Sadiqi employed this fluid form of draughtsmanship to define mass and suggest movement. Unlike earlier sixteenth-century drawings the contours of forms, such as the bear's back in 'Man Attacked by a Bear' [fig. 92], are broken rather than outlined by a single line of uniform thickness.

Another way in which Shaykh Muhammad may have influenced Riza and Sadiqi Beg is by exposing them to European paintings. According to Iskandar Beg Munshi, Shaykh Muhammad 'introduced the European style of painting in Iran and popularised it, and no one equalled him in the delineation of faces and figures'. While greater naturalism is not immediately obvious in the portraits by Riza and Sadiqi Beg, both artists incorporated European figures in their work as early as the 1590s. Sadiqi Beg copied Flemish woodcuts and Riza based a drawing of a nearly nude sleeping woman on an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi. He then produced a painted version of this figure in which he altered her pose, added a stream and more rocks to the setting, and placed a letter next to her. In the hands of Sadiqi Beg or a close follower this figure was transformed into Balqis, the wife of Solomon, who received love letters from him carried by a hoopoe [fig. 93]. By depicting the figure awake and fully clothed in a robe with a remarkable wavy design, the artist has metamorphosed a European-inspired composition into a Persian image complete with Persian literary allusions.

The subject matter of Riza's and Sadiqi Beg's single-page works from the 1590s fall into two broad categories: portraits of young courtly figures of either sex and older men who are labourers, dervishes or of indeterminate class. The former type of portrait, whether painted or drawn, enjoyed a vogue through most of the sixteenth century and continued to be in demand in the seventeenth century. Drawings of dervishes and other non-courtly types, however, became extremely popular under the influence of artists such as Riza and Sadiqi as well as Muhammadi and Siyavush [fig. 94]. Despite Shah 'Abbas' suppression of the Sufis in 1002/1595–4,
Sadiqi employed this fluid form of draughtsmanship to define mass and suggest movement. Unlike earlier sixteenth-century drawings the contours of forms, such as the bear's back in 'Man Attacked by a Bear' [fig. 92], are broken rather than outlined by a single line of uniform thickness.

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With the move of the capital to Isfahan, changes occurred in the royal kitabkhaneh. Sadiqi Beg ceased to be director, and was replaced by the calligrapher 'Ali Riza 'Abbasi who supplied the inscriptions to the Friday mosque in Qazvin and the two mosques in the maidan at Isfahan. From about 1011/1605 to 1019/1610 Riza abandoned his work for the court and a period ensued in which he depicted only dervishes, wrestlers and non-courtly figures. When he returned to the royal atelier, his style changed markedly. In place of the calligraphic speed that had characterized his drawings and the fine brushwork and the exquisite rendering of textures of his paintings, closed contours and thick lines now typified his drawings while his paintings featured a new palette in which purple and yellow ochre predominated. In all his works the silhouette of the figures now tended towards bottom-heaviness, accentuated by the large melon-shaped thighs and narrow shoulders of both men and women. As late as the 1620s Riza still recalled his artistic forerunners, as a portrait based on a work by Muhammad demonstrates [fig. 95]. Despite the return to the slender, elongated torso of the 1590s and 1570s, Riza has given the figure a seventeenth-century face complete with thick eyebrows which meet, round cheeks and full lips.

Like his and Sadiqi Beg's drawings of the 1590s, Riza's paintings of Isfahani youths from about 1019/1610 until his death in 1044/1635 set the style for a group of artists who were active during the reigns of Shah 'Abbasi's successors, shahs Safi and 'Abbas II. At the end of his life Riza portrayed a European, and in a portrait by one of his students Riza is shown painting a man in European dress. This type of work not only reflected the increasing presence of Europeans in Isfahan but also demonstrates Riza's innovative role in Safavid painting throughout his long career. Although European ideas entered Persian painting slowly through the work of Shaykh Muhammad, Riza and Sadiqi Beg, the momentum increased after the death of Shah 'Abbasi and ultimately European art exerted as much influence on Persian painting as Chinese art had done in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.
Although the paintings of Riza from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century rarely include figures in garments of anything but plain cloth, his works of the 1620s portray men and women dressed in elegant brocades with large patterns and a great quantity of gold. Fabrics of this type had been in production since at least the beginning of the seventeenth century, since they are listed in European archives as early as 1605. Given the large scale of their patterns, it seems likely that such textiles were intended for use as furnishing fabrics, not for garments, except heavy cloaks. The patterns, weave and weight of textiles used for most clothing until about the 1620s are represented by a group of eight pieces with the signature of Ghiyas, a master textile designer from Yazd who enjoyed favour at the court of Shah 'Abbas. These compound satins consisted of scenes derived from Persian literature, such as Layla visiting Majnun in the desert, and have a wealth of floral and vegetal detail in the field between the figures and animals. The vocabulary of bookbindings and manuscript borders also occurs in early seventeenth-century figured textiles, as is evident on a hat with animal combat and Chinese style chilins (fig. 96). Although the shape of this hat is not found often in Persian painting of the early seventeenth century, its shape and the two slits in its brim are related to those found in a hat on a figure depicted by Riza in 1025/1614. Certainly the robe worn by Balsis in figure 95 would have been made of this type of fabric, even if no textiles with the waqwaq design have survived.

Unlike the carpets, which appear little influenced by the kitabkhaneh, the designs of the finest figured textiles may have originated in the artists' workshop, after which they were 'translated' by men called naqshband, such as Ghiyas, into terms that were understandable to weavers. Qazi Ahmad mentions one Maulana Kepek who 'was good at 'aks, and in mastering that art made [new] discoveries. He created curious images, wonderful designs, rare colorings.' Although Minorsky takes 'aks to mean the gold painted decoration found in the borders of illuminated manuscripts [see fig. 42], he notes that Bayani says that 'aks refers to the use of stencils. If so, the standard forms of chinoiserie decoration could have been easily passed among artists working in different media. As some large-scale velvets featured standing figures alone or in pairs, the direct influence of painters working in the royal atelier seems more likely. A famous velvet in which a youth in an extravagant turban inclines his head towards the falcon perched on his hand not only reproduces the silhouette of Riza's Isfahani

96 (left) Hat, early 17th century, silk, compound cloth, h. 19 cm, w. 31 cm, Koir Collection. As the 16th century progressed, men's headdresses branched out from turbans to include a variety of caps, with or without fur lining. Hats with a split brim such as this one appear in the 1576–7 Shakhnameh of Shah Ismail II and later.

97 (right) Textile fragment, early 17th century, silk, double cloth, 52.5 x 17.5 cm, British Museum, no. 1985.5-6.1, acquired with funds given by Edmund de Unger, Esq. As the group of related red and off-white silk textiles ranges stylistically from the last quarter of the 16th century to the first quarter of the 17th, it is probable that they were the speciality of one workshop or locality.

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youths but also simulates his staccato treatment of turban and sash fringe with clusters of silver-foil-wrapped loops. These luxury fabrics were used for garments as well as furnishings. The appearance of cushion covers with expressively drawn figures who sometimes gaze at the "real" sitters in the picture may also indicate close co-operation between weavers and painters, though the latter were certainly exercising artistic licence in these works. Finally, like certain types of carpets, some classes of textiles that had first been produced in the sixteenth century [see fig. 61] continued to be manufactured in the seventeenth [fig. 97]. Although the same format of rectangles containing pictorial vignettes from the story of Layla and Majnun and inscriptions appears in seventeenth-century silk, the figural style has been adapted to that associated with the Isfahan school of painters. Textiles such as this provide a glimpse into the exigencies of the market, namely the need of weavers to amend the patterns of their wares to reflect the fashion of the day.

Although foreign visitors to the court of Shah 'Abbas describe the use of gold vessels at banquets, the great majority of extant metal objects from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries are made of brass or tin-foil copper. A brass pillar candlestick dated 996 [1588–9] demonstrates the continuity of this form at the beginning of the reign of Shah 'Abbas. Its shaft is faceted and decorated all over with a split-leaf palmette and arabesque design. The socket and the transition to the foot each have a central inscription band set between a row of floral scrolling, repeated in simplified form on the sides of the foot. Likewise, a pillar candlestick dated 1007 [1598–9] and signed by Muhammad ibn Ahmad retains the faceting and inscription bands above and below its shaft [fig. 78]. However, this piece is decorated with sixteen vignettes of youths and girls pouring wine, playing music or lounging on cushions, as well as one image of Layla and Majnun in the wilderness. Moreover, the surface of the zigzag band in the middle of the shaft, the base and the ridges near the socket are all enamelled. This is a very early and rare occurrence of enamelling in Safavid metalwork. Although the workmanship on this piece is somewhat careless, the figured imagery and enamelling suggest that its maker was experimenting with new effects on an established shape of object.

An undated flask in the British Museum [fig. 98] bears very similar decoration on its elegantly rounded body and thus must be
close in date to the 996/1588–9 candlestick and possibly from the same place of manufacture. On the neck, above and below a flattened boss, rise overlapping ogives between pairs of elongated leaves, simplified in the uppermost band. The shoulder contains an inscription in five cartouches that refers to the function of the flask. Although its shape resembles that of the vessels held by young wine-servers in Safavid painting, this flask was most likely used for ablutions in conjunction with a basin from which it has become separated.

An undated brass basin [fig. 99] is decorated with arabesques and split-palmette leaves very much along the same lines as those found on the body of the flask. Its shape with compressed rounded sides, no foot, a slightly everted neck and minimal lip is generally analogous to that of a group of basins published by Melikian-Chirvani of which one is dated 1015/1604–5. The decoration of a tinned copper bowl [fig. 100] of similar shape, however, relates far more closely to that of the group discussed by Melikian-Chirvani which he assigns to a Khurasan production site and to an undated bowl which he attributes to western Iran. Although its decoration is hardly as sharp as that of the Khurasan group, the organization of motifs on the body of the basin recalls the alternation of ornament and voids that one finds on both the Khurasan and the western Iranian bowls. Around the neck runs an inscription in cartouches separated by undecorated quadrilobes. Suspended at intervals from a narrow band of joined trilobes, half ovals with trefoils join alternately to cartouches with overlapping scrolls and larger quatrefoils enclosing animals in cusped roundels. The blank areas between these design elements contain multi-petalled flowers. Although at least two major schools of metalwork must have

98 (above) Flask, c. 998/1590, cast brass, engraved decoration, h. 57.8 cm, British Museum, OA 78.12-30.755, Henderson Bequest. Makers of Safavid base metal objects maintained the elegant forms associated with gold and silver wares.

99 (below) Basin, late 16th–early 17th century, inscribed with later owner’s name, Muhammad Hasan al-Husayni, cast brass, engraved decoration, h. 12.1 cm, diam. 28 cm, British Museum, OA 78.12-30.755, Henderson Bequest.

100 (below) Bowl, late 16th–early 17th century, cast copper, originally tinned, engraved decoration, inscribed with owner’s name, Rahim, h. 9.5 cm, diam. 24 cm, British Museum, OA 1969-2-12.1, Gift of H.A.N. Medd, Esq. Most likely, bowls of this type were produced with blank cartouches which could be engraved with the owner’s name at the time of purchase.
copper bowl [fig. 100] of similar shape, however, relates more closely to that of the group discussed by Melikian-Tirvani which he assigns to a Khurasan production site and to an undated bowl which he attributes to western Iran. Although its decoration is hardly as sharp as that of the Khurasan group, the organization of motifs on the body of the basin recalls the alternation of ornament and voids that one finds on both the Khurasan and the western Iranian bowls. Around the neck runs an inscription in cartouches separated by undecorated quadrilobes.

Suspended at intervals from a narrow band of joined trilobes, half ovals with trefoils join alternately to cartouches with overlapping scrolls and larger quatrefoils enclosing animals in cusped roundels. The blank areas between these design elements contain multipetalled flowers. Although at least two major schools of metalwork must have existed in the early seventeenth century, the metalworkers relied on a very similar range of ornament and, like bookbinders, some produced groups of pieces covered in non-figural decoration while others included human and animal figures and left certain areas of their pieces undecorated. Objects were also produced from the beginning of the seventeenth century which combined all-over decoration and human and animal forms, producing a type of ornament that recalls the silks with figures and inscriptions in separate compartments.

From the period of Shah 'Abbás a greater variety of shapes of metal objects is available. Thus bath pails with bulbous shoulders narrowing to a base of approximately half their diameter are found in various collections. The same profile is employed, with the addition of long crescent-shaped spouts, for vessels used for pouring water in the bath, a shape that is sometimes copied in ceramic. Footed tinned copper bowls used for liquids range in shape from examples with low sides and a splayed foot to the type with high walls, an everted rim and a low slightly conical foot. Metal hammering drums are depicted in paintings from the fifteenth century on but only appear as extant objects from the late sixteenth century. Finally, as early as 1011/1602-3 a new shape of ewer was introduced to the corpus of Safavid metalwork. On the basis of a related fifteenth-century Indian example Zebrowski has suggested that the shape entered Iran from India, but sixteenth-century Chinese blue and white ceramic vessels related to this shape are also extant. The unusual form of the ewer and its ceramic counterparts consists of a body in the shape in profile of an inverted spade with a hollow handle in the shape of a rounded arch rising from the shoulders. At the top of this is a casket-shaped device with a hinged lid into which liquid can be poured. A spout attaches to the upper body below the handle and rises up before turning out. The foot is high and slightly everted or terminating in a splayed band. The shape of this ewer diverges sufficiently from that of its long-necked counterparts of the sixteenth century to suggest a taste for the exotic which would not be unexpected in the cosmopolitan city of Isfahan in the early seventeenth century.

Much of the ceramic production during the reign of Shah 'Abbás relies heavily on Chinese and celadon prototypes. Certain styles such as Kubachi wares enjoyed their last hurrah in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and discrete groups of monochrome wares suggest that some potters were centred in Isfahan. The Kubachi wares that indicate a date in the period of Shah
time Shah 'Abbas restored Tabriz to the Safavids, its potters, if indeed they were the makers of Kubachi wares, must have moved to Qazvin, Isfahan or elsewhere, but their wares were superseded by those of other centres.

One group of monochrome ceramics exhibits a close relationship to painting of the Isfahan school, which suggests that the moulds for the pictorial motifs on the sides of flasks, small bottles and small hookah bases derived from drawings by painters and illuminators. The images include a man with a lion on a n, a derived from a drawing by Sadiqi Beg, two camels in based on a famous and often copied composition by a couple in flagrante with a sleeping dervish in attendance, in landscape, and a number of variations on floral es within arched panels. Some of the small arch-shaped ave two openings, indicating that they are hookah bases which attached to the mouthpiece would have been fed

102 (opposite, top left) Dish, north-west Iran, late 16th–early 17th century, stoneware with polychrome underglaze decoration, diam. 26 cm, British Museum, OA 1979.7–16.1. The sketchily drawn decoration in the centre of the dish includes a pair of plump birds in a pool from which wavy-stemmed plants grow.

105 (opposite, top right) Dish, north-west Iran, late 16th–early 17th century, stoneware with underglaze blues and black decoration, diam. 59.7 cm, British Museum, OA 96.6–26.6, Gift of Sir A.W. Franks. While the panels in the cavetto derive from Chinese prototypes, the turbaned figure in the centre of the dish with his oddly stunted hand is painted in the late Qazvin–early Isfahan style.

104 (opposite, centre) Dish, north-west Iran, c. 1608–9/1609, stoneware with underglaze black decoration under a transparent turquoise glaze, diam. 54.5 cm, British Museum, OA 1964.6–50.1. Ceramics painted in black under a turquoise glaze first appeared in Iran in the 12th century and continued to be in vogue well into the Safavid period.

105 (right) Ewer, Mashhad, signed by Mahmud Mi'mar Yazdi and decorated by Zari, dated 1927/1616–17, stoneware with underglaze blue decoration, 19th-century metal spout, h. 24.8 cm, British Museum, OA 1992.5–21.1. The blue and white decoration is based on Chinese models but the shape of the piece stems from Indian metal ewers.

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‘Abbas are tiles [fig. 101] and flat-rimmed dishes decorated with figures wearing the headgear of c. 1008/1600 in polychrome underglaze decoration on a white, turquoise or coral ground. Other dishes of the same shape contain vegetal ornament without figures [fig. 102], while a number of pieces with similar decorative motifs are glazed in blue, black and white alone [fig. 105]. A further group assigned by Lane to north-west Iran around 1008/1600 is the continuation of the north-west Iranian group of wares decorated in black under turquoise or green transparent glazes which had begun in the fifteenth century. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the decoration has lost much of its earlier solidity to flimsy, sketchily drawn forms [fig. 104]. Although textual information is absent, the most likely explanation for the decline of the Kubachi wares is the turmoil that engulfed Azerbaijan in the last quarter of the sixteenth century as the result of Ottoman invasions and occupation. By the

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The tube which attached to the mouthpiece would have been fed
106 (left) Pilgrim flask, Mashhad, dated 1036/1626–7, stoneware with underglaze blue and black decoration, modern knob and handles, h. 22.4 cm, British Museum, OA 1950.10–19.1. Like many blue and white Safavid ceramics, this piece has three Chinese-style characters on its base.

107 (above) Hookah base, Mashhad, c. 1015–40/1605–30, stoneware with underglaze blue and black decoration, h. 15.6 cm, British Museum, OA 1910.5–11.2. The reverse side of this piece depicts a youth trying to coax the bird from the tree, whereas here he has succeeded and has it in his grasp.
into the side hole, through the water and out of the top hole to the bowl of tobacco. Tobacco had been introduced to Iran at least as early as 1021/1612 and being an addictive substance had caught on immediately. Despite occasional government prohibitions, tobacco-smoking remained popular and generated the production of a range of ceramic water-pipes. A painting by Riza dated 1029/1630 depicts an archer smoking a pale green glazed pipe with a face on its side. In shape it is identical to the extant monochrome-glazed moulded pipes, indicating their use, if not their manufacture, in Isfahan.

Although European travellers to the court of Shah ‘Abbas do not mention specific pottery-making centres, later visitors such as Jean Chardin list Shiraz, Mashhad, Yazd, Kirman and Zarand as the primary sources of Persian ceramics, of which the most beautiful, he claims, were made in Shiraz. Of these cities, Kirman is mentioned most often by other Europeans, but even Isfahan is alluded to with respect to its potters. While no pottery from the reign of Shah ‘Abbas can be assigned to Shiraz, Yazd and Mashhad present a more promising picture. A ewer decorated in underglaze blue and dated 1027/1616–17 bears two inscriptions, stating ‘work of Mahmud Mi’mar [the architect] Yazdi’ on the opening of the handle and ‘the poor Zari is its decorator 1025’ under the foot (fig. 105). The inscriptions imply that the vessel was ‘built’ or at least its form was provided by Mahmud, but that Zari painted the decoration. Although the nisba ‘Yazdi’ might indicate that the piece was made in Yazd, Lane has suggested that Mahmud Mi’mar Yazdi may be the same as Kamal al-din Mahmud Yazdi who built the golden dome of the Sahn-i Kullia at the Mashhad shrine in 1015/1606–7. If so, perhaps the vessel was made at the established ceramic centre of Mashhad for the pilgrim market or for donation to the shrine."

As previously mentioned, metal ewers of this shape were produced in Iran as early as 1011/1602–3, but their shape derived from prototypes produced in India from the mid-fifteenth century onwards. Possibly, with the tall pillar candlestick made in Lahore in 946/1539 and now in the Mashhad shrine, the shape of this ewer was adapted by Iranian metalworkers and then potters from an Indian example presented to the shrine. The decoration of the blue and white vessel consists of panels on the body containing a waterfowl in landscape with a mountain and round blossoms floating in the sky, a deer and a bird before a stylized waterfall, a waterfowl in landscape with palm trees, a waterfowl in landscape with a mountain and floating daisies, and a panel of stylized cloud and other ‘illegible’ motifs below the spout. The sides of the handle are decorated with birds and flowering branches, and stylized cloud forms appear on the top of the handle, the top of the body and as pendant trefolos in a band on the shoulder of the vessel. The spayed foot has lotus panels below a ridge with cusps around its upper edge.

In 1020/1611 Shah ‘Abbas donated 1162 pieces of Chinese porcelain plus half his library and money for renovation of the Dar al-Huffaz, tombs and Chini-khaneh at the Ardabil shrine. Among the blue and white porcelains that he gave are at least five sixteenth-century plates that contain deer in landscape near a waterfall. Such plates were presumably also to be found in other collections and thus available for potters such as Zari to adapt to their needs. Likewise, the Chinese plates that were sources for the birds in landscape were exported, but the Persian potter has simplified the original scene, reducing the number of birds from two to one and misunderstanding the clusters of pine needles so that they are transformed into floating ‘daisies’. Although the compositional elements of Mashhad wares have been characterized as having black outlines to keep the blue glaze from running, the lines are absent from this vessel.

Unfortunately the 1027/1616–17 ewer has limited use for assigning other blue and white pieces to the early seventeenth century because of its unusual shape and the absence of black outlines. A pilgrim flask dated 1036/1626–7 below its rectangular foot, however, has more features that can be associated with Mashhad [fig. 106]. Its flat sides consist of a central boss with three leaves in white reserved on a blue ground. Around this is a band with birds perched on a branch above a landscape. The outer band includes leaves and flowers with thinly striated veins on a blue ground. Along the join of the two sides the potter has painted flying ducks and bees. Although many of the design elements are outlined in black, this has not kept the blue glaze from running. The plump flowers with striated veins and the fatness for depicting them in reserve seem to be typical of the Mashhad group. Yet within this
108 Bath raps in the shape of a pair of shoes, Kirman, early 17th century, stonepaste with underglaze blue decoration, l. 24.4 cm, British Museum, OA 87.6-17.5, Gift of Sir A.W. Franks. Various uses, including as a pair of vases, have been suggested for these ceramic shoes: it is most unlikely, despite their authentic shape, that they were ever worn.

The quality of draughtsmanship varies considerably and cannot always be taken as an indication of date. For example, the details of a hookah base decorated with a youth in a tree [fig. 107], a favourite early seventeenth-century theme, have been rendered with great care, but the piece must date to the second or third decade of the century, the same period as the two dated pieces discussed here.

While some distinct groups of ceramics, such as the monochrome glazed moulded wares, may have been produced in Isfahan, and the Mashhad blue and white wares present a fairly uniform picture, the pottery of Kirman was far more plentiful and varied in style. The genesis of Kirman and nearby Zaranq as major pottery producing centres is not entirely understood, but certain aspects of this development can be proposed. As early as 1000/1591–2 Ganj ‘Ali Khan, one of Shah ‘Abbas’ retainers when he was a prince at Herat, had been appointed governor of Kirman. By 1007/1598 the building of a large complex including a caravansarai, a mosque, two bazars, a maidan, an administration building and a cistern had been completed at Kirman. This not only included panels with inscriptions by ‘Ali Riza ‘Abbas, but also elaborate chinoiserie tile panels. Assuming the tiles were made locally, they would have required a specialized workforce. Possibly a group of potters emigrated to Kirman to work on this project and then established themselves there making a full range of ceramic objects. To speculate on the identity of these potters, one might recall the decline of Kubachi wares at the end of the sixteenth century and suggest that potters of north-west Iran might have emigrated to Kirman. This is not entirely idle speculation for two reasons: Ganj ‘Ali Khan himself was a Kurd and presumably maintained strong ties with his

109 Imitation celadon charger, Kirman, early 17th century, stonepaste with opaque green glaze and fluted cavetto, diam. 42.5 cm, British Museum, OA 1949.4-14.1. The impact of Chinese celadon wares on Persian and other Islamic ceramics was almost as great as that of blue and white porcelains. From the 14th century onwards Persians imitated the shapes and tried to match the colours of the Chinese originals.
completed at Kirman. This not only included panels with ions by 'Ali Riza 'Abbasi, but also elaborate chinoiserie tile. Assuming the tiles were made locally, they would have had a specialized workforce. Possibly a group of potters led to Kirman to work on this project and then established lives there making a full range of ceramic objects. To speculate the identity of these potters, one might recall the decline of the wares at the end of the sixteenth century and suggest that of north-west Iran might have emigrated to Kirman. This is a redile speculation for two reasons: Ganj 'Ali Khan was a Kurd and presumably maintained strong ties with his Kurdish tribesmen as 'all the Kurdish contingents that had accompanied the Shah on [the] expedition [to Qandahar in 1051/1641-2] were placed under his command'. Thus Kurdish craftsman from north-west Iran might have considered Kirman a safe or desirable place to which to relocate. Further, on the basis of the stylistic connection between dragon carpets made in the Caucasus in the fifteenth century and mid-sixteenth-century vase carpets, most likely from Kirman, it has been proposed that through nomads or some shift of the producers of dragon carpets the design and technique were brought to Kirman. Although the Caucasus is north of north-western Iran, the movement of people from that region to Kirman represents the same north-west/south-east trend as the proposed relocation of Kubachi potters. The continuation of pottery production at Kirman and Zarand is more easily explained by the proximity of Kirman to the Persian Gulf port of Bandar 'Abbas directly to the south, which was a major entrepôt for trade to India, the Far East and by sea to Europe.

Little external evidence exists to indicate which seventeenth-century ceramics were made in Kirman or Zarand, and dated pieces from the reign of Shah 'Abbas that would help to place groups thought to be from Kirman are lacking. On the basis of pieces dated to the end of the seventeenth century and other fragments that were found near Kirman, certain general stylistic traits can be identified. The very sharp drawing and foudness for spiky leaves found on Kirman polychrome wares that may be from the second half of the century may have antecedents in the carefully painted arabesques on a pair of bath raps in the shape of shoes thought to have been produced at Kirman [fig. 108]. Although it has been suggested that such novelty pieces were based on Delft examples, it is more likely that they were made for export to Europe, where the Dutch East India Company mixed them with Chinese export wares for sale to clients. A later class of slip-decorated monochrome wares may have antecedents in a group of large green glazed dishes [fig. 109] that copy Chinese celadons, but again no external information gives a preference to their having been made in Kirman.

However, they are characterized by spur marks in the foot which are also found on later Kirman wares. Finally, a group of hexagonal and octagonal dishes has been assigned to Kirman. There have been no painting in the cavetto, simple lozenge designs on their rims and decoration that is either of Chinese inspiration or after Persian paintings. The clarity of draughtsmanship is consistent with other early pieces from Kirman and the shapes survive into later periods of Kirman ceramics. Much remains to be learned about the Kirman and Zarand kilns in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, but the period of Shah 'Abbas I was most likely the formative era of Kirman ceramics before the great expansion in production from about 1050/1640 until the end of the century.

So many ceramics, metal objects, carpets, textiles, books and buildings remain from the reign of Shah 'Abbas that one can hardly do them justice, much less discuss other media at any length. The opening up to Europe not only changed the style of Persian art; it enabled the Iranians to import materials such as glass that were not produced locally. From paintings depicting half-empty carafes of red wine, we know that such bottles were in use by the 1620s. Moreover, they must have been a popular item as they appear in portraits of fashionable courtiers. Other items such as gems engraved with the name of Shah 'Abbas are rare but do exist. At court the beautiful young attendants are described by foreigners as having turbans stuck with large plumes and jewels, so their existence is not surprising. Finally, this was the era in which cut-steel panels in the shape of cartouches were apparently beginning to be fashioned for application to wooden doors. The tradition gained strength over the course of the century, as a later dated example will show (see fig. 146). Although Isfahan was the undisputed heart of Shah 'Abbas' Iran, many other cities such as Shiraz and Kirman blossomed in the first quarter of the seventeenth century thanks to the wealth of their governors or the shah's energetic development schemes. It would have been a remarkable time to see Iran, and we are fortunate nearly four hundred years later that so much of it survives.

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