholar, gained his livelihood from button-making (dugma-chīnī).²⁵

Birth and upbringing did not prevent intelligent artisans or their sons from receiving high governmental appointments, and thereby rising into the ruling class. For instance, Mīrzā Shāh Husayn, a high-ranking bureaucrat in Shāh Ismā'īl I's army who became the Shāh's vakīl (deputy and designated regent), had originally been a stone-mason, and Mīrzā Najm, another important official in Shāh Ismā'īl's reign, had at first probably been a goldsmith at Rasht (in Gilān province) and had been promoted solely on account of his capacity.²⁶ Tavernier notes that Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī Bey, the prime minister (ṣadr-i a'zam) of Shāh 'Abbās II, was the son of a tailor and had been appointed successively chief (bāshī) of the goldsmith's guild and head of the royal mint (mu'ayyir-bāshī) before he reached the highest official position in the Ṣafavid state.²⁷

Many craftsmen and traders gained reputations for their scholarly activities, mainly in the field of religious sciences, Arabic language, Persian poetry and prose, and calligraphy. For instance, in Shāh Ismā'īl I's reign, Mawlānā Ḥasan Shāh Baqqāl (a grocer) of Shirāz left his occupation to become a teacher and established an excellent college (madrasa) in that city.²⁸ Luṭf 'Alī Āzar (d.1195/1781) states that in his time Sirājā-yi Ḥakkāk (an engraver) was by far the best calligrapher,²⁹ and that Khavāja Ghīyās ud-Dīn Naqshband, the bāshī of the weavers of Yazd, was an

eminent artist,³⁰ while Naṣrābādī states that Zamānī-yi Naqqāsh, a painter, had been a well known poet in Shāh 'Abbās II's reign.³¹

Sources from the Ṣafavid period mention poor artisans who left their ill-rewarded occupations and successfully went in for large-scale commerce. For instance, Āqā Nūr-i Jūlā, a weaver, who abandoned weaving for the lucrative Indian trade, became after a few years a rich merchant and built a mosque in the Iṣfahān bazaar known as the Masjid-i Āqā Nūr-i Jūlā (which still exists).³² Khāvāja Bāqir-i 'Aṣṣār, one of the wealthiest merchants in Shāh 'Abbās II's reign, had at first been an oil crusher ('aṣṣār).³³ In general, such wealthy businessmen (saudāgarān), while enjoying an honourable place in society, lived very simply. They usually did not display their wealth, because by so doing they would lose their good name with their fellow businessmen.³⁴

The available evidence indicates that a guild's social status in the 17th and 18th centuries depended to a great extent on the religious and moral qualities which Islamic laws (sharī'at) and tradition ascribed to its trade or occupation. This religion-rooted distinction between high and low occupations had persisted in all the Islamic nations throughout their history. Occupations which are sanctioned by shar'ī rules were regarded as superior to occupations which are reprehended by the sharī'at.³⁵ The latter were not only considered inferior, but also, in general, were ill-rewarded. The

individuals who pursued the inferior occupations generally came from poor families, and these families consequently remained poor.³⁶

Another criterion of the social status of artisans and tradesmen depended on the degree of skill and length of experience which the various occupations or professions required. In general, the professions requiring hard skills and yielding high returns occupied the position at the top of the social scale, while those yielding low returns and employing unskilled workers lay at the bottom of the scale. In the first place, the artisans working in the royal workshops (kārkhāna-hā-yi salṭanati) had higher skills and qualifications than the self-employed artisans and therefore enjoyed a better social as well as economic status.³⁷ For this reason, artisans were glad to enter the royal workshops when opportunities arose. Amongst the ordinary guilds, a few stood particularly high in esteem, for example physicians and druggists, to whom patients entrusted their life and health, and money-changers with whom people deposited their money. Certain crafts such as glass-making, gilding, and calligraphy³⁸ were esteemed for the skill and art which they required. Wealth and honesty were the main sources of the prestige of guilds such as the goldsmiths and jewellers.

Information about the earnings of different occupations and guilds is scarce. The European travellers indicated that goldsmiths, gold wire drawers (zarkashān),

goldbeaters (ṭalā-kūbān), jewellers, and money-changers (ṣarrāfān) enjoyed the highest earnings and social status.³⁹

Brocade weavers (zar-bāfān) earned better incomes than most other workers.⁴⁰ The craftsmen and traders who had their shops in a royal bazaar and particularly in a qayṣariya enjoyed better business opportunities than those who had shops in other quarters (maḥallāt) or in the suburbs. The artisans in the royal bazaar were fully qualified members of the respective guilds, whereas the craftsmen who carried on their business elsewhere were by tradition only loosely attached to the organized guilds.⁴¹ The wealthier artisans and traders tried to

exhibit their economic standing through adornment of their shops. Kotov, the Russian traveller who sojourned in Iran in 1624, states that in the royal bazaar of Iṣfahān there were shops well roofed over with stone domes and with fronts and interiors painted in gold and many colours.⁴²

Mīrzā Ḥusayn Taḥvīldār, writing in the middle years of Qājār period, remarks that while the size and equipment of most of the cotton cloth dyers' shops at Iṣfahān were roughly the same, the heads and chiefs of the dyers' guild spent 1500 tumāns more than the others did on equipping their shops.⁴³

Notes (2.1)

1. Lewis, The Islamic Guilds, in Eco. H.R. vol.8, pp.20-37; Floor, The Guilds in Iran, in Z.D.M.G. pp.99-116; Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, passim.
2. Murvarīd, Sharaf-nāma, p.356.
3. Iskandar Munshī and Vālih, Zayl-i 'Ālamārā, pp.13-15.
4. Āṣaf, p.13.
5. Munsha'at-i Sultān Husayn Bāyqarā, pp.3ff.
6. Vā'iz Kāshifī, Futūvat-nāma, 110ff.
7. Iskandar Munshī, I, p.861; Muḥammad Ṭāhir Vahīd, 'Abbās-nāma, p.198.
8. Iskandar Munshī, I, p.861.
9. Farṃān of Shāh Tahmāsb I, dated 979/1571 in the Masjid-i Mir 'Imād at Kāshān.
10. T.M. pp.80a-81b; Khākī, Dīvān-i Khākī, p.48; Du Mans, p.31.
11. Farṃān of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 983/1575 in the Majlis Library, Tehran, MS.No.606, pp.133-136.
12. Du Mans, p.195.
13. T.M. 136-137.
14. Farṃān of Shāh Ṣafī dated 1042/1633 in the Masjid-i Jami' at Yazd.
15. Chardin, vol.7, pp.341-342; Kaempfer, p.159.
16. Herbert, p.127.
17. Olearius, p.303; Chardin, vol.7, p.389.
18. Muhammad Riḏā Vaṣifī Bīdgulī, Chirāghān (a manuscript from the early Qājār period reproduced in the Tārīkh-i Kāshān (ed. Kalāntar Ḍarābī), pp.492-494.
19. Sjoberg, p.109.
20. Rūmlū, pp.455-457.
21. Āṣaf, p.309
22. Tavernier, p.216.
23. Ghazzālī, p.117; Lewis, Sources for the Economic History of the Middle East, in Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East (ed. M.D.Cook), pp.86-87.

24. Carmelites, vol.I, p.386.
25. Āsaf, p.309.
26. Rūmlū, pp.107-108, 177, 264.
27. Tavernier, pp.187-188, 195-196.
28. Rūmlū, p.71.
29. Āzar, Ātashkada, vol.3, p.946.
30. Amīn Ahmad Rāzī, vol.I, p.159.
31. Naṣrābādī, p.294.
32. Chardin, vol.8, p.14.
33. Naṣrābādī, p.294.
34. Herbert, p.244; Chardin, vol.4, p.161; J. Polak, (Persien, das Land und seine Bewohner (Leipzig, 1865); 2, 165-90), quoted in Issawi, p.277.
35. Ghazzālī, pp.117ff.
36. Lisānī Shīrāzī, Majma'ul-Aṣnāf, quoted in Ahmad Gulchīn Ma'ānī, Shahr-āshūb, pp.151ff.; Falsafī, vol.2, pp.21-216.
37. Chardin, vol.2, pp.109-110; ibid., vol.7, pp.330-333; Iskandar Munshī, Zayl-i 'Ālam-ārā, p.12.
38. Du Mans, 199; Chardin, vol.4, p.155.
39. Du Mans, p.194; Le Brun, p.323.
40. Chardin, vol.4, p.153.
41. Kotov, p.18; also personal investigation in the royal bazaar of Isfahān.
42. Kotov, p.18.
43. Tahvildār, Jughrāfiyā-yi Isfahān, p.93.

2.2. Number of the Guilds

On the number of officially recognised guilds with which the government had dealings, precise information is lacking. Generally in Şafavid Iran, as in other pre-industrial societies, work specialization was based on the product and not, as in modern industrial society, on the process; but the developments in the 17th century, particularly the growth of commerce resulting from the presence of the European East India Companies, probably led to greater diversification and division of labour, though on the other hand it weakened indigenous industries such as silk and wool manufacturing.¹ The Şafavid administrative and fiscal systems also promoted specialization, which enabled the bureaucracy to control the guilds more closely, to buy goods more cheaply, to sell their own imported goods more conveniently through royal agents and Armenian brokers,² and to collect the guild tax (bunīcha) more easily. In general, however, a craftsman in Şafavid Iran made and assembled all the parts of an object himself, and often also offered his product directly to the buyers.

Three reliable contemporary sources give the number of guilds at Işfahān in the 17th and 18th centuries as thirty-three. The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk states that there were thirty-three royal workshops (kārkhāna-hā-yi buyūtāt-i saltanatī),³ and that the technical affairs of each were managed by a chief called the bāshī. Each chief of a royal workshop had a dual function, being responsible not only for the royal

workshop but also for the corresponding guild in the town.⁴ Both Jean Chardin, who resided in Iran from 1664 to 1670 and from 1671 to 1675, and Khākī-yi Khurāsānī, a poet in Shāh 'Abbās II's reign, state that the number of the main guilds in Iṣfahān came to thirty three.⁵

Each guild, however, comprised subdivisions which could be classified as distinct professional organizations. For instance the armourers' guild was composed of the arrow-makers (tīrgarān), bow-makers (kamāngarān), makers of rifle stocks (qundāq - sāzān) or (qundāq - tarāshān), (percussion) needle makers (sūzan-sāzān),⁶ rifle makers (tufang-sāzān)⁷ and gunpowder makers (bārūt-sāzān).⁸

Scattered information on the number of the guilds appears in other European and Iranian sources. Père Rafael Du Mans, the French priest and scholar, who died in 1696 after spending fifty one of his eighty three years in Iran, counted forty guilds at Iṣfahān⁹ (including some which were more properly subdivisions), while Engelbert Kaempfer, the German physician, who was at Iṣfahān from March to November 1685, noted about fifty, including entertainers and others who did not have shops in the main bazaar;¹⁰ their figures and details closely correspond. Mīrzā Ṭāhir Vaḥīd, living in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II, noted the names of a hundred and two guilds, but does not state from which city or cities he obtained this number.¹¹

'Abdullāh Jazā'īrī (d.1173/1762) gives the names of seventy six occupations, all at Shūshtar¹² (the capital of Khūzistān in the Ṣafavid period). These lists include certain occupations whose identities can hardly be distinguished from

others of a similar nature.¹³ For instance there were three guilds at Shūshtar all engaged in tailoring, the bazaar-tailors (khayyāt-i bāzārī), who made clothes to measure in the bazaar and sewed them there, the bazaar-sewers (bāzārī-dūzān), who sewed clothes for the ready-made tailors (dūkhta-furūshān), and the sewers of landara cloth (landara-dūzān),¹⁴ who sewed broadcloth (māhūt) and barak (camel-hair cloth).¹⁵ The principal reports on the number of the guilds relate to Isfahān, which was of course not the only city in Iran where guilds existed. Scattered references in local histories and geographies¹⁶ prove that guilds existed elsewhere but do not give enough information to permit estimates of the number of guilds flourishing in a particular city or town at any time.

During the Ṣafavid period, there was a tendency towards concentration of certain crafts in particular provincial cities and districts, due partly to the increase of regular trade with foreign countries and partly to the expansion of internal demand for the products. The towns of Gīlān specialized in silk production;¹⁷ Kāshān in spinning and weaving, especially of expensive fabrics such as brocade and velvet;¹⁸ Kirmān became the centre of production of lambskin coats and men's long robes (qabā)¹⁹ and pottery,²⁰ Qum of swords and blades,²¹ Yazd of silkweaving (sha'r-bāfī),²² and Shīrāz of glass-making.²³ In these cities and the adjoining districts, large proportions of the inhabitants were engaged in producing the local

speciality. Thus the relative growth of external and internal demand appears to have promoted both functional and regional specialization and division of labour.

As mentioned above, the main guilds of Isfahān, according to reliable sources, numbered thirty three. Each of these guilds pursued its occupation in a particular lane (rāsta) in the bazaar leading to the cross-roads (chār-sūq) of a certain quarter. Each had its own chief (bāshī) and each paid the guild tax. The members of these guilds were respected by the government as well as by the people. Since they served the state by paying the bunīcha and supplying the needs of the court and the royal establishments (buyūtāt-i salṭanatī), the officials in charge of their affairs were ready to help them by providing facilities such as the building of bazaars and the maintenance of security.²⁴

It has been possible to compile from the various sources three lists of the guilds or professional groupings at Isfahān in the 17th and 18th centuries. The first list, showing the thirty three main guilds and the professionally distinct subdivisions which many of them contained, is as follows:

1. Book-binders (ṣahhāfān), comprising booksellers, gilders, copyists, binders (mujalladān), block printers (bāsmachīyān), inlayers, paper makers, lapis lazuli washers (lājvard-shūyān),²⁵ ink sellers (murakkab-furūshān), and inkstand sellers.²⁶
2. Goldsmiths, comprising silver wire drawers (sīm-kashān),²⁷ gold wire drawers (zar-kashān), jewellers, gold beaters

- (ṭalā-kūbān), goldsmiths (zargarān), silver and gold medal makers, silver engravers (qalam-zanān), and engravers (ḥakkākān).²⁸
3. Money-changers (sarrāfān).²⁹
4. Physicians, including druggists and perfume-sellers ('aṭṭarān).³⁰
5. Glass makers (shīsha-garān), including mirror makers (ā'ina-sāzān).³¹
6. Gold brocade weavers (zarī-bāfān), including gold lace makers (gulābatun-dūzān) and silver brocade makers (naqda-dūzān).³²
7. Brocade weavers (sha'r-bāfān),³³ including (chādur-shab-bāfān)³⁴ weavers of black dark silkcloths for women's veils (mishkī-bāfān)³⁵ and men's cloak makers ('abā-bāfān).
8. Drapers (bazzāzān) including sellers of shawls, canvas for tents, woollens, and certain sort of brocades.
9. Textile printers (chit-sāzān), comprising calico and silk cloth printers.³⁶
10. Armourers, comprising arrow makers, bow makers, makers of rifle stocks, needle makers, rifle makers, and gunpowder makers.³⁷
11. Tailors, including tailors (darziyān), hat makers, suqurlāt makers,³⁸ sewers of landara, trouser makers (chāqshūr-dūzān), stocking makers (jūrāb-dūzān), furriers (pūstīn-dūzān), and ironers (utū-kashān).³⁹
12. Haberdashers (kharrāzi-furūshān).⁴⁰ (This occupation became extremely flourishing at Iṣfahān after the influx

of European goods such as glass beads, spectacles, coral, buttons, handkerchief, handbags, etc.)⁴¹

13. Weavers (nassājān), including cotton beaters (naddāfān), loincloth weavers (lung-bāfān), and weavers of 'abā (material for men's cloaks).⁴²

14. Carpenters (najjārān), including turners (kharrātān), wooden comb makers (shāna-sāzān), wood carvers (qālib-sāzān), makers of shoe-heels (pāshna-sāzān), makers of saddle pommels (qārḥ-tarāshān), chest makers (sandūq-sāzān), jewellery box makers (mijrī-sāzān), and tin box makers (quṭi-sāzān).⁴³

15. Confectioners (qannādān), including sugar refiners (shikar-bīzān) and sellers of sweetmeats (ḥalvā-furūshān).⁴⁴

16. Swordmakers (shamshīr-sāzān), knife makers (kārd va chāqū-sāzān), and steel workers (fulād-garān) who made steel helmets, Qur'ān cases, shields, and steel parts such as the upper parts of qalyāns (water-pipes), saucers for coffee cups etc., scissor makers, and chainmail makers (zira-sāzān).⁴⁵

17. Dyers (ṣabbāghān), including dyers of cotton cloths, dyers of silk (ṣabbāghān-i abrīsham), and dyers of yarn (ṣabbāghān-i rīsmān) who dyed cotton for the weavers and tailors.⁴⁶

18. Saddlers (zīn-sāzān), including leather bucket makers (dalv-dūzān) and makers of leather instruments (garīk-yarāqān).⁴⁷

19. Blacksmiths (āhangarān), including locksmiths (qufl-sāzān), makers of horse-shoes (na'l-bandān), farriers

- (na'licha-garān), and foundrymen (rikhta-garān).⁴⁸
20. Coppersmiths (misgarān), including braziers (rūy-garān) and brass vessel makers (davāt-garān).⁴⁹
21. Shoemakers (kafsh-dūzān), including makers of a sort of shoe called gūrji-dūzān, shagreen makers (sāgharī-dūzān) who made shoes from the hides of pack and riding animals, and gīva makers (raṣṣāfān) who made light cotton summer shoes.⁵⁰
22. Builders (bannāyān), including architects (mi'mārān), stone cutters, plasterers, panellers in stone and marble, and house painters.⁵¹
23. Oil-pressers ('aṣṣārān), including oil millers ('aṣṣārān-i rūghan) and pressers of sesame ('aṣṣārān-i arda).⁵²
24. Grocers (baqqālān), including greengrocers (sabzī-furūshān), sellers of roasted chick peas (ḥammāṣān), sellers of dried fruits (khushka-bārfurūshān), sellers of rice (birinj-furūshān or razzāzān).⁵³
25. Potters (fakhhārān), comprising brick makers (kūrapazān), makers of pottery (kūzagarān), and makers of glazed tiles (kāshī-pazān).⁵⁴
26. Bakers (khabbāzān).⁵⁵
27. Tanners (dabbāghān).⁵⁶
28. Secondhand dealers (simsārān) and scrap sellers (khurda-furūshān).⁵⁷
29. Corn chandlers ('allāfān), including seed merchants.⁵⁸
30. Cooks (ṭabbākhān).⁵⁹
31. Tent material makers (lavvāfān), saddlebag makers

(khūrjīn-sāzān), tent makers (khayyāmīyān) and packsaddle makers (akkāfān).⁶⁰

32. Braid sellers ('allāqa-bandān).⁶¹

33. Makers of prayer mats (jā-namāz or ihrāmi), and straw mat makers (būriyā-bāfān).⁶²

The second list is of occupations which were regarded as low in status. Workers in these occupations required little skill and consequently little or no professional training. They did not have shops in the bazaar, and their groups were not headed by a bāshī. In short, these occupations comprised the jobs of the poorer people and the jobs which were considered dirty, immoral, inferior, or religiously reprehensible. The list, which is based on data from the 17th and 18th centuries, is as follows:

1. Washermen (gāzurān or sīākārān).
2. Camel-drivers (sārbānān).
3. Candle makers (sham'-sāzān).
4. Water carriers (saqqāyān).
5. Wood cutters (hīzum-shikanān).
6. Gluers (kalvā-bandān).
7. 'Atā'īyān (junk-dealers, buyers of old household cloths (jul), old sacking (palās), old clothes, broken china).
8. Rope-makers and hair-coilers (mū-tābān).
9. Gut-twisters (zih-tābān).
10. Bath-keepers (hammāmīyān).
11. Pudding makers (āb-bandān or pālūda-sāzān).
12. Sheep's head friers (kalla-pazān).
13. Felt makers (namad-mālān).

14. Porters (hammālān).
15. Mud brick makers (khisht-mālān).
16. Flexible pipe makers (nāypīch-sāzān).
17. Fortune tellers ('arrāfān).
18. Washers of the dead (ghassālān).
19. Gravediggers (qabr-kanān).
20. Millers (āsīyāb-bānān).
21. Hunters (sayyādān), e.g. bird-netters and fishermen.
22. Meat-porters (lāsh-kashān), who carried carcasses from the slaughterers to the butchers.
23. Runners (shāṭirān).
24. Barbers (salmanīyān).
25. Donkey drivers (khar-kashān).
26. Brokers (dallālān), i.e. non-commercial brokers, including marriage-brokeresses who were often Jewish.
27. Coffeehouse proprietors (qahvachīyān).⁶³

The third list, which includes several of the occupations shown on the second, is of professional organizations or groups which were not subject to the normal tax (bunīcha), and which had no head (bāshī) of their own, but were supervised by a senior government official. Each of these groups had to pay customary fees (rusūm) to the official in charge. The arrangement served two purposes, firstly to ensure direct state control of the persons engaged in these professions, most of which were considerable harmful to the morals and discipline of the community, and secondly to provide for the immediate expenses of the supervising official and his staff. Although some of these occupations

might have sufficient earning power to offer a considerable source of tax revenue, the fact that most of them were not respectable by the canons of Iranian tradition or were not strictly legal in Islamic law made it unbecoming for the state to receive revenue from them. Their taxes were therefore used to meet the immediate cost of supervision instead of being credited to the royal treasury. The senior official charged with the supervision of such groups was normally the naqīb (see chapter 3).

The list of the mainly low-status guilds under the immediate supervision of the naqīb of Iṣfahān is as follows:

1. Showmen (ma'raka-gīrān). (The word probably then, as now, meant reciters of the battles and martyrdoms of the Imāms 'Alī and Ḥusayn, who illustrate their recitations with colourful unrolled portable pictures of these battles).
2. Qalandarān. (In earlier times, qalandar had meant "wandering darvīsh"). According to Kotov, the Russian traveller who was in Iran in 1624, the qalandarān or abdāl lived in mosques and looked after them. They frequented the Maydān-i Shāh and bazaar of Iṣfahān, and told stories about the lives of Islamic saints, i.e. the Imāms. They went barefoot and naked, wearing only a sheepskin with the fur outwards flung over their shoulders. On their heads they put hideous caps, in their hands they carried sticks and spears and axes, and in their ears they stuck big crystal stones. Their appearance was terrible, as though mad and evil. By day they would walk around the Maydān-i Shāh and bazaar, and would eat and drink little, at night

they would drink wine and fornicate.⁶⁴

3. Wrestlers (kushtī-gīrān).
4. Wolf-catchers (gūrg-gīrān).
5. Washers of the dead (ghassālān).
6. Gravediggers (qabr-kanān).
7. Jugglers (hugga-bāzān).
8. Storytellers (qissa-gūyān).
9. Shāhnāma-khwānān (reciters of Firdawsi's Shāhnāma or parts thereof).
10. Fortunetellers (fāl-gīrān).
11. Beggars (ḡadāyān).
12. Mu'azzinān (utterers of the call to prayer).
13. Acrobats and rope dancers (band-bāzān).
14. Puppet show operators (khayma-shab-bāzān).⁶⁵

At Iṣfahān certain groups having the nature of guilds were under direct supervision of the chief book-keeper (sāhib-jam') of the royal torch-bearer's department (mash'al-dār-khāna), who was also in charge of the royal band (naqqāra-khāna).⁶⁶ The mash'al-dār-bāshī collected various customary fees from the guilds under his authority. Since these funds were not considered quite pure enough for the use of the Shāh and the government, they were usually left at the disposal of the mash'al-dār-bāshī for the purchase of his requirements such as sheep's tail fat (dunba), tallow, lamp oil, melted fat (jizghāla), large and small kettledrums (kūs and naqqāra), and accessories for the band.⁶⁷ The guilds under the control of the mash'al-dār-bāshī were the following:

1. Dancers and singers (ahl-i ṭarb).

2. Drummers (ṭabbālān).
3. Gambling house keepers (qumār-bāzān).
4. Wineshop keepers (sharāb-khāna-dārān).
5. Pigeon trainers (kabūtar-bāzān).
6. Bang-khāna keepers (places where bang, i.e. hashīsh or cannabis, was consumed).
7. Būza-khāna keepers (places where būza, a sort of beer made from millet or rice, was consumed).
8. Kūknār-khāna keepers (places where a sherbet made from poppies was consumed).
9. Keepers of brothels (bayt ul-luṭf).⁶⁸ Chardin in 1666 noted that there were 14,000 whores in Iṣfahān. They were registered in an office responsible for the supervision of this trade and received licences from it.⁶⁹ Their abodes were in the "lane of the naked" (kūy-i birahnagān) and in several caravanserais adjoining the Maydān-i Shāh. According to John Struys, who was in Iran in 1671, at Ardabīl "the whores, who have their own residence (i.e. quarter) and ply all over the town and in the caravanserais, are reckoned as a corporation or guild".⁷⁰

Another category consisted of professional organizations under the supervision of the Shāh's private barber (khaṣṣā tarāsh), as follows:

1. Masseurs (dallākan).
2. Razor blade makers (tīgh-sāzān).
3. Bloodletters (faṣṣādān).
4. Bath stokers (tūn-tābān).
5. Dyers of white beards, e.g. with henna (rang-bandān).

6. Knife grinders (charkh-garān).
7. Wardrobe keepers (jāma-dārān).
8. Circumcisers (khatna-kārān).⁷¹

Data on the membership numbers of the guilds in Iṣfahān or elsewhere is even scarcer than on the number of the guilds. No direct information appears in the sources, and the available indirect information is scattered and incomplete. Uruj Beg Bayāt, the Secretary of Shāh 'Abbās I's embassy to Spain, who stayed in that country and embraced Catholicism, wrote that in 1601 there were ten thousand craftsmen's shops in Iṣfahān, in addition to six hundred caravansarais occupied by tradesmen and artisans.⁷² According to Kotov, in the main bazaar of Iṣfahān alone there were two hundred money-changers, ninety saddle makers, four hundred copper-smiths and cloth printers, two hundred haberdashers, and over two hundred swordsmiths and slipper makers,⁷³ while a very large caravansarai in the Gulbār quarter was occupied by straw mat makers,⁷⁴ and thousands of weavers were employed in cloth manufactories.⁷⁵ According to Taḥvīldār, writing in the Qājār period, the guild of architects and builders in Iṣfahān had numbered twelve thousand in Ṣafavid times.⁷⁶ As regards other cities very little is known. Tabrīz in Shāh Ṣafī's reign had fifteen thousand shops, three hundred caravansarais,⁷⁷ seventy khāns (commercial buildings) for merchants, and a hundred and ten khāns for craftsmen.⁷⁸ Although these figures are interesting in themselves, they do not provide an adequate basis for any estimates of the numbers enrolled in the guilds at Iṣfahān or other Iranian cities during the Ṣafavid period.

Notes (2.2)

1. Arthur Edwards, The letter of Arthur Edwards from Persia (1565-1566) in Hakluyt, 3, pp.146-147; J. Bruce, e, p.198; Tavernier, p.244.
2. W. Foster, L.R., 5, p.288 June 1617 from Işfahān to London.
3. T.M., p.19a.
4. Du Mans, pp.24-25.
5. Chardin, vol.5, p.499; Khākī Khurāsānī, p.48.
6. H. Lippomano, Lettera a sua Cattolica Real Maestá (Eng.tr.) Eng.H.R. vol.7, p.320ff.
7. Jazā'īri, p.105.
8. D.M., Majalla-yi Dānīshkada-yi Adabiyāt-i Tehrān, year 16, no.4.
9. Du Mans, pp.194-206.
10. Kaempfer, pp.121-122, 159-160.
11. Mīrzā Ṭāhir Vaḥīd, Maṣnavī-yi 'Āshīq va Ma'shūq (1110/1699), quoted in Gulchīn Ma'ānī, Shahr-āshūb, pp.64-65.
12. Jazā'īrī, pp.103-106.
13. Evliya Efendi, the Turkish traveller, counted the guilds of Constantinople as 1001, which he classified into 57 sections. Many of the Constantinopolitan guilds had no important role in the economic life of the city. See Evliya Efendi, vol.1, pp.104ff.
14. Londra (Landara) was the word used by Italian merchants at the beginning of the 17th century as a general name for the broadcloths from England which had a good market in Iran; for further information, see D.W.Davis, A Primer of Dutch Seventeenth Century Overseas Trade, pp.101-10. When Arthur Edwards, the English agent of the Muscovy Company, met Tahmāsb I at Qazvīn, the Shāh and his administration had no knowledge of England at all. Edwards introduced himself as follows: "He named it Inghilterra as the Italians call England. Then one of the nobles said Londra, meaning thereby London, which name is better known in far countries out of Christendom than is the name of England." See A. Edwards, in Hakluyt, vol.3, p.143.
15. Tavernier, p.48; Taḥvīldār, pp.92-122.

16. e.g. Malik Shāh Ḥusayn ibn Ghīyas ud-Dīn Sīstānī, Iḥyā' ul-Mulūk; Jazā'irī, Tazkira-yi Shūshtar.
17. Olearius, pp.388-391.
18. Amīn Ahmad Rāzī, vol.2, pp.445-449.
19. Thévenot, p.93.
20. Du Mans, pp.196-197; Tavernier, p.320.
21. Olearius, p.261.
22. Farmān of Shāh Sultān Ḥusayn dated 1113/1702) in the Masjīd-i Jāmi'-i Kābīr at Yazd.
23. Fryer, vol.1, p.215.
24. Tavernier, p.43.
25. T.M., p.106a; Chardin, vol.7, p.364ff.; Du Mans, p.200.
26. Naṣrābādī, p.418; Kotov, p.18.
27. The silver wire drawers produce silver thread for weaving silver brocade (naqda-dūzī).
28. Chardin, vol.7, p.364; Du Mans, p.195; Tavernier, p.42.
29. Khākī Khurāsānī, p.48.
30. Du Mans, p.176; Tavernier, p.44.
31. Du Mans, p.198.
32. Kaempfer, p.159; Du Mans, p.195.
33. Du Mans, p.195.
34. The chādur-shab-bāfān produce different kinds of light cloth for use as face veils for women and also as sheets.
35. The mishkī-bāfān made the black or dark grey silk cloths (mishkī) used by women as cloaks (chādur).
36. Naṣrābādī, p.360; Sloane, B.M. ms. Or.4094.
37. Lippomano, in English. H.R., vol.7, p.319; Du Mans, pp.197-198. D.M. in op.cit., year 16, no.4.
38. The cap (tāj) of the Qizilbāsh (the Ṣafavid army formed by Shāh Ismā'īl I). For further information, see R.M.Savory, The principal officers of the Ṣafavid state during the reign of Shāh Ismā'īl I, in Bulletin of the Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, vol.23, pp.91-105.

39. T.M., p.48b; cf. Du Mans, p.205, and Naṣrābādī, pp.143, 168.
40. Tavernier, p.45; Kotov, p.19.
41. R. Davis, Aleppo and Devonshire Square, pp.124-146; A. Edwards, in Hakluyt, vol.3, pp.57-78.
42. Olearius, p.324; Khākī, p.48.
43. Tavernier, pp.39, 47; Kotov, pp.18-19.
44. A letter from the agent of the Dutch East India Company in Iṣfahān containing information on the Ṣafavid guilds. This letter can be found in the Dutch State Archive (Algemeen Rijks Archief). Koloniaal Archief (KA), nr.1754, folio 2567, verso 2568.
45. Naṣrābādī, p.172; Tavernier, p.47; Du Mans, pp.204-205.
46. Olearius, p.324; Kotov, p.18; Tavernier, p.45.
47. Fīrūza Maṣṣūrī, Garḳ-yarāqān, in Majalla-yi Hunar va Mardum, year 16, no.189-190, pp.55-58; Kotov, p.19.
48. Tavernier, p.47; Du Mans, pp.200-203.
49. Tavernier, 45; Du Mans, pp.200-202.
50. Du Mans, p.200.
51. Tahvīldār, p.112.
52. Tahvīldār, pp.95-96; Naṣrābādī, p.160.
53. Khākī, p.48; Naṣrābādī, p.382.
54. Du Mans, pp.196-197; Naṣrābādī, p.382.
55. Khākī, p.48; Du Mans, p.202.
56. Khākī, p.48; Du Mans, p.203.
57. Kaempfer, pp.158-159; Tahvīldār, pp.111, 114.
58. Naṣrābādī, p.424; Khākī, p.48.
59. Khākī, p.43; Naṣrābādī, p.143.
60. 'Abd ul-Wahhāb Shahshahānī, Bahr ul-Javāhir fī 'ilm ud-Dafātir, p.95.
61. Tavernier, p.47.

62. Sloane, B.M. ms. Or.4094.
63. Kotov, p.20; Du Mans, pp.194-202; Kaempfer, pp.37, 158-159; Falsafī, vol.2, pp.368, 312-316; Farmān of Shāh 'Abbās II dated 1064/1653 in the Masjīd-i Jāmi' at Yazd; Naṣrābādī, pp.143, 431; Sām Mīrzā Ṣafavi, pp.22ff; Chardin, vol.4, p.130.
64. Kotov, p.65.
65. Falsafī 2, pp.312ff.; Kotov, pp.14, 20; T.M. p.81a; Du Mans, pp.163, 213, 210-200.
66. T.M., pp.51b, 52a.
67. Sanson, p.100; T.M., pp.51b, 52a; Du Mans, p.24.
68. Farmān of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 941/1534 in the Masjīd-i 'Imād at Kāshān; Kaempfer, p.87; Falsafī, 2, pp.312-316.
69. Chardin, Vol.2, p.211; Ibid., vol.5, p.371; Fryer (1684 ed.), p.395.
70. Struys, p.288.
71. Farmān of Shāh 'Abbās I dated 1038/1628 in the Masjīd-i Shāh at Iṣfahān; Khākī, p.48; Jazā'irī, p.107.
72. Don Juan, p.93.
73. Kotov, pp.18-19.
74. Sloane, B.M. ms. Or.4094.
75. Struys, pp.310-311.
76. Tahvīldār, p.112.
77. Chardin, 2, pp.321, 327.
78. Evliya Efendi, 2, p.136.

Chapter 3.

Structure of the Guilds.

3.1. The Governmental administration of the Guilds

- a) The guilds as administrative intermediaries
- b) Kalāntar
- c) Naqīb
- d) Muḥtasib
- e) Dārūgha
- f) Malik ut-Tujjār

3.2. The Internal Organization of the Guilds

- a) Bāshī
- b) Kadkhūdā
- c) Apprenticeship and Mastership.

3.1. The Governmental Administration of the Guilds.

a) The Guilds as Administrative Intermediaries.

The Ṣafavid Shāhs reunited most of the Iranian lands, and from the time of Shāh 'Abbās I maintained internal security, which is an essential prerequisite for the prosperity of cities; but they sought to centralize authority in their own hands and therefore did not permit any effective development of the spontaneous local institutions which are necessary for the lasting vitality of large urban agglomerations. Indeed, under the absolutist system of government which existed in Iran in the 16th and 17th centuries and again in the early 19th century, the idea that any political or economic organization might be independent of the palace was virtually unthinkable.¹ The nature of urban life was determined by the dominance of the palace and the governing classes.² The hierarchical structure of 16th and 17th century Iranian society may be conceived as a pyramid having the Shāh at the top followed by large number of governors, military commanders, vazīrs and other high-ranking officials, 'ulamā, and chiefs of the tribes (khāns), who dominated social and economic life at every level.³ The government, however, in attempting to keep the urban populations under control, generally used their traditional organizations as intermediaries, while the various social groups in the large cities managed to keep some measure of autonomy and to continue handling their internal affairs in accordance with their own traditional

rules and codes. Nevertheless the social structure of Şafavid Iran was characterized by the dominance of the state over many aspects of the life of the producing classes,⁴ such as farmers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, and even merchants. For this purpose an elaborate bureaucracy was created, and direct and indirect economic and political or ideological pressures were applied. Government-appointed officials as well as elected elders supervised the activities of the trade guilds, and it seems that the guild members often came to believe that the bureaucratic apparatus was an essential part of their own organization.

The methods of state control were of several kinds. Firstly, the Shāhs and provincial governors built complete central markets in the important cities, or at least built qayşariyas (monumental bazaar entrances with public buildings, warehouses, and superior shops). As owner and lessor of these premises, the government could determine and supervise the commercial and industrial activities of a city.⁵ Concentration of particular traders in particular streets or quarters was, of course, a characteristic of all Islamic cities, but as Chardin remarked, the location of each guild in the new royal bazaar of Işfahān had been ordained by Shāh 'Abbās I.⁶ This particular bazaar was not only a centre of artisans and tradesmen, but also the focus of the city's social life. It was a symbol of the authority of the state,⁷ and at the same time a very lucrative source of income for the state because many shops and carvansarais in it were owned by the Shāhs.⁸

Royal officials closely watched all that went on in this bazaar. Shāh 'Abbās I used to visit it and personally inspect everything.⁹ While such supervision helped to maintain order and security and thus to promote the prosperity of the city dwellers, the government's main concern was fiscal. The incorporation of the tradesmen and artisans into guilds made it easier to collect taxes from them and to control prices of goods supplied by them. Secondly, the Şafavid government exercised its supervision through the guilds. During the reign of Shāh 'Abbās I, the various officers (kalāntar, naqīb, muhtasib, dārūgha, bāshī, kadkhudā) had more or less become tools in the hands of the government. Many instances of government interference in the affairs of guilds are related by Chardin, Tavernier, and Du Mans,¹⁰ and it is clear that in comparison with the Tīmūrid period, the degree of state control had been greatly increased.¹¹ The main specific aims of the Şafavid régime may be summarized as follows:

- a) Through the guilds as well as through its own officials, the government controlled the quality of staple products required by the general public, kept down their prices, and ensured the use of correct weights and measures.¹²
- b) Through use of the guilds to assess and collect the taxes payable by artisans and tradesmen, the government relieved itself of a complex administrative burden.
- c) Through the channel of the guilds, the government obtained its own requirements of goods (e.g. for the royal workshops) at low prices, and sold surplus agricultural

products from the royal estates.¹³

d) Through the channel of the guilds, the government obtained workers for its establishments and corvées in peacetime and wartime. Their bāshīs supplied whatever labour and services the government might demand.¹⁴ In wartime, artisans and traders were conscripted to provide a mobile bazaar (urdū-bāzār) which supplied the needs of the army. The Venetian envoy, Barbaro, found tailors, blacksmiths, saddlers, arrowsmiths, and druggists accompanying the army of Uzun Ḥasan Āq-Quyūnlū (872/1467-882/1478) on his campaigns.¹⁵ Muḥammad Muḥsin, writing after the Afghān rebellion, states that in the time of Shāh Tahmāsb II, the garrison commander of Iṣfahan, Tahmāsb-Qulī Khān Jalā'ir, before setting out with reinforcements for the army which was to fight the Turks in 'Irāq, ordered the artisans and traders to set up a mobile bazaar for the benefit of his troops (chār-bāzār [= chār-sūq] va dakākīn sākhtand).¹⁶

e) Through the work of guild officers in regulating the bazaars, and in arbitrating commercial disputes, the government was relieved of a wide range of duties, and fewer cases were brought before the state courts¹⁷ (i.e. the courts under the dīvān-bēgī in which matters of customary law were decided).

f) Finally, through the heads of the guilds, the government compelled artisans and traders to participate in state ceremonies. The author of Iḥyā' ul-Mulūk, writing in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās I, states that for the reception

of Muhammad Khān, the ruler of Turkistān, on his arrival at Isfahān in 1022/1613, each guild under the supervision of its elders illuminated the Maydān-i Shāh and the bazaar of Isfahān.¹⁸

The rest of this chapter consists of short descriptions of the functions of the officers who dealt with guild affairs, namely the kalāntar, naqīb, muhtasīb, dārūgha, malik ut-tujjār, kadkhudā, and also the functions of craft masters and apprentices. Although the insurrections and wars after the fall of the Ṣafavids upset the governmental and bureaucratic structure from time to time, there is substantial evidence that the administrative and municipal organization at the lower levels remained more or less intact. In particular, the guild administration system of Ṣafavid Iran was largely maintained under the Zands and Qājārs.¹⁹ In the course of the second half of the 19th century, however, the offices now to be discussed gradually declined in importance. After the constitutional revolution and the subsequent introduction of new administrative methods, most of these old offices disappeared, though in the traditional bazaars some of them still exist.

b) Kalāntar

A.K.S.Lambton, in an essay on The office of kalāntar under the Ṣafavids and Afshārs, has examined its various functions in detail. Noting that the kalāntar was an urban official belonging to the "civil" hierarchy who appeared in the post-Ilkhānid period, she makes the following

comment: "The fact that there is no mention in the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk of the kalāntar's salary supports the view that, notwithstanding his association with the government, he was not its servant in the same way as was, for example, the vazīr". This view is contradicted by other evidence, which indicates that the office of kalāntar was then included in the governmental hierarchy. The kalāntars of Iṣfahān and other cities held titles, granted by the Ṣafavid Shāhs, such as 'Ālī-jāh²¹ or 'Ālī-ḥazrat²² (His Eminence). In 1135/1722, during the siege of Iṣfahān by Maḥmūd the Afghān, Shāh Sultān Husayn dismissed Mīrzā Rafi'ā, the kalāntar of Iṣfahān, in the same way that he had earlier in 1133/1720 dismissed the grand vazīr Fath 'Alī Khān Dāghistānī, and ordered the confiscation of this kalāntar's property.²³

More specific evidence, but from a later period, is reported by Muḥammad Hāshim Āṣaf: Karīm Khān Zand, after his accession at Iṣfahān in 1163/1750, appointed a governor (ḥākīm) for every city, and every governor had seven officers, ('ummāl-i sab'), namely the vazīr, muhtasib, mustawfī, vakīl ur-ra'āyā, muḥaṣṣiṣ, kalāntar, and naqīb, to each of whom a fixed salary was paid.²⁴ The kalāntar in Ṣafavid times had considerable authority over the affairs of the artisans and traders. He appointed the kadkhudās, took part in the apportionment of the taxes among guild members, and protected them against oppression by government officials.²⁵ John Fryer, writing in the reign of Shāh Sulaymān, states that the kalāntar was the clerk of the bazaar, who fixed prices and punished cheaters.²⁶ Although

the kalāntar intervened in decisions on price-fixing, he was not directly responsible for this function. At Isfahān there was some overlap between the duties of the kalāntar and the muhtasib. Sanson, also writing in Shāh Sulaymān's time, states that the Shāh appointed a kalāntar in every city who was made responsible for ensuring the correct conduct of the traders and who furthermore arbitrated their disputes and contentions.²⁷ According to Mīrzā Rafī'ā's Dastūr ul-Mulūk, the members of each guild nominated their kadkhudā, and the kalāntar issued a certificate (ta'līqa) and gave a robe of honour (khil'at) to the kadkhudā. The kalāntar presided over the bunīcha committee and apportioned the bunīcha among the various guilds. His signature on a demand for bunīcha was in some measure a confirmation of the guild's consent to the assessment.²⁸ The kalāntar settled disputes over guild affairs and between guild members.²⁹ The appointment or dismissal of masters (ustādān) required his approval.³⁰ According to Du Mans, the kalāntar was close to the Shāh, and collected the Shāh's shop rents, which he delivered to the royal treasury.³¹ From every guild with which he dealt, the kalāntar received a customary annual fee.³²

c) Naqīb

The naqīb was another high-ranking officer who was directly involved in guild affairs during the Şafavid period. The word, which means "verifier", was in Iranian usage given to the head of the sayyids (descendants of the Imām 'Alī) in a town and at first meant "verifier of the

genealogies of sayyid-ship".³³ G. Baer thinks that the office of naqīb derived from the futūvat tradition,³⁴ in which the Imām 'Alī is revered as the model of integrity in work and conduct (ikhlāṣ-i 'amal).³⁵ It has not been possible to find a clear description of the function of the naqīb before the Tīmūrid period. In documents from that period the office of naqīb is mentioned as an honourable rank. A diploma for the appointment of 'Abdullāh Murvārīd as the naqīb of Harāt, the capital (Dār us-Salṭana) of the Tīmūrid Sultān Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, which has survived from the last decade of the 9th century (1484-1494 A.D.), shows that his function as naqīb of Harāt was to scrutinize the authenticity of the genealogies of the sayyids.³⁶ Khwāndamīr, in his history Habīb uṣ-Sīyar which goes up to 930/1524, indicates that the sayyids had an organization in every city under the supervision of a naqīb.³⁷ There was probably a close link between the functions of the naqīb pertaining to religion and those pertaining to the guilds. Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī (d.910/1504) states that the naqīb supervised the relationship between masters of crafts (ustādān) and apprentices (shāgirdān), and girded every craftsman with a ceremonial belt (miyān bastan) on his promotion to the rank of mastership.³⁸ In the Ṣafavid period, such religious functions were still performed by the naqīb, but his principal role was the supervision of certain categories of guild affairs. The naqīb was appointed by the Shāh and ranked as a high official. Evliya Efendi, the Turkish

visitor who was in Iran in the mid-17th century, states that the naqīb of Tabrīz was a government official and was the head of the sayyids.³⁹ The naqīb of Isfahān held the title 'Ālī-ḥaẓrat, which was granted only to officials of the highest rank.⁴⁰ It may be assumed that the office of naqīb was hereditary and that a naqīb handed over his post to his son, who was confirmed in it by a royal decree.⁴¹ Minorsky states that the naqīb was the deputy or assistant of the kalāntar.⁴² According to the Tazkīrat ul-Mulūk, the main duty of the naqīb was to fix the bunīcha of the various guilds. Furthermore, when a guild approved a craftsman as master, it was the naqīb who certified the candidate's qualifications.⁴³ N. Kuznetsova attaches importance to the role of the naqīb in ritual ceremonies, and summarizes his functions in relation to the guilds as follows: supervision of custom and ritual, surveillance of the moral behaviour of members, enforcement of the rules governing the induction of novices and their apprenticeship to masters, guardianship of traditions concerning a craft's original patron saints, assessment of the bunīcha, apportionment of orders for goods between guild members, restraint of price fluctuation in the bazaar, and determination of prices for goods.⁴⁴ The Tazkīrat ul-Mulūk mentions that the naqīb had great authority in certain guilds. He appointed the elders of the darvīshes, religious reciters (rawza-khwānān) and religious entertainers (ahl-i ma'ārik), etc.⁴⁵ Although the naqīb was a government official, his relationship with the guilds

was close, and he generally enjoyed the respect of their members, not only for his ancestry but more importantly for his own dignity and honour.

d) Muhtasib

The rise of the office of muhtasib in the early Islamic period was a measure of the growth in the number of cities throughout the Islamic Empire.⁴⁶ The hisba, i.e. the muhtasib's function as overseer of the economic and social life of the Islamic city, is discussed in a valuable book by Ibn al-Ukhūwa (d.729/1329).⁴⁷ The development of the hisba in the 'Abbāsid period (132/749-656/1238) resulted from the effort of the Caliphs to islamize all the institutions of government and to make them as far as possible uniform. Although the actual role of the muhtasib differed in the various cities, his basic duties were the regulation of every day economic affairs such as payment of debts, fulfilment of contracts, supply of essential commodities, accuracy of weights and measures, quality of craft manufactures, purchase prices of raw materials, and sale prices of finished goods.⁴⁸ The muhtasib carried out his tasks in accordance with Islamic law (sharī'at) and the Qur'ānic command (sūra III, 104, 110, 113) to enjoin what is good and prohibit what is evil, and at the same time he represented the government's authority in the bazaar.⁴⁹ Khwāja Niẓām ul-Mulk Ṭūsī (d.485/1092), the vazīr of the Saljūqid Sulṭans, states in his Sīyāsāt-nāma that a muhtasib must be appointed in every

city to supervise the bazaar, to check weights and measures for accuracy, to inspect the prices at which raw materials and finished goods are bought and sold, and to prevent any kind of cheating, fraud, or deception.⁵⁰ In the reign of Sultān Maḥmūd Ghāzān (694/1295-703/1304), the first Muslim ruler of the Mongol Ilkhānid dynasty, who attempted to carry out important reforms, the muhtasib checked the weights in use among the tradesmen⁵¹ and was appointed by the government. From the Tīmūrid period, royal diplomas for the appointment of individuals to the office have been preserved in the Sharafnāma of 'Abdullāh Murvārīd.⁵² In Karīm Khān Zand's time, the muhtasib was one of the seven principal government officials in each city.⁵³

Under the Ṣafavid régime, the office of chief muhtasib of the empire (Muhtasib ul-Mamālik) carried great prestige and the title 'Alī-jāh ("His Eminence"). He supervised the prices of goods in Iṣfahān, affixed his seal on the official lists of prices, and punished any of the artisans (ahl-i ḥirfa) or tradesmen who violated his regulations; he also appointed a deputy (nā'ib) in every provincial city.⁵⁴ Le Brun reports that the muhtasib was the inspector general of the bazaar and used to prepare detailed lists of the various goods and their prices.⁵⁵ First the muhtasib and guild's representatives fixed the prices, then he displayed the prices every month on the gate of the palace⁵⁶ (i.e. the 'Alī-Qāpū in Iṣfahān); he also punished or fined cheaters who were found using false weights and measures.⁵⁷ The muhtasib had absolute authority and used it to prevent

any rise in the cost of the staple necessities. No one could overrule the muhtasib's decisions.⁵⁸ According to a diploma dated 1072/1662, the muhtasib was responsible for maintaining public morality, and in addition to this task, he was to supervise certain groups and guilds, such as the mullās (minor clergy), mu'azzins, darvīshes and ghassāls.⁵⁹ The Muhtasib ul-Mamālik received 50 tūmāns as his salary and 253 tūmāns and 300 dīnārs in local fees (rusūm-i maḥallī).⁶⁰ Although the office of muhtasib endured after the fall of the Ṣafavids until the early Qājār period, like many other traditional offices it afterwards gradually lost importance and finally disappeared.⁶¹

e) Dārūgha

The word dārūgha is derived from the Mongol dārū "to press, to seal" and was used in the Mongol feudal hierarchy.⁶² In Iran, the office of dārūgha rose to importance when, under the Tīmūrīds, the name dārūgha was given to the state-appointed governors of the major towns;⁶³ but under the Ṣafavids the function of the dārūgha was different. His basic task was to protect the town from disorder and from any threats to its security. In the Ṣafavid period, the dārūgha administered the market police, usually under the jurisdiction of the dīvān-begī (ministry of justice).⁶⁴ Krusinski, the Polish priest who was in Iṣfahān during the Afghān siege, states that one of the chief duties of the dārūgha was to protect the town against robbers and criminals;⁶⁵ he was directly responsible for the security of the bazaar at all hours of day and night.⁶⁶ He stopped at the qayṣariya of

Iṣfahān for an hour every night and then patrolled the bazaar. His men, who did the patrolling, were called aḥdās (a word originally meaning "young men");⁶⁷ if they discovered any stolen property, the dārūgha would take from one tenth to one fifth of it as a reward.⁶⁸ The tradesmen and artisans paid a regular fee to the dārūgha to protect their shops from burglary.⁶⁹ Fryer mentions that the artisans and craftsmen of each bazaar collectively provided the amount of the fee.⁷⁰

The dārūgha had power to fine and physically punish individual artisans and traders who violated the regulations of the bazaar. According to Du Mans, he might also fine the members of a guild collectively.⁷¹ If butchers and bakers overcharged or gave short weight, he had them flogged, or had their ears and noses cut off, or their tendons ripped.⁷² In the capital Iṣfahān, he was responsible for keeping special registers of crafts which were liable to labour service for the royal court.⁷² The post of dārūgha was a lucrative one. As salary alone, the dārūgha of Iṣfahān received 400 tūmāns, and he gained large amounts more from both customary fees (rusūm) and unlawful takings.⁷⁴ The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk does not indicate who paid the rusūm to the dārūgha of Iṣfahān, but probably means the fees contributed by the different guilds.

f) Malik ut-Tujjār

The merchants (tujjār) did not form a homogeneous class, but in every city were divided into several groups based on line of business, religious affiliation, place of

origin, nationality, and other criteria. At Iṣfahān and at commercially important cities such as Kāshān, Tabrīz, and Yazd,⁷⁵ a distinction was made between merchants from different parts of the country. Also mentioned is a division of merchants by special location in the cities where they did business. In the main bazaar of Iṣfahān, there were more than thirty well-established caravansarais, each belonging to a particular group of merchants engaged in a certain line of business or having a certain place of origin or nationality, e.g. the caravansarais of the Gīlānīs, Khurāsānīs, Turks, Farangīs (European), and Indians.⁷⁶

As a result of these divisions, the Iranian merchants in the Ṣafavid period never had any permanent professional organization similar to the contemporary craftsmen and tradesmen's guilds.⁷⁷ The merchants were exempted from the bunīcha (guild tax), the only tax which they normally had to pay being the tamghā.⁷⁸ On special occasions, however, such as the arrival of a royal guest or the occurrence of a royal wedding, the merchants were made to contribute to the cost of officially sponsored public jublations.⁷⁹ Lippomano, a Spanish ambassador who was in Iran in 1585-1586, remarks that Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda's financial straits compelled him to obtain the garments and cloths for dressing his court on credit, which the merchants granted most unwillingly.⁸⁰

A merchant's son normally took over his father's business. After completing a few years' apprenticeship, the son would become his father's trusted assistant, and

would often marry the daughter of a fellow merchant. Through such marriages, a merchant gained more respect and facilities for his business, and improved his social status.⁸¹

The concentration of the wealthiest merchants in Iṣfahān and certain provincial capitals was due mainly to the narrowness of the markets in other cities, but partly also to governmental action. The economic policy of the Ṣafavids in general and Shāh 'Abbās I in particular was not helpful to indigenous merchants. The Shāhs were more concerned to develop their own commercial enterprises, and they did this through the instrumentality of royal agents and merchants from favoured ethnic groups, namely the Tabāriza (Tabrīzī merchants) of Iṣfahān,⁸² and the Armenians whom Shāh 'Abbās I had forcibly removed from Julfā in Āzarbāijān in 1604 to enable them to start business as merchants in his capital.⁸³ Nevertheless, in several cities such as Iṣfahān,⁸⁴ Kāshān,⁸⁵ Tabrīz,⁸⁶ Yazd, and Shīrāz,⁸⁷ there were communities of indigenous merchants, who had a loose mutual relationship and organization and were supervised by a government-appointed functionary having the title malik ut-tujjār (chief merchant).

The malik ut-tujjār of Iṣfahān was appointed by the Shāh from amongst the city's leading merchants.⁸⁸ According to Le Brun, he had to possess not only a reputation for probity and good behaviour, but also a qualification to arbitrate commercial disputes which might be brought before him.⁸⁹ He had a hybrid role, being charged on the one hand with the supervision of his fellow merchants and the

settlement of disputes between merchants and between them and their clients,⁹⁰ and on the other hand with the protection of the government's interests and communication of its demands to his fellow merchants. In the former capacity, he was the responsible spokesman of a professional group which enjoyed a certain autonomy in its internal affairs, and served as intermediary between it and the government. The French priest Sanson, who was at Isfahān in 1683, states that the malik ut-tujjār represented the interests of the merchants and craftsmen and stood up for them against every kind of injustice or vexation.⁹¹ Nevertheless it seems that the main function of the malik ut-tujjār was to act on behalf of the Shāh and government. According to Chardin, he was the Shāh's commercial advisor,⁹² and according to Kaempfer, he was responsible for the purchase of garments for the royal family and the army.⁹³ Le Brun states that the "melikuziaer" or chief of the merchants bore that title by virtue of his final jurisdiction in commercial proceedings which were brought before him, but was at the same time in charge of the tailors working for the royal court. Although he acted under the orders of the nāzīr-i buyūtāt (superintendent of the royal establishments), "the provision of clothing and all similar articles for His Majesty's personal use was entrusted to his care. He was also the supervisor or inspector general of all persons authorized to dispose of silk and other manufactures belonging to His Majesty in foreign parts".⁹⁴ As a royal adviser, the malik ut-tujjār,

together with other experts, assessed the values of presents which were offered to the Shāh.⁹⁵ The fact that the malik ut-tujjār was appointed by the Shāh and sat in the same rank as senior officials at ceremonies did not mean that he was considered to be a member of the official hierarchy.⁹⁶ The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk in its enumeration of the offices (manṣābs) of the Ṣafavid régime does not mention the malik ut-tujjār among them. The seat of the malik ut-tujjār at Iṣfahān was the Shāh Caravansarai in the royal bazaar, where several wealthy merchants carried on their business.⁹⁷

It is known from the scarce available evidence that a similar functionary existed in certain other cities, and it may be surmised that there was one in every important commercial centre.⁹⁸ Sanson states that a provincial malik ut-tujjār was called Le Kalenter ou Prévost des marchands.⁹⁹ According to Chardin, a provincial chief merchant had the title ra'īs ut-tujjār (which he translates as roi des marchands).¹⁰⁰ The functions of provincial chief merchants resembled those of the malik ut-tujjār of the capital. They upheld the general interests of the merchant community, settled disputes, defended businessmen and craftsmen against every kind of vexation, and ascertained the causes of bankruptcies.¹⁰¹

In some of the sources, another functionary, apparently different from the malik ut-tujjār is mentioned, namely the tājir-bāshī (head merchant). Kaempfer's account indicates that the two offices were not separate in Shāh Sulaymān's reign,¹⁰² but it seems that there were two different functionaries with these titles in Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn's reign.

The precise role of the tājir-bāshī at that time is not clear. According to the later historian Āṣaf, the tājir-bāshī was responsible for the commercial businesses of the royal establishments (buyūtāt-i saltānatī).¹⁰³ In that case, the tājir-bāshī must have been a government official, whereas the malik ut-tujjār was in principle a representative of a class.

During the Qājār period, the merchants of every city elected from among themselves a trustworthy and experienced fellow merchant as the head of their guild (ṣinf) and called him ra'is ut-tujjār. He had no legal authority, but his judgement in mercantile disputes was traditionally acceptable to the merchants concerned.¹⁰⁴

Notes 3.1

1. C. Cahen, Ya-t-il eu des corporations professionnelles dans le monde musulman classique? pp.51-64.
2. Aḥmad Ashraf, Vīzhagī-hā-yi tārikhī-yi shahr-hā-yi Irān (Historical features of the Iranian cities), in Majalla-yi 'Ulum-i Ijtima'i, No.4, 1974.
3. Hāfiz Farmānfarmā'īyān, The beginnings of Modernization in Iran: the political and reforms of Shāh 'Abbās I, passim.
4. Chardin, vol.7, pp.361-362.
5. Struys, p.311.
6. Chardin, vol.7, pp.360-361.
7. Tavernier, pp.35ff.
8. Muhammad Muḥsin, Zubdat ut-tavārikh, folio, 199b; Shāmlū, Qiṣṣa ul-Khāqāniyya.
9. Carmelites, vol.1, p.169; Sanson, p.10.
10. Tavernier, p.239; Chardin, vol.4, p.95.
11. Munsha'āt-i Sulṭān Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, pp.3ff.
12. T.M. p.80a; Chardin, vol.4, pp.94-95; Du Mans, pp.36-37.
13. Jazā'irī, p.102.
14. Tavernier, p.239.
15. Barbaro, p.67.
16. Muḥammad Muḥsin, folio 217.
17. Evliya Efendi, vol.2, pp.1-8; Sanson, pp.189-190.
18. Malīk Shāh Ḥusayn Sīstānī, pp.414-415, 496-497; Abu'l-Faḏl ibn Muḥārak Shāh, Akbar-nāma (Tārikh-i Akbar-Shāhi, dated 1034/1625), folio 64a.
19. Āsaf, pp.306-310.
20. Lambton, The office of Kalantar under the Ṣafavids and Afshārs, p.2ff.
21. Naṣrābādī, pp.101, 115.
22. T.M. p.76a; Farmān of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn dated 1130/1717, B.M. ms. No.4935, folio 14.

23. Muḥammad Muḥsin, folio 206b.
24. Āṣaf, p.307; Evliya Efendi, vol.2, p.134.
25. Tavernier, p.250; Thévenot, p.103.
26. Fryer, vol.3, p.24.
27. Sanson, p.46; Kaempfer, pp.131-132.
28. D.M., in op.cit., year 16, no.4; Le Brun, pp.290-291.
29. T.M. p.77a.
30. D.M. in op.cit., year 16, no.4.
31. Du Mans, p.36; Fryer, 3, p.24.
32. According to two diplomas of Karīm Khān Zand appointing kalāntars at Tabrīz dated 1764 and 1773, one of the duties of a kalāntar was oversight of the affairs of the craft guilds. Texts in Lisan ul-Muluk Sipihri, Tārīkh-i Dar us-Sultana-yi Tabrīz, Tehrān, 1208/1876, pp.291-298.
33. Muḥammad 'Alī Rawzātī, Jāmi' ul-Ansāb, vol.1, p.38.
34. Baer, "The organization of labour", in Islamischer Zeit, Handbuch der Orientalistik, Band 6, pp.31-52.
35. Tuḥfat ul-Ikhvān, a work concerned with the principles of futūvat written in the 9th/15th century, ed. by Muḥammad Damādī, Tehran 1351/1972.
36. Murvārīd, pp.10-11.
37. Khwāndamīr, 4, pp.603ff.
38. Ḥusayn Vā'iz-i Kāshifī, pp.37a-43a.
39. Evliya Efendi, 2, p.134.
40. T.M., p.80a.
41. Farṃān-i Niqābat-i Rażavī, dated 1017 hijrī in Majalla-yi Barrasī-hā-yi Tārīkhī, No.4, year 4, Tehran, pp.225-230; Tahvīldār, p.86; Azar, 3, p.943.
42. T.M., p.148.
43. Ibid., p.83.
44. N. Kuznetsova, in C.A.R. No.2, pp.314-315.
45. T.M., pp.68, 83, 149.
46. Nīrumand Raḥīmī, Historical development of the central Iranian cities during the Islamic period, passim.

47. Ibn Ukhūwa, pp.4-5.
48. B. Foster, "Agoronomos and Muhtasib"; in J.E.S.H.O. vol.13, 1970, pp.128-149.
49. Ibid., p.140; Scanlon, pp.179-195; Floor, The market police in Qajar Persia, in Die Welt Des Islam, 13, 1971, pp.212-229.
50. Nizām ul-Mulk Tūsī, p.56.
51. Rashīd ul-Dīn Faḡlullāh, pp.496-497.
52. Murvārīd, pp.2-3.
53. Āṣaf, pp.307-308.
54. T.M., pp.79a-80a.
55. Le Brun, p.292.
56. Kaempfer, p.86.
57. D.M., op.cit., year 16, no.4; Le Brun, p.292.
58. Tavernier, pp.258-259; Āṣaf, pp.307-308.
59. Diploma in the possession of Hājji Muhammad Nakhjavāni of Tabrīz, in Islamic society in Persia, Lambton, p.13.
60. T.M., pp.90a.b.
61. Lambton, The office of kalāntar under Ṣafavids and Afshārs, p.13.
62. E.I., 1st ed., 1, pp.162-163.
63. Kātib, passim.
64. Tavernier, pp.220-221; Kaempfer, pp.84, 131.
65. Krusinski, vol.1, p.3; Evliya Efendi, 2, pp.141-142.
66. Muḡammad Muḡsin, folio 224a.
67. T.M., p.149.
68. Thévenot, pp.91, 103.
69. Gemelli, p.133.
70. Fryer, 3, p.24.
71. Du Mans, p.39.
72. Sanson, p.189; Thévenot, p.103.
73. E.I., 1st ed., 1, pp.162-163.

74. Kaempfer, p.40; T.M., p.90b.
75. Iskandar Munshī, vol.2, p.308; Kaempfer, p.159.
76. Sloane, B.L. ms. Or., No.4094.
77. Suhayl Āzar, pp.236-237.
78. See chapter 4, The guilds and taxation.
79. Du Mans, p.33; Iskandar Munshī, 2, p.1001.
80. Lippomano, in ENS.H.R., 7, 1892, pp.317-318.
81. Āṣaf, pp.94-95.
82. Naṣrābādī, p.306.
83. Le Brun, p.323; Herbert, p.122.
84. L.R. 5 (June 1617), p.287; Herbert, p.129.
85. Carmelites, vol.1, p.733.
86. Teixeira, 2, p.245.
87. Gemelli, pp.116-117.
88. Sanson, p.148; Du Mans, pp.191-192.
89. Le Brun, p.292.
90. Chardin, (English ed.) vol.1, p.370; Kaempfer, p.86.
91. Sanson, pp.147-148.
92. Kaempfer, p.86.
93. Tavernier, p.222; D.M., op.cit., year 16, no.1 and 2, p.85; Zayl-i 'Ālamāra, pp.281-282.
94. Le Brun, p.291.
95. Chardin, 3, p.198.
96. della Valle, 1, p.539.
97. Sloane, ms.4094.
98. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.308.
99. Sanson, p.148.
100. Chardin, 5, p.262.
101. Sanson, pp.147-148.

102. Kaempfer, p.86.

103. Āsaf, p.100.

104. Ādamīyat and Nāṭiq, pp.310-312.

3.2. The Internal Organization of the Guilds

a) Bāshī

In general it appears that the internal affairs of the guilds in the Ṣafavid period were administered by officers or elders of their own choice known variously as rīsh-safīd "white beard", kadkhudā "headman", or bāshī "chief". The representatives of the guilds were initially chosen by the members, but the choice of a bāshī generally had to be confirmed by a diploma (farmān) of the Shāh, or in a provincial city of the governor. This provided further opportunities for governmental control and exploitation of the guilds through the instrumentality of the bāshī. In the Mongol period, the terms pīshvā and muqaddam appear to have been used with the same meaning as bāshī in the Ṣafavid period. Sayfī Haravī, whose history of Harāt goes up to 721/1321, mentions that Amīr 'Izz ud-Dīn was the chief (ra'īs) and muqaddam of the weavers of Harāt and presided over their guild.¹ Ibn Baṭṭuṭa states in Iṣfahān the members of each craft appointed one of their own members as their headman, whom they called kilu (i.e. gulī).² A very interesting and reliable description of the function of the bāshī of certain guilds in Tīmūrīd Harāt has been preserved in a unique document from the early 15th century consisting of diplomas (farmāns) of appointment of the chiefs of the guilds (jamā'āt) of the oculists and surgeons (kaḥḥālān va jarrahān), furriers (pūstīn-dūzān), carpet-weavers, shoemakers, and barbers. These farmāns show that the chiefs (pīshvāyān va kalāntarān) were appointed by the ruler and were charged with the supervision of their respective

guilds throughout the territory (mamālik-i maḥrūsa). Each chief was elected from among the guild members, and to be eligible, he was required to possess a working knowledge of his craft and a reputation for piety and good morals and behaviour. The professional certificate of anyone who wished to be considered for the position of chief had to be authenticated by the master-craftsmen (ustādān) of his guild.³ The Tīmūrid documents quoted in the Sharafnāma of 'Abdullāh Murvārīd show that certain occupations were grouped together (aṣṇāf-i mushtarak) and placed under the supervision of single chief; for example Ustād Shams ud-Dīn Muhammad was appointed chief of the drummers (naqqārachiyan), washers of the dead (ghassālān), street vendors (ṭavvāfān), bloodletters (faṣṣādān), sieve-makers (gharbāl-sāzān), bathkeepers (ḥammāmīyān), bath-attendants who shaved heads (sar-tarāshān), masseurs (dallākān), millers (āsiyā-bānān), and dancers (luṭiyān).⁴ The pīshvāyān, who were similar to the later bāshīs, controlled the artisans in every professional aspect. They were required to prevent any kind of fraud or cheating by members, and they also punished any violations of the guild's regulations. For instance, Ustād Dānishmand Samarqandī, the chief of the furriers of Harāt, was required to supervise the cutting, sewing, and purchase and sale of fur by all members of his guild.⁵

There is clear evidence that in the Ṣafavid period the bāshīs of the guilds were appointed by the Shāh in Iṣfahān and by the governors in the provincial cities.⁶ The bāshīs were the link between the guilds and the government, but with the increased centralization during and after the reign

of Shāh 'Abbās I, they tended to become more closely connected with the government. Kaempfer states that in the reign of Shāh Sulaymān, the prime minister frequently consulted the bāshīs of the guilds.⁷ It may be surmised that at this stage the bāshīs began to encounter opposition from the guild members. At Iṣfahān the bāshīs of the workshops of buyūtāt-i salṭanatī were often charged with the supervision of the bazaar guilds of the same trades.⁸ Normally the bāshī of a guild was chosen from among its members on the basis of superior accomplishment in its craft,⁹ but was appointed by royal diploma on the recommendation of nāzīr-i buyūtāt (superintendent of the royal establishments). Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī, writing in the time of Shāh 'Abbās I, mentions that Khwāja Ghīyaṣ ud-Dīn Naqshbandī, who was perfect and unrivalled in his profession, was chosen to be the chief of the weavers of Yazd.¹¹ A surviving farṃān of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 983/1575 assigns to Mullā Ḥasan Muzahhib (manuscript illuminator) a number of responsibilities which are specified in detail: he was to supervise the guilds of the manuscript illuminators, scribes, binders, illustrators, and paper sellers, licence persons who were qualified to practise the said crafts, constantly inspect the raw materials which the said artisans used in their work, and take action against any artisan guilty of professional misconduct.¹²

The internal administrative organization of every guild was controlled by its bāshī. The bāshīs of Iṣfahān were made responsible for the respective guilds throughout the country.¹³ A qualified artisan or tradesman who wished to set up an independent business had to apply to the bāshī of the guild,

who registered the name of the applicant in his office and gave him the necessary licence to set up a shop.¹⁴ Of all the guild officers, the bāshīs were the closest to government.¹⁵ One of their functions was to provide labour for the royal corvées, and they were able to extract considerable sums from artisans anxious to escape from them. Tavernier remarks that "tous les chefs de ces métiers-là sont officiers payés du Roi, qui ne travaillent point s'ils ne veulent, et qui ont droit de commander à tous ceux qui sont sous eux".¹⁶ Certain bāshīs had specially close ties with the court, for instance, the zargar-bāshī (chief of the goldsmiths' guild). Through the zargar-bāshī, the government endeavoured to keep a particularly careful watch on the goldsmiths' guild, which was exceptionally wealthy and made a larger contribution to the state's revenue than any other. It was in order that the goldsmiths might be strictly controlled that they were always housed in the qaysariya. Not surprisingly, the zargar-bāshī of Iṣfahān enjoyed valuable privileges. For example he was entitled to two per cent of the value of all jewelry etc. that the goldsmiths and silversmiths supplied to the royal court, and to one per cent of the value of what they sold in the city.¹⁷

The office of bāshī might only be held by a Muslim. Tavernier relates that Jacob John, an Armenian artisan, brought a printing press from Europe to Iṣfahān and that Shāh 'Abbās I. afterwards appointed him the bāshī of the carpenter's guild and demanded that he should profess Islām; in spite of Jacob John's refusal, the Shāh temporarily retained him as bāshī of the carpenter's guild.¹⁸

In the provincial cities, every guild had its own bāshī, who similarly presided over its affairs. The appointments were made by the governors; for instance, in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, Ustād Jamāl Mi'mār was appointed the bāshī of the architects and masons of Shūshtar which was then the provincial capital of Khūzistān, and Nawrūz 'Alī Bēg Shāmlū was confirmed as the bāshī of the goldsmiths' guild in Harāt by the governor 'Abbās-Qūlī Khān.²⁰

The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk does not state whether the salaries of the bāshīs were paid by the Şafavid government or by the guild members. It appears from the Tīmūrid documents that the chiefs of the guilds of Harāt received remuneration from the guild members; for instance Ustād Dānishmand Samarqandī, the chief of the furriers, received "kind services" (i.e. emoluments) from the members regularly every year (murattab sāl bi-sāl ū-rā khidmat-hā-yi nīkū kardand).²¹ The salary of a bāshī in the Şafavid period depended on the importance of the craft. Du Mans states that the chiefs of the artisans who worked for the court were paid by the government; they were "serviteurs du roy" and "ainsi des autres qui ont gage du Roy".²² According to the Dastūr ul-Mulūk, the hakīm-bāshī (chief physician at the royal court) was paid 341 tūmans, and the tūshmāl-bāshī (chief of the cooks and kitchens of the royal court) received ninety tūmans.²³ Kaempfer states that the salaries of other bāshīs varied between 20 and 40 tūmans per annum,²⁴ but does not mention who paid them. Whatever may have been the source of a bāshī's remuneration in Şafavid times, he held office by virtue of a royal diploma and was in fact a representative

of the state rather than of his guild. Through this institution, the government obtained the services of reliable and influential guild members for the protection or pursuit of its own interests.

A list of the bāshīs who assembled for a ceremony at Shāh Sulṭān Husayn's court has been left by Muḥammad Hāshim Āṣaf. He describes them all as having pleasant features and elegant appearances with intricately patterned "Khalīl Khānī" silk turbans, fine leather shoes, Kurdish trousers, and gold brocade sashes. Each had his own karnā'ī, a sort of water pipe. (The karnā'ī bowl for water pipes is the best quality). They came mounted on costly steeds, and many of their trappings and accoutrements were of gold or silver.²⁵ Each was a master in his own craft with a delight in it and no inclination to any other trade, and for this reason was perfectly accomplished.²⁶

From the ~~references~~ in the sources, it has been possible to compile the following list of bāshīs in the later Ṣafavid period.

1.	Chief of the goldsmiths	<u>zargar-bāshī</u> .
2.	" " " Jewellers	<u>javāhir-bāshī</u> .
3.	" " " tailors	<u>khayyāt-bāshī</u> .
4.	" " " water-carriers	<u>saqqā-bāshī</u> .
5.	" " " architects	<u>mi'mār-bāshī</u> .
6.	" " " stone-masons	<u>hajjār-bāshī</u> .
7.	" " " cloth ironers	<u>uṭū-kash-bāshī</u> .
8.	" " " watchmakers	<u>sā'at-sāz-bāshī</u> .
9.	" " " house painters	<u>naqqāsh-bāshī</u> .
10.	" " " carpenters	<u>najjār-bāshī</u> .
11.	" " " merchants	<u>tājir-bāshī</u> .
12.	" " " horse-trapping makers	<u>garīk-yarāq-bāshī</u> .
13.	" " " bakers	<u>chūrchi-bāshī</u> .

14.	Chief of the grocers	<u>baqqāl-bāshī.</u>
15.	" " " druggists	<u>'atṭār-bāshī.</u>
16.	" " " rice-sellers	<u>razzāz-bāshī.</u>
17.	" " " butchers	<u>qaṣṣāb-bāshī.</u>
18.	" " " forage sellers	<u>'allāf-bāshī.</u>
19.	" " " millers	<u>ūnchī-bāshī.</u>
20.	" " " fruit sellers	<u>yamīsh-bāshī.</u>
21.	" " " cooks	<u>ṭabbākh-bāshī.</u>
22.	" " " oil seed crushers	<u>'aṣṣār-bāshī.</u>
23.	" " " moneychangers	<u>ṣarrāf-bāshī.</u>
24.	" " " chainmail makers	<u>zira-sāz-bāshī.</u>
25.	" " " swordsmiths	<u>sayyāf-bāshī.</u>
26.	" " " bow-makers	<u>kamāngar-bāshī.</u>
27.	" " " arrow-makers	<u>tīrgar-bāshī.</u>
28.	" " " locksmiths	<u>chilāngar-bāshī.</u>
29.	" " " makers of braid, trimmings etc.	<u>'allāqaband-bāshī.</u>
30.	" " " candlemakers	<u>shammā'ī-bāshī.</u>
31.	" " " coppersmiths	<u>misgar-bāshī.</u>
32.	" " " braziers	<u>rūygar-bāshī.</u>
33.	" " " saddlers	<u>sarrāj-bāshī.</u>
34.	" " " enam'ellers	<u>mīnā-sāz-bāshī.</u>
35.	" " " bootmakers	<u>chakma-sāz-bāshī.</u>
36.	" " " confectioners	<u>qannād-bāshī.</u>
37.	" " " bookbinders	<u>ṣaḥḥāf-bāshī.</u>
38.	" " " cameldrivers	<u>sārbān-bāshī.</u>
39.	" " " cotton carders	<u>ḥallāj-bāshī.</u>
40.	" " " drapers	<u>bazzāz-bāshī.</u>
41.	" " " brocade weavers	<u>sha'r-bāf-bāshī.</u>
42.	" " " tent equipment makers	<u>lavvāf-bāshī.</u>
43.	" " " packsaddle makers	<u>akkāf-bāshī.</u>
44.	" " " shoemakers	<u>kaffāsh-bāshī.</u>
45.	" " " hatmakers	<u>kulāh-dūz-bāshī.</u>
46.	" " " turners	<u>kharrāṭ-bāshī.</u>
47.	" " " mirror makers	<u>ā'īna-sāz-bāshī.</u>
48.	" " " tentmakers	<u>khayyām-bāshī.</u>
49.	" " " court barbers	<u>khāṣṣa-tarāsh-bāshī.</u>

50.	Chief of the weavers of gold lace and brocade	<u>zar-dūz-bāshī.</u>
51.	" " " smiths	<u>ḥaddād-bāshī.</u>
52.	" " " brick carvers	<u>ājur-tarāsh-bāshī.</u>
53.	" " " runners	<u>shāṭir-bāshī.</u>
54.	" " " wrestlers	<u>pahlavān-bāshī.</u>
55.	" " " bath keepers	<u>ḥammāmī-bāshī.</u>
56.	" " " inlayers	<u>munabbat-kār-bāshī.</u>
57.	" " " engravers	<u>ḥakkāk-bāshī.</u>
58.	" " " washers of the dead	<u>ghassāl-bāshī.</u>
59.	" " " blacksmiths	<u>na'l-band-bāshī.</u>
60.	" " " welldiggers and tunnelers	<u>muqannī-bāshī.</u>
61.	" " " singers	<u>mughannī-bāshī.</u>
62.	" " " minstrels	<u>muṭrib-bāshī.</u>
63.	" " " buffoons	<u>luṭī-bāshī.</u> 27

To sum up, the bāshīs were chosen by their guilds, but their appointments had to be confirmed by the government. They held undisputed authority over the guild members, and while they appear to have been anxious to retain the good will of the members, they generally had to exercise their authority in compliance with the government's wishes.

b) Kadkhudā

The word kadkhudā had the general meaning of chief or notable and was used as the title of headmen of villages and small towns (qaṣabas). Its use with reference to guilds dates from pre-Safavid times. While this title denoted a definite rank in the Iranian guild system, there were no specific rules to determine how a guild member might attain it. All that is certain is that skill, merit, and high standing were required for the office of kadkhudā.²⁸ The masters of each guild nominated from among themselves a



person whom they regarded as outstandingly proficient, and agreed on a salary for him and recommended him to the kalāntar. On the strength of this recommendation, the kalāntar introduced the prospective kadkhudā to the naqīb, and after obtaining the naqīb's endorsement, issued the certificate of his appointment as kadkhudā and at the same time bestowed a robe of honour on him. Thereafter the kadkhudā administered his guild's affairs and endeavoured to advance its interests in all matters of concern to it.²⁹ In fact the approval of the kalāntar was a mere formality, and the choice of the candidate lay in the hands of the guild members.

The kadkhudās were evidently the real leaders of the guilds and spokesmen of the interests of the guild members, who paid their salaries. Their functions comprised: a) determination of the amount of the bunīcha payable by the guild under the supervision of the naqīb,³⁰ assessment of the quotas payable by the individual guild members, and collection of the bunīcha from them in accordance with these assessments.³¹ b) Arbitration of disputed claims and professional differences within the guild. c) Supervision of the training of apprentices by masters, and admission of qualified members to mastership.

The seat of the kadkhudā was at the central cross-roads (chār-sūq) of his guild's bazaar or at a special guild house. Bihishtīyān, a contemporary writer on architectural monuments, has ascertained that in the Safavid period the kadkhudā of the dyers' guild in Iṣfahān officiated at the chār-sūq of the dyers' bazaar (bāzār-i

rang-razān) and there resolved the guild's disputes.³²

Naṣrābādī in his Tazkira states that the gannād-khāna (house of the confectioners) in the Iṣfahān bazaar was the seat of the confectioners' kadkhudās.³³

It is significant that the kadkhudā's jurisdiction was not derived from any governmental decree, but from his personal standing and relationship with the guild members.³⁴ The kadkhudā discussed the qualifications of candidates for mastership with the naqīb and had an important role in their promotion and initiation.³⁵ At Iṣfahān, the kadkhudās of the various guilds were summoned by the naqīb to regular meetings at which prices were discussed and fixed.³⁶ The kadkhudās kept themselves informed about the deliberations which the members of the guild held among themselves on their various affairs, and they maintained close consultation with the kalāntar on these matters.³⁷ Kuznetsova has found that in the early 19th century the elders of the craftsmen (i.e. the kadkhudās) acted more or less as intermediaries between the craftsmen and the merchants.³⁸

The kadkhudā's function, however, was hybrid. On the one hand he was appointed by his fellow guild members to promote their interests before the government; on the other hand he served as a link between the high-ranking supervisory officials and his guild. The authorities expected him to enforce regulations and maintain order among his members. In fulfilling this function the kadkhudā had to deal mainly with the bāshī, who generally supported the interests of the government.

No documentary evidence has been found from the Ṣafavid period on the question whether the kadkhudās of different guilds met regularly to discuss matters other than price fixing and to coordinate their actions; but the reported existence of a chief kadkhudā (kadkhudā-bāshī) of the guilds of Iṣfahān in the reign of 'Alī Murād Khān Zand suggests that there were some such links between the guilds. The kadkhudā-bāshī, named 'Alī Āqā Dalv-dūz (leather bucket maker), was ordered by 'Alī Murād Zand to gather 200 tūmāns in cash from the guilds of Iṣfahān and deliver it to the royal treasury. He refrained from imposing such a heavy burden in view of the poverty of the city's artisans and shopkeepers, and managed to get the required sum from the vazīr of Iṣfahān and the local governor of Khurāsghān (an eastern suburb of Iṣfahān), thereby sparing the craftsmen of the Iṣfahān bazaar from this unjust imposition.³⁹

The office of kadkhudā was sometimes hereditary. Nasrābādī states that Mullā Mushfiqī, the kadkhudā of the bazzāz-khāna (guild house of the drapers), and Ustād Hājji Sharīf, the kadkhudā of the qannād-khāna, both took over the office of kadkhudā from their father.⁴⁰ Mīrzā Hasan Fasā'ī states that the office of kadkhudā-bāshī at Shīrāz remained in the Hākīm Salmān family from the time of Shāh 'Abbās I up to the reign of Muḥammad Shāh Qājār.⁴¹

c) Apprenticeship and Craft Masters

The system of apprenticeship in Ṣafavid times is one of the least documented of the subjects under study. The lack of specific documents suggests that it was a rigid system deeply rooted in traditional custom.

In view of the continuity of the Iranian socio-economic structure throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and into the early part of the 20th century, it seems probable that a high proportion of the apprentices in every guild were sons of masters in the same guild. To a large extent the exercise of crafts and trades remained hereditary within families. A master's son began to learn the family's craft in childhood, then became an apprentice either to his father or one of his relatives, and eventually often succeeded to his father's business. Tavernier states that throughout Iran, sons learnt crafts from their fathers at an early age.⁴² Kinship and family affiliation were important factors in guild membership.⁴³ Among the practitioners of crafts and to a less extent professions, it was customary to keep technical secrets exclusively within the family.⁴⁴ Naturally this custom maintained traditional attachments of particular vocations to particular families. For instance, medicine was a hereditary occupation among the descendants of Mīrzā Muhammad 'Alī Ṭabīb in Kāshān⁴⁵ and Mīrzā Ḥakīmā in Iṣfahān, and calligraphy among the descendants of Qudṣī Khūsh-nivīs from the Ṣafavid period onward.⁴⁶

Although the hereditary practice of professions and trades in certain families was usual, it was not automatic. There are mentions of individuals who moved into other occupations. For instance, Mawlānā Ḥasan-shāh Baqqāl, who had been a grocer, afterwards became a teacher at a school in Shīrāz;⁴⁷ Mīrzā Taqī 'Itimād ud-dawla, the grand vazīr of Shāh Ṣafi and Shāh 'Abbās II, was the son of a baker;⁴⁸ and Ḥājji Sharaf Bēg, a weaver's son who had relinquished

his father's craft, became a rich merchant through the Indian trade.⁴⁹

Without work in an organized trade or craft or profession, it was difficult or impossible to secure a livelihood. Cartwright, who was in Iran in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, reported that idle persons were not permitted to live among the people. According to the regulations, persons who were out of work must refer to the magistrate and register themselves, declaring their circumstances and the previous jobs which they had done. The magistrate then found work for them. When anyone was proved to have lied, he was either bastinadoed or forced to work in the "public slavery".⁵⁰

When a craftsman's son preferred not to pursue his father's profession, the father would entrust him as an apprentice (shāgird) to a master (ustād) of another craft at an early age. According to the available evidence, the age of entry into a craft or trade was not the same in all cases. Thomas Banister, the agent of the Muscovy Company who was in Iran in 1568-69, gives it as five years.⁵¹ John Cartwright gives it as six, and Chardin states that apprentices were accepted at anything between twelve and fifteen years of age.⁵² In the light of Tavernier's statement that some of the masters commenced their apprenticeship at their father's shop when they had completed their school education and were between twelve and fifteen years old, all these reports may be accepted as correct. Only sons of masters were sent to a primary school (maktab); other boys were engaged as apprentices at the age of around six.

When a father entrusted his son to a master, no written contract with fixed provisions was signed.⁵³ Usually the master came to an oral agreement with the apprentice's father or guardian, and sometimes they held discussions on the matter before the guild's kadkhudā. No doubt the illiteracy of the great majority of the artisans and traders necessitated the oral form. An unnamed European traveller who was in Iran in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II states that the master only registered the apprentice's name and made no further inquiries.⁵⁴ Nevertheless the family background of an applicant and the moral conduct of an apprentice were matters of great concern for a master. When an apprentice was admitted, he was instructed in his duties, both as to the craft and as to moral conduct. In some skilled trades, the social background and good behaviour of a candidate were particularly important. This was because the chosen candidate would have to be carefully trained and supervised by his master and would be quite likely to become a member of his master's family through marriage.

The lengths of apprenticeships were not specified, and in principle apprenticeship agreements might be ended by either the master or the apprentice at any time.⁵⁵ According to Chardin, every agreement included an understanding on the rate of wage. A new apprentice began work at his master's shop on very simple tasks, but received pay almost from the start. The rate of the wage varied according to age and experience. In the first year an apprentice received something between two liards and one sou,⁵⁶ and as he became more skilled, his wage was raised.⁵⁷ Contrary to Chardin,

the writer of Disposition and temper of the Persians reported that there was no agreement between the master and apprentice on a definite wage in the early years; but he also observed that it was normal for the master to allow the apprentice a wage from the first day.⁵⁸

The actual lengths of apprenticeships depended on the craft. Kuznetsova reckons that the period of training might be anything from three to ten years.⁵⁹ During this time the apprentice showed his ability and talent in the craft and attempted to acquire its techniques under the direction of his master until eventually he acquired full skill. Chardin alleges that masters were reluctant to teach apprentices all the techniques of the craft in a short time, being anxious about new competition when fully qualified apprentices could set up their own shops; while an apprentice's training remained incomplete, a master could take advantage of his labour without fear of his competition.⁶⁰ In practice the traditional morality did not allow an apprentice to leave his master. Furthermore the former master might have claims against the apprentice and thus be able to restrain him. Other masters were therefore generally unwilling to employ a "rebellious" apprentice.

The final stage through which a shāgird passed before becoming an ustād was that of a khalīfa (literally a "deputy"). A khalīfa was a fully trained man who had acquired all the arts and techniques of his craft or profession. There is no direct evidence concerning the status and functions of a khalīfa in the Ṣafavid period; but the rank of khalīfa still exists today among various craftsmen such as

confectioners, goldsmiths, and silversmiths. The khalīfa is qualified to act as his master's deputy when the latter is absent.⁶¹

In the European guild system, there was a numerous class of journeymen (literally "day labourers") who had completed their apprenticeship but had not attained the rank of master, and were employed by masters on a short-term, often weekly, basis.⁶² The Western scholars who have investigated oriental guilds in connection with the study of Islamic cities have come to the conclusion that the rank of journeyman did not exist in the Islamic countries.⁶³ Kuznetsova thinks that if the rank of journeyman had existed in Safavid Iran, Chardin would have mentioned it, whereas he only mentions masters and apprentices. She concludes that in the Iranian guilds there was no need for journeymen, because anyone who had learned his craft could rise freely to mastership.⁶⁴ It can certainly be accepted that there was no rank in the Iranian guilds directly comparable to that of the journeyman in the medieval European guilds. In 17th and 18th century Iran, however, there was a large category of workmen who had no permanent shops, but were occupants of temporarily rented shops or booths, or were itinerant day labourers going from town to town or town to village or house to house. Workers in this category were called muzdvar (hired man) or kārgar (daily paid labourer). Some were artisans and traders who had valuable skills but did not possess fixed establishments. The existence of this group must not be overlooked in studies of the evolution of Iranian society. Even after the wave of industrial development in the period 1963-1978, daily hired workers and

itinerant artisans are still numerous in Iran, e.g. silver-smiths, carpenters, and tailors.⁶⁵ The socio-economic system of the Şafavid period promoted a multiplication of street artisans (muzdvarān), whose services were used mainly by the lower income groups in the cities and suburbs and by peasant families, because they could supply basic needs much more cheaply than their shop-owning counterparts in the bazaars.⁶⁶ Chardin states that the artisans and vendors of this type who carried on their trades in the Royal Square (Maydān-i Shāh) of Işfahān rented spaces in the Maydān, or if more fortunate, rented small shops surrounding the Maydān at three tūmāns per shop per week. Most of them spread their tools and wares on the ground in the square and were charged a rent of one tūmān per space per week, which they paid day by day or week by week to the Shāh's agents.⁶⁷ Shāh 'Abbās I had designated a space for each trade. Among them were blacksmiths, armourers, saddlers, hat makers, coppersmiths, patchers, money changers, thread makers, locksmiths, second hand dealers, carpenters, fruit sellers, sellers of nuts and dried fruits, street vendors, butchers, greengrocers, cooks, wood sellers, dealers in pack animals, felt makers, fur sellers, confectioners, and cotton-carders.⁶⁸ In the evening the members of these groups placed their tools and wares in chests which were left in the corners of the Royal Square, where they were guarded by watchmen throughout the night.⁶⁹

There were also groups of artisans, known as khāna-kārān, who had no fixed shop and worked for hire at customer's houses. According to Chardin, there were large numbers of these artisans in Işfahān, such as goldsmiths, coppersmiths, carpenters,

etc.⁷⁰ Some of them were respected and prosperous craftsmen who worked at the houses and establishments of wealthy employers. To employ several such craftsmen was considered a noble act and a token of aristocracy. No doubt other khāna-kārān artisans performed various tasks for employers with modest means, though no evidence is available. Du Mans remarks that in Isfahān there existed a group of artisans ("ouvriers") who lacked sufficient capital and other means to offer their products directly to consumers and therefore sold them to established traders who had shops in the bazaar.⁷¹

To become a master craftsman in the bazaar required a long period of apprenticeship which had to be completed satisfactorily, and the acquisition of a certificate of mastership which was subject to the approval of the guild's present masters and the endorsement of the naqīb and the kalāntar. According to the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk, before a guild could appoint anyone a master, its masters were required to attest the candidate's qualification and eligibility for mastership (ustādī) to the naqīb. There is no evidence to show whether a candidate for mastership had to present a fine piece of his own work for examination and judgement by the masters of the guild and the naqīb; but it is known that a craftsman who wished to be employed in the royal workshops had to produce a piece of work for presentation to the bāshī.⁷² The good will of the masters was absolutely essential for an apprentice's promotion. The candidate's eligibility for mastership was then notified to the kalāntar, from whom a certificate (ta'līqa) was

obtained.⁷³ Mīrzā Rafī'ā remarks that the kalāntar only issued his certificate if at least two thirds of the masters agreed on the candidate's eligibility.⁷⁴

Another uncertain question is whether a former apprentice automatically became a full member of the guild upon his induction as a master, or whether full membership required further inquiries by the guild's elders and officials and also consent by the new master himself. There is no evidence from the Ṣafavid period on this question; but Polak, the German doctor of medicine who was in Iran in the early part of Nāṣir ud-Dīn Shāh Qājār's reign, states that membership of a guild was optional.⁷⁵

The transition from apprenticeship to mastership was marked by a ceremony. Although none of the sources for the Ṣafavid period explicitly mention this ceremony, certain sources imply its existence. According to Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī (d.910/1504), the craftsmen and tradesmen who were adherents of the futūvat orders were girded with a sash in a special ceremony.⁷⁶ The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk states that the masters of the guilds expressed their approval (riżā-mandī) of an apprentice's application for mastership at a meeting (probably a ceremony) in the presence of the naqīb.⁷⁷ It must be borne in mind that the naqīb had a spiritual standing among the artisans and tradesmen. Kuznetsova states that on the day of the initiation, a formal ceremony took place in which the new entrant was girded with a belt.⁷⁸ A similar ceremony is still customary in the zūrkhāna (gymnasium) when a craftsman or trader joins a traditional

athletic fraternity. R. Ārāsta, a contemporary scholar, describes the girding ceremony in the zūrkhāna as having all the force of a religious rite. In it the successful candidate for the rank of athlete (pahlavānī) is crowned with a cap (tāj) or girded with a sash (kamar-band). According to Ārāsta, this ceremony goes back to Ṣafavid times.⁷⁹ G. H. Muṣaḥib, another contemporary writer, states that a banquet was part of the ceremony of conferment of mastership.⁸⁰ From the reports of European travellers in the Ṣafavid period, it is possible to piece together an account of the ceremony of initiation of a shāṭir, i.e. a runner or footman, who escorted or ran before the Shāh or a royal caravan (qāfila). Only after a long period of apprenticeship and after passing a very vigorous examination was a shāṭir admitted to the rank of mastership. Usually a shāṭir apprenticed his son to a master when the son was six or seven years old. The apprentice's long training under the supervision of his master took place in three stages. During the first year, the shāṭir was trained in walking and running, and had to run a league's distance without stopping. The distance was increased year by year until the apprentice reached the age of eighteen. At this point, he entered the second stage in which the training was stricter and tougher. He had to run long distances carrying a heavy parcel with a jar of water, a griddle (baking plate), and other objects on his back. In the third stage, he was obliged to prove his speed over a total distance of thirty six leagues by running twelve times from the 'Alī-Qāpū in Iṣfahān to the Kūh-i Ṣufa (the

mountain on the south of the city). The passage of this test completed the apprenticeship and was celebrated with a ceremony called jashn-i shāṭirān (the footmen's feast). When the candidate for the rank of shāṭir was in the service of the Shāh or of a high officer or official, the ceremony was more elaborate. In such cases, the shops in the Maydān-i Shāh and along the runner's route were illuminated, and entertainers were brought to the Maydān-i Shāh to amuse the people. The test took place under the supervision of ten or twenty masters of the shāṭirs' guild. The candidate wore thin trousers and was belted with a sash onto which three hawk-bells were sewn. After the test, the candidate, if successful, was presented with prizes and robes.⁸¹ Gemelli, whose caravan bound for Bandar Kung lost its way until a shāṭir appeared and guided them, noticed that the shāṭir had bells around his waist to warn horses and pack animals of his approach.⁸²

Before a qualified master could set up a shop, he had to obtain permission from the bāshī of his guild. According to Chardin, the bāshī took a sum of money from the applicant, and after registering him, gave him the permission.⁸³

In every guild the masters were the supporting arm and the guiding hand. They nominated the kadkhudā and recommended him to the naqīb. One of the criteria for the determination of a guild's bunīcha was the number of its masters. They set its tone and raised or lowered its social standing.⁸⁴

Notes 3.2.

1. Sayfī Haravī, p.106.
2. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 2, p.295.
3. Munsha'āt-i Tīmūrī, pp.2ff; Rāvandī, 3, p.385.
4. Murvārīd, pp.21b, 22a.
5. Munsha'āt-i Bāyqarā, pp.2ff.
6. Tavernier, p.239.
7. Kaempfer, pp.87-88.
8. Ibid., p.119; T.M., p.36a; Chardin, 7, pp.328-329.
9. Āṣaf, pp.101-102.
10. Chardin, 5, pp.345-346; D.M., op.cit., year 16, no.4, p.314.
11. Rāzi, Haft Iqlīm, 1, p.159.
12. Farman of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 983/1575, ms. Kitāb-khāna-yi Majlis-i Shawrā-yi Millī, Tehrān, no.606.
13. Chardin, 5, pp.554-555; D.M., op.cit., year 16, no.4, pp.314ff.
14. Du Mans, p.25; Chardin, 4, pp.92-93.
15. Tavernier, p.198.
16. Ibid, p.239.
17. Chardin, 5, pp.355-356; Tavernier, pp.95-96.
18. Tavernier, pp.224-225.
19. Shūshtarī, p.44.
20. Nasrābādī, p.391.
21. Munsha'āt-i Bāyqarā, pp.3ff.
22. Du Mans, pp.24-25.
23. D.M., op.cit., 16, pp.300, 303, 319.
24. Kaempfer, pp.125-126.
25. Āṣaf, pp.100-101.
26. Ibid., p.101-102.

27. Ibid., pp.100-105.
28. Naṣrābādī, pp.414-415.
29. T.M., p.76a,b.
30. Ibid., p.80a.
31. Le Brun, p.291.
32. Bihishtīyān, p.29.
33. Naṣrābādī, p.414.
34. Māfarrukhī, p.55. He notes that the kadkhudās of the different guilds settled their trading disputes at the different chār-sūqs in the bazaar.
35. T.M., p.80a,b; Kuznetsova, in C. Issawi, ed., The Economic History of Iran, p.288.
36. D.M., op.cit., 16, no.4, pp.70ff.
37. T.M., p.82.
38. Kuznetsova, in Issawi, op.cit., p.289.
39. Āṣaf, pp.437-438.
40. Naṣrābādī, p.414.
41. Easā'ī, 2, pp.112-113.
42. Tavernier, p.34.
43. Irānshahr (A survey of land, people, culture in Persia), 2, 183.
44. Wills, p.224.
45. Żarrābī, pp.401-402.
46. There are some documents in evidence of this in the private archives of the Buqrāṭiyān and Qudsī families.
47. Rūmlū, p.71.
48. Chardin, 7, p.303.
49. Shūshtarī, p.54.
50. Cartwright, 1, p.733.
51. T. Banister, in Hakluyt, 3, p.154.
52. Chardin, 7, p.333.
53. Tavernier, p.34.

54. Disposition and Temper of the Persians, in Pinkerton's Collection, 9, p.205.
55. Pinkerton, loc.sit.
56. According to dictionaries, sou = a half penny, liard = a half farthing.
57. Chardin, 4, pp.94-95.
58. Pinkerton, loc.sit.
59. Kuznetsova, in C.A.R., 2, p.316.
60. Chardin, 4, pp.94-95.
61. Personal investigation in the bazaars of Isfahān and Yazd.
62. H. Pirenne states that "the members of each guild in the medieval European system were divided into categories subordinated to one another: masters, apprentices, and journeymen. The masters were the dominating class upon whom the others depended. They were the proprietors of small workshops, owning their raw material and tools. The apprentices were initiated into the trade under their direction, for no one was admitted to the craft unless thoroughly proficient. Finally, the journeymen were paid workmen who had completed their apprenticeship, but had not yet risen to the rank of master. While the masters enjoyed relatively good conditions, the journeymen (and those who were employed by the master were for the most part journeymen) lived in alleys in rooms rented by the week and owned nothing but the clothes they wore. They went from town to town hiring themselves out to employers. On Monday mornings they were to be met with in the squares and in front of the churches, anxiously waiting for a master to engage them for the week. The working day began at dawn and ended at nightfall. Wages were paid on Saturday evening, and although the municipal regulations ordered that they should be in cash, the abuses of the system were numerous." Pirenne, pp.186-189.
63. Stern, in The Islamic City, pp.25-51; Floor, The Guilds in Qājār Iran, pp.29ff.
64. Kuznetsova, in Issawi, op.cit., p.288ff.
65. Most of the silver-engravers (qalam-zanān) in Isfahān are hired by wealthy silversmiths. The hired workers (muzdvarān or kārgarān) work in small shops in the streets or in their own houses.
66. Kaempfer, p.159.
67. Chardin, 7, pp.339-340.
68. Ibid., 7, pp.339-340.

69. Ibid., 7, p.339.
70. Ibid., 4, pp.91-93.
71. Du Mans, pp.194-195.
72. Chardin, 5, pp.499-500.
73. T.M., p.81a.
74. D.M., 16, no.4.
75. Quoted from Jakob Polak, in Issawi, op.cit., p.277.
76. Vā'iz Kāshifī, folio 110ff.
77. T.M., p.81a.
78. Kuznetsova, in C.A.R., 2, p.317.
79. R. Ārāsta, in Der Islam, 37, p.257.
80. Muṣāhib, 1, p.165.
81. Tavernier, pp.34-36; Chardin, 3, pp.453ff; Thévenot, pp.104-05; Curzon, 1, pp.332ff.
82. Gemelli, p.168.
83. Chardin, 4, pp.92-93.
84. See Chapter 4, section on The Guilds and Taxation.

Chapter 4.

Methods of Government Control.

- 4.1. The Guilds and Taxation
- 4.2. Price Control
- 4.3. Restrictions and Monopolies
- 4.4. Judicial and Penal Institutions of
the Guilds

4.1. The Guilds and Taxation

One of the most distinctive features of the Iranian guilds was the fact that they were used as instruments for the collection of taxes and imposts from tradesmen and craftsmen. The government levied the taxes through the guilds and dealt with the members of each guild collectively. W. M. Floor, in his dissertation on the Guilds in Qājār Iran, states the payment of taxes was the most obvious and noticeable function of the Iranian professional organizations in the 19th century, and that this in itself demonstrates that they were treated as guilds. Furthermore the criteria on which taxes were calculated preclude any doubt as to which groups belonged to guilds and which did not.¹ The state imposed a tax on a guild as a corporate entity, and the authorities of the guild apportioned the tax among its members. There is no precise information, however, about principles on which the tax liabilities were assessed and fixed, either for guilds by the state authorities or for individual tradesmen and craftsmen by the guild authorities.

It seems probable, in the light of the scanty available evidence, that the nature and the amount of rate of the taxes payable by a guild were determined by several factors, such as custom and tradition, estimation of the guild's normal income, and also a certain amount of bargaining. Consequently there was always a danger that the assessment or apportionment might be unjust in failing to reflect the relative level of prosperity of a particular guild or its

individual members. Thévenot, who was in Iran in 1654, reports that the assessment of a guild's dues was based on the incomes of its members.²

In Iṣfahān, the imposition of the guild taxes, which had the generic name bunīcha, was legalized through the approval of a tax committee consisting of the kadkhudās of the various guilds, the naqīb, and the kalāntar. This committee's authority did not extend over all guilds, since some of them were taxed by state officials directly. The tax committee, under the chairmanship of the naqīb, determined the quota of tax payable by each guild, and the kadkhudās fixed the liabilities of the members of their guild by apportionment of these quotas. The Shāh's decree (farṁān), being absolute, could override decisions of the tax committee. The Shāh might impose new taxes or remit established taxes. A farṁān concerning imposition or remission of a tax was broadcast by public criers (jārchīs) or displayed on inscribed tablets inside or outside mosques. One such tablet granting certain exemptions can still be seen in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Ardistan in the province of Iṣfahān.

The Dastūr ul-Mulūk states that the responsibility for the collection of the taxes from the Iranian provinces (sarḥaddāt va vilāyāt) and cities rested ultimately with the grand vazīr (I'timād ud-Dawla), who performed his task in accordance with statute law (qānūn), reason, and the rights of the realm (ḥuqūq-i mamlakat), which means customary rights.³ The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk states that the ṣāhib-jam' (chief receiver) of the royal treasury received

on the Shāh's behalf the sums due from the guilds in Iṣfahān and other cities. He delegated to subordinates called muḥaṣṣils (collectors) the tasks of collecting the said sums and of dispatching them to the royal treasury.⁴ Lippomano, the Venetian ambassador to Spain, who was in Iṣfahān in 1585, noted that one of the Shāh's permanent sources of revenue was taxation of guilds, and that all the guilds, such as silk workers, cotton weavers, armourers, sugar refiners, etc. paid prescribed sums.⁵

The taxes on the guilds were both regular and temporary. The heaviest regular tax was the already mentioned bunīcha or more precisely haqq-i bunīcha, which may be translated "guild tax". It was a due (haqq) levied by the tax committee on a guild's members for the special privilege (bunīcha) of keeping a shop in the bazaar or elsewhere. When the individual artisan or trader had paid his due, and as long as he observed the guild's regulations, the guild would support and protect him.⁶ According to the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk, the amount of the bunīcha to be levied on each guild was assessed during the first three months of the year.⁷ Du Mans states that the fixing of the guild tax had to be completed within a month in the spring.⁸ At Iṣfahān the fixing of the bunīcha was accomplished by three processes. First the naqīb of Iṣfahān suggested the amount of each guild's bunīcha, then the elders of the guilds had to consent to these amounts, and lastly the kalāntar had to confirm each amount with his seal. The naqīb, after appointing someone to gather the elders (kadkhudās and rīsh-safīdān) of

each guild and bring them to him, fixed the bunīcha of each guild with consent of its elders and according to the law of the realm. The liability of each guild was then formally notified.⁹ At Iṣfahān the collection of the bunīcha was the responsibility of the local vazīr and dārūgha. The Kadkhudās, however, probably did the actual collection of the bunīcha from the artisans and traders.

There are no precise documents to tell us on what principles and by what procedures the amount of a guild's bunīcha and the proportionate liability of each member were determined. It was the task of kadkhudā to apportion the quota of tax among the guild members. In all probability this role called for real leadership and good personal relations, because it seems clear beyond doubt that the kadkhudā had no power of coercion. Fasa'ī states that apportionment of the bunīcha quota among the members of the guilds of Fārs was determined by the kalāntar and the official, called by Fasa'ī the bunīcha-dār, who collected the bunīcha of the individual members. Fasa'ī adds that the system of apportionment and collection of the bunīcha derived from the Ṣafavid period.¹⁰ Undoubtedly the relative income of different guilds was a major consideration in the determination of this tax.¹¹ For instance, the goldsmiths and jewellers were taxed heavily because they made higher profits than the other artisans and tradesmen.¹² According to Chardin, the liability of each member of a guild was equal. He states that guild members had to pay a fixed sum of guild tax equally and regularly, and that for a tradesman's shop (boutique de revendeur) the

sum was 20 sous and for an artisan's shop (boutique d'artisan) 10 sous.¹³ Possibly Chardin may have confused the ḥaqq-i bunīcha with the dīvān tax (taklīf-i dīvān or māl-i muḥtarafa) which is discussed later.¹⁴ Similarly, the compiler of "the Government and Constitution of Persia" in Pinkerton's collection states that every shop of the handicraft trades had to pay 10 pence and that the rest (i.e. shops selling unprocessed commodities) payed 20 pence.¹⁵ Contrary to Chardin's statement that the bunīcha was paid equally, Du Mans mentions that the inequality and diversity of the assessments of the bunīcha were a cause of dissatisfaction and grievance.¹⁶

The ḥaqq-i bunīcha was collected in monthly instalments. Payment of this tax gave the shopkeeper or artisan the legal right to occupy a shop together with certain privileges which were endorsed by the customary law and the internal guild regulations. The bunīcha tax was levied until 1926, when by the law of 20th Āzar 1305 taxes on guilds were abolished.¹⁷ The phrase ḥaqq-i bunīcha meant not only liability to the tax but also the resultant privileges. A payer of the tax could cede his rights to a qualified member of the same guild.¹⁸ Taḥvīldār, the author of a Jughrāfiyā-yi Iṣfahān written at the end of the 19th century, states that in the Qājār period, if any member of a particular guild closed down his shop or workshop in the bazaar, the fellow members were obliged to make good any deficit in the total bunīcha payable to the government. When a large number of members of the guild of oil millers (jamā'at-i 'aṣṣārān-i rūghan) closed down their shops because business was stagnant,

those who continued in business had to pay the bunīcha on behalf of their colleagues.¹⁹

The increasing size of the salaried regular army (gullar or ghulamān) and of the palace staff strained the finances of the Ṣafavid state. The central government and the provincial governors, in order to meet rising costs and casual expenses (havādis), sought additional revenue in the form of extraordinary imposts ('avāriḡ), which for the most part fell onto the shoulders of the artisans and shopkeepers. One such burden was the contribution which the artisans and tradesmen had to make towards the upkeep of foreign ambassadors and guests of the Shāh. This charge was known as havādis²⁰ or kharj-i pādshāhī (royal expenses) or madad-i ma'āsh (royal extras).²¹ It was calculated that the contribution of the Iṣfahān guilds to the cost of government hospitality (madad-i kharj-i mīhmanān) came to an annual total of 3000 tūmāns, which was collected by officials of the royal treasury.²² The shoemakers, leather makers, and hatters were exempted from corvées but had to pay lump sums toward the royal hospitality expenses.²²

These contributions and the bunīcha were not the only taxes which artisans and tradesmen had to pay. According to Iskandar Munshī, they were also liable for takālīf-i dīvān and māl-i muhtarafa.²⁴ The nature of the takālīf-i dīvān, which means dues for government expenses, is not clear; perhaps Iskandar Munshī meant the above-mentioned imposts for royal hospitality. As regards the māl-i muhtarafa, which may be translated artisan tax, he states that artisans and tradesmen were compelled to pay it, and

mentions that Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda remitted it as a reward to the guilds of Tabrīz.²⁵ It appears to have been the same tax which Chardin noted under "havarez" = ('avāriḡ).²⁶ According to N. Falsafī, the avāriḡ were sums paid by the artisans and tradesmen for city maintenance.²⁷ The māl-i muḥtarafa was probably also the same as a tax mentioned by the anonymous Venetian merchant who was in Iran in 931/1514 and reported that the tradesmen and artisans who owned shops in the bazaar were compelled to pay a heavy tax, fixed for tradesmen at as much as two or six aspers or even a ducat per day and for craftsmen with regard to the circumstances of their business.²⁸

According to a farman of Shāh 'Abbās I dated Zul-Ḥijja 1038/1628, which is preserved in the Masjid-i Shāh of Iṣfahān, the 'avāriḡ of the barber's guild, payable by hairdressers (salmāniyān), masseurs (dallākān), cloakroom keepers (jāma-dārān) and other bath attendants, and makers of razor blades and grinding wheels, were remitted by the Shāh; but it is not stated for how long. Members of the entertainer's guild had to pay an occupation tax to the mash'al-dār-bāshī. (This name, meaning torchbearer, was given to a ṣāhib-jam', i.e. head receiver, who was also in charge of the lighting and heating of the royal palaces and of the dawlat-khāna, and at the same time supervised the royal band (naqqāra-chiyān) and headed the torch bearers at night when he carried a large torch in front of the Shāh.²⁹ in addition to this, the mash'al-dār-bāshī supervised all the different groups who worked as entertainers).³⁰

The author of the Rustam ut-Tavārīkh states that in the

early years of the reign of Karīm Khān Zand, the experts in fiscal affairs assessed a dīvān tax (māliyāt-i dīvān) on the guilds on the model of account books (dafātir) which had been compiled in the reign of Shāh Tahmāsb II.³¹ According to Fasā'ī, the governor of Fārs in 1159/1746 imposed a heavy tax called tawjīh on the traders of Shīrāz, and the tax collectors then seized one thousand tūmāns from the Shīrāzī artisans and shopkeepers.³²

In addition to the bunīcha and dīvān taxes, some of the guilds were liable for the corvée (bīgārī) (i.e. for the supply of labour or goods without payment). Unpaid labour by guilds was exacted by the Shāh and officials of the central government and also by provincial rulers (khāns).³³ In provincial towns where certain traditional crafts flourished, the guilds concerned had to execute orders from the royal court without payment. For instance, the skilled tailors of Kāshān and Iṣfahān had to provide, free of charge, the robes of high officials such as vazīrs, kalāntars, mīn-bāshīyān (regimental commanders, i.e. of 1000 men), yūz-bāshīyān (company commanders, i.e. of 100 men), and others below the rank of amīr (general).³⁴ Some of the guilds had to fulfil their corvée through unpaid labour. In such cases, the chief of the guild provided a certain number of labourers, thereby saving the treasury a great deal of money.³⁵ The corvée was used to obtain labour for the repair or construction of royal or other governmental buildings, and for work in the royal workshops.³⁶ Tavernier states that guilds which were exempted from the dīvān tax had to fulfil a corvée equal to it in value. The

chiefs of the artisans and labourers, after consultation with the guild's kadkhudās, decided which individuals should perform the required corvée, with the result that there were many opportunities for favouritism and fraud.³⁷ The Shāh had a overriding authority to decide which guilds should be liable for corvée. The carpenters and masons of Iṣfahān were permanently liable for it.³⁸ At the beginning of every autumn, the vazīr-i buyūtāt, who was the deputy of the nāzīr-i buyūtāt (controller of the royal establishments) summoned the chief of the masons (mi'mār-bāshī), who was responsible for the repair of buildings belonging to the Shāh,³⁹ and ordered him to supply the necessary labour. The mason's guild had also to make a large unpaid contribution to the construction of palaces and bridges.⁴⁰ According to Kaempfer, a palace of Shāh Sulaymān called Takht-i Sulaymān, which was situated high up on the Kūh-i Ṣufa of Iṣfahān, had been erected by the unpaid labourers of the corvée,⁴¹ and according to Le Brun, Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn similarly constructed several palaces at no cost to himself.⁴² A farmān of Shāh Ṣafī dated 1041/1631 made his grand vazīr, Mīrzā Taqī I'timād ud-Dawla, responsible for the repair of the mausoleum of the Imām 'Alī at Najaf in Iraq which the Ottoman Turks had conquered in 1638.⁴³ The repair took two years and was probably carried out by Iranian workers sent to Iraq under the corvée. Kaempfer noted that the unpaid workers, whose services were commandeered either for the royal building operations or for the royal workshops, suffered from very harsh and distressing conditions.⁴⁴

Chiefs of guilds were authorized in certain circumstances to take commissions on the sales of their guild. The bāshī of the goldsmiths and jewellers demanded two percent of all sales in the town.⁴⁵ The payment of such a sum by the members of an important guild could be construed as a reward or bribe to ensure that their privileges were preserved. Similarly certain guilds paid an extra charge described as brokerage (kharj-i dallālī). The brokerage of a particular bazaar was granted by the Shāh to certain individuals. For instance, Shāh 'Abbās II granted the kharj-i dallālī of the wood and charcoal bazaar first to Imām-Qulī Khān Vārasta and then to the poet Mas'ūdā.⁴⁶

It seems that fines must have become another heavy burden. They were the commonest penalty inflicted on artisans and tradesmen who had been found guilty of breaking laws and regulations. Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda abolished the payment of cash fines by the artisans and traders of Tabriz, because he was anxious to improve their economic circumstances.⁴⁷

Customary dues (rusūm) were levied on certain guilds, though not all guilds were liable. The Shāh usually granted the rusūm due from a particular guild to a high-ranking official of his choice. The amīr shikār (master of the hunt) received rusūm from the guilds of fishermen, butchers, sheep's brain friers,⁴⁸ pigeon keepers, poulterers, and falconry glove makers in Astarābād and Yazd (inscriptions dated 1047-1637 in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Ardistan and dated Jamādi ul-Avval 1047/1637 in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Yazd).

According to another inscription, dated 1038/1628 in the Masjid-i Shāh of Iṣfahān, the barber's guild (jamā'at-i salmāniyān) had to pay rusūm to the private barber of the Shāh (khāṣṣa-tarāsh). The rusūm received by the dārūgha of Iṣfahān, amounting to 95 tūmāns per annum, came from a levy on the painters and tailors.⁴⁹ The weavers' guild of Yazd paid rusūm to the mīn-bāshī and yūz-bāshī.⁵⁰ The head of the royal library at Iṣfahān (ṣaḥib-jam'-i kitāb-khāna-yi saltānatī) received rusūm from the basmachiyan (block-engravers), zar-kūbān (gold leaf makers), kāghaz-garān (paper-makers), miqrāz-garān (scissor makers), and muzahhibān (illuminators).⁵¹

Finally, the Ṣafavid bureaucracy gained a considerable revenue by taxing prostitutes. Although the placing of the prostitutes' organization in the same category as those of the craftsmen and tradesmen may seem astonishing, especially under a régime which professed to defend religion, nevertheless the prostitutes were classified as a guild because they had their own peculiar rules and paid a professional tax. B. Lewis regards the existence of immoral guilds in the Muslim lands as a strange phenomenon.⁵² It is possible, however, that the official recognition of the immoral professions in the Muslim cities was intended to give the government some means of controlling them and protecting the public.⁵³ Chardin noted that in 1666 there were 14,000 whores in Iṣfahān who were registered in a special office.⁵⁴ All of them had to have a licence. Fryer states that "courtezans, therefore, are displayed by the king, giving him so much for their licences when they first set up".⁵⁵

According to the Venetian merchant who sojourned in Iran in 930/1514, the rate of the tax taken from the prostitutes was fixed with regard to their beauty.⁵⁶ The total amount of the whores' professional tax in Iṣfahān was estimated by Chardin at around 200,000 écus in 1666, and by Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālih at 4000 tūmāns per annum.⁵⁷ This huge amount, being unclean money, was not paid into the royal treasury but was spent by the mash'al-dār-bāshī on the heating and lighting of royal palaces and on fireworks for various festivals.⁵⁸

Guilds with low social status were sometimes the beneficiaries of tax exemptions. Surviving inscriptions in mosques at Iṣfahān, Yazd, Astarābād, Kāshān, and Ardīstān record decrees (farmāns) of the Ṣafavid Shāhs for the grant of such exemptions. According to decrees of Shāh 'Abbās I⁵⁹ and Shāh 'Abbās II, the exempted guilds comprised bath attendants, wardrobe keepers in public baths, masseurs, razor blade makers, knife-grinders, old clothdealers, dyers of white beards (rang-bandān), i.e. with henna in public baths, midwives, hired mourners (nūḡagarān), ladies' hairdressers, bath stokers, millers, hunters and fishermen (ṣayyādān), blood-letters (faṣṣādān), and meat porters.⁶⁰ In 1022/1613, Shāh 'Abbās I remitted the dīvān tax on candle makers throughout Iran in the month of Ramāzān.⁶¹ A. K. S. Lambton, without quoting any source, states that in the Ṣafavid period there were seventęen guilds exempt from tax, including doctors of medicine, washers of the dead, grave diggers, singers, midwives, rawza-khwāns (reciters of religious elegies), bath keepers, blood-letters,

ma'raka-gīrān (tellers of religious legends or showmen),
and poets.⁶²

The big businessmen of Ṣafavid Iran, who were the tujjār (merchants), sawdāgarān (entrepreneurs), and bunakdārān (wholesale dealers), were not members of guilds and did not pay the guild tax (bunīcha), but were subject to a tax called the tamghā. This Mongol word (which originally meant signature or seal) was first used to designate a tax under the Ilkhānid dynasty (654/1256-736/1336). The tamghā tax (māl-i tamghā) was a cash levy imposed at varying rates on imported goods in the custom houses or in certain caravan-sarais. The tamghā assessors (tamghāchīyān) in the Ilkhānid period fixed the amount of the tamghā according to the weight and quality of the goods.⁶³ In the Ṣafavid period, the collection of this tax in the capital and in every provincial city was farmed out to a senior official, who arbitrarily decided the amount due on the taxable goods. After the payment of the tax, the goods were stamped with a seal (muhr-i tamghā), the stamp for imported cloth being called tamghā-yi qimāsh.⁶⁴

Under the Ilkhānids, the revenue from the tamghā was allocated to the expenses of emissaries and ambassadors.⁶⁵ In Shāh Tahmāsb I's reign, the imposition of higher tamghā taxes without regard to the solvency of the businessmen provoked revolts of merchants and wholesalers at Harāt and Tabrīz, which were then the main commercial centres, and Shāh Tahmāsb I was consequently obliged to abolish the tamghā tax throughout the country.⁶⁶ By another farmān, dated 971/1563 in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Iṣfahān, Shāh Tahmāsb I

exempted the money changers (ṣarrāfān) from a special tamghā payable to the royal mint (dār uẓ-ẓarb). The money changers had previously had to pay a sum of tamghā when they brought gold and silver specie to be recoined at the state mints.⁶⁷ These concessions did not last long, because according to Iskandar Munshī, the merchants and wholesalers of Tabrīz again revolted and refused to pay the tamghā tax in the reign of Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda, who was similarly forced to remit the tamghā.⁶⁸ Shāh 'Abbās I, however, must have ignored his father's decree and arbitrarily reimposed the tamghā, because it is reported to have been levied in his reign and also in those of his successors.⁶⁹ Du Mans mentions that in 1660 the businessmen of Isfahān had to pay a taxe sur les marchés on their imported goods.⁷⁰

The sources do not indicate the rates of tamghā in Isfahān or in the provincial cities; but the English traveller Lockyer, who stopped at Bandar 'Abbās for a short time in 1705, states that a 14 per cent tax was levied on imported goods at the harbour custom house. The Dutch and English East India Companies, however, had been exempted from custom duties by Shāh 'Abbās I when he authorized their establishment at Bandar 'Abbās. Lockyer adds that the English Company's factors were in secret collusion with the Iranian merchants engaged in the Indian trade, who had their goods shipped by the Company and labelled as its goods so that they might avoid declaring them at the custom house. They then pretended to buy their own goods from the Company, and paid the factors a two per cent reward for the service rendered.⁷¹ The tamghā tax on imported goods continued to be legally imposed until the early 19th century.⁷²

Notes 4.1.

1. Floor, The Guilds in Qājār Persia, p.17; and The Guilds in Iran, in Z.D.M.G., p.99-116.
2. Thévenot, p.87.
3. D.M., in op.cit., 16, no.1, pp.75-76.
4. T.M., p.65; also the Persian text, facsimile, pp.45b, 46a,b.
5. Lippomano, English H.R., 7, pp.317-318.
6. Du Mans, p.31.
7. T.M., p.80b.
8. Du Mans, p.31.
9. T.M., p.83, also Persian text, pp.80a,b; D.M., in op.cit., year 16, no.1, pp.57-76.
10. Fasā'ī, 2, p.97.
11. Thévenot, p.78.
12. Du Mans, p.31; The Venetian Merchants, in Travels to Tana and Persia, p.177.
13. Chardin, 5, p.399.
14. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.308.
15. Pinkerton's Collection, 9, p.222.
16. Du Mans, p.31.
17. Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, p.24.
18. Muṣāḥib, 1, p.165.
19. Taḥvīldār, pp.95-96.
20. Du Mans, p.30.
21. Chardin, 5, p.405.
22. T.M., p.46a.
23. Chardin, 4, p.95.
24. Farman of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated Ramaẓān 979/1571 in the Masjid-i Mīr 'Imād of Kāshān.
25. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.308.
26. Chardin, 5, p.95.

27. Falsafī, 3, p.265.
28. The Venetian Merchants, p.177. The asper was an Ottoman silver coin called in Turkish akçe (āqcha); the ducat was a Venetian gold coin which circulated in the Ottoman empire. The ducat corresponded to the value of a silver pound. (Pirenne, p.117). The value of a ducat in 1569 was 165 shāhīs. (A. Edwards, 3, p.63.
29. Tavernier, p.221.
30. Ibid., p.221; T.M., p.158; Falsafī, 2, p.415.
31. Āṣaf, p.320.
32. Fasā'ī, 1, p.196.
33. M. R. Arunova and K. Z. Ashrafīyān, p.90.
34. T.M., 20, 48b, 49a.
35. Disposition and Temper of the Persians, in Pinkerton's Collection, 9, p.222.
36. Kaempfer, p.177.
37. Tavernier, p.239.
38. Chardin, 4, p.95; ibid., 5, p.405; Tavernier, p.239.
39. T.M., p.186.
40. Chardin, 5, p.120.
41. Kaempfer, p.177.
42. Le Brun, p.297.
43. Vālih, Khuld-i Barīn, B.L. ms. Or.4132, folio 50a,b.
44. Kaempfer, p.177.
45. Chardin, 5, pp.554-555; Tavernier, pp.95-96.
46. Naṣrābādī, pp.335, 424.
47. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.308.
48. Kalla-pazān. This cheap dish is still popular as a snack.
49. T.M., p.91a, b.
50. Inscription in the Masjid Jāmi' of Yazd dated Rabī'ul-avval 1115/1703.
51. T.M., p.106a.
52. Lewis, The Islamic Guilds, in Econ. H.R., 8, p.35; Gibb and Bowen, Islamic Society and the West, 1, part 1, p.290.

53. Struys, p.288.
54. Chardin, 2, pp.211-212; ibid., 5, p.215.
55. Fryer (1684 edition), p.395; Vahīd, 'Abbās-nāma, pp.71-72.
56. The travels of Venetian Merchants in Persia, p.177.
57. Vālih, folio 38ff.
58. Sanson, p.100.
59. Inscription of Shāh 'Abbās I dated 1038/1629 in the Masjid-i Shāh at Isfahān.
60. Inscriptions of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 941/1535 in the Masjid-i Mīr 'Imād at Kāshān and of Shāh 'Abbās II dated 1064/1652 in the Masjid-i Jāmi'-i Kabīr at Yazd; Rūmlū, p.246.
61. Vālih, Khuld-i Barīn. folio 50ff.
62. Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, p.24.
63. Rashīd ud-Dīn Faẓl'ullāh, pp.414-415, 455.
64. Lisānī Shīrāzī, Majma' ul-Aṣṅāf, in Gulchin Ma'ānī ed., Shahr-āshūb.
65. Rashīd ud-Dīn Faẓl'lullāh, pp.474, 482-492.
66. Farman of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 971/1563 in the Masjid-i Shāh at Isfahān; 'Abd ul-Ḥusayn Khātūnābādī, Vaqāyi' us-sinīn va'l-a'vāmm, p.483; Petrushevsky, Tārīkh-i Irān, 2, p.526.
67. Farman of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 971/1564, in Navā'ī, ed. Farāmīn-i Shāh Tahmāsb I, pp.22-23.
68. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.308.
69. Qārī Yazdī, p.140.
70. Du Mans, p.33.
71. Lockyer, pp.219-220; Tavernier, p.334.
72. Kalāntar, Rūznāma-yi Kalāntar, pp.22-29.

4.2. Price Control

The dual nature of the craftsmen's and tradesmen's guilds in Safavid Iran has already been mentioned in Chapter 3. While the basic purpose of a guild was to serve the individual and collective needs of its members, these needs were not the only factors which kept it in existence or determined its structure and functions.

In the name of the public interest, various authorities intervened in the affairs of the bazaar. Police authorities such as the muhtasib and dārūgha attempted to protect the public against fraud, adulteration, and other malpractices. At the same time officially sponsored committees attempted to regulate weights, measures, coins, and market conditions.¹ From the point of view of the government, the safest and surest way to control the craftsmen and tradesmen was through the intermediary of the guilds in which they were already or might in the future be grouped. With the help of the kadkhudās and the muhtasib, the authorities could fix and enforce maximum prices for essential goods with a view to preventing social unrest in the big cities.

Apart from governmental control, competition in the markets tended to stabilize prices. The customary concentration of all sellers of a particular commodity in a special section of a city's bazaar made it easy for a buyer to compare prices and difficult for a seller to overcharge. On the other hand, in the predominantly agricultural and pastoral society of 17th and 18th century Iran, fluctuations in the yields of crops and animal

products caused a tendency toward price instability. Natural disasters such as droughts and floods and earthquakes, or human disruptions such as tribal raids and revolts, could suddenly cut off supplies to the cities and change abundance into scarcity. Abdullāh Shūshtarī, writing in the early years of the reign of Nādir Shāh Afshār, mentions that at Shūshtar commerce had flourished for a time as a result of good rains, adequate harvests, and security on the caravan routes, and that consequently the local merchants had not hoarded commodities but had increased their transactions with other cities. The prices of essential foodstuffs and other goods such as sugar, pepper, coffee, silk, textiles, sheep and cattle, and beasts of burden had fallen and the artisans and traders (ahl-i makāsib) had profited from the situation. This abundance and prosperity did not last, however, because after three years a sudden drought came, and goods fell into short supply and prices rose sharply.²

In the Şafavid period, prices in the large cities were in principle controlled by the muhtasib, but were in fact mainly determined by the guilds. Price committees met regularly, and the guilds were represented on them by their kadkhudās. The kadkhudās were summoned for consultation not only about price levels, but also about supply fluctuations and general market prospects.³ According to the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk, the chief muhtasib ('Ālī-ḥazrat-i Muhtasib ul-Māmalik) obtained a list of suggested prices and guarantees of the observance of these prices from the kadkhudās, and then affixed his seal to the lists and sent

them to the nāzir-i buyūtāt. The nāzir-i buyūtāt studied the lists and, if he approved, affixed his seal and sent them to the heads of the different royal establishments. The prices, having thus been determined, were advertised on notice-boards which were put up near the royal palace of the 'Alī Qāpū. The traders and artisans were then obliged to offer their goods for sale at the listed prices.⁴ The goods subject to price control appear to have been for the most part foodstuffs, and the prices were fixed by weight, not by size or volume. Evliya states that in Tabrīz every shopkeeper hung up a yellow brass scale at the front of his shop and never took it down.⁵

Āṣaf records that in Karīm Khān Zand's reign, the chief muhtasib kept registers (dafātir) of price changes and that prices were fixed at the levels recorded in these registers. According to Āṣaf, this price fixing system was copied from a price register which had been compiled in the reign of Shāh Tahmāsb II.⁶ The muhtasib usually advertised the fixed prices every week or every month, depending on the nature of the commodity. Prices of bread, meat, poultry, and fruits were fixed weekly, and varied according to the season and the scarcity or abundance of the supply.⁷ Du Mans states that the prices of foodstuffs were settled by consultation between the kadkhudās and four assistants of the muhtasib.⁸ Chardin likewise reports that every Saturday either the muhtasib or his assistants, after brief discussions with the kadkhudās of the respective guilds, advertised the crucial prices of provisions for the following week. T.M. also gives the

interesting information that throughout the week, the deputies of the muhtasib together with the kadkhudās examined the fluctuations of the bazaar in order to determine which commodities should be increased or decreased in price.⁹

Although ^{the} main categories of goods for which maximum prices were fixed consisted of basic foods and other necessities, and the main purpose of the system was to prevent social unrest, at the same time governmental bodies such as the royal establishments, in so far as they bought from the bazaar, used the system to obtain their requirements more cheaply. No tradesman or craftsman dared to exceed the set prices, because the sale of the essential commodities was closely supervised through more than one channel. Tavernier observed that the muhtasib and his deputies controlled the prices of the prime necessities as closely as they could. If a tradesman deceived a customer by overcharging or falsifying scales and weights or in any other way, the aggrieved buyer could take back his purchase and have his money repaid.¹⁰ During the reign of Shāh Ṣafī, the representative of the bakers' guild of Tabrīz complained to the government that the local muhtasib had fixed the price of bread so low that the bakers could not make any profit from its sale. The result of the complaint, however, was that the Tabrīzī bakers, instead of getting a price increase, were ordered to sell their bread even more cheaply.¹¹ Fryer states that in the fixing of grain prices, the kalāntar had some authority together with the muhtasib and his deputies and the kadkhudās.¹² At any time the Shāh might intervene personally to keep down the prices of goods.

Kotov, the Russian traveller who was in Iran in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās I, states that the Shāh used to make casual visits to the bazaar and ask about the price and quality of items offered for sale.¹³ Shāh Sulaymān similarly investigated the prices and the quality and durability of essential goods.¹⁴

The price control was tightened in times of famine and war or after a riot or other emergency. For instance in 1072/1661, when a severe famine occurred and food prices in Iṣfahān consequently rose and the poor people of the city suffered from a dearth of essential provisions, Shāh 'Abbās II ordered the nāẓir-i buyūtāt, Ṣafī-Qulī Bēg, to find a remedy. Ṣafī-Qulī summoned the tradesmen who had hoarded the available supplies and compelled them to offer these supplies at the prices which had been current before the famine.¹⁵ At the time of Shāh Sulaymān's coronation in 1079/1668, which took place after a bad harvest, so many people gathered in Iṣfahān for the event that a dearth of bread arose. Shāh Sulaymān made the army commander, 'Alī-Qulī Khān, responsible for the procurement of supplies. When 'Alī-Qulī Khān brought grain to the city and distributed it among the bakers, the bakers were required to sell the bread at special prices.¹⁶ To sum up, in abnormal circumstances particular guilds were subjected to still stricter control.

Prices of goods for sale to royal and governmental bodies were in some cases fixed monthly. The suggested prices were notified by the respective kadkhudās to the sāhib-jam' (collector, i.e. chief accountant), of the royal

establishments . The latter passed the prices on to the muhtasib ul-mamālik, who prepared a list of the prices and gave it to the nāẓir-i buyūtāt. The nāẓir-i buyūtāt had discretion to reduce the prices.¹⁷

In the provincial cities, the price fixing procedures were similar to those at Iṣfahān. The Dastūr ul-Mulūk states that the deputy (nā'ib) of the muhtasib ul-mamālik in every provincial city maintained a continuous control over the local prices, and that the craftsmen sold their goods in accordance with price lists which were advertised monthly after their confirmation by his deputy.¹⁸

There is some evidence that the sale of foreign goods also was regulated by the muhtasib and the price commissions. Fryer states that along the routes, the European merchants sold their goods at free prices mutually agreed after bargaining, but in the towns they had to observe the official published prices.¹⁹

In the absence of sufficient documentary evidence, and in view of the fluctuations of Iranian and foreign currency values, it is impossible to form an accurate and comprehensive picture of price trends in Iran in the Ṣafavid period; but on the basis of the scattered and fragmentary information from reports of European visitors which is set out below, it appears that the general trend was upwards and that the rise in prices became sharper as the Ṣafavid régime approached its end. The equivalent values of certain Iranian and English coins in 1627-28, according to Thomas Herbert, were as follows:

One 'abbāsī (a silver coin not above a quarter of an ounce in weight, which was the most important and widely used

currency at that time) = 16 pence; one shāhī = 4 pence; one bīstī = 2 pence; two qāzbigī = one penny, one qāzbigī = $\frac{1}{2}$ penny.²⁰

Prices of essential provisions at different times between 1581 and 1722.

At Iṣfahān in 1581:

rice	1	<u>man</u> (6 kilograms) ²¹	7 <u>bīstī</u>
bread	1	"	3 "
wood	1	"	1 " ²²

At Iṣfahān in 'Abbās I's reign:

wheat	100	pecks (1 bushel)	7 shillings
barley	100	"	$\frac{1}{2}$ ducat ²³

At Sultāniya in 'Abbās I's reign:

hen		per head	5 pence
eggs	30		2 pence ²⁴

At Iṣfahān in Olearius's time (1636-38):

sheep		per head	10 <u>'abbāsīs</u>
wood	1	<u>man</u>	1 pence
charcoal	1	"	1 or 2 pence ²⁵

At Iṣfahān in 'Abbās II's reign:

bread	1	pound	2 liards (1 liard = 3 <u>dīnārs</u>)
meat	"	"	18 <u>dīnārs</u> ²⁶

At Iṣfahān at the time of Shāh Sulaymān's accession (1668)

bread	1	<u>man</u>	one <u>'abbāsī</u> ²⁷
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At Iṣfahān in Shāh Sulaymān's reign:

hen		per head	6 pence
rice	1	pound	2 pence

wood	12 pounds	4-5 pence
charcoal	12 "	4-5 pence ? ²⁸

At Işfahān in 1716:

wood	7 pounds	3 pence ²⁹
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At Işfahān between March and August 1722 during
the siege by the Ghalzāy rebels:

bread	1 <u>man</u>	600 <u>dīnārs</u> (1 penny = 12½ <u>dīnārs</u>)
rice	1 "	1200 <u>dīnārs</u>
chicken	per head	700 "
sugar	1 <u>man</u>	6000 "
ghee (cooking oil)	1 <u>man</u>	4000 " ³⁰

While the above price figures are too obscure to permit definite conclusions, the traveller's reports clearly indicate a gradual rise of prices until Shāh Sulaymān's reign, and a rapid rise thereafter. Teixeira, who was in Iran in Shāh 'Abbās's reign, found the price of excellent provisions and necessaries very moderate.³¹ Struys in 1672 found the prices very dear.³² Sanson (1683)³³ and Bell (1715-1718)³⁴ both noted increasing dearness. The price rise in the last decades of the Şafavid period passed out of the control of the muhtasibs and the guild authorities.

The unexpected collapse of the Şafavid régime is certainly attributable in a large part to its autocratic nature and to the incapacity of Shāh Sulţān Ḥusayn, but might nevertheless not have occurred if the Iranian economy had not been suffering from inflation and general deterioration under the exploitative economic policy which the régime had long pursued.

Notes 4.2.

1. Lockyer, pp.214-215; Fryer, 3, p.139.
2. Shūshtarī, pp.102-103.
3. Du Mans, pp.36-37.
4. D.M. in M.D.A.T., 16, no.4; T.M., p.79a-80b; Āṣaf, p.308.
5. Herbert, p.150; Evliya, 2, p.141.
6. Āṣaf, p.308.
7. Kaempfer, p.131; Evliya, 2, p.14.
8. Du Mans, p.37; Gemelli, p.150.
9. T.M. pp.79b-80b.
10. Tavernier, p.257.
11. Ibid., pp.258-259.
12. Fryer, 3, p.24.
13. Kotov, p.21.
14. Sanson, p.10.
15. Muḥammad Ṭāhir Vahid, p.307.
16. Chardin, 1, pp.88-89.
17. T.M., p.17a.
18. D.M. in M.D.A.T., 16, no.4; T.M., p.88.
19. Fryer, 2, p.264.
20. Herbert, pp.264-265. See also Fryer, 3, p.152; Thévenot, p.89; Lockyer, p.241; Hamilton, A new account of the East India, in Pinkerton's Collection, 8, pp.519-520. Rabino, Coins, Medals, and Seals of the Shāhs of Iran, p.38. Schuster Walser, pp.45-46.
21. Man (English "maund") is a word derived from Greek, meaning a measure of weight. In Iran both liquids and solids are generally sold by weight, not volume. Before the adoption of the metric system in 1925, the man had been used all over Iran, but its weight had varied not only at different times but also in different parts of the country. The man-i Tabrīz was equal to 6 lbs and 9 oz., the man-i Shāh was double that weight, and the man-i Ray, used only in Ray and surrounding districts, was about 30 lbs. In Bandar 'Abbās and Kung, the Bāzār man and Copra man (perhaps from the Arabic kubrā = great), equivalent to $7\frac{1}{4}$ and $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs, were used. See Lockyer, p.242.

22. Newbery, in Purchas his Pilgrims, 8, p.467.
23. Don Juan of Persia, p.50.
24. Cartwright, in Osborne's Collection, 1, p.729.
25. Olearius, p.292.
26. Chardin, 2, p.329.
27. Ibid., 10, pp.1-8.
28. Le Brun, p.319.
29. J. Bell, 1, p.122.
30. Gilanentz, pp.42-43. One tūmān = 1000 dīnārs, 50 'abbāsī = 1 tūmān.
31. Teixeira, p.251. For the prices of more than 40 items in September 1705 at Bandar 'Abbās, see Lockyer, pp.43-44.
32. Struys, p.324.
33. Bell, 1, pp.121-122.
34. Sanson, p.159; Le Brun, pp.312-313.

4.3. Restrictions and Monopolies

A certain degree of restriction and monopoly is inherent in the nature of guilds in any community. Although the Islamic beliefs and the ideals of futūvat cherished by the Iranian guilds included concepts of the good quality and honest description of the product or service and of the just price and the fair reward or wage, naturally the elders of the guilds viewed such matters in the light of their member's interests. In general they were anxious to prevent competition by outsiders, which might have been beneficial to consumers but would have been harmful to established craftsmen and tradesmen.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the guild restrictions and monopolies which existed in Şafavid Iran. Information on the subject from the 17th and 18th centuries is sparse, but from the 19th century is more definite. Nevertheless it can be taken for certain that various kinds of restrictions and monopolies existed during the Şafavid period. The structure of the bazaar in all Islamic countries stemmed from restrictions which were maintained by the guilds.¹ In Iranian cities, as elsewhere, separate sections of the bazaar were reserved for particular trades. Each section was occupied by the members of a certain guild, and under no circumstances were craftsmen and artisans from other guilds allowed to practise their business in it.² When Shāh 'Abbās I built the royal bazaar of Işfahān, each guild established its business in a lane of the bazaar which was specially designated and allocated to it by royal decree.³ This strict demarcation was not

only thought to be advantageous for the government, but was also supported by the guild elders. Moreover, in each alley of the bazaar, the number of shops was limited, and there was consequently a restriction of the number of craftsmen and tradesmen in any guild who could found their own businesses.⁴

Professor A. K. S. Lambton states that there is no surviving document which records any debarment of non-members of guilds from trading in bazaars; but it is known that the total number of shops in the royal bazaar of Iṣfahān was limited and that each guild had a prescribed number of shops in a certain alley (rāsta). A newcomer had to buy the right of occupation (sar-quflī) of a shop and therewith the right to do business. This right was called ḥaqq-i bunīcha, which also meant the guild tax.⁵ The Tagkirat ul-Mulūk states that every master craftsman had to pay the ḥaqq-i bunīcha. From this statement it can be inferred that, as in later times, payment of the ḥaqq-i bunīcha was necessary for the privilege of occupying a shop in the main bazaar. Scattered references also show that the occupant of a shop in the royal bazaar had to be a full member of the appropriate guild.⁶ The bāshī of each guild was responsible for the administration of the shops in his rāsta, and he registered the name and location of every shopkeeper in it. Permission for the opening of a new shop or for a change of the occupancy of an existing shop had to be sought from the bāshī, who in turn had to report the name of the applicant and the condition of the shop to the governmental authorities.⁷ According to the tradition of

the Iranian guilds, the eldest son of a deceased master inherited the rights and privileges of his father, including the ḥaqq-i bunīcha. When a deceased master craftsman left no immediate heir or qualified successor, the ḥaqq-i bunīcha was bought by another craftsman of the same guild.⁸

The concentration or dispersal of a craft or trade within a city depended on two factors: firstly its nature, and secondly its relationship with the government. If the nature of a craft or trade was messy or untidy, its pursuit was only allowed in a prescribed location. For instance, in Tavernier's time, the wholesale fruiterers and purveyors of foodstuffs were confined to the old bazaar of Iṣfahān.⁹ Chardin noted that the old bazaar was occupied by unimportant guilds such as lemon and pomegranate juice makers, vinegar distillers, and charcoal and firewood sellers.¹⁰ Le Brun, who stayed in Iran from 1702 to 1704, states that at that time the old bazaar of Iṣfahān was used mainly as a stable and only as a place of business by some poor and insignificant guilds. He also mentions that a particular area, which had formerly been inhabited by unskilled and wretched workers, was reserved for the fullers and dyers ("shkaran", i.e. siyāhkārān).¹¹ Another poor quarter of Iṣfahān had once been inhabited by the stone cutters who had pursued their crafts there.¹² At both Iṣfahān and Tabrīz,¹³ certain alleys specially were allocated to camel drivers and cart drivers.¹⁴

Such localization of craftsmen and tradesmen had an influence on the residential pattern. The close relationship between home and workshop necessitated the assignment of residential

quarters adjoining the bazaar or other place of work to particular occupational group.¹⁵ The merchants (tujjār) of Georgian and black slaves, who came from Qarabāgh district (today in Soviet Armenia), and who had a monopoly of the slave trade at Iṣfahān, resided in the Qarabāgh caravansarai in the bazaar and were not allowed to pursue their business anywhere else.¹⁶

The most profitable and prestigious arts and crafts of Iṣfahān were concentrated in the royal bazaar. The money changers (ṣarrāfān), goldsmiths, jewellers, and other sellers of valuable and luxurious goods all had shops at the entrance to the royal bazaar in the qayṣariya. This was also the case in other Iranian cities in the Ṣafavid period (and still is today). The shops in the qayṣariyas were owned by the Shāh.¹⁷ The rents from them were a valuable source of revenue, and the royal ownership of them facilitated state control of occupations which were important in the economic life of the cities. Gemelli Carreri, who was in Iran in 1693-1694, mentions that gold and silver wares and luxurious goods were on sale in qayṣariyas of Ardabīl and Tabrīz¹⁸ and that the qayṣariya of Iṣfahān, being at the heart of the country's economic life, was well stocked with valuable goods from both Iran and abroad, such as gold and silver brocades, and all sorts of velvets, jewels, and pearls.¹⁹

It has already been mentioned in Chapter 2 that according to both Chardin and the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk, no master craftsmen or artisans were allowed to practise a craft or trade unless they had received a credential²⁰ or

certificate²¹ from the bāshī of their guild. On the other hand, Chardin states that there was no restriction of the range of a guild's production, and he mentions as an example that a coppersmith was allowed to make a silver tray even though such trays were usually made by the silver-smiths.²² Similarly an unknown European traveller, who was in Iran at a later time, probably near the end of the 17th century, states that although certain artisans were subject to restrictions and were not allowed to engage in other crafts, there was no general system of monopolistic control of the types of manufacture which the different guilds might undertake.²³ The statements of Chardin and of this unknown European traveller are open to question. While it can be accepted that a coppersmith might make a silver tray in an exceptional circumstance or in response to a special request, it seems most unlikely, for both financial and technical reasons, that coppersmiths would have undertaken silver tray making as a permanent occupation. Restriction of the number of persons exercising a particular trade was an essential guild function, and there is evidence of its practice in the 19th century and even later. For instance, in Nāṣir ud-Dīn Shāh Qājār's reign, according to the file (daftar) and rule (dastūr) which were lodged in the kalāntar's office at Iṣfahān, a group of cooks (āsh-pazān) who specialized in a certain sector of the culinary profession (pukht-u-paz) were not allowed to sell their meat warm, but were required to keep it on ice on trays and to sell it chilled, whereas another group had to sell their meat warm. These two groups, namely the cold meat sellers (sard-furūshān) and hot meat sellers (biryānīyān), were officially

regarded as mutually exclusive.²⁴ Such a practice is unlikely to have been first introduced in the 19th century, and may be assumed to have already existed in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Kuznetsova has remarked on the restrictive character of another customary practice. Every master had his own mark (nishān or tamghā) which was stamped or engraved on his handiwork. This mark was confirmed by the guild's elders or in a general meeting of the members. When a craft master died without a successor, his nishān could be transferred to another qualified member of the same guild if the elders or a full meeting of the members approved.²⁵

Monopolies of crafts and professions were evidently very rigid in small and distant towns. Tavernier noted the existence of a strict monopoly at Lār. The guild of the camel drivers of Lār monopolized the transportation from the town to Bandar 'Abbās and the ports of the province of Fārs on the Persian Gulf. Thus the camel drivers of Shīrāz had to unload their camels at the caravansarai of Lār, whence the camel drivers of Lār carried the bales to the destinations.²⁶

In addition to the guild restrictions, there were governmental restrictions or monopolies which affected certain trades. A number of decrees of the Ṣafavid Shāhs record their attempts to make soap manufacture a state monopoly. A decree of Tahmāsb I had required the slaughterers and butchers of Iṣfahān to sell all their tallow (pih) to certain officials and to deliver it to the government's soap factory (ṣābūn-khāna). Since the common

soap makers had thereby been deprived of their livelihood, Shāh Tahmāsb I, in a farmān dated Muḥarram 981/1573, ordered dissolution of the government's soap making establishments and prohibited any resumption of them.²⁷ The soap makers then started to make soap on their own account. At some later date, however, Shāh Tahmāsb's prohibition was disregarded, and soap making was again monopolized by the government, until Shāh Ṣafī issued a farmān reiterating his ancestor's prohibition of state monopolization of this manufacture.²⁸

Another type of governmental restriction was imposed on street vendors. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, Chardin has left a description of the street vendors who occupied stands in the Maydān-i Shāh of Iṣfahān. They offered for sale many kinds of goods and wares, which they displayed on mats. At sunset they put their goods into chests, which they left in the corners of the Maydān-i Shāh. Each group of the vendors and artisans in the Maydān was restricted to a certain pitch. An individual might only set up his stand in the proximity of stands where similar wares were sold.²⁹

From time to time various occupations were prohibited in the public interest or to protect the people's morals. A farmān of Tahmāsb I dated Rabī' 1 941/1534 ordered the closure of all taverns, gambling houses, shops selling bang (cannabis) and būza (a sort of rice beer), and music halls (qavvāl-khānas), and the imposition of severe penalties on persons thereafter engaging in these businesses.³⁰ For the benefit of public morality, 'Abbās II decreed the prohibition of prostitution, and thereby caused all the brothels (bayt ul-luṭf) to be closed down,³¹ at least for a time.

Another type of restriction was imposed on the non-Muslim craftsmen and artisans. The Turkish traveller Evliya Efendi (d.1093/1682) states that in Iran, non-Muslim traders were not allowed to sell foodstuffs to Muslims.³² According to a farmān of 'Abbās I, the Jewish merchants of Iṣfahān were only allowed to do their business in the Jārchī caravansarai in the royal bazaar.³³ Tavernier states that the Armenian furriers of Iṣfahān were confined to the Armenian bazaar, which adjoined the 'Alī-Qāpū.³⁴ Although they had dominated and indeed monopolized the fur trade, a farmān suddenly issued by 'Abbās II in 1053/1645 forbade the Armenian furriers to pursue this business, and as a result the royal treasury lost a considerable amount of revenue from the professional tax formerly paid by the Armenian furriers.³⁵ It is not known when this prohibition was rescinded, but according to Āṣaf, an Armenian furrier named Manūk Samūrdūz (sable trimmer) was ordered to make a fur cloak (bālā-pūsh) for 'Alī Mardān Khān Bakhtiyārī, the regent of Shāh Ismā'īl III.³⁶ A non-Muslim craftsman or artisan was not allowed to be the bāshī of a guild. Tavernier relates that an accomplished carpenter named Jacob Jan was appointed the bāshī of the carpenters' guild, but was soon dismissed because he refused to be converted to Islam.³⁷

In spite of all the road making and caravansarai building in the Ṣafavid period, the inadequacy and high cost of transportation in the 17th and 18th centuries necessitated a large measure of provincial economic self-sufficiency and generally prevented any concentration or

monopolization of national industries in particular cities or districts. Certain places, however, specialized in the production of expensive and easily transportable goods, and through their reputations for good quality won virtual monopolies. Most of the production of silk cocoons and filaments was concentrated, for climatic reasons, in the province of Gīlān.³⁸ The city of Qum was the main centre of the manufacture of swords and blades, which were exported to other cities.³⁹ The best lambskin coats,⁴⁰ pottery vessels,⁴¹ and carpets were made in Kirmān⁴² and sent long distances for sale. Shīrāz was principal centre of glass manufacture,⁴³ and in other cities there was a big demand for the best Shīrāzī bottles and panes.⁴⁴ At Yazd silk weavers (sha'r-bāfān) formed the main part of the population.⁴⁵ The shoemakers of Tabrīz were unequalled, and they produced so many excellent shoes that large quantities were exported elsewhere.⁴⁶

Another restriction of economic liberty in Ṣafavid Iran arose from the official regulation of weights and measures. The tradesmen and shopkeepers apparently had to comply with the systems of weights and measures which the governmental authorities (particularly the muhtasib)⁴⁷ prescribed. No attempt was made to impose uniformity, however, and different measurement systems were used in different cities and provinces. This continuing diversity can be explained by the fact that the economy of Ṣafavid Iran was always basically decentralized. Tavernier states that liquids and most other goods were sold by weight.⁴⁸ Lockyer, who was in Bandar 'Abbās in 1705, relates that sugar, drugs, and copper were measured by man-i Tabrīz (maund of Tabrīz = 6½lbs.),

and that fruits of all kinds, raisins and rice were sold by the man-i "copra" (= kubrā) of $7\frac{3}{4}$ lbs, precious stones, metals, and spices by misqāl ($\frac{1}{6}$ of ounce),⁴⁹ carpets and cloths by the gaz ($32\frac{1}{2}$ inches).⁵⁰

Discrepancy of the weights and measures in use in different provinces and for different categories of goods endured through the Qājār period until the introduction of the metric system by the fifth parliament of Iran in 1925.

Notes 4.3.

1. Baer, Guilds in Middle Eastern History, pp.11-30.
2. Māfarrukhī, p.53.
3. Tavernier, p.45; Kotov, p.19.
4. It is still preserved in the Royal Bāzār of Iṣfahān.
5. Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, p.24.
6. T.M., pp.80b, 81a; Muṣāḥab, 1, p.165.
7. Chardin, 4, pp.93-94.
8. Chardin, 7, pp.364-368. This tradition remains in force today.
9. Tavernier, p.36; Bihishtīyān, pp.22-23.
10. Chardin, 7, pp.380-381; Le Brun, p.323.
11. Le Brun, pp.271, 323ff; Jafarī, writing in the 9th/15th century states that the ṣhū-mālān (starch-workers) resided in the Kūcha-yi Faḥḥādān of Yazd and practised their profession at the same place. Ja'farī, Tārīkh-i Yazd, pp.116-117.
12. Chardin, 8, p.19.
13. Rūmlū, p.455.
14. Chardin, 8, pp.62-63.
15. Chardin, 2, pp.215-216.
16. Sloane, B. L. Or., ms. 4094.
17. Muḥammad Sharaf ud-Dīn Ḥusaynī Kāshānī (d.1204Q) Tagkira-yi Khulāṣat ul-āsh'ār va Zubdat ul-afkār, ms., Library of the Majlis-i Shawrā-yi Millī; Sepantā, p.55.
18. Gemelli, p.223.
19. Covert, in Osborne's Collection, 2, pp.226-228; Tavernier, pp.42-47.
20. Chardin, 4, pp.93-94.
21. T.M., p.94.
22. Chardin, 4, p.94.
23. Disposition and Temper of the Persians, in Pinkerton's Collection, 9, p.205.
24. Tahvīldār, p.119.

25. V. A. Gordlevskii, Dervishi Akhi Eyrana i Tesekhi v Turtsii, in Izvestia AN SSSR, series 6, 1927, no.15-17, p.1187, in Issawi, p.290.
26. Tavernier, p.318.
27. Farmān of Shāh Tahmāsb I, in Navā'ī, Majmū'a-yi Farāmīn Shah Tahmāsb, pp.511-512, and in Farhang-i Irān-Zamīn, 1347/1968, 12, pp.319-320; Farmān of Shāh Tahmāsb I dated 981/1574 in the Masjid-i Jāmi'-i Şaghīr of Nayrīz.
28. Farmān of Shāh Şafī in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Kāshān.
29. Chardin, 7, pp.339-343, 264-266; Tavernier, pp.37-38.
30. Farmān of Shāh Tahmāsb I, dated 941/1534, in Navā'ī, op.cit., pp.513-514.
31. Muḥammad Ṭāhir Vaḥīd, pp.70-72.
32. Evliya, 2, p.126.
33. Sloane, B.L. ms., 4094.
34. Tavernier, p.43.
35. Vālih, folio 132; Vaḥīd, p.72.
36. Āşaf, pp.250-251.
37. Tavernier, pp.224-225.
38. Olearius, pp.388-391.
39. Ogilby, p.20; Bell, in Pinkerton's Collection, 7, p.298.
40. Thévenot, p.93.
41. Gemelli, p.153; Thévenot, pp.92-93.
42. Ogilby, p.20.
43. Du Mans, pp.198-199.
44. Fryer, 2, p.215.
45. Inscription in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Yazd dated 1013/1602.
46. Gemelli, p.113.
47. See Chapter 2.
48. Tavernier, p.257.
49. Lockyer, pp.229-230; Ferrier, British-Persian relations in the 17th century (unpublished thesis), p.452.
50. Fryer, 3, p.139.

4.4. Judicial and Penal Institutions of the Guilds

In the sources from the Ṣafavid period concerning the conduct of internal guild affairs, there is nothing to suggest that guild courts rivalled or replaced the normal Islamic (shar'ī) courts. A. K. S. Lambton contends that the guilds were to some extent forced to assume judicial functions on account of the incompleteness of the Islamic law (sharī'at), which made it difficult for the shar'ī courts to take cognisance of many types of commercial disputes.² The sharī'at, however, contains general provisions governing transactions, contracts, property rights, etc. Muḥammad Ghazzālī (450/1059-505/1111), who devoted one chapter of his celebrated work Kīmīyā-yi Sa'ādat to commercial matters, relates that the second caliph 'Umar, when passing through the bazaar of Madīna, said that "he who is engaged in trading must learn the sharī'at".³ While it is true that the Shī'ite and Sunnite law treatises do not give detailed guidance on all commercial matters, Muslim lawyers and judges would have been able to find solutions to detailed problems on the basis of analogy and precedent. It may, therefore, be concluded that inadequacies in the sharī'at were not the reason why the guilds were allowed to keep a large degree of self-regulation in the field of commercial disputes between their members. Partial autonomy of social institutions was inherent in pre-industrial communities, and it was one of the characteristics of Ṣafavid Iran, where even after Shāh 'Abbās I's successful efforts to strengthen the government's control, the structure of the state was

still partly decentralized.

The judicial autonomy of the guilds was limited, because the referees who settled the internal disputes between the members derived their power from the governmental authorities in their city. Through the grant of these powers, the authorities made sure that the tradesmen and artisans would maintain professional standards and comply with official policies, and that they would not disturb the city's security. Each guild had a particular court consisting of its bāshī and its elders (rīsh-safīdān). Although there is no precise information, it may be assumed that the procedures and judgements of these courts were based on the principles of arbitration (kadkhudā-manishī), according to which oath-taking was only permitted when decisive evidence was lacking. Māfarrukhī, writing in the 8th/14th century, states that the kadkhudās settled the disputes between members of guilds, and that cases were heard in guild courts which set up at the chār-sūq of the guild's section of the bazaar.⁴ The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk states that one of the functions of the kalāntar was to judge important cases pertaining to the business (kasb-u-kār) of artisans and craftsmen.⁵ Kaempfer mentions that the malik ut-tujjār ("chief merchant", whose role has been discussed in Chapter 3) used to settle commercial disputes between big merchants at his own house.⁶ As regards disputes between individual craftsmen of the same guild, Chardin states that the bāshī of every guild dealt with such matters summarily and investigated all serious complaints.⁷ A farmān of Shāh Safī dated Zu'l -Hijja 1038/1629 exempting the barbers of Iṣfahān from certain

customary dues (rusūm) advises any barber from whom further rusūm are demanded to apply to the kadkhudā and the bāshī for redress.⁸ Mīrzā Hāshim Āṣaf records that in 1173/1759 Karīm Khān Zand ordered that each guild (ṣinf) should set up a court consisting of several well informed and accomplished persons to settle its disputes.⁹ Kuznetsova has found evidence which suggests that in the 18th century there was a high court for important guild cases, which formed part of the shar'ī judiciary and was presided over by the naqīb, who also arbitrated in minor cases between tradesmen. She states that this high court heard complaints free of charge, and could seize and reassign a shop occupied by a master who had violated his guild's regulations or honour by making shoddy goods or cheating, etc.¹⁰ There can be no doubt, however, that each guild still kept its own special court. 'Abbās Bihishtīyān, a modern specialist on Ṣafavid monuments, has found evidence that the chār-sūq of the dyer's bazaar in Iṣfahān was the seat of the guild's kadkhudā, who heard the complaints and pleas of the dyers and arbitrated their disputes.¹¹ Naṣrābādī in his Tazkira mentions that the leading craftsmen of each guild had shops in their guild's section of the bazaar, which was called its khāna (abode): for instance, Ḥājji Sharīf, the kadkhudā of the confectioners (qannādān), had his shop in the qannād-khāna, and Mullā Mushfiqī, one of the kadkhudās of the drapers (bazzāzān) of Qum, had his shop in the bazzāz-khāna. From Naṣrābādī's account, it appears that in cases involving guild regulations, the kadkhudā of the guild concerned would hear the complaints and pass summary judgement.¹² There is no

documentary evidence about the kinds of punishment which were considered suitable for guild members who were found guilty; but it is still customary in the ancient bazaars of Iṣfahān and Yazd that a violator of guild regulations may make amends for his first offence by giving a sūr (i.e. a reconciliation feast) to his fellow members. For repeated violations a tradesman might be subjected to a severe penalty such as closure of his shop or a ban on his continuance in business in the bazaar.¹³

General accusations against guild members were heard in the customary law courts (maḥākim-i 'urfī), which came under the jurisdiction of the divān-bēgi (minister of justice) and were administered by the kalāntar or the muhtasib.¹⁴

The responsibility for execution of sentences on offending artisans and traders lay with the dārūgha.¹⁵ Tavernier relates that, in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II, when one of the gold bowls in the royal kitchen was lost, the dārūgha of Iṣfahān, Mīr Qāsīm Bēg, arrested some goldsmiths and baselessly accused them of stealing it. He then told them that they would not be freed unless they gave him a large sum of money. Mīrzā Muḥammad Bēg, the bāshī of the goldsmiths' guild, appealed for mercy, but the dārūgha paid no attention and gave a harsh and abusive reply because Mīrzā Muḥammad Bēg's plea was not accompanied by any money.¹⁶

From time to time the muhtasib and the dārūgha separately examined the weights and measures in use in the bazaar to make sure that shopkeepers were not overcharging or falsifying the government-approved scales. If any

shopkeepers were found guilty, they were sentenced to appropriate penalties, such as fines, floggings, imprisonment, nailing by the ears to their own shop doors, immurement in their own red-hot furnaces (a punishment inflicted on bakers), and even the death penalty. Normally the sentences of punishment were decided by the muhtasib or some other official, and the punishments were carried out by the dārūgha.¹⁷ A farman of Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda ordered that cash fines (jarīma-hā-yi naqdī) due by offending artisans and craftsmen should be remitted, and that complaints against them, like complaints against non-craftsmen citizens, should be tried and sentenced in accordance with the sharī'at.¹⁸ It seems that this farman was not enforced, or not for long, because there is evidence that shopkeepers throughout the country continued to be sentenced to pay fines. According to Du Mans, the fines were collected by the muhtasib¹⁹ and delivered to the royal treasury.²⁰

The Ṣafavid government, which was always anxious to control retail prices, treated offending shopkeepers very harshly. An offending baker was liable either to be thrown and left inside his own red-hot furnace,²⁰ or to be nailed to his shop door.²² Fraudulent craftsmen were often publicly flogged²³ in an open space.²⁴ Chardin reports that in the reign of Shāh Sulaymān, 'Alī-Qulī Khān was made responsible for carrying out the punishment of bakers, and that he set up a great oven which was kept red-hot for a month. No baker then dared to sell bread dearer than the officially designated price.²⁵ A more prevalent punishment of convicted craftsmen was the so-called takhta-kulāh (wooden hat)

which is described by Kaempfer and other contemporary observers.²⁶ Kaempfer relates that the guilty shopkeeper was capped with a heavy wooden bowl, which was decorated with several hawk-bells and a fox's tail, and that he was then paraded around the city with a band of trumpeters marching ahead of him and crowds of jeering children running behind him.²⁷ In the event of continuance or repetition of fraud or overcharging, the offender could be sentenced to death,²⁸ but the sentence could only be executed after authorization by the governor.²⁹

The discipline and punishments which were imposed on guild members were of course intended to ensure quality and cheapness of manufactured goods and other supplies. It was the duty of the muhtasib and dārūgha to protect the consumers rather than to help the producers. By inflicting spectacular punishments on shopkeepers, the authorities of a city sought to avert popular complaints and discontent.

Notes 4.4.

1. Sanson, pp.189, 190.
2. Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, p.21.
3. Ghazzālī, Kīmīyā-yi Sa'ādat, pp.118-124.
4. Māfarrukhī, p.55.
5. T.M., p.77a.
6. Kaempfer, p.86.
7. Chardin, 6, pp.119-120.
8. Inscription in the Masjid-i Shāh of Isfahān dated 1038/1629.
9. Āṣaf, p.310.
10. Kuznetsova, Urban industry in Persia, pp.289-290.
11. Bihishtīyān, p.29.
12. Naṣrābādī, pp.366, 414.
13. Fryer, 3, p.24.
14. Kaempfer, p.86.
15. Evliya Efendi, 2, pp.141-142.
16. Tavernier, pp.195-196.
17. Kaempfer, p.86; Sanson, pp.188-189.
18. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.308.
19. Du Mans, pp.36-37; Chardin, 6, p.129.
20. Disposition and Temper of the Persians, in Pinkerton's Collection, 9, p.216.
21. Fryer, 3, p.24.
22. Gemelli, p.150.
23. Chardin, 4, pp.94-95.
24. Tavernier, p.257; Sanson, pp.189-190.
25. Chardin, 10, p.18; Gemelli, p.150.
26. Chardin, 2, p.129; T.M., pp.149-150.
27. Kaempfer, pp.132-133.
28. Kaempfer, p.86.
29. Sanson, pp.189-190.

Chapter 5.

Social And Political Functions of the Guilds

- 5.1. Social Functions of the Guilds
- 5.2. Political Activities of the Guilds

5.1. Social Functions of the Guilds

"Whatever craft you have, try to be quick and honest! Be content with a modest gain! Do not turn away customers by over-insistence! You will earn more profits from your occupation, and more people will do business with you... if you show humility. Be honest both in buying and in selling and avoid avarice! Always keep true weights and measures....! Never have two hearts or two purses (i.e. never be distrustful or mean) with your family (i.e. wife)! Never deal dishonestly with partners! In whatever craft you have, do nothing fraudulent, and do work of the same quality for the informed and the uninformed customer!"¹

These words of advice given by Kay Kāvūs (441/1049-476/1083), the Ziyārid ruler, express ethical concepts which Iranian traders and artisans have cherished since ancient times. Unfortunately the available contemporary sources do not give detailed information about the ideology of the Iranian guilds, and at the present time, when the pressure of modern conditions has destroyed or weakened guild life, only a small number of these traditions have been conserved by Iranian craftsmen. Nevertheless, from the traditions which are still practised, it is apparent that the social, cultural, and ethical-religious functions of the guilds were very important. The guilds constituted one of the main social orders into which the urban populations were grouped. Since the government did not provide social welfare services, the craftsmen themselves, collectively or individually, provided such services, and they did so on a scale which was significant in comparison

with other social or religious groups and town quarter groups.

An attempt must be made to describe the social functions of the Iranian guilds in the 17th and 18th centuries in so far as this is possible on the basis of the scarce documentary evidence and of oral evidence which has been transmitted from generation to generation down to the present time.

In the Iranian cities, the bazaar as the site of the artisans and traders was not merely the centre of trades and manufactures, but also the scene of many different activities.² It was equipped with all kinds of facilities and amenities, such as mosques, schools, public baths, coffee houses, inns, and caravansarais.³ Struys, the Dutch visitor who was in Isfahān in 1671, noted that in the daytime the bazaar was exceedingly populous, so much so that a person wishing to walk through the bazaar and the Maydān-i Shāh often had to wait a long time before he could pass.⁴ The most popular places where artisans and tradesmen gathered to discuss professional and municipal affairs were the coffee houses (qahva-khānas) and chār-sūqs (roofed crossroads in the bazaar).⁵ Fryer states that the coffee house was the hub of every bazaar or bāzārcha (small bazaar), and that people frequented it not only for the purpose of getting news and exchanging rumours, but also for the pleasure of hearing poets and reciters (naqqālān), who attended regularly to declaim their poems and fables.⁶ Generally in every lane (rāsta) of the bazaar there was a chār-sūq, which was in fact a complex of public buildings

usually comprising a mosque, public bath (ḥāmmam), theological college (madrasa), gymnasium (zūr-khāna), and drinking fountain (saqqā-khāna).⁷ The chār-sūq was considered to be the headquarters of the guild which occupied the particular lane, and the public business of the guild was conducted there.⁸ It also contained the residence of the head of the night-watchmen of the rāsta and the residence of the guild's kadkhudā.⁹ The emblem pole ('alāmat) of each guild was kept in its chār-sūq, in the same way as a town quarter's emblem pole was kept in the local bāzārcha.¹⁰ Capital punishments were executed at the chār-sūq, as shown for example by Rūmlū's report that Khwāja Kalān Ghūriyānī, a Sunnite Islamic scholar, was executed at a chār-sūq of Harāt in 944/1538.¹¹ Besides the main bazaar, there were little bazaars (bāzārchas) which were established in every quarter (maḥalla) of a city and were provided with the same amenities as the chār-sūqs in the main bazaar. The amenities of a bāzārcha were usually constituted as endowments (awqāf) of the quarter's mosque. At Iṣfahān, the bāzārcha of Sārū-Taqī (the grand vazīr of Shāh Ṣafī) was particularly well equipped with public facilities (which still exist).¹²

Certain aspects of the relationship of the guilds with religion, and in particular with ṭarīqats, are discussed in Chapter 7. The relationship was all-pervasive, embracing everything from the sale of merchandise to the construction of mosques, schools, etc. Gibb and Bowen remark that this was a common characteristic of Islamic guilds in every country, and add that "the moral effect of this religious personality... was incalculable". "It

encouraged the qualities of honesty and sobriety which all observers agree in attributing to Moslem artisans".¹³ No account of religion in Şafavid Iran would be complete without a study of the role of the guilds and the deeply religious nature of their activities. According to the traditional concept of the guilds, every artisan and trader should be a good Muslim. To a limited extent, however, non-Muslims were admitted; their role in Şafavid Iran is discussed in Chapter 6.

One aspect of the general role of the guilds in the Şafavid period was their contribution to the building of public edifices and amenities. Although the governmental authorities in the towns shared in such tasks, their contributions were insufficient to meet all needs and were primarily intended to display the government's benevolence or piety to the people. The wealthier artisans and traders often made good the deficiencies. For instance in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, Maqşūd Bēg, a simple coppersmith who had become rich and acquired a great amount of property, built many amenities such as a bāzārcha, a chār-sūq and a caravansarai,¹⁴ all of which still exist to the north east of the Maydān-i Shāh in Işfahān and are still called by his name. Hājj Sayyid Husayn Şabbāgh (dyer) built a cistern in the dyer's bazaar for use by the craftsmen and tradesmen at all times of the year.¹⁵ A similar cistern was built at Kāshān by Hājj Bāqir Sha'rbāf (brocade weaver) in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II.¹⁶ Mosques and schools built by craftsmen and traders were numerous, e.g. the Masjid-i Hammālān (porters' mosque), the Masjid-i Shīra-pazān (grape juice makers' mosque), and the Madrasa-yi Kāsa-ğarān (potters' college) at Işfahān, all of

which were built in the Şafavid period and still exist.¹⁷

There is little or no evidence concerning the relations between guilds of the same trade or profession in different towns. It would appear that they did not cooperate in joint charitable undertakings or in joint approaches to the central government on behalf of their common interests throughout the country. More probably there was a certain amount of rivalry between them. Chardin mentions that there was a healthy competition between the potters of Yazd and Işfahān. The potters of Yazd, in order to prove their skill, once manufactured a very fine glazed pot with a capacity of 12 livres and a weight of just one gros (1/16 of a livre), and presented it to their colleagues in Işfahān. In retort, the potters of Işfahān manufactured a beautiful glazed pot with a capacity of 12 livres and a weight of just one gros, and presented it to their colleagues in Yazd.¹⁸

Within each guild, and to some extent between different guilds in a town, mutual help and cooperation were important moral and social functions about which there is also little documentary evidence. The Yazdī poet Maḥmūd Qārī (d.993/1585) mentions that the tailors (ahl-i libās) held regular professional meetings to discuss their problems.¹⁹ 'Alī Bakhtīyār, a present-day architect who has made a thorough study of the Royal Bazaar of Işfahān, states that the Masjid-i Khayyāṭ-hā (tailors' mosque), which according to Jābirī Anşārī was built in the early Qājār period,²⁰ served two purposes, a part of the mosque being set apart for religious ceremonies and daily prayers, while another

part, accessible through a secret door, contained rooms used by the administration of the guild for storage of documents relating to the tailoring trade.²¹ In the Qājār period, members of the guild of the biryānī-furūshān (mincemeat rissole sellers) at Iṣfahān cooperated to ensure the supply of biryānīs to the public. All the biryānīs for sale in the biryānī shops of the city were prepared and cooked in one factory (kār-khāna), where the cooking process required a very close cooperation among the biryānī sellers.²²

Although the guilds had no organized systems of mutual and internal consultation, there is some evidence that members helped one another and that guilds cooperated with other guilds of the same city.²³ For instance 'Alī Aqā Dalv-dūz (leather bucket-maker), who represented all the guilds and had close connections with each, was appointed the kadkhudā-bāshī of the various guilds of Iṣfahān by 'Alī Murād Khān Zand.²⁴ According to Malik Shāh Ḥusayn, who wrote in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, the different guilds of Rāshalak, which he describes as a large and populous city in Sīstān, held thronged joint meetings in the premises of each, at which they also enjoyed talking to each other and listening to poetry reciters (shāhnāma-khwānān) and story tellers.²⁵ Chardin mentions an example of cooperation within a guild, namely the guild of the bookbinders (ṣahḥāfān) at Iṣfahān. The binders held a special meeting under the presidency of one of their number for the purpose of choosing a fellow binder who would be required to open his shop on Friday. This meeting was usually held on Thursday evening every week. The bookbinders' bazaar was

not far from the Masjid-i Shāh and Masjid-i Shaykh Luṭfullāh, which people frequented for daily and Friday prayers. The binder in question was appointed by lottery. He not only supplied the demands of the worshippers, but also made a good profit on Fridays, when he alone had his shop open.²⁶

The emblem poles ('alāmat or ṭawq) of the various guilds and town quarters (maḥallāt) were made and embellished on a cooperative basis. These poles had a religious significance and were carried in parades during the Muḥarram mourning (as they still are today). The possession and display of an emblem pole was regarded as a sign of dignity for a guild or quarter and its inhabitants. Different parts of an emblem pole would be made by at least ten guilds, such as ironsmiths, coppersmiths, braziers, steel fret workers (shabaka-sāzān), sword makers, locksmiths, engravers (hakkākān), metal embossers (qalam-zanān), and gold beaters.

A few fine emblem poles from the 18th and 19th centuries still survive, having been preserved by certain families of craftsmen and elders of town quarters at Isfahān.²⁷

Another example of cooperation was the payment of the wages of the night watchmen of a rāsta of the bazaar, which is mentioned by Fryer as having been customary in the Ṣafavid period.²⁸ Until about 1950 it continued to be a recognised collective obligation to which all members of the particular guild or guilds contributed. Kotzebue, the Russian traveller who sojourned in Iran in 1816-1817, states that at Tabrīz, if a retailer did not have available the articles which a customer requested, he would borrow them from his colleagues in order to satisfy the customer.²⁹

In the bazaars of present day Iran, wealthier members of a trade help poorer members who fall into distress; they regard such charity as a moral or religious duty and as a continuance of the custom of the old guilds. Although none of the sources from the 17th and 18th centuries say anything about the existence of guild funds for mutual help, there is some evidence that in those days the wealthier tradesmen and artisans similarly helped the families of colleagues stricken by illness or death. Probably such charity was not considered to be a collective obligation of the guild, but was traditionally acknowledged to be a human and Islamic duty incumbent on those who could afford. For instance, Naṣrābādī mentions that Ḥājj Bāqir Sha'rbāf (brocade weaver) allotted a part of his income for relief of distressed and needy persons, and if any member of the guild died indigent, his funeral expenses would be defrayed from this fund.³⁰ Kuznetsova, without mentioning her source, states that in the early Ṣafavid period, whenever a member of a guild in a town of eastern Iran was kidnapped by Uzbek, Turkman, or Afghān raiders, the other members would ransom their colleague.³¹ It is customary today that on the death of an artisan, mourning ceremonies are held by his colleagues as a corporate body, and that after three days, the deceased man's son is escorted by them from his house to the bazaar and installed in his shop; this custom is believed to go back to the Ṣafavid period. In 17th and 18th century Iran, neither the central government nor the provincial governors acknowledged any responsibility to provide social services for individuals in distress. The

guilds, however, or at least their wealthier members, gave help to distressed artisans and tradesmen. Sometimes this help was given in fulfilment of personal obligations to professional colleagues, but generally it was given for the sake of maintenance of the guild's dignity and above all from respect for the religious and moral duty of charity.

Notes 5.1

1. Amīr Kay Kāvūs, Qābūs-nāma, pp.138, 139; Eng. tr. by Reuben Levy, A mirror for princes, London 1951, pp.237-238.
2. Ashraf, Vizhā'i-hā-yi tārīkhī-yi shahr-hā-yi Irān, in Majalla-yi 'Ulum-i Ijtimā'i, no.4, 1353/1974, pp.5ff.
3. Carmelites, 1, p.120; Chardin, 7, p.293.
4. Struys, pp.310ff.
5. Chardin, 4, pp.66-68.
6. Fryer (1684 edition), pp.244, 346.
7. Du Mans, pp.126, 214-215.
8. della Valle, 1, p.563.
9. Fryer, 3, p.24; Du Mans, p.41; Bihishtiyan, p.29.
10. Personal investigation in the royal bazaar of Iṣfahān.
11. Rūmlū, p.279.
12. Chardin, 3, p.431; Emerson, p.272.
13. Gibb and Bowen, Islamic Society and the West, 1, p.277.
14. Jābirī Anṣārī, p.237.
15. Żarrābī, p.103.
16. Naṣrābādī, p.138.
17. Jābirī Anṣārī, pp.290ff.
18. Chardin, 4, pp.128-130.
19. Maḥmud Qārī Yazdī, pp.8-9.
20. Jābirī Anṣārī, p.288.
21. Bakhtiyan, The royal bazaar of Iṣfahān, in Iranian Studies, 7, part 1, p.329.
22. Taḥvīldār, pp.119-120.
23. Ruḥānī states that the various trade guilds in Safavid Iran regularly held assemblies under the supervision of the mullā-bāshī of the city. Only qualified guildsmen attended these meetings, at which they selected a clerk and a treasurer and discussed common issues and professional matters. Ruḥānī does not give any documentary evidence for this statement. Ruḥānī, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, pp.152-153, 157.

24. Āṣaf, pp.437-438.
25. Malik Shāh Ḥusayn, pp.252-254.
26. Chardin, 7, pp.361-362.
27. Personal investigation in the royal bazaar of Isfahān; see also Riżā Ārāsta, The character, organization, and social role of the Lutis, in J.E.S.H.O., 4, pp. 54-52. Kotov, the Russian traveller who was in Isfahān in 1624, gives a useful description of the atvāq (singular tawq) which were maintained in mosques or takiyas. He states that "in the mosques lie poles with flags, which like our banners are not used for anything except to be carried on festivals, and among them (i.e. the Persians), these poles are carried on their festivals and in front of the dead. These poles are vine rods, long and thin, about six sazhen (six feet) in length, and when they lift them, the poles bend; and tied to the tops of them, long and narrow streamers about 5 sazhen long hang half way down the poles, and on the tops of the poles there are iron things like scissors or like a stork's beak, and on other poles there are wicker crosses and spikes." Kotov, pp.24-25.
28. Fryer, 3, p.24.
29. Kotzebue, p.178.
30. Naṣrābādī, pp.138-139.
31. Kuznetsova, Urban industry in Persia during the 18th and early 19th century, in C.A.R., 2, pp.318-319.

5.2. Political Activities of the Guilds

Louis Massignon, in an article on Islamic Guilds in the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences,¹ states that the craftsmen and artisans in the Islamic realm were organized in professional groups called şinf, which except for the absence of any political significance had similar features and characteristics to the European guilds in the medieval period. Massignon's opinion that the Islamic guilds never had a political character is shared by those Western European orientalist scholars who deny the existence of free political institutions and parties in the Islamic countries. The opinion rests on two premises, (a) that the Islamic guilds were not democratically organized,² (b) that the Islamic guilds, unlike the European guilds, performed governmental functions in certain fields such as tax collection and municipal administration besides their basic economic functions. While there is some truth in both these premises, it cannot be inferred from them that Islamic guilds did not freely engage in political activities. The involvement of religion with politics has generally been closer in Muslim societies than in European societies,³ and as B. Lewis has pointed out in an article on Islamic guilds in the Economic History Review, the religious links of the Islamic guilds necessarily drew them into political activities and movements.⁴ In the Iranian environment, certain factors which determined the form of guild activities in the European environment were absent, while other factors were present. On the whole, in Iran the guilds limited their political

activities to peaceful demonstrations and seldom engaged in violence. Although the sources are insufficient for a clear perception of their political role, scattered references show that they were capable of vigorous political initiative in defence of their economic and municipal interests.⁵

In addition to power-seizures by tribal⁶ and foreign⁷ military groups, revolts or protests by city dwellers recur in the pages of post-Islamic Iranian history.⁸ These were revolts of the workmen and tradesmen, for the most part guild members, who formed the majority of the urban populations. The leaders, however, were usually members of the Islamic clergy ('ulamā) who were not members of the ruling group, and who for religious or socio-economic reasons were dissatisfied with the government.

Demonstrations by a single guild are mentioned, but appear to have been rare. When the conduct of a governor, dārūgha, or tax-collector was felt to have become intolerably oppressive, all the guilds normally acted in concert, even if some of them had not directly suffered.⁹

In Ṣafavid Iran, such oppression most often afflicted all the guilds in common. Their recurrent grievances referred mainly to (a) excessive tax demands (for bunīcha, tamghā, and occasional imposts), (b) unreasonable price control orders by the muḩtasib or his deputies,¹⁰ and (c) occasional abuses by bāshīs.¹¹

The social links of the different guilds were very close. To a large extent they pursued their occupations in different alleys (rāsta) of the same quarter of a city, and their members met each other daily at places such as

the entrance gates of the quarter (e.g. in the Iṣfahān bazaar). They also met each other at coffee houses, at national celebrations, and above all at religious gatherings in the quarter, such as Friday prayer in the mosques and commemoration of the martyrdoms (rawza-khwānī) in the takiyas (meeting places for this purpose which craft guilds traditionally maintained). Thus an injustice done to an individual or to a single guild quickly became known throughout the entire bazaar.

The traditional close links between the people of the Iranian bazaars and the Islamic clergy has a long history and would present an interesting subject for special study. In the present work a detailed discussion could be out of place, and the following observations must suffice. Traditionally the bāzārīs, whether artisans or tradesmen, are more attentive to Islam than other classes of the Iranian urban communities. Their religious attitude, which combines piety with honesty and insistence on justice, was to some extent connected with their economic need for protection against unjust treatment by the ruling military and official classes. The strong influence of the 'ulamā in the bazaar similarly had economic aspects. In the first place, many 'ulamā needed to work for their living, and preferred to work in the bazaar rather than in the service of the government. Twelver Shī'ite 'ulamā, whose inward loyalty is to the Hidden Imām, have always feared loss of their religious integrity and independence through any acceptance of obligation to the worldly ruler, and even under the Shī'ite Ṣafavid monarchy many of them held this

view. Secondly, literate 'ulamā constituted a large proportion of the literate element in the urban populations, and were therefore employed by bāzārīs as accountants and clerks. Thirdly, the 'ulamā received a major part of the religious taxes and contributions (khums, sahm-i Imām, etc.), on which they were to some extent dependent, from the wealthier bazaar traders and craftsmen. Fourthly, the bazaars were centres not only of commerce and industry, but also of cultural and social life. Side by side with the shops, workshops, and warehouses stood mosques, madrasas, and takiyas which members of the clergy directed. Finally, those 'ulamā who served as shar'ī lawyers and notaries had their offices (maḥzars) in the bazaars. They held a monopoly of the business of notarial registration, and advised the guilds on their legal procedures which were much influenced by Islamic law. Since governmental oppression of guild members was usually accompanied with disregard for the law and for the legal prerogatives of the 'ulamā, both classes usually began to feel grievances at the same time. When the grievances were not redressed, eloquent 'ulamā naturally took the lead in preaching resistance and organizing protests. It was a protest of bāzārīs led by 'ulamā which brought about the Iranian constitutional revolution of 1906.¹²

Reports of bazaar demonstrations or revolts from the Šafavid period are few. The course of such events appears to have been much the same as in the Qājār period. First the aggrieved bāzārīs, being unable to meet the tax demands of the central or provincial government, would send guild elders (rīsh-safīdān) to present their petitions to a high

official such as the dīvān-bēgī (minister of justice), or to the provincial governor, or even to the Shāh. If agreement could not be reached in this way, the guilds would then passively demonstrate their discontent by deciding on a closure of the bazaar (ta'ṭīl-i bāzār), which may be compared with a modern strike. Such strike action was considered illegal by the government, but acquired a measure of legal validity when it was sanctioned by influential 'ulamā. A bazaar closure caused inconvenience to the city's other inhabitants, and also alarm, because when a demonstration occurred they might be dragged by striking craftsmen and shopkeepers into the mob. Sometimes angry demonstrators poured into the streets when the Shāh was passing. If they were threatened with punitive action, they took refuge in mosques and important government buildings. Often 'ulamā played the role of mediators and persuaded the governmental authorities to modify their unjust demands or ill-treatment of the guilds; sometimes they made compromises which enabled the authorities to continue their exploitation or misconduct.¹³ Such collusion, possibly involving hypocritical and self-interested 'ulamā, appears to have been more prevalent in the Ṣafavid period, particularly under the sanctimonious Shāhs Tahmāsb I and Sulṭān Ḥusayn, than in the Qājār period. The Ṣafavid monarchs claimed religious authority as spiritual guides (pīr or murshid or mu'allim) and as descendants of the Imāms, and the assumed grandiose titles such as Shāh-i Dīn-panāh (refuge of the religion), Nuṣrat-i Qur'ān (supporter of Qur'ān) and Banda-yi Shāh-i Vilāyat (slave

of the first Imām 'Alī).¹⁴ These religious pretensions were used to justify the Şafavid autocracy, and although it is not known to what extent they were taken seriously by the bāzārīs and the clergy, it is clear that the religious and social conditions of the time were exceptionally unfavourable to any political manifestation of independent organized groups such as guilds.¹⁵ In Kuznetsova's opinion, the guilds under the despotic monarchy of the Şafavids were more strictly regulated than at any other time in order that they might serve the financial and administrative purposes of the state.¹⁶ In spite of this situation, the movement grew during the period through increase of the number of guilds and the number of members, and won some successes in achieving reductions of financial impositions and dismissals of oppressive officials.

A point of some interest is that the founder of the Şafavid darvīsh order and ancestor of the Şafavid royal dynasty, Shaykh Şafī ud-Dīn Ardabīlī (d.736/1334), had many craftsmen among his disciples, who supported him financially and politically besides following him as their spiritual guide. The Şafvat uş-şafā, a biography of Shaykh Şafī written in the 8th/14th century by Ibn-i Bazzāz, states that among those who followed him as their spiritual guide were numerous craftsmen and artisans such as shawl weavers, blacksmiths, jewellers, saddlers, shoemakers, barbers, dyers, carpenters, cotton-weavers, drapers, and soap-boilers.¹⁷ After the seizure of political power under Shāh Ismā'il I, the Şafāvī order (ṭarīqat) lost its

former character of a Sūfī religious and radical social movement, and thereafter its membership was limited to the Qizilbāsh troops who had brought the régime to political power. Finally Shāh 'Abbās I curbed the power of the Qizilbāsh and let the Şafāvī ṭarīqat fade away. In so doing, he consolidated his own autocratic power but discarded the last vestige of the Şafavid régime's democratic origin and connections.¹⁸

The first important bazaar uprising against oppression by the Şafavid government occurred in the reign of Shāh Tahmāsb I. Although this Shāh never adopted monopolistic policies like those of his grandson 'Abbās I, he made the tax burdens more severe and found ways to deprive individuals who were growing rich of their wealth. He was so avaricious that it was said that he would send his own clothes for sale in the bazaars in order to obtain money.¹⁹ Arthur Edwards, the Muscovy Company's commercial agent, reported to London in 1569 that "at my coming to Casbin (Qasvīn), I found no manner of any commodities made, but all lying there whole, and news given out that ye Shaugh (Shāh) would buy all such commodities as he had, and give him silk and spices for the same; but by report the Shaugh never tooke cloth into his treasure..."²⁰ The historian Hasan Rūmlū states that in 979/1571-981/1573 the people of Tabrīz revolted under leaders whom he describes as ruffians and rogues (awbāsh va ajlāf). The governor, Allāh-Qulī Bēg Ustājlū, who had been appointed by Shāh Tahmāsb I earlier in the year 979/1571, antagonized the people of Darjūya, one of the quarters of Tabrīz, by his

brutal behaviour. Among these people were many artisans and shopkeepers. The infuriated people drew their swords and slew the magnates and nobles (ayān va ashraf). Allāh Qulī-Bēg Ustājīlū was then dismissed from his post, and Yūsuf Bēg Shāmlū was appointed governor at the people's request. Yūsuf Bēg Shāmlū conciliated the malcontents through their elders (kadkhudāyān); but the accord was violated, and the struggle broke out again. Finally the army of the Shāh's central government marched on Tabrīz and recaptured the city. The leaders of the revolt were then massacred. It is noteworthy that, according to Ḥasan Rūmlū, craftsmen and tradesmen played the chief parts, the most prominent rebel leaders being Ḥusayn, a greengrocer, Ḥasan, a shoe-maker, Nashmī, a fuller, and Shanji, the son of a shawl-maker. All of them were executed 979/1571-981/1573.²¹ Although Rūmlū says nothing about the consequences of this uprising, it is known that soon after the end of the two years of contention between the government and the people of Tabrīz, Shāh Tahmāsb I gradually remitted the professional taxes on the guilds at Tabrīz and other cities.²² In view of the importance of Tabrīz as a centre of craft industries and commerce, and of the high proportion of artisans and shopkeepers in its population, Rūmlū's statement gains deeper significance. After the surrender of Tabrīz to the Ottoman Turks in 920/1514, Sulṭān Salīm I had carried away 3000 families from the city to Istanbul, including the best artisans, particularly those who were skilled in weapon manufacture.²³ Iskandar Munshī states that the majority of the population of Tabrīz consisted of artisans.²⁴ According to Chardin, who wrote in the

reign of Shāh Sulaymān, 15,000 shops were open in Tabrīz, more than 6,000 bales of raw silk were manufactured annually,²⁵ and thousands of artisans were employed in 110 kār-khanās (workshops).²⁶

The next significant political action by the Iranian guilds against oppression by government officials is reported from Iṣfahān in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II. The importance of this event was so great that it is mentioned in several Iranian chronicles. In 1066/1657 a converted Georgian named Parsīmadān or Parsīdān was appointed to the office of dārūgha of Iṣfahān. He treated the people, and in particular the guilds and craftsmen (aṣnāf va muṭtarafa), very harshly. The craftsmen and artisans complained about the dārūgha's oppressive conduct to the dīvān-bēgī (i.e. the minister of justice, who supervised the administration of customary law ('urf)). The dīvān-bēgī, by name Ughūr Bēg, failed to investigate the causes of the people's discontent. A movement of protest then began in the Royal Bazaar and spread to other quarters of Iṣfahān. The chroniclers, who were eyewitnesses, do not mention which guilds took the lead in organizing the demonstrations of protest, but state that the bazaar gradually came to an absolute standstill. Through wide-ranging deliberations, the craft guilds coordinated their peaceful political protest with fellow citizens who were not employed in the bazaar. The peaceful demonstrations, however, proved to be fruitless. The protesters then congregated along a route to be taken by Shāh 'Abbās II. The Shāh ordered the prime minister

(I'timād ud-Dawla), Mīrza Muḥammad Bēg to investigate and find an appropriate and acceptable solution. The prime minister urgently summoned the guild representatives and the concerned ministers and high officials to a meeting, which was ineffective because free discussion of all the problems was not allowed. The protesters, who were mainly craftsmen, then took sanctuary (bast) inside the dawlat-khāna (assembly hall of the ministers), where their representatives frankly asserted their complaints. They also sent a scroll containing their demands from the sanctuary to the Shāh. Finally they turned to Mawlānā Muḥsin, an eminent and learned clergyman (mujtahid uz-zamān), who had a close relationship with the bazaar. Thanks to Mawlānā Muḥsin's mediation, Shāh 'Abbās II dismissed the dārūgha, and at the request of the demonstrators, he later also dismissed the dīvān-bēgī.²⁷

The political significance of this event becomes clear when the high proportion of craftsmen and shopkeepers in the population of Iṣfahān at that time is taken into account. Although it can hardly be maintained that a single focus of economic activities existed in 17th century Iran, because in the predominantly rural society, agriculture and stock breeding remained essentially dispersed activities, nevertheless it is evident that Iṣfahān was then a uniquely important business centre.²⁸ Its long established community of artisans and traders had been enlarged by the immigration of businessmen from Tabrīz (Tabāriza)²⁹ and of Armenians from their native Julfā in Āzarbāijān to a similarly named new suburb, and the skills and energies

of these two groups had further stimulated commercial and industrial activities. As the capital and biggest city, Iṣfahān was the obvious residence for ambitious entrepreneurs. Don Juan, whose account goes up to around 1600, states that Iṣfahān had 10,000 shops;³¹ Francesco Gemelli, who was in Iṣfahān in 1693-94, describes Iṣfahān as the centre of metal working and leather working;³² and John Bell reports that at the end of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn's reign a considerable proportion of the population of Iṣfahān was employed in the manufacture of cloths and carpets.³³ A bazaar closure, equivalent to a general strike, at Iṣfahān was thus a very powerful weapon.

Another example of political action by a guild at Iṣfahān is reported in the Dutch archives. Some confectioners (qannādān), who had delivered goods to a value of 1200 tūmāns to the royal sharbat-khāna³⁴ (soft drink-making establishment), were pressed to continue these deliveries on credit. The confectioners took sanctuary in the mosque of Imāmzāda Ismā'īl, and wrote to the Shāh and nāzir-i buyūtāt-i saltānatī (superintendent of the royal establishments) that this situation could not continue any longer. They would come out of their sanctuary if Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn would promise only to order more sugar after payment of the outstanding 1200 tūmāns. They received no reply. The nāzir-i buyūtāt then fell into trouble at the royal court. Next the mustawfī-yi khāṣṣa (collector of the royal estates), at the order of the prime minister (I'timād ud-Dawla), tried to obtain sugar through the merchants of Khurāsān. Fearing that they likewise would have to deliver on credit, they

replied that they had no sugar. The mustawfī-yi khāssa then demanded an undertaking from the caravansarai keepers that they would not allow the merchants to sell a single pound of sugar and would accept liability to a heavy fine in the event of non-compliance. The Khurāsānī merchants were in a difficult position, because without giving some presents to the royal court they could not expect to sell their sugar. The mustawfī-yi khāssa next tried to obtain sugar from the Dutch East Company, who refused. He then ordered the harbour master (shāh-bandar) of Bandar 'Abbās to obtain sugar as soon as possible from the merchants there.³⁵ How this conflict ended is not reported in the Dutch Company's letters. It would seem probable that in the end the court had to pay in cash. The incident, although it arose over a purely commercial dispute, shows that an Iranian guild in the Ṣafavid period occupied a position of sufficient strength to defend its members' rights against an absolute monarchy.

Probably the most powerful of the guilds in the Ṣafavid period were those of the weavers. They existed in large cities such as Iṣfahān, Tabrīz, Yazd, and Kāshān. Although this guild rarely intervened in the general affairs of a city, its influence was always taken into account by the authorities. Yazd was the biggest single centre of weaving, and so remained until early Qājār times when there were more than 1800 looms with 9000 weavers in the city.³⁶ According to Steel and Crowther, the English East India Company's agents in 1615-1616, along the trade route from Yazd to Mashhad there were many small towns and villages which produced

high quality cloth and as much as 3000 maunds of raw silk yearly for delivery to the weavers of Yazd.³⁷ A royal decree (farman) dated Rabī'ul-Avval 1015/1603, which is preserved in an inscription in the Masjid-i Jāmi' at Yazd, ordered that customary dues (rusūm) should be levied on the weavers' guild of Yazd and paid to the officers of the local military garrison. The weavers had recourse to the vazīr of Yazd, as they were unable to pay such sums. The vazīr conveyed their representations to Shāh 'Abbās I and appealed against the levy, emphasizing that the Yazdī weavers had always obeyed every royal command. Shāh 'Abbās I consequently abolished the rusūm on the weavers' guild of Yazd and forbade the military officers of Yazd to interfere in its affairs. This incident is not reported in the contemporary chronicles, but in view of the strict and comprehensive control which Shāh 'Abbās I's government exercised over the guilds, it may be inferred that the abolition of a royal farman and the issue of a new one in favour of a particular guild would not have occurred unless the resistance of the concerned craftsmen had been strong and potentially damaging to the government.

The uprising of the people of Rasht and Lahījān in Shāh Ṣafī's reign against the low prices paid by the royal silk monopoly is mentioned in chapter 8.

On critical occasions, the craft guilds and bāzārīs played a decisive part in the military defence of a city's security. During the Ghalzāy Afghān insurrection, Amānullāh Khān, an Afghān general, besieged Qazvīn in 1136/1723. The bāzārīs of Qazvīn, i.e. the artisans and shopkeepers, defended the city with the backing of the masses and brought

the siege to an end after killing 4000 Afghān soldiers.³⁸

The evidence which has been cited in this section shows that the Iranian guilds had a considerable political influence in the Ṣafavid period, though not so great as in the Qājār period. Despite the autocratic nature of the regime, they were able on several occasions to prevent the imposition of unfair taxes or prices, to obtain the dismissal of unjust officials, and even to defend a city against invaders.

Notes 5.2.

1. Louis Massignon, Guilds, Muhammadan, in Encyclopedia of the Social Science, vol.6, pp.184-187.
2. Cahen, in The Islamic City, pp.51-53; Stern, pp.25-51.
3. A.R. Hamilton, in Int. J. M.E. Stud., vol.1, p.226.
4. B. Lewis, in Econ. H. R., vol.8, pp.23-30.
5. See Chapter 1, Historical background.
6. Such as the Saljūqids (see C.E.Bosworth in Cambridge History of Iran, vol.5) and The Zands, (see H. Hidāyatī, Tārīkh-i Zandīya).
7. e.g. the Ilkhānids (see J.A.Bovle in Cambridge History of Iran, vol.5); and The Tīmūrīds (see R.M.Savory, The struggle for supremacy in Persia after the death of Tīmūr, in Der Islam, 15, pp.35-65).
8. e.g. The Sar-bi-dārān (739/1338-783/1381) (see Tārīkh-i Iran by Petrushevsky, 2, pp.443-455, and A. Bausani in the Cambridge History of Iran, vol.5, pp.545-549.
9. See Chapter 4, section 1.
10. See Chapter 3, muḥtasib.
11. See Chapter 3, bāshī.
12. Nāẓim ul-Islām Kirmānī, 1, pp.91ff.; Aḥmad Kasravī, 2, pp.339ff.; E. Abrahamian, The causes of the constitutional revolution in Iran, in Int. J. M.E. Stud., 10, pp.362-414.
13. Floor, The Guilds in Qājār Persia, pp.28-29.
14. Rūmlū, passim; Iskandar Munshī, passim; Āṣaf, pp.68-85ff.
15. A.H. Zarīnkūb, p.210.
16. Kuznetsova, Urban Industry, in C.A.R., 2, p.318.
17. Ibn-i Bazzāz, Ṣafvat us-ṣafā, B.L. Ms. 11745.
18. L. Lockhart, The fall of the Ṣafavid dynasty, p.12.
19. Carmelites, 1, p.54.
20. A. Edwards, in The principal navigation, 3, p.140; A. Jenkinson, in Purchas his pilgrims, 12, pp.29ff.
21. Rūmlū, pp.455-457; Petrushevsky, Tārīkh-i Irān, 2, pp.522-529.

22. Farmān of Shāh Tahmāsb I (no date), in the Majlis Library, Tehran no.606; Farmān of Shāh Tahmāsb I in the Masjid-i Mir 'Imād at Kāshān, 981/1574.
23. Cartwright, in Osborne's Collection, 1, pp.227-228.
24. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.308.
25. Chardin, 2, pp.321, 327-328.
26. Evliya, 2, p.136.
27. M. Ṭ. Vaḥīd, 'Abbās-nāma', pp.219-222; M. Y. Vālih, folios 253a,b-254a.
28. Herbert, p.120; L.R., 5, Edward Pettus (1617), p.287.
29. Naṣrābādī, p.120ff.
30. Carmelites, 1, p.207.
31. Don Juan, p.39.
32. Gemelli, p.153.
33. J. Bell, 1, p.122.
34. The sharbat-khāna under the control of the sharbat-dār-bāshī made all kinds of sharbats. (Kaempfer, pp.118-119).
35. Dutch State Archives (Algemeen Rijksarchief), in Koloniaal Archief (K.A.), nr.1754, fol.2567 Verso and 2568.
36. M.A. Jamālzāda, p.79.
37. Steel and Crowther, in Purchas, 4, pp.275ff.; J. Salbancke, in Purchas, 3, pp.85-86.
38. M. A. Ḥazīn, Tārīkh-i Ḥazīn, p.62.

Chapter 6.

Special Guilds

6.1. The Royal Guilds (Aṣṇāf-i Shāhī)

6.2. The Non-Muslim Artisans

6.1. The Royal Guilds (Aṣnāf-i Shāhī)

In pre-industrial societies, the independent artisans and traders working with their own resources could only handle small scale business. The demands of the royal courts and ruling groups were too large, either in volume or, given their luxurious tastes, in cost, to be met by persons lacking security of patronage and time to acquire special skills. For this reason, royal courts and similar establishments engaged their own artisans from among the best skilled craftsmen. Governments in those days did not normally concern themselves with the needs of ordinary townspeople (except sometimes in cases of dearth or famine), but were always mindful of their own requirements.¹

In medieval and Ṣafavid Iran, the ordinary artisans and tradesmen were not equipped to meet royal and official demands, particularly for expensive goods and services. Consequently the court and also high dignitaries such as provincial governors and men of importance such as wealthy landlords and khāns set up their own workshops and employed highly skilled craftsmen in them. These establishments supplied the craftsmen's requirements such as tools and raw materials and usually provided good working conditions and remuneration.

The earliest documentary evidence concerning royal workshops appears in the Safar-nāma of Nāṣir Khusraw (394/1004-470/1077). He mentions that the 'Abbāsīd Caliphs maintained workshops, known as bayt ut-tirāz and controlled

by a ṣāhib ut-ṭirāz, in which highly skilled weavers produced costly cotton, silk, and woollen cloths for the 'Abbāsīd court, and that if any surplus was left over, the ṣāhib ut-ṭirāz sold these cloths to private individuals.²

The invasion of the Mongol Chingiz Khān in 616/1219 destroyed most of the important and populous Iranian cities, and forced many cultivators to abandon their villages and turn to nomadic pastoralism. This devastating blow to the traditional order of society was followed by a decline of urban life, which in some places was prolonged. Apart from a few regional centres such as Tabrīz, Harāt,³ and Shīrāz, and some smaller cities such as Yazd and Kāshān, where commerce and craftsmanship survived, most of the long established urban centres of Iran were reduced to the rank of rural market towns. Under the Mongol Ilkhānid dynasty and the Turkish Tīmūrid and Black and White Sheep Turkṡmān dynasties (789/1387-911/1506), the rulers obtained most of their needs through two institutions, namely camp bazaars (urdū-bāzār) and royal workshops (kār-khāna). The camp bazaar was developed to meet the economic needs of the nomadic armies which sustained these dynasties. Artisan labour was diverted to the camp bazaar, which followed the royal camp on military expeditions and duplicated and often competed with the city bazaars.⁴ In addition to the camp bazaar, the Mongol and Turkish rulers set up royal workshops to produce important requisites. For instance a farṡmān of the Ilkhān Abāqā Qā'ān dated 663/1265 made the governor of Harāt,

Malik Shams ul-Ḥaqq, responsible for the construction of certain workshops in that city. Since Chingiz Khān (616/1219-624/1225), Ugatāī (627/1229-639/1241), and Hulāgū (654/1256-663/1265) had forbidden governors to start any developments, whatever their nature, within the limits of the existing cities, Malik Shams ul-Ḥaqq erected extensive royal workshops outside the city wall of Harāt. Besides the workshops, he also set up a large bazaar. These new developments were inaugurated by Abāqā Qā'an in the following year.⁵ Under a farmān of the Īlkhān Ghāzān, several workshops were built throughout the realm. The skilled artisans, arrow makers, bow makers, sword makers, chain mail makers, and others who were employed in these royal workshops worked exclusively on the execution of the government's orders. Each group of artisans of a particular craft formed a distinct unit and was supervised by an overseer (amīn). The establishment of these workshops enabled the government to equip 10,000 soldiers with full armour.⁶

In the Ṣafavid period, workshops (kārkhāna-hā) belonging to the royal establishments (buyūtāt-i salṭanatī) were developed to a greater extent than ever before or after. Minorsky remarks that "In the absence of capitalistic industry, the Ṣafavid kings, similarly to their predecessors and contemporaries, had to secure the production of certain necessities and objets de luxe at the workshops of their own households. Many of these workshops were simply domestic departments, such as the kitchen, scullery, various stores, stables, kennels, etc. There were also, however, some buyūtāt which were run like real state-owned manufactories."

Kaempfer thought that the grandeur of the Şafavid court could be appreciated from the fact that there were as many as 50 royal workshops,⁸ whose expenses amounted to 5,000,000 écus (approximately 350,000 tūmāns).⁹ The dynasty's founder, Shāh Ismā'īl I, set up a number of silk and cotton cloth factories at his own expense.¹⁰ Under Shāh 'Abbās I, a great expansion of the royal court and ruling class took place, and their demands exceeded the capacity of the bazaar and the independent artisans.¹¹ In establishing royal workshops, the Şafavid government had two aims: to escape from dependence on the individual craftsmen; and to make profits. Krusinski, who was in Işfahān from 1704 to 1729, noted that the royal workshops made large profits for the Şafavid Shāhs; they not only produced goods such as textiles and rugs for the court, but also sent expensive silks and textiles to Europe and India, and paid the profits made in this way to the Shāh.¹² Besides providing the needs of the Shāhs and the governors at their residential courts, royal artisans accompanied the authorities on their tours and military expeditions.¹³ In addition to skilled craftsmen from all over Iran,¹⁴ qualified artisans from abroad were employed in the Şafavid royal establishments.¹⁵

The administrative organization of the buyūtāt-i saltānati was an elaborate apparatus within the bureaucratic system of the Şafavid régime. Officials competed for appointments in the royal kār-khānas, which gave an opportunity for profit as well as a respected position in the government.¹⁶

Each workshop was administered by several high-ranking

officials. The highest position was that of the 'ālī-ḥaẓrat-i nāẓir-i buyūtāt, who headed the thirty three royal workshops.¹⁷ The nāẓir-i buyūtāt was appointed by the Shāh, and through his subordinates kept a strict control over all pertinent matters.¹⁸ He was responsible for the attendance, leave of absence, wages, and promotion of the craftsmen in the royal workshops, and for the investigation and judgement of offences relating to their professional conduct. Once a year the nāẓir summoned the artisans and approved their salaries and set their leave.¹⁹ Kaempfer noted that although the bāshīs and master craftsmen in the royal workshops were nominally chosen by the Shāh, the nāẓir had a decisive influence over their appointment and dismissal.²⁰ As a result of the growth of the nāẓir's responsibilities from 'Abbās I's reign onward, a colleague with the title 'ālī-ḥaẓrat-i vazīr-i buyūtāt was employed to serve with him and assist him.²¹ In addition to the nāẓir and vazīr, there were administrative officials in two other high-ranking grades called ṣāhib jam' (chief collector, meaning roughly workshop master) and mushrif (overseer), who carried out their duties under the supervision of the nāẓir-i buyūtāt. The ṣāhib-jam' and the mushrif of each workshop estimated its needs and obtained its supplies of raw materials and fixed its internal arrangements. The technical affairs of each workshop were managed by its bāshī and master craftsmen (ustādān). The bāshīs and ustāds of the various royal workshops received their raw materials from the responsible mushrif or from a government agent holding the title malik ut-tujjār (whose role is discussed in Chapter 3).²² The number of

the masters in each workshop depended on its nature and capacity. For instance, in the fireworks (ātish-kārān) and gun powder (bārūt-sāzān) workshops there were several master craftsmen.²³ Appointment to the rank of ustād in a royal workshop depended on seniority and past record. The malik ut-tujjār was in charge of the supply of raw materials for the royal textile workshops and also acted as a supervisor.²⁴ He inspected the workshops of the shawl makers, tailors, stocking makers, cotton carders, cloak makers, and shoemakers, and chose the patterns to be used in cloth weaving.²⁵ According to Mīrzā Rafī'ā, the number of artisans varied in different workshops. Chardin noted that the average number of the artisans in thirty two royal workshops was 150. The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk counts 400 artisans who worked in the nine workshops of the royal mint,²⁶ seventy two painters (artisans) in the painter's workshops, and one hundred and eighty tailors in the tailors' workshop.²⁷

The total number of the Ṣafavid royal workshops is variously recorded. The Tazkirat ul-Mulūk counts thirty three workshops,²⁸ while Chardin counts thirty two.²⁹ Minorsky gives a list of royal workshops totalling thirty four, but including subdivisions which were attached to other departments.³⁰ According to Kaempfer, there were fifty workshops. Some of them, despite their designation kār-khāna, were not in fact workshops but only storehouses for raw materials. The following list of the royal workshops which were actually operated by artisans has been compiled mainly from the data given by Kaempfer:³¹

a) CLOTHING

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | shawl-making workshop | <u>shāl-bāf-khāna</u> |
| 2. | tailoring " | <u>khayyaṭ-khāna</u> |
| 3. | stocking-making " | <u>jūrāb-bāf-khāna</u> |
| 4. | furriery " | <u>pūstīn-dūz-khāna</u> |
| 5. | gold brocade weaving workshop | <u>ṭalā-dūz-khāna</u> |
| 6. | shoemaking workshop | <u>kafsh-dūz-khāna</u> |
| 7. | cotton carding " | <u>ḡallāj-khāna</u> |

b) METAL WARES

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | goldsmiths' workshop | <u>zargar-khāna</u> |
| 2. | coppersmiths' " | <u>mesgar-khāna</u> |
| 3. | blacksmiths' " | <u>āhangarī</u> |
| 4. | tinsmiths' " | <u>rūygari</u> |
| 5. | tin platers' " | <u>ḡalabī-sāzī</u> |

c) TREASURY

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | mint | <u>zarrāb-khāna</u> |
| 2. | treasury | <u>khazāna</u> |
| 3. | money changing house | <u>ṡarrāf-khāna</u> |

d) DRUGS AND FOOD

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | druggist's and perfumer's workshop | <u>'aṭṭār-khāna</u> |
| 2. | kitchen | <u>āshpaz-khāna</u> |
| 3. | butchery | <u>qaṡṡāb-khāna</u> |
| 4. | fruit juice factory | <u>sharbat-khāna</u> |
| 5. | syrup factory | <u>shīra-khāna</u> |

e) LIBRARY AND ARTS

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Library | <u>kitāb-khāna</u> |
| | a. book-bindery | <u>ṡahḡafī</u> |
| | b. paper factory | <u>kāghaz-sāzī</u> |
| | c. book illumination | <u>tazhīb-khāna</u> |

2.	painters' workshop (i.e.artists)	<u>naqqāsh-khāna</u>
f)	WOODWORK	
1.	carpenters workshop	<u>najjār-khāna</u>
2.	turnery "	<u>kharrāṭ-khāna</u>
g)	ARSENAL	
1.	locksmiths' "	<u>chilāngarān</u>
2.	cutlers' "	<u>kārd-garān</u>
3.	arrow (head) makers' workshop	<u>paykān-garān</u>
4.	gunpowder makers' "	<u>bārūt-sazān</u>
5.	firework makers "	<u>ādash-bāzān</u>
h)	MUSICIANS	<u>navāzandagān</u>
i)	PANNIER MAKERS	<u>kajāva-sazān</u>
j)	BARBERS	<u>salmāni-khāna</u>

Entry into the royal workshops was not easy, even for well qualified artisans. Employment in them was governed by various conditions, and the employees fell into four main categories.

1) Those who acquired their skill through apprenticeship at the royal workshops. Some of them were unpaid artisans, who in general were prisoners of war employed as the Shāh's slaves (ghulāmān). Many of these men served in the armed forces and were called qullar or qullariyān, while others were employed in the royal workshops. The ghulāms in the royal workshops received training and acquired professional qualifications in them before entering into permanent service.³² Simon, a Carmelite priest who was in Iṣfahān in 1608, states that Shāh 'Abbās I had a very great number

of slaves including artisans of all kinds, and in order not to feed them himself, he put them to work in crafts, so that not only they should earn their victuals, but he also should make money out of it.³³

2. Sons of master craftsmen in the royal workshops naturally enjoyed priority over other applicants. According to Chardin, a master's son who obtained the requisite qualification often took over his father's position.³⁴

3. Artisans were sometimes engaged from outside the royal establishments, but only after introduction by a person of rank and proof of complete mastery of the craft.³⁵

4. Non-Iranian artisans were also employed, but only if they possessed skills not found among the Iranian craftsmen.³⁶

Apprentices entered the royal workshops at twelve to fifteen years of age.³⁷ Appointments of artisans were confirmed by the Shāh and the nāzīr-i buyūtāt.³⁸

The artisans in the royal workshops were organized in royal guilds (aṣnāf-i shāhī) which had no connection with the independent bazaar guilds. They enjoyed numerous privileges, such as free board, lodging, clothing, and relatively good wages and work conditions. They possessed a form of unemployment and sickness insurance from which all members of royal guilds could benefit.³⁹ Once a year the nāzīr-i buyūtāt negotiated the wages of the royal artisans. They were paid annually, with the exception of cameldrivers who were paid every six months.⁴⁰ The wages of royal artisans differed according to their crafts.

Kaempfer noted that an ordinary master craftsman was paid anything between ten and fifty tūmans per annum.⁴¹ According to Chardin, some artisans received an annual salary of

800 écus besides free food.⁴² In addition to the agreed regular wages, rewards were given by the Shāh to meritorious artisans in recognition of their special skills.⁴³ The wages and rewards of the royal artisans were paid in two ways, either with coins delivered at the royal workshops or with bills drawn on private traders or partnerships all over the country.⁴⁴ Kuznetsova has found that the royal artisans were called "darbasta" meaning "tied", i.e. that they worked exclusively for the court.⁴⁵ Chardin noted that the royal weavers seldom worked privately for their own profit.⁴⁶

An interesting point, attested in certain sources, is that despite the expansion of the royal workshops, the Šafavid court obtained part of its needs from the Işfahān bazaar.⁴⁷ Sometimes finished goods were selected and purchased for the court, sometimes raw materials were supplied and commissions were paid for piece-work done in the process of manufacture.⁴⁸ According to Chardin, at some date, possibly during Shāh Sulaymān's reign, certain royal workshops such as the dye works and silk factories were closed and thereafter, under new arrangements which were made, linen to be dyed for the royal court was sent into the town, and silk, gold thread, and woollen and cotton yarns for the royal weaving and carpet making workshops were purchased from private tradesmen at fixed prices.⁴⁹

Not all the industrial enterprises of the Šafavid court were concentrated in Işfahān. The Šafavid Shāhs possessed many other factories throughout their realm. According to della Valle, the Shāh built factories in Işfahān and also

in the provincial cities, which not only made all kinds of textiles and carpets needed by the court, but also produced a surplus from the sale of which the Shāh obtained a very good profit. Another point which della Valle notes is that sometimes the management of royal factories in provincial cities was entrusted to men of standing in the government.⁵⁰

Paul Simon, who visited Kāshān in 1608, describes it as a rich city in which all sorts of cloths and carpets were made on looms owned by the Shāh.⁵¹ The royal workshops in Mashhad and Qum were administered by the custodian of the holy shrines in those cities, namely the 'ālī-jāh mutawallī-yi Āstān-i Rażavī and the mutawallī-yi Āstāna-i Qum.⁵² A plea addressed in 1013/1604 by Mīrzā Muḥammad

Ḥasan, the vazīr of Yazd, to Shāh 'Abbās I for compassion towards the silk weavers of Yazd, shows that most of the looms in that city belonged to the buyūtāt-i salṭanatī.⁵³

A large proportion of the carpets in use at the royal court were made in villages. The rural carpet weavers worked for the Shāh with raw materials which were usually provided by the court; they did not receive wages, but were given tenure of crown lands for which they paid the rent in kind with their carpets.⁵⁴ Steel and Crowther, two factors of

the East India Company who sojourned in Iṣfahān in 1615-1616, mention that the main occupations of the villages and towns on the desert road between Bīrjand and Yazd were carpet making and production of raw silk.⁵⁵ Although the road which Shāh 'Abbās I constructed through this arid district on the edge of the salt desert was useful, the inhabitants can scarcely have profited from their labour

if all that they got in return was rent-free tenure of such unproductive land.

Establishments similar to the royal workshops were maintained by the provincial governors. Malik Shāh Ḥusayn, writing in Shāh 'Abbās I's time, states that the governor of Sīstān set up various workshops such as an arsenal, a tailoring department, and a goldsmiths' workshop, and appointed Amīr Ḥaydar to be the chief of the tailoring department (qaychāji-khāna).⁵⁶ Naṣrābādī mentions that a tailor named Yaghmā, who was unequalled in his craft, worked in the tailoring department of Imām-Qulī Khān, the governor of Fārs, and that Nawrūz 'Alī Bēg Shāmlū, a skilful goldsmith, was appointed the bāshī of the goldsmiths' workshop by 'Abbās-Qulī Khān, the governor of Harāt.⁵⁷ Mar'ashī, writing in the reign of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, mentions that Gurgīn Khān, the governor of Harāt, had several workshops of his own.⁵⁸

The highly skilled artisans of the royal workshops had good reason to be pleased with their privileges, but probably were also worried about the risk of dismissal.

In regard to the general economic and industrial development of Iran, the removal of a large proportion of the skilled artisans from the relatively free market of the bazaar to the privileged confines of the royal workshops probably had long-term harmful effects; it certainly restricted the opportunities of the ordinary craft guilds.

Notes 6.1.

1. G. Sjoberg, p.198.
2. A. Y. Bertels, p.50.
3. Sayfī Haravī, Tārīkh-nāma-yi Harāt, pp.81ff.
4. Jean Aubin, in The Islamic City, pp.65-75.
5. Sayfī Haravī, pp.285-286.
6. Rashīd ud-Dīn Faḡlullāh, pp.542-544.
7. T.M., p.29.
8. Kaempfer, p.117.
9. Chardin, 7, p.330.
10. Raḡīmzāda-yi Ṣafavī, p.64.
11. Thévenot, p.81.
12. Mankowski, Documents from Polish sources, in Survey of Persian art, by A. U. Pope, 3, pp.2431-2434.
13. Mar'ashī Ṣafavī, pp.310-311; Chardin, 7, p.333.
14. Naṣrābādī, p.388; Chardin, 2, pp.109-110.
15. Struys, pp.310-311.
16. Thomas Ricks, Politics and trade in Southern Iran and the Gulf, p.29.
17. T.M., p.19b.
18. D.M., in M.D.A.T., 16, no.2, pp.85-86.
19. T.M., pp.48-49.
20. Kaempfer, pp.79-80.
21. T.M., pp.45a,b, 54b-56a, 140.
22. Kaempfer, p.122.
23. Iskandar Munshī, 2, p.838.
24. Le Brun, p.291.
25. Kaempfer, pp.121-122.
26. T.M., pp.38b-39a.
27. Chardin, 7, pp.329-330.
28. T.M., p.19b.

29. Chardin, 5, p.499, and 7, p.329.
30. T.M., pp.134-125.
31. Kaempfer, pp.118-125.
32. Ibid., p.125.
33. Carmelites, 1, pp.285-286.
34. Chardin, 7, p.329.
35. Naṣrābādī, p.144.
36. Sanson, pp.73-74; Tavernier, p.223.
37. Chardin, 7, p.330.
38. B.L. ms., Or.4935, p.12.
39. Chardin, 2, pp.109-110 and 7, pp.330-333.
40. D.M., in M.D.A.T. 6, no.1-2, pp.85-86.
41. Kaempfer, p.125.
42. Chardin, 7, pp.331-332.
43. Tavernier, pp.172-173; Kaempfer, p.126.
44. Chardin, 5, pp.423-424, 500.
45. Kuznetsova, in C.A.R. 2, p.313; Chardin, 7, p.329.
46. Chardin, 6, p.95.
47. Kaempfer, p.125.
48. T.M., p.48a.
49. Chardin, 4, pp.330ff.
50. della Valle, 1, p.584; Sanson, p.161; Falsafī, 5, p.237.
51. Mankowski, in Survey of Persian art, by A.U.Pope, 3, 2431-2432.
52. D.M., in M.D.A.T., 16, 1-2, pp.66-68.
53. Inscription in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Yazd dated 1013/1601.
54. Chardin, 7, pp.330-333.
55. Steel and Crowther, in Purchas, 4, pp.274-275.
56. Malik Shāh Ḥusayn Sīstānī, Ihyā' ul-Mulūk, p.434.
57. Naṣrābādī, pp.294, 341.
58. Mar'ashī Ṣafavī, p.7.

6.2. The non-Muslim Artisans

The occupations of the non-Muslim minorities in the Islamic countries were to a large extent determined by religious ordinances. The Qur'ān and the sharī'at (Islamic law) prohibit consumption of alcoholic drinks and certain foods by Muslims, regulate dress, and forbid or condemn certain practices such as lending money for interest, production of gold and silver eating and drinking vessels, and wearing of silk garments by men. When the sale or purchase of a commodity or service was subject to a religious restriction, such business, if conducted at all, was normally left to individuals from the various non-Muslim communities.¹ It was in the professions which the Muslims were reluctant to enter that the minorities prospered.² Their opportunities in these fields were only limited by the religious requirement that they should remain politically and socially inferior to the Muslims.³

Under Shāh 'Abbās I, the position of the religious minorities in Iran was improved both in the field of commercial opportunity and as regards political and social status. Although the Jews and Christians normally resided in specific quarters, they did not carry on their occupations in professional ghettos. Their shops were scattered in the main markets, and their ambulatory vendors did business in all parts of the towns.⁴ The indigenous and foreign minorities played important parts in the commercial economy of Iran in the later Şafavid period. Contemporary sources give information about trades and professions pursued by members of non-Muslim socio-religious groups

and foreign nationalities, mainly Armenians, Jews, Georgians, Italians, Indian "Banyans", Greeks, English, Dutch, French, and Chinese. Although the identification of non-Muslim groups with specific activities is not always precise, the evidence shows that besides the professions which were strictly confined to the non-Muslims there were certain branches of other professions which were typically associated with particular minorities.⁵ For instance, furriery was not confined to the Armenians but to a large extent was in their hands.⁶ Armenian furriers were specially expert in making the best fur coats.⁷ From the available sources it can be reckoned that more than fifty professions were pursued by the various minorities. This high figure confirms the existence of a large measure of occupational freedom in Ṣafavid Iran. The relevant contemporary sources indicate that the percentages of the Christian and Jewish craftsmen and traders in the total populations of the principal cities were large enough to be significant.⁸

The Iranian guilds in the Ṣafavid period were in principle not interconfessional. At that time non-Muslim craftsmen did not formally participate in such professional bodies. They paid their taxes separately from the Muslim craftsmen.

Among the non-Muslim city-dwellers the most numerous were the Jews and the Armenians; others were of less importance. The Jews during the whole of the Ṣafavid period, particularly in and after Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, were active in both crafts and trades. Contemporary documents mention about twenty occupations in which Jews were

engaged. Large numbers of them were silk weavers, dyers, goldsmiths, jewellers, druggists, wine makers and wine sellers, brokers, second hand dealers, ambulatory vendors, musicians, dancers, and singers. A definite preponderance of Jews was observed in midwifery and in certain highly remunerated female occupations, e.g. brokeresses (dallālahā) who carried messages and negotiated between Muslim harīm ladies, suppliers of recipes for love potions and magic concoctions, and story-tellers.⁹ In the light of estimates of the Jewish population of Iran in the Şafavid period, the significance of the Jewish economic activities becomes apparent. Pedro Teixeira, who was in Iran in and after the year 1587, estimated the total number of the Iranian Jews at 8,000 to 10,000 families,¹⁰ and later Chardin reckoned that there were about 30,000 to 35,000 Jews throughout Iran.¹¹ There is no record of any special professional or commercial tax levied on Jews, apart from the poll tax (jizya) to which all Jewish citizens were liable. It is clear, however, that in each town all taxes due by Jews were gathered and paid through the Jewish community as a collective body and sole agency. At the head of the community in Işfahān stood a layman called the nasī, who cooperated with the religious chief called the rabbī-mullā or dayyān (i.e. religious judge). The nasī was responsible for payment of the taxes to the local authorities. If he could not deliver the due taxes within the time limit, he might be dismissed by the government. Usually the collection of the taxes of the Jews was farmed out to a high ranking government official,

who promised to pay the treasury a certain sum; at one time during the reign of Shāh 'Abbās I, it was assigned to a Jewish renegade who succeeded in squeezing fifty percent more tax out of the Jewish community than in the previous year.¹² Within the community at Iṣfahān a committee headed by the nasī and the dayyān not only assessed and gathered the tax due by the individuals, but apparently also settled all internal disputes between the Jewish artisans and traders.¹³

Certain crafts and trades were particularly popular within the Jewish community, and in some of them the Jews obtained an important and considerable role.¹⁴ The silk industry in the 17th century was an example. According to Tavernier, a great part of the population of Lār consisted of Jews engaged in silk manufacture; in particular they produced fine shawls.¹⁵ Trading in both raw silk and finished silk products was another lucrative occupation of many Jews. The Jewish activity in the silk business lasted into the Qājār period. Taḥvīldār wrote that in Iṣfahān there was a group of Jews who selected raw silk and distributed it to the guilds of the brocade weavers (sha'r-bāfān), weavers of mishkī (black silk cloth), lace-makers ('allāqa-bandān), and others.¹⁶ The preparation of drugs and processing of medicinal herbs was to a large extent a Jewish speciality.¹⁷ Fryer mentions that he found some Jewish druggists in the main bazaar of Iṣfahān who retailed all sorts of drugs and spices.¹⁸ The distribution of these commodities in local commerce was largely performed by Jews; at Iṣfahān they carried on this business at the Jārchī

caravansarai in the royal bazaar.¹⁹ Other Jewish specialists were cutting precious stones, engraving on metal, and carving wooden stamps and seals.²⁰ Wine making, a forbidden business for the Muslims, was almost exclusively carried on by the Jews. Tavernier asserts that the Jews of Shīrāz alone annually produced more than 100,000 to 110,000 maunds (man) of wine.²¹ Finally, in Iran as in other countries at that time, brokerage, money lending at interest, and dealing in second hand articles (simsārī) were Jewish pursuits.²² Abbé Carré, who was at Bandar Kung in 1672-1674, mentions that the brokers in that port were all Jews, and were very cunning in their business.²⁴

(Bandar Kung, now overshadowed by nearby Bandar Linga, was a pearling centre and the site of the "factory" which 'Abbās I allowed the Portuguese to establish after their loss of Hurmuz in 1622).

The Armenian traders and craftsmen played a very important part in the economic life and internal and external trade of Iran in the Şafavid period. They had had a long experience of commercial activities in the towns of the Caucasian provinces. A considerable number (5000 families) were transplanted by 'Abbās I in 1604 from their home town Julfā in Āzarbāijān and settled at New Julfā, a suburb in the southern outskirts of Işfahān, and at villages in the province of Işfahān.²⁵ The Armenians were most prominent as merchants, but many of them worked in highly qualified crafts. Tavernier states that the Armenian artisans brought some hitherto unknown industries to Iran; in particular Jacob John (Jan), an Armenian craftsman from New

Julfā who had learnt printing during a stay of a few years in Europe, set up a printing press at Iṣfahān after his return.²⁶ Carpentry and furriery were crafts in which the Armenian craftsmen excelled. A skilled Armenian carpenter was appointed the chief (bāshī) of the carpenters' guild by Shāh 'Abbās I,²⁷ but was not finally able to keep the post. The Armenian furriers produced the best fur caps and cloaks.²⁸ Armenians also worked in other crafts such as the sewing of leather buckets,²⁹ pharmacy,³⁰ and wine-making. Abraham Gurginiyan, a modern Armenian researcher, and A. Haniyaniyan, a learned Armenian scholar who died in 1960, have through a patient study of the grave-stones of the Armenian cemeteries in Julfā and Firīdan (a small district west of Iṣfahān) been able to enumerate about 43 crafts and professions which were pursued by the Armenians of Iṣfahān from Shāh 'Abbās I's reign onwards, as follows:

1. goldsmith	<u>zargar</u>
2. tailor	<u>khayyāṭ</u>
3. founder	<u>rīkhta-gar</u>
4. plaster-carver	<u>gach-bur</u>
5. brick-maker	<u>kūra-paz</u>
6. watch-maker	<u>sā'at-sāz</u>
7. merchant	<u>bāzargān</u>
8. woollen weaver	<u>pārcha-bāf</u>
9. cotton weaver	<u>jūlā</u>
10. cotton carder	<u>ḥallāj</u>
11. packsaddle maker	<u>pālān-dūz</u>
12. carpet maker	<u>qālī-bāf</u>
13. gardener	<u>bāgh-bān</u>
14. boot maker	<u>chakma-dūz</u>

15. mud wall constructor	<u>chīna-kash</u>
16. horse trainer	<u>tarbiāt-kunanda-yi asb</u>
17. printer	<u>basmachī</u>
18. tanner	<u>dabbāgh</u>
19. musical instrument player	<u>navāzanda</u>
20. sable furrier	<u>samūr-dūz</u>
21. butcher	<u>qaṣṣāb</u>
22. camel driver	<u>sārbān</u>
23. mirror maker	<u>āy'ina-sāz</u>
24. enamel maker	<u>mīnā-kār</u>
25. sieve maker	<u>gharbāl-sāz</u>
26. candle maker	<u>sham'-sāz</u>
27. barber	<u>salmānī</u>
28. baker	<u>khabbāz</u>
29. carpenter	<u>najjār</u>
30. shoemaker	<u>kaffāsh</u>
31. house painter	<u>naqqāsh</u>
32. stone carver	<u>sang-tarāsh</u> ³¹
33. glass maker	<u>shīsha-gar</u>
34. blacksmith	<u>āhangar</u>
35. arms maker	<u>asliḥa-sāz and shamshīr-gar</u>
36. coppersmith	<u>misgar</u>
37. builder	<u>bannā</u>
38. hat maker	<u>kulāh-dūz</u>
39. medical practitioner	<u>pizishk</u>
40. surgeon	<u>jarrāḥ</u>
41. ship's captain	<u>nākhudā</u>
42. headman of the Armenian villages in New Julfā and Firidan	<u>kadkhudā</u>
43. historian	<u>mu'arrikh</u> ³²

The settlement of commercial disputes and other affairs of the Armenian artisans and tradesmen was recognized as an internal task of the community and was therefore entrusted to its representatives.³³ At Iṣfahān, the kalāntar of New Julfā was made responsible for this task. He assessed and collected the taxes of the individual artisans and tradesmen with proper regard to their incomes.³⁴ Thévenot states that in return for the payment of a collective tax of 500 tūmāns, which went straight to the Shāh's treasury, the Armenians had the right to elect their kalāntar.³⁵ Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālih states that the tax of the Armenian furriers was delivered to the head of the royal lands department (sarkār-i khāṣṣa).³⁶ This was probably one of the customary dues (rusūm) to which, as a decree of Shāh Sulaymān shows, the Armenian craftsmen were liable.³⁷

There were two communities of Hindu Indians in Ṣafavid Iran, namely the Bānyāns and the Multānīs (Hindus from Multān in the Southern Panjāb and from Sind). They were numerous in the southern Iranian ports and other commercial cities. The former were lenders of money at high rates of interest, the latter were traders in cloths and spices. None of the Hindus were artisans. Their role is described in chapter 8 and will not be discussed here.

A small, but significant, number of European and Asian artisans worked in Iran in the Ṣafavid period, mainly at the capital Iṣfahān. European goldsmiths, silversmiths, watch-repairers, gunsmiths, and artisans were welcomed by successive Shāhs. A letter in the London East India

Company's archives records that Shāh Ṣafī requested the Company to send out artisans, particularly clock makers and limners (artists), for the royal court, and that the English king, Charles I, recommended that they should be sent. The East India Company sent a goldsmith named Clement Evans and a very competent and skilful limner named Benjamin Webb.³⁸ Chardin noted that the European artisans did not have special workshops but were counted as employees of the arsenal department (jabā-khāna or asliḩa-khāna).³⁹ The European artisans enjoyed good conditions, at least until the economic decline in the later decades of the period. Kaempfer states that in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II the French goldsmiths were pleased with their comfortable life and received a salary of thirty to forty tūmāns annually, which was as much as the salary of a bāshī,⁴⁰ in addition to free meals.⁴¹ The European artisans dwelt in New Julfā.⁴² Manucci, during the reign of Shāh 'Abbās I, noted the presence of six French goldsmiths at Iṣfahān. They were highly regarded by the Shāh, and each received an annual salary of 150 patacas (dollars or Pieces of Eight), besides free meals. Shāh 'Abbās I also gave them presents and even deigned to chat and drink with them.⁴³ In the reign of Shāh Sulṭān ḩusayn, however, the position of the European artisans deteriorated.⁴⁴ The contemporary European sources show that about ten professions were pursued by European artisans in Ṣafavid Iran. Olearius, in his report on the Holstein ambassador's mission to Shāh Ṣafī's court, mentioned that he met an English watchmaker named Festy who had made a striking

clock which was hung over the entrance of the qaysariya.⁴⁵ The two English adventurers, Anthony and Robert Sherley, who were received by Shāh 'Abbās I at Qazvīn in 1007/1598, brought with them a number of artillery experts and gun founders, some of whom entered the Shāh's employment.⁴⁶ William Hedges, who was in Iṣfahān in 1685, noted the presence of several French jewellers and watchmakers working at Shāh Sulaymān's court,⁴⁷ and Pietro della Valle found a Greek weaver working in a royal workshop.⁴⁸ Tavernier enumerated the European artisans in the royal workshops as follows: two Dutch diamond-cutters, a Swiss watchmaker named Rodolphe Stadler, two French watchmakers named Varin de Lyon and Lagis, two gunsmiths (arqebusier) named Marais and Bernard, and four French goldsmiths.⁴⁹ Stadler was later condemned for killing a Muslim burglar and put to death when he refused the offer of a pardon in return for his conversion to Islam.

Shāh 'Abbās I was a patron of the art of pottery. His collection, which still exists, was formerly kept in the shrine of Shaykh Ṣafī ud-Dīn Ardabīlī at Ardabīl and is now in the Ancient Iran (Irān-i Bāstān) Museum at Tehran. He invited a number of Chinese potters to Iran, who not only worked in the royal workshops but also instructed Iranian craftsmen in the art of porcelain making. Sanson noted that in Shāh Sulaymān's time there were Chinese artisans in Iṣfahān.⁵⁰ H. E. Wulff, the eminent German authority on Iranian arts and crafts, states that the chief of the Chinese potters was probably a person mentioned in the Iranian annals as Man-oo-har,⁵¹ but he does not name the annals.

One of the factors which strengthened the European and Chinese influences on the Iranian painting, ceramic, and carpet designs of the later Şafauid period must have been the presence of the foreign artisans. These are complex questions, outside the scope of this thesis.

Notes 6.2.

1. Ghazzālī, pp.130ff.
2. Goitein, pp.260-262.
3. Gibb, The Heritage of Islam in the Modern World, in Int. J. M.E. Stud., 1, p.222.
4. Tavernier, p.32.
5. Evliya, 2, p.126; Sloane, B.L. ms. 4094.
6. Tavernier, p.45.
7. Chardin, 3, p.276; Emerson, p.193.
8. A.K.S. Lambton notes that "In modern times in Kirmānshāh, the guilds accepted both Sunnīs and Shī'īs. In Qazvīn the cloth merchants (bazzāzān) had among their members Muslims and Jews and Zoroastrians. In Tabrīz Armenians and Muslims belonged to the guild of the goldsmiths, and in 1936 an Armenian was made the head of the guild. In Kāshān, so far as Jews belonged to the guilds, they were under the Muslim ra'īs (chief), but had their quarters in a separate bazaar". Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, p.23.
9. W.C. Fischel, in Joshua Starr Memorial Volume, 173, p.118; Ogilby, p.20; Du Mans, p.193.
10. P. Teixeira, p.252.
11. Chardin, 2, pp.55-56.
12. Fischel, 173, p.119; Thévenot, p.110.
13. Fischel, 173, pp.119-120.
14. Tavernier, p.319.
15. Ibid., pp.319-320.
16. Tahvīldār, p.107.
17. Fryer, 2, pp.216, 247-248.
18. Sloane, 4094; Fryer, 2, pp.216-217; R. Coverté, The voyage and travels of Captain Coverté (1607-1611), in Osborne's Collection, 2, p.260.
19. Sloane, 4094.
20. Du Mans, p.194.
21. Tavernier, p.304; Mandelslo, p.6.
22. Du Mans, p.194.

23. Carré, 3, p.825.
24. Fryer, 2, pp.247-248; Du Mans, pp.193-194.
25. Farman of Shāh 'Abbās I dated 1028/1619, in the Vānk Church of Iṣfahān; Carmelites, 1, p.207.
26. Tavernier, p.225.
27. Ibid., p.225.
28. Emerson, p.264.
29. Tavernier, pp.44-45.
30. Manucci, 1, p.46.
31. Shāh 'Abbās I in the later part of his reign brought to Iṣfahān a second group of Armenians from the Āzarbāijānī town of Julfā. Among the newcomers were many stone carvers. They were housed in a quarter which soon became known as the Mahalla-yi Sangtarāshān (quarter of the stone carvers). See Ismā'il Rā'in, p.32.
32. L. Hunarfar, Mashāghil-i Arāmina, in Majalla-yi Vahīd, 6.
33. Falsafī, 3, p.209; Rā'in, pp.32ff.
34. Chardin, 8, pp.113-115.
35. Thévenot, p.3.
36. Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālih, folio 182a; Vahīd, p.72.
37. Farman of Shāh Sulaymān dated 1094/1682, B.L., ms. no. 4932, f.2.
38. Sainsbury, letters dated January-March, 1639, pp.147, 161.
39. Chardin, 7, pp.333-334.
40. Kaempfer, pp.121-122.
41. Sanson, pp.73-74.
42. Fryer (1684 ed.), p.265.
43. Manucci, 1, p.41.
44. Lockhart, The fall of the Ṣafavid Dynasty, pp.70-79.
45. Olearius, p.299.
46. Ṭāhirī, p.308.
47. Hedges, 1, pp.210-212.

48. della Valle, 1, p.562.
49. Tavernier, pp.112, 182, 222; Du Mans, p.207.
50. Sanson, pp.73-74; Tavernier, p.244.
51. Wulff, p.149.

Chapter 7.

7.1 Public Ceremonies

7.2 Cultural and Religious Aspects

7.3 The Guilds and the Darvīsh Orders .

7.1. Public Ceremonies

Participation in public processions and ceremonies on the occasion of national and religious festivals was an important function of the guilds in Şafavid Iran. Private ceremonies also were a feature of the life of certain guilds. This subject is well documented, because the festivities on such occasions were the most striking aspect of guild activity and were therefore noted by local historians and European travellers who were eye-witnesses. Moreover, in spite of the modern changes in the character of the guilds, their participation in public ceremonies still continues at the present day.

The most prominent of the annual public ceremonies were the 'Īd-i nawrūz, the Iranian spring festival¹ at the vernal equinox, and the 'Īd-i sipand at the beginning of the solar month of Ispand² or Isfand, (i.e. one month before the first day of the nawrūz festival), when all the guilds took part in a public gathering at Işfahān in the Qaysariya and the Maydān-i Shāh. According to Iskandar Munshī, during the twelve days of the nawrūz festival season, the ahl-i ħirfa and san'at-garān (artisans) and tujjār (traders) illuminated their shops throughout the bazaar. At the qaysariyas and chār-sūqs, lavish festivities were held and visitors were entertained with fruits and sherbets and sweets.³ Kotov, the Russian traveller who was in Işfahān in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, relates that during public festivals, the traders and craftsmen of Işfahān decorated their shops with beautiful flowers and coloured lights, and that candles and tapers were lit on every night of a festive season. The shopkeepers

did no trading on such nights, but entertained the people, for whom they provided all kinds of sports and amusements.⁴

Le Brun, who was in Iran in 1703-04, gives the following description of a public festival (possibly 'Īd-i nawrūz).

"Their bazaar strikes the eye in a very agreeable manner by candle-light, since all the shops in general are prettily decorated, but those more especially of the fruiterers and confectioners, which have a charming effect. There is plenty of all sorts of provisions. Likewise in the cook-shops which are sent about all the town over, which is an uncommon custom and what I never saw practised in any other country. However, notwithstanding such a profusion, the shops are soon stript of all their stocks through the vast concourse of strangers who resort from all parts to Iṣfahān on this solemn occasion."⁵

For the guilds of the capital and the other cities of Ṣafavid Iran, 'Īd-i Nawrūz and the 'Īd-i sipand were occasions when they could present themselves to the public and make closer contact with society. Āṣaf states that the royal family used to visit as many bazaars as possible in the course of 'Īd-i nawrūz festivities. During the reign of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, the royal family would visit the central bazaar of Iṣfahān on three successive days every year. These days were announced in advance, because during them no man was permitted to go out of his house. An interesting point which Āṣaf notes is that on these three days the craftsmen's wives and daughters served in their husbands' and fathers' shops and offered the goods demanded by the royal family. Āṣaf adds that the royal family comprised 500 wives and daughters of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, who

were accompanied by 4500 slave girls (kanīz) and eunuchs (khawāja) and 100 black eunuchs. The royal family not only enjoyed seeing the bazaars and the Qayṣariya and the caravansarais, but also would buy more than 100,000 tūmāns worth of various luxury articles.⁶ Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa, the Spanish ambassador at Iṣfahān in 1617-1620, mentions similar visits of the royal family to the bazaar in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign.⁷

In addition to the annual national festivals, there were royal and official ceremonies to which the guilds contributed. These were intended to glorify the state or to make propaganda for the government, and brought no advantage to the guilds, but on the contrary imposed heavy burdens on them. On occasions such as a coronation, a royal wedding, or the arrival of a foreign guest of the Shāh, orders for the holding of celebrations were issued from the royal court and strictly enforced by officials such as the vazīr, the dārūgha, and the kalāntar.⁸ If a ceremony was to be held in a public place such as the Maydān-i Shāh, the Qayṣariya, or one of the bridges of Iṣfahān,⁹ the expenses of the illuminations, decorations, etc. were levied on the craftsmen, artisans, and merchants. Sometimes the expenses were so heavy that the craftsmen were unable to pay them and had to complain.¹⁰ Pietro della Valle, the Italian traveller, mentions that in 1028/1619, when Shāh 'Abbās I returned to Iṣfahān from Nāzandarān, the Maydān-i Shāh and the royal bazaar were by official command attractively decorated at the collective expense of the various guilds, and that craftsmen and shopkeepers who could not

immediately afford their contributions had to borrow the required ready cash from the royal treasury.¹¹ On the arrival of Nadar Khān, the "ruler of Turkistān" in 1056/1646, the artisans and tradesmen of Iṣfahān illuminated and decorated the Qayṣariya and the Maydān-i Shāh alternately in honour of Shāh 'Abbās II's guest.¹² For the wedding ceremony of the son of Mīrza Mahdī Ṣadr ul-Mamālik with the daughter of Khalīfa Sulṭān, the grand vazīr of Shāh 'Abbās II, the splendid Allāhvirdī Khān bridge at Iṣfahān (built in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās I) was decorated with candles, lamps, and different coloured objects, and a large part of the expense was contributed by the merchants and craftsmen.¹³ Gemelli, who was in Iṣfahān at the time of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn's coronation, vividly describes the illumination and decoration of the Qayṣariya and the Maydān-i Shāh and of the different bazaars and chār-sūqs of Iṣfahān which the different guilds provided. The shopkeepers had to stay at their shops until midnight.¹⁴ Mar'ashī relates how the coronation of Shāh Sulaymān II, a Ṣafavid pretender, in 1163/1749 was celebrated by the craftsmen and traders of Mashhad. The different guilds of that city decorated the bazaars and squares under the supervision of their headmen (kadkhudāyān) and "grey beards", i.e. elders (rīsh-safīdān).¹⁵

The above-described ceremonies were national festivals or royal and governmental occasions in which the guilds together with other social groups took part. There were also ceremonies which were conducted solely by the guilds. For instance, the annual Islamic festival of the Īd-i qurbān (feast of sacrifices) was celebrated with a special ceremony

by the guilds in Şafavid times and up to the end of the 19th century, when changes in social conditions and attitudes led to its abolition. The camel slaughter ceremony on the 'Id-i qurbān' at Işfāhan has been described by Chardin,¹⁶ Kotov¹⁷ and Kaempfer,¹⁸ by the Iranian chroniclers of the Şafavid period, and in great detail by Tahvīldār, who was an eye-witness of the event in the Qājār period. Tahvīldār remarks that the origin of the ceremony was not definitely known, but appeared to go back to Şafavid times.¹⁹ H. Brugsch, who was in Iran in 1858, states that the slaughtered camel was divided according to ancient custom among the guilds, the smiths receiving the legs, the tailors the head, and the other guilds all the remaining parts.²⁰ Tahvīldār states that the votive offerings (nuzūr) which were collected during the ceremony were allotted to the various groups in traditional proportions which corresponded with their shares of the aggregate tax liability.²¹ Floor thinks that the holding of the 'Id-i qurbān' ceremony was first promoted by the Haydarī and Ni'matī factions and only later taken over by the guilds.²² (See Appendix 1).

The sources from the Şafavid period give few examples of ceremonies peculiar to single guilds. One ceremony which survived into the 19th century was the annual coppersmiths' celebration on the 13th day of the solar month of Tīr (4 July). This celebration was called the jashn-i ābrīzān,²³ jashn-i ābpāshān,²⁴ also jashn-i misgarān and litū-yi misgarān²⁵ (litū means "watering"). Shāh 'Abbās I was fond of this celebration and sometimes attended in person. It was held throughout Iran,²⁶ but with the greatest

enthusiasm in the cities with the driest climates. At Kāshān, where the climate is extremely dry and the coppersmiths' guild played an important part in economic and social life, the ābrīzān celebration proceeded as follows. Early in the morning of the 13th day of Tīr, when the craftsmen opened their shops, the coppersmiths began to throw water onto each other and into the shops of their guild, and then closed their shops and formed a procession. Singing songs, and followed by a large and cheerful crowd, they walked to the dawlat-khāna (governor's house), where they gathered around the pool in the garden and again joyously sprinkled each other. The governor thanked them and gave them presents, and they then departed and passed through the city, singing special songs with words taken from guild folklore. When night fell, the crowd again left the city and walked to Fīn (a beautiful village in the suburbs), where the merrymakers stayed for three days, enjoying various pleasant and amusing games.²⁷

According to Kotov, the celebration at Isfahān was held in the presence of Shāh 'Abbās I: "On the 15th day of that August, the Shāh had an entertainment, not a festival. All the people gathered in the Maydān opposite the Shāh's great gate (i.e. the 'Ālī Qāpū), and all had large pitchers and bowls and drinking vessels and cups, and the Shāh himself was on the balcony which is over the great gate, and with him were ambassadors and merchants, and in front of the gate they themselves blew great trumpets like bulls bellowing, and played on pipes and beat drums and kettledrums, and all the people in the Maydān danced and clapped their hands and leapt in the air. And when the Shāh himself from the balcony

poured water onto the ground and onto the people, then all the people in front of the gate and all over Maydān began to pour water onto each other and to push one another into water and to plaster each other with mud, no matter who they might be; they plastered everybody, even the Shāh's relatives. And the Shāh had ordered everybody to come in their best clothes, (and this went on) for about two hours, while the Shāh watched the sport from the balcony."²⁸ Another festive occasion was a special ceremony held by the sword-makers of Iṣfahān from the time of Shāh 'Abbās I until the end of the 19th century in commemoration of Asad-i Shamshīr-sāz, a skilled swordsmith in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign. According to Chardin, whose statement is confirmed by present-day artisans in the Iṣfahān bazaar to whom the story has come down orally through the generations, Shāh 'Abbās I received a gift of a strong helmet from the Ottoman Sultān, who challenged anyone to break it with a sword. It was a symbol of Ottoman military strength. Shāh 'Abbās I offered a reward to any man who could make a sword which would break this helmet. The swordsmith's guild was informed of the Shāh's offer, and a swordsmith (shamshīr-sāz) named Asad made a sword which spilt the strong helmet. The reward given by 'Abbās I was a remission of the bunīcha of the swordsmiths' guild of Iṣfahān. Asad was honoured by his fellow artisans as long as he lived, and after his death and burial in the cemetery of Sīchān (a southern suburb), his death was annually commemorated by visitation of his tomb and presentation of votive offerings (nuzūr).²⁹ No other instances of a ceremony of a particular guild are

recorded in the sources from the Şafavid period. If, as seems probable, such ceremonies existed, they must have been abandoned and forgotten in later times.

The craftsmen and shopkeepers of the bazaar had specially close links with religious institutions. Their relationship with Şufî orders (ṭariqats) is discussed later in this chapter. The strength of religious feeling and traditionalism in the bazaar is still a noteworthy feature of present-day Iranian society. For instance, the most impressive of the mourning assemblies (majlis-i rawza-khwānī) for the commemoration of the martyrdom of the Imām Ḥusayn in the first ten days of the lunar month of Muḥarram are those which are held by bazaar artisans and shopkeepers. One such assembly is held annually in the Takya-yi Gul-bandān at Işfahān, which was built in the Şafavid period and is situated southeast of the Maydān-i Shāh. (A takya is a large walled enclosure with many small rooms built into the surrounding walls used mainly for Muḥarram mourning ceremonies). According to a long existing tradition, the Işfahānī guilds collectively hold a mourning assembly in the Takya-yi Gul-bandān. Every small room in this takya is decorated by a particular guild, whose identity is shown through the use of its signs and implements in the decoration. Moreover every guild has its own cups, teapots, samovars, etc., and receives mourners from its own membership separately. According to the general belief of the older craftsmen, the collective mourning assembly in the Takya-yi Gul-bandān is a practice which dates from Şafavid times.³⁰ At Tehrān in Qājār times, a similar collective mourning assembly of the guilds was held in the

Takya-yi Pāṭūq.³¹ 'Abdullāh Mustawfī, a modern historian, states that 'Alī Qulī-Khān Kāshānī, a merchant of Tehrān, held an annual assembly in the month of Muharram in his house at which recitations of the martyrdom were given for the benefit of members of important guilds, and that every guild attended the assembly on a particular day.³²

Although the contemporary reports are scarce, they suffice to show that participation in festivals and ceremonies was an important feature of guild life in the 17th and 18th centuries, as it is still in some degree in Iran today.

Notes 7.1.

1. Iskandar Munshī, 2, p.861.
2. Muḥammad Ṭāhīr Vahīd, p.198.
3. Iskandar Munshī, 2, p.861.
4. Kotov, pp.26-27.
5. Le Brun, p.265.
6. Āṣaf, pp.107-108.
7. Gulrīz, pp.183-184.
8. Zayl-i 'Ālamārā, p.195.
9. Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālih, Khuld-i Barīn, folio 242a.b.
10. Naṣrābādī, p.431.
11. della Valle, Voyages dans la Turquie, la Palestine, la Perse, les Indes Orientales et autres lieux, 8 vols. Rouen 1745, vol.4, pp.330-333; also Falsafī, 2, pp.288-290.
12. Muḥammad Ṭāhīr Vahīd, p.77.
13. Mullā Kamāl Munajjim, pp.114-115; Shāmlū, Qiṣaṣ ul-Khaqāniyā, folio 42.
14. Gemelli, p.141.
15. Mar'ashī, p.119.
16. Chardin, 2, p.235.
17. Kotov, pp.28-31.
18. Kaempfer, p.149.
19. Tahvīlār, pp.88-90.
20. H. Brugsch, Reise der Königlich-preussischen Gesandtschaft nach Persien (1860-1861), 2 vols., Leipzig 1862, p.250, in Floor "The Guilds in Qājār Persia".
21. Tahvīldār, p.88.
22. Floor, The Guilds in Qājār Persia, *passim*.
23. Dihkhudā notes that the jashn-i ābrīzān (water sprinkling festival) is traditionally supposed to date from the reign of the Sāsānid Shāh Fīrūz (459-485). In the early years of this reign, Iran was smitten by a terrible drought and famine. The Shāh and the people prayed for rain, and when at last rain came, the Shāh and the people rejoiced and threw water onto each other. The celebration was held on the 13th of Tīr. (Alī Akbar Dihkhudā, Lughat-nāma, vol.1, p.25).

24. Iskandar Munshī, 2, p.853.
25. Narāqī, p.273.
26. Falsafī, 2, pp.308-311.
27. Narāqī, pp.273-274.
28. Kotov, p.28.
29. Personal investigation in the royal bazaar of Isfahān and the Sīchān cemetary; Lambton, Islamic Society in Persia, pp.25-26.
30. Personal investigation in Takya-yi Gul-bandān and the royal bazaar of Iṣfahān.
31. Mustawfī, vol.1, p.378.
32. Ibid., p.381.

7.2. Cultural and Religious Aspects

There was a special branch of literature, described as guild literature, of which a considerable amount has survived. The relationships of these writings with guild life have been investigated by certain present-day scholars, particularly Ahmād Gulchīn Ma'ānī¹ and Muḥammad Ja'far Maḥjūb.² The guild literature is influenced by Ṣūfī literature, and is full of Ṣūfī terms and concepts, such as pīr, which means both patron saint of a guild and spiritual guide of a Ṣūfī order.³ Nevertheless it is a unique branch of Persian literature. Its typical genre is the so called shahr-āshūb poem or prose piece. Shahr-āshūb, which literally means "city-disturbing", is an epithet used by Ḥāfiz and other poets to denote a beautiful singer or other person whose presence fascinates and disturbs a city.⁴ Gulchīn Ma'ānī defines the shahr-āshūb poem as a kind of poem which includes a description of the artisans and traders and their professions.⁵ For knowledge of the technical and social affairs of crafts and trades in the Tīmūrīd and Safavid periods, the shahr-āshūb literature is a valuable source, because it mentions the tools and technical terms used in different crafts and the traditions and characteristic customs of particular guilds. It is composed in correct metrical and rhymed verse and usually in the rubā'ī (quatrain)⁶ or ghazal (sonnet) form.⁷ The following examples are two rubā'īs by Lisānī Shīrāzī:

- (1) Bazzāz pīsar bar ān du rukhsār chū māh
Sar sāya-yi zulfat dil u jān rāst panāh
Tamghā-yi qumāsh-i ḥusn rūz-afzūn ast
bar atlas-i 'arīzat būvad khāl-i siyāh

O young draper with those two moon-like cheeks,
the shadow of your curls is truly the refuge of hearts
and souls!

The tamghā-stamp on the cloth of ever-growing beauty
is the beauty-spot on the satin of your cheek.

- (2) Āhangar-i man dast-i man u dāman-i tu'st
khūn-i dil-i man chū jawq dar gardan-i tu'st
Āh-i man-i mubtalā ki zanjīr-i balāst
dar gardan-i man k'az dil-i chūn āhan-i tu'st

O blacksmith, it is I who beg from you (literally "it is
my hand and your skirt")!

my anguish is like the necklace on your neck.

The sigh of my afflicted self, which is a chain of
affliction,

is on my neck because of your iron-like heart. ⁸

The best known early writers of shahr-āshūb verse are Sayfī of Bukhārā (d.910/1504), the author of Ṣanāyi' ul-Badāyi', who has left 120 ghazals, each about an artisan of a different craft;⁹ Līsānī of Shīrāz (d.940/1534), who lived at Tabrīz and used the rubā'ī form; and the already mentioned Qārī of Yazd (d.993/1583), the poet of clothes, whose full name was Niẓām ud-Dīn Maḥmūd Qārī, and whose Dīvān-i Albisa, consisting mainly of ghazals, shows a thorough knowledge of tailoring.¹⁰ In Shāh 'Abbās I's time, the principal shahr-āshūb poets were Mīrzā Qāsim Bēg Tehrānī¹¹ and Mīrzā Ṭāhir Vāḥid Qazvīnī (d.1110/1699).¹² The latter, who wrote a work in the masnavī (rhymed couplet) form named Maṣnavī-yi 'āshiq va ma'shūq as well as ghazals, mentions 98 guilds in his writings. (See Appendix 2).

Besides the shahr-āshūb poets, there were many artisans and tradesmen who wrote conventional poetry in the Ṣafavid period. Among those whose quoted poems have been preserved are: Mawlānā Kisvatī-yi Sha'r-bāf (brocade weaver),¹³

Sirājā Ḥakkāk (engraver),¹⁴ Amīr Ilāhī Astarābādī-yi Qaṣṣāb¹⁵ (butcher), Sayyid Ya'qūb-i Khayyāṭ¹⁶ (tailor), Mīrzā Shūkri-yi Ṣaḥḥāf¹⁷ (bookbinder), Khawāja Khalīl-i Zargar¹⁸ (goldsmith), Darvīsh Dihakī-yi Julā¹⁹ (weaver), Mānī Mashhadī-yi Kāsa-gar²⁰ (potter), Gulshanī Tabrīzī-yi Pustīn-dūz²¹ (furrier), Bazmī-yi Kafsh-dūz²² (shoemaker), Mawlānā Dāmī-yi Āhangar²³ (blacksmith), Fayzī-yi 'Aṣṣār²⁴ (oil crusher), Tazrīqī-yi Kolāh-dūz²⁵ (hatter), Hijrī-yi Shamsīr-gar²⁶ (swordsmith), Shawqī-yi Tīr-gar²⁷ (arrowsmith), Zayn ul-Ābidīn-i Murakkab-furūsh²⁸ (ink seller), and others.

The shahr-āshūb poetry and other literary sources give information about another feature of guild life which has persisted until the present time, namely, the use of a special language or jargon which each guild created for itself. These jargons were and still are used when customers are in the shop. Each guild differed from the other in the vocabulary, grammar, and sound, pitch and stress of its special language. The most noteworthy guild jargons were zargarī (goldsmiths'), misgarī (coppersmiths') and gūshtī (butchers'). Lisānī Shīrāzī alludes to the goldsmiths' jargon (zabān zargarī) in the following rubā'ī:

Zargar ki samand-i dilbarī mi-rānad,
aḥ bas ki ṭarīq-i dilbarī mī-dānad,
mi-rānadam az kirishma rūzī ṣad bār
bāzam bi zabān-i zargarī mi-khānad.

The goldsmith who rides the bay horse of charm,
 who knows the path of charm so well,
 drives me away with his glances a hundred times every day,
 (and) calls me back in the language of the goldsmith's 29
 trade.

The main features of the goldsmiths' jargon are as follows:

a) It is based on correct Persian grammar and vocabulary.
 b) A z followed by an intrusive vowel is inserted after every vowel sound of the correct language. Thus the word pīrāhan (shirt) becomes pīzīrāzāhazan. c) The vowel following the z is determined by the vowel which precedes it. Thus sag (dog) becomes sazag. d) Two-consonant clusters are left unchanged, no z being inserted between or after the consonant. Thus chashm (eye) became chazashm.³⁰

For the keeping of accounts, the notation called siyāq, i.e. symbols derived from Arabic letter-combinations and having numerical values, was commonly used in the bazaars of Šafavid Iran and is still quite widely used in the bazaars today. In the Šafavid period, siyāq was also used in the government offices concerned with revenue and expenditure and in the royal establishments.³¹ Special tax collectors called bunīcha-dārān registered the guild tax (bunīcha) liabilities and payments of every guild in siyāq notation.³² Every guild member kept books in siyāq in which he entered his cash and credit transactions, as many shopkeepers still do today.³³ Mīrzā Abū Turāb Mustawfī,³⁴ Mīrzā Sulaymān,³⁵ and Abū'l-Ḥasan,³⁶ who were considered to be outstanding specialists in siyāq, were all in the service of the royal guilds.

According to the modern historian 'Abdullāh Mustawfī, the accountants who kept the books of the Arab governors in the time of the Umayyad Caliphate (41/661-132/749) were Iranians, and the Arab governors, being unable to understand the old Persian system of numerical notation, compelled them to devise a system in Arabic.³⁷ Gradually the old Persian

system fell into disuse, and the system based on modified forms of Arabic letter-combinations which the Iranian accountants had devised came into general use.³⁸ It is remarkable that the Indian numbers, which were introduced by Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārazmī (169/780-125/850) and which provided a much better system, were not used in book-keeping until modern times, though they were used in mathematics, astronomy, etc. In book-keeping, sīyāq figures are taken to mean dīnārs, of which ten thousand equal a tūmān. Sīyāq is read from right to left. A table of sīyāq with English equivalents appears on the following page.³⁹

Another aspect of the traditional life of the Iranian guilds is their use of symbols. The existence of this practice in the 17th and 18th centuries is attested by the graves of craftsmen of that period in the old cemeteries of Iṣfahān. For instance, the tombstone of Asad-i Shamsīr-sāz (swordsmith), who died in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, is engraved with a sword. A coffee house owner's tombstone bears a carving of a coffee pot, cups and saucers, a wrestler's a carving of wooden weights (mīl), etc.

Another practice of shopkeepers in the bazaars was the illumination (chirāghānī) of their shops with lighted candles and lamps. Illumination was customary as an expression of joy on festive occasions, but it also served the purpose of advertisement. Floor states that in the Qājār period, whenever meat became cheap, the butchers would announce this cheapness by burning tallow in the fronts of their shops.⁴⁰ Although there is no documentary evidence of this practice in the Ṣafavid period, it probably goes back to that time or

even earlier. The traditions of the Iranian guilds were transmitted from generation to generation, and have in many cases endured until the present day. Evliya Efendi relates that all the cookshops of Tabrīz were adorned with china plates bearing inscribed phrases such as "there is no nobility above Islam", "the nobility of a place depends upon who occupies it", "the nobility of a house depends upon its inhabitants".⁴¹ This old custom is still observed in the cookshops of the main bazaar of Tehrān.

The common patron saints whom particular guilds venerated everywhere, and the local patron whom they also venerated, were figures from the Qur'ān and the early days of Islam, or from the folk-memories of the particular city or guild. According to the traditions of the guilds, a chain (silsila) of blessings (barakāt) from God passed through Jibrīl, Ādam, Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, and Muḥammad to 'Alī and Salmān Fārsī, the two great patron saints of all guilds, and from Salmān Fārsī to each guild's particular pīr ("elder", i.e. guardian and guide, a term also used by the Ṣūfī orders).⁴² According to Khākī Khurāsānī, every guild had its own special pīr,⁴³ while 'Alī was the common patron and Salmān Fārsī was venerated by all. The barbers' guild regarded Salmān Fārsī as their private patron, because he had shaved Muḥammad's head after the conquest of Mecca.⁴⁴ A legendary friend of 'Alī described as Javānmard-i Qaṣṣāb (the valiant young butcher) was the patron of the guild of the butchers, who hung up (and still hang up) an imaginary portrait of him in their shops. In this connection, the question arises to what extent the guilds in the Safavid period had local saints

also. There is no documentary evidence from the period which answers this question. Ja'farī, writing in the 9th/15th century, mentions that Shaykh Aḥmad and his brother Shaykh Muḥammad, whose profession had been the starching of cloth (shū-mālī), were the local saints of the starchers' guild of Yazd, where their tombs were a revered shrine at which the shū-mālīyān made votive offerings (nuzūr).⁴⁵ Similarly Asad-i Shamsḥīr-sāz, whose tomb was in the takya (which in this context means cemetery) of the swordsmiths at Isfahān, was the local saint of the swordsmiths' guild.⁴⁶

Finally, the family relationship and intermarriage traditions among the members of each guild in a town were very important. Traditionally all the members of a single guild resided in a separate alley of quarter. It has been mentioned in Chapter 5 that an apprentice usually married the daughter or niece of his master. Rūmlū mentions ^{the names of} several such quarters at Tabrīz, e.g. those of the paper-makers (kāghaz-kunān), hatters (kulāh-dūzān), and potters (kūzagarān).⁴⁷

Notes 7.2.

1. Gulchīn Ma'ānī, Shahr-āshūb dar shi'r-i Fārsī.
2. M.J. Maḥjūb, Shahr-āshūb, in Kitāb-i Hafta, no.90, pp.86-104.
3. Qārī Yazdī, Dīvān-i Albisa; Khākī Khurāsānī, p.48; Vā'iz Kāshifī, folios 144ff.
4. Ānandrāj, Encyclopedia, Lucknow 1893, vol.2, p.595.
5. Gulchīn Ma'ānī, pp.4ff.; Maḥjūb, op.cit., pp.86-104.
6. Mawlānā Lisānī, Majma' ul-Aṣṅāf, in Shahr-āshūb by Gulchīn Ma'ānī; Mirzā Tājāz Haratī, Shahr-āshūb-i Mansūr, in Shahr-āshūb by Gulchīn Ma'ānī, p.94.
7. Qārī Yazdī, passim.
8. Lisānī Shīrāzī, in Shahr-āshūb by Gulchīn Ma'ānī, p.114.
9. Sayfī Bukhārī, Central Library of Tehran University, mss. no.4585.
10. Qārī Yazdī, passim.
11. Gulchīn Ma'ānī, p.44.
12. Mīrzā Tahīr Vaḥīd, Masnavi-yi 'āshiq va ma'shūq, in the private library of Ahmad Gulchīn Ma'ānī.
13. Amīn Ahmad Rāzī, 1, p.156.
14. Luṭf-'Alī Bēg Āzar, vol.3, p.946.
15. Sām Mīrzā, p.37.
16. Sām Mīrzā, p.40.
17. Ibid., p.45.
18. Ibid., p.63.
19. Ibid., p.107.
20. Ibid., 114.
21. Ibid., 142.
22. Ibid., 149.
23. Ibid., 150.
24. Ibid., 160.
25. Ibid., 168.
26. Ibid., 172.
27. Ibid., 171.

28. Naṣrābādī, p.418.
29. Lisānī Shīrāzī, in Shahr-āshūb by Gulchīn Ma'ānī, p.119.
30. Personal investigation; Tahvīldār, p.128.
31. Muḥammad Muḥsin, folio 1986.
32. Munsha'āt, Kitāb-khāna-yi Millī-yi Malik, ms. no.6293, folio 301a; Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī, 2, pp.401-402.
33. Muṣāḥib, 1, p.1390.
34. Muḥammad Muḥsin, folio 1986.
35. Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī, 2, 401-402.
36. Munsha'āt, ms. no.6293, folio 301a.
37. Mustawfī, 2, pp.469-476.
38. Rabino, Banking in Persia, in J. Institute of Bankers, 13, 1892, pp.52ff.
39. 'Abdul-Vahāb ibn Muḥammad Amīn Ḥusaynī Shahshahānī, pp.7-11.
40. Floor, The Guilds in Qājār Persia, p.41.
41. Evliya, 2, p.141.
42. Lewis, An Epistle on manual crafts, in Islamic Culture, 7, p.151.
43. Khākī Khurāsānī, p.48, verses 770-778.
44. Vā'iz Kāshifī, Futūvat-nāma-yi Sultānī, folio 144a.
45. Ja'farī, Tārīkh-i Yazd, pp.116-117, 218.
46. The Takya-yi Shamsḥīr-sāzān at Iṣfahān collapsed about 30 years ago.
47. Rūmlū, p.246.

7.3. The Guilds and Darvīsh Orders

Many of the politico-religious movements which have appeared in the history of Iran drew their memberships from the urban working people. Their aims were expressed in religious terms, but their motives were basically or at least partly social. Although the diversity of these movements and the obscurity of the writings about them makes study of the subject difficult, the available evidence shows that they had certain common features and in many cases some kind of connection with guilds or other urban organizations. They strove to disseminate their beliefs and ideas among the city dwellers, especially among the artisans and tradesmen,¹ and at the same time tried to voice the aspirations of these classes. Scholars have noted the importance of Ṣūfī (mystic religious) elements in the ideology of the guilds in the Islamic countries. Beliefs, and also practices such as ritual initiation, similar to those of Ṣūfī orders permeated the ceremonies and celebrations which were a permanent fixture of guild life.² For instance, the sirvāl (ceremonial trousers), after being an outward symbol of the early futūvat movement, passed into the usage of the guilds; until quite recently the ceremony of initiation into a guild took the form of putting on certain garments, the sirvāl, the shadd (girdle), and the pīsh-dāman (apron).³

It has been mentioned in Chapter 1 that during the centuries before the Mongol invasion, various branches of the Ismā'īlī Shī'ite movement⁴ took the lead in revolutionary propaganda and won converts in Fārs and among artisans in the cities of Ray, Nīshāpūr, and Marv.⁵ Although Massignon's

hypothesis that it was the Qarmaṭī movement which created the Islamic guilds and gave them the distinctive character which they retained until modern times⁶ is not supported by adequate documentary evidence, nevertheless it seems likely that the Qarmaṭīs, the later Ismā'īlīs, and the various Ṣūfī ṭarīqats, who all venerated the Imām 'Alī, had connections with the urban craftsmen at different times.⁷ A reference has also been made in Chapter 1 to the role of 'ayyārān (urban militia). The word, which means "rascals", was a disparaging name given to them by their opponents. The first movements of 'ayyārān were organized to resist exploitation and misgovernment by the 'Abbāsids and other rulers. They had links with early Ṣūfī preachers, and also showed a Shī'ite inclination in their choice of the Imām 'Alī as their model of probity : (futūvat or javān-mardī). Although the first 'ayyārān came from the lower classes, afterwards higher ranking people also joined.⁸ The role of Ya'qūb-i Lays the coppersmith (or rather brazier), who began his career as an 'ayyār leader in Sīstān,⁹ and the resistance of the artisan 'ayyārān of Harāt against the Mongols, have been mentioned in Chapter 1.¹⁰

Gradually the artisans and their guilds took over the concept of futūvat, probably from the 'ayyārān, and the veneration of 'Alī, probably from the Qarmaṭīs and other Shī'ites. They also formed links with the increasingly well organized Ṣūfī ṭarīqats (darvīsh orders). The 'Abbāsīd Caliph Nāṣir (515/1180-623/1226), who wished to reconcile the Sunnites and Shī'ites in support of the caliphate, chose futūvat as the motto of a pro-caliphate movement which he sponsored. The guilds were probably drawn into this

movement.¹¹ In Turkey, where the Mongols caused widespread anarchy, a movement of craftsmen and tradesmen called akhī (brethren),¹² with some similarities to the earlier 'ayyārān of Iran and Iraq, sometimes played an important role. The rule-books of the Turkish guilds were called futūvat-nāma.¹³

In the post-Mongol period, the 'ayyārān finally disappeared from the scene and the darvīsh orders (ṭarīqats) gained widespread influence. They showed a special eagerness to recruit members among the urban artisans and craftsmen. The bazaar was always a centre of political as well as economic life in every city, and the leaders of orders which won followings in it often acquired strong political positions.¹⁴ From the contents of Sūfī literary works such as the Tazkirat ul-Awliyā of Farīd ud-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (d.617/1220), it may be inferred that the Sūfī orders enjoyed wide support among the artisans and shopkeeping classes.¹⁵ Moreover the artisans and shopkeepers provided useful financial help for the ṭarīqats which they joined.¹⁶ Both the guilds and the ṭarīqats gained from this mutual support.

The similarity of the ceremonies and the ranks and titles used by the Iranian guilds to those of the futūvat brotherhoods also points to the existence of close links between them.¹⁷ Authors of the 7th/13th, 8th/14th and 9th/15th centuries, when they mention ahl-i futūvat, appear to mean groups of seekers of this ideal who were organized in either ṭarīqats or guilds or both. A work by the well-known author of the Tīmūrid period, Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī (d.910/1504-5), entitled Futūvat-nāma-yi Sulṭānī, shows that at Harāt in his time the artisans and craftsmen cherished the ideal of futūvat,¹⁸ and

that many of them were what he calls ahl-i futūvat (i.e. adherents of the futūvat movement). He classifies the artisans and craftsmen in two groups: a) ahl-i ma'raka (performers, apparently meaning providers of services), and b) ahl-i qabza (hand-tool users). The ahl-i ma'raka comprised the following professions: maddāhān (eulogists, perhaps meaning popular eulogists of the Prophet Muhammad and the Imām 'Alī rather than court poets), saqqāyān (water-carriers), khavāṣṣ-gūyān (perhaps meaning orators and poets employed by the court and the aristocracy), bisāṭ-andāzān (itinerant showmen), kushtī-gīrān (wrestlers), ḥammālān (porters), rasan-bāzān (rope-acrobats), ṭās-bāzān (providers of a gambling game played with sheep's knuckle bones, today called qāp-bāzī), huqqa-bāzān (jugglers), nāva-kishān (hodmen), etc. The ahl-i qabza comprised sipāhiyān or ahl-i qabza-yi shamshīr (cavalry men, or soldiers generally), ahl-i qabza-yi māla (trowel users, i.e. plasterers), ahl-i qabza-yi khāysak (hammer users, i.e. blacksmiths, copper-smiths, braziers, goldsmiths, and silversmiths), ahl-i qabza-yi kamān (carding bow users and felt-makers), ahl-i qabza-yi kūda (awl users, i.e. shoemakers, shoe repairers, pack saddle makers), ahl-i qabza-yi uṭū va ṭāqīya (ironers, tailors, and hatters), ahl-i qabza-yi kafcha (ladle users, i.e. confectioners and ḥalvā makers), ahl-i qabza-yi kulang va dās (pick wielders and sickle users, i.e. diggers, qanāt tunnelers (muqannīs) and agricultural labourers), ahl-i qabza-yi Kārd va sātūr (knife wielders, i.e. slaughterers, butchers, and cooks), and ahl-i qabza-yi sīkh (skewer users, probably meaning kabāb-grillers).¹⁹ Although Kāshifī does not use the word ṣinf

(guild), it seems likely that he based his classifications on the existing guilds.

The craftsmen and artisans had a significant role in the Sarbidārān movement. The Sarbidārān, who rebelled against injustice of the local rulers and set up an independent state at Sabzavār in Western Khūrāsān which lasted from 738/1337 to 781/1379, are important because they were a militant Ṣūfī order with definitely Shī'ite beliefs, inspired by the preaching of Shaykh Ḥasan Jūrī (d.739/1338), and supported both by the townsfolk, particularly the artisans, and by the villagers.²⁰ They acquired the name because they said that they would rather have their heads on the gallows (sar bi-dār) than endure further oppression.

Although the Safavid order's historical importance lay in its indoctrination and military organization of nomadic Turkish tribes, the biography of Shaykh Ṣafī (d.735/1334) entitled Ṣafvat uṣ-Ṣafā, written by Ibn Bazzāz in the middle of 8th/14th century and rewritten by Abu'l-Faḥ Ḥusaynī in the reign of Shāh Tahmāsb I, indicates that the founder also won a following among urban craftsmen and shopkeepers.²¹

Under Shah Ismā'īl I and Shāh Tahmāsb I, however, membership of Ṣafavī ṭarīqat appears to have been limited to the Qizilbāsh tribal troops, and not to have been extended to other classes such as artisans. These troops did not always respect the Shāh's claim to their obedience as the head (pīr or murshid) of the order, and often split into factions supporting rival claimants to the throne.²² Shāh 'Abbās I therefore abolished the Ṣafavī ṭarīqat and deflected other Ṣūfī orders away from their proper spiritual functions.

Hostile pressure from formalistic (qishrī) 'ulamā and interference by the government greatly restricted all true spiritual activity by Iranian tarīqats in the period.²³

W. Ivanow, who has studied the poems of Khākī Khūrāsānī (probably written in Shāh 'Abbās II's reign), has noted that one of Khākī's verses clearly indicates and regrets a weakening of the traditional connection of the guilds with Ṣūfī orders at that time:

Ḥadīs az zāhir ū 'unvān-i bāṭin
na-shud bī-pīr u bī-ustād-i aṣnāf

"Discussion of outward observance and declaration of inward belief became impossible without pīrs (i.e. of tarīqats) and master craftsmen of guilds."²⁴

By the time of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, the majority of the Twelver Shī'ite 'ulamā were hostile to Ṣūfīsm in any form, and the government, under the influence of the mullā-bāshī, Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, began to persecute Ṣūfī-minded Shī'ites as well as non-Shī'ite social-religious groups.²⁵ The collapse of the tarīqats deprived the craftsmen and artisans, and other classes also, of the moral and cultural stimulus which they had formerly drawn from these independent spiritual centres. According to the interpretation of 'Abdul-Ḥusayn Zarīnkūb, a present-day scholar, Shāh 'Abbās destroyed the real strongholds of futūvat (langar-hā-yi fityān), and replaced them with socio-religious associations or factions of a deformed kind which the Ṣafavid state thereafter encouraged and supported with material benefits.²⁶ The most prominent of these factions were the Ni' matīs, Ḥaydarīs,²⁷ Lūṭīs,²⁸ and Mashhadīs. Engelbert Kaempfer, who was in Isfahān in Shāh Sulaymān's reign, noted that the Ḥaydarīs enjoyed that Shāh's

support. The only ṭarīqats then existing were the Ni'matī and Ḥaydarī, who had been active in the bazaar of Iṣfahān and other Iranian cities throughout the Ṣafavid period. They were allowed to exist by the Ṣafavid state, but had lost their spiritual vitality and acquired the character of factions. The government's motive for tolerating or supporting them appears to have been a desire to exploit their rivalry in order to deprive the bazaars of political unity and strength.²⁹

J. T. P. de Bruijn, in his article on Iran (Religion) in the second edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam, notes that the galandarān or wandering darvīshes, who never were well organized, regarded Jamāl ud-Dīn Sāvī (d.630/1223) as their first founder, but in Iran generally gave allegiance to the successors of Quṭb ud-Dīn Ḥaydar (d.690/1291), who was buried at Zāva (subsequently known as Turbat-i Ḥaydarī). Under the Ṣafavids, they became Shī'ite, and won considerable followings in the bazaars under the name Ḥaydariya. The Ni'matullāhiya order was founded by the Ṣūfī poet Shāh Ni'matullāh Valī (d.834/1431), who is buried in the khānqāh which he founded at Māhān³⁰ in the province of Kirmān.

In the Ṣafavid period, the Ḥaydarī and Ni'matī factions were^a wholly urban phenomenon.³¹ According to Chardin, the members of each faction had special ties with particular wards of a city and gave their loyalties first to their faction, then to their ward.³² Jābirī Anṣarī, in his history of Iṣfahān and Ray written in the Qājār period, mentions the Ḥaydarī-Ni'matī strife and adds that such enmity between fellow citizens had antecedents in pre-Ṣafavid times; in the

Saljūqīd period, there had been hostility between the Sunnite and Ismā'īlite sects and between followers of the Shāfi'ī and Mālikī schools (mazāhib) of Sunnism. After the conquest of Iran by Shāh Ismā'īl I and establishment of Twelver Shī'ism as the official religion of the Iranians, the old enmities were replaced by a new hostility between the Ni'matī and Ḥaydarī factions.³³ The two factions recruited a large proportion of their members from among the artisans and craftsmen. Fasā'ī, writing later in the reign of Nāṣir ud-Dīn Shāh Qājār, mentions that the Ḥaydarī and Ni'matī factions had strong followings amongst the craftsmen of Shīrāz.³⁴ At Isfahān under Shāh Sulaymān and Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, seventeen of the wards were occupied by Ni'matīs (Ni'matī-khāna) and the rest by Ḥaydarīs (Ḥaydarī-khāna).³⁵ Tabrīz had nine wards, some Ḥaydarī and some Ni'matī.³⁶ Each ward was headed by a kadkhudā or bābā who belonged to the locally dominant faction and was called the kadkhudā-bāshī or bābā of the Ḥaydarī-khāna or of the Ni'matī-khāna.³⁷

Kaempfer, after noting that the inhabitants of the cities of Iran were divided into Ḥaydarī and Ni'matī factions who dwelt in separate wards, commented that the most striking point about their rivalry was that hostilities between them broke out during religious ceremonies. For instance, at the 'Īd-i Qurbān ceremony and in the annual commemorative mourning for the martyrdom of the Imām Ḥusayn on the ninth and tenth days of the month of Muḥarram, violent clashes between the two factions used to occur.³⁸ Kaempfer gives some vivid pictures of the Ḥaydarīs and Ni'matīs in the years 1683-1685, when he was in Iran. The Ḥaydarī darvīshes wore turbans and

covered their backs with a lamb skin, and also carried a stick and a trumpet (būq). The dress of the Ni'matīs was not so remarkable. Between the two factions, games and matches were often held, and sometimes passed off peacefully, but sometimes led to bloody clashes like those which took place after their participation in religious ceremonies. The dārūgha, with the armed forces at his disposal, was the only authority who could quell such violent disturbances.³⁹

Notes 7.3.

1. Lewis, The Islamic Guilds, in E.H.R., 8, pp.23-24.
2. Bonn , p.236.
3. L. Massignon, article on Shadd in E.I. (shorter E.I., 1953 ed.), pp.508-509.
4. After the death of the Imam Ja'far S diq's son Ism 'il in 148/765, a group of the Sh 'ites followed Ism 'il as the seventh Imam. Some of them maintained that Ism 'il never died and would reappear as the Mahd -yi Maw'ud (promised restorer). See W. Madelung, article Ism 'iliyya in E.I., 2nd ed. 4, pp.198-206; also Rashid ud-D n Fa lullah, pp.30-40.
5. Petrushevski, Isl m dar Ir n, pp.293-319; Lewis, An Epistle on manual crafts, in Islamic Culture, 17, pp.142-152.
6. L. Massignon, in E.I., 1st ed., article  inf, pp.436-437.
7. Lewis, An Epistle on manual crafts, pp.142ff.
8. T rikh-i S st n, pp.192ff.
9. B st n  P riz , Ya'qub-i Lays, passim.
10. Sayf  Harav , pp.81-90.
11. F. Taeschner in E.I., 2nd ed., article Fut wwa, pp.961-969.
12. Breebaart, D., The Fut vvet-n ma-yi Kab r, a manual on Turkish Guilds, in J.S.E.H.O. 15, pp.253-215; Halil Inalcik, The Ottoman economic mind and aspects of the Ottoman economy, in M. A. Cook, ed., Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East, p.215. Inalcik states that "The Ottoman guild system was a continuation of the akhi organization with the difference that the independent and powerful position of the guilds in the 13th and 14th centuries weakened under the centralization of the Ottoman r gime".
13. R h n , pp.6-7.
14. Ab  Sa' d ibn Ab 'l-Khayr, pp.51, 104-198.
15. Farid ud-D n 'A t r, pp.46, 56, 68, 102, 112, part two, pp.55, 119, 200.
16. Bertel's, Na ir-i Khusrau va Ism 'iliyya, p.52; Petrushevski, T rikh-i Ir n, 2, p.442.
17. Muhammad Riy z Kh n, in Majalla-yi D nishkada-yi Adabiy t Mashhad, 3, 4, 1973, pp.35-36.
18. V 'iz K shif , Fut vat-n ma, folio, 110; Zarinkub, pp.81, 210.

19. Vā'iz Kāshifī, folios, 119a, 147a; 'Abbās Iqbāl, in Majalla-yi Sharq, 6, 1310/1931, p.348.
20. Petrushevski, Tārīkh-i Irān, 2, pp.443ff.; Rūhāni, pp.129-131.
21. Ibn Bazzāz, Ṣafvat us-ṣafā, B.L. ms. 11745.
22. Savory, Some reflections on totalitarian tendencies in the Ṣafavid state, in Der Islām, Band 53, pp.226-242; Ṭāhirī, pp.138-140.
23. Ṭāhirī, pp.335-338.
24. Khākī Khūrāsānī, p.12.
25. L. Lockhart, The Fall of the Ṣafavid Dynasty, pp.16-18, 70-80.
26. Zarīnkūb, pp.210-212; Bāstānī Pārīzī, Siyāsāt va iqtisād-i 'aṣr-i Ṣafavī, pp.34-57; Farmānfarmā'īyān, The beginning of modernization in Iran, the policies and reforms of Shāh 'Abbās I, 1969.
27. Narāqī, Tārīkh-i ijtimā'ī-yi Kāshān, pp.103-105.
28. Floor has found evidence that in the early Qājār period the term lūṭī was given to members of the class of entertainers, who consisted of two recognized groups and were entirely separate from the hooligans, who were also called lūṭī or darvīsh. The skilled entertainers of the lūṭī-khāna were supervised by a lūṭī-bāshī, who was appointed by the Qājār Shāh. Floor, The lūṭīs, in Die Welt des Islams, 13, pp.103-119.
29. Kaempfer, p.111.
30. Tahsin Yazici, article Kalandariyya, in E.I., 2nd ed., 4, p.473; Rūmlū, pp.422-423.
31. Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī, 2, pp.188-189.
32. Chardin, 2, pp.291-292, 321.
33. Jābirī Anṣārī, p.384.
34. Fasā'ī, 2, pp.198-199; Petrushevski, Tārīkh-i Irān, 2, p.571.
35. Le Brun, p.248; Tavernier, p.38; Jābirī Anṣārī, pp.97-98.
36. Chardin, 2, p.321.
37. Naṣrābādī, pp.140-141; Fasā'ī, 2, pp.75-98; Āṣaf, p.440.
38. Kaempfer, pp.110-112. Jābirī Anṣārī, p.384.
39. Kaempfer, pp.110-111.

Chapter 8

Relations between the Merchants and the Guilds,
and
Impediments to Economic Growth in Şafavid Iran

Relations between the Merchants and the Guilds
and Impediments to Economic Growth in Şafavid Iran

In Şafavid Iranian society, merchants held a relatively privileged position. On account of the importance of their contribution to the state's revenue, they generally enjoyed better governmental protection than other socio-economic groups, and they were not hampered in their activities by guild regulations and restrictions. On the other hand, they were subject not only to the tamghā (internal customs) and other heavy taxes (see Chapter 3, Malik ut-tujjār), but also to frequent casual imposts, e.g. on the occasion of royal weddings and receptions of guests (see Chapter 4, Fiscal and financial and tax aspects of the guilds); and above all they were weakened by the spread of state monopolies. The Şafavid state sought to manipulate Iranian trade with a view to its own immediate financial and political advantage, and therefore pursued policies such as the use of governmental trading agents, the grant of privileges to individuals, and the encouragement of foreign enterprises.¹ These short-sighted policies led to a concentration of external trade in the hands of Armenian merchants, Indian moneychangers, and the Dutch and English East India Companies, and made it difficult or impossible for the Iranian merchants who carried on the internal trade to benefit fully from the security and the facilities such as roads and caravansarais which the Şafavid Shāhs provided.² Moreover it is probably true to say that the popular notion of the Şafavid period, particularly 'Abbās I's reign, being a period of economic and commercial prosperity is incorrect or exaggerated, and that the volume of the external and

internal trade of Iran was less than that of many other countries at the time (i.g. India or Ottoman Turkey). The French traveller Thévenot was probably correct when he wrote that scarcity of money was the cause of slight trade in Iran, and that the only considerable sources of money-making were silk and carpets.³ Thus it is not surprising that the Iranian merchants failed to evolve into an enterprising and influential capitalist class or "bourgeoisie", and that social relations in 17th and 18th century Iran remained very largely feudal.

The important and complex subjects of Şafavid Iran's external trade, and of the role of the East India Companies and the Armenians and Indians in it, lie beyond the scope of this study; but an attempt must be made here to examine the effects of the changing situations of Iranian and other merchants on the fortunes of the craftsmen's and shopkeepers' guilds in the bazaars.

The term "merchant" is used by contemporary and later European writers to denote many different categories of traders. In the Persian language of the Şafavid and early Qājār period, the word tājir (plural tujjār) meant a wealthy wholesale trader engaged in interprovincial and/or international transactions.⁴ The word sawdāgar, though sometimes used as a synonym for tājir, generally meant a trader of similar type but less wealthy. The word bunakdār meant a local wholesaler and no more.⁵ In this chapter, "merchant" is used solely as the equivalent of tājir or sawdāgar, and "wholesaler" as the equivalent of bunakdār.

Although there is evidence that foreign trade had grown in importance before the reign of Shāh 'Abbās I and the

establishment of the capital at Iṣfahān in 1006/1597, and although European merchants had already begun to appear on the scene, Iranian merchants still handled the great bulk of the business in the early Ṣafavid period. Arthur Edwards, the English agent of the Muscovy Company who was in Iran in 1568-69, states that Iranian merchants carried on an extensive foreign trade; they travelled to Venice, bartered their goods, and brought back all kinds of European goods.⁵ Aleppo was another centre which Iranian merchants frequented. Since the early part of the 16th century, Iranian merchants had organized a considerable trade with Russia, to which they exported Iranian goods such as silk and linen cloths, and from which they imported mainly sheep skins, wooden vessels, bridles, saddles, etc.⁷ Lippomano, the Spanish ambassador at Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda's court, mentions that among the Iranian traders there were merchants of considerable wealth and standing; they supplied cloth to the government (reluctantly and under compulsion) for the clothing of its troops, and dealt in many kinds of goods but mainly in textiles, because weaving was the occupation of a very large number of Iranian workers; and in addition, some of them had sidelines in other fields and exported a wide range of goods including carpets, books, turquoise, lapis lazuli, precious stones, manna, and archino fiori (perhaps a kind of arrow and bow).⁸

Before Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, importation of Western European goods into Iran through Turkey, Russia, and Hurmuz (under Portuguese control 1515-1622), though probably growing, was not sufficiently voluminous or regular to upset the traditional economic and social equilibrium. The large-scale and

medium-scale trade remained in the hands of Muslim Iranian merchants, who supplied both manufactured goods and raw materials to the neighbouring Muslim countries. Only in the Āzarbāijānī and Caucasian cities and in Hurmuz and its dependencies were Armenian and Indian merchants of any significance.

During and after 'Abbās I's reign, this equilibrium was upset by two main factors, both of which weakened the position of the Iranian merchants and thus adversely affected the guild craftsmen with whom they dealt. One factor was the greatly increased importation of European goods, particularly woollen textiles, and exportation of Iranian raw materials, particularly silk and wool, through non-Iranian channels. The other was the bureaucratic interference and stranglehold of the Şafavid state.

Although the Western European industrial revolution, i.e. the introduction of mechanically operated processes and factories, did not occur until later, namely in the 18th and 19th centuries, and production was still generally manual and house-based, the Western Europeans achieved big improvements in technique and organization during the 16th and 17th centuries. Merchant entrepreneurs of the Western European bourgeois class promoted the output of larger quantities of better quality goods and sought new markets for the growing output, and at the same time they required larger supplies of raw materials. In 17th century Iran, they were represented principally by the English and Dutch East India Companies. Both companies were at first interested above all in the purchase of Iranian silk and wool at a price somewhat lower than the price at Aleppo, which had previously been the main

market place of this trade.⁹

Shāh 'Abbās I, through his establishment of a royal silk monopoly, supplied their requirements of silk at prices which they found profitable, and achieved his purposes of raising revenue for his government and diverting trade from the territory of his Ottoman enemies; but in so doing he took away the business of the Iranian merchants who had previously exported the silk to Aleppo. The companies were also interested in the purchase of Iranian wool, which was in demand for the industries of Western Europe. To compensate for the silk and wool purchases, and to avoid the necessity of payment in scarce silver or gold coin, the companies offered Indian and Indonesian goods such as spices and sugar, copper, tin, lead, ivory, chintz, bath-towels, etc. and European goods such as woollen cloth, quicksilver, iron articles, Russian leather, etc.¹⁰ The English company successfully promoted the sale of English woollen "broadcloths", which were unsuitable for India but suitable for Iran with its cold winter climate.¹¹ Since silk production and cloth weaving were the two most important sources of cash income in Safavid Iran, the penetration of the East India Companies into these fields must have had far-reaching economic and social repercussions. Contemporary sources, which do not provide any statistics or detailed evidence, indicate that the importation of European textiles and luxury goods adversely affected the Iranian merchants and guilds.¹² The loss of trade to the European East India Companies and later also to European "interlopers" was probably one of the reasons why Iranian merchants in the Safavid period could not accumulate sufficient capital, and therefore could

not provide finance for the expansion and improvement of the output of handicraft industries such as textiles, in the way that contemporary merchant-entrepreneurs did in England and other Western European countries. Thus the Iranian handicraft industries were already in a weak and retarded state, due at least in part to foreign competition, when they had to face the shattering impact of the European industrial revolution in the 19th century.¹³

In V. Minorsky's opinion, considering the known wealth of the Şafavid state and the reported size of private hoards, the overall trade of Iran in the early 18th century "could not be considered vast".¹⁴ Probably the main reason for this was the Şafavid state's rapacity. Şāh 'Abbās I needed large sums to pay for the Ottoman wars, for the reorganized bureaucracy and splendid court, and for the treasure-ward¹⁵ which he, like other 17th and 18th century rulers, wished to amass. His preferred method of raising funds was through monopolies, and his basic motive for granting privileges to the European East India Companies was probably the consideration that the royal monopolies or governmental trading agencies could control the activities of foreign companies more easily than the activities of individual Iranian merchants.¹⁶ A second motive, as already mentioned, was to divert trade from Ottoman territory.¹⁷ The European companies, for their part, at first accepted the limitation of their business to dealing with the royal monopolies or agents, because it gave them a privileged position and obviated difficulties which might have arisen in dealing with individual Iranian merchants, for instance in cases

when an Iranian merchant might not possess sufficient capital.¹⁸

After Shāh 'Abbās I's death, his monopolistic policy, which had caused great discontent, was to a large extent discarded. In 1036/1629 his successor Shāh Ṣafī proclaimed the abolition of the state monopoly of the purchase and sale of silk.¹⁹ From then onward, two important developments can be observed. Firstly, Iranian merchants, if they could show that they possessed sufficient capital, were allowed to deal directly with the Dutch and English companies.²⁰ Secondly, the number of individual European traders, and the volume of their transactions, began to increase. From the viewpoint of the companies, many of these men were "interlopers", i.e. contraband traders. There is some evidence that the individual European traders dealt mainly with "native" merchants.²¹ The presence of growing numbers of European and also Indian, Tatār, and Bukhārian traders in the Isfahān bazaars is mentioned in several sources. Fryer states that merchants from many different countries did business in the royal bazaar, supplying the native wholesalers and retailers with various goods such as cloth, tin, copper, etc.²² European traders were to be found in many cities of Iran, but the largest number resided in three caravansarais at Isfahān, namely the Kārvānsarā-yi Jadda (Grandmother's Caravansarai, built by the grandmother of Shāh Sulaymān and still surviving), the Caravansarai of New Julfa, and the Farangī (European) Caravansarai.²³

The activities of the East India Companies and private European traders directly affected some of the Iranian guilds.

As already mentioned, weavers were hit hard by the competition of imported woollen cloths of better quality and perhaps lower price than their own products. Fryer saw large quantities of English cloth in the royal bazaar of Isfahān, and paid four shillings per yard for some of a quality which would have cost twenty shillings in England; he does not say how it could be brought all the way to Iran and sold at such a greatly lower price.²⁴ The trade grew so much that a new guild came into being in the Isfahān bazaar, called the landara-dūzān or landara-furūshān ("London" cloth tailors or sellers); they dealt exclusively in English woollen cloth and garments made from it.²⁵ Since cloth weaving was the most important of the industries pursued by Iranian craftsmen, the harmful effect of the English competition can readily be surmised. For instance, a tablet in the Masjid-i Jāmi' of Yazd surviving from Shāh 'Abbās I's reign mentions that the majority of the population of Yazd were weavers, and Evliya Efendi, who passed through the northwest of Iran in the late 17th century, reports that the whole population of Marāgha was employed in cloth weaving.²⁶ Another guild which flourished from trading in European manufactures was the guild of the haberdashers (kharrāzī-furūshān). Among other things they sold European luxury goods such as spectacles and handbags.²⁷

Nevertheless, the competition from the European traders and European imported goods was probably not the main reason why the Iranian merchants and traders remained weak and could not accumulate the capital which would have been required for an expansion of the indigenous industries. A much more

important factor was the rapacity of the Şafavid state. The belief that commerce prospered, particularly under Shāh 'Abbās I, is clearly an exaggeration if "commerce" is taken to mean "private commerce". The belief is based on the historical fact that the Şafavid kings, particularly 'Abbās I and 'Abbās II, sponsored the construction of numerous bazaars, caravansarais, water-cisterns (āb-anbārs), and bridges, the improvement of thousands of miles of roads, and the provision of road guards (rāhdārān) to ensure the safety of the commercial routes, etc.²⁸ Although it is probable that these developments were intended primarily to serve royal and official needs, it is possible that they were also meant to help private commerce. Nonetheless, the help given to Iranian private commerce through the Şafavid state's public works and services was greatly outweighed by the harm done to it through the Şafavid state's monopolies, restrictions, and exactions. Through appointed agents, such as the malik ut-tujjār or tājir-bāshī, the government kept all important trading activities under close supervision. In addition to the regular taxes such as the tamghā and the casual imposts, the government exacted a large customs revenue from the Iranian merchants. At every port and frontier post the collection of the customs was normally farmed out to a contractor, called the shāh-bandar (see below), and the holders of this office were usually close associates of the royal court.²⁹ The government also conferred many commercial privileges on the Dutch and English East India Companies, and on Armenian and Tabrīzī merchants, and in return obtained a large income from these sources.³⁰ The Armenian merchants

and the Tabrizī merchants, who owed their position to Shāh 'Abbās I and were very dependent on him, shared their profits with the government, which through this direct involvement in commerce acquired a distinctly capitalistic character. One interpretation, which John Emerson has suggested, is that "Shāh 'Abbās I endeavoured, in a manner somewhat similar to contemporary mercantilistic practice, to promote commerce and industry inside Iran so as to prevent money leaving the country".³¹

The silk trade was a very important source of national wealth and state revenue, and the provinces of Gīlān and Shīrvān, which were the main centre of silk production, were exposed to Ottoman attacks.³² Although the earlier Safavid Shāhs repulsed the Ottomans, it was only after the establishment of firm control over these provinces by 'Abbās I that the government was in a position to launch the policy of monopolizing the silk trade. At the same time the arrival of the English and Dutch East India Companies offered secure outlets for the sale of the monopolized silk. Edward Connock states that "the king was desirous to pass all his silks into Christendom by sea, to the weakening of his enemy the Turk."³³ These arrangements were highly profitable to the Safavid government, but according to contemporary sources did great harm to the Iranian silk merchants and silk weavers. The English East India Company's factor who was in Isfahān in 1614 reported that by order of the Shāh "all silks made throughout his dominions shall be brought into his treasuries."³⁴ If any silk producer sold to private merchants and the sale happened to be discovered, the silk would be confiscated.³⁵

Thus the Iranian silk merchants were deprived of their livelihoods,³⁶ while the sale of raw silk to the East India Companies for export abroad took work out of the hands of the Iranian silk weavers. ~~Certain~~ reports³⁷ suggest that the exportation threatened to weaken the indigenous silk weaving industry.

Olearius reported that the total silk production of Iran was estimated at around 20,000 bales (each of 215 pounds), and that only 1000 bales were processed and woven in the country.³⁸ A few decades later, an unknown European traveller stated that the Iranian silk growers produced 22,000 bales of raw silk annually, but only 2000 bales were processed locally in the form of cloth and carpets.³⁹ From Ottoman sources there is evidence of a decline in the commerce traditionally undertaken by Iranian merchants through Ottoman territory, due partly to the diversion of the silk route from Turkey to the Persian Gulf ports, and partly to the hostile behaviour of the Ottoman administration towards Iranian merchants.⁴⁰

Another important source of employment and national wealth, namely the Kirmān wool trade, also fell gradually into the hands of the Şafavid administration and its governors of Kirmān, and thereby into the hands of officially supported Armenian merchants and to some extent of the European companies and private traders. This process reached its peak in the reign of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, when the poverty of the Kirmān wool weavers, who formed the majority of the working class of that city, was noted by foreign observers.⁴¹

The mercantilist belief that a government ought to accumulate a financial reserve in the form of a hoard of treasures appears to have been held independently by Muslim

and Christian statesmen alike during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. Contemporary reports mention huge amounts of gold and silver coins, bullion, and vessels which the Šafavid Shāhs hoarded in the castle of Tabarak and elsewhere in Iṣfahān.⁴² If these treasures, or reserves, had been spent in time of crisis, e.g. on defence against the Ottoman invasions or the Ghalzāy Afghān rebels, the policy of hoarding might have served a useful purpose. In the event, the policy did nothing but harm to the Iranian economy, because it withdrew productive capital from circulation and unnecessarily aggravated the burdens on entrepreneurs and producers. The biggest single source of the royal wealth was the profit from the royal commercial and industrial establishments (buyūtāt). The combined policies of state trading and hoarding had the effect of transferring capital from the hands of the Iranian merchants and artisans, who might have invested it productively, into the royal treasure stores, where it lay idle. Contemporary reports also mention the great wealth of the Armenian merchants and the Indian moneychangers (ṣarrāfān).⁴³ In so far as the royal monopolies or trading establishments gave part of the business which they had taken away from the Iranian merchants to the Armenian merchants, they transferred capital accumulation opportunities from the former to the latter. The exportation of precious metals, which brought wealth to the Indian moneychangers, perhaps arose because the overburdened Iranian craftsmen and merchants could not produce and export sufficient quantities of low enough priced goods to counterbalance the importation of goods from India or elsewhere. In any case, the non-appearance of a "bourgeois"

class of capitalist merchants and entrepreneurs, and the stagnation of the Iranian craft industries, were clearly due above all to the rapacity and oppressiveness of the Safavid régime. V. Minorsky, discussing this régime in his preface to the Tazkirat ul-Mulūk, writes: "The Shāhs are now the capitalists. They amass goods in their buyūtāt, they attract the European merchants, they use their Armenian subjects as their trading agents for disposing of the chief exportable commodity, namely the silk."⁴⁴ Far from encouraging free enterprise and the growth of a national middle class, the Safavid policies crippled both.

Contemporary European observers noted how difficult it was for Iranian merchants to find sufficient resources of capital,⁴⁵ and the English East India Company's factor in Isfahān reported to his court (i.e. board of directors) in 1617-18 that "this King is a marchant, here cammeth not any commodities to Towne but hee by his Ministers hath the refusall; any profitt thereby, the Merchant shall have none of it. Hee knows his Merchants, for forceinge his Subjects to take it again at his price." It was partly for this reason that Shāh 'Abbās I in 1598 selected Isfahān as his capital "beinge the Chiefe Marte Towne and Intended staple of the Kinge of all merchants, every day beiutifienge and enlarginge it with newe and stately Carravanserais, and places of conveyency for Marchants." It was accepted that "Marchants muste hazard that will trade", but one fact was "most consequentiall for yourhonour's knowledge and consideration, if God should call this Kinge it would bee a question whoē should suckceed."⁴⁶ One instance of 'Abbās I's mercantile

aspirations was his dispatch of royal agents to Venice, London, and Russia to procure manufactured goods and luxuries for the royal stores - a practice which was continued under his successors.⁴⁷ The Ṣafavid Shāhs sometimes made profitable deals in such goods with private buyers. According to the chronicle of the Carmelites, the King often sold jewels and dealt in other merchandise, buying and bartering "with that subtlety a passable trader might use".⁴⁸

The extent of the interference by the central and provincial governments was so great that the Iranian merchants lost heart and restricted their activities to relatively small-scale trading.⁴⁹ Even if they were sometimes able to do direct transactions with the English Company's factors, the restrictive attitude of the authorities towards wealthy Iranians outside the ruling group made it very difficult for a capable Iranian merchant to do business with the Company. The English factor who exhibited the Company's goods at Iṣfahān in 1617 reported that "since our coming, as yet we have not made any sale. The reason is that it was desired by Lala Beg, the King's Treasurer, to have the first sight of our cloth, promising he would give us $\frac{1}{4}$ cash and $\frac{3}{4}$ silk."⁵⁰ It seems clear that as time passed, the restrictions on native merchants became more severe. The levying of import and export duties at ports and frontier posts, and the appointment of a shāh-bandar (harbour master, but in fact a holder of a farmed-out customs office) at all these places brought foreign trade under increasingly firm official control. Iranian merchants who took goods to the frontier posts suffered such harassment from the shāh-bandars that they did

not dare to deal directly with foreign merchants, but instead were forced to engage in contraband dealings. Many of the contraband dealers were Georgians, and according to Herbert many of these were actually royal agents, who smuggled goods such as china, silk, precious stones, and spices in and out of the country.⁵¹ In order that the trading profits of the royal establishments might be maintained, Iranian merchants were liable to prosecution if they sold goods at prices cheaper than the royal prices.⁵²

The abolition of the silk monopoly and other restrictions on freedom of trade⁵³ by Shāh Ṣafī in 1629 ought in principle to have improved the position of the native merchants, but for reasons which are discussed later in this chapter, the improvement was slight and impermanent. In the case of silk, the English and Dutch companies were told, during their contract renewal negotiations, that they might henceforth buy silk direct from private merchants if they found the conditions satisfactory. In practice both companies found that they could not buy silk on a large scale except from the royal court or its agents. Their freedom to bargain with native merchants and obtain goods from them in exchange for ready cash was counterbalanced by the risk of official obstruction. For instance, at Isfahān when the Dutch company acquired a cargo of silk in the free market, the governor raised the question of the liability of goods bought from private merchants for export duty, and at Gombroon likewise the customs officials began to call for duty payments on silk which private merchants had sold to the Company.⁵⁴ John Emerson thinks that the Iranians in the Ṣafavid period seldom

used money productively; they generally either hoarded it, spent it on presents or on "conspicuous consumption", or donated it for religious and charitable purposes such as the construction of mosques, madrasas, bridges, caravansarais, etc. Those who put money to productive use, particularly the merchants, usually invested it in buildings to let or lent it to Indian moneychangers.⁵⁵ It is true that throughout history Iranian merchants and other wealthy men have given generously to religious and charitable causes, partly with sincere motives of piety or benevolence and partly also with the consideration that religious endowments (vaqfs) were legally protected against governmental depredations. In fact the number of vaqfs instituted by unofficial persons such as merchants in the Safavid period was not very large.⁵⁶ Their preference for rent-producing or interest-yielding investment in buildings and loans can be attributed to the Safavid restrictions on mercantile and industrial enterprise. Chardin states that the priorities of a successful merchant in those days were firstly acquisition of a house to dwell in, secondly acquisition or contribution to the cost of a bazaar or bath or caravansarai to rent out, and thirdly, but only for the richest, endowment of a college, caravansarai, bridge, or mosque, provision of income for "priests" (i.e. 'ulamā), and distribution of charity to the poor.⁵⁷

The privileges conferred by Shāh 'Abbās I on the Armenians whom he forcibly transplanted to Iṣfahān in 1604 were another source of harm to the Iranian merchants. Although Armenians had long been active in the trade of the Āzarbāijānī and Caucasian provinces, they had never previously played an

important part in national trade. The transplantation of the Armenians was part of the Shāh 'Abbās I's long-term plan for enrichment of the monarchy through direct royal participation in trade.⁵⁸ While the native Iṣfahānī merchants suffered from legal and illegal harassment, 'Abbās I granted a loan of 4000 tūmāns, repayable within three years, to the merchants of the recently established suburb of New Julfā. Depending on the position of their families, the loan was made partly in silk, partly in coin. In the event they were not required to repay, and they took the Shāh's silence as a sign that he had excused them and waived their debt.⁵⁹ In reply to some of his ministers who asked by he had been so generous, the Shāh said that the Armenians were more competent than the Iranians in commercial business, and that it would be better to train the Iranians for fighting and not let them be spoiled by commerce.⁶⁰ The Armenian merchants of New Julfā played a double role, as royal merchants or agents of the Shāh, and as traders on their own account.⁶¹ In this position they were soon able to accumulate considerable amounts of capital. The abolition of the royal monopolies and restrictions by Shāh Ṣafī opened new opportunities for the Armenians, who strengthened their grip to such a degree that the Dutch and English Companies and private traders found that they could not buy their requirements or sell their goods without the consent of the Armenian merchants.⁶² According to Le Brun, there were two thousand Armenian merchants at New Julfā and some of them were described as immensely rich.⁶³ They did their business in the so-called Julfā Caravansarai, which was an Armenian

bazaar adjacent to the 'Alī Qāpū palace, and the bazaar and caravansarai of New Julfā. They had numerous links with the Iranian craftsmen's guilds; e.g. they were the exclusive suppliers of Russian furs, sables, hides, and leathers to the guild of the furriers (pūstīn-furūshān) and fur sellers (khaz-furūshān), and of seeds, coral, spectacles, and miscellaneous luxury items to the guild of the haberdashers (kharrāzī-furūshān).⁶⁴

Lastly, the native Iranian merchants had to contend with the Indian (i.e. Hindu) moneychangers (ṣarrāfān), whose presence and proliferation in the markets of several important cities of Iran in the Ṣafavid period is an astonishing and unexplained episode of Iranian economic history. It was suggested above that their success may perhaps be attributed to a growing imbalance in the trade between Iran and India which necessitated payment in silver and gold for the excess of imports over exports. Later the issuing of debased coins by Shāh Sulaymān enabled them to make big profits from the export of good Iranian coins to India. To a large extent the Indian-Iranian trade was organized by the Indian moneychangers resident in Iran. For this reason they were particularly numerous at Bandar 'Abbās. Herbert found a large number of Indian residents there,⁶⁵ and Chardin reckoned the town's population to be two thirds Indian.⁶⁶ At Shīrāz one of the finest bazaars belonged to the Indians.⁶⁷ They did not normally keep stocks of goods in the way that the merchants did, but acted only as commodity brokers (dallālān) and currency dealers. They charged usuriously high rates of interest,⁶⁸ and exported the best coins as well as silver and

gold bullion to India.⁶⁹ Chardin states that they often doubled their capital in eighteen or twenty months.⁷⁰ There were two main communities of Indians, the Bānyāns, who specialized in moneychanging and brokerage, and the Multānīs, who specialized in the importation of Indian textiles. Their presence must certainly have helped to weaken the development of Iranian private enterprise. The trade imbalance which appears to have initially made their activities possible must have been at least partly caused by the restrictions which impeded growth of the Iranian national product in the Ṣafavid period.⁷¹

The extent to which credit was used instead of cash, and the types of loan and rates of interest which were current, in Iranian commercial life during the Ṣafavid period cannot be fully ascertained on account of the scarcity of evidence. While the Qur'ān strictly prohibits usury (ribā) (Qur'ān, 2, 275; 3,130; 4,161) and the Islamic laws of sale generally require prompt delivery and payment,⁷² the acceptability of certain kinds of legal device (hīla) in Islamic jurisprudence gives some latitude in matters such as forward sale, deferred payment, premiums, discounts, etc. In periods of stability, merchants (tujjār) and moneychangers (ṣarrāfān) had long been able to make credit transfer arrangements which may be regarded as early forms of banking.⁷³ Nevertheless, in all Muslim countries, including Iran, the uncertainties of the shar'ī and customary laws, together with religious scruples, inhibited progress by Muslims in the provision of what would now be called commercial banking services. One result was that investment in this field was generally inadequate and that

rates of interest (under whatever name was used) were generally high. Another result was that banking business tended to fall into the hands of non-Muslim minorities.

The sources show that in Ṣafavid Iran much of this business fell into the hands of Indian (Bānyān) and Iranian Jewish moneylenders.⁷⁴ Thévenot states that in Iṣfahān there were 15,000 Bānyāns, who did not engage in commerce or crafts but lived solely from usurious moneylending.⁷⁵ Chardin gives their number as 10,000 and states that they milked the people's wealth and cleverly smuggled it in the form of pure silver coins out of the country.⁷⁶ The offices of the Bānyān moneylenders and moneychangers in Iṣfahān were situated in the 'Alī-Qulī Khān caravansarai in the royal bazaar.⁷⁷ The money which the Bānyāns lent consisted not only of their own capital but also of funds which they borrowed from "men of substance" at 8 to 10 per cent annual interest and lent at 30 per cent annual interest.⁷⁸ They would only lend at extremely high interest rates. The rate, which depended on various factors such as the amount of the loan and its duration, rose even higher than 30 per cent when money was tight.⁷⁹

Two classes of financiers in Ṣafavid Iran can be identified: those who lent large sums, and those who lent medium-size and small sums. According to Tavernier, the large-scale Bānyān moneylenders had head offices at Iṣfahān, Lār, and Shīrāz, and branch offices or agencies at the ports of Bandar 'Abbās and Kung. For transactions which they approved, they made loans to merchants which were secured on the merchandise and were repayable in three months at

6 to 12 per cent interest (for the three months).⁸⁰ The conditions which they imposed placed heavy burdens on the shoulders of the merchants. The class of small moneylenders, which also included Bānyāns, is described in some detail by Fryer. They resided in all the main cities. Their business was partly commercial and partly pawnbroking, i.e. lending to individuals on the security of pledged private possessions. They never made any sort of loan without security. On a one-year loan of 10 tūmāns, they normally made a profit of 13 tūmāns per year, which included a deposit of a month's interest at one tūmān that every borrower had to pay before a loan was granted.

A lender could obtain legal certification of a loan contract, even though it involved a payment of a high rate of annual interest, by registering it with a qāzī (Islamic judge). He would bring the agreed sum of money, e.g. 100 tūmāns, and declare before the qāzī that he gave it to the borrower, and when the borrower consented by saying "yes", the contract would become binding; but at the same time, the lender would bring some article, e.g. a knife or a book, and declare that he would sell it at this price. Another common form of lending resembled the modern mortgage loan. The borrower pledged his house to the lender in return for a loan, and then rented the house from the lender, at a rent which the lender fixed, until the loan was repayed.⁸¹ Repayment of loans, including the disguised interest, usually had to be made in monthly instalments. Defaulters were liable to severe punishment, such as flogging. Tavernier mentions an incident in 1662, when a street draper, who had borrowed six or seven tūmāns at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per month interest, was unable to pay the

next instalment in time. Fearing punishment, the draper led other borrowers who could not afford their due payments in a murderous conspiracy against the Bānyāns.⁸²

Maḥmūd, the Afghān victor of the siege of Iṣfahān in 1722, despoiled the Bānyāns and other Hindu Indians of their properties. They were so afflicted that some took poison or died of grief, and others fled. Maḥmūd seized all the contents of the closed shops belonging to the Indian shopkeepers who had fled.⁸³ They never again played an important part in the economic life of Iran.

In addition to the political and institutional restrictions which have been discussed, certain geographical and social factors impeded the formation of capital and development of large-scale commercial and industrial enterprises in Ṣafavid Iran. Like all other countries at that time, with a few exceptions such as Venice and Holland, Iran was a primarily agricultural country; but the geographical conditions of Iran imparted some peculiar characteristics to Iranian society. The extensive deserts and mountains gave rise to a topographical dispersion of the urban centres, and made communication between them difficult and expensive. In general, an Iranian town was surrounded by a detached and relatively small irrigated area, whose village-dwelling inhabitants supplied to the town-dwellers raw materials such as cereals, wool and silk, and also manufactures produced by village artisans such as carpets, cloths, earthenware, etc. On account of the small scale of the output and the short distance to the town, it was often possible for the villagers personally to transport their

own or the landowner's products or wares to the town's markets and to deal with the town's shopkeepers or craftsmen. It was also possible for peddlers to play a considerable part in the trade between a town and its surrounding villages.⁸⁴ Olearius states that much of the rural produce, such as silk, wool, and fresh and dried fruits, was brought to the markets by the villagers who produced it.⁸⁵ At Iṣfahān special daily and weekly bazaars for the peasants of the surrounding villages were set up in the Maydān-i Kuhna (Old Square) and the Maydān-i Shāh. As a result of the prevalence of this simple method of collection and distribution, there was not so great a need in Iran as in other countries for capital and organization in the commerce between town and country. Only in trade between the urban centres of distant provinces were more elaborate methods necessary. The interprovincial trade was the main sphere of activity of the Iranian merchants.

While the Iranian merchants as a class were injured by the policies of the Ṣafavid government, one group of them enjoyed favour and financial aid. This was the group of Tabrīzī merchants resident at Iṣfahān. The merchants of Tabrīz had for a long time played a big part in the development of the import and export trade through Turkey, and they had acquired valuable commercial experience and knowledge. The decline in the importance of the traditional trade route from Tabrīz to Turkey, resulting from the wars and from 'Abbās I's economic policies and the transfer of the capital to Iṣfahān, impelled a number of the more able Tabrīzī merchants to migrate to Iṣfahān in 1015/1607. They were housed in the 'Abbāsābād quarter, which was (and still is)

one of the pleasantest quarters of Iṣfahān,⁸⁶ and were helped by the government in various ways, including loans or credits and an annual allocation of wheat amounting to 20 man (120 kilograms) per head from the royal granaries.⁸⁷ Thanks to this aid, their community acquired a firm foundation, and subsequently remained a cohesive group with considerable influence in economic and social life.

The Iranian merchants held a respected place in society, and were not subject to the jurisdiction of the muhtasib which regulated and restricted the activities of the craftsmen's guilds.⁸⁸ On the other hand, they worked individually, and with the possible exception of the Tabrīzī merchants of Iṣfahān, they did not organize any strong or lasting collective associations. After Shāh Ṣafī's decree of 1629, while most of them still only did inter-provincial business, some began to venture into new fields of external trade and in the course of time acquired an increasing, though probably still relatively minor, share. They revived the trade with the Ottoman Turkish territories to a considerable extent, and set up communities abroad, particularly in India and Russia, as well as at Baghdād, Aleppo, Bukhārā, etc.

Naṣrābādī names a number of these enterprising individuals, e.g. Mīrzā Amīn, Mīrzā Ma'ṣūm, and Ḥājjī Ismā'īl Khān in the Indian trade, and Muḥammad Qāsīm Lāhījī, Sa'īd Lāhījī, and Muḥammad Shafī' Rashtī in the Russian trade.⁸⁹ A handful of Iranian adventurers even travelled to the Western European countries in search of business. According to the East India Company's correspondence, four Iranian merchants, named Āqā Husayn, Pīr 'Alī, Muṣṭafā, and Āqā Kamāl, arrived in London

in 1636 to buy English goods and stayed until 1637.⁹⁰ It must be emphasized, however, that royal trading still continued after the abolition of the royal monopolies, and that the Armenian merchants managed to retain the dominant position in the silk and wool trades which they had acquired in Shāh 'Abbās I's reign, with the result that the Iranian merchants could not effectively compete with them.⁹¹

The more favourable conditions existing after 1629 for the growth of the business of the Iranian merchants, and for their emergence as an independent social force, were brought to an end by the deterioration of the Iranian economy in the reigns of Shāh Sulaymān and Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, which contributed to the collapse of the Ṣafavid régime.⁹² The causes of this deterioration have not yet been fully analysed and assessed by scholars. One generally recognized cause was the wasteful extravagance of the royal court, and another was the hoarding of silver and gold bars and vessels by the royal court and also by wealthy members of the ruling class. The main external cause was a continually sharpening decline in the foreign demand for Iranian silk,⁹³ and another was the constant outflow of good coins which the Indian moneychangers exported to India.⁹⁴ This outflow was greatly aggravated by the issue of debased coins under Shāh Sulaymān.⁹⁵ The insecurity of the trade routes due to brigandage, piracy, and insubordination of tribal chiefs under Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn severely injured the merchants of all nationalities. The Polish priest Krusinski states that at that time merchants found the roads so unsafe that when they complained about the brigandage to a governor, he would only reply "show me

the brigands, I will oblige them to make restitution to you".⁹⁶

Business between the merchants or wholesalers and the guild craftsmen of Šafavid Iran appears to have been conducted mainly through a system of special markets for interprovincial trade. These markets were located not only in the capital and the provincial cities, but also at points along the trade routes. They were set up weekly or in some cases monthly. In them the craftsmen bargained and dealt directly with the buyers, who might be either wealthy merchants or their agents, or local wholesalers, or peddlers. It has already been mentioned that the requirements of villagers were to a large extent supplied by peddlers. The reason why bargaining prevailed was probably that the goods on offer were too varied in quality and too small in volume to permit the establishment of recognized market prices.

A striking feature of the Šafavid period was the rise of certain markets in small towns situated on the caravan routes. One of these was Khūr, at the edge of the Kavīr (salt desert) on a route then in use between Yazd or Iṣfahān and Mashhad. Its market grew around a caravansarai and water-storage cistern (āb-anbār) reputedly built by order of Shāh 'Abbās I. The caravansarai became the market for the scattered small villages of the area, whose main occupations were silk weaving and carpet making,⁹⁷ and merchants stopped at Khūr to buy these goods and to sell requisites to the producers. Although Khūr does not lie on the present main road, it still has a market with the same functions.

In the principal cities, the central bazaar was the normal market place where the merchants and wholesalers met

the craftsmen and shopkeepers, and the caravansarais and the khāns or tīmchas (vaulted or open-air enclosures adjoining the bazaar) were the places where the merchants and wholesalers negotiated their deals, stored and packed their goods, and kept their books.⁹⁸ The Ottoman Turkish traveller Evliya Efendi states that he found seventy caravansarais at Tabrīz in the occupation of merchants and wholesalers.⁹⁹ The tīmchas resembled caravansarais, but were smaller and better equipped; some of those which survive in Iṣfahān from the Ṣafavid period and in Tabrīz from the early Qājār period are fine specimens of Iranian architecture.¹⁰⁰ Rich merchants, however, sometimes did business in their private mansions to show off their wealth and gain prestige.¹⁰¹

Every craftsmen's guild had connections with one or more of the caravansarais or tīmchas, where their representatives negotiated sales of their products or purchases of their raw materials with individual merchants or wholesalers.

The British Library in London possesses a magnificent scroll, undated but from Shāh Sulaymān's reign, which gives particulars of the main caravansarais in Iṣfahān at that time and of the categories of merchants (tujjār va sawdāgarān) and wholesalers (bunakdārān) who occupied rooms in them.¹⁰² Since this is the only known document giving details of the relationships between merchants and craftsmen in Ṣafavid Iran, its contents are summarized below:

1. Kārvānsarā-yi Anār-furūshān (pomegranate sellers): occupied by the wholesalers (bunakdārān) who supplied fresh and dried fruits and different kinds of juices to the confectioners, fresh fruit sellers, dried fruit sellers (khushkbār furūshān), and juice sellers (shīra-pazān).

2. Kārvānsarā-yi Shāh: occupied by merchants from Tabrīz and Ardabīl, who supplied the craftsmen and shopkeepers with Tabrīzī goods such as cloths, shawls, and mats.
3. Kārvānsarā-yi Lālā Beg: occupied by the pearl merchants who supplied unbored pearls to the pearl-stringers (murwārīd-kashān). This is a surviving and particularly well built tīmcha.
4. Kārvānsarā-yi 'Arabān: occupied by travelling merchants from Baghdād and Mesopotamia (Bayn al-Nahrayn) who during their stays sold many articles to several craft guilds, e.g. pearls, coral, carnelian ('aqīq), amber, prayer mats (jā-namāz).¹⁰³
5. Kārvānsarā-yi Muḥammad Bēg: occupied by merchants and traders from Kirmān, Mashhad, and Samarqand. The Kirmānī traders (sawdāgarān) supplied china vessels such as bowls, plates, coffee pots, saucers etc. to the pottery sellers and jug sellers (kuza-furūshān). The merchants from Mashhad and Samarqand offered paper, perfumes, lamb-skin cloaks, and other goods. In addition, some of the rice merchants from Gīlān sold their rice in this caravansarai.
6. Kārvānsarā-yi Gīlāniyān. This caravansarai had formerly been occupied by the fried sheep's head sellers and had been called the Kārvānsarā-yi Kalla-pazān, but had later been transferred to Gīlānī merchants who sold products of their province, not only foodstuffs such as smoked fish and rice, but also raw spun silk and thick rough silk cloth.
7. Kārvānsarā-yi Qazvīniyān: occupied by merchants from Qazvīn who provided the drapers with ordinary linen cloth (katān) and fine linen cloth (qaṣab).

8. Kārvānsarā-yi Jārchī: occupied by Jewish merchants who sold to the druggists and perfumers ('aṭṭārān) different kinds of drugs and spices such as herbs, ginger, pepper, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, coffee, and many other imported varieties.
9. Kārvānsarā-yi Ardistāniyān: occupied by merchants from the small town of Ardistān east of Isfahān, who provided the tentmakers and drapers with canvas and cloths for linings and women's veils, etc.
10. Kārvānsarā-yi Kāshī-hā: occupied by traders and wholesalers from Qum and Kāshān. The traders from Qum supplied the tentmakers and soap retailers with their goods. Some of the Kāshānī merchants supplied copper implements to the retail coppersmiths, others sold carpets and cloths.
11. Kārvānsarā-yi Sāgharakchīyān: occupied by leather merchants (possibly from Hamadān) who supplied leather and hide for the shoe-makers, saddlers, and sāgharī-dūzān (shagreen shoemakers).
12. Kārvānsarā-yi Bavānātiyān: occupied by traders (sawdā-garān) from Bavānāt (a long established market town in Fārs) and from Shīrāz, who supplied juices, flower essence and rose water, fresh and dried dates, and also bottles and vessels of various sizes and shapes, for use by confectioners and juice-makers.
13. Kārvānsarā-yi Jadda. This well equipped and extremely large caravansarai was built in Shāh Sulaymān's reign and named in honour of his grandmother (jadda). It was managed directly by government officials. European merchants, wealthy Armenian merchants, and some of the more affluent

Iranian merchants ran their businesses from this caravansarai. It was there that merchants of the landara-dūzān and landara-furūshān and other drapers obtained their supplies of English cloth. Part of it has survived, but is somewhat dilapidated.

14. Kārvānsarā-yi Khurāsāniyān: occupied by merchants and traders from Khurāsān and Harāt who offered carpets, mats (gilīm), Harātī hats, lambskin cloaks, and other goods from Khurāsān. The hatters and cloak-makers (pustīn-dūzān) obtained either raw materials or ready-made articles at this caravansarai.

15. Kārvānsarā-yi Maqṣūd Bēg: this well-built caravansarai was erected at the expense of Maqṣūd Bēg, a rich self-made coppersmith, at the request of Shāh 'Abbās I. In it were lodged the merchants from Lār, Hurmuz, and Bihbahān, who supplied coffee, tobacco, and different kinds of spices. It survives in good condition.

16. Kārvānsarā-yi Khwānsāriyān: occupied by wholesalers from Khwānsār (a small and beautiful town in Iṣfahān province) who supplied the retailers with fresh and dried fruits.

17. Kārvānsarā-yi Lāriyān: occupied by wealthy merchants from Lār who sold different sorts of medicines, perfumes, herbs, and spices.

18. Kārvānsarā-yi Yazdiyān: occupied by cloth merchants from Yazd who sold expensive Yazdī cloths such as zarbāf (gold brocade), and fabrics for shawls (shāl), kerchiefs (mindīl), etc.

19. Kārvānsarā-yi Kāshāniyān: the rooms of this caravansarai were occupied exclusively by Kāshānī merchants engaged in selling velvets and other fine textiles from Kāshān and carpets from the Kāshān district.

20. Kārvānsarā-yi Abarqū'īyān: occupied by wholesalers of pottery made in Abarqū (a town on the road from Shīrāz to Yazd) who supplied the pottery sellers with many kinds of earthenware.

21. Kārvānsarā-yi Nakhjavānīyān. In spite of its name (Nakhjavān being a town north of the Aras river, now in Soviet Russian territory), this caravansarai was occupied by merchants and sawdāgarān of Māzandarān, who sold products of their province such as rice, charcoal, and wooden planks.¹⁰⁵

The wealthy merchants who transacted business in their own mansions had to adapt them for this purpose. The usual layout was a compound containing a family house (andarūnī), a group of so-called private rooms (khalvat), and a warehouse (anbār or bār-andāz).¹⁰⁶ Negotiations were conducted in the khalvat. The historian Muḥammad Hāshim Āṣaf has described the grand style of business of a leading Iranian merchant in Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn's reign, Muḥammad Taqī 'Abbāsābādī, who held the title of tājir-bāshī (chief merchant) of Iṣfahān. Whenever a large consignment of his goods was about to reach the city, he employed a band of musicians (naqqāra-chīyān) to make the news known to the craftsmen, drapers, and shopkeepers, and in the early morning of the next day they would rush to his mansion to get the best choice because he served his customers on the basis of the order of their arrival. The craftsmen and shopkeepers of the bazaar did not always buy directly from the big merchants; they more often obtained goods from intermediary wholesalers or even peddlers.¹⁰⁷ This practice probably arose from problems of distribution and of financial capacity. The quantities which shopkeepers

required or could afford to buy were usually small. A draper (bazzāz) requiring 250 yards of cloth in ten or fifteen yard lengths would want the lengths to be in different colours so that his customers might have a choice.¹⁰⁸ The transactions of craftsmen likewise were generally small, because their volume of output was limited. The wholesalers probably performed a useful function in buying large lots from the merchants and splitting them into smaller lots for sale to craftsmen, shopkeepers, and peddlers. The peddlers supplied goods to craftsmen and small shopkeepers as well as to urban and rural consumers. It is difficult, however, to form an accurate and complete picture of the relations between the merchants, wholesalers, retailers, and producers, because documentary evidence is scarce.

Josaphat Barbaro, a Venetian merchant who was in Iran during the reign of Uzun Ḥasan Āq Quyūnlū, states that cloth merchants from different parts of Iran used to visit Yazd, where the finest fabrics were woven. They stayed in the rooms lining a large caravansarai, and weavers bearing their goods appeared in the caravansarai one hour after sunrise. The prices of the goods were then determined, and each merchant picked items of the quality and price of his choice. The seller, if satisfied, left the item in the merchant's possession without demanding immediate payment, and reappeared later in the same day when he called on the merchant and received payment.¹⁰⁹ Buying and selling in this way is still practised in certain trades in Iran today, e.g. between wholesalers and retailers of charcoal, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and flour, but with variations

in the customary terms; in some cases payment falls due on the following Thursday, in the case of the butchers of Iṣfahān in the evening of the same day.

Du Mans states that the craftsmen who worked in their own houses or in workshops in remote alleys and did not have retail shops in the royal bazaar generally sold their products either to wholesalers or to the members of the same craft who possessed sufficient capital to maintain stocks of goods.¹¹⁰ This arrangement was clearly necessitated by the financial weakness of most craftsmen, who needed immediate payment and could not afford to store for later sale at a better price. Sometimes a craftsman who was forced by bankruptcy or ill-health to give up his work could earn a subsistence by acting as a broker of the products of his guild.¹¹¹ Brokers played an important part in arranging meetings and conveying information between merchants or wholesalers and craftsmen or shopkeepers. They still play such a part in the craft industries and markets of present-day Iran. The brokers (dallālān) of the Ṣafavid period fell into distinct categories: brokers of large-scale transactions in all sorts of goods, and local specialist brokers. The large-scale brokers generally resided in the ports such as Bandar 'Abbās and Kung, and the overwhelming majority of them were Hindu Indians and Jews. They obtained information about the likely times of arrival of ships, about the ships' cargoes, and about the estimated prices and the states of supply and demand in the provincial markets. As soon as a ship arrived in the port, they transmitted the news to the merchants. Whenever a merchant lacked sufficient cash or credit, they would arrange the necessary

facilities (presumably loans) from the Indian moneylenders or other sarrāfs . They made sure that they earned good profits in the form of commission for these services.¹¹²

Tahvildār, writing in the Qājār period, states that at Isfahān in his time there were four kinds of brokers: 1: The cattle market brokers (dallāl-i sūq ud-davābb) who acted as intermediaries between buyers and sellers of cattle. 2. The fruit-market brokers. 3. The trade brokers, who arranged transactions in all kinds of goods and merchandise. 4. The opium brokers, who had come into the market recently.¹¹⁹

It is not precisely known how large-scale trading operations were carried out, but according to an unknown European traveller, all such business was arranged by brokers, who were very cunning, after they had agreed on the matter at the seller's house.¹¹⁴ The local brokers were highly specialized in particular branches of business. Every guild in a particular alley (rāsta) of a city's bazaar had its own broker.¹¹⁵ Although there is no documentary evidence that they had any professional organization, they were subject to many regulations (as they still are today), which they probably on the whole respected. The brokers in each branch had close ties with the guild concerned and were often retired or bankrupted artisans of the same craft. In general, business depended to a great extent on personal acquaintance and trust.¹¹⁶ For large and important transactions, however, documents were signed in the presence of a qāzī.¹¹⁷ In the case of ordinary transactions, if commercial documents were used, they were not necessarily signed, but the names of the parties were included in the text and affixed by seals at the foot of the page.¹¹⁸

The reports which have been cited in this Chapter are fragmentary but sufficient to permit certain general conclusions. It might be supposed that the peace and stability which Iran enjoyed in the century before 1722 would have stimulated commercial and industrial growth. The evidence, however, indicates that in this period, Iranian commerce underwent a change of character and direction but did not expand, and indeed began to contract, in total volume, and that the guild industries did not increase their output and did not introduce new products and techniques. This stagnation was certainly to some extent caused by the restrictiveness of the guilds and by the heavy burden of the taxes and imposts on them. Other, and probably more important, causes were inadequacy of capital investment and of enterprise and organization. A class of bourgeois entrepreneurs did not arise from the ranks of the merchants or of the shopkeepers and craftsmen during this period when such a class was arising in Western Europe. Although it does not necessarily follow that such a class would have arisen in Iran if the Şafavid state had pursued different policies, it is evident that Iranian private investment and enterprise were impeded by the Şafavid policies, which are recapitulated below:

- 1) The royal monopolization or semi-monopolization of important contemporary sources of national wealth such as silk.
- 2) The grant of discriminatory commercial privileges, particularly to the English and Dutch East India Companies and to the Armenian merchants of New Julfā.
- 3) The maintenance of royal workshops and commercial agencies, which supported a dependent royal trading community but deprived the Iranian private sector of good sale outlets

and also of good artisans.

- 4) The use of the profits of the royal monopolies and establishments for unproductive hoarding of gold and silver.
- 5) The failure to issue adequate quantities of coins of good standard, and the issue of debased coins, in the last half-century of the period.
- 6) The imposition of regular taxes which were high in relation to the monetary circulation and of occasional imposts which were harmful to business confidence.
- 7) The unawareness of the need for better laws and practices in the field of commercial credit, which consequently fell into the hands of usurers such as the Bānyāns.
- 8) The generally unhelpful or hostile official attitude towards native merchants, which caused potentially successful entrepreneurs to conceal their wealth or invest it in real estate rather than in commerce and industry.¹¹⁹ Fryer was probably right when he wrote that the growth of the King's treasuries diverted wealth from circulation and made the people uninterested in commerce.¹²⁰

Notes 8.

1. Iskandar Bēg Munshī, 2, p.1104.
2. Olearius, pp.229-230; Tavernier, p.43; A. Sherley, pp.118-119.
3. Thévenot, p.77.
4. Iskandar Bēg Munshī, 2, p.1104; Āṣaf, p.94; Naṣrābādī, passim.
5. Mu'īn, 2, p.1947; Floor, The merchants (tujjār) in Qājār Iran, in Z.D.M.G., Band 126, pp.101-135.
6. A. Edwards, pp.136-137.
7. A. Jenkinson, in Purchas, 12, pp.8, 24-25.
8. Lippomano, in English H.R., 7, pp.316-319.
9. Mun, pp.10-11; R. Davis, English imports from the Middle East, in M.A. Cook ed., Studies in the economic history of the Middle East, pp.193-206. For English trade in the 16th century J. Bent, The English in Levant. English H.R., 5, 1890, pp.654-664. For the trade of Bursa, Halil İnalcik, Bursa and the commerce of the Levant, in J.E.S.H.O. 3, pp.131-147. For the trade of the Dutch and the privileges granted to them by Ṣafavid royal decrees, M.A.P. Roelofz, The earliest relations between Persia and the Netherlands, in Persica 6, pp.1-50; K.U. Chaudhuri, pp.303-306.
10. L.R., 3, 177-178; Bruce, 2, p.579; Le Brun, p.313 (Le Brun states that Dutch annual imports into Iran in 1706-1707 included no less than 1200 chests of sugar, each of 150 pounds weight); Du Mans, p.181; Ogilby, p.64.
11. Chardin, 7, pp.36ff; L.R. 5, p.281; M.J. Salbancke, in Purchas, 3, p.86; R. Davis, Aleppo and Devonshire Square, pp.100-101; I.O., G/29/14, folio 32-33; Phillips from Iṣfahān to the East India Company (1721), in R.W. Ferrier, An English view of Persian trade, in J.E.S.H.O., 19, p.197; R. Fisher, The Russian trade, pp.214-217.
12. Lockyer, pp.244-245; Fryer, 2, pp.163-164; A. Raynal, 1, pp.183-184; Glamann, pp.78ff; W.C. Palmer, pp.421ff. Edward Connock, the English agent who arrived in Iṣfahān in March 1617, asked for the admission of 1000 pieces broadcloth and 200 kerseys annually together with 600 tons of tin (L.R., 5, p.281). In 1705, the English East India Company was only able to sell 4800 pieces of cloth annually in Iṣfahān (Bruce, 3, p.600). In 1695-1696, the Dutch obtained new privileges to import goods into Iṣfahān, duty free, to the amount of 20,000 tūmāns per annum (Bruce, 3, p.198).
13. Palmer, pp.421ff.
14. T.M., p.26.

15. L.R., 5 (1617), pp.283-290.
16. Falsafī, 3, p.157: Roelofz states that "Shāh 'Abbās I, in order to promote his silk monopolistic policy, in 1007/1599 declared Gīlān province to be crown land (khāṣṣa). The farmers in the silk producing areas were compelled to deliver their silk to the representatives of the Shāh. The price was fixed before the harvest. This was the source of the Shāh's silk. Sometimes the silk producers sold their production at a better price to the private merchants, whose prices were lower than the cost of Shāh's silk, but it was done secretly and rarely. If transactions of this sort were discovered, the silk would be confiscated. The silk was weighed in the presence of a qāẓī. According to the contracts, the silk was transported in the company of an Armenian who knew about the silk business." Roelofz, Visnich to directors, 17 August 1629, in Persica, 6, pp.39-40; Tavernier, pp.58-59; Farṃān of Shāh 'Abbās I dated Jumādī al-Avval 1033/1624, B.L., Harkian's Collection, no.109.
17. Iskandar Munshī, 1, p.747; Chardin (English edition) p.348; R. W. Olson, The sixteen century "Price Revolution" and its effects on the Ottoman-Şafavid relations, in Acta Orientalia, 37, pp.53-55.
18. Salbancke, 3, p.8 ; L.R., 3 (1615) pp.177-178; Mandelslo, pp.10-11.
19. Fūmanī, pp.264-265; Zayl-i 'Ālam-ārā, p.13; Roelofz, in Persica, 6, p.39.
20. Steensgaard, p.389; D. W. Davis, A primer of Dutch seventeenth century overseas trade, p.121.
21. Hedges, 1, p.210.
22. Fryer, 2, p.242; Bruce, 2 (dated 1682-1683), p.479; R. H. Fisher, pp.214-217; Gemelli, pp.114-117; Salbancke, op.cit., p.86, states that the royal bazaar of Işfahān was regarded as an exhibition for all kinds of European goods; Olearius, p.299, states that "there is nothing, though even so rare in the world, which is not here in Işfahān at a very reasonable rate."
23. B.L., no.4096; Hedges, 1, p.210; Tavernier, pp.43-44; Gemelli, p.133.
24. Fryer (1684 edition), p.264.
25. Chardin, 3, p.376, and 7, pp.364-368; T.M., p.486.
26. Evliya, 2, p.144; Ogilby, p.16.

27. Tavernier, pp.42-43 states that the haberdashers' shops of the Maydān-i Shāh were crammed with goods and luxuries from Venice and Nuremberg.
28. Iskandar Munshī, 2, p.1104; Kayānī, The Iranian caravansarais during the Šafavid period, passim; Emerson, pp.211-221.
29. Kaempfer, pp.92-93; Bruce, 2, (dated 1669-1670), p.267; A. Carre, 3, p.834; Tavernier, p.334, states that the merchants not only paid 16 per cent custom duty to the Shāh's treasury, but also had to pay 2% to the shāh-bandars if they wanted to get away from the hot weather of Bandar 'Abbās.
30. Iskandar Munshī, 2, p.1104; D. W. Davis, op.cit., p.98; Roelofz, in Persica, 6, pp.18-19.
31. Emerson, p.273.
32. L.R., 5 (March 1616) p.150 H. Inalcik in his article Harīr in E.I., 2nd ed., vol.3, pp.212-213, states that from the Ilkhānid period onward the silk production of Shīrvān and Gīlān was collected at Sultāniya and sent via Erzurūm into Ottoman territory. In the reign of Uzun Ḥasan, the silk was collected at Tabrīz, which was his capital, and transported into Ottoman territory by way of either Erzurūm or Bidlīs and Diyārbakr. An important part of the Ottoman silk manufacture was based on the imported Persian silk, which brought a large revenue to the Ottoman treasury. See also Olson, Price Revolution in Acta Orientalia, 37, pp.52-53; Clavijo, p.93; Sharaf Khān Bidlīsī, 1, pp.257-258.
33. L.R., 5 (Edward Connock, May 1617), p.244.
34. I.O., E/317/815 (Factor in Iṣfahān, 16th Oct. 1619) in R.W.Ferrier, in J.E.S.H.O., 19, p.265.
35. H. Dunlop, Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis der Oostindische Compagnie in Perzie (Sources for the history of the East India Company in Persia), in Roelofz, Persica, 6, pp.39-40.
36. Apart from the silk trade, this route had a wider importance for the Iranian merchants. They attempted to revive it, not only for silk, but also for other Iranian agricultural and industrial products such as musk, rhubarb, broadcloths, velvets, and especially gold and silver coins. See A.E.Lybyer, The Ottoman Turks and the routes of Orient trade in English H.R., 30, pp.577-588.
37. Tavernier, p.244; W.C. Palmer, pp.298-299.
38. Olearius, p.324; Foster, The commencement of the East India's Company's trade with Persia, p.16.

39. Pinkerton's Collection, 9, p.210; Chardin, 4, p.158.
40. Inalcik, in M. A. Cook ed., Studies in the economic history of the Middle East, pp.207-219; Inalcik, Bursa and the commerce of Levant in J.E.S.H.O. 3, pp.131-147.
41. Bruce, 2 (dated 1707), p.600 and 3, pp.168-169, 243; Raynal, 1, p.864; Glamann, p.22.
42. Tavernier, p.97; Gilanentz, pp.17-18.
43. Thévenot, p.111; Chardin, 7, p.364.
44. T.M., p.14; Steensgaard, pp.377-379.
45. Olearius, p.366; Carmelites, 1, p.159.
46. R. W. Ferrier, An English view of Persian trade, in J.E.S.H.O., 19, p.194.
47. Fūmanī, pp.264-265; E. B. Sainsbury, pp.214,225-226, 234-237; Falsafī, 4, p.176.
48. Carmelites, 1, p.48.
49. Fryer, 3, p.25.
50. L.R., 5 (June 1617, from Iṣfahān to London), p.288.
51. Herbert, pp.225-229.
52. I.O., Original Correspondents, in W. Palmer, p.78.
53. Zayl-i 'Alam-ārā, pp.13-15.
54. Steensgaard, p.272.
55. Emerson, p.272.
56. For further information, see 'Abd ul-Ḥusayn Sipantā, passim; Zarrābī, Khulāṣa-yi vaqf-nāma-yi Masjid-i Mir 'Imād, pp.508 ff.
57. Chardin, 3, pp.430-432.
58. Tavernier, p.66; Farman of Shāh 'Abbās I dated 1028/1618 in the Vānk Armenian Church at Julfā, Iṣfahān.
59. Carmelites, 1, p.207.
60. Krusinski, 2, pp.34-40. Krusinski heard this report from some people in Iṣfahān.
61. L.R., 5 (June 1617), p.216.
62. Bruce, 2, p.618; Lockyer, p.216.
63. Le Brun, p.323; Krusinski, 2, pp.41-42; Āṣaf, p.97.

64. Du Mans, p.181; Herbert, p.48; Chardin, 3, p.276; Le Brun, p.253; Glamann, pp.158-160, 173.
65. Herbert, p.48.
66. Chardin, 9, p.508.
67. Chardin, 7, p.418.
68. Thévenot, p.3.
69. Du Mans, pp.192-193.
70. Chardin, 4, p.64; Thévenot, p.111.
71. Tavernier, pp.331ff.
72. J. Schacht, article Bay', in E.I. 2nd ed., 1, pp.1111-1113; Ghazzālī, pp.125-160.
73. Tavernier, p.339.
74. Tavernier, pp.159-160.
75. Thévenot, p.111.
76. Chardin, 4, p.64; T.M., p.19.
77. Chardin, 7, p.364.
78. Tavernier, pp.159-160.
79. Cartwright, The preacher's travels, in Osborne's Collection, 1, p.730.
80. Tavernier, p.338.
81. Fryer, 3, pp.109-110.
82. Tavernier, pp.159-160.
83. Gilanentz, p.36.
84. A. K. S. Lambton, Aspects of agricultural organization and agrarian history in Persia, pp.160-188.
85. Olearius, p.303.
86. Valī-Qulī Shāmlū, p.25.
87. della Valle, 1, p.567.
The poet Mullā 'Aṣrī, a Tabrīzī gold thread drawer (zar-kash) who had his shop in the 'Abbāsābad quarter, expressed in these verses his grievance when the deputy minister of finance (nā'ib uş-şadāra, the deputy of the şadr-i khāṣṣa) cut off the pension of the Tabrīzī merchants:

Az dawlat-i Shāh Abū Turāb-i Qāzī, ān baḥr-i 'ulūm,
mustaqbal-i mā rashk barad bar māzī, az ṭāl'at-i shūm.

Har sāl sarī u bīst man gandum būd, az dawlat-i Shāh
Şad sar shuda imsāl bi yik man rāzī, ān ham ma'dūm.

Thanks to the judge Shāh Abū Turāb, that great man
of learning,
our future envies the past, because an evil omen has
appeared.

Twenty maunds of wheat every year used to be our allotment
per head, thanks to the Shāh.

This year a hundred heads had to be content with one
maund, and (now) that has disappeared too.

88. See chapter 3, Muhtasib and Malik ut-tujjār, and Chapter 4,
The guild tax.
89. Naşrābādī, pp.132, 135, 137, 149, 376-377.
90. Salisbury, pp.232-234.
91. Bruce, 2, p.618.
92. T.M., pp.23-24.
93. Khān Shaf'at, p.251.
94. Sanson, pp.12-13.
95. T.M., p.130.
96. Krusinski, 1, pp.116-119.
97. R. Steel and J. Crowther, in Purchas, 4, pp.270ff.
98. Chardin, 2, pp.146-147; J. Hanway, 1, p.248.
99. Evliya, 2, pp.136.
100. Kayānī, The Iranian caravansarai.
101. Āşaf, p.96. In Işfahān there is a surviving merchant's
house and compound of this type belonging to a very old
family of haberdashers called the Khāna-yi Kharrāzī
(haberdashery house).
102. Scroll, B.L., 4096.
103. Tavernier, p.336, mentions that when he was traveling
towards Baghdad, he was accompanied by some Arab merchants.
104. B.L., 4096.
105. Chardin, 7, p.326.
106. Āşaf, p.96.
107. Hanway, 1, p.248; Pinkerton's Collection, 9, p.206.

108. D. W. Davis, p.121.
109. Barbaro, pp.73-74.
110. Du Mans, pp.180-181.
111. Du Mans, pp.194-195.
112. A. Carré, 3, pp.835-836.
113. Tahvīldār, pp.116-117.
114. Pinkerton's Collection, 9, pp.206-207.
115. Inscription dated 1035/1626 in the Masjid-i Shāh at Iṣfahān.
116. Du Mans, pp.194-195.
117. Chardin, 4, pp.146-148.
118. Tavernier, p.103; Chardin, 4, 170.
119. Olearius, p.366; Carmelites, 1, p. 159.
120. Fryer, 3, p. 25ff.

CONCLUSION

Under the Şafavid régime in the 17th and 18th centuries, the people of Iran enjoyed the benefits of unprecedented political unity and stability. Shāh Ismā'īl I acquired political control of nearly all the provinces which traditionally constituted Iran, and his successors were generally able to defend the territory against external aggression and to maintain internal order. The spread and popularity of Shī'ism in most of the territory after its official establishment by Ismā'īl I also led, on the ideological plane, to greater national unity.

As in the other great empires of those centuries, the régime in Iran pursued policies which were intended to increase the power and wealth of the central government and to eliminate or suppress dissent. These policies in fact had the long-term effect of weakening the economy and provoking opposition, and were among the factors which contributed to the Şafavid régime's sudden fall.

To a large extent the Şafavid régime was able to eliminate local or tribal potentates in the provinces and to replace them with its own bureaucracy. The establishment of security in the provinces and along the roads created a favourable environment for trade, which was further promoted by 'Abbās I's encouragement of the building of costly bridges, caravansarais, bazaars, etc. Factors such as currency stability and favourable price conjunctures probably also contributed to the relative prosperity of his reign. It was a period of expansion in internal trade, in the craft industries, and also in external trade. This expansion stimulated urban growth and led to increases

in the populations of the chief cities.

On the other hand, no significant improvements in the technique and organization of agricultural and industrial production were achieved. The peasants and nomads continued to practise traditional methods and to live hard lives under the domination of landowners and khāns. The artisans continued to use slow manual processes, and the merchants and traders neither attempted nor were able to develop new corporate systems appropriate for business on a large scale. It is clear that the prosperity of Iran in the reigns of Shāh 'Abbās I, Shāh Ṣafī, and Shāh 'Abbās II was limited to the cities and did not extend either to the countryside or to the mass of the urban workers. This prosperity disappeared in the course of the reigns of Shāh Sulaymān and Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, when the Iranian economy went into a progressive decline.

In the present study, an attempt has been made to collect and analyse data on the position of one of the main component groups of Iranian society in the 17th and 18th centuries, namely the artisans' and traders' guilds of the urban bazaars. In spite of much searching, the subject remains ill documented. Interpretation of the scanty data can therefore only be tentative.

The method of comparison with European guilds has not been considered appropriate, because the Iranian and European guilds did not operate under similar conditions. Not only the religious and cultural heritages, but also the social and economic environments, were fundamentally different. The rise of the European guilds to powerful positions in municipal

life coincided with the growth of the importance of merchant capital in European national and international life. In Iran merchant capital did not begin to acquire comparable importance until the second half of the 19th century; it played no part in the country's socio-political evolution in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The policies of the Şafavid régime gave rise to significant, but not basic, changes in the traditional class structure of Iranian society. This consisted of the ruling class or élite (khavāşş), comprising the Shāh and his courtiers and relatives, the top ranks of the armed forces, of the bureaucracy, and of the Shi'ite Islamic clergy, and the more powerful landowners and khāns and surviving semi-autonomous local governors. The remainder or "generality" ('avāmm) of the people, who were the ruled class, worked in various activities and obtained different levels of income, but had no share of political power. The Şafavid régime strengthened and enlarged both the bureaucracy and the clergy, with the result that officials and 'ulamā came to form a bigger proportion of the ruling class. This made it easier for individuals from the ruled class, especially literate sons of bazaar artisans or traders, to rise through the ranks of the bureaucracy or the clergy into the ruling class. The Armenians of New Julfā may be said to have become part of the ruling class in so far as they served the government as managers of its monopolies. With few exceptions, members of the ruling class owed their position to the Shāh's favour rather than to their own strength. They could not always be certain of the Shāh's favour, and they were often divided by factional or personal rivalries which made their positions unstable. Even so, the

ruling class kept its hand on the strings of political and economic power.

The ruled class (ra'āyā) consisted of two main categories, which in the terminology of today may be called middle class and lower class. The middle class category comprised the possessors of some measure of financial independence and the possessors of literacy, numeracy, and other superior skills: i.e. the majority of the officials or officers and clerks in the service of the central and provincial governments (ahl-i dīvān), the majority of the clergy and clerical teachers and lawyers (ahl-i 'ilm), the indigenous merchants, and the artisans and shopkeepers who were members of guilds and masters of their own businesses in the bazaars (ahl-i bāzār). The lower class category comprised peasants working on estates owned by landlords, tribal nomads, and urban workers possessing no capital and no skills or only inferior skills.

The distinction between the classes and categories became somewhat blurred in the Ṣafavid period, probably because the demand for literate and numerate officials and 'ulamā was increasing. There were overlaps between the ahl-i dīvān, ahl-i 'ilm, and ahl-i bāzār. Skilled artisans or their sons were frequently given employment in the royal workshops or in government departments. Traditionally the ahl-i dīvān served the ruling class, while the ahl-i 'ilm had economic and family ties as well as spiritual links with the ahl-i bāzār. Among the ahl-i bāzār, merchants who traded directly with India and other foreign countries were wealthier than those engaged in internal trade, while the money-changers, goldsmiths and jewellers at bazaar entrances (qayṣariyas) were

wealthier than other shopkeepers and artisans. The difference of wealth and interest between the various groups in the bazaars, and their links with the bureaucracy and clergy, may be among the reasons why the ahl-i bāzār did not develop into a national bourgeoisie and why they seldom acted in concert. From time to time, however, they joined in common protests against governmental restrictions and impositions, and against oppressive conduct by officials. After the fall of the Safavids, the ahl-i bāzār gained greater independence, until in the late Qājār period the bazaars became centres of political opposition and upheaval.

The lower ranks of the urban working people either belonged to loosely organized associations or guilds which were generally controlled by government officials, or else pursued their activities without the protection of any collective body. Many poor city dwellers retained links with villages and with agriculture. All considered, the social and political significance of this class in Safavid Iran was remarkably small.

The fiscal policies of the Safavid state, like those of other contemporary states, were not intended to promote economic growth or social welfare, but to provide for the government's financial needs. Apart from the extravagance of the royal court, it seems probable that these needs increased from the time of 'Abbās I onward because the process of centralization and bureaucratization was expensive. Moreover, in Iran as elsewhere at that time, it was thought desirable that the state's accounts should show a surplus and that the surplus should be accumulated in treasure hoards.

The reasons for the decay of the Iranian economy under Shah Sulaymān and Shāh Sultān Ḥusayn are fairly clear, although the relative importance of the various factors cannot be assessed. In such an autocratic régime, the ineptitude of the reigning monarchs was of course a major factor. Among the other factors were falls in the relative value of silk and other Iranian exports, foreign competition and rising imports, technical and organizational stagnancy, renewed insecurity on roads and sea routes, burdensome taxation, and governmental restrictions and monopolies. The last-mentioned factors stemmed from the fiscal policies initiated by 'Abbās I and maintained without significant change by his successors. It seems justifiable to conclude that, even if all the other factors had been favourable, the restrictions imposed by the Ṣafavid régime would have prevented the evolution of the indigenous merchants and the ahl-i bāzār into an economically enterprising and politically influential national bourgeoisie.

V. Minorsky (T.M.p.19), in his observations on the fall of the Ṣafavids, has written: "Neither is much known about the town bourgeoisie. The Shāh was the largest capitalist. The merchants traded exclusively for cash, but money was short." While the purpose of 'Abbas I's intervention in the silk trade was to raise money for the government and to switch the export trade away from Ottoman Turkey; this action at the same time deprived the indigenous merchants of important business by concentrating the trade in the hands of the foreign East India companies and the government's Armenian agents. Later the Kirmān wool trade also fell into the hands

of the foreign companies. Indigenous merchants consequently lost opportunities to accumulate capital and marketing experience. The exportation of silk and wool in the raw state had the further effect of depressing the indigenous handweaving industries. The government's transactions were not always settled for cash, as probably more than half were barter deals in which silk and wool were exchanged for European manufactured goods. The privileged importation of European luxuries and broadcloths and Indian cotton textiles similarly curbed or set back the indigenous handicraft industries. Contemporary European observers likened Iran to a caravansarai in which the wealth entered through one door and left through the other. It can be concluded from the available evidence that the balance of the trade with Europe and India became increasingly unfavourable for Iran and that the profits of the trade were not invested in Iranian industry and commerce, but went to European companies, Armenian and other middlemen, and Indian coin exporters, and into royal treasure hoards and official pockets.

The evolution of the guilds under the Safavid régime, in so far as it can be traced, shows trends typical of the evolution of contemporary Iranian society as a whole. Their numbers and memberships grew when the economy expanded, and their internal arrangements probably became more institutionalized, but their basic aims and functions underwent no change. At the same time they were subjected to increasingly strict governmental supervision. The government used the guilds as agencies for tax collection, price fixing, and performance of municipal functions, and supervised them

through the appointment of guild officers (bāshīs and kalāntars) responsible to itself rather than to the members. The construction of royal bazaars to accommodate the more important guilds was another instrument of state control.

Nevertheless, the guilds in the Ṣafavid period retained the essential character which Iranian guilds had possessed throughout their history, namely their spontaneity. They were formed from below by the members, not from above by the government. In regard to the assessment of guild tax (bunīcha) and fixing of prices, they were to some extent able to negotiate and bargain, and in cases of official injustice and oppression they were able to make effective protests, usually with the support of independently minded 'ulamā'. In extreme cases, they could use the weapon of a bazaar closure, equivalent to a strike, though in the Ṣafavid period they did this very seldom.

The internal affairs of the guilds were managed by bāshīs (chiefs) and kadkhudās (headmen). The bāshī was chosen from among the most highly skilled members of a guild, but was appointed by the government and was therefore considered by the members to be on the side of the government. The kadkhudā, whom the members regarded as their own representative, enjoyed much greater respect and made every effort to defend his guild's interests.

The importance of a guild depended on the nature of its trade or craft and on the number of its master craftsmen (ustādān). The masters formed the backbone of every guild. The number of the masters in a guild was one of the main criteria in the assessment of its guild tax.

It seems that the internal regulations of the guilds in the Ṣafavid period were not recorded in writing; in any case, none have survived. It can be taken for certain that such regulations existed and were strictly observed. Traditionally they have always been held in high respect. One questionable feature of the guilds in this period was their practice of limiting the number of shops and therefore the number of master craftsmen allowed to do business in the particular guild's rāsta, of the bazaar. This was made possible by the guild's collective responsibility for the apportionment of the bunīcha, which was not only a liability for payment of a tax (or in the case of a royal bazaar, tax and rent), but also a privilege to operate a shop and a trade. Through payment of the bunīcha, a shopkeeper not only secured his own position, but was usually able to transmit his shop and his business to his heir. Although there is some evidence that when trade was expanding, guilds were willing to increase the number of their shops and masters, the general effect of this practice was to restrict guild membership and make it hereditary.

A characteristic of the Iranian guilds which was noted in the Ṣafavid period and continued to be prominent in the Qājār period was their role in social and religious life. According to the long established tradition of the guilds, a craftsman or shopkeeper must first and foremost be a faithful Muslim. His behaviour should be modelled on that of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, whose virtues of honesty, generosity, and courage are summarized in the word javānmardī (Arabic futūvat; literally youthfulness). For this and other reasons,

the guilds maintained close links with the Islamic clergy and held their own private religious ceremonies. They also played prominent parts in public celebrations and festivities, generally of a religious or semi-religious nature. The bazaars were not only centres of business and handicrafts, but also centres of social intercourse. They contained mosques, takyas, schools, caravansarais, guild guesthouses, chār-sūqs, and coffeehouses as well as shops and warehouses. The chār-sūqs (cross-roads) and coffeehouses were favorite meeting places. On the anniversaries of the Imām Ḥusayn's martyrdom, large crowds came to the commemoration ceremonies in the takyas (special assembly halls). The customary illumination of the bazaar on religious and national festive occasions also attracted many visitors. The bazaar was the place where people exchanged gossip and obtained news. This did not have political repercussions in the Ṣafavid period, but was to do so in the Qājār period.

In the decades of war and disorder which followed the Ṣafavid collapse, the economy of Iran suffered immense damage, but the restrictive and monopolistic policies of the Ṣafavids ended with them. When the economy began to revive in the Qājār period, the people of the bazaars enjoyed greater freedom and acquired greater social and political influence. In the protest against the tobacco monopoly in 1891-1892 and in the struggle for constitutional government in 1906, they played the decisive role. Under the two Pahlavī Shāhs, the importance of the bazaars and the guilds was reduced by various factors such as the growth of modern factory industries which replaced handicraft industries, the spread of

modern shops in the boulevards and suburbs, and the imposition of governmental controls. In the years 1975-1978 the government unsuccessfully attempted to check inflation by fixing prices and to use the surviving guilds as price control agencies. The people of the bazaars generally supported the Islamic revolution of 1979, and in spite of their reduced economic and social importance, their support seems to have contributed a good deal to its victory.

Appendix 1.Celebration of the 'Īd-i Qurbān

Hereunder is a literal translation of Taḥvīldār's description of the ceremonial slaughter of a camel on the 'Īd-i Qurbān as it was performed at Iṣfahān in Qājār times. In this ceremony the craft guilds played an important part. Taḥvīldār states that it followed exactly the same procedure as in Ṣafavid times.

"(As for) the categories of workers having a share in the sacrificial camel, it is not known whether there was a procedure for this in earlier times. The rules and regulations which have survived up to now have a Ṣafavid basis. According to the ancient decree, all the workers and participants get a share in the proceeds, having their status and function in regard to the said camel by right and entitlement inherited from generation to generation.

"At Iṣfahān this ceremony has peculiar features. From the first day of Zul-Hijja to the eve of the 'Īd-i Aẓḥā, the participants march in procession with the camel around the houses of the quarters. (They consist of) two knife bearers, each with three ancient, precious, and strangely shaped steel knives, together with the hone and other tools and gear; two axe-bearers, each with an embossed steel axe; one lance-bearer; two persons bearing cleavers, two bearing iron staffs (baydaq); one bearing a basin with a large lid, embossed inside and out with Qur'ānic verses and charms, in which the proceeds of the appeal for charity and alms are collected every day (on the tenth day the proceeds are

divided according to the traditional apportionment of the bunīcha among all the members); an orator who goes to every house delivering a sermon in the name of pādīshāh-i zamān and a fatiḥa for the householder's deceased relatives; a bearer of the camel's halter, to whom the trappings of the sacrificial beast are entrusted for ten days and who leads the camel around; a band leader together with dancers, drummers, trumpeters, and blowers of (other) wind instruments, each (present) in (large) numbers. It is a strange but widely known fact that all of these workers swear oaths of honesty on this occasion, because differences have repeatedly arisen between the professions inheriting the foregoing tasks. Some who really lacked any title fraudulently and deceitfully seized the tools of the knife-bearers and others who had a good claim to possession by law or custom. They did not see the year out, and their families were ruined, as the title of the rightful owners was again confirmed. The sharers in the camel, in detail, are those who according to the ancient decree are entitled to parts of the body of the sacrificial camel. Each piece is the right of the leader of a group, and the possessor of such a piece is called a mūchadār. Every mūchadār has a group and (performs certain) ceremonial functions. Half of the mūchadārs are of the Ḥaydarī faction (Ḥaydarī-khāna) and the other half are Ni'matī. These two factions are always in dispute and rivalry with each other. Extraordinary turmoil and remarkable uproar occur when the groups march in the procession. The parts of the camel are divided into six, and likewise the groups of the mūchadārs, who are, in detail, two groups from the Ḥaydarī faction, two

from the Ni'matī, and two from two large villages close to the city, each affiliated to one of the two factions. Each group, as it sets out, challenges the other by assembling a great abundance of trappings and a large retinue in rank and order. Each numbers more than a thousand. In the van are the ruffians of the mob. Then come the riders, accoutred and armed, on camelback. They are followed by the lance-bearers of the opposing army and the actors of the religious tragedy (shabīh-khwānī) in black garments representing the captives of Karbalā with golden camel litters and scenes of the bazaar of Shām, i.e. Damascus. After these, the Mīr Ḥājj, splendidly and gloriously equipped, rides at the head of many bands of horns and trumpets, cymbals and brass instruments, all on camelback with their retinues of stave-bearers on foot and armed riders bearing flags. Then come files of camels ridden by bareheaded, shawled pilgrims in white (ihrām), and spare mounts and pack animals with their drivers in front of them. After these come the possessors of the mūchas, each in special dress with his servant and butler (ābdār) and a group of mob ruffians with shields and daggers on foot, marching on the right and the left. The groups from the villages also, each consisting of three or four thousand people, with musical instruments, horns, trumpets and cymbals - and with huge banners and lofty emblems swarm (through the city) and join forces with the Ḥaydarī and Ni'matī factions. On the day of 'Īd-i Qurbān, following the same pattern every year, each faction sets out from its own place passing through the quarters and bazaars until it enters the Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān. At the gate of 'Alī Qāpū, a khaṭīb delivers an oration.

Group by group, passing before the governor of the province who is enthroned above on the balcony of the 'Ālī Qāpū, they proceed by way of the Chār Bāgh of Shāh 'Abbās. From the deputy governor, seated on a marble bench before the porch of the Madrasa of the (Mother of the) Shāh, they receive confectionery and bounty. Then by the Chār Bāgh and the Pul-i Sī u Sih Chashma, they cross the river and proceed down the river bank until they reach the Muṣallā and the slaughtering place of the camel. All those concerned with the camel, such as the knife bearers and others, each with a different ceremonial befitting the circumstances, approaches the camel in the presence of the mūchadārān. The spectators from Iṣfahān, who in these years are fewer, but in former years were more than fifty thousand souls, follow the camel along the Chār Bāgh-i Ṣadr and into the Muṣallā. After the camel's meat is divided, they return in groups and parties by the Ḥasanābād-i Khwājū bridge and the Chār Bāgh-i Ṣadr and so back into the Maydān-Naqsh-i Jahān, whence they disperse to their own quarters. Every year the 'Īd-i Qurbān involves great turmoil through the assembly of these louts and followers of Dajjāl. On the one hand the dignitaries and authorities protect and accompany the factions; on the other hand the dārūghā of Iṣfahān guards the vulnerable points of the city with three hundred infantrymen, and the governor's cavalry and soldiers protect the quarters of the city. When the factions come and go (through the streets), when they encounter each other at intersections, and when the meat is divided, disturbances generally occur and ruffians make themselves conspicuous. For some years (now), by order of

the government, the commotion and disturbance have on the whole been reduced and their excessive uproar has been abated. Before this, there was never a year in which forty or fifty persons did not receive injuries and at least three or four persons were not killed."

APPENDIX 2

Selected shahr-āshūb verses from the Dīvān-i Rīzván of Mīrzā Ṭāhir Vahīd (Central Library of the University of Tehran, ms. no. 4344 (Catalogue, vol. 13, p. 3300)).

Ṣifat-i simsār

Na-dānam zi simsār yak kas fuzūn,
ki uftāda dar fann-i khūd zū-funūn.

Chū jūshān 'asal bāshadash kār-u-bār,
zi yak chashma jūshīda ṣad chishma kār.

The Second-hand Dealer

I have met nobody more skilled than the second-hand dealer,
nobody so well versed in the arts of his business.

His business bubbles like springs of honey;
each spring is the source of hundreds of deals.

Ṣifat-i khayyāt

Chi gūyam zi khayyāt chasbān-qabā?
Marā dūkht bar khāk chūn naqsh-i pā.

Buvad dar dilam az nigāhash rusūm,
kashīdand khayyāt gūyā bi-mūm.

Zi hammām dārad dukānash nishān,
ki bāshand Gabr u Musalmān dar ān.

The Tailor

What shall I say about the tailor who makes such close-
fitting robes?
I am stamped by the garment he sewed, just as the ground
is stamped by a foot-step.

His glance leaves imprints on my heart,
in the same way that tailors draw threads through wax.

His shop has the semblance of a public bath,
since there are Zoroastrian as well as Muslim customers in it.

(The word Gabr [Zoroastrian] was also used to mean
lax, e.g. wine-drinking, Muslims).

Şifat-i baqqāl

Chi gūyam zi baqqāl-i şāhib jamāl,
az ān khaṭṭ-i sabz u az ān rang-i āl?

Asīrān bar aṭrāfash az shahr u dih,
namad-pūsh az gard-i kulfat chū bih.

The Grocer

What shall I say about the handsome grocer
with that youthful down on his cheek and that plum-like
complexion?

He is surrounded by captives from the city and the villages,
whose felt-like figures resemble quinces, since they have
a thick nap of dust from the fatigue (of their journeys
to his shop).

Şifat-i qannād

Chi gūyam zi qannād u ān nūsh-khand
ki shud maghzam az yād-i ū kalla-qand?

Az ān shikkarīn khanda bar rū-yi man
chū halvā-yi pashmak buvad mū-yi man.

The Confectioner

What shall I say about the confectioner and his sweet smile,
which turns my brain into a sugar loaf when I think of it?

His sugary smile, when he looks me in the face,
turns my hair into candy floss.

Şifat-i pūstīn-dūz

Shud az pūstīn-dūz dardam davā
chi gham az zimistān-i pīrī marā.

Gar uftad bi-sangam dar ān kūy rāh,
kunam narmash az puf-nam-i ashk u āh.

The Furrier

My illness was cured by the furrier,
and the sorrow was removed from the winter of my old age.

If my way to that street is stony,
I shall smooth it with the moisture of my tears and sighs
(as the furrier smoothes his furs).

Şifat-i javāhirī

Chi gūyad kasī az javāhir-furūsh,
ki yārī na-mī-āyad az 'aql u hūsh?

Tanash sīm u lab la'l u dandān guhar,
bi īn ganj az jān ghanī shud bashar.

The Jeweller

What is to be said about the jeweller,
when reason and wit give me no help?

His figure, handsome as the silvery moon, his ruby lips,
and his jewel-like teeth,
are treasures which enrich the souls of human beings.

Şifat-i 'aṭṭār

Zi 'aṭṭār gīrand mardum davā,
valīkan marā hast dardī judā.

Shifā yābad az khū-yi tundash 'alīl,
ki parvarda dar shahdash īn angabīn.

The Druggist

The people get medicine from the druggist,
but my affliction is different.

His sharp temper cures the patients,
because he sweetens the pill with this honey.

Şifat-i tīrgar

Dilam-rā hadaf kard tā tīrgar,
nafas hamchū tīram khūrad bar jigar,

Labash hamchū tīr ast khandān mudām,
valī ghayr khūn-rīzī-ash nīst kār.

The Arrowsmith

As soon as the arrowsmith aims at my heart,
a gasp strikes my bosom like an arrow.

His constant smile resembles an arrow notch,
but his work only sheds blood and causes tears.

Şifat-i kamāngar

Kamāngar ki jānam shud ū-rā nishān,
sitam mi-kashad dil az ū chūn kamān.

Marā chūn kamān sākht az ham du tā,
na-dānam sar-i khwīsh-tan-rā zi pā.

The Bowmaker

The bowmaker has made my soul his target,
like a bowstring, my heart suffers the strain of
his tyranny.

He has bent me like a bow;
I cannot tell my head from my foot.

Şifat-i kafshgar

Magū kafsh-dūzām bi kār-i farang,
kaz ū khāna bar man buvad kafsh-i tang.

Na-ranjam zi ū gar burīdast dūst,
ki burrīdan u dūkhtan kār-i ūst.

The Shoemaker

Do not mention the European-style shoemaker,
who makes my home uncomfortable by making such uncomfortable
shoes!

I shall not be distressed if he cuts off his friendship
with me,
because cutting and sewing are his profession.

Şifat-i zargar

Buvad shikva-yi man zi zargar bi-jā,
ki bugdākht ān būta-yi gil ma-rā.

Tavān khwānd kaz kīst tāb u labam,
chū angushtar az saj' muhr-i labam.

The Goldsmith

My complaint about the goldsmith is well founded,
for that fire-clay crucible has melted me.

You can infer who has caused my passion,
from the seal, like a signet-ring, on my lips.

Şifat-i hakkāk

Zi hakkāk bāshad dil-i man ghamīn,
buvad chūn niġīn sar-nivishtam hamīn.

The Engraver

My heart is saddened by the engraver;
my fate resembles the fate of a signet-ring.

Şifat-i khūrda-furūsh

Zi khūrda-furūshām dil-i zār sūkht,
zi gham khūrda chūn shud bi hīchash furūkht.

Muzayyan shuda hamchū ḡusn-i butān,
zi āyina u shāna u vasma-dān.

The Peddler

My heart was saddened and pained by a peddler;
when it was smitten with grief, he sold it for nothing.

His (stand) is adorned like a beauty's (dressing-table),
with mirror, combs, and cosmetic pots.

Şifat-i sarrāj

Savār ast sarrāj bar kār-i khwīsh,
ki az khūb-rūyān fitād'st pīsh.

Namāyad agar rū-yi sihr-āfarīn,
chū mūr-ī savārī shavad zinda-pīl.

The Saddler

The saddler rides his trade,
and gallops ahead of (other) good lookers.

Whenever he shows his fascinating face,
warriors, mighty as elephants, swarm around him
like ants.

Şifat-i sandūq-sāz

Dilam-rā zi sandūq-sāz ast gham,
ki sandūq-i sirrash buvad sīna-am.

Mu'allāq namūdast chūn qufl-i zar,
zi sandūq-i ū mäh-i naw dar nazār.

The Chest Maker

My heart is saddened by the chest maker,
whose secrets lie in the chest of my bosom.

He has the appearance of the new moon,
like the gold lock which he attaches to his chests.

Şifat-i miqrāzgar

Chi gūyīm az husn-i miqrāzgar,
kaz ū shud marā rīz rīza jigar?

The Scissors-maker

What shall we say about the scissors-maker,
who has cut my heart to pieces?

Şifat-i zahgīr-sāz

Chu dīdam rūkh-i yār-i zihgīr-sāz,
bi khūn gashtam āghushta az tīr-i yār.

The Maker of archer's thumb-stalls

When I saw the face of my friend the maker of
archer's thumb-stalls,
his arrow made me blush.

Şifat-i saḥḥāf

Narā yār-i saḥḥāf tā karda şayd,
na-yārad birun chūn kitābam zi qayd.

Shudam pūst az gham dar ān rū-yi yār,
'ayānast chūn kaghaz-i muhra-dār.

The Bookbinder

My bookbinder friend, since he trapped me,
has been taking books out of his paper-press,
but has not released me.

I have been reduced by my grief to skin on which his face
is stamped as clearly as the stamp on fine paper.

Ṣifat-i na'lband

Bi-īn ḥāl uftāda az na'lband,
mah-i naw ki gardūn zi chishmash fakand.

Nazad putk yak bār bar na'l-i sard,
ki ū-rā dam-i garm chūn kūra kard.

The Blacksmith

I have fallen into this state because of the blacksmith,
who resembles the new moon and sheds stars from his eyes.

He never hammers a cold horse-shoe,
He speaks warmly, for he has heated his breath in a furnace.

Ṣifat-i najjār

Zi najjār yābad dilat gar futūḥ,
kunad dīda-at kār-i ṭūfān-i Nūḥ.

Bi-tahrīk-i īn randa, ān tīz chang
zi rukhsār -i 'āshiq tarāshīd zang.

The Carpenter

If the carpenter shows you favour,
your eye will shake like the storm which brought Noah's
flood.

With a stroke of the plane, his sharp hand,
will remove the wrinkles from his admirer's face.

Ṣifat-i ṭabbākh

Zi ṭabbākh bāyad sukhan pukhta guft,
ki natvān bi-ātash zadan dast muft.

Zi ṭabbākhi-yi ū shudam ghuṣṣa-khur,
dili dāram az ghuṣṣa chūn chamcha pur.

The Cook

A statement about the cook must be well done,
and not just fit to be thrown into the fire.

His cooking grieved me so much,
that my heart is as full as his ladle of grief.

Sifat-i khabbāz

Zi khabbāz bishnaw ḥadīsī zi man,
ki afrūkht fikram tanūr-i sukhan.

Buvad sangakash ānchunān dilshikār,
ki dil-hā khūrad āb az ān chashma-sār.

The Baker

Listen to what I have to say about the baker,
for my thoughts have kindled the oven of eloquence!

His punctured crispbread is so delicious,
that hearts are refreshed by those springs.

Şifat-i khayyām

Chi gūyam zi khayyām-i khūrshīd-vash,
ki gardān chū gardūn buvad khāna-yash.

The Tentmaker

What shall I say about the sun-like tentmaker,
whose house, like the sky's vault, is mobile?

Şifat-i shammā'ī

Zi ashkī ki rīzad zi sham'-i qalam,
furūzān namāyam chirāgh-i raqam.

Pay-i khūd-namāyīsh angīkhtand
ki az mūm āyīna-ash rīkhtand.

The Candlemaker

With the tears dripped by the pen-shaped candle,
I kindle the lamp of my pen.

It was moved to self-display
when its mirror-like form was moulded from wax.

Şifat-i taryāk-furūshān

Chi gūyam man az ḥusn afyūn-furūsh,
 ki chūn pīnakī az saram burda hūsh?
 Muzha dārad az zahr chashmash nishān,
 chū chūbī ki taryāk sāyi bi-dān.

The Opium-seller

How shall I describe the fair opium-seller,
 who makes me drowsy and takes away my sense?

His eyelashes show the poison of his eyes
 like the stick with which you grind opium.

Şifat-i gāzur

Zi gāzur chi gūyīm yādash bi-khayr,
 ki ū shust az lawḥ-i mā naqsh-i ghayr.

The Bleacher

What shall we say about the bleacher? We have a
 happy recollection of him,
 Because he washed the imprint of the alien off the
 slate of our memory.

Şifat-i saqqā

Na-gūyam zi saqqā nadāram gila,
 kaz ū dil chū khīk ast pur ābila.
 Dukānash zi nāranj u gul khurram ast,
 bi-ham şuḥbat-i āb u ātash kam ast.

The Water-carrier

I do not say that I have no complaint against the water-
 carrier,
 because he leaves blisters on my heart like those on a
 water-skin.

His shop is freshened with oranges and flowers,
 and water is seldom accompanied by fire.

Şifat-i qaşşāb

Chi gūyam zi qaşşāb u ān rang-i āl,
ki bādā bar ū khūn-i 'āshiq ḥalāl?

Qanār'st dandān u dukkān dahān,
buvad kunda-ash hamchū misvāk az ān.

The Butcher

How can I describe the butcher with his plum-like
complexion?

May a lover's tears be licit wine for him!

His hook resembles a tooth, his mouth a shop,
and his block a toothpick.

Şifat-i 'allāqa-band

Chi gūyam zi qazzāz u ān khū-yi narm,
ki abri-st rūyash chū dukhān zi sharm.

Dukānash zi abrišam i rang rang,
namūda chū taşviri az kār-i farang.

The Braid-maker

What shall I say about the gentle silk cloth dealer,
whose cloud-like silky face puts his shop to shame?

His multicoloured silk cloths
make his shop as bright as a European picture.

Şifat-i 'aşşār

Zi 'aşşār charbī'st pahlū-yi man,
chirāghī'st az sūz-i dil rū-yi man.

Bi-dukkān-i ū az guzasht-i shutur,
zi rūghan falak gashta chūn dabba pur.

The Oilseed Presser

The oilseed presser fattens my ribs
and makes my face glow like a lamp with emotion.

Thanks to the camel which turns (his press),
his shop makes the universe as full of oil as a cruet.

Şifat-i jarrāh

Chi gūyam as ān yār-i paymān-gusil,
ki kaḥḥāl-i chashm ast u jarrāh-i dil.

The Surgeon

What shall I say about that unfaithful friend
who is a healer of eyes and a surgeon (i.e. wounder)
of hearts?

Şifat-i ālū-furūsh

Chi gūyam man az ḥusn-i ālū-furūsh,
ki dārad marā 'ajz-i vaḥfash khamūsh?

The Plum Seller

What shall I say about the fair plum-seller?
My inability to describe him keeps me silent.

Şifat-i nukhūd-paz

Nukhūd-paz bi-ān rū-yi hamchūn bihisht,
dil-i khasta-am-rā barāyash birisht.

The Boiler of Peas

The boiler of peas has such a heavenly face,
that he has roasted my sick heart.

Şifat-i ḥallāj

Chū ḥallāj āmad darūn az daram,
shud āshufta chūn maghz-i panba saram.

The Cotton Carder

When the carder came in through my door,
my brain was battered like a cotton seed.

Şifat-i kharrāṭ

Chi gūyam zi kharrāṭ u ān rūy u mūy,
ki sar-gashta dārad marā hamchū gūy?

Gahī kāsa zāyad az ū gah qadaḥ,
gahī ranj zāyad az ū gah farah.

The Turner

How shall I describe the turner, whose face and hair,
made my heart spin like a ball.

Sometimes he produces a (wooden) bowl, sometimes a goblet,
sometimes pain, sometimes joy.

Şifat-i lavvāf

Man-i 'āshiq-i khasta-yi mustmand,
zi lavvāf uftāda am dar kamand.

The Seller of Camping Equipment

Sick and helpless with love,
I fell into the noose (rope) of the seller of camping
equipment.

Şifat-i naqqāsh

Chi gūyam zi naqqāsh-i Mānī-nizhād,
ki naqshī chū ū kilk-i Mānī nazād.

The Painter

How can I describe the painter, the heir of Mānī,
when even Mānī's brush could not produce such paintings
as he does?

Şifat-i kūza-gar

Dil-i man khūrad āb az kūza-gar,
buvad nā'ib-i kūza īn chashm-i tar.

The Potter

The potter has filled my heart with water,
My tearful eyes act as the jug.

Şifat-i kārdgar

Kasī gar sukhan gūyad az kārdgar,
khūrad kārđ bar dil ma-rā zīn khabar.

The Cutler

If anyone speaks about the cutler,
my heart is wounded as if with a knife.

Şifat-i shamshīrgar

Shahīdam az ān shūkh-i shamshīrgar,
dil-i man zi ū karda qaṭ'i naẓar.

The Swordsmith

I am a martyr to that impudent swordsmith,
whose disregard has humbled my heart.

Şifat-i bakhya-dūz

Chi gūyad kas az shūkhi-yi bakhya-dūz,
kaz ū bakhya-yi chashm-i man gasht rūz?

The Stitcher

What can be said about the impudence of the stitcher,
who let daylight into my eyes by removing their stitches?

Şifat-i suqurlāṭ-dūz

Chi qūyad kasī az suqurlāṭ-dūz,
vaz ān sham'-rū-yi shabistān-furūz.

Zi mulk-i Farang īn ṭarf kard rū,
chū sawghāt āvard imān, bi ū.

The Scarlet Robe maker

How can anyone describe the scarlet robe maker,
whose radiant face illuminates the shabistān
(night prayer room)
of the mosque like a candle?

Scarlet cloth came straight to this country from
Europe,
and the robe maker pinned his faith on it as if
it was a traveler's gift.

Şifat-i shīshagar

Dilam āb gardīd az shīshagar,
bi-dih may ki buḡzasht ābam zi sar.

The Glass-maker

The glass-maker has melted my heart,
give me wine, for I am gasping.

Şifat-i dallāk

Chi gūyam zi dallāk u tarz-i nigāh,
ki dil-rā nigābash kunad kharj-i āh?

The Masseur

What shall I say about the masseur and the nature of
his glance?
A glance at him makes the heart let out a sigh.

Şifat-i chaqshūr-dūz

Guzāram bi chaqshūr-dūzān fitād,
marā band chaqshūr bar pā fitād.

The Trouser Maker

When I passed through the trouser maker's bazaar,
my trouser belt fell to my feet (with wonder).

Şifat-i misgar

Shud az misgar u ān rukh-i bā-şafā,
chū dukkān-i misgar saram pur-şidā.

Az ān kafcha u chamcha tā zāda-and,
hama dast-i bay'at bi-ū dāda-and.

The Coppersmith

The coppersmith and his cheerful face
echoed in my head like the noise of a copper workshop.
Even before he had beaten out those ladles and scoops,
all (the customers) gave him allegiance.

Şifat-i rangraz

Sirishkam zi gham surkh rukh zard kard,
marā rangraz īn chunīn rang kard.

The Dyer

If my tearful eyes have become bloodshot and my face
has become pale,
It is the dyer who has dyed me these colours.

Şifat-i āhangar

Chi gūyam zi āhangar u rū-yi ū
ki chūn kūra-yi ū buvad khū-yi ū?

The Smith

What shall I say about the appearance of the smith,
when his temper is as hot as his forge?

Şifat-i daqqāq

Zi daqqāq ruzam chunīn tīra shud,
bi-daqqāqi-yi sīna 'umram guzasht.

The Miller

My days have been darkened by the miller,
I have passed my life being thumped on the chest
(i.e. like grain in a mill).

Şifat-i ṭalā-kūb

Dilam shīva-yi yār-rā pīsha kard,
ki gashtam ṭalā-kūb-i īn rū-yi zard.

Bi-tadbīr dar jild-i āhū khazīd,
bīyābān-i dil-rā chū majnūn burīd.

The Goldbeater

I adopted the style of my friend;
my pale face has been stamped with gold (leaf).

Like Majnūn he has stamped his imprint on the
desert of my heart,
in the same way that he skilfully stamps (the title
in gold) on the gazelle-leather binding (of a book).

Şifat-i sūzangar

Zi sūzangarān kār gardīd zar,
 zi fūlād dar rāh-i man rīkht khār,
 Chū zulfam parīshān u afsāna kard,
 marā kaghaz-i sūzanash shāna kard.

The Needlemaker

My life was made miserable by the needlemaker,
 who cast steel thorns on my path.

After ruffling my hair in a fabulous way,
 he combed me with his needle paper.

Şifat-i basmachī

Dilam mād az basmachī dar shigift,
 az ū dīda-am naqsh-i hayrat girift.

The Block Printer

My heart was astonished by the block printer,
 who has left an imprint of wonder on my eyes.

Şifat-i zarkash

Shavad yār-i zarkash gul-i ātashī,
 chū az rang-i zardam kunad zar-kashī.

Nigāram chunān kard şan'atgarī
 kaz in mū tavān bāft dām-i parī.

The Gold Wire Drawer

My friend, the gold wire drawer becomes a fiery red rose,
 when he draws gold from my pale (face).

My idol performs his craft so skilfully,
 that he could trap a fairy with these hairs (of gold wire).

Şifat-i rīkhtagar

Zi ham rīkhta rīkhtagar marā,
 buvad rangam az rukh tan az jān judā.

Garat sākht manqal agar jān āb,
 shumārī yakī ān du-rā dar hisāb.

The Foundryman

The foundryman has upset me;
he has removed the colour from my face and soul from
my body.

Whether he makes you a chafing dish or a water jug,
you will find both equally (good).

Şifat-i chīlāngar

Zi chīlāngarān shu'la dar jān girift,
dil-am ātash az āb-i ḥayvān girift.

Juz anbur kasī shākh-i khushkī nadīd,
ki şad rang gardad samar zū padīd.

The Forge Master

The forge master has set my soul aflame;
The water of life has set my heart on fire.

Nobody has seen a dry branch comparable with his tongs,
which pick hundreds of varieties of fruit.

(The word chīlāngar is often translated locksmith, but has a wider meaning; he makes tongs, chains, and skewers as well as locks).

Şifat-i naqqār

Chi gūyam zi naqqār-i nīkū-liqā,
ki khūrd ustūkhān-i marā chūn humā.

The (Bone) Carver

What shall I say about the fair faced (bone) carver,
who has eaten my bones like an osprey (i.e. carved a
favourable impression).

Şifat-i rufūgar

Rufūgar jahān-rā dar-āvard bi-band,
gusasta'st bā ānkī ū-rā kamand.

The Darner

The darner stitches up the world,
even though his lasso is broken.

Şifat-i şarrāf

Bi-şarrāf shud şarf-i 'umram tamām,
az ū gasht chūn nuqra-am kār-i khām.

Dil-i khalq-rā ḥalqa-yi ūst dām,
ki gīrand mardum bi-īn kār vām.

The Moneychanger

My whole life has been devoted to the moneychanger,
who has turned my crude work into silver.

His curls trap people's hearts,
when they get loans from him.

Şifat-i pālūda-sāz

Bibīn nard-i fikrī ki īn ṭifl bākht,
ki az dāna-'ī gandum ān dām sākht.

The Pālūda Maker

See what a clever game of backgammon this boy has played,
by making this trap from grains of wheat!

(Pālūda is a concoction of jelly-like threads or hairs made
from wheat starch and sweetened with sugar).

Şifat-i kalla-paz

Marā kalla-paz karda bī dast u pā,
khabar nīst az pā u az sar marā.

The Sheep's Head Fryer

The sheep's head fryer has disconcerted me (taken away
my head and feet),

I do not know where my head and feet are.

(The sheep's head fryer also fries sheep's trotters).

Şifat-i kabābī

Kabābī az ān rū-yi pur-āb u tāb,
marā karda bar ātash-i dil kabāb.

The Kabāb Griller

The kabāb griller with his bright, glistening face,
has grilled me in the fire of emotion.

Şifât-i zarnishāngar

Bi-jānam magū zarnishāngar chi kard,
marā zar-nishān kard az rang-i zard.

The Gold Inlayer

Don't ask what the gold inlayer has done to my heart!
He has put an inlay of golden paleness onto my complexion.

Şifât-i zira-sāz

Agar az zira-sāz pursī sukhan,
barad chashm bar chashm-i dil-rā zi man.

Zira-sāz-rā barg-i gul kun qiyās,
ki ū-rā buvad chasm-i bulbul libās.

The Chain-Mail Maker

If you ask me to speak about the chain-mail maker,
he captivates my heart with every glance of his eye
(meaning also every link of his chain mail).

You may compare him with a rose petal,
because his clothes are made of nightingale's eyes
(i.e. the chain mail which he makes has links
as small as nightingale's eyes).

Şifât-i utū-kash

Zi bīdād-i yār-i utū-kash magū,
ki afkanda dar ātasham chūn utū.

The Ironer

Don't ask me about the wrong doings of my friend the
ironer!
He has put me, like his iron, onto the fire.

Şifât-i mīva-furūsh

Furūshanda-yi mīva an shākh-i zar,
ki sad rang dārad chū jannat samar.

The Fruiterer

The fruiterer resembles a golden bough,
which like (the boughs of the trees in) the
garden of paradise bears hundreds of sorts of fruits.

Şifat-i sha'r-bāf

Dilam dar bar-i sha'r-bāf ast band
ki har tār bāshad bi dastash kamand.

Chū zarbāft ānjā chū shud maskanam,
shavad pur zi gul khud bi-khud dāmanam.

The Brocade Weaver

My heart is captive to the brocade weaver,
in whose hand every thread is a noose.

Like a piece of brocade, I made his shop my abode,
and since that time my skirt is of course being
filled with roses.
(i.e. flower patterns used in brocade weaving).

Şifat-i tukhma-furūsh

Chi gūyam zi bīdād-i tukhma-furūsh,
ki dar sīna-am sūkht dilrā zi jūsh?

The Seller of Roasted Water Melon Seeds

What shall I say about the wrongdoings of the seller of
roasted water melon seeds?
He has roasted the heart in my bosom with the fervour
(of the emotion which he caused).

Şifat-i jadval-kash

Zi jadval-kasham bāgh-i dil khurram ast,
az ān jūy dāyim bi-chashmam nam ast.

The Measuring Ruler Maker

The garden of my heart is freshened by the measuring
ruler maker;
like an irrigation ditch, he constantly makes my eyes damp.

Şifat-i maftūl-kash

Zi maftūl-kash rūz-i man shud siyāh,
shudam hamchū maftūl-i ū madd-i āh.
Chū az dast-i ustād zaḥmat kashīd,
bi-dān pāya kārash zi diqqat rasīd.

The Wire Rope Maker

My days have been darkened by the wire rope maker;
I have been stretched, like his wire rope, by my sighs.

His work has attained this degree of precision,
because he had to put up with so much pestering by the
master (who trained him).

Şifat-i ghalyān-furūsh

Chi gūyam zi ghalyān u ghalyān-furūsh
kaz u hamchū ghalyān dilam dāsht jūsh.

The Hookah Seller

What am I to say about the hookah and the hookah seller?
He has made my heart bubble like a hookah (water pipe).

Şifat-i namad-māl

Buvad az namad-māl nālīdanam,
rukh az hijr bar khāk malidanam.

Kunam chūn buzurgī bi-gardūn rasad,
bi-pā ū bi-ghaltānadam chūn namad.

The Felt Maker

My grievance against the felt maker
makes me rub my face in the dust out of (grief for my)
separation (from him).

When my neck proudly reaches to the sky (i.e. when I
feel extremely proud),
he rolls me, like felt, with his feet.

Şifat-i sabzī-furūsh

Marā shūkh-i sabzī-furūshī-st yār,
ki sabzī furūshad bi-bāgh u bahār.

The Greengrocer

I have a greengrocer friend who is an impudent fellow;
he does his vegetable business with gardens and with springtime.

Şifat-i kāghazgar

Zi kāghazgarān bāshad ān iztirāb,
ki sharhash nagunjad bi chandīn kitāb.

Zi āb-i tanūr ast kārash ravā,
kaz īn āb mīgardadash āsyāb.

The Papermaker

To describe the trouble which the papermaker causes
(in my heart),
several books would be needed.

His business depends on the water of his tank,
which makes his business flourish.

Şifat-i jurāb-dūz

Zi jurāb-dūzān dil-i zār sūkht,
ki chashm-i marā bar rukh-i khwīsh dūkht

Kamānash buvad ḥalqa u chilla dār,
bi-pā mīkunad chūn rasad vaqt-i kār.

The Stocking Knitter

My heart was pained and saddened by stocking knitter,
who fastened my eyes on his face.

His lasso is the rope and his bow the gallow,
when the time to use it comes, he erects it in his shop.

(In Persian the frame on which stockings are knitted is
called a "bow").

Şifat-i mushk va 'aṭr-furūsh

Dilam az shamīm-i butī shud fagār,
ki bū mīfurūshad bi-bāgh u bahār.

The Seller of Musk and Perfume

My heart was wounded by the scent of the idol,
who sells fragrance to the garden and springtime.

Şifat-i muhr va tasbīh-sāz

Chi gūyam man az muhr u tasbīh-sāz
ki rūyam buvad sū-yi ū dar nīyāz.

The Maker of Prayer Tablets and Rosaries

What can I say about the maker of prayer tablets and rosaries,
to whom my face is turned in supplication.

(Prayer tablets, onto which the head is lowered in prayer,
prostration, are made with dust from Karbalā where the Imām
Husayn is buried).

Şifat-i hanā-sāz

Hanā-sāz zad bar dil az ghuṣṣa nīsh,
az ān kard rangīn rukh-i kār-i khwīsh.

The Henna Manufacturer

The henna manufacturer stamped my heart with his glance;
the same glance with which he has dyed (i.e. adorned)
the face of his business.

Şifat-i 'allāf

Dilam-rā chū 'allāf az gham fishurd,
rag-i man bi-ham tāb chūn burma khurd.

The Hay Dealer

My heart was weigh ed down with grief about the hay dealer,
my veins were twisted like a coil of hay.

Şifat-i davāt-gar

Davātī ki jānān bi-bāzīcha sākht,
dilam-rā barā-yi maşāliḥ gudākht.

The Inkwell Maker

The inkwell which my dear friend made to tease me,
has melted my heart into (ink) ingredients.

Şifat-i ātash-bāz

But-i ātash-afshān-i mūshak-davān,
ki bāshad nīshanash dil-i āsmān.

The Pyrotechnician

My flame-scattering idol, who fires off rockets,
makes the sky's heart his target.

Şifat-i qumār-bāzān

Chi qūyam man az vaşf-i ahl-i qumār,
ki īn qawm-rā pāk bāzīst kār.

Hama shusta az khwīsh-tan chirk-i pūl,
bi-şābūn-i yak ustūkhān-i bajūl.

The Gamblers

What can I say to describe the gamblers?
Risking all is the job of these people.

They wash their hands clean of filthy lucre
with ankle-bone soap.

(Sheep's ankle-bones are used in Iranian gambling games (qāp-bāzī). Bars of hand-made soap used to be shaped like sheep's ankle-bones).

Şifat-i ahl-i ma'ārik

Chū ṭiflān digar ṭab'ibazīchagar,
zi ahl-i ma'ārik sukhan kard sar.

The Entertainers

I have a cheerful temperament, like a child's;
so I will again start to talk about the entertainers.

Şifat-i kushtīgīr

Zi kushtiyi bā dil sukhan sar kunam,
khiyālātishān-ra muşavvar kunam.

The Wrestler

I will start by talking about wrestling with my heart,
before I depict my notion of wrestlers.

Şifat-i ṭās-bāz

Shud az ṭās aṭrāf-i ū lālā-zār,
bi-rang-i nihālī ki rīzad bahār.

The Dicer

The dice have surrounded him with a tulip bed,
coloured like the fresh blossom which spring sheds.

Şifat-i huqqa-bāz

Chi gūyad kas az shūkhi-yi huqqa-bāz,
ki paydā-yi ū hast pinhān chū rāz?

The Juggler

What is to be said about the impudence of the juggler,
whose visible show is as hidden as a secret?

Şifat-i büryā-bāf

Man az büryā-bāf dīdam jafā,
bi-haddī-ki shud pūstam büryā.

The Rush Mat Weaver

The rush mat weaver has treated me so harshly
that my skin has become (yellow and shrivelled)
like a rush mat.

Şifat-i sang-tarāshān

As īn yār-i shīrīn-i Farhād-fann,
dilam chūn zi yak sang shud dar badan.

The Stonemason

This charming (shīrīn) friend, skilful as Farhād,
has turned the heart in my body into a piece of stone.
(Farhād is the ill-fated stonemason who loves Queen Shīrīn in
Nizāmī's Khusraw va Shīrīn).

Şifat-i kūra-paz

Na-shud pukhta az kūra-paz nān-i man,
az ū sūkht har chand īmān-i man.

The Brick Maker

The brick maker has not baked my bread,
but he has burnt my (religious) faith (i.e. I have
become so fond of him that I have forgotten my religion).

Şifat-i Khisht-māl

Chu qālib bi-yak musht gil khisht-māl,
dahān-i marā bast az qīl u qāl.

The Mud Brick Maker

The mud brick maker silenced my mouth with his loud argument,
as he might have done with a handful of brick-moulding mud.

Şifat-i qişş-khwān

Chi gūyad kas az khūbī-yi qişş-khwān,
ki dar mulk-i khūbī-st sāhibqirān.

The Story Teller

How can the kindness of the story teller be described?
His horoscope has made him the king of the empire of
kindness.

Şifat-i tāj-dūz

But-i tāj-dūz ast tāj-i saram,
chū sham' ast az ān tāj bāl u param.

Kasī-rā ki nabvad zi jang ihtirāz,
zabānash chū tāj ast dāyim dirāz.

The Tāj Maker

The handsome tāj maker is my crown;
my wings and feathers (i.e. arms and hand) are drawn
(like those of a butterfly) towards the candle-like
(beauty of) his tāj.

Those who do not shun war
constantly stick their tongues out like the (frontward
bulge of a) tāj.

(Tāj means crown, and was also the name of the red-coloured hat,
made by sewing together twelve gussets each representing one of
the twelve Imāms, which were worn by the Qizilbāsh troops of
Şafavid army. This hat had a frontward bulge comparable with
a tongue.

Şifat-i pālān-dūz

Khīrad gar chi bāshad falāṭūn-shi'ār,
kashīd ast pālān-garash zīr-i kār.

The Packsaddle Maker

Wisdom, even when equal to Plato's,
is brought under the control by the pack-saddle maker.

Şifat-i qāshuq-tarāsh

Chi gūyam az ān yār-i qāshuq-tarāsh,
nadīdam ki qāshuq bi-sūzad chu āsh.

The Wooden Spoon Carver

What shall I say about my friend the wooden spoon carver?
I have never felt a spoonsburning (my mouth) as hot soup does.

The carving of wooden spoons (mostly small ladles for serving
sherbet) is still an Iranian craft. Its centre is the small town

Ābāda in the north of Fārs, which has pear orchards. The spoon is chiselled out with a fretwork handle, all from a single piece of pear tree wood).

Şifat-i sa'lab-furūsh

Chi gūyam man az yār-i sa'lab-furūsh,
ki chūn dīg dārad marā garm jūsh?

Tamāshā-yi rukhsār-i ān dil-rubā,
buvad sa'lab-i garm khurdan marā.

The Seller of sa'lab

What shall I say about the fair sa'lab-seller
whose good looks keep my feelings as hot as a
pot of boiling sa'lab?

Seeing his charming appearance,
gives me the same pleasure as drinking his warm
sa'lab sherbet.

(The seeds of a wild plant named sa'lab are used to make a sherbet).

Şifat-i shāna-i tarāsh

Bi-man tā but-i shāna-gar shud duchār,
marā rūz u shab shāna bīnī'st kār.

The Comb Maker

Ever since I came across the adorable comb maker,
you can see that my nights and days have resembled the
teeth of a comb.

Şifat-i qalandar

Marā ān qalandar, qalandar namūd,
zi man şabr u imān u ũaqat rubūd.

Malūl az dil u jān mukaddar shudam,
guzashtam zi dunyā qalandar shudam.

The Qalandar (Wandering Darvish)

That qalandar has made me a homeless wanderer (qalandar);
he has snatched away my patience, my faith and my endurance.

I am now annoyed with my heart and soul,
because I have become a homeless wanderer (qalandar) and have
renounced the world.

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