were attacked and suppressed by Gurgin Khan, a Georgian who had been appointed governor of Qandahar in Muharram 1116/May 1704. Gurgin Khan captured the Ghaznavi leader, Mir Vais, and exiled him to Isfahan. Because of his power and wealth, Mir Vais insinuated himself into court circles and developed a thorough understanding of the weaknesses of Shah Sultan Husayn and his government. By 1121/1709 Mir Vais was back at Qandahar and had overthrown the Safavid governor. Even though the Safavids sent an army against Mir Vais, the troops took nearly two years to reach Qandahar and were too disorganized to maintain their siege once they did arrive. In Shu‘ban 1123/October 1711 the Safavids retreated, pursued by the Ghaznavi, who murdered the Safavid commander. After one other unsuccessful attempt to retake Qandahar, the Safavids abandoned the city to Mir Vais, who then ruled the region independently until his death in 1127/1715.

A similar Safavid attempt to impose Shiaism in Herat led the local tribal power to revolt. Again, despite expeditions to Herat the Safavid army was unable to regain the city, and eventually the rebellion spread to Mashhad. Meanwhile, in the Persian Gulf Bahrain fell to the imam of Oman, and in the north Sunni Lzgians and Shirvans were rebelling. Shah Sultan Husayn responded by moving his capital to Qazvin in 1129–30/1717–18 with the hope of raising a more effective army. The court remained at Qazvin for three years but was singularly unsuccessful at countering the insurrections in the east and north. In addition, when government forces did become involved, as in the war between the Lzgians and the Georgians, who were Safavid feudatories, their position was so devoid of strategy or long-range objectives that they lost their valuable allies while saving people of lesser importance to the survival of the Safavid state. The traditionally restive populations took advantage of the situation, the Kurds raiding Hamadan in the north-west and the Baluchis raiding Bam and Kirman in the east.

Despite the judgement of the grand vizier, Fath ‘Ali Khan Daghistani, that the Omani threat to the Persian Gulf was the most serious of those confronting the Safavids, the death of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1118/1707 and subsequent disarray in India enabled Mahmud, the young Ghaznavi leader of Qandahar who had succeeded his father, Mir Vais, to build up his strength undetected or at least unopposed. In 1132/late 1719 Mahmud took Kirman, forcing the governor to flee, but within a year he returned to Qandahar to defend it against a Safavid army that had set out with the shah at its head. By the time the army reached Tehran, the enemies of the grand vizier had accused him of plotting to overthrow the shah. Sultan Husayn reacted not by inquiring into the allegations but by removing the grand vizier from office and blinding him and by imprisoning his nephew, the governor of Fars, who commanded a sizeable army. At this point, Dhu‘l Hijja 1132/October 1720, the court returned to Isfahan, the resolve to fight for Qandahar having collapsed. In the wake of the grand vizier’s fall from power, the Lzgians and Shirvans in the north again rose up against the Safavids, this time seizing Shamakha and transferring their allegiance to the Ottomans.

Once the Safavid court had arrived in Isfahan in Jumada I 1135/April 1721 after its retreat from Tehran, Mahmud decided to renew his attempt to capture Kirman. Following an unsuccessful siege of the city in Dhu‘l Hijja 1135/October 1721, he advanced to Yazd, where he accepted payment in exchange for lifting his siege. By Jumada I 1154/March 1722 Mahmud and his army had advanced to within twenty-five miles east of Isfahan. A Safavid force of over 40,000 men, more than double that of Mahmud, met him on the battlefield on 19 Jumada I/8 March and at first dominated the fighting. The numerical advantage of the Safavids was soon cancelled out by the fact that the grand vizier and the leader of troops from ‘Arabistan were joint commanders whose personal enmity made communication impossible. The Afghans, by contrast, were united and well enough organized to carry the day. Having suffered many casualties, the Persian army retreated to Isfahan in a state of disarray. Rather than pursue them, Mahmud waited three days and then continued the march on the capital.

Entering Isfahan from the south, Mahmud seized Shah Sultan Husayn’s palace of Farahabad and set up his headquarters there, then proceeded to sack the Armenian community of New Julfa. At this point Mahmud began his siege of the main part of the city, north of the Zayandeh-Rud. The shah, surrounded by utterly ineffectual advisers, spurned two offers to negotiate with Mahmud, in Jumada II and Dhu‘l Qa‘da 1154/April and August 1722, and failed to muster troops or start military engagements with the Ghaznavi in
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Despite the shah’s fatal indifference to his governmental duties, he seems to have appreciated the visual arts, for at least one major architectural complex was built in his name and the work of artists in the court atelier system continued unabated. A number of repairs to older buildings are dated to his reign, and mosques, madrasas and tombs were constructed by other individuals in provincial centres as well as in Isfahan. Yet the most significant commission at the end of the Safavid dynasty is the Chahar Bagh madrasa, bazaar and caravansarai, which was paid for by the shah’s mother. Monumental in scale and regular in plan, these buildings were erected between 1118/1706 and 1125/1714 on the eastern side of the Chahar Bagh next to the Hasht Bihisht. Unlike the mosques on the maidan with the contrasting alignments of their entrances and interiors to accommodate the need of the qibla wall to face Mecca, the Chahar Bagh madrasa is built strictly on a north–south/east–west axis so that its prayer hall and mihrab face due south and not south-west towards Mecca. A dome on a high drum decorated with hazar bat tile arabesques in predominantly yellow and turquoise covers the sanctuary and is preceded by a façade flanked by two minarets (fig. 155). The surface of the courtyard is divided into four rectangular gardens and a pool fed by a canal running east–west (fig. 155). Two levels of arched niches open onto the courtyard and are punctuated by an iwan in the centre of each wall and low domed

153 (top) Façade and dome of the Chahar Bagh madrasa, Isfahan, viewed from the west, 1118–25/1706–14, from Pascal Coste, Monuments modernes de la Perse (Paris, 1867), pl. xviii. Known as the Makan-i Shah madrasa, that is, the College of the Shah’s Mother, this is the last great religious building of the Safavid dynasty.

154 Chahar Bagh caravansarai, Isfahan, 1118–25/1706–14, from Pascal Coste, Monuments modernes de la Perse (Paris, 1867), pl. xxxii. Unlike the madrasa to which it is attached, this caravansarai is relatively unadorned, as is typical of most Safavid caravansarais.

Disintegration of the Dynasty 163
and religion were intertwined in Safavid Isfahan. In Islamic architecture a long tradition exists of funerary buildings and shrines commissioned by women, but in the fifteenth century both Timurid and Turkman royal women paid for the construction of major mosques. Even if the Chahar Bagh madrasa does not represent a significant departure in female patronage, its size and expense underscore the wealth and power enjoyed by the key women of the Safavid harem for most of the last century of the dynasty’s rule.

Painting at court level during the period of Shah Sultan Husayn presents a continuum of the Europeanizing style of the period of Shah Sulayman. Muhammad Zaman worked during the 1690s until his death in about 1111/1700, but by the second decade of the eighteenth century a new generation of painters worked alongside the older artists who were still active, ‘Ali Quli Jabbadar and Muhammad Zaman’s brother, Haji Mohammad. A portrait of the grand vizier Shah Quli Khan bestowing a ring on a young man, attributable to Muhammad Zaman, dates from the first year of Sultan Husayn’s reign, 1106/1694–5 [fig. 156]. The horizontal format and setting with the figures arrayed on a veranda before a landscape that recedes into the distance corresponds to the type found in ‘Ali Quli Jabbadar’s portrait of Shah Sulayman and courtiers from the 1670s [see fig. 144]. However, the treatment of drapery, the atmospheric, somewhat misty rendering of the landscape and the three-dimensionality of the figures conform to Muhammad Zaman’s style. A later portrait of the grand vizier by Haji Muhammad reveals a less thorough integration of European techniques; while the sitter’s face is naturally depicted, his body and garments are hardly modelled at all.

The textiles, carpets and metal objects depicted in Muhammad Zaman’s portrait of the grand vizier will be discussed below; it is worth noting here, however, the lacquer pen box placed before the knees of the young courtier. Both Muhammad Zaman and Haji Mohammad excelled in painting lacquer objects, and the example in this painting demonstrates that boxes with rounded ends, with the interior nested inside the exterior rather than with a hinged top, and decorated on the upper surface with a single figure, were in use by the mid-1690s. Several such penboxes were signed by ‘Ali Quli Jabbadar in the early eighteenth century, but it is possible
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156 'Shah Quli Khan Bestowing a Ring', attributable to Muhammad Zaman,
Isfahan, dated 1106/1694–5, opaque watercolour, silver and gold on paper,
22.2 x 50.3 cm, Institute of Oriental Studies, St Petersburg, album E-14,
fol. 97v. This painting is inscribed with the epithet most often associated
with Muhammad Zaman, 'Ya sabib al-zaman' ('Oh lord of the age!'), and is
consistent with his style.
that Muhammad Zaman was the originator of the use of a single figure on the lid of a penbox. Likewise, Hajji Muhammad introduced multiple cartouches enclosing figure busts, birds and flowers, as well as inscriptions to penbox lids, as early as 1116/1704–5 [fig. 157]. The side of the box contains floral sprays in cartouches separated by smaller medallions of gold floral ornament on a black ground. Flattened strips of metal have been applied like stripes to the surface of the penbox to provide extra glitter, an experiment that was not repeated.  

In addition to lacquerware, Safavid painters in the second half of the seventeenth century adopted the European practice of painting large-scale portraits in oil on canvas. Like the smaller-scale works on paper and in lacquer produced in the reigns of the last three shahs, Safavid oil paintings, of which at least eleven are extant, are executed in the Europeanizing style. To a greater or lesser extent the artists borrowed from European sources, duplicating architectural details, curtains and objects found in European prints and paintings and in the works of the European artists active in Iran. The figures in the paintings, however, are dressed in Persian garb, even if some of them are now thought to represent Georgians or Circassians who served at the Safavid court.  

Like the wall paintings in the Armenian houses and royal palaces of Isfahan, these large oil paintings were conceived as pairs or in groups as part of an overall decorative programme. Whether they were portraits of specific people or of generic types, the technique gained currency from the late Safavid period to the eighteenth century until it became one of the dominant art forms of the nineteenth-century Qajar dynasty.

From about 1111/1700 Muhammad 'Ali, the son of Muhammad Zaman, carried on the work of his recently deceased father, producing lacquer objects and paintings on paper. Two lacquer penboxes dating from 1132/1719–20 and 1135/1720–21 by Muhammad 'Ali reveal a debt to Muhammad Zaman in the depiction of European-style background but a distinctive figural style in which faces are not putty-eyed and ponderous like those of his father, but are more delicately modelled. In the painting ‘The Distribution of New Year Presents by Shah Sultan Husayn’, dated 1155/1741 [fig. 158], Muhammad 'Ali concentrated on portraying the shah and his court rather than elaborating on the setting in which this ceremony took place. Shah Sultan Husayn is depicted in an opulent gold brocade coat with three fur tails forming the collar and a purple and gold turban rising higher and more perfectly fanned out than those on the figures around him. The shah and his courtiers kneel and stand on a veranda before a stormy sky. With the exception of the carved bases of the columns and leaf forms and diagonal lines on the columns themselves the building is devoid of ornament; even the carpet is plain except for its grey and white lozenge-pattern border. Unlike Muhammad Zaman’s paintings in which all figures are equally illuminated, here the artist has indicated two light sources, one from the right and one from the left, which oddly leave the central figure of the shah in relative darkness. Although Muhammad 'Ali was certainly aware of the use of light and shadow in European painting to define forms and to suggest three-dimensionality and spatial relationships, his understanding seems not to have
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extended to showing the light source itself or depicting cast
shadows in a logical fashion.

As the figure in the left foreground, viewed from behind, reads
the list of recipients of royal largesse, a figure in the right fore-
ground and another in the right background raise their hands as if
to applaud. Two figures in the right background hold small red
bags of money, while before the shah large white sacks and
rows of small bags await distribution. The contrast between the
dark-skinned, black-bearded shah and the pale-faced youths and
greybeards that surround him is marked as the shah appears to
recede into his splendid raiment. In Jumada I 1135/March 1721,
when this event would have taken place, the shah and his court
were returning to Isfahan after failing to go to battle with the
Ghalzai Afghans. Possibly the plainness of the surroundings reflects
the fact that the court celebrated Nauruz, the Persian new year,
outside the capital. The shah had recently dismissed his grand
vizier and was relying for advice on his court physician and his
shaykh al-Islam, who are presumably included in this scene but
cannot be identified. The darkness of the shah, the cloudy sky and
gestures and facial expressions of the courtiers all contribute to an
impression of impending doom. While the artist would have been
justified in implying that all was not well with the shah and his
court, we should be wary of imposing such an interpretation in
hindsight on a scene that may in fact be no more than a piece of
honest reportage. Even so, the contrast with the audience scene
with Shah Salayman, where music, food, drink and tobacco
enlivened the gathering, underscores the depths to which the
Safavids had sunk by the spring of 1135/1721.
While Muhammad 'Ali's painting of Shah Sultan Husayn and his court provides insights into the state of the Safavid dynasty in 1153/1741, Muhammad Zaman's portrait of the grand vizier Shah Quli Khan [see fig. 156] includes textiles and objects that are closely paralleled by extant examples. The striking ochre-ground carpet with a lattice pattern of four leaves, two peony blossoms and two pink or red four-petalled flowers, all joined by tendrils, corresponds closely to a group of related fragments that have been variously assigned to Iran and India. A velvet fragment in Copenhagen shares the palette and general layout of the carpet in the painting, although the velvet contains more details, such as the small multi-petalled blossoms at the points of the four leaves [fig. 152]. On the other hand, the leaves in the painting are bent in an S curve which enlivens the design. Although using velvet for a floor covering seems extravagant, the men in the painting wear soft-soled boots, and such a 'carpet' would have been used as much for sitting as for standing. As to whether the extant velvet fragment was produced in Iran or India, Muhammad Zaman's painting lends credence to Iran as its source. Nonetheless, von Folsach has assigned the velvet to India on the basis of the similarity of its pattern to that found on some seventeenth-century Indian carpets. Since trade between India and Iran continued unabated in the 1690s, it is possible that Indian carpet weavers adapted the designs of imported Persian velvets.

The textiles from which the coats and quilted robes in Muhammad Zaman's painting are made also have close counterparts in existing pieces. The robe worn by the grand vizier consists of a gold ground with brocaded irises, roses and pomegranates, diagonally striped borders to the sleeves and hem and a fur lining and collar similar to that on Shah Sultan Husayn's coat in figure 158. One related example, made into a chasuble [fig. 159], includes a greater variety of flowers, but like those in the painting they are placed in rows of alternating species and are not touching one another. The silver-ground coat on the youth behind the grand vizier and the gold floral repeats on the robes of the grand vizier himself and the youth who kneels before him reveal the continuing production of these luxury textiles right up to the end of the Safavid dynasty. Unfortunately, the technique declined and disappeared in the wake of the fall of the Safavids.

As the jewelled hilt and dagger sheaths tucked into the sashes of the grand vizier and his attendants indicate, objects of precious metal were also still produced in the reign of Shah Sultan Husayn. Enamelling of metal objects was a rare technique in Safavid Iran and may well have been introduced from India, where enamel was applied to precious metals as well as copper from at least as early as the seventeenth century. Although very little is known about Safavid enamel, Chardin even stated that it did not exist in Iran,

'...enamelled civers and other objects were in use from the late sixteenth century onwards. Possibly Iranian metalworkers adopted the technique to achieve a similar effect to that of inlaying precious metal with jewels and created objects that were more affordable than the jewel-studded precious metals used at court. The introduction of the enamelling technique in the late sixteenth century eventually led to a major vogue under the Qajars (1779–1924) when a whole range of objects and jewellery were decorated in a broad palette of enamels.

Among the rituals central to Shiism is the commemoration of the martyrdom of Husayn, grandson of Muhammad and son of 'Ali, who died at Karbala on the tenth of Muharram (as'hura). Throughout
tenth-century Indian carpets. Since trade between Iran continued unabated in the 1690s, it is possible that Persian weavers adapted the designs of imported Persian tiles from which the coats and quilted robes in Muhammad’s painting are made also have close counterparts in Iran. The robe worn by the grand vizier consists of a gold brocaded irises, roses and petaled flowers, diagonally striped the sleeves and hem and a fur lining and collar similar Shah Sultan Husayn’s coat in figure 158. One related jacket into a chasuble [fig. 159], includes a greater variety but like those in the painting they are placed in rows of species and are not touching one another. The silver and gold on the youth behind the grand vizier and the gold on the robes of the grand vizier himself and the youth before him reveal the continuing production of these tiles right up to the end of the Safavid dynasty. Unfortunately this technique declined and disappeared in the wake of the Safavids.

The ewers, hilted daggers, and dagger sheaths tucked into the sashes of the grand vizier and his attendants include objects of precious metals and precious stones that were imported and also produced in the reign of Shah Sultan Husayn. Of metal objects was a rare technique in Safavid Iran, till have been introduced from India, where enamel was used on metal as well as copper from at least as early as the tenth century. Although very little is known about metalwork in Iran, Chardin even stated that it did not exist in the safavid period and other objects were in use from the late sixteenth century. Possibily Iranian metalworkers adopted these techniques to achieve a similar effect to that of inlaying precious stones of objects and jewellery were decorated in a variety of enameled techniques.

The rituals central to Shiism is the commemoration of the death of Husayn, grandson of Muhammad and son of ‘Ali, Karbala on the tenth of Muharram (ashura). Throughout

160 (left) Pair of 'adans, late 17th century, gilded brass with openwork inscriptions and designs, h. 127 and 128 cm, British Museum, OA 88.9-1.16-17, Franks Collection. Standards such as these would have been carried in religious processions and symbolize the sword of Imam 'Ali.

161 (below) Astrolabe of Shah Sultan Husayn, made by 'Abd al-'Ali ibn Muhammad Rast' al-Jazi and decorated by his brother Muhammad Roqi, dated Sha'ban 1125/Oct. 1712, h. 55 cm, British Museum, OA +569.
Iran, but especially in the great shrine cities of Qum and Mashhad, the faithful march in processions to the shrines chanting words of mourning and symbolically re-enacting the martyrdom by flagellating themselves. Such processions are led by men carrying *‘alams*, metal standards that signify the battle standards carried by Husayn and his band of supporters. The most common shapes of *‘alams* are the stylized hand of which the five fingers represent Muhammad, *‘Ali, Fatima, Husayn and Hasan, called the Ahl-i Bayt* ("Five People of the Household"), and the drop-shaped form with one or more vertical projections, the embodiment of *‘Ali’s sword, Za’il-Fiqar."* One pair of gilt brass *‘alams* [fig. 160] is inscribed with the names of the Ahl-i Bayt in the drop-shaped base and with the name of *‘Ali in the roundel from which the shaft springs. The openwork cartouches and roundels along the length of the shaft also contain the names of the Ahl-i Bayt. Although the *‘alams* are not dated, they were most likely produced at the end of the seventeenth century, a period in which the Shi‘ite religious orthodoxy was particularly strong in Iran, partly in reaction to the dissolute activities of Shah Sulayman and his harem and then as a reflection of the religious concerns of Shah Sultan Husayn.

The magnificent brass astrolabe inscribed in silver with the name of Shah Sultan Husayn, signed by ‘Abd al-‘Ali ibn Muhammad Rafi‘ al-Juzi and his brother Muhammad Baqir and dated Sha‘ban 1124/September–October 1712, may also reflect the shah’s piety [fig. 161]. In a Muslim context astrolabes were used to determine the direction of Mecca and were usually portable, as it was especially important to know the correct direction of prayer while travelling. This exceptionally large astrolabe, however, must have been produced for use in one place, and one is tempted to suggest that one of the mosques or *madrasas* renovated by Shah Sultan Husayn would have been a worthy home for it. In addition to the place names and diagrams inscribed on the plates of the astrolabe, its rete – the openwork disk which indicates the ecliptic, the signs of the zodiac and the fixed stars – consists of an elegant vine with leaves extending at the necessary intervals corresponding to the position of specific stars. At the top of the astrolabe a polychromed panel in the shape of a half-oval, called the throne, contains a seven-line inscription with the name and titles of the shah on one side and a lively split-palmette leaf arabesque on the other. The use of this type of ornament is a throwback to the early sixteenth century when similar split-palmette leaf patterns were employed on the spandrels of the Harun-i Vilayat of 918/1512 in Isfahan [see fig. 15] as well as in paintings and decorative arts of that period. It remains a mystery why the makers of this astrolabe should have looked back so far when Muhammad Salih, the producer of the silver door decoration at the Chahar Bagh *madrasa* of 1125/1714, was incorporating the lush floral motifs of early eighteenth-century border illuminators in his work."

Possibly the ornament matched...
that of the setting for which the astrolabe was intended, or the astrolabist came from an artisanal group whose ties with the court atelier were weaker than those with, for example, the 'ulama, who would have been frequent users of astrolabes.

Ceramics that can be attributed to the reign of Shah Sultan Husayn with confidence exhibit few innovations. Rather, many motifs and techniques that became current in the reigns of shahs 'Abbas II and Sulayman continued in use. Meanwhile, the compositional disintegration evident in pieces such as the flattened flask [see fig. 148] occurs in the blue, black and white dish dated 1109/1697-8 [fig. 162]. In the centre of the dish three groupings of vegetation rise like strange islands out of something resembling a palm frond or a feather. A vestigial cloud floats in the sky above, while in the middle of the dish a group of Xs in the shape of a triangle with a projection from one point may be the potter's mark. Near the right and left cavetto clusters of vertical and horizontal lines resemble exotic buildings and may be the remnants of architectural elements from the Chinese blue and white porcelain prototype of this piece. While the inscription band reserved in white on black in the cavetto is consistent with earlier examples, the border design also shows signs of over-stylization. What was once a simple vine scroll with leaves has now metamorphosed into a series of roundels enclosing forms that resemble bats more than leaves.

The distortions away from the Chinese source in a dish such as this may reflect a decline in the market for Persian ceramics which occurred as a result of the end of the Transitional Period and the re-establishment of trade in Chinese blue and white porcelain. Alternatively, the taste for blue and white wares with black and white inscription bands may have run its course by the 1690s to be replaced by pieces with blue and white designs on the interior and brown glaze either on the rim or over the whole exterior, a style that remained in favour in the eighteenth century. A bowl with brown glaze on the rim and lustre-glazed arabesque bands separating the panels on its sides shows its reliance on Chinese Kraak porcelain [fig. 165]. The central image of a bird on a rock in landscape is surrounded by a band of wave pattern and stylized repeating landscape elements in the panels on its walls. The exterior of the bowl is decorated in lustre over cobalt blue. The combination of lustre decoration on the exterior, brown glaze on the rim

164 Lusteware ewer with a wide mouth, Isfahan?, early 18th century, stonepaste, transparent cobalt glaze, h. 20.5 cm, British Museum, ox 1983.392, Godman Collection. Another ewer of this shape and nearly identical dimensions but without a handle suggests that potters made large numbers of 'blanks' to which they could add handles and lids and, in the second firing, decorate with lustre glazes in a variety of ways.

172 Disintegration of the Dynasty
and blue and white on the interior of this bowl indicates that the production of Safavid lustrewares continued into the eighteenth century.

Further proof of lustrewares made at the end of the Safavid period can be found on those decorated with floral motifs that are closely related to the lush floral sprays found in lacquerware and the silver doors of the Chahar Bagh madrasa from the second decade of the eighteenth century. A censer with a wide, lobed mouth is decorated with panels containing tulips of the type found in album borders and other media [fig. 164]. The use of these motifs by lustreware potters lends support to the idea that they were producing their wares in Isfahan or at least had access to designs generated from the court workshops at Isfahan. As with the earlier examples, the lustreware shapes tended to follow those of metal objects, such as the spittoon or sand shaker in the painting of the grand vizier [see fig. 156].

While glass bottles were certainly being produced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, it is by no means certain which of the extant bottles assigned to Shiraz in that period might actually be Safavid and which might be later. A pair of examples are included here [fig. 165], chosen for their simplicity and similarity to the types of bottles illustrated by Kaempfer. However, it is possible that more elaborate bottles were being produced before the fall of the Safavids and eventually some new type of data, either archaeological or written, will shed further light on the evolution of late Persian glass.

While the apathy and misrule of Shah Sultan Husayn adversely affected most aspects of life in Iran, artists and craftsmen maintained their workshops and continued to produce their wares for Persian patrons and foreign trade. Given the power of the emirs and women of the harem, court painters may have worked for them as much as for the king. Likewise, wealthy merchants, whether Armenian or Persian, may have driven the market for new types of objects, such as enameled or lustrewares, and thus Safavid art did not entirely stagnate under its last shah. While the spark of an inspiring and inspired royal patron is absent in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Iran, the artists themselves had enough ingenuity to develop ideas introduced in the second half of the seventeenth century. Thus paintings in oil on canvas, lacquer-wares, enamelled objects, and some classes of fine ceramics continued to be made through the turmoil of the post-Safavid eighteenth century until they became in the nineteenth century the primary media of Qajar artistic expression.