

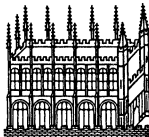


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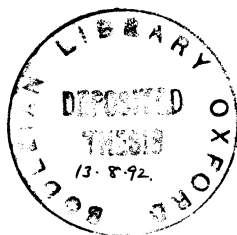


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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Oriental Studies
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford



THE ARMENIAN MERCHANTS OF NEW JULFA, ISFAHAN:

A study in pre-modern Asian trade

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1991

ABSTRACT

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THE ARMENIAN MERCHANTS OF NEW JULFA, ISFAHAN: A study in pre-modern Asian trade

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the merchants of Julfa, a town on the trade routes linking the Mediterranean with Iran, developed an extensive international trade network reaching from the Atlantic coast of Europe to the Indian Ocean. Part 1 of the dissertation traces the history of Julfa and examines the factors contributing to the Armenians' success - among them the significant growth of Iranian raw silk exports to Europe; the stimulus to East-West trade given by the influx of American silver to Europe and the consequent imbalance in the value of bullion between Europe, the Middle East and South Asia; the forced resettlement of the Julfans in Isfahan and the formation of a close economic relationship with the Safavi court.

Part 2 concentrates on social and economic organisation, examining the structure of the Armenian patriarchal household and its commercial operation as family firm, and the community and its provision of the institutions that upheld commercial law and the merchants' system of values and standards of behaviour. The discussion in Chapters 4 and 5 of partnership and agency and the credit system operated by the Julfans is based on research into surviving contracts and credit instruments.

These documents also provide the material for Part 3. The Julfan mercantile documents are a unique record of the commercial world of an Asian trading community in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. They also present numerous technical difficulties, which are discussed through the presentation of examples of documents in the original, with translation, notes and a glossary.

The history of the Julfa merchants affords a rare opportunity for close examination of the organisation and techniques of trade in Asia and provides a basis for comparison with other Asian merchants.

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Completion of the final version of the manuscript was achieved with the help of Georgina Balmforth and Ann Sharrock. Stephen Vernoit drew the maps.

Special thanks go to my supervisor, Doctor John Gurney for help, interest, encouragement and, not least, patience over many years, and to Ana Novaković for her several careful readings of the manuscript and for her criticisms and encouragement, valued in equal part.

TRANSLITERATION

| Armenian | | Persian | | |
|----------|---|------------|-------|----|
| a | ա | Consonants | ' (1) | ء |
| b | բ | b | b | ب |
| g | գ | p | p | پ |
| d | դ | t | t | ت |
| e (1) | ե | š | š | ش |
| z | զ | j | j | ج |
| ē | է | ch | ch | چ |
| ě | ը | h | h | ح |
| t' | թ | kh | kh | خ |
| zh | ժ | d | d | د |
| i | ի | z | z | ذ |
| l | լ | r | r | ر |
| kh | խ | z | z | ز |
| ts | ժ | zh | zh | ژ |
| k | կ | s | s | س |
| h | հ | sh | sh | ش |
| dz | ժ | š | š | ش |
| gh | ղ | ž | ž | ژ |
| ch | ժ | t | t | ت |
| m | մ | z | z | ز |
| y (2) | յ | ' | ' | ظ |
| n | ն | gh | gh | ع |
| sh | շ | f | f | ف |
| o (3) | ո | q | q | ق |
| ch' | չ | k | k | ک |
| p | պ | g | g | گ |
| j | յ | l | l | ل |
| r | ր | m | m | م |
| s | ս | n | n | ن |
| v | վ | v (2) | v (2) | و |
| t | տ | h (3) | h (3) | ه |
| r | ր | y | y | ی |
| ts' | ժ | Vowels | | |
| w (4) | ւ | a | a | ا |
| p' | պ | u | u | ا |
| k' | կ | i | i | ا |
| ō | օ | ā | ā | آ |
| f | ֆ | ū | ū | و |
| | Ֆ | ī | ī | ی |
| | | Diphthongs | | |
| | | ay | ay | ای |
| | | aw | aw | او |

Notes - Armenian

- (1) E is pronounced YE in initial position.
is pronounced Y before a vowel.
- (2) Y is generally pronounced H in initial position.
- (3) O is generally pronounced and transliterated VO in initial position.
- (4) W is pronounced V before a vowel.
OW forms U and is so written.
U is pronounced V before a vowel.
AW, EW and IW are diphthongs or vowel-consonant combinations
according to context.

Notes - Persian

- (1) ' (hamzah) in initial position is not represented.
- (2) KHVĀ is pronounced KHĀ.
Where V (vāv) represents the short vowel U it is so written,
e.g. khud, du.
- (3) Final silent H representing the short vowel A is written AH.

The systems of transliteration for Armenian and Persian have been designed with two main considerations in mind. First, that the systems for the two languages should be broadly compatible. Second, that transliterated terms should be accessible to historians of the Middle East and South Asia.

For Armenian the Journal of the Society of Armenian Studies system has been used, and for Persian and Arabic a slightly adapted version of the Library of Congress system. For Turkish modern spellings have been used in the text and Redhouse's transcriptions in the Glossary in Part 3. Platts' Dictionary of Urdū, Classical Hindī and English is the basis for transliterations from Indian languages. Arabic, Turkish and Indian words occurring in Armenian or Persian have been treated as Armenian or Persian words (with a few exceptions, e.g. Beg not Bayg). Country names and a few other familiar place names are given in their usual English spellings. Julfa is used throughout for Armenian Jugha and Persian Julfā or Jūlāh.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| ASVA | Archivio di Stato, Venice, <i>Documenti armeni</i> . |
| ASVT | Archivio di Stato, Venice, <i>Documenti turchi</i> . |
| BL | British Library. |
| BLL | British Library, Lansdowne MSS, <i>Armenian Mercantile Papers</i> . |
| BSOAS | <i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> . |
| CHI | <i>Cambridge History of Iran</i> . |
| EI ² | <i>Encyclopedia of Islam</i> . New series. |
| EIC | East India Company. |
| EIr | <i>Encyclopedia Iranica</i> . |
| IESHR | <i>Indian Economic and Social History Review</i> . |
| HSH | <i>Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran</i> . |
| HTD | L.S. Khach'ikyan and H.D. P'ap'azyan (eds.), <i>Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan Jughayets'u hashvetumarë</i> , Erevan, 1984. |
| HZHP | <i>Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yun</i> , vol. 4, Erevan, 1972. |
| IJMES | <i>International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies</i> . |
| IO | India Office Library and Records. |
| JESHO | <i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i> . |
| <i>Lraber</i> | <i>Lraber Hasarakakan Gitut'yunneri</i> . |
| NJHV | Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, <i>Nor Jughayi hay vach'arakanut'yunë ew nra arevratntesakan kaperë Rusastani het XVII-XVIII darerum</i> , Erevan, 1988. |
| PBH | <i>Patma-Banasirakan Handes</i> . |
| PNJ | Y.T'. Ter-Yovhaneants', <i>Patmut'iwn Nor Jughayu vor yAspahan</i> , 2 vols., New Julfa, 1880-1881. |
| REA | <i>Révue des Études Arméniennes</i> . |
| <i>Teghekgagir</i> | <i>Teghekgagir Hasarakakan Gitut'yunneri</i> . |
| VOC | Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie. |
| ZDMG | <i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i> . |

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation presents a study of the merchants of the Armenian community of New Julfa, Isfahan, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Based on research into documentary sources comprising contracts, account books, letters and other documents, it describes the commercial world of the Julfa merchants as they themselves recorded it.

In European history there are numerous studies of merchant families and communities based on the extensive surviving collections of documents, some of which date from several centuries earlier than the Julfan materials, but in the context of Asian history the Julfa Armenian documents are unique, being perhaps the richest surviving for any Asian merchant community from the time of the Cairo Geniza (eleventh to twelfth centuries A.D) until the nineteenth century. It is of course possible that similar materials for other groups of merchants may be lying forgotten and unresearched (as until recently were the Julfa documents), but at the time of writing the historical interest of these Armenian sources derives largely from their rarity. We read them as much for what they suggest about Asian trade in general as for what they tell us about Julfan trade in particular.

In view of the exceptional interest of the sources, this dissertation is organised around them. It concentrates on the areas they reveal most clearly and presents a number of documents in facsimile, transliteration and translation. A full discussion of the documents will be found in the Introduction to Part 3, but it must be stated at the outset that research into the Julfa commercial sources is at an early stage. The largest single collection, that of the All Saviour's Cathedral (Amenap'rkich' Vank') Archive in Julfa itself, remains unexplored since the nineteenth century, with only a basic guide to the archive having been recently published,¹ while work on the documents available in western and Soviet collections is far from advanced and has uncovered

¹ L.G. Minasean, *Divan S. Amenap'rkich' Vank'i 1606-1960. Arkhivi ughets'oyts' grk'oyk* (New Julfa 1983).

numerous linguistic and technical problems that await satisfactory resolution. What is presented here should, therefore, be read as a preliminary report on work in progress rather than as the conclusions of a completed project.

The purpose of this introduction is to place this study in a historiographical context within both the infant field of Julfa commercial history and within the wider fields of Iranian and Asian economic history. It will look at previous research into the Julfa material and consider the broader issues involved in the study of Asian trade, tracing the intellectual traditions involved and asking what the various approaches adopted by scholars may have to offer for the present study.

Historiography

It has been the universal complaint of economic historians of Asia that: "the person who enters this territory lacks practically all the aids which an economic historian has at his disposal where European history is concerned".² The dearth of sources, the late development of modern historical research outside the West, the long reluctance of orientalist to follow historians of the West in responding to the challenge of the social sciences and the consequent difficulties involved in working with concepts developed in the context of studies of Europe have all hindered work on non-European economies in the pre-colonial age. The relatively little developed nature of the field and the various methodological and ideological problems involved in a study of this kind, necessitate a fairly full historiographical introduction. To illustrate this point one need look no further than the subtitle, which contains two terms, "Asian" and "pre-modern" that cry out for definition. As an inherently Eurocentric notion "Asia" distorts even as a geographical term. It divides the Eurasian continent into two unequal "halves", and in a historical context predicates for European history a uniqueness denied the rest of the continent, which is lumped together in one

2 M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, *Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630*, (The Hague 1962), 5.

undifferentiated mass.³ "Pre-modern" is scarcely less tendentious, especially when applied to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which in European history belong firmly to the (early) modern age.⁴ The connotations of modernity go far beyond the purely chronological, implying also a developmental or evolutionary dimension. A consideration of previous work on the Julfa Armenian merchants will begin the process of defining these terms and delimiting the scope of the present study.

The Armenian context

Until very recently there were no studies exclusively devoted to the trade of the Julfa merchants; existing works on Armenian trade were either general surveys,⁵ or dealt with much earlier periods.⁶ Merchants and trade had not, however, been ignored by scholars working on the history of New Julfa and the Armenian diaspora. The most important contribution is that of Tēr-Yovhaneants', whose two volume history of the New Julfa colony from its foundation to the mid nineteenth century is unique both for the amount of information it contains and because it is based on research in New Julfa itself, particularly the archives of the All Saviour's Cathedral. Tēr-Yovhaneants' gives so many examples of documents and letters from that source that his history has the character of a primary source. One chapter is devoted to trade and the subject is also covered in several others, notably those dealing with the histories of prominent Julfa families.⁷ The Julfa trade network and commercial system are also described in works such as Alishan's

3 M.G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam* (Chicago 1974) vol. 1, 48-49 and *passim*. in the sections entitled "Usage in World Historical Studies" and "Usage in Islamic Studies"; K.N. Chandhuri, *Asia before Europe* (Cambridge 1990) 22-23.

4 *Ibid.*, 50-53.

5 K.S. Papazian, *Merchants from Ararat. A brief survey of Armenian trade through the ages*, revised and edited by P.M. Manuelian (New York 1979).

6 H.A. Manandian, *The Trade and Cities of Armenia in Relation to the Ancient World*, trans. N.G. Garsoian (Lisbon 1965).

7 Y.T'. Tēr-Yovhaneants', *Patmut'iw'n Nor Jughayu vor yAspahan*, 2 vols. (New Julfa 1880-1881); modern Eastern Armenian translation entitled *Patmut'iw'n Nor Jughayi* by P. Petrosean, 2 vols. (New Julfa 1980-1981), with notes by L.G. Minasean published separately as *Tsanōt'agrut'iw'nner Nor Jughayi Patmut'iw'n A. ew B. Hatorneri* (New Julfa 1980).

Sisakan,⁸ Abrahamyan's history of the Armenian diaspora,⁹ Seth's *The Armenians in India*¹⁰ and the relevant chapters in the Armenian Academy of Science and Dédéyan's histories of the Armenian people.¹¹ Ter-Avetisyan and Bayburdyan's monographs and Gregorian's article on Julfa also discuss trade.¹² The studies of New Julfa churches and houses by Carswell and Karapetyan provide further information and an interesting perspective on the lives of the Julfa merchants.¹³ These works combine to provide a wealth of information but (with the exception of the two studies of buildings) they reveal the underlying nationalist concerns of most modern Armenian historiography since its inception during the Armenian intellectual reawakening of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For most of the medieval period, the story of the Armenian people was one of a struggle for survival. They were discriminated against and politically disenfranchised - a powerless minority in a bloody and turbulent corner of the Islamic Middle East. It is not surprising, therefore, that Armenian historians have tended to concentrate on the Armenians' resistance to assimilation, their struggle for independence and those aspects which distinguish the Armenians from the surrounding peoples and show them in a positive light. Thus the economic success of the Julfans is sometimes portrayed as an expression of the resilience and industriousness of Armenian culture or character. Historians stress the positive economic role of the Julfans in Iran's economy and take pride in the Julfa colonists' ability to establish a widespread international trade network in spite of their disadvantages. Even where other

8 Gh.M. Alishan, *Sisakan* (Venice 1893) 409-428.

9 A.G. Abrahamyan, *Hamarot urvagits hay gaght'avayreri patmut'wn*, 2 vols (Erevan 1964) 250-259.

10 M.J. Seth, *Armenians in India from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Calcutta 1937; reprinted 1983).

11 Chapters by H.D. P'ap'azyan and V.A. Bayburdyan in *Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'wn*, vol. 4, *XIV-XVII dd.* (Erevan 1972); chapters by Gh. Khosdeghian in *Histoire des arméniens*, ed. G. Dédéyan (Paris 1982).

12 S. Ter-Avetisyan, *Gorod Dzhuga* (Tiflis 1937); V.A. Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya Novoi Dzhul'fy v XVII veke* (Erevan 1969); V. Gregorian, "Minorities of Isfahan: the Armenian community of Isfahan 1587-1722", *Iranian Studies*, 7/3-4 (1974) 652-680.

13 J. Carswell, *New Julfa. The Armenian churches and other buildings* (Oxford 1968); K. Karapetyan, *Isfahan, New Julfa. The houses of the Armenians* (Rome 1974).

approaches impinge the nationalist preoccupation is rarely far beneath the surface, whether in a class analysis of the Julfa merchants which portrays them as a progressive bourgeoisie stimulating economic and societal development, or in the analysis that the commercial strength of the Julfans shielded Iran from European capitalist penetration and colonial domination.

There has been a considerable growth in academic interest in the Julfa merchants in the last two decades. Though the most important source for Julfan history, the archive of the All Saviour's Cathedral, ^{awaits through investigation} ~~remains virtually untapped since Ter-Yovhannēs' day,~~¹⁴ much interesting work has been done, often on Julfan activities abroad,¹⁵ on the basis of materials held in foreign

14 Exceptions are L.G. Minasean's guide cited in note 1 above and the same author's "Farāmīn-i mawjūd dar mūzah-yi Julfā", *Hunar va mardum*, 84 (1348 A.H.) 14-19. The Cathedral's manuscript collection has been catalogued and more extensively utilised: S. Tēr-Awetisean, *Tsutsak hayerēn dzeragrats' Nor Jughayi Amenap'rkich' Vank'i*, vol. 1 (Vienna 1970); L.G. Minasean, *ibid.*, vol. 2 (Vienna 1972).

15 R. Gulbenkian, "Philippe de Zagly, marchand arménien de Julfa, et l'établissement du commerce persan en Courlande en 1696", *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, new series, 7 (1970) 361-426; R.W. Ferrier, "The agreement of the East India Company with the Armenian nation 22nd June 1688", *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, new series, 7 (1970) 427-443; *idem.*, "The Armenians and the East India Company in Persia in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century", *Economic History Review*, second series, 26/1 (1973) 38-62; L.B. Zekiyān, "Xoḡa Safar ambasciatore di Shāh Abbas a Venezia", *Oriente Moderno*, 58/7-8 (1978) 357-367; S. Van Rooy, "Armenian merchant habits as mirrored in 17th-18th century Amsterdam documents", *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, new series, 3 (1966) 347-357; R.A. Bekius, "The Armenian community in Amsterdam in the 17th and 18th centuries. Integration and disintegration", paper presented at the First Conference of the Association Internationale des Études Arméniennes held at Wasenaar, Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies, 30-31 August 1983; A.I. Yukht, "Russko-armyanskaya kompaniya" persidskogo torga" v seredine XVIII veka", *PBH* (1983) nos. 2-3, 224-239; "Uchastie armyanskogo kupechestva vo vnutrennei torgovle Rossii (20-40e gody XVIII v)", *PBH* (1979) no. 3, 112-118; "Vostochnaya torgovlya Rossii v 30-40 godakh XVIII veka i rol' v nei armyanskikh kuptsov", *Teghekgagir* (1956) no. 8, 43-62; "Russko-armyanskaya kompaniya" persidskogo torga" v seredine XVIII veka", *PBH* (1983) nos. 2-3, 224-239; "Armyanskie remeslenniki v Astrakhane v pervoi polovine XVIII v.", *Teghekgagir* (1958) no. 1, 37-54; "Astrakhani haykakan gaghut' i bnakh'ut'yan sots'ialakan kasma 18-rd dari arajin kesum", *Teghekgagir* (1957) no. 7, 47-60; "Pravovoe polozhenie astrakhanskikh armyan v pervoi polovine XVIII veka", *Teghekgagir* (1960) no. 12, 47-60; V.A. Khachaturyan, "Naselenie armyanskoi kolonii v Astrakhane vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka", *Teghekgagir* (1965) no. 7, 77-87; A.A. Kurkdjian, "La politique économique de la Russie en Orient et le commerce arménien au début du 18e siècle", *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, new series, 11 (1975-1976) 245-253; V.K. Voskanyan, "Les arméniens à Moscou du XVe au XVIIe siècle", trans. A. Ter-Minassian, *REA*, new series, 9 (1972) 425-444; "Novo-torgovyi ustav i dogovor s armyanskoi torgovoi kompaniei v 1667 g.", *Teghekgagir* (1974) no. 6, 29-43; Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, "1667 t'. Hay-rusakan arewtrakan paymanagirē ew Nor Jughayi ink'navar marminnerē", *Haykazean Hayagitakan Handēs*, 8 (Beirut 1980) 259-288; S. Gopal, "Armenian

archives.¹⁶ For this dissertation the most interesting work has been on Julfan commercial practice and techniques as revealed in commercial documents.

The pioneer in this field was L.S. Khach'ikyan, whose articles on the account book of a seventeenth century Julfa merchant first pointed to the potential of the Julfa sources for the study of economic history on the broadest level.¹⁷ The culmination of Khach'ikyan's work in the field was the posthumous publication, jointly with H.D. P'ap'azyan, of the edited text of Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan's account book, complete with a glossary of terminology and a thorough introduction.¹⁸ This is undoubtedly the most significant achievement in the field to date and represents the first serious attempt to deal with the technical and linguistic aspects of the Julfa documents and to make sense of the commercial terminology. Khach'ikyan and P'ap'azyan made great progress towards an understanding of several important features of Julfan commercial practice: the *commenda* contract, the use of bills of exchange and the system of double entry bookkeeping. The introduction to the text contains a considerably fuller and deeper study of Julfan commercial practice than Khach'ikyan's earlier articles and corrects a number of errors.

Two other scholars working in collaboration on Julfan material are Kévonian and Aghassian, who have written thorough surveys of the Julfan commercial network in Russia and in the Indian

traders in India in the 17th century", in *Central Asia*, ed. A. Guha (New Delhi 1970) 200-213; J. Carswell, "The Armenians and East-West trade through Persia in the XVIIth century", in *Sociétés et compagnies de commerce en Orient et dans l'Océan Indien. Actes du huitième colloque international d'histoire maritime (Beyrouth 5-10 septembre 1966)* ed. M. Mollat (Paris 1968) 481-486; B.C. Colless, "The Traders of the Pearl", *Abr Nahrain*, 9 (1969-1970) 17-38; 10 (1970-1971) 102-121; 11 (1971) 1-21; 13 (1972-1973) 115-135; 14 (1973-1974) 1-16; 15 (1974-1975) 6-17.

16 On the major collections of Julfan documents, see the Introduction to Part 3.

17 The manuscript of the account book is held in the Portuguese National Archive in Lisbon, manuscript reference F.G. 7970. L.S. Khachikyan, "The ledger of the merchant Hovhannes Joughayetsi", *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, 8/3 (Calcutta 1966) 153-186; *idem.*, "Le registre d'un marchand arménien en Perse, en Inde et au Tibet (1682-1693)", *Annales Economies Sociétés Civilisations* (1967) no. 2, 231-278.

18 L.S. Khach'ikyan and H.D. P'ap'azyan (eds.), *Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan Jughayets'u Hashvetumarë* (Erevan 1984) (hereafter HTD).

Ocean.¹⁹ Their work is particularly interesting for its coverage of seventeenth and eighteenth century published works produced by and for merchants (exerpts from which are included in translation in their articles), and for its integration of commercial and cultural history.

Most recently Sh.L. Khach'ikyan has published a number of articles on aspects of Julfan trade, among them a description of an early eighteenth century account book,²⁰ a discussion of the commercial activities of the Lazarean family in the eighteenth century based on materials in the Moscow archives,²¹ a study of the commercial agreements between the Julfa merchants and the Russian government in the late seventeenth century²² and an examination of the bill of exchange in Julfan trade, based mainly on the Lazarean collection and British Library Lansdowne Armenian documents.²³ Most of these articles have recently been collected and incorporated with slight revisions into a monograph, together with new material on commercial firms, partnerships and credit.²⁴ In this work Sh.L. Khach'ikyan uses the full range of sources examined to date to describe the principal features of Julfan commercial and financial organisation.

One objective of this dissertation is to continue the line of research opened up by the above-mentioned scholars, broadening its scope to cover questions not hitherto examined in any detail, and extending the investigation to cover sources not hitherto utilised, notably the collection in the

19 M. Aghassian and K. Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien dans l'Océan Indien aux 17e et 18e siècles", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques dans l'Océan Indien et la Mer du Chine 13e-20e siècles*, eds. D. Lombard and J. Aubin (Paris 1988) 155-181; K. Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens au XVIIe siècle. À propos d'un livre arménien publié à Amsterdam en 1699", *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, 16/2 (1975) 199-244.

20 Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, "Shahvelu vordi Sarhadi hashvematanë vorpes hay-ṛusakan tntesakan kaperi skzbnaghbyur", *PBH* (1978) no. 2, 93-108.

21 *Idem.*, "Lazaryanneri arevtrakan ėnkerut'iwnë XVIII dari 40-50-akan t'vakannerin", *Lraber* (1981) no. 7, 78-91.

22 *Idem.*, "1667 t'. Hay-ṛusakan arewtrakan paymanagirë ew Nor Jughayi ink'navar marminnerë", *Haykazean Hayagitakan Handës*, 8 (Beirut 1980) 259-288.

23 *Idem.*, "P'okhants'ayin murhak hay khojayakan mijavayrum", *PBH* (1981) no.1, 87-101.

24 *Idem.*, *Nor Jughayi hay vacharakanut'yunë ev nra arevratntesakan kaperë Ṛusastani het XVII-XVIII darerum* (Erevan 1988).

Venice State Archive. A supplementary objective is to make the findings of the Khach'ikyan and P'ap'azyan accessible to historians unable to read Armenian, since all their recent work has appeared only in that language.

The language barrier has not been the only factor isolating the nascent field of Julfa commercial history. It is also the case that the existing studies of Julfan trade have drawn few comparisons between the Armenians and other Asian merchant communities, perhaps owing to the influence of the often inward-looking preoccupations of Armenian historiography already alluded to. Thus Kévonian makes it clear that he is interested in the Armenian merchants as much for their contribution to the national renaissance as for their economic significance,²⁵ while the Erevan historians are willing to view the Julfans more or less in isolation, as a unique, specifically Armenian phenomenon. This is not to say that there is no awareness of the wider context; L.S. Khach'ikyan and P'ap'azyan in particular note the wealth of information in the Julfan sources for the economic history of the Middle East, South Asia and Tibet,²⁶ but in their discussion of Julfan commercial practice they make few comparisons with other Asian merchants. The same is true of Sh.L. Khach'ikyan's work; where she does look beyond the Armenian world it is generally to medieval European commercial practice or to eighteenth century Russia, rather than to contemporary Asia.

In certain respects it is of course valid to view the Julfans' commerce as a specifically Armenian phenomenon. The community was physically separate from the surrounding Muslim Iranian society, and in commercial as in social intercourse the Julfans preferred to deal within the community. Some features of commercial life were distinctly Armenian: the language of the documents; the customary law and the community tribunal that administered it; and the role of the Armenian church in validating and preserving contracts. But in terms of economic history it is not the uniquely Armenian features that present the greatest interest, but the parallels with other

25 Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens".

26 L.S. Khachikyan, "The ledger of Hovhannes Joughayetsi as a reference source on the economic life of India, Nepal and Tibet", *XXVIIth International Congress of Orientalists. Papers presented by the USSR Delegation (Moscow 1967)*

merchant communities and what these reveal about a larger economic system of which the Armenians formed only a part.

It is these possibilities that have attracted the attention of comparative historians, such as Steensgaard and Braudel, who share the same underlying interest in comparison between the Asian commercial world and European merchant capitalism.

The first to realize the potential of the Julfan material was Niels Steensgaard, who drew on one of L.S. Khach'ikyan's early articles to reformulate Van Leur's theory of the "peddling" character of Asian trade. The peddler is described as a small-scale, itinerant, individual trader whose success or failure depends to a great extent on an unpredictable market and other forces over which he has little or no control. Steensgaard concludes that the peddling system of trade was radically different from and competitively inferior to that represented by the companies of northwestern Europe.²⁷ Steensgaard's work has given rise to a lively debate, and it is unnecessary to reiterate here the criticisms levelled at his analysis of Asian trade and merchants.²⁸ It is, however, apposite to add that in his discussion of Armenian merchants Steensgaard was dependent on a single study, itself based on research on a single merchant's account book. Read in its entirety, and in conjunction with other Armenian commercial sources, Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan's account book suggests quite different conclusions, which will be discussed in detail in Part 2.

In addition to Khach'ikyan's articles, Braudel was able to use Kévonian's article (published 1975) on Vanandets'i's merchant handbook. Braudel rejects Steensgaard's analysis, likening the

27 N. Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century. The East India Companies and the decline of the caravan trade* (Chicago-London 1973); also published as *Carracks, Caravans and Companies. The structural crisis in the European-Asian trade in the early 17th century* (Copenhagen 1973) 406, 412.

28 M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, "The structures of trade in Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A critical appraisal", *Mare Luso-Indicum*, 4 (1980) 1-43; J. Aubin, review article in *Studia Iranica*, 3 (1974) 130-132; T. Bentley Duncan, review article in *Journal of Modern History* 47 (1975) 512-518; A. Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat c.1700-1750* (Wiesbaden 1979) 10-13.

seventeenth century Armenian merchants instead to "the new kind of English merchant engaged in "private trading"... who is always described as the modern figure who shook up the old rules of the medieval English market".²⁹ Braudel also remarks on the extraordinary extent of the Julfa trade network, but admits that he is unable to discern "whatever was the compelling commercial or capitalist motive behind this trading network", and ventures only tentative suggestions about the interrelation of different parts of the system.³⁰

The third historian to make use of the Julfa material is Curtin, who devotes a chapter of his *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* to the Armenians.³¹ Curtin's main interest is in trade diasporas, and he takes the Armenians' experience as one example, so his focus is different from that of Steensgaard or Braudel. His theory offers a basis for comparison between various merchant communities in terms of internal organisation and relations with host societies, but is less useful when it comes to explaining why the Julfans were so successful at that particular time. Nor is his model of a trade diaspora community acting as a cross-cultural broker between two culturally distinct societies adequate to characterise the whole Julfa trade network. It may fit the Armenians well enough in their role as intermediaries between Christian Europe and the Muslim Middle East, but fails to take into account the eastern half of the Armenian trade network, which stretched across the cosmopolitan world of Indian Ocean trade. Although Curtin recognises the special character of the Indian Ocean and coins the phrase "zone of ecumenical trade" to describe such areas of open trade, his chapter on the Armenians returns to the cross-cultural broker model, stressing their intermediary role and emphasising their overland trade to North and West at the expense of their Indian Ocean activities.

The work of Steensgaard, Braudel and Curtin undoubtedly demonstrates the potential value of the Julfa Armenian sources for comparative history on the broadest scale, but few would now

29 F. Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century*, vol. 2, *The Wheels of Commerce*, trans. S. Reynolds (London 1982) 123.

30 *Ibid.*, 156-157.

31 P.D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge 1984).

subscribe to Steensgaard's Asian pedlar theory³², while Braudel's view of the Armenians as a progressive capitalist force brings us no closer to an understanding of what, if anything, distinguishes the European from the Asian commercial world. Moreover neither Steensgaard nor Braudel fully justifies using the Armenians as a type for the Asian merchant. Each does so more or less by default, because there is information about the Armenians and not for any other contemporary Asian merchants, but it is open to question that the Armenians were really typical, or indeed that Asian merchants conformed to a single type. Nor do these studies present a convincing explanation for the sudden expansion of Julfan trade in the seventeenth century. To begin to answer these questions it may be advisable to step back from the wide vistas opened by Steensgaard, Braudel and Curtin and focus first on the immediate historical context of the New Julfa colony - Safavi Iran.

The Iranian context

However self-contained the Julfa merchants may have been communally, they were certainly not isolated economically. They both bought goods for export and sold their imports on the Iranian market. The roads they travelled, bridges they crossed, transport they hired and caravanserais they stayed at formed the communications network of Safavi Iran. Their relationship with the Safavi court was a vital element in their commercial system, and the aspect Europeans always commented on first. It was the Safavi Shah 'Abbās I who settled them in a suburb of Isfahan, and the patronage of the court guaranteed their security and privileges as well as supplying them with goods (collected as revenue) for export and providing a market for imported luxuries. Moreover, although Armenian commercial practice and law possessed a number of distinctly Armenian features, this should not be allowed to conceal its many borrowings from Iranian practice. This is apparent from the preponderance of Persian terminology in the Julfa commercial vocabulary, and is indeed openly acknowledged by the authors of the eighteenth century Astrakhan Lawbook

32 Steensgaard himself appears to have revised his views concerning the nature of the advantages enjoyed by the European companies: "The companies as a specific institution in the history of European expansion", in *Companies and Trade*, eds. L. Blussé and F. Gaastra (Leiden 1981) 245-264.

in their statement that the Armenians living in Iran had adopted Persian commercial practice and law.³³

These considerations suggest that the Julfa Armenians' trade should be viewed as an integral part of the economy of Safavi Iran and that we should seek comparisons with the Muslim Iranian merchants. Locating Julfan trade within that context is, however, a difficult undertaking, principally owing to the shortage of sources for other aspects of Safavi economic history - a lack that is only brought into sharper contrast by the comparative wealth of material dealing with matters political, military, religious, philosophical, historical, poetical and biographical. Seventeenth and eighteenth century Iranians did not attach great importance to recording economic data, so, as one translator has remarked of the Safavi histories: "Administrative, social and economic facts have to be dragged, as it were, out of their unwilling pages".³⁴ This would not be so serious a gap (even contemporary European historians after all occupied themselves primarily with political and military events) were it not for the destruction of Safavi official records. It is known that the Isfahan archives were deliberately destroyed twice in the course of the eighteenth century,³⁵ but when we remember that written tax registers were kept for villages³⁶ and that even the goods entering and leaving the larger caravanserais were recorded,³⁷ the apparently complete absence of surviving administrative records is hard to believe. The surviving Safavi documents mostly comprise land, revenue and salary grants of various kinds, diplomatic correspondence (often preserved in foreign archives), and decrees and

33 *Datastanagirk' Astrakhani hayots'*, ed. F.G. Poghosyan (Erevan 1967) 5-7.

34 C.N. Seddon's introduction to his translation of Hasan Beg Rumlu's *Aḥsanu't-tawārīkh*, vol. 2 (Baroda 1934) xi.

35 By the Afghans in 1723, and by 'Ādil Shah in 1748.

36 Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, ed. and trans. M.O. Darbinyan-Melikyan (Moscow 1969) 107.

37 John Newbery in S. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous or Purchas his Pilgrimes*, vol. 8 (Glasgow 1905) 464-465.

letters patent establishing the privileges of particular groups and individuals.³⁸ In addition there are two administrative manuals written in the early eighteenth century.³⁹ Private records are virtually non-existent, except for a few *vaqf* documents. Of foreign sources, the records of the English and Dutch East India Companies provide interesting information on certain aspects of the economy, but the limited penetration of the East India Companies into Iran restricts their usefulness. Many European merchants, travellers, missionaries and diplomats recorded their travels and experiences in Iran, but not in the systematic way needed to build up a picture of economic processes. The Russian archives do contain valuable information on Russo-Iranian trade including statistics but, like other foreign sources, they present a partial picture from a particular perspective and can be used only to supplement Iranian sources rather than to replace them.

The dearth of sources is echoed in the scarcity of studies (in any language) on Safavi economic history. The shortage of sources is only partly to blame for this gap in the historiography of a formative period in Iranian history; the intellectual traditions of scholars Iranian and foreign have also played a part.

Most surprising is the apparent lack of interest among Iranian historians in a period which was after all of crucial importance in the shaping of Iranian state and society. It can be attributed in part to the late development of social and economic history in Iran in general,⁴⁰ but in so far as the Safavi period has been excluded from the increasingly lively debate on nineteenth and early twentieth century social and economic history, this is only a partial explanation. We must look

38 On Safavi documents see, B.G. Fragner, *Repertorium persischer Herrscherurkunden. Publierte Originalurkunden (bis 1848)* (Freiburg 1980); R. Schimkoreit, *Regesten publizierte safawidischer Herrscherurkunden. Erlass und Staatsschreiben der frühen Neuzeit Irans* (Berlin 1982).

39 V. Minorsky (ed. and trans.), *Tadhkirat al-mulūk. A manual of Safavid administration*, (Cambridge 1943; reprinted 1980); M.T. Danishpazhuh, "Dastūr al-mulūk-i Mīrzā Rafī'ā va Tazkirat al-mulūk-i Mīrzā Samī'ā", *Majallah-yi Dānishkadah-yi Adabiyāt va 'Ulūm-i Insānī-yi Dānishgāh-i Tehrān* 15 (1347/1968) 475-504; 16 (1347-8/1968-9) 62-93, 298-322, 416-440, 540-564.

40 F. Ādamiyyat, "Problems in Iranian historiography", *Iranian Studies* 4 (1971) 132-156; J.D. Gurney, "Rewriting the social history of late Qajar Iran", in *Persian and Islamic Studies in honour of P.W. Avery. Pembroke Papers 1*, ed. C. Melville (Cambridge 1990) 43-57.

also to the traditional Iranian perception of the Safavi period as remote from modern history, separated from Iran's first serious encounter with the modern West in the nineteenth century by the hiatus of the anarchic eighteenth century. Iranians generally consider the modern history of their country to begin only with the establishment of the Qajar state, the renewal of close links with the West and the ensuing slide into pseudo-colonialism. Few historians look for the roots of the processes of the nineteenth century in the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴¹ The Safavi period is seen rather as the last flowering of medieval Iran, a period which left glorious monuments in art and architecture but which was in many ways (most significantly in terms of its literature - always the cultural touchstone for Iranians) already decadent, representing the conclusion of a cycle that had begun with the Persian renaissance of the third and fourth centuries A.H. (ninth and tenth centuries A.D.). In this respect the contrast with the Turkish and Indian historical traditions is striking. For these the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though marked by imperial decline, are an integral part of their countries' modern histories, marking the beginnings of processes whose continuous development through the eighteenth into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is uninterrupted.

The lack of interest in Safavi economic history on the part of western scholars has certain features in common with that in Iran. In particular the orientalist tradition, with its predisposition towards literary and linguistic subjects, has militated against the study of the Safavi period in general, since this has traditionally been viewed as a period of literary decline.⁴² If orientalist influence is waning, modern students still have to cope with its legacy, which survives not only in existing works but in the disciplinary structure of western universities. Iranian history has not traditionally been a field for historians working in history departments, but for orientalists with the necessary linguistic training. The language barrier discourages most history graduates from serious research on Iran, while few orientalists keep in touch with developments in historical methodology.

41 Recent (post 1979) studies in religious history are an important exception.

42 The most effective critique of the influence of orientalist tradition on Safavi historiography remains M.B. Dickson's "The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty: a Review Article", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 82 (1962) 503-517.

Russian and Soviet orientalism shares the same origins as the western school and its practitioners have not been immune to orientalist prejudices, but in the Soviet period the adoption of a Marxist philosophy of history resulted in an interest in social and economic history much earlier than among most western scholars. The achievements of Soviet historians of Iran show the benefit of this early start, as well as the value of applying a consistent analytical method. The Soviet school also has its weaknesses, however, and the requirement for inflexible orthodoxy for much of the Soviet period has undoubtedly narrowed the scope of enquiry and vitiated debate. This leads us to a more fundamental problem, which applies also to the work of non-Soviet Marxist historians.

Marxist historiography evolved, like other European historical theories, in the context of the study of Europe and deals with categories and models that do not always easily fit the histories of non-European societies.⁴³ In particular, the Marxist developmental paradigm of evolutionary progression through a series of specific historical stages - the primitive, slave-owning, feudal, capitalist, socialist modes of production - presents difficulties for Iranian history.⁴⁴ Thus Soviet historians of Iran have characterised the whole Islamic period up to the nineteenth century as feudal, but the acknowledged differences between Iranian feudalism and European feudalism are so great that one must question the usefulness of an analysis that classes early Qajar Iran with Plantagenet England and tends to obscure rather than reveal the distinctions in Iranian economy over more than a millennium. Of course Marxist scholars have recognized that Iran's economy underwent some development in this period and subdivide Iran's long feudal era into stages, but the unilinear evolutionary model insists that these were ultimately without significance, since none resulted in a change in the mode of production.

An alternative to classifying Iran as feudal is to adopt the Asiatic mode of production model. This has the advantage of allowing for greater differentiation among pre-capitalist modes of production,

43 See E.J. Hobsbawm's introduction to K. Marx, *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, trans. J. Cohen (London 1964).

44 Hobsbawm (*loc. cit.*) argues that: "the general theory of historical materialism requires only there should be a succession of modes of production, though not necessarily any particular modes, and perhaps not in any particular predetermined order". The flexibility this suggests has only recently begun to manifest itself in work on Iranian history (see works cited in notes 44 and 50).

but raises problems of its own. Applied to Iran, one still finds a single categorisation for the whole Islamic period to the mid-nineteenth century; furthermore the Asiatic mode of production is perceived as lacking an internal dynamic, unable to transform itself into a more advanced mode without the interference of capitalist Europe. This is resonant of older orientalist paradigms, leaving a passive dormant Asia to await the vitalizing kiss of dynamic Europe.⁴⁵

Turning to the existing literature on Safavi economic history and its relevance for the present study, it is possible, at the risk of generalisation, to identify a number of principal concerns. Most historians of Safavi Iran have addressed a nationalist (in the broadest sense) agenda. Debate has revolved around the success or failure of the Safavi dynasty in establishing and maintaining a unified Iranian state. In political history attention has focussed on the dynasty's development from an extremist *shī'ī* Turkish tribal confederacy into an orthodox *shī'ī* Iranian centralised autocratic state, and on the tensions and conflicts between central (Iranian bureaucratic) and regional (Turkish tribal) forces. From the nationalist perspective the centralising forces are viewed as positive, the tribal elements as alien and disruptive. In the economic sphere this conflict finds expression in competition for land between settled agriculturalists and nomadic pastoralists, and in the central authority's efforts to uphold its monopoly over revenue extraction and the distribution of property, against illegal tribal encroachment and usurpation. It is not surprising therefore to find that landholding and taxation are the most developed areas of Safavi economic history. The Safavi economy is seen in terms of an agrarian system dominated (at least in theory) by a central authority with massive extractive and redistributive powers, yet facing a two-fold threat from

45 On the feudalism/Asiatic mode of production debate in Iranian history see the following two articles and the bibliographies contained in their notes: H. Shaugannik, "Mode of production in Medieval Iran", *Iranian Studies*, 18/1 (1985) 75-94; J. Foran, "The modes of production approach to seventeenth-century Iran", *JMES*, 20 (1988) 303-324. Foran's article presents a critique of both the feudal and Asiatic mode of production analyses, and proposes a new approach to seventeenth century Iran that involves *three* coexisting modes of production: the pastoral nomadic; the peasant crop-sharing and the petty-commodity modes. In terms of flexibility and responsiveness to the findings of empirical studies this marks a considerable advance on single mode of production approaches, though difficulties remain when it comes to integrating the commercial sector into the model (see below). To the bibliography should be added: M.R. Sawdāgar, *Rushd-i ravābiṭ-i sarmāyahdārī dar Īrān* (Tehran 1349), of which parts 1 and 2 deal with the pre-twentieth-century period.

nomadic tribes - in pastoralists' competition for agricultural land and in the challenge to central authority and revenue collection posed by insubordinate tribal khans.⁴⁶

This model incorporates a number of significant assumptions. First, implicit in it is the idea of a Safavi "national" economy, defined by the state's right or claim to distribute property rights and extract revenue throughout its territory. Yet the existence in this period of a national economy that was in any sense unified is extremely doubtful. Geography, climate, demography, poor communications, and limited monetary and fiscal integration combined to fragment Iran into a series of regional or local economies, several of which were more closely linked with regions beyond the Safavi frontiers than with other parts of Iran.⁴⁷

Second, the state as the arbiter of property rights and the principal recipient of the agricultural surplus occupies the central place in the discussion. The focus on the top of the structure stems in part from the availability of sources, but reveals also a theoretical predisposition. Minorsky's procedure, outlined in the introduction to the *Tadhkirat al-mulūk*, that: "Logically one should begin with the basis of the social pyramid, but this is not the clearest part of the picture and so we shall start from the top",⁴⁸ has been adopted without apology by several later historians.⁴⁹ There has been a readiness to accept the power of Safavi institutions to dominate society and the economy at every level. In particular we may note the focus on the Shah's claim to universal land ownership, on his control of the distribution of the agricultural surplus through various forms of land and revenue assignment, and on his extraction of a high proportion of agricultural output and

46 A.D. Papazyan, *Agraryne otnosheniya v vostochnoi Armenii v XVI-XVII* (Erevan 1972); A.K.S. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia* (London 1953, 2nd ed. 1969); K.-M. Röhrborn, *Provinzen und Zentralgewalt Persiens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, (Berlin 1966).

47 T.M. Ricks, "Towards a social and economic history of eighteenth century Iran", *Iranian Studies*, 6 (1973) 110-126; R.P. Mathee, "Politics and Trade in Late Safavid Iran: commercial crisis and government reaction under Shah Solayman (1666-1694)", PhD dissertation (University of California, Los Angeles 1991) chapter 1.

48 Introduction to Minorsky, *Tadhkirat al-mulūk*, 12.

49 For example: "Safavid society was pyramidal in shape. At the apex of the pyramid was the shah...", R.M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids* (Cambridge 1980) 177.

commercial turnover through taxation. Studies have highlighted the state's involvement in economic affairs through monopolies, price fixing, the royal workshops (*buyūtāt*) and the extension of royal demesne (*khāṣṣah* and *khāliṣah*) lands. It is also often maintained that economic policies such as the granting of privileges to certain groups (for example the Julfa Armenians and the East India Companies), the hoarding of gold and silver in the treasury and massive "unproductive" court expenditure, were of far-reaching significance in terms of overall economic development.⁵⁰ This emphasis on the state and its role in the economy owes a considerable, if sometimes unrecognised, debt to the Asiatic mode of production theory and to Weberian patrimonialism. The dominant economic role of the state in Safavi Iran should not however be taken for granted. The sources by their nature predispose us to concentrate on the shahs and their courts: it is hardly surprising that administrative manuals like the *Tazkirat al-mulūk* and the *Dastūr al-mulūk* present a picture of the state structure as an efficient and powerful apparatus. Similarly European diplomats, missionaries, company agents and jewel merchants generally had more contact with the court than with other levels of society and focus their accounts on the subject they knew best. But when we consider how limited is our knowledge of even basic features of the economy of Safavi Iran, it is rash to accept at face value the assessment found in such sources of the role of the state in the economy as a whole.

Third, there is the question of the role of the tribes in Iranian history. While recent studies have emphasised the importance of the tribes in the social make-up of the Safavi state, tribalism still often appears essentially as an obstacle to political and economic development.⁵¹ While the

50 A. Banani, "Reflections on the social and economic structure of Safavid Persia at its zenith", *Iranian Studies*, 11 (1978) 83-116; D. Navidi, "Socio-Economic and Political Change in Safavid Iran. 16th and 17th Centuries", Ph.D. thesis (Vanderbilt University 1977) 220; M. Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life in the Later Safavid Period. Contributions to the social-economic history of Persia* (Berlin 1982) 215-217; A. Seyf, "Despotism and the disintegration of the Iranian economy 1500-1800", in *Essays on the Economic History of the Middle East*, eds. E. Kedourie and S.G. Haim (London 1988) 1-19.

51 L.M. Helfgott, "Tribalism as a socioeconomic formation in Iranian society", *Iranian Studies*, 10/1-2 (1977) 36-61; F. Moghadam, "Nomadic invasions and the development of productive forces: an historical study of Iran (1000-1800)", *Science and Society*, 52/2 (1988) 389-412; H. Pirouzjoui, "L'Iran au début du XVIe siècle. Étude d'histoire économique et sociale", Ph.D. dissertation (Paris, Ecole des Hautes Études, VIe Section Sciences Sociales 1974).

damage caused to Iranian settled life by the Turkish and Mongol invasions is undeniable, as are the conflicts inherent in a society containing agricultural and pastoral elements, such a view undervalues the positive elements contributed by tribes: defence, utilization of marginal lands unsuitable for cultivation, provision of overland transport and stimulus to the internal market as a result of the different functional specialisations of settled and pastoral producers, and to the inherent dependence of pastoral society on settled economies. The principal criticism of this tendency, however, is its implicit Eurocentricity. It views tribal pastoralism as abnormal, and disruptive of a pattern of societal development which is ultimately defined by the experience of settled European societies. This difficulty will remain for as long as the influence of the social sciences in Iranian history is limited to applying existing models to Iran, rather than reinterpreting the social sciences and their models in the light of Iranian (and other non-European) history.

A further tendency in existing studies of Safavi and of pre-modern Iranian economic history in general is an underlying negativity. It is common to find comments about the stagnation of Iranian agrarian and urban production and about the failure of the Safavis to find long-term solutions to underlying problems. Looking back with hindsight from Iran's economic weakness in the nineteenth century and given the inevitable comparisons with Western European progress from the sixteenth century onwards, this is to some extent understandable. In any case, the traditions of orientalism and those of evolutionary social science theory converge in predicting decadence and stagnation as the natural condition of non-Western societies. This negativity is most clearly exemplified in the "obstacles to capitalist development" approach to economic history.⁵² The aims of this approach are encapsulated in the following statement:

"But what of a situation where x (capitalism) did not exist, or did not endogenously develop? Can we trace back its lack of development? ... We

52 Among many studies pursuing this approach note especially: A. Ashraf, *Mavānī'-i tārikhī-yi rüşd-i sarmāyahdārī dar Irān-i dawrah-yi qājāriyyah*, (Tehran 1359); *idem.*, "Historical obstacles to the development of a bourgeoisie in Iran", *Iranian Studies*, 2/2-3 (1969); reprinted in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, ed. M.A. Cook (London 1977) 308-332; W.M. Floor, "Impediments to economic development in Safavid Iran", paper delivered at a conference on "The Political Economies of the Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires" (Harvard University 22-23 March 1989); M. Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life in the Later Safavid Period. Contributions to the social-economic history of Persia* (Berlin 1982) chapter 8 "Relations between the merchants and the guilds: impediments to economic growth in Safavid Iran".

think such a study can be done, and in this study such an effort has been made."⁵³

This approach is based on the teleological assumption that industrial capitalism is a natural evolutionary development for any society and that it is divergence from this norm that requires explanation. Leaving aside the question of whether the development of capitalism is natural or inevitable for all societies, and of the validity of historical study of a non-entity, there can be no doubt that this line of enquiry leads to a negative appraisal of pre-modern Iranian economic development.⁵⁴ In focussing on what Iran was *not*, historians inevitably lose sight of what Iran *was*, including positive features such as the remarkable resilience of its economy and capacity for recovery after disaster. The approach also prefers judgement against absolute (ultimately European) standards to comparison between different periods in Iranian history.

The "obstacles to capitalist development" argument has meshed with the predisposition to see the state as dominating Iranian economy with the result that the state is blamed for the lack of economic development because it was (in various periods and viewed from various perspectives) too powerful and interfering, or too weak and ineffective, or too despotic and arbitrary, or because it represented the interests of the tribal rather than the settled element in society.⁵⁵ Again one must question the *a priori* assumptions of such arguments. First, it cannot be presumed that Iran's economy was stagnant in the Safavi period merely because it failed to achieve capitalist development along European lines. Second, as suggested previously, it is unwise to account for the lack of development through reference to the state until it has been demonstrated that the state genuinely played a dominant role in economic life. Lastly, it might be more rewarding to examine how and why the Safavi system was able to function as it did for so long (compared to the preceding and subsequent periods), rather than concentrating on its eventual failure.

53 D. Navidi, "Socio-Economic and Political Changes", 4.

54 On the same question in South Asian historiography see, S. Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500-1650* (Cambridge 1990) 3-4.

55 See the works cited in notes 50 and 53 above.

It will readily be seen that cities, merchants and trade are pushed to the margins in most existing models of Safavi economy. Even in Foran's more flexible modes of production analysis merchants are still in a peripheral position, contained within the petty-commodity mode, though Foran does recognise the existence of trade in agricultural goods and of significant commercial expansion.⁵⁶ Using the allocation of space in Fragner's chapter on internal social and economic affairs in the *Cambridge History of Iran* (vol. 6) as a crude rule of thumb, we find that out of a total of 77 pages 9 are devoted to the rural economy (agrarian production), 25 to forms and institutions of landholding, 9 to cities, commerce and trade (anything on urban manufacture is included here), 23 to the post-Mongol tax system, and 11 to the monetary system.⁵⁷ Trade is also dealt with in a separate chapter, of which the section on the Safavi period deals almost exclusively with foreign trade, principally that of the Europeans in Iran. Work has scarcely begun on a range of important questions about the Safavi economy, among them the technological, labour-related, and quantitative aspects of production, price history, and the study of social classes or economic groups.⁵⁸

The discussion of trade in most existing studies of the Safavi economy shows the influence of the general tendencies outlined above. A generally negative view of Safavi Iran's level of commercial development is taken. It emphasises the absence of a single unified market, the small scale of commerce relative to the economy as a whole, the general weakness of commercial capital, the poor integration of the commercial and productive sectors and the peripheral and subordinate role of commerce as the purveyor of luxuries to the political elite. It is held that most of the population took no part in the market and that much of agrarian and even urban production operated outside the orbit of commercial capital. Emphasis is also laid on the weakness of the merchants as a class, isolated from both the productive economy and the centres of political power, and on the damaging impact on private commercial capital of state interference in the economy

56 Foran, "Modes of production", 352 fig. 1, 353-354.

57 *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, eds. P. Jackson and L. Lockhart (Cambridge 1986).

58 An important exception is: Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life*.

in all its forms (arbitrary confiscation and levies, royal monopolies and concessions to foreigners, excessive fiscal burdens and so on). Safavi commercial policy has been criticised for being directed towards maximising immediate revenue rather than promoting commercial growth, and it has been suggested that fear of confiscation by officials acted as a major disincentive to the productive investment of commercial capital.⁵⁹

There is much about this view with which one could take issue. One has only to consider the Safavi contribution to the bazaars and caravanserais of Iran to realise that in many areas trade experienced significant development. Isfahan's growth was particularly impressive, but towns such as Lār and Bandar 'Abbās also expanded to become major commercial centres. That trade was essentially luxury in character can also be disputed. Imports included goods for the mass market such as cheap textiles and foods (cottons and sugar from India; linen and leather from Russia; cheap woollens from Europe) which, if they were not destined for the peasants, certainly were not restricted to the court and the very wealthy. Among exports were dried fruit and nuts for the Indian market and meat on the hoof to the Ottoman Empire. Even industrial raw materials were transported considerable distances within Iran; witness the thriving silk industries in Lār, Kāshān, Yazd and Isfahan, which depended on the Caspian and Transcaucasian regions for at least part of their raw silk supplies. On the question of the state and trade, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the level of taxation in Iran was excessively heavy by comparison with other contemporary states nor that the provision of commercial infrastructure in the form of transport facilities and security was worse or more expensive in Safavi Iran than elsewhere. Similarly, evidence that insecurity of property posed a serious problem for merchants is very slight. We return again to the problem of assessing how significant the state's involvement in the economy really was and of characterising more clearly the nature of that involvement. It can be argued that the royal monopolies and trade concessions did not so much deny opportunities to private capital,

59 Fragner in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, 493, 527-529; Ashraf, "Historical obstacles"; Banani, "The social and economic structure", 15; Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life*, 215-216, 225; Navidi, "Socio-Economic and Political Changes", 218.

as provide selected groups of merchants, among them the Julfans, with exceptional opportunities and a competitive advantage.⁶⁰

Despite the theoretical and methodological problems involved in the study of Safavi trade, useful research in the field has nevertheless been carried out. In the first place there have been several informative surveys, based largely on European travel literature.⁶¹ Second, a number of urban or local studies go some way towards correcting the prevalent centralist agrarian bias. Outstanding among these is Gaube and Wirth's study of the Isfahan bazar, which combines architectural and historical sources;⁶² also noteworthy are Ricks's dissertation on trade in the Gulf in the mid eighteenth century,⁶³ several recent studies of urban life in Azerbaijan and Khurāsān⁶⁴ and a recent dissertation on Tabriz during the Ottoman occupation of 1725-1734.⁶⁵ A related area of research, based largely on architectural evidence, has been into caravanserais.⁶⁶ This,

60 For a discussion of similar issues in Russian historiography, see, P. Bushkovitch, *The Merchants of Moscow 1580-1650* (Cambridge 1980).

61 J. Emerson, "Ex Occidente Lux. Some European sources on the economic structure of Persia between 1630 and 1690", PhD dissertation (Cambridge 1969); M.I. Bāstāni Pārīzī, *Siyāsat va iqtisād-i aṣr-i ṣafavī* (Tehran 1348).

62 H. Gaube and E. Wirth, *Der Bazar von Isfahan* (Wiesbaden 1978).

63 T.M. Ricks, "Politics and Trade in Southern Iran and the Gulf 1745-1765", PhD dissertation (Indiana University 1975).

64 M.Kh. Geiderov, *Goroda i gorodskoe remeslo Azerbaidzhana XIII-XVII vekov* (Baku 1982); *idem.*, *Remeslennoe proizvodstvo v gorodakh Azerbaidzhana v XVII v.* (Baku 1967); A.A. Rakhmani, *Azerbaidzhan v kontse XVI i XVII veka* (Baku 1981); G.A. Dzhiddi, *Srednevekovyi gorod Shemakha (XIV-XVII veka)*, Baku, 1981; V.A. Akhmedov, *Istoriya Balkha (XVI-pervaya polvina XVIII v.)* (Tashkent 1982); N.N. Tumanovich, *Gerat v XVI-XVIII vekakh* (Moscow 1989).

65 F. Zarinbaf-Shahr, "Tabriz under Ottoman Rule (1725-1731)", PhD dissertation (University of Chicago 1990).

66 M. Siroux, "Les caravansérails routiers safavids", *Iranian Studies*, 7/1-2 (1974) 348-375; *idem.*, *Anciennes voies et monuments routiers de la région d'Ispahân* (Cairo 1971); *idem.*, *Caravansérails d'Iran et petites constructions routières* (Cairo 1949); M.Y. Kiyani, *Yad-i kav-ha-yi Ribat-i Sharaf* (Tehran 1981); *idem.*, "The Iranian Caravanserais during the Safavid Period", PhD dissertation (London University 1970); W. Kleiss, "Das safawidische Karawanserei von Bisitun", *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, new series, 3 (1970) 289-308; R. Pohanka, "Karawanwegen und Karavanserais in Laristan: die Strassenabschnitte Lar-Djahrom, Lar-Khundj und Lar-Bastak", *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, new series, 17 (1984) 285-308.

together with work on European and Armenian travellers' itineraries, has done a great deal to reveal Iran's communications network.⁶⁷

The aspect of Safavi trade that has been most thoroughly researched is undoubtedly the commerce carried on by Europeans. If the emphasis on the Europeans has to some extent distorted perceptions of trade, European sources, especially the East India companies' archives, also clarify many areas, such as commodities, routes and prices. For the English, Willan provides a detailed account of the activities of the Russia Company in the sixteenth century and Ferrier's dissertation covers the relations of the English East India Company with Iran in the seventeenth century, while his articles treat particular questions in greater detail.⁶⁸ Chaudhuri's study of the East India Company's trade throughout Asia also has useful information on Iran.⁶⁹ In addition work has begun on the archives of the Dutch East India Company; the first half of the 17th century is fairly thoroughly covered,⁷⁰ but the second half and the eighteenth century have received much less

67 V.H. P'ap'azyan, *Hayastani arevtrakan ughinerë mijazgayin arevtri volortum XVI-XVII darderum* (Erevan 1990); A. Mat'evosyan, "Chanaparhats'uyts' Jughayets'i Petrosi vordi Hakobi", *Banber Matenadarani*, 8 (1967) 285-289. The international trade routes of Safavi Iran are the subject of current Ph.D. research by R. Klein (School of Oriental and African Studies, London University).

68 T.S. Willan, *The Early History of the Russia Company 1553-1603* (Manchester 1956); R.W. Ferrier, "British Persian Relations in the Seventeenth Century", Ph.D. dissertation (Cambridge 1970); *idem.*, "The agreement of the East India Company with the Armenian nation 22nd June 1688", *REA*, new series, 7 (1970) 427-443; *idem.*, "The Armenians and the East India Company in Persia in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century", *Economic History Review*, second series, 26/1 (1973) 38-62; *idem.*, "An English view of the Persian trade in 1618. Reports from the merchants Edward Pettus and Thomas Barker", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 19/2 (1976) 182-214; *idem.*, "The terms and conditions under which English trade was transacted with Safavid Persia", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 49/1 (1986) 48-66.

69 K.N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the East India Company 1660-1760* (Cambridge 1978).

70 H. Dunlop (ed.), *Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis der Oostindische Compagnie in Perzië. Eerste Deel 1611-1638* (The Hague 1930); M. Vermeulen-Forrier, "De Organisatie van de Handelsbedrijvigheid van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie in Perzië 1623-1638", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 80 (1967) 472-485; M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, "The earliest relations between Persia and the Netherlands", *Persica*, 6 (1972-1974) 1-50.

attention.⁷¹ Trade with Russia occupied a large part of Veselovskii and Shpakovskii's massive works and more recently has been treated in Fekhner and Kukanova's valuable, and in the West little-used, studies.⁷² A number of other works on the trade and economies of neighbouring areas also contain valuable information on Iran.⁷³ An important development is the increasing use of European sources for research into Iranian economy and society, rather than into Irano-European relations. This trend was initiated by such scholars as Emerson and Bāstānī Pārīzī and has been developed in Matthee's recent study of politics and trade in the reign of Shah Sulayman.⁷⁴

Yet while there have been significant developments in the study of Safavi trade,⁷⁵ many vital questions remain almost wholly unresearched, including commodity production and prices and the volume of trade.⁷⁶ One such subject is the Iranian merchants in the Safavi period, a subject of central importance for this dissertation. Sources are extremely scarce, no private commercial

71 K. Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade 1620-1740* (Copenhagen-The Hague 1958); R.J. Barentse, "Zijde, Zambouqs, Zilver: de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en Iran 1623-1693", MA dissertation (Leiden University 1985).

72 N.I. Veselovskii, *Pamyatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii Moskovskoi Rusi s Persiei*, 3 vols. (Saint Petersburg 1890-1898); A.Ya. Shpakovskii, *Torgovlya moskovskoi Rusi s Persiei v XVI-XVII vekakh*, Kiev, 1915; M.V. Fekhner, *Torgovlya russkogo gosudarstva so stranami vostoka v XVI veke* (Moscow 1956); N.G. Kukanova, *Ocherki po istorii russko-iranskikh torgovykh otnoshenii v XVII-pervoi polovine XIX veka* (Saransk 1977).

73 A. Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat* (Wiesbaden 1979); B. Gokhale, *Surat in the Seventeenth Century* (Copenhagen 1979); O. Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal 1630-1720* (Princeton 1985); J.A. Burton, "Bukharans in trade and diplomacy 1558-1702", PhD dissertation (Manchester University 1986); H. Gaube and E. Wirth, *Aleppo*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden 1984); H. Gerber, *Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa 1600-1700* (Jerusalem 1988); B. Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: mercantilism and the Islamic economy in Aleppo, 1600-1700* (New York 1988); N. Erim, "Onsekizinci yüzyılda Erzerum gümrüğü", PhD dissertation (Istanbul University 1984).

74 Matthee, "Politics and Trade".

75 Ferrier's chapter in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, chapter 8, provides a useful survey of research into Safavi trade.

76 R.P. Matthee, "The East India Company trade in Kerman wool, 1658-1730", forthcoming in the proceedings of the Table Ronde Internationale sur les Études Safavides (Paris 7-9 March 1989); E.M. Herzig, "The volume of Iranian raw silk exports in the Safavi period", forthcoming in *Iranian Studies*.

document from the Safavi period having been published or studied to date.⁷⁷ The lack of sources has precluded in-depth detailed discussion of the merchants of Safavi Iran, and discussion has for the most part been limited to generalisations based on the snippets of information to be found in European accounts.⁷⁸ By contrast the sources used for this dissertation provide a wealth of information on subjects that have hitherto scarcely been considered because they are covered in neither Persian nor European sources. As a result this dissertation does not readily fit into the existing pattern of studies of Safavi economy. Its sources are very different from those available for other areas, and it avoids applying *a priori* models in favour of a descriptive reconstruction of the commercial system of the Julfa merchants on the basis of the primary sources. This is not to suggest that the Julfa material is without relevance for Safavi economic history - far from it. If there has been little possibility of integrating this study into existing models of the economy or of drawing Iranian comparisons, the reason is the lack of information on Iranian merchants and trade. There can, however, be little doubt that in reconstructing the commercial environment of the Julfa merchants this dissertation will also begin to reconstruct the trading world of the Iranian merchants. The types of contracts and partnerships employed, the varieties of financial and credit instruments, perhaps the system of accounting, and even the social organisation of the Julfa merchants must have had much in common with those of the Iranians.

The Asian context: trade in the Middle East and South Asia

If New Julfa was situated in the Safavi capital, and the Julfa merchants were deeply involved in the international trade of Iran, they did not belong exclusively to Safavi Iran. Their trade carried them far beyond the borders of the Safavi state, and their commercial practice and techniques were marked by influences from many directions. This is hardly surprising, for the Julfans were international merchants *par excellence* and their far-ranging activities considerably predated their enforced settlement in Isfahan. It is therefore not sufficient to consider them only in the context

77 For an earlier period see, W. Hinz, "Ein orientalisches Handelsunternehmen im 15. Jahrhundert", *Welt des Orients*, 1 (1947-1952) 313-340.

78 Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life*, 216, 224-230; Emerson, "Ex Occidente Lux", ; Ferrier and Fragner in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, 484, 487-488, 528-529; J. Calmard, "Les marchands iraniens. Formation et monté d'un groupe de pression 16e-19e siècles", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, 91-107.

of Iranian society and economy; one must ask whether there is not some supra-communal, supra-national commercial system within which their activities could be better understood. The preceding section concentrated largely on the difficulty of studying the Julfa merchants in the context of Safavi Iran, a context ultimately defined by political boundaries. The following pages will attempt to identify a context defined by economic criteria - the long-distance trading world in which the merchants operated. The problem then becomes one of delimiting an arena for a group whose trade network in about 1700 extended from Amsterdam to the Philippines.

Defining a core area within the diffuse network of Julfan trade necessitates partially preempting the discussion on the expansion of Julfan trade in Chapter 2. There it will be argued that Julfan trade, for all its apparent diffuseness, had two principal axes - the westward silk trade with Europe, which linked Iran with the eastern Mediterranean via the overland routes through the Ottoman empire, and the eastern circuit to India and the Indian Ocean via the Gulf ports. In an important sense these formed branches of a single circuit: that of the bullion trade carrying American silver from Europe to India. It was articulated around a mid-way point in Iran where many Indian goods found their destination and where Iranian exports entered the westward flow. Of course, the western axis did not stop at the Levant entrepôts; some Armenians travelled on to Venice, Livorno, Marseilles and beyond. The eastern end is even harder to delimit. Beyond Surat the Armenians penetrated inland along the highways of northern India and by sea reached Malabar, Coromandel, Bengal and destinations further East. To concede the impossibility of drawing clear borders around the core area of Julfan trade is not, however, to suggest that the network extended seamlessly in every direction. Venice, for centuries the western terminus of the intercontinental trade routes, may have accommodated Armenians in a fashion not very dissimilar from the cities of the Middle East, but the papal port of Ancona would admit only those who said they were Catholic. In Marseille the Armenians' reception was even more uncertain: on two occasions they were even banned from the town for a number of years. In Russia also, the trade of foreign merchants was severely restricted. Further East restrictions and prohibitions were virtually unknown. From the Mediterranean ports of the Ottoman Empire to the harbours of the Indonesian archipelago Armenians were free to travel and trade without serious obstruction.

This area of open trade spanned the three great Muslim empires of the Ottomans, Mughals and Safavis so it may be useful to start by considering the development of economic history in the first two.⁷⁹ South Asian historiography contrasts strikingly with that of Iran, the most obvious difference being in the level of activity in the field. British historians have since the nineteenth century considered Indian history as a vital part of British Imperial history, while in South Asia itself a modern historiographical tradition developed earlier than in Iran. It is, moreover, a tradition that retains the English language, and so has maintained a dialogue with historians in the West. The richer and more readily accessible sources for South Asian history have also facilitated development. This great difference notwithstanding, in its conceptual development, the socio-economic history of South Asia presents certain similarities to that of Iranian historiography. Until fairly recently discussion of the 1600-1800 period was dominated by what has been dubbed the Aligarh or Mughalist school. Although there is in fact no uniformity of theoretical approach among the Aligarh or Mughalist historians, the name has proved useful to refer to a shared interest in a set of issues within a specific interpretative framework deriving from common assumptions about Mughal state and society. Washbrook lists the characteristic features of the Mughalist discourse as:

An emphasis on the high degree of centralised authority in the Empire (at least at its height); on the immense power of imperial institutions to dominate society, economy and even culture; on the fractured and fragmented quality of "civil" society in India; and on the supremacy of "the political" over other, exigent historical logics.⁸⁰

For our purpose it is important to note also the assumption that the Mughal state forms a self-contained unit of study possessing a particular socio-economic, as well as political, structure and that the emphasis on the Mughal state led inevitably to a perception of the eighteenth century as a period of post-imperial anarchy and collapse stemming from political failure at the system's centre.

79 In the following notes I have not attempted an exhaustive listing of all relevant studies, but have tried to select studies that summarise recent work in the field and contain detailed bibliographies. On Ottoman history I am restricted to studies written in English.

80 D. Washbrook, "Recent trends in the historiography of Mughal India", paper delivered at the conference on "The Political Economies of the Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires" (Harvard University 22-23 March 1989) 4-5.

A broadly Marxist approach led to the same "obstacles to capitalist development" paradigm discussed above in relation to Iranian historiography.⁸¹ The economic basis of the Mughal state was held to be its extractive power over agrarian civil society, and trade and merchants were seen as essentially marginal to the economy - isolated and powerless before the dominant state institutions.⁸²

Recent studies of late pre-colonial South Asia have challenged the Mughalist interpretation's most fundamental assumptions. They question the character of the central institutions and their ability to dominate society, and even cast doubt on the Mughal state's vaunted effectiveness as a "revenue pump" for extracting agricultural surplus.⁸³ Studies on the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have radically reinterpreted the conventional view of both the post-Mughal politics and the process of Mughal decline. They argue that the eighteenth century represented not a debris of empire but a period of dynamic change in South Asian society, with new elites emerging to challenge and displace the warrior nobility of the Mughal.⁸⁴ Factors involved in this process included developments in military technology and organisation, but the key issue was seen to be that of commercialisation.⁸⁵ Recent studies have argued convincingly that the eighteenth century witnessed significant, if uneven, economic development and a growing permeation of commercial capital through all levels of the economy. The chief agents and beneficiaries of this process were a new "commercially-oriented gentry" with interests concentrated in a range of commercial activities including revenue farming, investment in commercial production and trade

81 Its clearest exposition being: I. Habib, "Potentialities of capitalistic development in the economy of Mughal India", *Journal of Economic History*, 29 (1969) 32-78.

82 Washbrook, "Recent trends", 2.

83 *Ibid.*, 5-9.

84 See in particular, C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, townsmen and bazaars: North Indian society in the age of British expansion 1770-1870* (Cambridge 1983).

85 Washbrook, "Recent trends", 10-14.

itself.⁸⁶ This new interpretation is of profound consequence for studies of merchants in the South Asian context, shifting them as it does from the margins of the state-dominated agrarian system of the Mughalist vision to a central position in dynamic and commercialised economies. Historians are now reexamining a range of related questions: the importance of trade in South Asian economies, the nature of relations between merchants and political elites, commercialisation of both agricultural and industrial production, of revenue systems through tax farming and of the military through mercenarisation.

This development in South Asian historiography provides a new framework in which to understand merchants and trade. It does not directly address the problem of the spatial context of Julfan trade, or only in so far as it shifts attention away from a self-contained Mughal economy towards a more flexible view of a South Asian economy, or economies, in which regions, boundaries and relations are perceived to some extent independently of political frontiers.

The picture for Ottoman historiography is less clear cut than in the case of South Asia. There is no clear contrast between a seventeenth century imperium and an eighteenth century disintegration, nor evidence for the kind of economic upsurge that historians now believe took place in the Indian Ocean region between 1500 and 1750. There are, however, many similarities. The conventional view sees the Ottoman Empire, or at least its Balkan and Anatolian heartland, as an effective economic as well as political unity, with a powerful centralised state structure controlling every level of society. Though historians, notably Inalcik, were at pains to reverse the old stereotype of the Turks as hostile to trade, trade was nevertheless marginal in this perception, with society organised around agrarian production and merchants divorced from political power. The by now familiar "obstacles to capitalist development" approach revealed similar impediments to those in Mughal and Safavi societies: a state system that preempted merchant capital by controlling the agricultural surplus and which subjected merchants to excessive and arbitrary restrictions and exactions; a more or less static and subsistence-oriented productive sector including a manufacture

86 *Ibid.*; S. Subrahmanyam and C.A. Bayly, "Portfolio capitalists and the political economy of early modern India", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 24/4 (1988) 401-424.

shackled by guild restrictions and price controls; a culture which militated against the capitalist spirit through injunctions against usury and profiteering, and which hindered capital accumulation through its inheritance patterns.⁸⁷

There is a further similarity in the view of a period of imperial greatness followed by decline and crisis. In the Ottoman case the heyday of the Empire was considered to be the mid sixteenth century. The decline that followed (first signalled by the *celali* revolts at the turn of the seventeenth century) was neither as precipitous nor as complete as the Mughal collapse after Aurangzeb's death, but the whole period from the last three decades of the sixteenth century until the New Order (*tanzimat*) of the end of the eighteenth century was seen as a period of decline, temporarily arrested by bouts of traditional reform that failed to deal with the root causes of the problems.

Recent Ottoman historiography has not offered such a radical challenge to conventional ideas as its South Asian counterpart, but there has nevertheless been a significant shift in emphasis. The influence of the *Annales* school was felt early in Ottoman studies, leading to research on demography and prices,⁸⁸ and more recently Wallerstein's world-system theory has exerted a considerable influence.⁸⁹ An important result of this has been an increased interest in placing Ottoman history within world history, though this interest has manifested itself unevenly, far greater attention being paid to tracing the impact of developments in Western Europe than to identifying linkages with the East.

87 H. Inalcik, "Capital formation in the Ottoman Empire", *Journal of Economic History*, 29 (1969) 97-140; *idem.*, "The Ottoman economic mind and aspects of the Ottoman economy", in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, ed. M. Cook (London 1970) 207-218; both articles reprinted in *idem.*, *The Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organisation and Economy* (London 1978).

88 H. Inalcik, "Impact of the *Annales* school on Ottoman studies and new findings", *Review*, 1/3-4, 69-100.

89 *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, ed. H. İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge/Paris 1987); M. Çizakça, "Incorporation of the Middle East into the European World Economy", *Review*, 8 (1985) 353-378.

There are clear parallels between other recent developments in Ottoman historiography and those outlined for South Asia. Historians have questioned the concept of Ottoman decline, seeing rather a shift in elite structure within the Empire as new professional military forces replaced the service warriors of the *timar* system, a development closely related to the increasing commercialisation of the revenue system. As in Indian historiography the possibility that these changes might not have had political failure as their root cause has stimulated interest in what was happening at the local level, and commercialisation and merchants have also been the subject of particular attention.⁹⁰

Recent developments in South Asian and Ottoman historiography are clearly relevant to this study for their challenge to traditional assumptions that still hold sway in Safavi studies, and because they allow merchants and trade a more significant place on the economic and political map. But another related development is perhaps of even greater value in delineating an Asian commercial world in which to locate the Julfa merchants. Returning to South Asia and to the history of Indian Ocean trade, we find ourselves in a very different historiographical tradition from that of the histories of the great land empires. Indian Ocean studies originated in the history of the East India Companies and the European powers' struggle for supremacy in the East, but the field has developed beyond recognition in the last several decades, as historians have grown increasingly aware of the extraordinary wealth of the archives of Europe, particularly those of Portugal, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for research into Asian society and its interaction with the European intruders.

Studies on the activities of the Europeans in Asia have shown that far from dominating a passive Asian society the first two-and-a-half centuries of European presence in the Indian Ocean were a period of dynamic interaction between Europeans and Asians, which witnessed rapid commercial

90 S. Faroqi, "Crafts, cash flows and concepts: an attempt at cross-fertilisation", paper delivered at a conference on "The Political Economies of the Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires" (Harvard University March 1990); also the same author's two studies, both containing full bibliographies for Ottoman socio-economic history: *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia. Trades, crafts and food production in an urban setting, 1520-1650* (Cambridge 1984); *idem., Men of Modest Substance. House owners and house property in seventeenth century Ankara and Kayseri* (Cambridge 1987).

expansion in Asian maritime trade (not merely in the export trade to Europe, nor only in the trade of the Europeans), accompanied by significant growth in commercial production.⁹¹ An important point to emerge was the vitality of the Indian merchant groups that coexisted through cooperation and competition with the European newcomers. Merchants, many of them extremely wealthy, are seen to have played a crucial role in the economic lives of several of the Indian ports and their productive hinterlands, though there is still little consensus about how to understand their relationship with political elites.⁹² The focus of these studies was inevitably on the coastal regions where European activity was concentrated and which are therefore most fully documented: Gujarat, Malabar, Coromandel and Bengal. The emerging picture of these as areas with dynamic, commercialised economies clashed with the Mughalist interpretation of Indian economy and provided one of the initial stimuli to criticism of the Mughalist model.

With its emphasis on long-distance trade and the activities of merchants of all nations, and because it attempts to define its area by other than political criteria, Indian Ocean history is of great interest for this dissertation. In his two most recent books K.N. Chaudhuri has applied to the Indian Ocean the concepts developed by Braudel for the Mediterranean.⁹³ Chaudhuri's undertaking is truly vast: his generously conceived Indian Ocean includes not only South and Southeast Asia, but the Middle East, the East African coast down to Madagascar and even China and Central Asia as well. His time scale is no less munificent: from the rise of Islam to 1750 is a *longue durée* by any standards. One could dispute whether such a massive unit really fits the models of "world economy" or "central place theorem" even by Chaudhuri's own definition,⁹⁴

91 For a summary of the development of Indian Ocean historiography see Pearson and Das Gupta's introduction's to *India and the Indian Ocean 1500-1700*, eds. A. Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson, (Calcutta 1987); also M.N. Pearson, *Before Colonialism. Theories on Asian-European relations 1500-1750* (Delhi 1988).

92 Washbrook, "Recent trends", 10.

93 K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean. An economic history from the rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge 1985); *idem.*, *Asia before Europe*.

94 *Trade and Civilization*, map on page 10, 36 n. 1.

but what is valuable for our purpose is the characterisation of the distinctive economic (essentially commercial) qualities of this extended system.

Chaudhuri sees the unity of the Indian Ocean world as lying in a number of factors. In terms of geography and climate it formed a viable arena for commercial exchange with developed regional product specialisation. Continuous navigable seas stretched from the head of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf to the ports of southern China. The monsoon winds regulated the rhythms of navigation and subdivided the region into three sub-systems: 1) the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea; 2) the Eastern Indian Ocean extending from the Bay of Bengal to Indonesia; 3) the South China Sea area.⁹⁵ Chaudhuri also believes that the area possessed some kind of cultural unity. His periodisation reflects his conviction that Islam was somehow an important factor in the creation of a single trading world, partly because of Islamic laws of commercial contract and principles of juridical rights, and partly also (and this may be more controversial) because the spread of Islam contributed to a conscious cultural unity in the Indian Ocean region that was experienced to some degree even by non-Muslims.⁹⁶

Chaudhuri also detects political unity, not in the sense of a single embracing empire, but in terms of the political culture of the "various military-bureaucratic empires found in Asia from the eleventh century onwards [which] represented a refashioning of the ancient imperial traditions (as, for example, those of Iran and Babylon) in the mould of the steppe peoples".⁹⁷ An important characteristic of these Asian states was their limited interference in trade, in particular their

95 *Ibid.*, chapter 1 "Trade and civilisation in the Indian Ocean: social, cultural, economic, and temporal dimensions". It is interesting to compare Chaudhuri's approach to the Indian Ocean with that of Abu-Lughod for an earlier period. In particular, compare Chaudhuri's Indian Ocean with her map of the medieval World System showing three Indian Ocean subsystems, and in addition two Middle Eastern circuits running along the axes of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf as separate circuits. J. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: the World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York 1989) map on page 34 and chapter 1 "Studying a system in formation".

96 Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization*, 21, 36, 44, 98.

97 *Ibid.*

reluctance to interrupt trade routes (overland or maritime) and their general lack of interest in sea power.⁹⁸

Chaudhuri develops a theory of "emporium trade" characterised by a network of commercial cities situated at strategic intersections of the major land and sea routes, and on the junctions of the three Indian Ocean subsystems. These cities were functionally distinct from the capitals of the major states and from cities depending primarily on an agricultural hinterland. The emporia were specialised centres of long distance trade, often independent or semi-independent of the major land-based powers and offering a range of special market facilities and services, effective administration and judicial impartiality to merchants of every nation.⁹⁹

The other characteristic feature highlighted by Chaudhuri is the part played by specialist merchant communities. Long-distance trade tended to be in the hands of networks of traders belonging to small tight-knit communities with distinct religious and cultural traditions that set them apart from the rest of society and provided the framework for the close bonds of family, friendship, trust and mutual interest that were essential for effective commercial organisation.¹⁰⁰ All too little is known about such trading communities and few have left records dating from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, but the small number of existing studies of Asian merchants in this period suggest numerous interesting shared features and points of comparison.¹⁰¹

98 Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization*, 14-16.

99 *Ibid.*, 102-107.

100 Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization*, 11-12, 100-101.

101 *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, eds. D. Lombard and J. Aubin (Paris 1988); S. Chaudhuri, "Bengal merchants and commercial organization in the second half of the seventeenth century", *Bengal Past and Present*, 90 (1971) 182-216; *idem.*, *Trade and Commercial Organisation in Bengal 1650-1720*, (Calcutta 1975); S. Arasaratnam, "The Chulia Muslim merchants in Southeast Asia 1650-1800", *Moyen Orient et Océan Indien*, 4 (1987) 125-143; *idem.*, "The Indian merchants and their trading methods", *IESHR*, 3 (1966) 85-95; *idem.*, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740*, (Delhi 1986); H.-D. Evers, "Chettiar moneylenders in Southeast Asia", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, 199-219; D.L. White, "Parsis in the commercial world of western India 1700-1750", *IESHR*, 24 (1987) 183-203.

Chaudhuri's application of the concept of world economy to the Indian Ocean is useful for locating the present study in a geographical context, defining an area as it does not in terms of political, ethnic or cultural boundaries, but by economic criteria. The Indian Ocean may seem a surprising context for the study of a merchant community originating in land-locked Armenia and later settled in Isfahan, capital of the land-based Safavi state but, as Chaudhuri is careful to emphasise, maritime and overland routes of trade formed a continuum. What is valuable in Chaudhuri's formulation is the idea of a network of commercial centres linked by established routes that spanned the frontiers between countries and continents. This provides an alternative vision to that of the Julfans as belonging to Armenian or Iranian national history, and opens the door for comparisons with diverse other merchant communities. It is to this system of interconnected trade circuits that the "Asian" of the subtitle refers.

Periodisation

A number of periodisations are possible for the history of Asia in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries A.D. "Early modern" has the advantage of corresponding to usage in European history and of avoiding the danger of erecting artificial barriers between Europe and the rest of the world. On the basis of an analysis of the dominant mode of production most Marxist scholars have preferred the terms "feudal" and "medieval", while "late pre-colonial" is currently popular among historians of South Asia (it has the advantages of being relatively precise and avoiding the confusion of chronological and developmental criteria inherent in both "modern" and "medieval"). The term "pre-modern" has been used in this dissertation for a number of reasons. First, the system of trade of the Julfa Armenians grew out of a long-standing commercial tradition. As Abu-Lughod has pointed out, there are striking similarities between the business practices of the Julfa Armenians and the Jews of Fatimid Cairo.¹⁰² "Pre-modern" avoids cutting off the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries from earlier periods. Second, "pre-modern" allows comparisons with other commercial systems, including that of Europe. This is an important point, for we need to distinguish those features that were shared by all or several pre-modern commercial systems and

102 Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 178.

those that were specific to Asia.¹⁰³ Third, the system of trade described here belonged to a world order that had not yet been displaced by the modern European world order. This is not to suggest that all the features of the older system later disappeared completely, nor to deny that in the period under consideration elements of the European system were already exerting an influence. The term is used in a deliberately developmental rather than chronological sense, to mean something close to Hodgson's "pre-technicalistic" or "pre-factory industrial"¹⁰⁴, or as Chaudhuri puts it: "an age when the technological breakthrough of the late eighteenth century had not as yet fundamentally changed the structure of Asian and European societies and state systems".¹⁰⁵ For our purpose it is sufficient simply to think of an age when the presence of Europeans had not yet had a decisive impact on the trading world of Asian merchants.

Summing up

The preceding sections have considered how a study of the Julfa Armenian merchant community might fit into various historical traditions. The Armenian context provides the most obvious accommodation for a study of this kind, since there is an existing tradition of research into the Julfan commercial sources. This study clearly belongs to that tradition and contributes to it through the investigation of hitherto unresearched aspects of commercial organisation and through ^{the exploitation} of unutilised sources. On the analytical level, however, the Armenian context has its limitations since it does not provide a basis for linking the Julfa merchants into larger political, social or economic structures. The Julfans clearly also have a place in the history of Safavi Iran, but the absence of sources for the Iranian merchants makes comparison difficult, while prevalent models of Safavi economy do not readily accommodate a dynamic and expanding merchant community. A broader geographical arena encompassing the whole Mediterranean to Indian

103 The numerous similarities between known medieval commercial institutions and practices everywhere have often been pointed out. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 15; Lopez, "Les methodes commerciales des marchands occidentaux en Asie du XI^e au XIV^e siècle", in *Sociétés et compagnies*, 343.

104 Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 1, .

105 Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization*, .

Ocean region seems in several respects to provide a more amenable context for the study of Julfan trade, and recent developments in the historiography of South Asia and the Indian Ocean provide a basis for analysis and comparison with other Asian merchant communities. But there are still many unanswered questions surrounding the idea of a unified Asian trading world, and if we accept it we must inevitably return to the question raised by Steensgaard and Braudel: is it possible to distinguish a characteristically Asian merchant from his European counterpart.¹⁰⁶

For all these theoretical problems, perhaps the principal difficulty in the study of Asian merchants remains the dearth of information. It is in this respect that the Julfan sources are so valuable, and it is with this in mind that the central objective of this dissertation has been to provide a thorough and detailed account of the Julfa merchants drawn directly from the primary sources. There are areas which it has not been possible to cover as fully as one would like, but it is hoped that even with its gaps and limitations this dissertation will provide a more detailed description of the Julfa merchants than has hitherto been available in a European language, and for historians of Asian economy will provide a basis for comparison with other merchant groups as well as grist to the theorists' mill.

Organisation

The dissertation is divided into three parts. The first traces the history of the New Julfa colony and the extension of the Julfa trade network. The sources utilised are broadly the same as for other aspects of Armenian diaspora history: Armenian histories, colophons and inscriptions, histories of the host society (in this case Iran) and European sources. Extensive use has also been made of earlier studies of New Julfa. The second section describes the principal features of Julfan commercial organisation, beginning with the social institutions of the family and the community and progressing to specifically commercial features: partnership and agency, finance, credit and

¹⁰⁶ See also D. Lombard, "Y a-t-il une continuité des réseaux marchands asiatiques?", *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, 11-18.

accounting. This section is based primarily on documentary sources, although these have also been supplemented by non-Armenian sources and existing studies of Julfan trade.

Although many Julfa Armenian institutions bear comparison with those of other merchant groups, such comparisons are drawn only where they appear directly relevant, as for example where there appears to be an actual linkage (as in forms of credit in the Middle East and South Asia) rather than merely an interesting parallel. It would have been easy to multiply comparisons, and would indeed be a worthwhile exercise to make an in-depth comparison between the Julfans and other pre-modern merchant communities, but that is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

The third part is more technical and presents examples of the source material with annotated translation. The decision to follow this procedure came partly in response to the problems encountered in the course of research for the dissertation owing to the absence of accessible primary sources for comparison, even in the few areas where they could be made, such as the Cairo Geniza,¹⁰⁷ or the Ottoman archival material.¹⁰⁸ The opportunity to compare the terminology of Geniza or Ottoman contracts with those of the Julfa Armenians would have been immensely helpful, and it is hoped that the documents in Part 3 may form the basis for such comparisons in the future.

107 Goitein's research into this source has resulted in a massive monograph, and a volume of letters in translation, but not in the publication of documents in the original. As far as I am aware very few Geniza commercial documents have been published in the original with transliteration, translation and explanatory notes. One example is J. Hathaway, "A twelfth-century partnership in silk-trading in the Egyptian Delta: a Geniza study", *Journal of the Middle East Studies Society at Columbia University*, 2 (1988) 23-37.

108 A number of recent studies have direct relevance to this dissertation: R. Jennings, "Loans and credit in early 17th century Ottoman judicial records - the sharia court of Anatolian Kayseri", *JESHO*, 16 (1973) 168-216; *idem.*, "The office of vekil (wakil) in 17th century Ottoman sharia courts", *Studia Islamica*, 42 (1975) 147-169; B. Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: mercantilism and the Islamic economy in Aleppo 1600-1700* (New York 1988); A. Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants du Caire au XVIII^e siècle*, 2 vols. paginated as 1 (Damascus 1973-1974); Faroqhi, works cited in note 89 above. Very few, however, present Ottoman sources in the original and in translation: M. Hinds and H. Sakkout's *Arabic Documents from the Ottoman period from Qaşr Ibrîm* (London 1986) is a rare exception.

PART ONE

THE HISTORY OF NEW JULFA

CHAPTER ONE
THE HISTORY OF NEW JULFA

Old Julfa

The town of Old Julfa¹ stood on a narrow spit of land a little more than two kilometres long and four to five hundred metres wide sandwiched between the River Aras to the South and a steep mountain ridge to the North. The shortage of land on the original site forced the inhabitants to build also on the southern side of the river.² In most respects it was an inhospitable place, whose dry climate and barren rocky soil discouraged agriculture,³ but it possessed two important advantages. First, it was readily defensible, being protected by the high ridge and the river to North and South, while the entrances to the gorge from East and West were closed with strong walls.⁴ Second, it was strategically situated at a river crossing on one of the major overland routes linking Transcaucasia and Iran with Anatolia, Syria and the Mediterranean.

According to Movsēs Khorenats'i Julfa already existed in the time of Tigran the Great of Armenia (first century B.C.), but it is in Ghewond's history of the Arab invasion that Julfa is first referred to as a crossing place on the Aras,⁵ and the eleventh century Catholicos Sargis mentions the town in the same connection.⁶ We do not know whether there was then a bridge at Julfa, or merely a ford or ferry, but the Aras had been notorious since classical times for its ferocious

1 Old Julfa has been comparatively little studied; its position directly on the Irano-Soviet border within the territory of the Nakhchavan Autonomous Republic of the Azerbaijan SSR has discouraged archeological research on the surviving Armenian monuments. Considerable damage was done to the graveyard at the time of the construction of the nearby railway. The principal studies are: Gh.M. Alishan, *Sisakan*, Venice, 1893, 409-428; S. Ter-Avetisyan, *Gorod Dzhuga*, Tiflis, 1937 (not consulted); A. Vruyr, "Jugha", PBH, 1967, no. 4, 169-180; J. Carswell, "Djulfa" in EI²; A.A. Ayvazyan, *Jugha*, Erevan, 1984 (which includes a sketch map of the site); *idem.*, "Jugha" and "Jughayi gerezmanatun" in HSH; J. Baltrušaitis and D. Kouymjian, "Julfa on the Arax and its funerary monuments", in *In Memoriam Haïg Berbērian*, ed. D. Kouymjian, Lisbon, 1986, 9-53.

2 Ayvazyan, *Jugha*, 5.

3 Baltrušaitis and Kouymjian, "Julfa", 17.

4 Ayvazyan, *Jugha*, 6.

5 Both cited in Ayvazyan, *Jugha*, 4.

6 Cited in Alishan, *Sisakan*, 410.

current, Virgil dubbing the river "*pontem indignatus Araxes*".⁷ Travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were equally aware of its dangers; Cartwright complained of the "outrageous turnings and windings and his many rushing downfalls", and Chardin agreed that the Aras was dangerous to cross when in spate, though it could be forded on camelback in winter when the waterlevel was low.⁸ At Julfa the river bank flattened out and became less rocky, so the river was calmer and easier to ford.⁹ The river crossing on a busy intercontinental trade route must always have contributed much to the economy of a settlement devoid of other natural resources.¹⁰

Some time before 1340 Ziā al-Mulk Nakhchavani erected a magnificent stone bridge at Julfa.¹¹ Some fifty years later, when Tīmūr's army crossed by the same bridge, Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī was so impressed that he wrote a detailed description of it, noting the impressive engineering, the strong gates and the caravanserai built onto its northern end.¹² Today only ruins mark the site; the bridge was probably destroyed during the Ottoman-Safavi wars of the 1570s and 1580s, though the sources contradict one another. John Newbery states that in 1581 he crossed the Aras on a pontoon bridge which had replaced the already broken stone construction,¹³ but according to at least one manuscript of the *Khulāṣat al-tavārīkh* the stone bridge was still standing in 994/1586.¹⁴ The bridge was certainly destroyed by the time of 'Abbās I's retreat through Julfa during his first Ottoman campaign, and as none of the numerous sources for that expedition record

7 Cited in V. Minorsky, *Studies in Caucasian History*, Cambridge, 1957, 27.

8 J. Cartwright, *The Preacher's Travels*, London, 1611 (reprinted Amsterdam, 1977), 34. Cartwright's travelogue also appears in volume 8 of S. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous or Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 20 vols., Glasgow, 1905-1907; J. Chardin, *Voyages de Chardin...*, ed. L. Langlès, 10 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1811, II, 305-307.

9 J.-B. Tavernier, *Les six voyages...*, 2 vols., Paris, 1682, I, 43.

10 Alishan, *Sisakan*, 411; Leo, *Hayots' patmut'yun*, in *Erkeri zhoghovatsu*, Erevan, 1966-, III, 235.

11 Ḥamd-allāh Mustawfī Qazvīnī described the bridge as "among the greatest of fine buildings" (*Nuzhat al-qulūb*, London, 1915, 89). Minorsky, *loc. cit.*, has Ziā al-Dīn for Ziā al-Mulk.

12 Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *Zafar-nāmah*, ed. A. Urunbaev, Tashkent, 1972, f. 179b. The description is given in Armenian translation in Alishan, *Sisakan*, 410.

13 J. Newbery, in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous*, VIII, 462.

14 Aḥmad ibn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ḥusayn al-Ḥusaynī al-Qummī, Qāzī, *Khulāṣat al-tavārīkh*, ed. I. Ishraqi, 2 vols. paginated as 1, Tehran, 1359-1363/1980-1984, 1044.

its destruction it seems probable that it had happened some time earlier (perhaps in war, perhaps by a flood) and that the later version, which attributes its destruction to 'Abbās I, is a myth.¹⁵

Julfa's oldest church was founded in the ninth or tenth century,¹⁶ but it was not until the fifteenth century that Julfa's commercial expansion began in the fifteenth century,¹⁷ and only in the mid sixteenth century that Julfa rose to become one of the most prosperous and important towns in the region. The story of Julfa's commercial success will be told in Chapter 2; this chapter will concentrate on the town itself and its inhabitants.

Julfa's remarkable cemetery suggests that the town's rise was meteoric: of more than 2,000 surviving tombstones very few are dated earlier than 1550 and the vast majority, including the most magnificent, are from the period 1570-1604.¹⁸ The scant evidence on the construction of churches and other buildings indicates an upsurge of activity in the same period¹⁹ and Kouymjian's research on manuscript production confirms the picture of a boom, with a sudden expansion in the number of manuscripts produced in Julfa or paid for by Julfa merchants in the last decades of the sixteenth century.²⁰

About the same time the name of Julfa first reached Western Europe. The first contacts were probably between Julfan and European Levant merchants in Aleppo (see Chapter 2), but evidence of the extent of Julfa's fame is provided by Ortelius's famous atlas, published in 1570, which features Julfa (appearing as Chinla) along with other principal cities of the region.²¹

15 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 43.

16 Ayvazyan, *Jugha*, 27-28.

17 Alishan, *Sisakan*, 410.

18 Ayvazyan, *Jugha*, 33-38; "Jughayi gerezmanatun" in HSH; Baltrušaitis and Kouymjian, "Julfa", 31; S. Saghumyan and V. Harut'yunyan, "Vimagrer Hin Jughayits", *Lraber*, 1983, no. 12, 46; Vruyr, "Jugha", 173.

19 Ayvazyan, *Jugha*, 29-32, 41-43.

20 D. Kouymjian, "Dated Armenian manuscripts as a statistical tool for Armenian history", in *Medieval Armenian Culture*, eds. T.J. Samuelian and M. Stone, Chico, California, 1983, 431.

21 A. Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Antwerp, 1570, map 49.

Julfa's commercial success generated great wealth, and the town became renowned among Armenians as a rich and splendid city full of glorious churches and luxurious merchants' mansions. After its destruction poets were to lament its passed glory:

Julfa, that nobly-built town,
Whose lofty pavilions and courts
And myriad embellishments
Enraptured the beholder,
Exalted by its seven chapels,
Its richly-decorated churches,
With their gilt censers
And brocade chalice napkins.
The gospels and processional crosses
Were studded with priceless gems.
The altars and sanctuaries
Were the joy of all who saw them.²²

The most eloquent witnesses to the wealth of late sixteenth century Julfa are the headstones (*khach'k'ar*) in the cemetery. Their exquisite decorative style, so different from that of most medieval *khach'k'ars*, clearly shows the influence of Islamic artistic traditions, and hints at the cosmopolitan world of the Julfa merchants.²³ The large number erected in the memory of merchants provides tangible evidence of the Julfans' wealth.

The few travellers' descriptions of Julfa confirm the picture of a thriving commercial town. Newbery counted seven churches and three thousand houses, of which the richest paid twenty piasters tax a year.²⁴ Cartwright counted only two thousand houses, estimating 10,000 inhabitants, part Armenian and part Georgian (on this last point he was certainly mistaken, since all other sources agree that Julfa was an all Armenian town²⁵) and praised the town's fine buildings, "very faire, all of hard quarrie stone".²⁶ Sefer Muratowicz, the Armenian agent of

22 A. Hovhanissyan, *Hayerēn dzeragreri 17 dari hishatakaranner*, vol. 1, Erevan, 1974, 366. Compare the lament of Yovhannes Makuets'i, in P.M. Khach'atryan, *Hay mijnadaryan patmakan voghber (14-17 dd.)*, Erevan, 1969, 278-279.

23 A number of Julfa *khach'k'ars* are illustrated in Ayvazyan, *Jugha*; and Baltrušaitis and Kouymjian, "Julfa".

24 Newbery, in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous*, VIII, 468.

25 Baltrušaitis and Kouymjian, "Julfa", 18.

26 Cartwright, *The Preacher's Travels*, 35.

King Sigismund III of Poland, claimed improbably that there were 15,000 houses in 1601,²⁷ and Gouvea described the town as "peopled with Armenian merchants, the richest in the whole province, by reason of which it is very fine and full of commerce".²⁸ Despite the lack of consensus, Ayvazyan's suggestion that the town probably contained between two and four thousand houses is credible.²⁹

Julfa's rise is the more remarkable for having taken place during a disastrous period in Armenian history. Opposing Ottoman and Safavi armies were marching across the borderland, besieging and sacking cities, laying waste the countryside and deporting large numbers of people.³⁰ This enigma has puzzled at least one Armenian historian³¹ and is not easy to explain. One factor contributing to Julfa's survival must have been the barren surroundings and well-defended site, another the fact that as Christians the Julfans could remain neutral in the conflict. Luck also played a part, for none of the major Ottoman offensives into Transcaucasia and Azerbaijan passed through Julfa.³² Julfa must have passed into Ottoman hands in the 1580s, but the capture was probably achieved peacefully, since it is not recorded in contemporary histories or colophons. The citizens' willingness to make liberal gifts to passing Ottoman and Safavi military commanders doubtless also helped.³³ Lastly there was the special relationship with the Safavi shahs and court. Julfa merchants may already have been acting as royal agents and ambassadors in the reigns of Tahmāsp and Muḥammad Khudābandah (see Chapter 3), and Ḥamzah Mīrā placed an

27 M.Szuppe, "Un marchand du roi de Pologne en Perse, 1601-2", *Moyen Orient et Océan Indien XVI^e-XIX^e s.*, III, 1986, 93.

28 A. de Gouvea, *Relation des grandes guerres et victoires...*, trans. A. de Meneses, Rouen, 1646, 223. This is a translation of *Relaçam em que se tratam as guerras...*, Lisbon, 1611.

29 Ayvazyan, *Jughā*, 6.

30 H.D. Papazian, "Armenia", in *Encyclopedia Iranica* and HZHP, IV; Khosdegian in *Histoire des arméniens*, ed. G. Dédéyan, Paris, 1982; E. Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document of 1640 from Lvov and its background in Armenia and in the diaspora", in *Between the Danube and the Caucasus*, ed. G. Kara, Budapest, 1987, 247-330.

31 Leo, *Hayots' patmut'yun*, 236.

32 J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, 10 vols., Pest, 1827-1835 (reprinted Graz, 1963), IV, 87, 171; O. Efendiev, *Azerbaidzhanskoe gosudarstvo Sefevidov v XVI veke*, Baku, 1981, 184, 187.

33 Cartwright, *The Preacher's Travels*, 36; *Khulāṣat al-Tavārīkh*, 833.

order for a sword with a Julfa craftsman.³⁴ Julfa was apparently a part of the Safavi *khāsshah* establishment and the Ottomans continued this arrangement, allocating the revenue from Julfa to the stipend of the Sultan's mother.³⁵ A combination of these factors was enough to keep Julfa intact until the Treaty of Istanbul (1590), after which the region enjoyed more than ten years of peace before 'Abbās I renewed the campaigning.

*The Great Deportation*³⁶

'Abbās I's reconquest of Azerbaijan and Transcaucasia is one of the best documented episodes of Safavi history. The principal Persian historians of the reign all describe the campaign in detail and comment on 'Abbās's strategy and objectives.³⁷ Several European envoys travelled to the royal camp during this period and wrote about their experiences³⁸ and Antonio de Gouvea gives a detailed account, presumably based on information from other Augustinians, since he himself was absent from Iran at the time.³⁹ Aṛak'el Davrizhets'i's description is detailed if

34 L.G. Minasean, *Diwan S. Amenap'rkich' Vank'i 1606-1660*, New Julfa, 1983, 107; L.G. Minasyan, "Farāmīn-i mawjūd dar mūzah-yi Julfā", *Hunar va Mardum*, LXXXIV, 1348 A.H., 170.

35 Gouvea, *Relation*, 223.

36 In Armenian sources the deportation of 1604-1605 is generally referred to as the *Mets Sūrgūn*. *Sūrgūn* is the Turkish term for the transfer of population, a measure frequently employed by both Ottoman and Safavi rulers to strengthen control over disputed or rebellious territory, to neutralise troublesome tribes or individuals, or to stimulate the economy of one region at the expense of another. See O.L. Barkan, "Les déportations comme méthode de peuplement et de colonisation dans l'Empire Ottoman", *Revue de la Faculté des Sciences Economiques de l'Université de l'Istanbul*, IX, 1949-1950, 67-131; J. Perry, "Forced migration in Iran during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries", *Iranian Studies*, VIII, 1975, 199-215; F.M. Göçek, "Sūrgūn policy in the Ottoman Empire. A study of the Ottoman deportation policy in the 14th to 17th centuries", M.A. dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 1981.

37 Iskandar Beg Tukmān Munshī, *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*, ed. Ī. Afshār, 2 vols. paginated as 1, Tehran 1350/1971; English translation *History of Shah 'Abbās the Great*, trans. R.M. Savory, Boulder, Colorado, 1978; Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Munajjim-Bāshī Yazdī, *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsī*, ed. S. Vahīdīniyā, [Tehran], 1366/1987; Mīrzā Beg Ḥasan Ḥusayni Junābādī, *Rawzat al-Ṣafaviyyah*, British Library, Or. MS 3388.

38 G. Tectander, *Kurze und wahrhaftige Beschreibung der Reiss von Prag...*, Leipzig, 1608 (reprinted as *Eine abenteuerliche Reise durch Russland nach Persien 1602-1604*, Tulln, 1978); French translation *Iter Persicum, ou Description du voyage en Perse...*, trans. C. Schéfer, Paris, 1877; Russian translation, *Kakash i Tectander. Puteshestvie v Persiyu...*, trans. A. Stankevich, Moscow, 1896; Persian translation (from the French), *Ītar parsīkūm*, trans. M. Tafāzullī, Tehran, 1351. Belchior dos Anjos, in R. Gulbenkian (ed.), *L'Ambassade en Perse de Luis Pereira de Lacerda*, Lisbon, 1972.

39 Gouvea, *Relation*.

partisan. Other eyewitness accounts also survive, and numerous Armenian colophons dating from these years, constitute a particularly rich and little-used source.⁴⁰

It was not until twelve years after the humiliating Treaty of Istanbul (999/1590) that 'Abbās I was sufficiently secure on the home and eastern fronts to move to regain the territory he had then been forced to cede. Towards the end of the year 1011 (Spring 1603) a combination of factors persuaded the Shah that the time had come to challenge the Ottoman position in Azerbaijan and Transcaucasia.

Ottoman rule in the East had never been so precarious. The *celali* revolts were paralysing the provincial administration, while European war kept the main army occupied in the West. There were also clear indications that reconquest would be welcomed by the populations of the former Iranian provinces under Ottoman control. A number of Transcaucasian leaders of various nationalities and faiths (including the Armenian co-Catholics Melk'isedek) had fled to Isfahan and petitioned the Shah to liberate them from Ottoman rule.⁴¹ Contemporary Armenian colophons are full of complaints about Ottoman oppression and extortion.⁴² Furthermore there were suitable pretexts for an attack: the rebellious Ottoman garrison of Nihāvand fort had been

40 Aṛakel Davrizhets'i (Davrēzhats'i on t.p. of first edition), *Girk' patmut'eants'*, Amsterdam, 1699 (second edition Vagharshapat 1896); French translation in M.F. Brosset (ed.), *Collection d'histoires arméniens*, 2 vols., Saint Petersburg, 1874-1876; Russian translation, *Kniga istorii*, trans. L.A. Khanlaryan, Moscow, 1973. A. Hovhanissyan (ed.), *Hayerēn dzeragreri 17 dari hshatakaraner*, I, Erevan, 1974 (hereafter Hovhanissyan, *Hshatakaraner 1601-1620*); Awgostinos Bajets'i in K'. Patkanean (ed.), *Nshkhark' matenagrut'ean hayots'*, Saint Petersburg, 1884, 5-23; French translation "Itinéraire du très-révérénd frère Augustin Badjetsi, évêque arménien de Nahidschevan", trans. M.-F. Brosset, *Journal Asiatique*, series 3, III, 1837, 209-245, 401-421; Grigor Daranaghts'i, *Zhamakagrut'iwn Grigor vardapeti Kamakhets'woy kam Daranaghts'woy*, ed. M. Nshanean, Jerusalem, 1915. Of the secondary sources the fullest account, based on Persian and European sources, is in N. Falsafi, *Zindigānī-yi Shāh 'Abbās-i avval*, 5 vols. bound in 3 and paginated as 1, Tehran, 1364 (first edition 1334-1352, different pagination), 1699-1738; W.J. Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion*, Berlin, 1983, 99-109, gives a brief but lively account which draws also on Ottoman histories and Aṛakel Davrizhets'i. See also E.M. Herzig, "The Deportation of the Armenians in 1604-1605 and Europe's myth of Shah 'Abbās I", in *Persian and Islamic Studies in Honour of P.W. Avery. Pembroke Papers 1*, ed. C. Melville, Cambridge, 1990, 59-71.

41 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'* (Amsterdam edition) 14-16; G. Berchet, *Relazione dei consoli venti nella Siria*, Turin, 1866, 69, 108; Kouymjian in *Histoire des arméniens*, 355.

42 Hovhanissyan, *Hshatakaraner 1601-1620*, 25, 33-34, 43-44, 104-105.

raiding the surrounding countryside and the Shah's commercial agents had been mistreated and even murdered by the governors of Van and Shīrvān.⁴³ The final spur was the rebellion of the Kurds of the Salmās area against 'Alī Pasha, governor of Tabriz, and their appeal for support to the Shah.⁴⁴

'Abbās planned and executed the attack on Tabriz with such skill that the Ottoman defenders were taken by surprise. The city fell without a struggle in October 1603 and the Ottoman forces hurriedly fell back to regroup at Erevan. According to most accounts, in the opening stages of the campaign the advancing Iranian forces were warmly welcomed by the local inhabitants. The people of Tabriz celebrated their liberation by massacring every Ottoman they could find⁴⁵ and at Nakhichavān a delegation of *kadkhudās* visited the Shah before the town was taken and provided assistance in the attack on the fort.⁴⁶ The European envoys who accompanied the Iranians' unopposed advance from Tabriz record the reception given by the people of Marand, Urdubād, Agulis, Julfa and Nakhichavān, who lined the route with music, singing and dancing.⁴⁷ A colophon of 1603 records that it was written "at the time when Shah 'Abbās came and took Tabriz and liberated the land from captivity".⁴⁸

At Julfa the Shah was given a particularly splendid reception. All the notables and priests put on their finest garments to receive him. The route from the river to the palatial house of Khoja Khach'ik, the community leader, was covered with carpets and costly fabrics, and inside the Shah was presented with a golden dish filled with gold coin.⁴⁹ Tectander was impressed by the thousands of candles kept burning all night on the flat roofs of the houses throughout 'Abbās's

43 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 635-637; Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1699-1700.

44 Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1700-1701; Belchior dos Anjos, 97.

45 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 639; Gouvea, *Relation*, 220-221.

46 *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 251-252. Aṛak'el and Iskandar Beg give a slightly different account (Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 20-24; *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 834).

47 Tectander, *Kurze*, 60-62; Gouvea, *Relation*, 222-223.

48 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 128. Other contemporary colophons already speak of the destruction caused by the advancing Safavi forces (*Ibid.*, 84, 99).

49 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 24.

stay.⁵⁰ Although one version, preferred by Aṛak'el, says that 'Abbās seized large quantities of goods and treasure from the Julfans,⁵¹ most eyewitnesses suggest that the townspeople were glad to fete 'Abbās. De Gouvea writes that the principal Julfa merchants were already known by 'Abbās, and that they showed their sympathies by putting to death the one hundred strong Ottoman garrison when they heard of the Shah's approach and presenting him with their heads and three years' revenue, which had been held in the fort.⁵² Cartwright, who had visited Julfa three years earlier, confirms that the Julfans were "both by nature and affection great enemies of the Turke".⁵³

The only contemporary source to mention any deportation during the advance through Azerbaijan is the *Rawzat al-Şafaviyyah*, which states that 'Abbās razed the town of Nakhichavān and massacred its *sunnī* inhabitants, because it had been the seat of the Ottoman governor of Chukhūr Sa'd and the people had supported the Turks. At the same time he ordered the deportation of the Julfans in order to prevent Nakhichavān, which depended on the commerce of the Julfa merchants,⁵⁴ from recovering. Other sources contradict this. Belchior dos Anjos, for example, states that only the fort was destroyed during the advance, but that the city was razed and the population massacred at the time of the Iranian withdrawal the following year,⁵⁵ while according to Jalāl-i Munajjim the Nakhichavānīs actively assisted the Iranian army in taking the fortress.⁵⁶

With the arrival of the Safavi army at Erevan the advance was brought to an abrupt halt. Here the Ottoman forces were gathered in a complex of three strong forts, equipped and provisioned to withstand a long siege.⁵⁷ It took seven and a half months of intense operations through a severe winter before the Iranians were finally able to capture two of the fortresses and bring the

50 Tectander, *Kurze*, 60-61. Jalāl-i Munajjim records that Nakhichavan was illuminated in the same way (*Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 253).

51 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 24; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 259.

52 Gouvea, *Relation*, 223-224.

53 Cartwright, *The Preacher's Travels*, 35. In spite of what Cartwright says, Julfa was certainly subject to the Ottomans at the time of his visit.

54 *Rawzat al-Şafaviyyah*, f. 320b.

55 Belchior dos Anjos, 99, 104; see also Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 206.

56 *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 252.

57 Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1716.

defenders to terms.⁵⁸ The success of the siege was especially significant to the Iranians because, as 'Abbās wrote to Akbar, "not one of the kings of Iran, in any century, has been able to capture a fort from the Ottomans in war".⁵⁹ It was during this period that the war began to take a serious toll on the civilian population of the region.

As soon as siege works began 'Abbās sent out his troops to round up the local populace to help in constructing earthworks. About 12-14,000 men, Christian and Muslim, were pressed into service, and a very large number of them died, either during Ottoman sorties, from the exchange of cannon and musket fire, or from hunger and the extreme cold of the winter months.⁶⁰ Erevan city was largely dismantled to provide materials for the siege works and all the city's fruit trees were cut down to provide fuel or building material, so that after the eventual capture of the forts 'Abbās granted the city a seven year tax exemption on its orchards.⁶¹

During and immediately after the siege of Erevan, 'Abbās despatched several forces to prevent Ottoman relief expeditions and subdue or raid areas still under Turkish control. It was at this time that the first large-scale deportations took place. Aṛak'el Davrizhets'i mentions a number of raids on the regions of Basēn, Khnus, Artskē, Archēsh, Van and Erzerum in western Armenia, which he says resulted in the devastation of the country and the carrying off of numerous captives.⁶² His narrative of these expeditions is confused, however, and does not tally with the version given by Iskandar Beg Munshī, who mentions raiding by *celalis* and tribesmen travelling East to declare their loyalty to the Shah, but not Safavi deportations in western Armenia at this time.⁶³ Jalāl

58 12th Jamādā II 1012/November 1603 to 12th Khurdād 1013/June 1604, *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 253, 263. 'Abbās wrote in a letter to Akbar that the siege had lasted seven months, Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1379. De Gouvea's statement that the siege ended in March 1603 having begun in June of the previous year can be explained only by the fact that he did not witness the siege, and has confused his sources (*Relation*, 247). Most Armenian colophons have the siege lasting seven, eight or nine months.

59 Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1380.

60 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 644; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 53; Gouvea, *Relation*, 232, 233, 238, 350; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaraner 1601-1620*, 147.

61 Gouvea, *Relation*, 233; *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 265.

62 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 29, 33.

63 For example, Aṛakel has Allavardī Khan marching to Artskē to relieve a Safavi Muḥammad Pasha from attack by an Ottoman Muḥammad Pasha, then laying waste the region

al-Dīn Munajjim does note that the army was given leave to make foraging raids in the direction of Kars and that the troops brought back captives and booty from around Erzerum, and his version is confirmed by Belchior dos Anjos and a colophon of 1606.⁶⁴ Jalāl-i Munajjim also records that steps were taken to recover goods taken from Julfa merchants in the frontier region and to ensure the continuation of their trade.⁶⁵

Describing another raid, against Karabagh and the Ottoman garrison at Ganjah, all the main sources agree that the Safavi troops brought back women and children captives; de Gouvea states there were 12,000 of them, but according to Iskandar Beg they were Muslims so the Shah ordered them all to be released, and even executed some soldiers who tried to conceal their captives.⁶⁶ The Armenian Catholic Belchior states that 'Abbās also commanded the release of Armenian women and girls enslaved during these operations.⁶⁷ These incidents were not systematic deportations, however, but took place in the course of raids whose purpose was the collection of provisions and booty, including captives. Apart from the *Rawzat al-Şafaviyyah*, none of the contemporary sources suggest that between the beginning of the Azerbaijan campaign in summer 1603 and autumn 1604 'Abbās made any moves to deport the civilian population, or to prepare for a possible deportation.

'Abbās and the main Safavi army had advanced as far as Kars when spies reported that the long delayed Ottoman counterattack was under way, with the experienced general Sinan Pasha Jaghal

when the former refused to hand over the fort (*Girk' patmut'eants'*, 29-33). In Iskandar Beg's account Allāhvardī Khan was despatched to attack Aḥmad Pasha the *celali*, who was besieging Muḥammad Pasha in Arjish. It was the *celali* irregulars who were looting the vicinity, while Allāhvardī Khan refrained from pillage although he was in enemy territory. *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 663-664). Iskandar Beg's version is supported by a 1604 colophon (Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 147).

64 *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 258; Belchior dos Anjos, 100; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 218.

65 *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 258.

66 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 659-660; Gouvea, *Relation*, 246. Aṛak'el's account again contains inaccuracies; for instance he has Anīr Gūnah Khan leading the Safavi force rather than the Qūrchī-Bāshī, Allāh Qulī Beg (*Girk' patmut'eants'*, 26).

67 Belchior dos Anjos, 100-101.

Oghlu in command.⁶⁸ 'Abbās then despatched troops towards Erzerum to lay waste the region through which the Ottoman army would pass. According to Iskandar Beg, some two or three thousand families of Armenians and tribespeople whose summer pasture was in that area were deported from there to 'Irāq(-i 'ajam), and 20,000 non-Muslims were taken captive and converted to Islam.⁶⁹ As it was already late in the season the Ottomans were not expected to move from their camp in the plain of Mush until the next year. The Shah therefore demobilised most of the army and was preparing to withdraw to suitable winter quarters when news came in that the Ottoman army was on the advance.⁷⁰

To launch a campaign so late in the season was a calculated risk on the part of the Ottoman commander. At first it seemed likely to succeed, since 'Abbās was unprepared for a pitched battle and was forced to withdraw. It was at this point, in autumn 1604, that he initiated the systematic deportation of the entire population of the region, as part of a scorched earth strategy to hinder the Turkish advance. The Persian sources ascribe 'Abbās's decision to fall back on Tabriz to a number of causes, including the lateness of the season, the fact that a large part of his army was already in winter quarters, and a preference for fighting any decisive battle to the south of the River Aras near Nakhichavān or Julfa. They also suggest that the evacuation of civilians was undertaken at least partly to protect them from the ravages of the advancing Ottomans.⁷¹

From outside the royal camp the view was very different. The following description is from a colophon of 1608:

But with the approach of autumn, the Turkish commander ... mustered a large army and launched a fierce attack on King Abas in the Ararat canton (*gawar*). When he ('Abbās) saw that he could not face him (Sinan Pasha Jaghal Oghlu) in battle, he fled from one place to the next, and put the country to fire, so that there would be no shelter for the Turkish forces, nor food or nourishment for their beasts. Also he gave the order for his wicked troops to drive the Armenian people into Persia, as of old Nebuchadnezzar drove ancient Israel into Babylon. With savage blows and violent haste

68 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 665.

69 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 665-666; Falsafī, citing the *Khuld-i barīn*, adds 20,000 women and children captives to the few thousand local families (*Zindigānī*, 1726-1727).

70 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 666-667; Belchior dos Anjos, 102.

71 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 666-667; *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 270-271; *Rawzat al-ṣafaviyyah*, f. 322b.

they began to empty of inhabitants the whole area between Shirakuan and Kars provinces and Goght'n province. In the days of winter they dragged *vardapet* and bishop, priest and congregation, noble and commoner from their abodes and dwellings in village, city, monastery and hermitage, and drove them off with all speed before their horses, brandishing their swords aloft to spur them into greater haste, for the enemy, the Turkish army, was on their heels. Woe and alas for this calamity! Oh the sufferings, the misery and the bitterness! For when they drove the people out of their homes they set fire to the houses with all their possessions in them, and the owners, looking back, saw the flames leaping up. Then they wept, uttering piercing cries, wailing loudly and pouring dust on their heads. There was no help to be found, for the King's edict was unbending. Then on the road they (the soldiers) killed some and maimed others, took babes from their mothers' arms and dashed them on the stones, so that [the women] would be lighter for the march.⁷²

This account, echoed in many other colophons and in Aṛak'el's version, is supported by European sources.⁷³ It suggests that the decision to deport the entire civilian population (Christian and Muslim) was taken when 'Abbās realised that he could not face the Ottoman forces in the field. The people tried to delay departure as long as possible, hoping to evade the order until the spring, but with the Ottoman army advancing rapidly, their reluctance to leave only made matters worse, as the *qizilbāsh* troops resorted to increasingly violent means to carry out their orders.⁷⁴ De Gouvea wrote this description of the evacuation:

It was so pitiful as to break the hardest heart, to see four soldiers enter a house, and after looting everything there was, to divide among themselves the children, young girls and women, instructed in this by their avarice and by the beauty and attractiveness of their captives (for the majority of the women of that nation are extremely beautiful). Mothers clung to their children, children to their mothers, and split the heavens with their cries and pleas, so deserving of compassion that they would have softened any other hearts.⁷⁵

The plight of the women of the Erevan district was especially acute, for many of the men of that area had died during the siege of the previous year and the women had to undergo the deportation

72 The account given here in English translation has twice been published in Armenian: *Manr zhamanakagrut'yunner XIII-XVII dd.*, ed. V.A. Hakobyan, 2 vols., Erevan, 1951-1956, II, 178-188; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, I, 284-291. References are to the latter edition.

73 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 129-130, 183, 196, 206, 218, 412; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 38-40; Gouvea, *Relation*, 347-360; Belchior dos Anjos, 104-106; Awgostinos Bajets'i, 6-7.

74 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 38-40; Gouvea, *Relation*, 264, 353.

75 *Ibid.*, 349.

without protection, often with families of five or six children "too big to carry, yet too small to walk".⁷⁶ To make matters worse, the evacuation took place in autumn and winter. Few had warm clothes and they were forced to march and sleep out in the open. Frostbite and cold took their toll and many, especially children, froze to death.⁷⁷

Hunger took an even greater toll. The deportees were moving through a country denuded of anything that could support a passing army, so that, according to De Gouvea, "there was no one who was not nourished on the flesh of the corpse of his own father, brother, wife, child or parent".⁷⁸ Those who attempted to avoid the deportation by fleeing into the hills and hiding in caves were hunted out and often massacred.⁷⁹

The Persian historians are generally reticent on the sufferings of the evacuated civilians but Iskandar Beg mentions laconically that, "since it was God's will to destroy the Armenians of Erevan, many of the latter died in exile this winter (1604-1605)".⁸⁰ A few sources strike a different note: Belchior dos Anjos, an Armenian eyewitness, was favourably impressed by the good order and efficiency of the Iranian withdrawal and Grigor Kamakhets'i, though lamenting the destruction, wrote that 'Abbās "did no harm to the Armenian people, only deported them (*surkun arar*)".⁸¹

The depopulated region formed a broad swathe through the heart of Armenia, so that "from Julfa to Nakhichavān to Erevan to Erzerum to Van not a building was left standing".⁸² Some colophons contain detailed lists of the districts laid waste.⁸³

76 *Ibid.*, 354.

77 *Ibid.*, 355.

78 *Ibid.*, 356-360. The severe famine and starvation affecting the whole region between Ani and Julfa are recorded in several colophons (Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 196, 205).

79 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 45-51; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 287; *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 669-670.

80 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 670.

81 Belchior dos Anjos, 103; Grigor Kamakhets'i, *Zhamanakagrut'awn*, 38-39.

82 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 206.

83 *Ibid.*, 183, 411-412; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 51-52. See Map 1.

The deportees from western Armenia, travelling in separate groups according to their place of origin,⁸⁴ were driven in a huge herd to the Ararat plain, where they filled the whole valley. Aṛak'el describes the three masses of people moving East across the plain: first the evacuated civilian population then, driving these before them, the retreating Safavi army and last, not far behind, the Ottoman forces.⁸⁵

The climax came when the retreating Iranian army reached Julfa. Once across the River Aras they could either defend the ford or fall back on Tabriz. According to Aṛak'el the deportees and Iranian army reached Julfa only as the Ottomans entered nearby Nakhichavān, so there was a real danger of being caught by their pursuers with their backs to the river.⁸⁶ This would have spelt disaster. Iskandar Beg writes that when the Ottomans reached Erevan, 'Abbās sent Maḡsūd Sulṭān to evacuate the people of Nakhichavān and its surrounding area to Qarājahdāgh and Dizmār, and Tahmāsp Qulī Khan (himself an Armenian) to evacuate the Julfans to Isfahan.⁸⁷ In the *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi* it is stated that 'Abbās decided to evacuate Julfa when he learned from Ottoman deserters that "it was the intention of Aḡmad Pasha (*celali*) and the *sardar* (Jaghal Oghlu) to plunder Julfa, and carry off provisions and other [necessities]".⁸⁸ All the sources agree that the decision to evacuate was taken when there was a real threat that the towns might fall to the Turks. Once the order had gone out, the operation was executed with extreme urgency.

Awgostinos Bajef^ի'i, a Catholic Armenian priest in a village not far from Nakhichavān at the time of the evacuation, describes the violence and haste of the deportation in that area.⁸⁹ In Aṛak'el's account the Julfans were given three days to clear out or be put to the sword. They hurried to load what they could onto the few available beasts of burden and concealed the rest of their wealth. Much was lost to the Safavi troops and to marauders from the surrounding region

84 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 39; Gouvea, *Relation*, 355.

85 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 40. According to Jalāl-i Munajjim the Ottoman army was some two to three *farsangs* behind the retreating Safavi troops (*Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 271).

86 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 40.

87 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 668.

88 *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 271-272.

89 Awgostinos Bajets'i, 6.

who came to gather the rich pickings.⁹⁰ Belchior's account substantially confirms Aṛak'el's, except that he states that Julfa was evacuated in just twenty-four hours.⁹¹

Even so, the Julfans seem to have been treated with greater consideration than the other evacuees. Because they obeyed the order promptly, the Shah provided them with camels to help them transport their belongings.⁹² That the Julfans managed to take much of their wealth with them is confirmed by Figueroa's later observation that most of the gold and silver ornaments in the churches in New Julfa had been brought from Old Julfa.⁹³ Aṛak'el, however, relates that the troops allocated to help the Julfans across the river Aras plundered them and carried off women, children and youths into slavery, and that many drowned in the river.⁹⁴ The colophon already cited describes the evacuation of Julfa and the crossing of the Aras:

Then the soldiers gathered everybody on the bank of the Aras, and since there was a shortage of boats, they detached the multitude of common people and pushed them forward into the river, and the water swept them away and became a burial ground for them. And when the soldiers saw that they were drowning in the water, they feigned compassion and took good-looking Christian youths up on their horses, deceiving the parents that they would help them across the river, but [instead] they rode off without looking back. When the parents saw this they were maddened with grief, and fell writhing to the ground, pouring dust on their heads and raising a clamour of desperate anguish; but there was no help, for the river was between [them and their kidnapped children]... They were fortunate who had never been conceived, never sucked at the breast, or who had departed this life before the crossing. Perhaps in a hundred or a thousand one barely survived, half-drowned.⁹⁵

There was no longer a bridge at Julfa and though boats and rafts had been assembled and constructed, they were too few.⁹⁶ One account suggests that the debacle was the result of a sudden wave of panic.

90 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 55-58.

91 Belchior dos Anjos, 104.

92 Gouvea, *Relation*, 352. Jalāl-i Munjjim also states that the Julfans were helped across the river by the *qizilbāsh* (*Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 272; Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1116)

93 Figueroa, *L'ambassade*, 284. See also, Gulbenkian, *L'ambassade*, 119.

94 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 59.

95 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 286.

96 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 41. Awgostinos Bajets'i describes how he got across by holding on to the leg of a bullock, 6.

When they reached the great river Aras, a report came that the Ottoman army was about to arrive, and there was no means of escape. Then panic fell, everyone threw themselves into the water all together, the king and his army, and the common people.⁹⁷

Aṛak'el describes how the Armenians were forced into the water at sword point with several of their leaders being mutilated or executed to instil greater urgency.⁹⁸ The version which portrays the crossing as a major catastrophe is supported by most contemporary accounts,⁹⁹ but there is an alternative, preferred by the nineteenth century historian of New Julfa, Tēr-Yovhaneants', according to which the river was forded without loss of life (*voc' vok' vnasef'aw kḥamovn Astutsoy*). The colophon in which this version appears is detailed and accurate in most respects but cannot outweigh all the evidence to the contrary. A possible explanation of the discrepancy is that there was more than one crossing of the Aras.¹⁰⁰

Disastrous as Abbās's scorched earth strategy was for the inhabitants of the region, it proved effective in wearing down the advancing Ottomans. The Turkish forces suffered from the lack of provisions, fodder and shelter and from the harassment of the *qizilbāsh* cavalry.¹⁰¹ When the Iranian army prepared to oppose any Ottoman crossing of the Aras, Jaghal Oghlu, who was facing mutiny from his troops, took the road back to Van via Mākū.¹⁰² Many of his troops drowned when fording the Aras near Mākū; others froze after the crossing and later, near Chāldirān, a great many more died in severe blizzards, so that there were said to have been more than 20,000 casualties.¹⁰³

97 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 218, 365.

98 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 40-41.

99 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 196, 206, 365, 758, in addition to those already cited.

100 PNJ, I, 25-29. The colophon he cites is published, Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 218. On the verse cited by Tēr-Yovhaneants' see, L.G. Minasean, *Tsanō'agrut'iwnner Nor Jughayi patmut'ean A. ew B. hatormeri*, New Julfa, 1980, 13.

101 *Tāriḫ-i 'ālam-ārā*, 669; *Tāriḫ-i 'Abbāsi*, 271; Gouvea, *Relation*, 265; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 211.

102 According to some sources the Ottoman army reached Nakhichavān (*Tāriḫ-i 'Abbāsi*, 272; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 260; Belchior dos Anjos, 6-7; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 54). Other accounts do not have them advancing beyond Erevan or Etchmiadzin (*Tāriḫ-i 'ālam-ārā*, 859-860; Gouvea, *Relation*, 265).

103 *Tāriḫ-i 'Abbāsi*, 272; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 181, 260.

After crossing the Aras, the deportees were immediately driven onwards.¹⁰⁴ Here the narrative of the deportation becomes more difficult to follow. Apart from Aṛak'el, the sources tell us little about what happened next. Most colophons merely say that the Armenians were taken to Tabriz for the winter and then on to Qazvīn, Kāshān and Isfahan in the spring. Aṛak'el informs us that Ilyās Khalīfah Qaradāghlu took charge of the deportees from the Ararat plain, with instructions to move them eastwards as fast as possible along the Aras gorge, leaving the direct road to Tabriz free for the Iranian army. The main group therefore spent the winter in the vicinity of Ṭārum, Khalkhāl, Ahar and Mishkīn, unable to proceed because of the cold and snow, before being driven on to Isfahan in the spring.¹⁰⁵ The Julfans, however, were led to Tabriz directly by Tahmāsp Qulī Beg.¹⁰⁶

In Aṛak'el's view it had always been 'Abbās's intention to send the evacuees into permanent exile in Iran, and he dismisses as deception the idea that the evacuation was undertaken as a temporary measure to hinder the Ottoman advance and safeguard the population.¹⁰⁷ His interpretation is, however, strongly influenced by biblical parallels; he sees the Armenians as a second children of Israel driven into Babylonian exile, and Shah 'Abbās as a composite of the devil, Nebuchadnezzar and Shāpūr II.¹⁰⁸

Evidence from sources contemporary with the deportation tell a very different story. After the threat from the Ottoman army receded some of the deportees were permitted to return home. Awgostinos Bajets'i was with the group of evacuees from the Nakhchavan region when, a few days after the fording of the Aras, the Shah gave an order allowing them to go home. They did so with great rejoicing, in spite of finding their homes and country ruined.¹⁰⁹ Belchior dos Anjos also states that Amir Gūnah Khan escorted the people of Nakhchavān and the surrounding villages back to their homes and gave them protection through the winter.¹¹⁰ That some did

104 Awgostinos Bajets'i, 6-7.

105 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 44.

106 *Ibid.*, 60-61.

107 *Ibid.*, 37-38.

108 *Ibid.*, 24, 38, 43, 56.

109 Awgostinos Bajets'i, 7-8.

110 Belchior dos Anjos, 104.

return is further confirmed by a colophon of 1605, which relates that while the Armenians were in Tabriz a royal decree was issued:

That he who wishes to settle (*bnakil*) here, let him stay here (*asti kats' ts'ē*), and he who does not wish to settle here, let him go his own way (*ert' iis' ē zchanap' arhn iwrn*), each to his own place. Then many of the Armenians and Muslims (*tachik'*) set off on their way, and travelled for two days, but the wicked Kurdish chiefs (*anawren paronayk' n k'urd azgin*) killed all the men and women, and took the youths captive ... Then compassionate and merciful God ... instilled pity in the heart of the King, and he gave a decree, that, "The Armenians are free (*Hayk' azatk' en*), but there is no order for them to leave, let them remain here until the spring. And when the month of March arrives let them all depart and go to Shush (Susa), which is called Aspahan (Isfahan)." On hearing this we afflicted Armenian people rejoiced with great joy and gave glory to God and blessed our Creator. And in the spring there came a royal command that the Armenians be counted, men and women, boys and girls, even babes at the breast. And he ('Abbās) entrusted us to Maghsudbēk (Maqsūd Beg), who entrusted us to his officer Kanchibēk (Ganj 'Alī Beg). Then they brought camels of the King's, and loaded everybody with all their goods and chattels on them and brought us to Isfahan.¹¹¹

This eyewitness account establishes that it was not until the Shah was in winter quarters in Tabriz that he decided to resettle the Armenians in Isfahan. Like Aṙak'el, most later writers have accepted that 'Abbās intended from the beginning to resettle the evacuees in Iran. The other principal source for this theory is Pietro Della Valle, though in most respects Della Valle's assessment of 'Abbās is utterly opposed to Aṙak'el's. The Italian sees the Shah as the epitome of the enlightened autocrat, describing him as, "not only the King, but also the father, the tutor, and the most liberal benefactor of his people",¹¹² and he praises 'Abbās for removing the Armenians from the dangerous frontier regions. Although there are numerous examples of deliberate mass deportations later in 'Abbās's reign,¹¹³ temporary war-time evacuation was an even more frequent strategy. Tabriz had been evacuated in 1586¹¹⁴ and 'Abbās even gave the

111 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 182-183. The anonymous author does not specify where the colophon was written, though internal evidence suggests that the author was a native of Western Armenia, since he witnessed the deportation there. *Ibid.*, 411 (no. 518, dated 1611) is a virtual copy of this colophon. The 1611 copy was written in a village in the Chahār Maḥāl area, which provides the only clue as to the provenance of the 1605 version.

112 P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 2 vols., Brighton, 1843, I, 598.

113 Perry, "Forced migration", 205-208.

114 U. Tucci (ed.), "Una relazione di G.B. Vecchiotti sulla Persio e sul regno di Hormuz (1587)", *Oriente Moderno*, XXXV, 1955, 154.

order for the evacuation of Ardabīl, birthplace of the Safavi order, in 1618.¹¹⁵ All contemporary accounts suggest that the deportation of 1604-1605 was undertaken as a short-term expedient and that it was only later that 'Abbās decided to resettle the evacuees in Iran.

Once the Ottoman threat had receded, 'Abbās more showed concern for the evacuees' welfare:

He saw to the needs of those who had been transferred from the frontier regions, using funds from the state treasury to furnish them with supplies of food and whatever else they needed for the winter.¹¹⁶

Both Jalāl-i Munajjim and de Gouvea recount the story of Qalandar Beg Ustājilū, who had thrown an Armenian *kadkhudā* in chains in order to seize his wife. The man escaped and petitioned the Shah for justice and 'Abbās had the offender's eyes and tongue cut out and promulgated an edict that "Armenians could not be slaves in his realm". This led to the release of a great number of enslaved Armenians.¹¹⁷

It is almost impossible to estimate the total number deported in 1604-1605. The large numbers in contemporary sources inspire little confidence; indeed it would be unreasonable to expect even an eyewitness to produce an accurate estimate of a disorganised mass of refugees. Schütz discusses the question briefly and notes that the number of families suggested in sources varies from 80,000 (in Georgian sources) to 400,000 (in the New Julfans' account to the Carmelites); 300-350,000 is the figure most often put forward.¹¹⁸ In any case the figures given in the primary sources often refer to the deportees of only a single region or include the total of all the deportations in Shah 'Abbās's reign. This accounts for figures as diverse as 60,000 taken captive from the area between Tabriz and Erevan,¹¹⁹ and 300,000 killed from the districts of Kars, Shirakuan, Artskē, Archēsh, Berkri and Khnus.¹²⁰ Another account gives the number of Armenians exiled

115 [H. Chick (ed.)], *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia*, 2 vols. paginated as 1, London, 1939, 232.

116 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 670.

117 *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsi*, 274; Gouvea, *Relation*, 362.

118 Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 260-261; H.D. P'ap'azyan, in HZH P, IV, 98; *idem*, "Armenia and Iran; vi Armeno-Iranian relations in the Islamic period", in EI R.

119 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaraner 1601-1620*, 412.

120 *Ibid.*, 183.

to Isfahan as 500,000, with 100,000 casualties during the forced migration.¹²¹ De Gouvea reports that twenty towns and hundreds of villages were depopulated and laid waste, which is credible, but goes on to explain that in Erevan district there were more than 1,500 villages each of 400-500 people, which is not.¹²² What is certain, however, is that the deportation was on a massive scale and deeply impressed observers; the huge figures they suggest are indicative of their own shocked reactions, if not of the actual numbers involved.

Resettlement in Iran and the Founding of New Julfa

Writing at the end of the seventeenth century, Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i gives a long list of Iranian cities where Shah 'Abbās is said to have resettled Armenians deported during his campaigns against the Ottomans.¹²³ Some of these settlements date from deportations later than that of 1604-1605, while others were probably the result of voluntary emigration from war-torn Armenia.¹²⁴

Later writers have tended to view all the deportations together as part of 'Abbās's long-term strategy for developing the resources of central Iran and the Caspian provinces. Thus it has often been suggested that one of his motives in ordering the 1604-1605 deportation was to make use of the Armenians' skill in silk production in Gīlān and Māzandārān. Yet there is no evidence that any of the deportees were sent to these provinces. It was only ten years or more later, during the campaigns in Georgia, that exiles were resettled near the newly founded palaces at Farahābād and Ashraf.¹²⁵ Even then, according to Della Valle, the Armenians were mainly employed in

121 Gulbenkian, *L'ambassade*, 119.

122 Gouvea, *Relation*, 347-348. De Gouvea also suggests that 100,000 people were enslaved (*ibid.*, 349), which Schutz takes as his estimate of the number of deportees (Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 260-261).

123 Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, 48.

124 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 85-86.

125 Farahabad and Ashraf were not founded until 1020 or 1021 (1611-1613) (R.M. Savory, "Ashraf" and "Farahābād" in *Et*²). The dates for the settlement of Armenian, Georgian, Muslim and Jewish deportees there are confirmed in Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 130-131; Hakobyan, *Manr zhamanakagrut'yunner*, I, 146, 302; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 622; Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 183.

wine-growing and agriculture, and the Georgians, Shirvanis and Jews tended the mulberry plantations.¹²⁶ This seems credible as comparatively little silk was actually produced in Armenia.

The destination of the first and largest group of deported Armenians seems to have been limited to Isfahan and some surrounding districts.¹²⁷ Aṛak'el writes that in the spring of 1605 those Armenians who had spent the winter in Tārum, Khalkhāl, Ahar and Mishkīn were transported to Isfahan by Abū Ṭurāb Beg. There the townspeople were settled in Isfahan itself, while the villagers were placed in surrounding villages: Linjan, Alinjan, Gandiman, Jlakhor, K'earvand, P'eria and Burvari.¹²⁸ Iskandar Beg and contemporary colophons confirm this account: "the survivors [of the Armenians of Erevan] were moved to Isfahan in the spring and allotted plots of cultivable land and seed".¹²⁹

The accommodation of the vast number of refugees arriving in Isfahan must have caused acute administrative problems. One member of Luis Pereira's embassy described the refugee situation in the capital in 1607.

This enormous crowd of refugees has been divided up, some in lodgings in the vicinity of Isfahan, some in what is called the Old City, close to the new one, in several quarters, a few everywhere, in caravanserais (which are very big houses for caravans of merchants, where one can lodge a lot of people, and which resemble big, very ugly monasteries).¹³⁰

As late as 1618 conditions had scarcely improved:

It is impossible to give an idea of all the foreigners (Figueroa is here referring to Armenians and other Christian minorities) who are always to

126 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, I, 598.

127 A colophon of 1601 was written in K'art'man village, Isfahan, which suggests that there were Armenians already living in or near the capital even before the Great Deportation (Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakarnner 1601-1620*, 32). They may have emigrated from Armenia during the Ottoman occupation, perhaps because they were known supporters or former officers of the Safavi administration, or they may have been craftsmen working on royal commissions, or on the numerous new constructions in Isfahan.

128 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 45; PNJ, I, 31-32. On the identity and location of the rural colonies see L.G. Minasean, *Patmut'iwn P'eriayi hayeri*, Antilias, Lebanon, 1971, 28-29.

129 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 670; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakarnner 1601-1620*, 181, 220, 336, et al.

130 Gulbenkian, *L'ambassade*, 119, see also 135.

be found in Isfahan, because their number is so great that the caravanserais, which are so vast and so numerous, cannot lodge them all, so that not having homes of their own a large part of them find refuge in the suburb of Julfa.¹³¹

The same observer also remarked the wretched condition of:

This strange confusion of every kind of miserable people, half-naked women and children who have no proper lodging, nor other refuge than that of those caravanserais which have been founded for this purpose by devout and pious persons.¹³²

Aṛak'el mentions two refugee communities still sharing the caravanserai of Gech'guni in his day (c. 1660), trapped in poverty by the high cost of living in Isfahan.¹³³

Little by little, however, the refugees were permanently settled. One group from the district of Dasht in Goght'n province was moved into the quarter of Shamsābād,¹³⁴ and others were settled in other quarters of the city.¹³⁵ There was apparently no attempt to segregate Christians from Muslims and the quarters in which the Armenians were settled had mixed populations. Della Valle records that there were two Armenian churches in Isfahan itself.¹³⁶

Outside Isfahan and the surrounding area, the only place known to have had Armenians from the 1604-1605 deportation settled there was a small colony of 500 households, established at the request of Allāh Vardī Khan, in the province of Shiraz.¹³⁷ When De Gouvea visited the Armenian villages in Shiraz province four years after the Great Deportation, he found them wretchedly poor, with the men working as hired labourers in the neighbouring (Muslim) villages, and the children scavenging for scraps.¹³⁸

131 G. de Silva y Figueroa, *L'ambassade de D.G. de S. y F. en Perse*, trans. A. de Wicquefirt, Paris, 1667, 180.

132 *Ibid.*, 185.

133 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 146-147.

134 *Ibid.*, 433.

135 *Ibid.*, 436.

136 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 85.

137 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 45.

138 Gouvea, *Relation*, 361; Tavernier found these communities virtually assimilated: "the old people dying out, the young ones generally turn Muslim" (*Les six voyages*, I,).

While the other deportees were being settled in Isfahan and the surrounding region, the Julfans continued to enjoy special treatment. For the first few months they stayed in Isfahan, but soon they were given a special site for their own colony.

And [they were] taken to Shush, to the city of Isfahan on the Zāyandah river, and remained there three months, and then there came a royal edict to settle in village, city and caravanserai. And there they stayed two or three months, as spoke the prophet David: "But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works".¹³⁹ They had been mingled among the infidels. And the Christians had learned all the infidels' works. And then he (Shah 'Abbās) gave a place for houses and dwellings on the river bank. And they made a start to the settlement and built houses and dwellings, and constructed twelve churches.¹⁴⁰

One colophon records that at first the colony was called "Unjulfa" (*Ch'ajughā*) and "Not Julfa" (*Voch' Jugha*)¹⁴¹ but an earlier colophon already gives the name that became standard: "and a new town with new buildings grew up and it was called New Julfa (*Nor Julā*)".¹⁴²

The original *farmān* granting land to the Julfans is lost but other sources record that the Shah commanded the governor of Isfahan to allocate land on the south bank of the Zāyandah river near *Khiyābān-i 'Abbāsābād*¹⁴³ and a later *farmān* (1028/1619)¹⁴⁴ confirming the original grant survives:

It was decreed at this time that in accordance with the infinite royal magnanimity and boundless clemency, in order to ease the condition of the Armenians of Julfa (*Jūlāh*), we have bestowed and granted to them the lands situated on the bank of the Zāyandah River in Isfahan, on which they have built houses, and which are our Royal Majesty's property (*milkiyyat-i navvāb-i humāyūn*). The *mustawfīs* of the Divan shall remove the above-mentioned lands from [the register of] state property (*milkiyyat-i dīvān*) and enter it in the registers as a grant to the above-mentioned Armenians. And the *vazir* and the *kalāntar* and officials of Isfahan, in accordance with this intention, shall not transgress what is commanded, and shall confirm the above-mentioned lands as a grant to them.¹⁴⁵

139 Psalm CV:35 (Armenian Bible).

140 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaraner 1601-1620*, 738, see also 570.

141 *Ibid.*, 338. *Ch'jugha* would be the expected form for "Unjulfa"; *Ch'ajughā* may be a dismal pun on *Ch'yajogh*, unsuccessful.

142 *Ibid.*, 268.

143 *Rawzat al-ṣafaviyyah*, cited in Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1115; PNJ, I, 36.

144 Tēr-Yovhaneants' is in error in his conversion of the dates. Shavvāl 1028 corresponds not to 1612 (nor to 1618, as in Minasean, *Divan*, 107) but to Sept./Oct. 1619.

145 Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1126; PNJ, I, 36-38.

A *farmān* of 1014/1605 addressed to the governor of Isfahan settles a dispute between the Julfans and the neighbouring Muslim community of Mamān in favour of the former and enjoins the latter to treat the Armenians as honoured guests, since they have given up their old homes and endured great sufferings and losses. The Muslims are commanded to shelter and help the Julfans in the coming winter, as they have not yet had time to build themselves houses and provide for themselves.¹⁴⁶ 'Abbās also commanded the governor of Isfahan to provide the Julfans with assistance in building houses and churches.¹⁴⁷ If the original deportation of the Julfans was dictated by immediate tactical and strategic factors, there can be no doubt that 'Abbās went to some lengths to make the Julfans comfortable in his new capital and to discourage them from attempts to return to their homeland. Aṛak'el notes that the Shah made a point of personal contact with the leaders of the community. He dined at their homes, invited them to his entertainments and, at their request, even reduced the taxes paid by Christians. He favoured Christians in disputes with Muslims and evicted Muslim inhabitants from the places where the Armenians were to be settled. He encouraged church building, not only in Julfa but also inside the city of Isfahan,¹⁴⁸ and attended the the Blessing of the Waters ceremony at Epiphany.¹⁴⁹ The Julfans were granted complete religious liberty and could celebrate their rituals publicly.¹⁵⁰ They also enjoyed freedom of dress, permission to ride on horseback and to use decorated harness, and considerable autonomy in administrative and judicial matters.¹⁵¹

While endeavouring to attach the immigrants to their new home, 'Abbās sought also to sever their ties with Armenia. The destruction of Julfa at the time of the deportation must have served this end, but the Shah also considered an even more radical scheme. He planned to raze the war-

146 Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1125-1126; PNJ, I, 46-47. The *farmān* is dated 6th Rabī' II by Falsafī and 2nd Jamādā II by Tēr-Yovhaneants'. Minasean, *Divan*, 107.

147 *Rawzat al ṣafaviyyah*, cited in Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1115.

148 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 85.

149 See below.

150 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 63-64.

151 If the privileges were granted by *farmān* these have not survived. The principal sources of information are Aṛak'el and European travellers. The Julfans privileges are listed, with minor variations in V. Gregorian, "Minorities of Isfahan: the Armenian community of Isfahan 1587-1722", *Iranian Studies*, VII/3-4, 1974, 652-680; Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1119-1120; Baiburtyan, *Armyskaya koloniya*, 19-20; and in HZhP, IV, 326-328.

damaged seat of the Catholics at Echmiadzin and use the stones to build a cathedral for the use of all the Christians of Isfahan in the Bāgh-i Zirishk not far from New Julfa. The plan also fitted in with the Shah's diplomatic initiatives towards Catholic Europe, but it was the proposed involvement of the Catholics that made it unacceptable to the Gregorian Armenians. In the end the Shah was satisfied with bringing some of the altar stones from Echmiadzin to Isfahan, where they have remained to this day.¹⁵² A similar motive lay behind bringing the relic of St Gregory the Illuminator's right hand, from Echmiadzin to New Julfa. It was eventually returned in 1637-1638 by command of Shah Šafī.¹⁵³ Finally, if all these incentives to stay were insufficient, the Shah maintained a network of spies to prevent the deportees from returning to Armenia.¹⁵⁴

With land to build on, the Shah's support and guarantees of personal and religious freedom, work on the new suburb progressed rapidly. Tēr-Yovhaneants' cites a colophon which suggests that though the Julfans reached Isfahan in 1605 the new suburb was not begun until the next year. Nevertheless, as early as 1607 churches had already been built.¹⁵⁵ Another scribe writes, "We began to build superb houses and churches, finer than before (i.e. in Old Julfa)". When De Gouvea visited Isfahan there were already fine houses, seven parishes, two bishops and many other priests.¹⁵⁶ Pietro della Valle counted ten churches in the winter of 1618-1619 and by 1620

152 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 570; PNJ, I, 51-57; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 195; Falsafī, *Zindigāni*, 1129-1130. Falsafī publishes the *farmān*, but is mistaken in suggesting that the cathedral was built and became known as the Vank' church. The first church built on the site of the All Saviour's Cathedral was probably constructed in 1606; it was completely rebuilt between 1655 and 1666 in the shape it retains to the present day (PNJ, II, 1-2). 'Abbās's scheme may have been influenced by an earlier plan for an interdenomination Christian church suggested by the merchant Khoja Shevelin (Shahvali Shahrیمانean), who in 1609 was hoping to buy the island of Qishm from the Shaykh of Hurmuz for this purpose. The church was to have three naves, one each for the Gregorians, Catholics and Syrians (*Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 171).

153 PNJ, I, 57-60.

154 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 168.

155 PNJ, I, 41; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 259.

156 Gouvea, *Relation*, 352.

there were twelve.¹⁵⁷ Iskandar Beg also describes the growth of the suburb and adds that the Julfans were so pleased with their new home that they completely forgot the old one.¹⁵⁸

The plan of New Julfa was a regular one - a single main street, called the Kھیābān-i Nazar, ran on an East-West axis, parallel to the river but separated from it by an open space.¹⁵⁹ At the western end of this street the Sarfrazean family built their house, and the Shahrīmaneans did the same at the eastern end; the two main gates thus became known as the Sarfrazean and Shahrīmanean gates.¹⁶⁰ On the North-South axis were ten smaller streets which ran from the Zāyandah river and crossed Kھیābān-i Nazar, seven of them reaching as far as the cemetery some distance to the south. These streets divided Julfa into "tenths" (*tasnak*). Every family was allotted its own plot and constructed its own house.¹⁶¹

The Growth of the Colony

Many of the sources used for the history of the Great Deportation fall silent when it comes to the development of New Julfa in the seventeenth century. The Persian historians who recorded 'Abbās's Azerbaijan campaign do not consider the subsequent history of the Julfa Christian community in Isfahan worthy of note, and the Armenian scribes were more at home lamenting the woes befalling the people in retribution for their wickedness than in describing periods of peace and prosperity. There are, however, numerous descriptions of New Julfa by seventeenth century European travellers (though the detail and quality of their information is extremely variable), and Aṛak'el Davrizhets'i also visited Julfa and supplies vital information about a number of important events.

Contemporary sources alone do not provide enough information to plot the course of New Julfa's development. Tēr-Yovhaneants's history of New Julfa is particularly valuable, both for its detailed

157 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, I, 439; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 738.

158 *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 668.

159 PNJ, I, 39; Fiqueroa, *L'ambassade*, 283.

160 PNJ, I, 39. See Map 3.

161 PNJ, I, 36, 39-40.

account of the colony's history and for its description of New Julfa as it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. Carswell and Karapetian's studies of the buildings of New Julfa both contain valuable photographs and plans as well as historical information,¹⁶² and Karapetian also reproduces the earliest known map of New Julfa (1829). On the basis of the available materials it is possible to reconstruct New Julfa's history as follows:

The first phase saw the Khiyābān-i Nazar laid out with its intersecting North-South streets. At this time the colony does not seem to have been divided into quarters (Arm. *tagh*), but each street or block (Arm. *tasnak* -tenth, derived from the ten North-South dividing streets) was known by the name of its most notable inhabitant. Ter-Yovhaneants' gives the following *tasnak* names: *Dilakeants'*, *Mets Khōjēnts'*, *P'irmsēnts'*, *Gilanēnts'*, *Baghrāmēnts'*, *Awageants'*, *Mimaneants'*, *Zēkeants'*, *Israyēleants'*, *P'anoseants'*, *T'ōp'ch'eants'*, *Jakhat'üneants'*, *Ghōch'ghareants'*, *T'aghvaleants'*, *Alijaneants'*, *Tēr-Ananeants'*, *Mushegheants'*, *Gharadaneants'*, *Awag Ēdaneants'* and *Dawt'eants'*. (From the large number of these it appears that the *tasnak* names changed with those of their notable inhabitants.¹⁶³)

According to Tēr-Yovhaneants', the original colony occupied the area between Khiyābān-i Nazar and the banks of the river. In Tēr-Yovhaneants's time, this area was uninhabited except for five houses on the street leading to St. George's (Surb Georg) church. It had been given over to orchards and cultivation and was known as Old Julfa (*Hin Jugha*).¹⁶⁴ Tēr-Yovhaneants' states that the original colony extended south of Khiyābān-i Nazar as far as the area that later became the quarter of *Ch'arsu* (P. *Chahārsū*, market square, crossroads).¹⁶⁵

162 J. Carswell, *New Julfa. The Armenian churches and other buildings*, Oxford, 1968; K. Karapetian, *Isfahan, New Julfa. The houses of the Armenians*, Rome, 1974.

163 PNJ, I, 40.

164 PNJ, II, 281, 304-305.

165 PNJ, I, 40; In Safavi Isfahan *chahārsū* generally referred to the domed junction of two bazaar vaults at the intersection of two routes (H. Gaube and E. Wirth, *Der Bazar von Isfahan*, Wiesbaden, 1978, 69-72 and figs. 20-23).

The quarters of *K'ōch'er*, also known as *Sangt'ērash* (P. *Sangtarāsh*, stonemason) and *Geawrabad* (P. *Gabrābād*, the Zoroastrian quarter), *Dawrēzh* or *T'awrizets'ots'* (Tabriz, or the Tabrizis' quarter), also known as *Mahlat'* (P. *Maḥallāt*, suburb) which included the subdivision *Dasht* (after the village of origin of its inhabitants: Dasht in Goght'n *gawar*¹⁶⁶), *Erewan* and *Gask* did not form part of the original colony.¹⁶⁷ Karapetian suggests, without offering any evidence, that these quarters predated the building of New Julfa,¹⁶⁸ but there is documentary and architectural evidence that they were built half a century after the original colony along the axis of *Khiyābān-i Nazar*.

The earliest *farmān* confirming the grant of land has already been cited but, since there are several later *farmāns* in the Julfa Cathedral archive also allocating land to the Armenians, it is clear that the original grant did not include all the territory of even the older quarters.¹⁶⁹ A *farmān* of 1033/1623-4 concerns building houses in *Marnān* and *Sīchān*; another of the same year and one of 1038/1628-9 also allocate building land. A *farmān* of 1042/1632-3 concerns permission for church-building and others of 1046/1636-7 and 1057/1647-8 are also on the subject of building land. There is also a *farmān* of 1046/1636 that allocates land not in Julfa but in the original Zoroastrian quarter of *Gabrābād* (or *Hasanābād*) also South of the river but to the East of Julfa. *Tēr-Yovhaneants'* gives an Armenian translation of this document:

166 *Arak'el, Girk' patmut'eants'*, 433; H. Hübschmann, *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen*, Strassburg, 1904 (reprinted Amsterdam 1969) 420.

167 PNJ, I, 40; II, 277-284. The names of the quarters given by *Tēr-Yovhaneants'* are confirmed in European travel accounts: Chardin lists Julfa itself, and *Guebre-abad*, *Chaic Sabana* and *Champs Abad* (both named after the quarters in Isfahan from which their inhabitants were transferred), *Erivanlou* and *Nakchivanli* (*Voyages*, VIII, 102, 106; X, 21-22); *Thévenot* lists *Giolfa*, *Ecrivān*, *Nakchuan*, *Chaksaban*, *Sirou-Kainan* (*Shīrah-khānah*), *Gaur*, *Sitchan*, and *Mekrigan* (? *Marnān*) (*J. de Thévenot, Voyages de Mr de Thévenot*, 3 parts, Paris, 1664-1684, II, 149); *De Bruyn* mentions *Gaif-rabaet* (*Gabrābād*) or *Koets* (*K'ōch'er*), *Tabriese*, *Toest* (*Dasht*) or *Samsjabaet*, *Eriwan*, *Nagt-siewan*, *Siachsa-baen* and *Kasketsie* (*Gask*) (*C. De Bruyn, Voyages de Corneille le Brun par la Moscovie, en Perse et aux Indes Orientales*, 2 vols. paginated as 1, Amsterdam, 1718, 232 [Translated from the Dutch, *Reyse over Moskovie, door Persie en Indië...*, Amsterdam, 1711]). All of these are recognisable either as the names of the quarters of New Julfa, or the inhabitants' original homes in Armenia, or the quarters they inhabited in Isfahan city, or the villages to the South of the *Zāyandah-rūd* which predated New Julfa.

168 Karapetian, *Isfahan, New Julfa*, 48-49, fig. 5.

169 I have not had the opportunity to examine these *farmāns*, of which brief descriptions are given in L. Minasean, *Divan Surb Amenap'rkch'i Vank'i 1606-1960*, New Julfa, 1983, 107-116.

A decree by the world obeyed is issued to the eminent Sayyid Mīr Muḥammad Ṭāhīr, governor of the city of Isfahan, that you, taking cognisance of the purport of this decree, should recognise the obligation to allocate two hundred empty houses of the Zoroastrians in the Gabrābād quarter of the city to the leader of the Armenians, Khoja Sarfraz, the elder of all the Armenian Christians in Julfa, so that he may allocate each of them to an Armenian who has no home to live in. 20th Muḥarram, 1046 A.H. (25/6/1636).¹⁷⁰

It seems that the Armenian population was continually outgrowing available accommodation, as immigrants continually arrived in Isfahan seeking a better lot.¹⁷¹

That the growth of New Julfa was not achieved without friction is indicated by two *farmāns* (of 1030/1620-1 and 1044/1634-5) prohibiting the Muslim villagers of neighbouring Mamān from using the water of the Ghēynun stream, and by a *farmān* (1059/1649-50) ordering the restitution to the Armenians of land that had been seized.¹⁷²

The greatest expansion of New Julfa came in the reign of 'Abbās II, when all the Armenians living in the city and suburbs of Isfahan itself were resettled in New Julfa. Aṛak'el gives a detailed contemporary account. The decision to move the Armenians was connected with the I'timād al-Dawlah Khalīfah Sulṭān's drive against alcohol and vice.¹⁷³ In spite of severe penalties for Muslims caught drinking, the I'timād al-Dawlah's efforts proved ineffectual as long as there were Armenians in the city from whom their Muslim neighbours could readily buy alcohol.¹⁷⁴

170 PNJ, II, 280. Tēr-Yovhancants' mistakenly supposes this *farmān* to refer to the Gabrābād quarter in Julfa, which did not exist at that time. He also makes an error in converting the date.

171 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, I, 100; Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1119, 1123.

172 Minasean, *Divan*, 108-110.

173 P. Luft, "Iran unter Schah 'Abbās II (1642-1666)", PhD dissertation, Göttingen University, 1968, 90-92; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 430-431; Chardin, *Voyages*, II, 216.

174 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 431; Olearius had remarked that the Iranians only tolerated the Armenians living among them in order to have wine close at hand (*Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 577). A *farmān* prohibiting the sale of alcohol to Muslims survives in the Julfa Cathedral archive (Minasean, *Divan*, 111).

In the mid-seventeenth century the Armenian population of Isfahan was scattered among a number of suburbs of the city. Aṛak'el lists Dashtets'is in Shamsābād (*Shamshaput*) to the West of the royal palace; Armenians from a wide range of origins in Talvaskūn (*Toroskan*) near the fortress and Shaykh Yusūf Bannā (*Shkhshapanay*), and natives of the city of Erevan in the quarters of Takht-i Kharaj (*Taght'igharajay*) and Bāghāt (*Baghat*).¹⁷⁵ Tēr-Yovhaneants', though relying mainly on Aṛak'el, suggests a slightly different distribution, with Armenians from Tabriz as well as Dasht in Shamsābād, Erevants'is and Gaskets'is in Talvaskūn and others again in Bāghāt, Shaykh Yusūf Bannā and elsewhere.¹⁷⁶ Raphaël du Mans confirms that the Erevants'is were settled near the fortress and that there were other Armenians in the suburbs of Shaykh Yusūf Bannā (*Serabana*), Shamsābād and 'Abbāsābād.¹⁷⁷ As the latter was also known as the quarter of the Tabrizis,¹⁷⁸ it is probable that the Armenians from Tabriz and Nakhichavān (who are not mentioned by Aṛak'el) lived there alongside the Muslim immigrants from the same cities.

Only Manrique (c. 1642) estimates the numbers of Armenians living in the city. He gives a list of the suburbs to which the Augustinian fathers used to make daily visits: Julfa, Gabrābād (*Gauverabad*), 'Abbāsābād (inhabited by Muslim courtiers and rich merchants), Shamsābād (a tiny village of eighty Armenian families), Ḥasanābād (*Assenabad*, which Manrique describes as a village of 250 Georgians, though other sources identify it with Gabrābād, the Zoroastrian quarter), and Shaykh Yusūf Bannā (*Cheikhsabanna*, a village of 120 Armenian families).¹⁷⁹ Most of the above-mentioned suburbs can be identified on Coste's 1840-41 map of Isfahan.¹⁸⁰

The Dashtets'is were the first to be evicted. They lived in the quarter of Shamsābād, a suburb close to the palace, desirable on account of its excellent water supply. The ban on wine provided

175 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 433, 436.

176 PNJ, I, 33.

177 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat*, 182.

178 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 67.

179 S. Manrique, *The Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique 1629-1643*, ed. C. Eckford Luard and H. Hosten, 2 vols., Oxford, 1927, II, 360.

180 See map 2.

a pretext for removing the Armenian residents, who were said to be polluting the royal water supply by washing their wine vessels in it. The Dashtets'is were resettled in Julfa and Gabrābād.¹⁸¹ This took place in 1104 Great Armenian Calendar (1655). The following year the other Armenians living in the city were also evicted and forced to resettle on the far side of the river.¹⁸²

These events find surprisingly little reflection in contemporary colophons. One copyist notes that he began his work in Talvaskūn (*T'ōraskan*) near the fort (*Narnghalay*, from Persian *Nārn qal'ah*¹⁸³) and finished in the village of Marṁān (*Marunan*), but does not explain how or why he made the move.¹⁸⁴ Tēr-Yovhaneants' gives the following excerpt from the history of the All Saviour's (Amenap'rkich') church in the Erevan quarter of Julfa:

And he ('Abbās II) gave the command to evict the Armenians from the city and separate us from the Persians, and he gave a suitable place on the Zāyandah River (*Zandaru*) above Julfa on the western side in a place called Marṁān (*Marunan*), in the year of the Armenian calendar 1105 (1656-57). And there we built beautiful houses, vineyards, gardens and orchards ... and founded a church.¹⁸⁵

Julfa now became the place of residence for the entire permanent Christian population of the Safavi capital¹⁸⁶. Only a few West European diplomats, East India Company agents, visiting merchants and missionaries stayed in Isfahan itself. However, the Armenians did not sever their links with the city centre. On the contrary Isfahan remained the principal retail outlet for their woollen cloth and other imports from the Levant. Several European writers, as well as the anonymous Persian description of the caravanserais of Isfahan, note that the Julfa merchants had their warehouses and shops in and around the Jaddah (Grandmother's) Caravanserai, just off the

181 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 435.

182 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 436-440; PNJ, I, 81-83; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, I, 365; Chardin, *Voyages*, VII, 411. Raphaël du Mans mistakenly states that the Armenians were moved out of Gabrābād, whereas this was the quarter where they were resettled (Raphaël, *Estat de la Perse*, 184).

183 I have been unable to find confirmation for this name for Isfahan fort.

184 V. Hakobyan, *Hayerēn dzeragreri 17 dari hishatakaraner*, vol. 3, Erevan, 1984, 902.

185 PNJ, II, 218-219.

186 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 440.

Maydān-i Shāh.¹⁸⁷ Chardin provides the fullest information, stating that in addition to the large Jaddah Caravanserai the Armenians occupied four smaller caravanserais in the vicinity, all known as the "woollen cloth sellers" (*lundra-furūsh*).¹⁸⁸ He also mentions an "Armenians' bazaar" (*bazar d'Aramenē*) in the Nimah-urdah quarter of the city.¹⁸⁹ Some Julfa artisans also worked and sold their manufactures in the city centre. The makers of fur caps, for instance, worked and traded in the Maydān-i Shāh itself.¹⁹⁰

A few years later in 1070/1659-60, 'Abbās II removed the Armenian and Zoroastrian inhabitants of the suburb of Gabrābād or Ḥasanābād to vacate the land for the gardens of Sa'ādātābād.¹⁹¹ These evacuees were also resettled in Julfa, in the quarter known variously as Gabrābād, Sangtarāshhā and K'ōch'er. The *farmān* allocating these lands is preserved in the Julfa Cathedral archive and is given in Armenian translation by Tēr-Yovhaneants'. Two hundred *jarīb* of land in Sirwē (? Sichān) and Marnān were allocated to the Zoroastrians at one and a half *jarīb* per man (i.e. household), and thirty-five *jarīb* were allocated to the Armenians (who were apparently all stonemasons - hence one of the quarter's names). The amount of land distributed to each family is listed, varying from four tenths to three *jarīb*. A further twenty-five *jarīb* were to be kept in reserve for any other Armenians who might need land in the future. This is a particularly interesting document, as it shows that not all the Armenian immigrants in Isfahan remained there voluntarily; the thirty-five *jarīb* given to the stonemasons had originally been allocated to Erevants'is moved out of the city centre, but these had all fled (presumably back to Armenia), leaving the land vacant.¹⁹²

187 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 361-362; Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, II, 115; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 184, 250; *Dar dānistān-i kārvansaray-hā-yi Isfahān*, in Gaube and Wirth, *Der Bazar von Isfahan*.

188 Chardin, *Voyages*, VII, 366-367.

189 Chardin, *Voyages*, VII, 461.

190 R.P. Mathee, "Politics and Trade in Late Safavid Iran: commercial crisis and government reaction under Shah Soleyman (1666-1694)", PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991.

191 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 99-102, 112.

192 PNJ, I, 84-86. Minasean points out several errors in Tēr-Yovhaneants's translation of this *farmān* (L.G. Minasean, *Tsanōt'agrut'iwinner Nor Jughayi patmut'ean A. ew B. hatorneri*, New Julfa, 1980, 18).

The lands granted to the Armenians and Zoroastrians in the reign of 'Abbās II became the quarters of K'ōch'er, T'abriz and Erevan.¹⁹³ The dates for the development of New Julfa's various quarters can be established by referring to the foundation dates of their churches. Carswell's identification of the churches is not always reliable and Karapetian's map likewise contains errors, so it is necessary to identify the churches clearly before their foundation dates can be used as a reliable tool for dating the quarters themselves. The churches are listed below, quarter by quarter (using Tēr-Yovhaneants's quarter names and demarcations)¹⁹⁴.

1. Hin Jughā

a) Surb Georg (St. George). Founded 1060/1611-12. Also known as Khoja Nazar's or the Khoja's church.¹⁹⁵

b) Surb Nazarēt' (Holy Nazareth). Founded 1060/1611-12 or earlier. Also known as the P'ranshini or Norashēn (newly built) church. According to Tēr-Yovhaneants', this was the first church built in New Julfa. The building has disappeared and the Poghoskhanian hospital now stands on its site.¹⁹⁶

c) Surb Yakob (St. James). Founded 1083/1634-5. Also known as the Muradēnts' church and as Khiaray gmbēt' (the cucumber-domed, from P. *khiyār gunbad*¹⁹⁷). Carswell is mistaken in identifying it with the small church adjacent to Surb Astuatsatsin (Holy Mother of God).¹⁹⁸ Both Tēr-Yovhaneants' and the 1829 map indicate that Muradēnts' Surb Yakob stood North of Khiyābān-i Nazar near the river.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, Tēr-Yovhaneants's description of Muradēnts' Surb Yakob bears no resemblance to the humble chapel illustrated by Carswell.

This is one of Julfa's glorious churches, both for its height and for the splendour of its architecture and the embellished and delicate paintings

193 There is no direct evidence for the development of Gask at this time, but if Tēr-Yovhaneants' is correct in stating that the Gaskets' is occupied the same quarter in Isfahan as the Erevants' is, it is reasonable to suppose that they were evacuated to Julfa at the same time.

194 To locate the churches see Map 3.

195 PNJ, II, 155, 179-190, 281; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 37-40.

196 PNJ, II, 154, 157-160, 281; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 11 n. 48; L.G. Minassian, *Guide Book to New Julfa*, fourth edition, New Julfa, 1977, map.

197 PNJ, II, 154, 160-162, 281; Carswell, however, cites C. Minassian that the church known as Khiaray gmbēt' was Surb Nazarēt' (*New Julfa*, 11 n. 48).

198 Carswell, *New Julfa*, 35-36 and fig. 3.

199 PNJ, II, 281; Karapetian, *Isfahan, New Julfa*, fig. 4.

within. It is supported by four pillars, the floor is paved (in 1854 the paving stones were removed and used in paving the All Saviour's Cathedral). Like many of the notable Julfa churches it has an adjoining oratory or summer chapel, where divine service is conducted in summer.²⁰⁰

In addition, the church's nickname, 'cucumber-domed', suggests either an elongated or perhaps a ridged dome. The church described by Carswell possesses neither. This leaves a question mark over the building identified as Muradēnts' Surb Yakob by Carswell and described by him as "reputed the oldest church in Julfa", and dated 1606 (on the basis of an inscription and a stone cross (*khach'k'ar*).²⁰¹ This church or rather chapel can be identified as a different Surb Yakob, which is mentioned by Tēr-Yovhaneants' in his description of the Surb Astuatsatsin.

Beside the north wall of this church (Surb Astuatsatsin) there is a little chapel called Surb Yakob, which was built before the church, at a time when the people were poor. Here they performed their prayers until the construction of Surb Astuatsatsin.²⁰²

d) Surb T'ōmay (St. Thomas). Founded 1140/1691-92. This church was given the nickname Zangov (with a bell, P. *Zang*) not on account of a real bell, but for its metal gong which served the same purpose. No trace of this church remains.²⁰³

e) Surb Yovhannēs (St. John). Founded 1146/1697-98. Also known as Shahvēlēnts'. This church has disappeared.²⁰⁴

f) Surb Hogi (Holy Spirit). No date. The ruins of this church were still standing thirteen years before Tēr-Yovhaneants' was writing, but were then sold and the land given over to agriculture.²⁰⁵

200 PNJ, II, 161-162.

201 Carswell, *New Julfa*, 19, 36, plate 14.

202 PNJ, II, 197.

203 PNJ, II, 154, 162-163, 281; Karapetian, *Isfahan, New Julfa*, fig. 4. Compare the wooden church gong depicted in Carswell, *New Julfa*, plate 35, and Raphaël du Mans's remarks about church gongs in Isfahan (*Estat de la Perse*, 185).

204 PNJ, II, 154, 164-167, 281, where the foundation date of 1146 Greater Armenian Calendar is wrongly converted as 1677 A.D.

205 PNJ, II, 155, 281.

2. Mets Mēydan

a) Amenap'rkich' Vank' (All Saviour's Monastery). Founded 1606 (?), rebuilt between 1104/1655-6 and 1113/1664-65.²⁰⁶

b) Surb Astuatsatsin (Holy Mother of God). Founded 1062/1613-14.²⁰⁷

c) Surb Bet'ghehēm (Holy Bethlehem). Founded 1077/1628-29. Also known as Mēydani Bet'ghehēm. Karapetian's plan, based on the map of 1829, misnames this church Surb Step'anos.²⁰⁸

3. P'ok'r Mēydan (also known as Shirakhanayi poghots', from Persian *shīrah-khānah*, tavern).

a) Surb Lusavorich' (St. [Gregory] the Illuminator). Founded 1633 (?). The earliest inscription recorded by Tēr-Yovhaneants' is dated 1178/1729-30, which he gives as the construction date. However, as the annexe chapel was built in 1163/1714-15, it is likely that the church itself was built even earlier. Carswell suggests, on the basis of gravestones from the 1640's, that it is a seventeenth century church, rebuilt in the eighteenth century. Minasean dates the church to 1633 and names its founder as Khoja Catchick (Khach'ik'), but without citing his sources.²⁰⁹

4. Prtwēnts' or Yakobjanēnts'

a) Surb Step'anos (St. Stephen). Founded 1063/1614-15 or earlier.²¹⁰

206 PNJ, II, 1-2, chapter 1; Y. K'iwrtean, "Nor Jughayi Amenap'erkch'ean Vank'in ekeghets'woyn vormanrankamerē", *Hayrenik'i Amsagir*, Boston, 1939, 1940.

207 PNJ, II, 155, 191-197, 282; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 41-42.

208 PNJ, II, 155, 173-179; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 50-51; Karapetian, *Isfahan, New Julfa*, fig. 4.

209 PNJ, II, 155, 198-199; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 61-62; Minassian, *Guide book*, 17.

210 PNJ, II, 155, 200-203; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 43-45.

5. Ch'arsu

a) Surb Yovhannēs Mkrtych' (St. John the Baptist). Founded 1070/1620-21. This church was originally named Surb Astuatsatsin.²¹¹

b) Surb Katarinē (St. Katherine). Founded 1072/1623-24. The church of the nunnery of the same name.²¹²

6. Gharagēl or Ghēynun

a) Surb Sargis (St. Sargis). Founded not later than 1058(?) / 1609-10. Also known as Ōhanay Vank' (St. John's monastery). Tēr-Yovhaneants's dates this church on the evidence of a colophon which was written "at the door of" Surb Yovhannēs Mkrtych', Surb Hreshtakapet (the Holy Archangel), Surb Yakob and Surb Sargis. If this colophon is to be relied upon, it indicates the existence of two otherwise unknown churches (or church names): Surb Yovhannēs Mkrtych', which cannot be the church in Ch'arsu as that was not founded until 1070/1620-21 and was originally dedicated to the Holy Mother of God, not St. John (see above), and Surb Hreshtakapet. The Surb Yakob must be the one still standing beside Surb Astuatsatsin rather than the Muradēnts' church. Carswell confuses the other Surb Sargis in the Erevan quarter with this older demolished church (see below).²¹³

b) Surb Nikoghayos Hayrapet (St. Nicholas the Patriarch). Founded before 1630 (on the basis of stone crosses.) Formerly dedicated to Surb Astuatsatsin.²¹⁴

c) Surb Anania Aṙak'eal (St. Ananias the Prophet). No date. This church no longer exists.²¹⁵

d) Jezvit' (the Jesuit church). Founded 1652. This church too has disappeared.²¹⁶

211 PNJ, II, 155, 204-207; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 46-47.

212 PNJ, II, 155, 223-227; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 48-49.

213 PNJ, II, 155, 169-173, 282.

214 PNJ, II, 155, 207-209; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 59-60.

215 PNJ, II, 155, 282.

216 PNJ, II, 282; Chardin places the Jesuit church in the Erevan quarter (*Voyages*, VIII, 106-108).

7. Erevan

a) Surb Amenap'rkich' (the All Saviour). Constructed between 1108/1659-1660 and 1118/1669-70. Also known as Surb Sargis. Built by the Erevants' is moved out of Isfahan in the reign of 'Abbās II. This is the church that Carswell identifies as the nearby but now demolished Surb Sargis in the Gharagēl quarter (see above). The description by Tēr-Yovhaneants' states that the Surb Sargis in Erevan quarter was built on four pillars, which fits Carswell's plan. The question of identity is settled beyond doubt by the dedication to Surb Amenap'rkich' reproduced by both Carswell and Tēr-Yovhaneants' in their descriptions of this church. Only the Surb Sargis church in the Erevan quarter was also known as Surb Amenap'rkich'.²¹⁷

b) Surb Yakob Baghat'ay (St. James in the Gardens, doubtless the church of the evacuees from the Bāghāt' suburb of Isfahan). Founded 1115/1666-67. This church no longer exists.²¹⁸

c) Safrazēnts' tnyain ekeghets'i (the Sarfrazean private chapel). No date. Demolished.²¹⁹

8. Dawrēzh (Tabriz), including Dasht.

a) Surb Lusaworich' (St. [Gregory] the Illuminator). Constructed between 1108/1659-60 and 1112/1663-64. Also known as Surb Minas (St. Minas). This church was built by Armenians, natives of Tabriz and Nakhichavān, moved out of Isfahan in the reign of 'Abbās II. One of the donors named on inscriptions in the church, Paron Zēynin, was also the donor of the missal cited above, whose colophon recorded that it was begun in Talvaskūn and completed in Marnān.²²⁰

217 PNJ, II, 155, 218-223; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 52-54. The name given as Sephat'un in Dowsett's transcription should read Alfat'un - Plato via its Arabic form Aflatūn.

218 PNJ, II, 155, 167-169, 281.

219 PNJ, II, 155, 281.

220 PNJ, II, 155, 211-217, 280; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 55-56; Hakobyan, *Hishatakaranner 1641-1660*, 902.

9. K'ōch'er or Sangt'ērash.

a) Surb Aweteats' (after its founder Awetik') or Surb Nersēs (St. Nerses). Founded 1116/1667-68. The house of the Dominican friars used to stand beside this church.²²¹

10. Gask

a) Surb Minas (St. Minas). No date. Demolished.²²²

b) Surb Astuatsatsin (Holy Mother of God). No date. Demolished.²²³

Tēr-Yovhaneants' thus identifies twenty-four churches, which accords with the description of New Julfa by the eighteenth century poet Baghērōghli and with the eighteenth century Carmelite who names twenty-two Julfa churches (in addition to those of the Catholic missionaries).²²⁴ With a few exceptions, these churches can readily be identified on the 1829 map of Julfa (see Map 3).

The foundation dates of the churches establish that the quarters built during New Julfa's initial development were Hin Jugha, Mets Mēydan, Prtwēnts' and Gharagēl - all of which contain churches founded within a decade of 1605. The only question mark is over Gharagēl, for which Tēr-Yovhaneants'' dating of the Surb Sargis church on the basis of a colophon is open to doubt. It is possible that Gharagēl was built some time after the first phase of building, though certainly before 1630. On the basis of church foundation dates, Ch'arsu and Pok'r Mēydan may not have grown up until the 1620's or 1630's but they may have belonged to the original colony as Tēr-Yovhaneants' states²²⁵. The earliest churches in Erevan, Dawrēzh and K'ōch'er all date from the reign of 'Abbās II, after the eviction of the Armenians from Isfahan city. While it has not been possible to establish foundation dates for the churches in Gask, it is likely that this quarter is contemporary with Erevan.

221 PNJ, II, 155, 209-211, 280; Carswell, *New Julfa*, 57-58.

222 PNJ, II, 155, 282.

223 *Ibid.*

224 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 644.

225 PNJ, I, 40.

The phases of construction of New Julfa suggested by church foundation dates are shown in Map 4. It should be borne in mind that P'ok'r Mēydan and Ch'arsu may actually have belonged to the earliest phase of building, and that Gharagēl may *not* have belonged to the initial phase (since the dating of Surb Sargis is dubious). Tēr-Yovhaneants'' quarter divisions do not exactly correspond with those of the 1529 map (on which Map 4 is based). He does not distinguish Ghēynun from Gharagēl, while a number of quarters on the 1829 map are unnamed and contain no datable churches, leaving their construction date uncertain.

Population

Estimates of the population of New Julfa vary. For the period immediately after its founding there is Gouvea's figure of 5,000 people, Iskandar Beg's of 3,000 households, (i.e. roughly 15,000 people) and the Carmelites' 2,000 households (10,000 people). Figueroa reckoned that New Julfa, New Tabriz and the Zoroastrian quarter had 10,000 houses between them²²⁶. In 1628 Herbert reckoned 10,000 people²²⁷ and in 1637 Olearius 3,000 houses, 15,000 people.²²⁸ Five years later, however, the Manrique estimated only 6,000 people.²²⁹ For the second half of the century we have Tavernier's statement that Julfa had grown considerably, "so that it may now pass for a large city",²³⁰ but surely not one of 12,000 houses, as suggested by Step'an Hazarjribs'i.²³¹ In 1664, Daulier-Deslandes imagined Julfa to be "nearly as big as Tours and not unlike it",²³² while one missionary came up with the figure of 50-50,000.²³³ Other writers are more credible: Gabriel de Chinon counted 4,000 houses (a population of about 20,000)²³⁴, but Chardin is more conservative; he reckoned New Julfa the largest suburb on

226 Figueroa, *L'ambassade*, 285.

227 T. Herbert, *Thomas Herbert: Travels in Persia 1627-29*, ed. W. Foster, London, 1928, 137.

228 Olearius, *Neue und warhafftige Beschreibung*, 562.

229 Manrique, *Travels*, II, 360-361.

230 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 373.

231 PNJ, I, 44.

232 A. Daulier-Deslandes, *Les beautés de la Perse*, Paris, 1673, 47-480.

233 Placide Louis de Chemin, Archives Nationales, K1374, no. 31, f. 4.

234 [Gabriel de Chinon,] *Relations nouvelles du Levant...*, Lyon, 1671, 254.

earth, but counted only 3,400-3,500 houses (17-17,500 people).²³⁵ A little later, in 1677, Fryer estimated 6,000 families (30,000 people)²³⁶ and later writers continue the upward trend. Gauderau (1700) put the population at 30-40,000,²³⁷ and Kaempfer (1712) confirms the lower of these figures.²³⁸ De Bruyn, counting the old colony alone (i.e. the quarters built in the early seventeenth century) suggests 2,000 families.²³⁹

All of these figures were based on the personal observations and rough estimates of their authors (if they were not copied from the accounts of earlier travellers), rather than on any systematic count or census. Furthermore, the method of reaching population figures by multiplying the number of houses or households by five is at best only a rough rule of thumb. Nevertheless some of these writers did know Isfahan very well and their careful descriptions of the city (which can be checked against other sources) command respect. Chardin, Gabriel de Chinon, Kaempfer and several of the Carmelites probably deserve greater credence than the others.

On the basis of the estimates and study of the historical development of the colony, reasonable estimates are a population of between 5,000 and 10,000 after the initial foundation, growing to between 10,000 and 15,000 in the second quarter of the century and swelling further to around 20,000 after the foundation of the new quarters in the 1650's. The population appears to have continued to grow, reaching as much as 30,000 by the end of the century - certainly new churches were still being founded at this time. There is no evidence for any significant fall off before the end of Safavi period.

235 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 102, 105. Fryer's editor - Croke, Curzon and Lockhart all suggest that Chardin estimated Julfa's population at 30,000, but I have been unable to trace this figure in the *Voyages* (J. Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia during nine years' travels, 1672-1681*, ed. W. Croke, 3 vols., London, 1909-1915; G.N. Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question*, 2 vols., London, 1966 (first edition 1892), II, 52; L.Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia*, Cambridge, 1958, 477).

236 Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 253.

237 M. Gauderau, *Relation d'une mission faite nouvellement par Monsieur l'Archevesque d'Ancyre à Ispahan en Perse pour le réunion des armeniens à l'Eglise Catholique*, Paris, 1702, 94-97.

238 E. Kaempfer, *Amoenitatum exoticarum politico-physico-mediarum...*, 164.

239 De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 232.

The Character of the Suburb

The picture of New Julfa that emerges from European travellers' descriptions is that of a pleasant leafy suburb with fine houses, set in large gardens. Many praised Julfa's broad straight avenues, lined with plane trees and refreshed by channels of flowing water - a delightful contrast to the narrow, winding alleys of old Isfahan.²⁴⁰ Many commented on the cheerful aspect and gorgeous decoration of the houses and thought them superior to the houses in the city. Gabriel de Chinon even considered Khoja Sarfraz's house to be the most beautiful in Persia, excepting only the royal palace.²⁴¹ Very little of this beauty and splendour survives. Only the churches preserve something of their former glory, while the few remaining Safavi houses, all sadly dilapidated, give no more than a faint echo of their heyday.²⁴²

The Safavi Shahs and New Julfa

Although in theory the status of *zimmis* in Islamic states was established in the *sharī'ah*, the position of the Julfans seems to have depended less on any clearly defined legal basis, than on an apparently *ad hoc* set of arrangements between them and the reigning Shah. These arrangements, though undoubtedly influenced by *sharī'ah* law and established practice, do not appear to have been fixed or permanent, nor do they appear to have been applied outside Julfa, not even among the other Armenian communities of Safavi Iran.

It is surprising to discover that 'Abbās I, generally remembered as the protector of the Christians, was in fact responsible for more instances of anti-Christian persecution than any of his successors.

The contemporary accounts of his treatment of the Armenians present an initially baffling diversity

240 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 102-103; N. Manucci, *Storia do Mogor, or Mogul India 1653-1708*, trans. and ed. W. Irvine, 4 vols., London, 1907 (reprinted Calcutta, 1965-1967), I, 39; Daulier-Deslandes, *Les beautez de la Perse*, 48; J. Struys, *Les voyages de J.S. en Moscovie, en Tartarie, en Perse...*, Amsterdam, 1681, 305; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 373; G.F. Gemelli Careri, *Giro del Mondo*, 6 vols., Naples, 1699, II, 137-138.

241 Fiqueroa, *L'Ambassade*, 195 (?), 285; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 373; Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 562; Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 105; Struys, *Les voyages*, 305; Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 149; Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 269; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, 233.

242 See the plates in Carswell, *New Julfa* and Karapetian, *Isfahan, New Julfa*.

of opinions. While many of the early colophons and some European travellers praise 'Abbās I for his kindness towards the Christians (in spite of his devastation of Armenia and the deportations),²⁴³ the colophons after about 1615 note a change in his behaviour, with mass forced conversions to Islam - of over a thousand people in one instance - and severe persecution.²⁴⁴ The incidences of persecution of Armenians resettled in Iran are described in the primary sources and in several secondary studies.²⁴⁵ Some persecutions undoubtedly had an underlying political motive but others, such as 'Abbās's giving a sword blow to an Armenian youth who refused to convert, cannot be laid down to reasons of state.²⁴⁶ Wilfred Blunt rightly dismisses Pietro Della Valle's apologia for 'Abbās's persecutions as unconvincing.²⁴⁷ Arak'el Davrizhets'i took a wholly negative view of 'Abbās I, dismissing the idea that he was a friend to the Christians on the evidence of his devastation of Armenia and Georgia,²⁴⁸ and the Carmelite Father John Thaddeus (who probably knew 'Abbās better than any other European) was equally sceptical of the Shah's supposed attachment to the Christians: "He is at heart a Muhammedan and all he has done [in favour of the Christians] in the past has been feigned".²⁴⁹

Against the persecution, however, must be set the examples of 'Abbās's justice and generosity towards the Armenians.²⁵⁰ Most significant for this dissertation is the fact that none of the recorded instances of persecution were directed against the Julfans, who enjoyed uninterrupted

243 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 144, 233, 349; Tectander, *Kurze und wahrhaftige Beschreibung*, (37).

244 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 570, 738; Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1621-1640*, 106, 318.

245 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 214-215; Arak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, chapters 13, 14, 27; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 96, 100-101, 125, 129, 163, 205, 255-257, 271; *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā*, (1181-1182); PNJ, chapters 11 and 12; Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 264-266; Gulbenkian, *L'ambassade*, 62-63; Minasean, *Patmut'iwn P'eriyayi hayeri*, chapter 5.

246 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 100.

247 W. Blunt, *Pietro's Pilgrimage*, London, 1953, 155; Della Valle, *Delle conditione*, 53-78.

248 Arak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 132.

249 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 164.

250 Arak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 63, 196-197; PNJ, I, 47-48; Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, I, chapters 13, 15, 20, 22; Della Valle, *Viaggi*, (160 in the Rome 1972, Nuovo Ramusio edition).

protection from 'Abbās. At the time of the persecution of 1621, the Shah even reassured them that they would not be affected by the measures taken against other Armenians.²⁵¹ In the case of the brothers Khoja Safar and Khoja Nazar, the leaders of the Julfa community, 'Abbās' favour extended to making them his intimate companions and close advisors. (According to Gouvea the close relationship between 'Abbās and this family predated the founding of New Julfa and had already existed between the Shah and Khoja Khach'ik', the father of Safar and Nazar and community leader of Old Julfa on the Aras.)²⁵² Safar was the first *kalāntar* of New Julfa and 'Abbās frequently visited him at home in Julfa and invited him and his brother to royal entertainments.²⁵³ Nazar often travelled with the royal camp where he was an effective advocate of Julfan and Armenian interests.²⁵⁴ As far as Julfa is concerned, the reign of 'Abbās I was a happy one. It saw them securely established in their new colony, enjoying numerous privileges and direct royal patronage. Tēr-Yovhaneants's assessment of 'Abbās's treatment of the Armenians seems a fair one. He notes the contradictions between persecutions and beneficence, but points out that 'Abbās's primary concern was to derive the economic benefits to be gained by good treatment of his Armenian subjects. Shrewd politics rather than pro-Christian sentiment may well have been his motive, but for the Julfans at least the results of self-interest were overwhelmingly positive.²⁵⁵

The reign of Shah Şafī presents no similar contradictions. Contemporary accounts agree that, "throughout his reign there was no charge of persecution of Christians raised against him".²⁵⁶ In some respects, he showed himself even more amenable to the wishes of the Julfans than his predecessor, agreeing, for example, to revoke the annual one hundred tuman tax (*muqatta'*) placed on the Catholicosate by 'Abbās.²⁵⁷ Like 'Abbās, Şafī maintained close relations with Khoja

251 Della Valle, *Delle conditione*, 65-66; Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1159.

252 Gouvea, *Relation*, 223-224.

253 Fiqueroa, *L'ambassade*, 287; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, (79); Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 256-260; Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 105-106.

254 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 184-185; PNJ, I, 78.

255 PNJ, I, 73-76.

256 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 314; Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 454-455; Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 105-106; PNJ, I, 80; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 67-68.

257 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 235-236.

Nazar (who had succeeded his brother as *kalāntar* on Safar's death in 1618) and his sons **Sarfraz Beg** and **Eliaz Beg**.²⁵⁸

'Abbās II continued the same policy. He protected the Armenians, though apparently without forming the same personal links as his predecessors.²⁵⁹ The eviction of the Armenians resident in Isfahan city (described above) was carried out with care for the well-being of the transferred population and those evicted soon came to prefer their new quarters.²⁶⁰ It is nowhere held against 'Abbās II as an instance of persecution. Most sources concur that for the Julfans, his reign was a period of uninterrupted security and prosperity, though Aṛakel suggests that because 'Abbās II himself showed no personal interest in the Armenians they began to be victimised by officials.²⁶¹

Royal favour towards the Julfans began to weaken under Shah Sulaymān. Early in his reign, the Julfans were threatened with forced conversion, which they evaded only by payment of a considerable sum of money.²⁶² In 1673, the Carmelite fathers noted with concern that, "Since this king [came to the throne] Persia has become a country where tyranny, opprobrium and persecution is the lot of Christians ... and the political favour which formerly used to attend the Armenians has altogether melted away and disappeared."²⁶³ On one occasion, the Julfans were forbidden to enter Isfahan to sell their wares.²⁶⁴ The Shah himself was not personally responsible for the growing discrimination; Sanson records that Sulaymān disapproved of forced conversion, allowed forced converts to return to their original faith and even annulled the tax debts

258 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaraner 1621-1640*, 428; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 308; Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 533. The latter does, however, record that Eliaz Beg was forced to submit to circumcision after having agreed in jest to convert to Islam.

259 Hakobyan, *Hishatakaraner 1641-1660*, 61, 593; Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, I, 46-48; Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 201-202; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 380; Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, 135-136.

260 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 436-440.

261 PNJ, I, 86; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 68-69.

262 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 520; Hakobyan, *Manr zhamanakagrut'iwnner*, 303.

263 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 406-407.

264 *Ibid.*

of certain poor Armenians to save them from conversion.²⁶⁵ But without positive protection from the court, the Armenians were vulnerable to extortion by lower officials and persecution by Muslim zealots.

Under Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn the situation deteriorated further. The Shah acceded to the demands of the more uncompromising 'ulamā and enacted a series of decrees discriminating against the Armenians and encouraging them to convert to Islam.²⁶⁶ Even the original land grant to the Julfans came under threat from a plan to extend the gardens of Faraḥābād over the site of the Julfa cemetery.²⁶⁷ It is unlikely that Sulṭān Ḥusayn himself was the driving force behind such measures, or that he personally had strong anti-Christian views²⁶⁸ - there are even two *farmāns* from his reign that confirm the Julfans' immunity from outside interference - but the absence of direct royal patronage left the community defenceless. An English East India Company agent wrote:

By what we can understand here ye Armenians are very slaves here and have little or noe admittance at Court, not soe much as with ye great Omras (*umara*) but stand in feare of every ye least officer of ye King's or servant of ye Omras.²⁶⁹

The Julfans' only remaining patron at court was the Shah's grandmother, who had a personal stake in keeping the community prosperous and Christian (see below).²⁷⁰ On one occasion she intervened to prevent forced conversions, on another she obtained the release of an Armenian nun who had been abducted into the royal harem.²⁷¹

265 N. Sanson, *Estat present du royaume de Perse*, Paris, 1694, 10-12.

266 PNJ, I, 203.

267 PNJ, I, 202.

268 Lockhart, *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 76.

269 Minasean, *Divan*, 115-116.

270 India Office, E/3/51/6052, f. 102. Isfahan to Gombroon 5/7/1695. See also J. Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant*, 2 vols., Paris, 1717, II, 318.

271 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 474; According to Lockhart, the patroness of Julfa in the reign of Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn was Maryam Begum, the Shah's great aunt (*Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 48, n.1).

The changing attitude of the shahs towards the Julfa community is shown clearly by comparing descriptions of the annual Armenian Epiphany celebrations over the course of the seventeenth century. The Blessing of the Waters was always celebrated with great pomp and involved processions to the Zāyandah river and prayers, hymns and blessings in the open air. It was the one time in the year when the Armenians put their religion on public display. 'Abbās I used to take a lively interest in the occasion, using it to demonstrate his favour towards the Julfans, encouraging them to celebrate with as much splendour as possible; he himself acted as a kind of master of ceremonies, directing the event from horseback, and afterwards visited the *kalāntar*'s house for further festivities.²⁷² No description survives of Šafī at an Epiphany celebration, but Olearius witnessed the occasion in Shamakha, where it took place in fine style in the presence of the governor, although the Armenian community had given the governor a rich present to pay for an armed guard to protect against abuse from the Muslim spectators.²⁷³ In 'Abbās II's day, the situation was fundamentally unchanged. The Šah accompanied by his courtiers often attended the ceremony and afterwards went on to the house of the New Julfa *kalāntar* for an entertainment.²⁷⁴ In the reign of Sulaymān the royal presence took on a more sinister aspect when in 1683 the Šah abducted a number of Armenian women into his harem after the ceremony.²⁷⁵ The Julfans were also obliged to pay a large sum for the guards who protected them from the Muslim spectators.²⁷⁶ Sulṭān Ḥusayn did not attend the Epiphany celebrations at all and the Julfa *kalāntar* had to request permission to hold the ceremony and pay a fee of two hundred ducats for the privilege.²⁷⁷

272 A. de Gouvea, *Histoire orientale des grans progres de l'Eglise Catholique Apostolique et Romaine en la reduction des anciens Chrestiens...*, trans. J.B. de Glen, Anvers, 1609, 722; Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 83-84; Fiqueroa, *L'ambassade*, 282; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 245; Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 63, 231-232.

273 Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*.

274 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 408-409.

275 G. Goyau, *Un précurseur: François Picquet Consul de Louis XIV en Alep et Evêque de Babylone*, Paris, 1942, 296-297; Hakobyan, *Manr zhamanakagrut'yunner*, 303. A Carmelite's version of the same incident differs considerably from Goyau's (*Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 409-410).

276 Struys, *Les voyages*, 245-246.

277 De Bruyn, *Voyages*, 189-190.

Religious Freedom and Persecution

Religious freedom was vital to the community. It was not only a question of freedom of conscience, but of the Armenians' separate identity. Converts to Islam rapidly shed their own language and culture and merged into the Iranian population. They effectively ceased to be Armenian.²⁷⁸ By the same token Julfa, as a separate and special enclave, was distinguished primarily by the faith of its inhabitants.

'Abbās I allowed the Julfans almost total religious freedom. They were encouraged to build churches and permitted to celebrate their religious services publicly. Muslims were not permitted even to enter Julfa.²⁷⁹ A colophon of 1607 is enthusiastic:

And they (the Armenians) built churches and decorated them magnificently, and the beadle (*zhankots'*) cries out the hours of divine service in a loud voice, just like the Muslims' mullah only more so, and they bury the dead with processional crosses (*khach'alam*) and chasubles (*surtar*) (i.e. with full ceremony), and on the Epiphany of the Saviour they bless the waters in complete freedom, chanting hymns (*sharakan*) with a loud voice as in the time of [St. Gregory] the Illuminator and King T'rdat'. And [at this ceremony] there were more than 100 priests in ceremonial vestments and more than 80 processional crosses lifted aloft in the sight of every nation. And the priests and the princes and the leaders (*iskhanōk'n ew tanutērōk'n*) of the Armenians plunged into the river together to the sound of cymbals and loudly chanting hymns. And of every nation and people there came to see the holy cross and the holy chrism more than 100,000 people, Persians and Franks and Indians and Medes and every other nation, all with one voice praising and blessing Christ our God.²⁸⁰

Almost the only recorded limitation on the Julfans' religious liberty was that they had to use wooden gongs instead of church bells.²⁸¹

Julfa enjoyed fundamental religious liberty throughout the Safavi period. Churches continued to be founded well into the eighteenth century. Even in the reigns of Sulaymān and Sulṭān Ḥusayn²⁸² there was no active religious persecution. The only practical discriminatory

278 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 65-66.

279 *Ibid.*, 63.

280 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaranner 1601-1620*, 259-260.

281 Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 520.

282 PNJ, I, 202-203; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 474.

measures were the institution of monthly proclamations to the Julfans promising rich rewards to any who converted,²⁸³ and the lifting of the ban on Muslims living in Julfa. The latter was not in itself discriminatory but it did make Julfa more vulnerable to interference. It is not clear exactly when the prohibition was lifted; it was still in force in Tavernier and Chardin's day.²⁸⁴ Initially the only Muslims living in Julfa were voluntary converts from the Armenian community or forcibly converted Zoroastrians. The Zoroastrian fire temple became a mosque at the time of their conversion in 1699²⁸⁵ and in 1707 a mosque was built at the western end of Julfa for the Armenian converts.²⁸⁶

There were occasional instances of individual persecution or forced conversion. For example, in 1703 an Armenian servant of the English East India Company was lynched when he refused to apostasise after having had a Muslim beaten up.²⁸⁷ Such incidents were rare, however, and there had been similar cases in the reigns of 'Abbās I and Šafī when Christian "criminals" had been executed after refusing to convert;²⁸⁸ they do not indicate any growing trend of persecution.

The Julfans enjoyed a number of other privileges often denied to *zimmi* subjects of Muslim states. They were exempt from dress restrictions and allowed to ride horses with gold and silver harness in the manner of the Iranian elite. They were also permitted to buy and sell land and property without restriction.²⁸⁹ European visitors, especially those coming from the Ottoman Empire, were struck by the lack of serious discrimination against the Armenians in Iran; they lived almost on a level of equality with the Muslims.²⁹⁰

283 PNJ, I, 203.

284 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 380; Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 115.

285 Lockhart, *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 73.

286 Minasean *Divan*, 115; Karapetian, *Isfahan, New Julfa*, fig. 4.

287 PNJ, I, 210-221; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 242.

288 Della Valle, *Delle conditione*, 63-64; Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 116.

289 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 380; Struys, *Les voyages*, 305.

290 T. Herbert, *A Relation of Some Years Travaile...*, London, 1634, 68; Sanson, *Estat present*, 15.

In the reign of Sulayman these privileges began to be eroded, starting with the ban on Armenians entering the city to sell their goods (presumably because they might defile the Muslims).²⁹¹ Under Sultān Ḥusayn dress restrictions were imposed for the first time (according to De Bruyn Christians were not allowed to wear green), and the Armenians were prohibited from riding in the bazaars or from entering them at all on rainy days (again on the grounds of ritual pollution). They were compelled to collect the corpses of executed criminals - a task unfit for Muslims - and, somewhat obscurely, banned from receiving any payment for the corn for the Shah's birds.²⁹²

If the Julfans were not the victims of any serious systematic persecution during the Safavi period, there was always pressure on them to convert. Incentives included money, status, women or pardon for criminals. The most usual motive for conversion to Islam, however, was the operation of the *shar'ī* law known as the law of Imām Ja'far, by which a convert to Islam (*jadīd al-islām*) was entitled to inherit the whole of all his Christian relatives' property on their deaths. In al-Hilli's *Sharā'i' al-Islām* the principle is clearly stated that if an infidel has both infidel and Muslim heirs, then the Muslims claim the entire inheritance,²⁹³ but the law does not seem to have been in force in Iran until the 1620's. For that decade there are a number of *fatvās* from the *divān al-ṣadārātī* and local *shaykh al-islāms* elucidating its interpretation and application. The later assertion of a Carmelite friar that it was introduced by an edict of 'Abbās I must be understood in light of the fact that this was a *shar'ī* law, so the Shah's edict could only have been an instruction to his officers to enforce it. In the surviving documents the royal *farmān* appears as a confirmation of the *ṣadr's fatvā*. Chardin contradicts the Carmelites' other assertion, that under 'Abbās I the law applied to relatives as far removed as the seventh generation, suggesting instead that 'Abbās prevented the law being interpreted so widely. In c. 1660, according to

291 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 407.

292 PNJ, I, 203; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 227. Compare Daulier-Deslandes, *Les beautés de la Perse*, 50; Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 174-175; Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, I, 14. The *farmān* prohibiting Armenians from going out on rainy days is preserved in the Julfa Cathedral Archive (Minasean, *Divan*, 115).

293 Abū'l-Qāsim Ja'far ibn al-Ḥasan al-Muḥaqqiq al-Hillī, *Sharā'i' al-Islām*, 4 vols., Najaf, 1969 (reprinted Beirut 1983), IV, 12. I am grateful to Dr N. Calder for this reference.

Raphaël du Mans, a convert could claim the inheritance of a relative six generations removed, according to Thévenot only to the fifth generation.²⁹⁴

The *fatvās* published by P'ap'azyan clearly state that a convert takes precedence over all unconverted claimants, though among several converts the normal rules of closeness of kinship apply. Conversion after the death of a relative does not give an heir retroactive inheritance rights.²⁹⁵

The rigorous application of this law in seventeenth century Iran resulted in widespread conversions; if one relative of a wealthy man converted to Islam all the other potential inheritors had to do the same or lose their share of the inheritance.²⁹⁶ Christians were made still more vulnerable by the fact that *shar'ī* courts sometimes accepted fabricated claims of kinship made by converts and supported by false witnesses.²⁹⁷ This seems to have been what happened when two brothers of the wealthy Shahrimeanean family converted in order to protect their inheritance from the false claims of Philippe de Zagly.²⁹⁸ The law also came into force when Armenian women who had been married to Muslims (frequently via the royal harem) were forced to convert and then used by their husbands to lay claim to the property of their Christian relatives.²⁹⁹

294 This and other discriminatory measures are discussed in H.D. P'ap'azyan, "Sefyan Irani asimilyatorakan k'aghak'anut'yan harts'i shurjē", *Banber Matenadarani*, III, 1956, 85-99; P'ap'azyan gives an example of one of these *fatvās*, supported by a royal *farmān*, in his *Persidskie dokumenty Matenadarana, Ukazy, pervyi vypusk 1601-1650*, document 16. See also, M.M. Karapetyan, "Imam Jafari ħrenk'ē ew aṛevelahayerē (XVII-XVIII darer)", PBH, 1988, no. 1, 219-221; Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 265-266; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 288, 366; Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 201; Chardin, *Voyages*, IX, 43; Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 47.

295 P'ap'azyan, "Sefyan Irani", 89, 91.

296 Aṛak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 65-67; Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 292-293; Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 201; Sanson, *Estat present*, 199-200.

297 P'ap'azyan, "Sefyan Irani", 88, citing Zak'aria K'anak'erṭs'i; Goyau, *Vie de Picquet*, 279.

298 R. Gulbenkian, "Philippe de Zagly, marchand arménien de Julfa, et l'établissement du commerce persan en Courlande en 1696", REA, new series, VII, 1970, 361-426.

299 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 28-29, 47 n. 5, citing Pouillet, *Nouvelles relations du Levant*, Paris, 1668, II, 283-285.

This law caused numerous conversions among the Armenians of New Julfa and elsewhere in Iran, but the figure of 50,000 proposed by the Carmelites is certainly inflated (Chardin reckoned the entire Armenian population of Iran at only 80,000).³⁰⁰ Tēr-Yovhaneants' states that the law was more rigorously enforced under Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn than during previous reigns and that this was the reason for the growing number of conversions among the Julfans at this time.³⁰¹

For obvious reasons, the rich were more affected than the poor,³⁰² and many converts were the children of rich Khojas. There were, however, ways of circumventing the law and these were generally connived at by the Safavi government, which was reluctant to see the conversion of their richest subjects, who would then become ineligible for the *jizyah* (poll tax).³⁰³ The law could be evaded either by simply denying the kinship of a converted claimant (whether true or false, such a denial backed up by bribes and witnesses might often persuade the court), or by a legalistic device (*hīlah-yi shar'ī*) which involved fabricating the sale of a person's estate to a (preferably Muslim) third party, who then "resold" it to the original owner's Christian heirs, giving them a deed of purchase (*qabālah*) authenticated by the *qāzī* for the transaction.³⁰⁴ The heirs thus became owners by right of purchase, not through bequest, and were immune from claims by converted kin.

Those who had made an expedient conversion to preserve their inheritance rights often reconverted to Christianity. The government abetted them by allowing converts to revert on the grounds that not all were able to comply with the rigorous demands of Islamic law (prayer, fasting, and so on).³⁰⁵ Those reconverting to Christianity were given a certificate by the *ṣadr* giving them

300 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 288; Chardin, *Voyages*, VI, 152.

301 PNJ, I, 205.

302 P'ap'azyan, "Sefyan Irani", 92-95.

303 Chardin, *Voyages*, IX, 42-45; Sanson, *Estat present*, 199-200.

304 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 47; Chardin, *Voyages*, IX, 43-44; Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 292-294; Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 201; Kaempfer, *Amoenitatum*, 153-154.

305 Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 408-409; Sanson, *Estat present*, 200.

permission to do so. The number of such restored Christians must have been considerable as a separate section of the Julfa cemetery was set aside for them.³⁰⁶

Another area where the Julfans suffered for their religion was in the selection of women for the royal harem. They were not alone in having to tolerate this - all khans were expected to keep an eye open for suitable candidates for the harem, though Georgia and Armenia were the usual sources.³⁰⁷ The Julfans, being Christian, could be abducted without offending Muslim sensibilities and being close at hand in Isfahan could readily be inspected for suitable girls.³⁰⁸ When Sulayman abducted some twenty-five Armenians after the 1683 Epiphany ceremony, however, it was considered excessive, and the missionary Piquet claimed to have secured the restoration of all but four of the victims to their families. (Piquet was told that it was an established custom for the Shah to select four Armenians at Epiphany.)³⁰⁹

The only defence was to marry girls off at an early age, as there was some hesitation about abducting married women.³¹⁰ So, as Fryer puts it, "The next thing after being Baptised is to commit matrimony".³¹¹ Matchmaking began at birth, betrothal at two or three and weddings as early as four or five years old.³¹² Even this was no guarantee of security. On one occasion, 'Abbās I abducted into his harem the wife of an Armenian merchant,³¹³ while 'Abbās II abducted the wife of the Julfa *kalāntar*, Khoja Sarfraz, and returned her to him fifteen

306 PNJ, I, 206.

307 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 27-28; Struys, *Les voyages*, 256; Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 575.

308 Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 536; Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 28; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 500.

309 Goyau, *Un précurseur*, 297. According to Picquet the Shah initially abducted 100 girls, but released 73 almost immediately. Neither the Carmelites nor the Armenian chronicler mentions the subsequent release of most of the girls (*Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 409-410; Hakobyan, *Manr zhamanakagrut'yunner*, 303).

310 Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 664; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 408; Chardin, *Voyages*, II, 69.

311 Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 276.

312 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 410-412; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 236.

313 Blunt, *Pietro's Pilgrimage*, 183.

days later rewarded with a pearl necklace.³¹⁴ The Shahrimeaneans are said to have adopted the more drastic deterrent of scarring the faces of their children.³¹⁵

If the threat of religious discrimination and racial hostility was always present in the background, the Julfans felt quite a different religious threat much more keenly. The bitter conflict between the Gregorian Armenians and the Roman Catholic missionaries and their converts was, in the eyes of both parties, no mere divisive squabble but a matter of supreme importance, and both applied to the Safavi court for support and legislation against the other. The history of the Catholic missions in Isfahan and of their conflict with the Gregorians is relatively well-documented and requires only a brief discussion here.³¹⁶

Until the mid-seventeenth century relations between the Catholics and the Gregorians were generally cordial, or at least tolerant.³¹⁷ There were occasional disputes - but these were not characteristic of the relationship.³¹⁸ The Shahrimeanean family either converted to Catholicism early in the century or (according to some sources) had been Catholics before the Great Deportation. They soon became the missionaries' principal sponsors in Julfa and Isfahan.³¹⁹ Khoja Shahveli Shahrimeanean financed the building of a Catholic church in Isfahan in 1609.³²⁰ Apart from this prominent family, however, the missionaries won few converts in the Safavi period, though they seem to have been more successful later in the eighteenth century.³²¹

314 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 500.

315 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, I, 460.

316 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*; Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*; Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document"; R. Gulbenkian, "The translation of the four Gospels into Persian", *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, XXXVI, 1980, 186-218, 267-288; XXXVIII, 1981, 35-57; *idem*, *L'ambassade en Perse de Luis Pereira de Lacerda...*, Lisbon, 1972.

317 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 317-321.

318 Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 281; Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*, 138.

319 D.M. White, *Zaccaria Seriman 1709-1784 and the Viaggi di Enrico Wanton*, Manchester, 1961, Introduction; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 457, 500, 515, 1078, 1080; Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*, 135; PNJ, I, 110; II, chapter 5.

320 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 191.

321 Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 382, 613; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 381.

But relations began to deteriorate. The enforced conversion to Catholicism of the Armenians of Lvov in the 1630s sent shockwaves through Gregorian communities elsewhere and sowed the seeds of lasting mistrust.³²² Then, from about mid-century, the missionaries in Isfahan began to concentrate their efforts on Julfa (which housed the entire permanent Christian population of Isfahan from 1655-1656), and attempted to establish themselves within the colony.³²³ Their efforts were concentrated on gaining permission at court to build churches and hospices in Julfa, and they achieved some success, particularly with their schools, which were popular with merchants because they taught European languages.³²⁴ They also attempted to exert pressure on the Julfa merchants to convert by urging the Pope to extend trade concessions to Catholic Armenians and to withhold them from Gregorians.³²⁵ The Gregorian clergy worked equally hard at court to keep the Catholics out of Julfa and occasionally succeeded in having their activities banned.³²⁶

The conflict reached a peak in about 1690, when the Gregorian Archbishop Step'annos succeeded in having the Carmelites and some Jesuits expelled from Julfa (he had denounced them at court as foreign spies) and excommunicated the Shahrimeanean family, who at this time were the victims of extortion and a fraudulent court case.³²⁷ Most commentators agree that the most significant effect of the conflict was to weaken the Julfans' position by applications to the court to intervene in Christian affairs, thereby setting a dangerous precedent, and by publicising their internal divisions.

322 Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document"; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 321.

323 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 1072.

324 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 378; Daulier-Deslandes, *Les beautés de la Perse*, 27; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 381.

325 Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*, 138-141.

326 Minasean, *Divan*, 111; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 379-380.

327 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 1078; Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, 135, 136, 139; Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*, 141-142; Gulbenkian, "Philippe de Zagly"; Lockhart, *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 76-77.

Administration of Julfa

The religious freedom enjoyed by the Julfans was matched by a considerable degree of administrative autonomy. In Julfa's government the key figure was the *kalāntar*. His office was somewhat ambiguous, since it involved being the community's representative in all dealings with the Safavi court and authorities as well as the state's agent in the community for revenue collection and the maintenance of public order.³²⁸ This ambiguity extended into the selection of the *kalāntar*, for while it is often asserted that the Julfans enjoyed administrative autonomy and had the right to select their own *kalāntar*³²⁹, the evidence suggests that, while a Julfa notable was always selected for the office, it was the Shah who actually made or ratified the appointment.³³⁰ Although the Julfans put forward their candidate for the Shah's approval, there was no question of any right to appoint a candidate of whom the Shah did not approve. Gabriel de Chinon relates an interesting case which illustrates the process. When Khoja Nazar died (1636), he was succeeded by his son Sarfraz, who set about ruling the community in the same high-handed manner as his father. The Julfans were no longer willing to tolerate this and, emboldened by the fact that Sarfraz did not have such close royal patronage as Nazar, they put forward a rival candidate. The latter, by bribery, succeeded in having Sarfraz dismissed and gained office, but only lasted two years before being replaced again by Sarfraz. The Julfa notables did, however, manage to curb his authority by using the *dārūghah*'s lieutenant as a counterbalance. They also strove to weaken Sarfraz's links with the Shah which, as Gabriel remarks, may have restricted the power of their *kalāntar*, but also left the community weaker and with less royal patronage and therefore more vulnerable to interference.³³¹

328 A.K.S. Lambton, "The office of kalantar under the Safavids and Afshars", in *Mélanges d'orientalisme offerts à Henri Massé*, Tehran, 1963, 206-207.

329 Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 1120; Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*, 19; Gregorian, "Minorities of Isfahan: the Armenian community", 665.

330 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 380; Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 217; Struys, *Les voyages*, 305, 309; Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, II, 139. All the above state that the *kalāntar* was appointed by the Shah. Only Fryer insists that the Armenian elected their own leader (*A New Account*, II, 258).

331 Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 266.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, there was also a strong hereditary principle at work in the selection of the *kalāntar*. The first three were Safar (son of Khach'ik, the head of the community in Old Julfa), his brother Nazar and Nazar's son, Sarfraz - a direct line from father to son to second son to grandson.³³² The Julfans themselves do not seem to have used the Persian term *kalāntar* at all at first, preferring other titles: *k'alak'apet* (town leader), *arajnard* (marmnavor bani) director (for matters temporal or corporeal), *zolvrdapet* (community leader) are all encountered, but most frequent is the title *iskhan* (prince/noble/leader).³³³ The connotations of *iskhan* in seventeenth century Julfa may not have been as regal as in English "prince", but Khoja Sarfraz's epitaph - *Hayots' T'agavor* (King of the Armenians) - leaves no room for doubt that the Julfans certainly looked on their *kalāntar* as something more than a cross between an official and mayor.³³⁴ There was no fixed term of office, but while Safar, Nazar and Sarfraz all died in office, later *kalāntars* came and went in fairly rapid succession.³³⁵

We have seen above that the *kalāntar* was responsible for dividing up land allocated to the community among individual families and this is typical of his intermediary role between state and community. From Gabriel de Chinon's account of the Julfans' resentment of Khoja Sarfraz's excessive power, it is clear that the limits of the *kalāntar*'s authority were elastic. One important function was to distribute the tax burden within the community.³³⁶ In this and other matters he was assisted by the *kadkhudās*, or chiefs of wards or quarters.³³⁷ No less important was the *kalāntar*'s role in representing the community to the court and central government. A *farmān* of 1094/1683 is addressed in response to a petition from the *kalāntar*, *kadkhudāyān* and *ru'āyā* (populace of Julfa).³³⁸

332 Compare Lambton: "The *kalāntar* was frequently chosen from the local inhabitants and there was a strong hereditary tendency in the office" ("The office of Kalantar", 208-209).

333 Stodart calls Khoja Nazar "the Armenian Prince" (*The Journal of Robert Stodart...*, ed. E. Denison Ross, London, 1935, 71).

334 PNJ, I, 91.

335 NJHV, 29 and n. 26.

336 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 380; Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, II, 139.

337 According to Khach'ikyan there were twenty of these (NJHV, 26-28, 42-46).

338 H. Busse, *Untersuchungen zum islamischen Kanzleiwesen*, Cairo, 1959, 212.

The only other important officials in Julfa's administration were the *dārūghah*³³⁹ and a *vazīr*, described by Chardin as "gouverneur particulier" (special governor) and "receveur" (collector) respectively.³⁴⁰ These were invariably Muslim officials of the state bureaucracy. Most other travellers do not mention the *vazīr* at all and describe the functions of the *kalāntar* and *dārūghah* as "civil judge" and "criminal judge",³⁴¹ or "civil magistrate" and "governor" - the latter only being called on when the community refused to submit to the arbitration of the former.³⁴² According to Gabriel de Chinon the *dārūghah* settled court cases but did not actually reside in Julfa, and everything else was in the hands of the *kalāntar*.³⁴³ De Bruyn also describes the interaction of local and central government:

They (the Julfans) have their own *kalāntar* or burgo-master, and their *Betgoedaes* (*kadkhudās*) or chiefs of districts, who are judges to decide in all common cases, but those of importance are reserved for the King or the council of state, and afterward put into execution by the burgo-master and chiefs of districts.³⁴⁴

Generally, the Julfans were left to run their own affairs under the direction of the *kalāntar*, who acted as general community leader and arbitrator; but there was nothing to prevent the Shah or his officials from intervening whenever they saw fit. This appears to fall short of the autonomy often claimed for the Julfans, but in practice there was little interference in Julfan affairs by the state. It was only during the reign of Sulṭān Ḥusayn, when royal patronage evaporated, that state officials and other outsiders began to meddle to any considerable extent in the internal affairs of Julfa.³⁴⁵

339 [Mirza Sami'a], *Tadhkirat al-mulūk. A manual of Safavid administration*, trans. and ed. V. Minorsky, London, 1943 (reprinted Cambridge 1980), 141.

340 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 114.

341 Fiqueroa, *L'ambassade*, 286; Thévenot also describes the *dārūghah* as the judge for criminal cases (*Voyages*, II, 217).

342 Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 258.

343 Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 255.

344 De Bruyn, *Voyages*, 232.

345 PNJ, I, 204-205.

Fiscal status of Julfa

Julfa's tax status, like other aspects of the colony's administration and relations with the Safavi state, was anomalous. As Christians the Julfans were liable to pay the *jizya*, yet this poll tax was not actually assessed on a *per capita* basis; instead, Julfa was taxed as a community for a single lump sum, which was then divided out among the community by the *katāntar* and *kadkhudā* with a concern for means that impressed Chardin.³⁴⁶

Shah 'Abbās I's original grant to the Julfans ordered the state (*dīvān*) officials to remove Julfa from their records; this means that Julfa was *khāṣṣah* land and that all taxes were paid direct to the royal treasury. As was usual Safavi practice, the taxes levied on Julfa were ear-marked for the stipend of a member of the Safavi hierarchy - in Julfa's case, the recipient was the Shah's mother or grandmother.³⁴⁷ She therefore became the patron and protector of the colony.³⁴⁸ This unfamiliar arrangement confused some Europeans, who decided that the Queen Mother must be the owner of Julfa,³⁴⁹ but there is no evidence to suggest that Julfa was anything other than normal *khāṣṣah* land, owned by the reigning Shah, the *navvāb-i 'ālī*, as De Bruyn correctly notes (though he misunderstands the meaning of the term). It is a curious fact that Old Julfa too had been *khāṣṣah*³⁵⁰ and that under Ottoman rule the taxes raised were likewise assigned for the stipend of the Sultan's mother.³⁵¹

The fiscal status of the later additions to Julfa is not so easy to establish. From Tēr-Yovhaneants's translation of the *farmān* of 1046/1637 (cited above), it appears that part of the land granted is to be *khāṣṣah* and out of bounds to the state tax collectors, while another section is to be taxed by them at the normal (?) rates.³⁵² De Bruyn states that the new quarters were under the

346 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 115.

347 Chardin, *Voyages*, VII, 315; VIII, 114; X, 160.

348 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 464; Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 258.

349 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 474; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 232.

350 Alishan, *Sisakan*, 411.

351 Gouvea, *Relation*, 223.

352 PNJ, I, 85-86.

naqqāshī-bāshī (chief of the king's painters). As this officer was a part of the *khāṣṣah* establishment,³⁵³ this would suggest that the new quarters too were *khāṣṣah*.

The level of taxation depended primarily on the indulgence or avarice of the ruling Shah. 'Abbās I is said to have set a low rate of half the amount the Julfans had paid to the Ottomans.³⁵⁴ During his reign, the total annual tax, according to Chardin, was 9,000 francs (200 tumans),³⁵⁵ but on another occasion 'Abbās accepted a "gift" from the Julfans of one and a half times that amount,³⁵⁶ while a *farmān* of 1030/1620-1 records a payment of 1,237 tumans tax.³⁵⁷ Under Saḫī (still according to Chardin), the sum rose to 13,000 francs (289 tumans), then again to 2,000 pistoles (533 tumans), and by the time of Chardin's first visit to Iran in 1665, to 5,000 pistoles (1,333 tumans). After that the levying of taxes became both exorbitant and unpredictable, until "[the] Julfans are now (i.e. in the reign of Sulayman) loaded with impositions, so that they are sometimes forced to pay as much as 50,000 *écus*, (3,333 tumans) all at once".³⁵⁸ Against these extravagant rises it should be remembered that Julfa had grown and prospered remarkably in the intervening sixty years and would no doubt have been assessed for more on a *per capita jīzah*.

Elsewhere, however, Chardin states that the Julfans had an agreement with the King to pay 400 tumans per annum, on the basis of which they were exempt from all other taxes and impositions,³⁵⁹ and other sources confirm that Julfa's tax assessment was fixed. Thévenot and Gabriel de Chinon (c.1660) agree that the basic tax levied was five hundred tumans per annum, plus fifty tumans as a fee for the *dārūghah*³⁶⁰. These figures are confirmed in a number of *farmāns*,³⁶¹ one of which (dated 1094/1683) specifies the Julfans' annual tax as 580 tumans,

353 *Tadhkirat al-mulūk*, 100.

354 Arak'el, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, 63; Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 254.

355 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 114.

356 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, (437-438 in the Rome 1972 Nuovo Ramusio edition).

357 Minasean, *Divan*, 107.

358 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 114.

359 Chardin, *Voyages*, X, 14,j

360 Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 217; Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations nouvelles*, 254.

361 Minasean, *Divan*, 111, 112, 114.

which included the *jizyah-yi muqatta'ī*, the fees of the vazir and *dārūghah* (*rasm al vazārah va rasm-i dārūghahī*), though it does not appear to include several other levies mentioned later in the document: the wine tax (*raskārtī*), the new-year gift (*pīshkash-i nawrūzī*), the head tax and hearth tax (*sar-shumār va khānah-shumār*), and other charges and imposts (*sāyir-i ikhrājāt va 'avāriẓāt-i mamlakatī bih har ism u rasm*). The purpose of this *farmān* was to establish the share to be paid by the wealthy Shahrimeanean family (presumably the matter called for royal decision as they had refused to accept the arbitration of the *kalāntar*). The amount stipulated for Khoja Sarhad and his sons is thirty-five tumans, which would have been a trifle to a family in which each of the three sons had a personal fortune of 400,000-500,000 livres (roughly 10,000 tumans³⁶²). Hitherto, the Shahrimeaneans had paid only 19,318 *dīnārs* (less than two tumans) in annual tax.³⁶³

As long as taxation remained at this level and was properly collected it cannot have been a very heavy burden for so wealthy a community. A *farmān* of 1073/1662-3 authorising a tax rebate to the Julfans of 21 *riāls* 920 *dīnārs* suggests that there was some possibility of redress if excessive taxes were levied.³⁶⁴ On the other hand the vazir Sarū Taqī was accused by his enemies of levying ten times the annual tax on Julfa in a period of only five months.³⁶⁵

A growing number of extra charges, taxes and fines were levied from the beginning of Sulayman's reign. Minasean in a brief description of the contents of several *farmāns* mentions several unspecified tax payments,³⁶⁶ and at the start of the reign, the Julfans were forced to pay a sum given variously as 4,000 or 15,000 tumans.³⁶⁷ In 1678 another several hundred tumans had to be found to buy off another threat of persecution. Kaempfer states that the Armenians paid two hundred tumans annually for their religious freedom while De Bruyn relates that they had to give two hundred ducats (25 tumans) for the privilege of celebrating Epiphany and that on one occasion

362 Chardin, *Voyages*, (volume and page reference misplaced).

363 Busse, *Untersuchungen*, 212-213.

364 Minasean, *Divan*, 112.

365 Chardin, *Voyages*, VII, 315.

366 Minasean, *Divan*, 113-116.

367 Hakobyan, *Manr zhamanakagrut'yunner*, 303; Chardin, *Voyages*, X, 20; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 520.

they were forced to contribute three hundred tumans towards the cost of the Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn's latest garden.³⁶⁸ The *Dastūr al-mulūk* indicates that Julfa provided fifty tumans for the *in'ām-i hamah sālah* of the *amīr shikār bāshī*,³⁶⁹ and Gemelli Careri records a fine of 550 tumans levied on a single merchant.³⁷⁰

In 1673 a new annual tax of 424 tumans on the Armenian churches in Julfa and elsewhere in Isfahan province was introduced at the instigation of an embittered Armenian cleric who converted to Islam. This was officially revoked by Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn in 1111/1699-1700, but by that time it had taken root in the books and minds of the collectors and persisted, in spite of three further *farmāns* annulling the tax. Effective revocation was obtained only from Ashraf. By this time, however, the Armenian churches were 1,120 tumans in debt, with most of their property mortgaged and many of their gold and silver ornaments sold.³⁷¹

Such unpredictable and onerous charges were a heavy burden on the community and formed a real threat to security. A *farmān* of 1125/1713-4 states that many are fleeing the country in order to escape the tax collectors - this is given as one reason for abolishing the tax on the Julfa churches.³⁷² By this stage, however, Sulṭān Ḥusayn's administration was incapable of controlling the activities of its own officers.

The Decline and Abandonment of New Julfa

The first indications that Julfa's prosperity was in decline came as early as the middle of the seventeenth century. Raphaël du Mans believed that the Julfans had reached the pinnacle of their

368 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 408; Kaempfer, *Amoenitatum*, 164; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 190, 214.

369 M.T. Dānishpazhūh, "Dastūr al-mulūk-i Mīrzā Rafī'ā va tazkirat al-mulūk-i Mīrzā Samī'ā", *Majallah-yi Dānishkadah-yi Adabiyāt va 'Ulūm-i Insānī-yi Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān*, XI/1-2, 1347-8 (1968-9), 89.

370 Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, II, 106-107.

371 PNJ, II, chapter 3. See also Minasean, *Divan*, 113-116; Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 119; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 407.

372 PNJ, II, 245.

success under Shah 'Abbās I and had been in slow decline ever since,³⁷³ and Chardin (who like Raphaël firmly believed that the whole Safavi state had been declining from 'Abbās I's death onwards) considered that in the reign of Shah Sulayman Julfa had greatly fallen from its former wealth and size.³⁷⁴

It is difficult to assess the accuracy of these gloomy observations. There was certainly some deterioration in the second half, or last third, of the seventeenth century. International merchants were adversely affected by the gradual breakdown of internal security and the road-guard (*rahdārī*) system that had once been the admiration of European commentators.³⁷⁵ In the 1660s and 1670s the low level of Iranian tolls and the security of the roads still impressed most travellers;³⁷⁶ during their negotiations with the Russian government in Moscow the Julfa Armenians themselves contrasted the Iranian system with the high tolls and poor security of travel in Russia,³⁷⁷ but others noted that travel was less safe than they had been led to expect, or that the *rahdārs* now concentrated on extorting money from travellers rather than on pursuing thieves.³⁷⁸ There were several spectacular caravan robberies in the reigns of 'Abbās II and Sulayman, in which Julfa merchants suffered heavy losses.³⁷⁹

Extortion by local officials increased as central authority weakened.³⁸⁰ On the other hand, the relaxation of central control also increased merchants' opportunities to evade tolls and duties, while corrupt local officials could often be bribed to overlook or undervalue goods at the customs

373 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 183.

374 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 105-106, 115.

375 J. Emerson and W. Floor, "Rahdars and their tolls in Safavid and Afsharid Iran", *JESHO*, XXX, 318-327; V.H. P'ap'azyan, "Aḡvtrakan chanaparhneri pashtpanut'yunē Sefyan petut'yunum XVII darum", PBH, 1986, no. 4, 156-162.

376 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 246; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 534-535; Daulier-Deslandes, *Les beautés de la Perse*, 7; Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 430; IV, 123-125; Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 205.

377 V.A. Parsamyan (ed.), *Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke. Sbornik dokumentov*, Erevan, 1953, 73.

378 Chardin, *Voyages*, VI, 126-127; VIII, 194-195; Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, 183; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 214; II, 260.

379 Chardin, *Voyages*, II, 124, 347-350; Mathee, "Politics and trade", 134; Emerson and Floor, "Rahdars", 323.

380 Mathee, "Politics and Trade", 205, 338, 361, 367; Emerson and Floor, "Rahdars", 323.

houses.³⁸¹ As conditions in Iran in general, and Bandar 'Abbās in particular, became more difficult, the Julfans increasingly channelled their trade with India through Basra.³⁸²

On the basis of the available evidence it is unclear whether the robberies and petty tyrannies of local officials were symptomatic of a general failure in the system that was already seriously affecting the viability and profitability of long-distance trade, or whether these were isolated incidents, damaging for the merchants directly involved, but not seriously destroying business confidence or the conduct of trade in the long term.

In any case, the severity of the breakdown of the system in the late seventeenth century should not be exaggerated. Even in the early eighteenth century there were still some positive comments on the costs and security of travel in Iran.³⁸³ Long-distance trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries involved high risks and costs wherever and however pursued, and the Julfans were accustomed to the bandits of the Ottoman roads and to Mediterranean, Caspian and Indian Ocean pirates. There is no reason to suppose that the deterioration in Iranian conditions would have made a sudden decisive difference.

On balance there is little evidence that Julfa's economic basis was seriously undermined until the turn of the eighteenth century at the earliest. In about 1700 the colony still won the admiration of travellers for its wealth and thriving population.³⁸⁴ Tēr-Yovhaneants' considered the reign of Shah Sulṭān Husayn to mark the start of real decline: extortion by officials and litigation by Armenian converts to Islam then began seriously to threaten the wealth of the major merchants, leading to the start of large-scale emigration.³⁸⁵ He maintains, nevertheless, that trade in

381 Matthee, "Politics and Trade", 241-244, 375-376.

382 *Ibid.*, 243.

383 J. Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant*, Paris, 3 vols., 1717, II, 303; De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 210; F.I. Soimonov, *Opisanie Kaspiiskago Morya i chinennykh na onom rossiiskikh zavoevanii*, Saint Petersburg, 1763, 190.

384 Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, II, 139; Lockhart, *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 484, citing Gauderau, *Relation*, II, 94, 97.

385 PNJ, I, 185-186, 292-293.

general continued to flourish, the problems being confined to Julfa in particular, and having little effect on their overseas trading activities.³⁸⁶

The Afghan invasion, the siege of Isfahan and the collapse of the Safavi government represented a crisis on quite a different scale from the difficulties of the last decades of Safavi rule. The accounts of the Afghan capture of Julfa on 20th March 1722 at the start of the siege of Isfahan differ in detail but agree on most points of significance. Julfa was not defended by the Iranian army and the Armenians had earlier been disarmed (according to Krusinski because the Iranian commanders were afraid they might join forces with the invaders - a telling comment on the alienation of the Julfans from the Safavi elite and majority Muslim population - and also because they hoped the Afghans would be satisfied with plundering Julfa and would then return home).³⁸⁷ According to some sources the Julfans nevertheless resisted the attack,³⁸⁸ while others hold that the suburb was taken without a struggle.³⁸⁹

The Afghans forced the Julfans to pay a heavy fine (70,000 tumans according to most sources), and abducted some fifty women, most of whom were later allowed to return to their families. A number of the prominent citizens were executed when the fine was not paid in full, and the suburb was partially plundered to raise the money, though pillage was not unrestrained.³⁹⁰

According to one contemporary Armenian source, used by Tēr-Yovhaneants', the Julfans themselves opened negotiations with Maḥmūd at his camp in Farrahābād, and they certainly escaped more lightly than the Isfahanis (not least because they escaped the famine of the siege);

386 PNJ, I, 207.

387 J.T. Krusinski, *The History of the Late Revolutions in Persia*, 2nd edition, London, 1740 (reprinted New York 1973), 103-104; Petros di Sarkis Gilanentz, *The Chronicle of P. di S. G.*, trans. and ed. C.O. Minasian, Lisbon, 1959, 5-6; Lockhart, *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 150-151.

388 Krusinski, *loc. cit.*; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, I, 574; Lockhart, *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 151.

389 Petros di Sarkis Gilanentz, *loc. cit.*

390 Krusinski, *loc. cit.*; Petros di Sarkis Gilanentz, 11-13, 35-39, 42; Hakobyan, *Manr zhamanakagrut'yunner*, 431; PNJ, I, 229-231; Lockhart, *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 152-153; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 574.

this aroused the hatred of many Iranians, who suspected them of collaboration.³⁹¹ While there is no foundation for this belief, the Julfans did manage rapidly to establish a *modus vivendi* with the invaders and were treated more favourably than the Iranian *shī'īs*.³⁹² Even so, many Julfans emigrated following the invasion, and trade was brought to a temporary standstill.³⁹³

Under Ashraf, trade picked up again, though extortion and oppression continued. The Julfans' traditional links with the court elite were partially restored and Emmanuel Shahrimean was a member of Ashraf's 1725 embassy to Istanbul. Edicts were published confirming the Armenians' right to settle their own law suits and abolishing the tax on the Julfa churches.³⁹⁴

Surprising though it may seem, Julfa and its trade weathered the storm of the Afghan invasion and the following twenty years of instability remarkably well. Many of the documents in the British Library and Venice Archivio di Stato collections date from this period, and show that Julfa was still functioning as the centre of the extensive Armenian trade network (though how significant Iranian commodities and markets were to Julfan trade by this time is uncertain).

The reports of missionaries confirm that the colony was still populous and that as many churches were working as in any previous period. For Catholics this was actually an easier time than the late Safavi period, because the opposition of the Gregorians had waned or become ineffectual.³⁹⁵ The oppression of the Afghans was to pale into insignificance by comparison with the reign of Nādir Shah.³⁹⁶

Julfa's demise as a major commercial centre came not in the 1720s with the political collapse of the Safavi state, but in the years after 1745, when Nādir Shah's ruinous taxation and tyranny

391 PNJ, I, 227-228, 231, 234, 240.

392 Krusinski, *The History*, 137; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 588-589.

393 Petros di Sarkis Gilanentz, 67-68; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 583, 618.

394 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, I, 580, 588; PNJ, I, 243; II, 249-251.

395 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 613, 639, 642, 644.

396 PNJ, I, 185-186; L.H. Babayan, *Drvagner Hayastani XIV-XVIII dareri patmut'yan*, Erevan, 1984, 193, citing Khach'atur Jughayets'i.

devastated the economy and society in much of Iran.³⁹⁷ While the level of taxation was high throughout Nādir's reign,³⁹⁸ it was the two periods of his residence in Isfahan (December to January 1745/6 and the same period the following year) that caused most damage to the Armenian suburb along with the rest of Isfahan. Armenian and missionary sources give harrowing descriptions of the month of house to house searches, beatings and torture that the Shah's officers inflicted on the civilian population on both occasions.³⁹⁹

During Nādir's first visit as much as 60,500 tumans were levied in Julfa, 23,500 tumans of which came from ten leading families.⁴⁰⁰ On the second occasion Julfa paid 30,000 tumans, one tenth of the total raised in Isfahan.⁴⁰¹ The Shah's officers, abetted by the *kalāntar* Sargis,⁴⁰² collected as much as one and a half times the official levy, forcing people to sell for a pittance their valuables and even their children to meet the demands.⁴⁰³

During Nādir's second visit the tyranny was even more extreme, the Shah's worst excess being the public burning alive in the Maydān-i Shāh of eight merchants - two Armenians, two Zoroastrians and four Jews. The two Armenians were both in their sixties, and members of two of Julfa's most prominent families: Ēmniāz Khoja Minasean and Yarut'iwn Shahrimanean. Petros Shahrimanean was bastinadoed to within an inch of his life before escaping into hiding, but his brother Lēo died soon after from shock and fear.⁴⁰⁴

397 M.R. Arunova and K.Z. Ashrafyan, *Gosudarstvo Nadir-Shā'kha Afshara: ocherki obshchestvennykh otnoshenii v Irane 30-40 godov XVIII veka*, Moscow, 1958, chapter 6.

398 PNJ, I, 250.

399 PNJ, I, 250-270; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 649-654. Joseph Emin is alone in his positive assessment of Nādir Shah's treatment of the Julfans - probably because of Emin's own dislike of them and his admiration for Nādir's military prowess (J. Emin, *The Life and Adventures...*, London, 1792 [reprinted Calcutta, 1918 and n.d.] p. 12).

400 PNJ, I, 250-252.

401 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 650-651.

402 According to Tēr-Yovhaneants', Sargis was *kalāntar* from 1739-1752, when the Julfans finally managed to depose him. He willingly participated in the plunder and oppression of the population, and grew rich in the process (PNJ, I, chapter 41). It is hard to square Tēr-Yovhaneants' dates with the Carmelite's statement that Nādir ordered the execution of both the governor of Isfahan and the *kalāntar* of Julfa in December 1745.

403 PNJ, I, 250-252, 306-397; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 650, 653.

404 PNJ, I, 256-257; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 651-652.

This act horrified the Muslim and Christian populations alike and threw the Julfans into panic, especially when Nādir threatened to put the whole community to the sword and to treat the Julfans more harshly on his next visit.⁴⁰⁵ These events were decisive in persuading many to leave Julfa permanently. After Nādir's first visit many children were sent out to safety, but parents had not been allowed to leave.⁴⁰⁶ Emigration was achieved in secret, by night or under the pretext of pilgrimage.⁴⁰⁷ Merchants fled South and West to Basra and Baghdad, via Hamadān or Būshahr. The major family firms set up new centres of operations in those countries where they had the strongest commercial interests, mostly India, Iraq and Russia.⁴⁰⁸

Even after Nādir's assassination Isfahan and Julfa continued to suffer for several years, until Karīm Khan Zand succeeded in establishing secure rule. Āzād Khan's collectors used great oppression in attempting to extract the 8,000 tumans demanded in 1753, but the assessment was eventually reduced to 6,000 tumans on the Julfans' plea that they were unable to pay the full amount. In 1756 Ḥasan Khan also demanded 8,000 tumans, again inflicting terrible violence on the population in trying to raise the sum, although the inhabitants pleaded that they were destitute and that their homes and property were already mortgaged.⁴⁰⁹ Famine also struck in 1756, lasting seven months and killing 2,000 in Isfahan and 500 in Julfa.⁴¹⁰

The fact that in the 1750s the collectors were unable to raise 8,000 tumans in Julfa, whereas the Afghans had collected 70,000 tumans in 1722, and Nādir Shah 60,000 tumans in winter 1745/6 and a further 30,000 tumans only a year later, shows how sudden and complete Julfa's decline had been.

Karīm Khan's reign provided a respite after a decade of continual violence, but for Julfa it was already too late. All the wealthy merchants had already left, and though Armenian sources

405 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 652-653.

406 *Ibid.*, 649-650.

407 PNJ, I, 293-295.

408 PNJ, I, 293-295, 315; NJHV, 114.

409 PNJ, I, 286-289; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 656-662.

410 PNJ, I, 290.

acknowledge Karīm Khan's justice, the merchants could not be induced to return to a country which had caused them so much harm, and in whose political stability they had no faith.⁴¹¹

In 1769 a missionary in Julfa wrote: "Here the townfolk are poor and wretched both in numbers and in worldly goods",⁴¹² and a census taken by Archbishop Mkrtych' in 1770 recorded a population of just 1,667 (though this probably refers to households rather than individuals).⁴¹³ As a result of emigration and the forced sale of property to meet tax demands Julfa's exclusively Armenian character was lost, and in the later eighteenth century a considerable part of the population was Muslim.⁴¹⁴

After one and a half centuries of commercial success New Julfa ceased to be a centre of international trade. Julfa survived, and survives to this day, but for the merchants the future lay elsewhere. Tēr-Yovhaneants' publishes a number of letters from this period. All lament the sufferings of the people, the destitution of the once flourishing suburb and the separation from family members left behind.⁴¹⁵ One of these letters, dated 1753 and written by three brothers of the Khoja Minasean family in Basra to their mother and sisters in New Julfa, gives the reasons for the brothers' refusal to return to Iran.

With what heart and what hope could we return to that country, where every year and every month there is a new king ... It must be obvious to all of you that that country does us no good. What became of the Khaldareans ... the Shahrīmancans, Salenjeans ... (there follows a list of some twenty merchant families) ... Not one of them is left.⁴¹⁶

The fall of Julfa was a consequence not of commercial failure, but of the complete breakdown of security of person and property in Iran, particularly in Isfahan and Julfa.

411 PNJ, I, 311-312, 316; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 662-663; J.R. Pery, *Karim Khan Zand. A history of Iran 1747-1779*, Chicago, 1979.

412 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 669, see also 1085.

413 PNJ, I, 315.

414 PNJ, I, 356.

415 PNJ, I, 295-303.

416 PNJ, I, 295-298.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TRADE NETWORK OF THE JULFA MERCHANTS

This chapter will trace the development of the commercial network of the Julfa merchants, a development which brought them from obscurity until the mid-sixteenth century to become, within a few decades, one of the most widespread and conspicuously successful merchant communities of Asia. The focus of attention will be on the extension of the Julfan network through much of the Old World and on identifying the circuits of trade which determined the direction of their commercial expansion. Routes, communications and commodities are an essential part of this discussion, but they will not be treated in great detail; the time scale (c.1550-c.1750) and geographical extent of the Julfan network preclude detailed treatment here. In any case, research on the account books of individual merchants has shown how much information there is to be treated and assimilated on the small-scale before the broader picture begins to take shape.¹

The sources for this subject are both numerous and disparate; they include physical monuments to Julfan overseas trade (usually in the shape of churches and gravestones), official records of the host societies, individual community histories, European travel literature and company archives, contemporary Armenian documents and letters. Although there are a number of previous studies on the subject, these generally treat the Julfan trade network in the context of Armenian diaspora history; it is therefore important to stress at the outset that the subject under discussion here is not the whole Armenian diaspora of the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, but only the trade diaspora of the Julfans.² Although the two can be difficult to disentangle (mainly because non-

1 HTD; L.S. Khachikian, "The ledger of the merchant Hovhannes Joughayetsi", *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, VIII/3, Calcutta, 1966, 153-186; See also Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, "Shahvelu vordi Sarhadi hashvematanê vorses hay-rusakan itesakan kaperi skzbnaghbyur", PBH, 1978, no. 2, 93-108. Several other account books await investigation.

2 On the Armenian diaspora see: A. Alpaychean, *Patmut' iwn hay gaght' akanut' ean*, 2 vols., Cairo, 1941-1955; A.G. Abrahamyan, *Hamaṛot urvagits hay gaghtavayreri patmut'yan*, 2 vols., Erevan, 1964; HZhP, IV; *Histoire des arméniens*, ed. G. Dédéyan, Paris, 1982, chapter 10. On the Julfan trade diaspora, see also: Gh.M. Alishan, *Sisakan*, Venice, 1893, 409-428; V.A. Baiburtyan, *Armianskaya koloniya Novoi Dzhul'fy v XVII veke*, Erevan, 1969; J. Carswell, "The Armenians and East-West trade through Persia in the XVIIth century", in *Sociétés et compagnies*

Julfan Armenians were also active in long-distance trade and because Julfa itself was a heterogeneous community, incorporating Armenians from many different towns and districts), there is nevertheless a real distinction between the diaspora colonies of deportees and emigrants from war-torn Armenia (New Julfa itself originating in this way) and the communities which originated as commercial outposts. For this reason the Armenians of Poland and the Ukraine will not be discussed here, since there is no evidence to suggest that they were closely integrated into the Julfan network, though they had extensive long-distance trading activities of their own.³ Similarly only those Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire which had a significant Julfan element or connection will be discussed.

Iranian Raw Silk and the Westward Circuit of Julfan Trade

It has been suggested that Julfa's commercial expansion began in the fifteenth century,⁴ but there is no firm evidence of extensive Julfan involvement in long-distance trade until the mid-sixteenth century. The first period of Julfan commercial growth was based entirely on the export trade in Iranian raw silk, so some information on the silk trade is an essential background to the history of Julfan trade.

de commerce en Orient et dans l'Océan Indien, ed. M. Mollat, Paris, 1970, 481-486; B.C. Colless, "The traders of the pearl", *Abr Nahrain*, IX, 1969-1970, 33-34; X, 1970-1971, 116; XI, 1971, 15-16; XIV, 1973-1974, 7-11; XV, 1974-1975, 11-14; K. Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens au XVII^e siècle", *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, XVI/2, 1975, 199-144; M. Aghassian and K. Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien dans l'Océan Indien aux 17^e et 18^e siècles", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, eds. D. Lombard and J. Aubin, Paris, 1988, 155-181.

³ Y. Dachkévytch, "L'établissement des arméniens en Ukraine pendant les XI^e-XVIII^e siècles", REA, new series, V, 1968, 327-367; *idem.*, "Les arméniens à Kiev (de la deuxième moitié du XIII^e au XVIII^e siècle)", in *In Memoriam Haïg Berberian*, ed. D. Kouymjian, Lisbon, 1986, 185-214; N.K. Krivonos, *Armyanskaya koloniya vo L'vove v pervoi polovine XVIII v.*, L'vov, 1965; E. Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews in medieval Lvov. Their role in oriental trade 1400-1600", *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, XX, 1979, 345-388; M. Szuppe, "Un marchand du roi de Pologne en Perse, 1601-1602", *Moyen Orient et Océan Indien XVI^e-XIX^e siècles*, III, 1986, 81-110.

⁴ Alishan, *Sisakan*, 410.

Sericulture was probably established in Iran around the sixth century A.D., and from then on supplied Iran's own requirements for raw silk.⁵ The white mulberry flourishes throughout most of Iran to an altitude of 1,900 metres, but the climate of the Caspian provinces, notably Gilan, is particularly favourable to rearing silk worms.⁶ Unlike most other branches of Iranian agricultural production, sericulture seems to have suffered comparatively little from the Mongol invasion and to have expanded continuously thereafter until the end of the seventeenth century.⁷ Raw silk became an increasingly important export, feeding the growing industries in the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe.

Regular trade in Iranian raw silk to Europe had begun as early as the twelfth century with the establishment of a significant silk textile industry in central Italy. Lucca, for example, the first important Italian centre, depended on the Levant for most of its raw silk supply. Although silk was produced in Europe, in southern Italy, Sicily and Spain, the quantities were never sufficient to meet demand,⁸ so Levant silks always supplied a large part of the needs of the Italian looms.⁹ The varieties bought by European merchants came predominantly from the provinces to the South and West of the Caspian Sea:¹⁰ from Gīlān, *ghella* and *leggi* (silk from Lāhijān); from Māzandarān, *masandroni* and *amoli* (from Āmul); from Gurgān, *strava* (from Astarābād); from Tālish, *talani*; from Shīrvān, *ardas* (from Aras or Aresh),¹¹ *mamodea* (from Mahmūdābād, a

5 Eilers, Bazin, Bromberger, Thompson, "Abrišam" in *Encyclopedia Iranica*; I.P. Petrushevskii, *Zemledelie i agrarnye otosheniya v Irane XIII-XIV vekov*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1960, 164-172.

6 F.D. Lafont and H.L. Rabino, *L'industrie séricole en Perse*, Montpellier, 1910, 39, 68.

7 Petrushevskii, *Zemledelie*, 171.

8 F. Edler de Roover, "Lucchese silks", *CIBA Review*, VII/80, 1950, 2907-2909. Gilan silk is mentioned in a Genoese document of 1274 (P. Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo*, 8 vols, Paris, 1959, II, 734).

9 G.R.B. Richards, *Florentine Merchants in the Age of the Medici*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1932, 44.

10 The information on the different varieties of silk is drawn mainly from W. Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au Moyen Age*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1923, II, 670-674; and Petrushevskii, *Zemledelie*, 167.

11 The connection between the town of Aras and the variety of silk known to Europeans as *ardass* is not made in any contemporary source, but the country around Aras certainly produced raw silk: V. d'Alessandri, in *A Narrative of Italian Travels in Persia in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, trans. and ed. C. Grey, London, 1873, 222; A. Jenkinson, in *Early Voyages and Travels to Russia and Persia*, eds. E.D. Morgan and C.H. Coote, 2 vols, London, 1886, I, 136. Morgan and Coote are mistaken in suggesting that Aras is the same place as Ganjah (*ibid.*, n. 3, 389 n. 1).

port at the mouth of the river Kür^a,¹² *siechi* (from Shakkī), and from Shamakha; from Karabagh, *ganjia* (from Ganjah), and *canarese* (from Kanara ?);¹³ and from Georgia. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the silks of Gīlān, Shirvan and Karabagh are mentioned most frequently.

None of these provinces had easy access to the Mediterranean, and over the centuries a succession of routes was taken to overcome geographical and political obstacles. In Marco Polo's time the Genoese, from their outposts in the Crimea and Tana, were navigating the Caspian to trade with Gilan,¹⁴ while in the early fourteenth century Pegolotti's merchant handbook gave advice on the routes to the silk and spice markets of Tabriz by way of Ayas (Lajazzo) in Cilician Armenia, or Trebizond.¹⁵ One hundred years later Clavijo found Genoese and Venetian merchants buying Gīlān and Shamakha silk in Sultaniyyah,¹⁶ and for most of the fifteenth century Ottoman Bursa and later Syria were the principal centres for European merchants buying Iranian raw silk.¹⁷

It was an important town on the river Turianchay (a tributary of the Kura), close to the present-day villages of Khalad and Agdash (S.B. Ashurbeili, *Gosudarstvo Shirvanshakhov*, Baku, 1983, 285); M.Kh. Geiderov, *Goroda i gorodskoe remeslo Azerbaïdzhana XIII-XVII vekov*, Baku, 1982, 108 and n. 45, 119. Cartwright describes two separate towns, Eres and Aras, but in all probability he found the two names on Ortelius's atlas, which has both Erex and Arast. The mistake probably arises from Ortelius's failure to show the confluence of the rivers Kura and Aras, so both Aras and Maḥmūdābād are duplicated, and shown on both rivers (J. Cartwright, *The Preacher's Travels*, London, 1611, 41; A. Ortelius, *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, Antwerp, 1570, map 49). It is likely that Cartwright fabricated the whole of his itinerary in Shirvan, since it is not mentioned by his travelling companion, Mildenhall (B. Penrose, *Urbane Travellers*, Philadelphia, 1942, 44).

¹² See previous note.

¹³ The anonymous Venetian merchant mentions "a large fortress named Canar, subject to which are many villages famous for the production of silk" (*A Narrative of Italian Travels*, 203). I have been unable to confirm this information, unless Canar is the same place as the Kenderah which Evliya Çelebi describes as an Armenian village on the opposite bank of the River Kura from the Muslim village of Mekuchurūd, which is famous for its silk (*Seyahatnāme*, ed. A. Cevdet, 10 vols., Istanbul, 1314, II, 287). Alternatively the name *canarese* could simply be derived from Persian *kinār*, edge or bank; meaning silk grown on the bank of the Kura river.

¹⁴ M. Polo, *The Description of the World*, eds. A.C. Moule and P. Pelliot, 2 vols., London-New York, 1976, I, 99.

¹⁵ F.B. Pegolotti, *Pratica della mercatura*, ed. A. Evans, Cambridge (Mass.), 1936, 28-29.

¹⁶ R.G. de Clavijo, *Narrative of the Embassy of R.G. de C. to the court of Timour at Samarcand AD 1403-1406*, trans. and ed. C.R. Markham, London, 1659, 93.

¹⁷ H. Inalcik, "Bursa" and "Haḥīr" in EI²; E. Ashtar, "The economic decline of the Middle East during the later Middle Ages", *Asian and African Studies*, XV, 1981, 266-269.

The sixteenth century marked a new stage in the history of the Levant silk trade. Europe enjoyed a period of vigorous economic development and a richer Europe demanded more luxuries: more spices and more silks.¹⁸ The demand grew as wealth permeated down the social scale and more people could afford silks. Fashion also played a part as lighter silk fabrics began to replace the sumptuous stuffs typical of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁹

At the same time the silk industry itself was becoming more capitalistic, as the spread of the putting-out system encouraged more economical production and greater responsiveness to the market.²⁰ The rate of growth is difficult to quantify; there are few statistics and the new mobility among both artisans and entrepreneurs led to the rapid rise and fall of manufacturing centres.²¹ Italy was still most important in the sixteenth century, but silk manufacture was also established in France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and England.²² The expansion of European silk manufacture stimulated interest in sericulture, and individuals and governments strove to produce their own raw material supplies for the fast-growing industry. These efforts, however, did not end the dependence on imports from the Levant.

Europe of course had always been hungry for Eastern luxuries, but with few commodities of her own that were in demand in the East, had to rely on exports of gold and silver to supplement the woollen textiles, metals and armaments that were her only exportable products. In this respect also the sixteenth century saw dramatic developments. Woollen textiles from Italy, Flanders, England and France had been exported to the Levant on a limited scale since the early Middle Ages, but

18 F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. S. Reynolds, 2 vols., London, 1972, II, 893; F.C. Lane, "The Mediterranean spice trade: its revival in the sixteenth century", in *Venice and History*, Baltimore, 1966, 31 and n. 28.

19 F. Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism 15th to 18th Century*, trans. S. Reynolds, 3 vols., London-New York, 1982, II, 178; D. Sella, "European industries, 1500-1700", in *The Fontana Economic History of Europe. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, ed. C.M. Cipolla, Glasgow, 1974, 375-376.

20 Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, I, 430-432.

21 *Ibid.*, I, 433-435.

22 Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, I, 430-432; *idem.*, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 312-313; Sella, "European industries", 375.

the volume of exports now increased rapidly.²³ The Venetians and Florentines made considerable cloth sales in Syria and Istanbul from the second half of the fifteenth century, by which time Italian silk textiles, as well as woollens, were as good as or better than Middle Eastern manufactures.²⁴ European textiles penetrated as far as Iran, Central Asia,²⁵ and even India, where the Portuguese pioneers of the Cape route found Luccan fabrics for sale in the bazaars of Calicut.²⁶ Europe's flourishing textile industry acted as a double stimulus to trade in that it both produced goods for export and created demand for more textile raw materials from the Levant.

But even with this increase in textile exports, the historic trade deficit with the Levant could only be balanced by exporting gold and silver, and in this respect the opening of the New World mines was the decisive factor in increasing Europe's capacity for international trade.²⁷ As far as the export of silver to the Levant is concerned, the great increase in the production of the American silver mines in the second half of the sixteenth century and the turning of the flow of that silver away from a Spain-Antwerp axis towards a Spain-Italy axis was crucial.

After 1580 the true centre of distribution of Spanish silver ... was Italy and her city states. From this position Italy derived much benefit, her responsibility being to export to the Levant (and this was both easy and profitable) some of her surplus Spanish silver ...²⁸

The close connection between the increasing flow of silver from Europe to the Levant and the volume of Iranian raw silk exports to the West was already apparent in 1574 when a commentator

23 Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant*, II, 706-707; E. Ashtor, *The Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton, 1983, 442-443.

24 E. Ashtor, "The economic decline", 273-275; *idem.*, *The Levant Trade*, 461-462; M.E. Mallett, *The Florentine Galleys in the Fifteenth Century*, Oxford, 1967, 122-123; W. Endrei, "La transformation de la soie, vue à travers une série d'esquisses du XVI^e siècle", in *Méthodologie de l'histoire et des sciences humaines. Mélanges en l'honneur de Fernand Braudel*, Toulouse, 1973, 217.

25 *Early Voyages and Travels to Russia and Persia*, II, 396; R. Hakluyt, *The Principall Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, 12 vols., Glasgow, 1903-1905, II, 473, 478; III, 137.

26 Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant*, II, 709-710.

27 Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, I, 184-185.

28 *Ibid.*, I, 491-496.

noted that: "There is brought into Persia an incredible summe of Dutch dollars, which for the most part are there imployed in raw silk".²⁹

Raw silk was not the only commodity in the Levant trade: Europe also bought oriental spices from Aleppo and Alexandria. After the discovery of the Cape route, changes in the spice trade also had important repercussions on the trade in silk. The opening of the Cape spice route partially diverted supplies away from the Levant, making prices in Europe harder for Levant merchants to predict. In these circumstances traders looked for an alternative import and found one in raw silk. Spices did not actually disappear from European Levant imports until the early seventeenth century, when the Dutch broke into the ocean trade, but in the closing years of the sixteenth century the substitution of silk for spices was already an important factor. In 1599 an English Levant merchant wrote from Aleppo:

There will go good store of all commodities upon her (the ship Hector) but especially indigo and silk; all men having advice chiefly of these commodities, being fearful of spices by reason of the Flemings' discovery in the East Indies.³⁰

The sixteenth century, particularly the last three decades, saw a considerable increase in West European interest in the Levant silk trade and a significant development of Europe's ability to finance an increased trade with the East. The impact of these developments on the Ottoman economy has generated considerable scholarly interest, and in the case of the silk trade it has been convincingly argued that increased silk purchases by Europeans put a damaging squeeze on Ottoman silk manufacturers.³¹

The most important Levant *entrepot* for Iranian raw silk exports to Europe in this period was Aleppo, which grew rapidly. After it was sacked by the Mongols in 1260 the city had been through a long period of decline, from which it began to recover only in the second half of the

29 G. Duckett in Hackluyt, *The Principall Navigations*, III, 161.

30 E. Southeren in J. Sanderson, *The Travels of J.S. in the Levant 1584-1602*, ed. W. Foster, London, 1931, 189. See also P.R. Harris, "An Aleppo merchant's letterbook", *British Museum Quarterly*, XXII, 1960, 66-67.

31 M. Çizakça, "Price history and the Bursa silk industry: a study in Ottoman industrial decline, 1550-1650", *Journal of Economic History*, XL/3, 1980, 533-550 (also published in *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, ed. H. İslamoğlu-İnan, Cambridge, 1987, 247-261).

fifteenth century.³² By the 1470's Venetian envoys to the court of Uzun Hasan Aq-quyunlu were remarking that Aleppo (like Bursa) had benefited from Astrakhan's demise: "For, before it was destroyed by Tamerlano the spices and silk that now pass through Soria came to Cithercan",³³ and: "A great quantity of silk passes through [Tabriz] in caravans, bound for Aleppo",³⁴ statements borne out by Ashtor's studies of Venetian trade in Syria.³⁵

It was not until the sixteenth century, however, that Aleppo became the single preeminent centre. The causes of this rise are obscure, though in 1514 Aleppo (then still in Mamlūk hands) must have benefited at Bursa's expense when Selim I's embargo on trade with Safavi Iran forced merchants to circumvent Ottoman territory.³⁶ It was, however, only after the Ottoman conquest of Syria in 1516 that Aleppo developed rapidly as a major centre in the Ottoman internal communications network and a western terminus for goods entering the Empire, not only from Iran, but also from India via either Hormuz, Basra and Baghdad, or the annual Hajj caravan from the Hijaz.³⁷ By the middle of the century silk no less than spices drew Venetian merchants there,³⁸ and at the end of the century consul Malipiero reported that Aleppo's trade was as great as that of any city in Europe,³⁹ and by 1600 Aleppo's dominance in the silk trade was complete.⁴⁰

In the 1560s and 1570s the English Russia Company organised a number of voyages to Iran across Russia and the Caspian, in the hope of diverting a part of the silk trade along that route, but their

32 H. Gaube and E. Wirth, *Aleppo*, Wiesbaden, 1984, 55.

33 J. Barbaro, *Travels to Tana and Persia*, trans. W. Thomas and S.A. Roy, ed. Lord Stanley of Alderly, London, 1873, 31.

34 A. Contarini, in *ibid.*, 127.

35 Ashtor, "The economic decline", 265-267.

36 J.-L. Baqué-Grammont, "Études Turco-safavides, I. Notes sur le blocus du commerce iranien par Selim I", *Turcica*, VI, 1975, 75-76; H. İnalçık, "Harir", in *EI*²; M. Çizakça, "A short history of the Bursa silk industry (1500-1900)", *JESHO*, XXIII/1-2, 1980, 142-152.

37 Gaube and Wirth, *Aleppo*, 238-239 and fig. 65; B. Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: mercantilism and the Islamic economy in Aleppo, 1600-1700*, New York, 1988, 11-18.

38 U. Tucci (ed.), *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien, Andrea Berengo (1553-1556)*, Paris, 1957, editor's introduction, 11; G. Berchet, *Relazione dei consoli veneti nella Siria*, Turin, 1866, 19.

39 Berchet, *Relazione*, 79-80.

40 N. Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, Chicago-London, 1973, 160.

efforts were frustrated by over-extended communications, a shortage of ready money, the political turmoil in Iran following Tahmāsp I's death and the opposition of the established silk merchants.⁴¹ After this abortive initiative the northern transit route to Iran remained closed until the last third of the seventeenth century, in spite of numerous efforts by West European merchants and governments to have it reopened.⁴²

There were important developments in the silk trade in the first decades of the seventeenth century. At the European end Venice's virtual monopoly broke down and thereafter merchants from France, England and the Netherlands all competed in the markets of the Ottoman Empire, while Marseille, London, Amsterdam and Livorno challenged Venice for the import of Iranian raw silk.⁴³

There were developments in the Levant also. Aleppo faced competition from a hitherto insignificant port - Izmir, which first emerged as an outlet for Iranian raw silk exports in the early seventeenth century. Steensgaard places the rise of Izmir in the 1620s, when we find the first definite records of silk exports,⁴⁴ but it is possible that it went back further, since in 1609 Simeon Lehats'i described Izmir as a large harbour (*skalay*) with numerous European merchants, and ships from distant ports, including Venice. This makes one wonder whether silk was already being traded through Izmir at this time.⁴⁵ Lithgow, who visited the port in 1614, lists silk first

41 T.S. Willan, *The Early History of the Russia Company 1553-1603*, Manchester, 1956, *passim*.

42 E.S. Zevakin, "Persidskii vopros v russko-evropeiskikh otnosheniyakh XVII veka", *Istoricheskie Zapiski*, 1940, no. 8, 129-162.

43 On the Levant trade in the early seventeenth century, see: Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*; L. Bergasse and G. Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, IV, Paris, 1954; P. Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVII^e siècle*, Paris, 1896; A.C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, London, 1935; R. Davis, "England and the Mediterranean 1570-1670", in *Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor England in Honour of R.H. Tawney*, ed. F.J. Fisher, Cambridge, 1961, 117-137; *idem.*, "English imports from the Middle East 1580-1780", in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, ed. M.A. Cook, London, 1970; K. Heeringa, *Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis van ven Levantschen Handel (1590-1826)*, 4 vols. in 6, The Hague, 1910-1966; A.H. de Groot, *The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic. A history of the earliest diplomatic relations 1610-1630*, Leiden-Istanbul, 1978.

44 Steensgaard, *Asian Trade Revolution*, 186.

45 *Ughegrut' iwn, tarngrut' iwn ew yishatakarank'*, ed. N. Akinean, Vienna, 1936, 37.

among the commodities traded through Izmir.⁴⁶ From the mid-1620s Izmir's rise was meteoric, so that by about 1650 it had become the single most important port in the Levant trade, a position it maintained for the rest of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth in spite of the devastating earthquake of 1688.⁴⁷ The trade in Iranian raw silk was the most important branch of international commerce at Izmir, and though Goffman attributes the port's growth more to local products and trade, it was primarily silk that attracted Armenian and European long-distance merchants. Izmir's rise did not, however, lead to the complete eclipse of Aleppo, and the Syrian city maintained its position as an important, if not the leading, centre in the silk trade.⁴⁸

The other significant developments in the silk trade at this time were in Iran. 'Abbās I took a keen interest in the trade, both as a source of income (which prompted him to make the trade a royal monopoly in 1619), and as an economic weapon against the Ottomans (which stimulated his interest in proposals to divert the trade to the Persian Gulf and Cape of Good Hope route).⁴⁹ The possibility of diverting Iran's raw silk export to the Cape route excited serious interest in the

46 W. Lithgow, *The Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures and Painefull Peregrinations of Long Nineteene Yeares Travayles from Scotland to the Most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Africa*, 1632 (reprinted Glasgow, 1906 and London, 1974 as *The Rare Adventures...*, ed. G. Phelps), cited in D. Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550-1650*, Seattle-London, 1990, 51-52.

47 Goffman, *Izmir*; N. Ülker, "The Rise of Izmir, 1688-1740", PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1974, 70-71; S. Anderson, *An English Consul in Turkey. Paul Rycaut at Smyrna, 1667-1678*, Oxford, 1989; Masson, *Histoire (XVII^e siècle)*, 416; *idem.*, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, 1911, 520-521, 552; de Groot, *The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic*, 218; G.R. Bosscha-Erdbrink, *At the Threshold of Felicity: Ottoman Dutch relations during the embassy of Cornelius Calkoen at the Sublime Port 1726-1744*, Ankara, 1975, 16, 33.

48 W. Aigen, *Sieben Jahre in Aleppo, 1656-1663*, (an extract from the *Reiss-Beschreibung*) ed. A. Tietze, Vienna, 1980, 79-80; C. De Bruyn, *Voyage au Levant*, Delft, 1700, 333; [A. Justice,] *A General Discourse of Commerce*, 3 parts, London, 1707, 107. Davis believes Aleppo always to have been the most important centre for the English Levant trade, and even states that Izmir was only a minor outlet for raw silk (R. Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square. English traders in the Levant in the eighteenth century*, London, 1967, 36-37, 138 n. 2). This is contradicted by numerous sources. See note 48 above, and J. Chardin, *Voyages de Chardin*, ed. L. Langlès, 10 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1811, I, 8, 15; J. Savary, *Le parfait négociant*, 3 parts in 2 vols., Paris, 1742-1749; vol. 1 part 2, 398.

49 Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 211 f.; R. Ferrier in CHI, VI, 439 f.; L.K. Steinmann, "Shah 'Abbās I and the Royal Silk Trade 1599-1629", PhD dissertation, New York University, 1986; *idem.*, "Shah 'Abbās and the royal silk trade 1599-1629", *BSMES Bulletin*, XIV, 1987, 68-74.

English and Dutch East India Companies for about two decades (1620-1650), but they never achieved the hoped-for monopoly and later in the century exported only insignificant quantities. The English Company showed renewed interest in the 1680s and 1690s, but without significant results.⁵⁰

Later in the century, following the conclusion of commercial agreements between the Julfa merchants and the Russian government in 1667, 1673 and 1676, the Levant route faced a different challenge: from the transit route via the waterways of Russia and the White or Baltic Sea.⁵¹ The Russian route began to carry considerable quantities of silk in the 1690s, when Mediterranean navigation was disrupted by the war between France and the Netherlands, and when Russia obtained direct access to the Baltic, thereby gaining an easier and more direct route to Amsterdam than that through Archangel.

Estimating the actual quantities of raw silk exported from Iran to Europe in the Safavi period is extremely difficult owing to the fragmentary and often unreliable nature of the available sources. Though the totals suggested by many contemporary commentators are wildly exaggerated, silk exports were, nevertheless, on a very significant scale, and grew rapidly during the Safavi period. In about 1500 the trade cannot have amounted to more than a few tens of thousands of kilograms of silk per year, but by 1600 it was probably in excess of 200,000 kilograms. By the end of the Safavi period it had risen further, possibly to around 500,000 kilograms. For most of the seventeenth century the Levant route carried the great majority of the exports to Europe, but in the 1620s and 1630s the Gulf route took a significant share, possibly as much as fifty per cent in

50 R.W. Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company in Persia in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century", *Economic History Review*, second series, XXVI/1, 1973, 38-62.

51 V.A. Parsamyan (ed.), *Armenyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke. Sbornik dokumentov*. Erevan, 1953, editor's introduction and *passim*.; N.G. Kukanova, *Ocherki po istorii russko-iranskikh torgovykh otnoshenii v XVII-pervoi polovine XIX veka*, Saransk, 1977, chapter 2; V.A. Baiburtyan, *Armenyanskaya koloniya Novoi Dzhul'fy v XVII veke*, Erevan, 1969, chapter 3; NJHV, 15-65; K. Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens au XVII^e siècle. A propos d'un livre arménien publié à Amsterdam en 1699", *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, XVI/2, 1975, 199-244; R. Gulbenkian, "Philippe de Zagly, marchand arménien de Julfa, et l'établissement du commerce persan en Courlande en 1696", REA, new series, VII, 1970, 361-426.

some years, while the Russian route emerged as a viable alternative in the late seventeenth century and carried increasing quantities of silk⁵².

Clearly any merchant who could secure a share of this flourishing trade in a profitable commodity stood to do very well. Indeed it was involvement in and eventual domination of Iran's raw silk export trade that was the basis of the Julfa Armenians' commercial success.

The Julfans and the Silk Trade

Until the sixteenth century the Armenians were not prominent among merchants trading silk between Iran and the Levant; it was in the second half of the century that they steadily expanded their share of the trade.⁵³ In the 1560s to 1580s the agents of the English Russia Company encountered many Armenian as well as Turkish merchants in Shīrvān, Karabagh and Gilān buying silk to trade for European cloth with the Venetians in Aleppo. D'Alessandri discussed trade with Armenian merchants in Tabriz in 1571.⁵⁴ Among them the Julfans formed the most important group. By 1570 they were already taking a leading role in the trade with Aleppo; as another Russia Company agent noted, "one village of Armenia named Gilgat (Julfa ?) doth carie yeerely five hundred, and sometime a thousand mules laden with silke to Halepo in Soria".⁵⁵ In Europe Julfa suddenly became famous, appearing on Ortelius's atlas of 1570 as Chinla⁵⁶ and attracting the notice of passing travellers. In 1581 Newbery visited the town, and in 1600 Cartwright and Mildenhall.⁵⁷ In 1581 an English merchant in Aleppo was well aware of the Julfans' special role as silk importers, describing them as, "a people rather given to the traffique of silkes".⁵⁸

52 The quantitative question is discussed in detail in E.M. Herzig, "The volume of Iranian raw silk exports to Europe in the Safavi period", *Iranian Studies*, 1991, forthcoming. For a more general treatment of the subject see *idem.*, "The Iranian raw silk trade and European manufacture in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries", *Journal of European Economic History*, XIX/1, 1990, 73-89.

53 İnalçık "Hārī" in EI².

54 D'Alessandri, 225.

55 A. Edwards, in *Early Voyages in Russia and Persia*, 396-397, 410; L. Chapman, in Hackluyt, *The Principall Navigations*, III, 147-148.

56 Ortelius, *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, map 49.

57 J. Newbery, in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous*, VIII, 468; Cartwright, *The Preacher's Travels*, 35.

58 W. Biddulph, in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous*, VIII, 274-275.

According to one European observer the Julfans were already in complete control of the silk trade by the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁵⁹

At about the same time there was a considerable influx of Julfans to Aleppo. They dominated the Armenian community there; nineteen out of twenty-seven dated pre-1604 tombstones in the Armenian cemetery mark the graves of Julfans.⁶⁰ They usually traded their silk with the Venetians in Aleppo and then returned home, but already in the sixteenth century some travelled on to Venice and soon became an important element in the already well-established Armenian community.⁶¹ The earliest Venetian notarial reference to a Julfan is in 1570 and Julfans crop up frequently thereafter; in at least one instance a Julfan is identified as a silk merchant.⁶²

The Julfans' growing participation in the silk trade in the sixteenth century can be attributed largely to those changes in the nature of the trade itself outlined above. As increasing quantities of raw silk were sold to Christian European merchants in Aleppo, rather than to the Muslim manufacturers of Bursa, the Armenians were able to expand their share of the trade through their role as intermediaries between Christian Europe and the Islamic Middle East.⁶³ It is also likely that the Armenians, as a neutral party, benefited from the heightened hostility between *sunni* Turkey and *shī'ī* Iran, and from the official sanctions periodically imposed by the Ottoman government on Iranian merchants.⁶⁴ A third contributing factor may have been the Julfans' success in establishing links with the Safavi shahs and political elite. This relationship will be

59 A. de Gouvea, *Relation des grandes guerres et victoires obtenues par le Roy de Perse...*, trans. A. de Meneses, Rouen, 1646, 465.

60 A. Siwrmēan, *Patmut' iwn Halēpi azgayin gerezmanatants' ew ardzanagir hayerēn tapanak' arern*, Aleppo, 1935, 12-13, 25; A.K. Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Dominion*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1965, 46-48.

61 Gh.M. Alishan, *Hay-Venet*, Venice, 1896, 23f.; G. Berchet, *La Repubblica di Venezia e la Persia*, Turin, 1865, 62; G. Gianighian, "L'ospizio della nation armena a San Zulian, Venezia", *Atti del Terzo Simposio Internazionale di Arte Armena - 1981*; Venice, 1984, 211-225.

62 Alishan, *Hay-Venet*, 368-380, 430-431, 464-465. The Archivio di Stato in Venice contains a number of wills made by Armenian merchants.

63 İnalçık, "Haḫīr".

64 J.-L. Baqué-Grammont, "Notes sur le blocus"; *idem.*, "Notes sur une saisie de soies d'Iran en 1518", *Turcica*, VIII/2, 1976, 237-253.

discussed in Chapter 3, but there is some evidence that in the late sixteenth century the Julfans were already acting as royal silk sales agents and emissaries to Europe.

In the seventeenth century the Julfans' strong position in the silk trade was further reinforced as European demand for Iranian raw silk continued to grow and as they cemented their special relationship with the Safavi court. 'Abbās I adopted the Julfans as his particular agents for royal trade and diplomacy in Western Europe. They thus became direct beneficiaries of the increased royal involvement in the silk trade and of the royal silk monopoly. From the early seventeenth century until the end of the Safavi period the Julfa merchants enjoyed a virtual monopoly in Iran's silk export to Europe.⁶⁵ There were also Muslim Iranian and Turkish silk merchants but they did not play a significant part in the export trade to Europe.⁶⁶

Aleppo

In view of all this, it is not surprising that the Armenian colony in seventeenth century Aleppo was dominated by Julfans.⁶⁷ An account by a Polish Armenian who visited the town in 1613 notes that there were three hundred Armenian houses inhabited by wealthy Julfans and Amt'ets'is (natives of Amit' - Diyarbekir) who traded as far afield as Baghdad, Isfahan and India. Two Armenian churches had just been renovated and enlarged. A Julfan named Khoja Petik held no fewer than twenty-four official positions and went about with a large retinue like a Pasha.⁶⁸ Later in the century Tavernier put the Armenian population of Aleppo at 12,000 and another

65 P. Della Valle, *Viaggi di Pietro della Valle, il pellegrino*, 2 vols., Brighton, 1843, I, 463; [H. Chick (ed.)] *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia*, 2 vols. paginated as 1, London, 1939, 295; Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse en 1660*, ed. C. Schéfer, Paris, 1890 (reprinted Farnborough 1969), 181; J.-B. Tavernier, *Les six voyages...*, 2 vols., Paris, 1682, I, 72-73; J. Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant*, 2 vols., Paris, 1717, II, 315-317.

66 H. Dunlop (ed.), *Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis der Oostindische Compagnie in persië. Eerste Deel 1611-1638*, The Hague, 1930, 665; Parsamyan, *Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke*, 35.

67 A. Siwrmēan, *Patmut' iwn Halēpi hayots'*, 3 vols., Aleppo-Beirut-Paris, 1940-1950, III, 59.

68 Simēon Lehats'i, *Ughegrut' iwn*, 318-320.

estimate is as high as 20,000.⁶⁹ The raw silk trade at Aleppo remained in the hands of Armenian merchants into the eighteenth century though Julfan dominance of the Armenian community there began to wane at the end of the previous century.⁷⁰

Izmir

Armenians were no less prominent in Izmir. According to K'ōsean the colony was established at the time of 'Abbās I's devastating campaigns in Armenia,⁷¹ but it must have been trade which drew the refugees to Izmir. In 1609 there was already a sizeable Armenian community of one hundred houses and two churches.⁷² As the century progressed the colony expanded, though probably not as dramatically as Tavernier's figure of 8,000 suggests,⁷³ since Pitton de Tournefort put their number at only 2,000 in 1702; by this time the town had made a remarkable recovery from the devastating earthquake of 1688.⁷⁴ The earliest inscription in the Armenian church in Izmir dates from 1688, when it was rebuilt following the earthquake.⁷⁵ The Armenians' domination of the raw silk trade is confirmed by the fact that the caravanserai that acted as the terminus for caravans from Iran was known as the *Khān* of the Armenians,⁷⁶ while the leading role played in the community by Iranian Armenians emerges clearly in a petition of 1658 or 1659 to the Estates General of the United Provinces; the authors describe themselves as "Persian Armenians".⁷⁷

69 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 124; M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, "The earliest relations between Persia and the Netherlands", *Persica*, VI, 1972-1974, 25 n. 206, citing A. Rabbath, *Documents inédites pour servir à l'histoire du Christianisme en Orient*, 2 vols., Paris, 1910.

70 Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria*, 261 and n. 5, 262; R. Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square. English traders in the Levant in the 18th century*, London, 1967, 146.

71 Y.V. K'ōsean, *Hayk'i Zmiwrnia ew i shrjakays*, I, Vienna, 1899, 31.

72 Simēon Lehats'i, *Ughegrut' iwn*, 38.

73 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 70.

74 Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation*, II, 495-496.

75 K'ōsean, *Hayk'i Zmiwrnia*, 55-56.

76 G.F. Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, 6 vols., Naples, 1699.

77 A. Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerč XVI-XVII darerum*, Vienna, 1926, 19-25.

For as long as the silk trade was centred in Aleppo, Armenian commercial penetration of the Mediterranean was limited. Julfans are only rarely mentioned in the Iskanderun port books⁷⁸ and it is unusual to find Aleppo cited as the place of origin of Armenians in seventeenth century Europe.⁷⁹ The extension of Armenian trade into Western Europe was particularly associated with the rise of Izmir, situated directly on the Mediterranean coast, and with the large scale entry to the Levant trade of the Dutch, who concentrated at Izmir and were prepared to freight foreign merchants and their goods on the return voyage to Europe.⁸⁰ It was a ^{Fleming} (Dutch) (*Fēlamik*) vessel that carried Zak'aria Agulets'i together with twenty-seven other Armenians from Izmir to Venice in 1658,⁸¹ and the contemporary petition of the Izmir merchants mentioned above was a complaint against a Dutch consul who was making it difficult for them to use Dutch shipping as they had been doing for many years.⁸²

Venice

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Venice, still in control of the bulk of Europe's raw silk import, was the natural destination for Armenian traders. In 1611 Simeon Lehats'i travelled to Venice with a group of merchants carrying raw silk from Istanbul overland to Split (*Sbilit'*) (where he noted the presence of Julfan merchants), and from there by sea to Venice.⁸³ In Venice he found an established community with its own churches and an Armenian house, or *fondaco*. He counted only ten resident families of Gregorian Armenians and does not give a total for Catholics; he does note, however, that in addition to the residents there were numerous

78 Gy. Káldy Nágý, "Dannye k istorii levantinskoj torgovli v nachale XVII stoletiya", in *Vostochnye istochniki po istorii Yugo-vostochnoi i Tsentral'noi Evropy*, vol. 2, ed. A.S. Tveritinova, Moscow, 1969, 329.

79 Two Venice colophons dated 1623 and 1643 were written by Aleppan scribes, the latter being dedicated to a Julfan (A. Hovhannisyan, *Hayeren dzeragreir 17 dari hishatakaranner*, vol. 2 (1621-1640), Erevan, 1978, 104; V. Hakobyan, *Hayeren dzeragreir 17 dari hishatakaranner*, vol. 3 (1641-1660), Erevan, 1984, 58-59.

80 Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 186; Masson, *Histoire du commerce (XVII^e siècle)*, 127; Chardin, *Voyages*, I, 10.

81 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Öragrut'yunë*, Erevan, 1938, 51-52.

82 Sarukhan, *loc. cit.*

83 Simëon Lehats'i, *Ughegrut'iwñ*, 43-54.

merchants passing through.⁸⁴ The principal Catholic Julfa family, the Shahrimeaneans, are said to have owned a house in Venice as early as 1615.⁸⁵ The Venice Armenian community had its own leader or *sanser*.⁸⁶ It was about this time that Venice began to experience serious commercial competition from rival centres, especially Genoa, Livorno and Marseille, and from the mid 1660's the city introduced a series of measures to encourage the silk trade and attract Armenian merchants.⁸⁷ Its efforts met with some success, and Venice remained an important centre of Armenian trade throughout the century and into the next. Some Armenians carried their silk on overland from Venice into Germany and as far as Holland.⁸⁸

The resident Armenian community in Venice was fairly small - twenty-five to thirty families plus fifty or so unmarried men - but the number of visiting merchants was very great.⁸⁹ During the Candian War when direct Venetian access to Levant markets was restricted, the Armenians played an important intermediary role, which was recognised in the decree of 1648 describing them as "sempre bene merita della Serenità nostra".⁹⁰ Julfans, especially the Shahrimeaneans, dominated the Armenian colony in Venice⁹¹ and to this day Venice has a Ruga Giuffa.⁹² Late in the seventeenth century, when the situation of the Catholic Armenians in Julfa deteriorated sharply, several members of the Shahrimeanean family emigrated from Julfa and settled permanently in

84 *Ibid.*, 54 and n. 1.

85 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*. Abrahamyan lists the names of many of the prominent Armenian families in Venice (*Hamarot'urvagits*, I, 297).

86 Alishan, *Hay-Venet*, 395.

87 G. Berchet, "Del commercio dei veneti nell'Asia", *Atti dell'Ateneo Veneto*, second series, I, 1864, 15-16; V.A. Baiburtyan, "Posrednicheskaya rol' novo-dzhul'finskikh kuptsov v diplomaticheskikh otnosheniyakh Irana s zapadno-evropeiskimi stranami v nachale XVII veka", *Kratkie Soobshcheniya Instituta Narodov Azii*, LXXVII, 1964, 27.

88 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Oragrut'yunë*, 53; Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, *Correspondence politique, Perse*, vol. 2, f. 315a-b.

89 L.B. Zekiyani, "La colonie armene del Medio Evo in Italia", *Atti di Primo Simposio Internazionale di Arte Armena*, Venice, 1981, 914 and n. 375.

90 *Ibid.*, 911.

91 *Ibid.*, 913; Berchet, "Del commercio", 13.

92 "Venetik" in HSH.

Venice.⁹³ The Shahrimeaneans had invested large sums of money long before in the city's banks and had provided considerable financial support during the war against the Ottomans.⁹⁴

Livorno and Genoa

Venice did not, however, succeed in maintaining her grip on the Levant silk trade. From early in the seventeenth century Armenian merchants began to find their way to the rising centres of Livorno, Marseille and Amsterdam. In Livorno the decisive step was the creation of a free port in 1591.⁹⁵ The Armenians there formed a new colony. It owed its existence entirely to commerce and consisted predominantly of Julfans.⁹⁶ In the early seventeenth century there were about one hundred and twenty Armenians trading in Livorno and numbers remained between one and two hundred into the eighteenth century.⁹⁷ Livorno's welcome for foreign merchants contrasted sharply with the situation in Marseille, where for much of the seventeenth century foreign merchants were penalised if not altogether excluded, and it was largely as an alternative port for access to the French market that Livorno flourished. An interesting letter of 1650 from a Lyon merchant to his fellow in Marseille explains that the Armenians abandoned the Provençal port because of the excessive duties levied there and subsequently sent their silk to Lyon from Livorno under the names of Livornese merchants.⁹⁸ Zak'aria Agulets'i travelled back to the Levant by sea from Amsterdam, stopping at Livorno, where he met two fellow merchants (*ekhbayr*).⁹⁹ The Abbé Carré also bumped into old friends in Livorno: "I was surprised to meet

93 D.W. White, *Zaccaria Seriman 1709-1784 and the Viaggi di Enrico Wanton*, Manchester, 1961, Introduction.

94 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, .

95 Zekiyán, "La colonie armena", 901.

96 *Ibid.*, 909; Baiburtyan, "Rol' novo-dzhul'finskikh kuptsov", 28. On the Livorno Armenian community see the articles and monograph by Mesrop Ughurlean: "Ekēghets'i hayots' i Livomoy", *Handēs Amsōrea*, IV, 1890, 14-18; "Livomoy k'aghak'in azgayin gerezmanak'arem", *Handēs Amsōrea*, IX, 1895, 70-75; *Patmut'ivn hayots' gagh't'akanut'ean ew shinut'ean ekeghets'woy nots'a i Livornoy k'aghak'i handerdz yaweluatsov* k', Venice, 1891.

97 Zekiyán, "La colonie armena", 914.

98 F. Macler, "Notices de manuscrits arméniens ou relatifs aux arméniens vus dans quelques bibliothèques de la Péninsule Ibérique et du sud-est de la France", *REA*, II, 1922, 40-41; C.-D. Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", *Mémoires de l'Institut Historique de Provence*, VI, 1929, 18-20.

99 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Ōragrut'yuně*, 55.

several Armenian, Persian and Indian merchants whom I had known in the East during my first Travels".¹⁰⁰ Genoa played a similar role to Livorno in Julfan trade, but there is very little surviving evidence on the colony there.¹⁰¹

Julfa merchants also reached other parts of Italy but there is no evidence of established colonies. Catholic Armenians were always welcomed in the Papacy and in 1629, when relations between the Gregorian and the Catholic missionaries in Isfahan were still cordial, the privilege of free trade in the Papacy was temporarily extended to all Julfa merchants.¹⁰²

Marseille

The earliest evidence of Armenian trade in Marseille dates from the early 1620s in a series of proposals and decisions aimed at protecting Marseillan interests from Armenian competition. These banned French captains from freighting Armenians' goods, forbade the Armenians' export of money from France (whether in the form of cash or bills of exchange) and even put a stop to Armenian trade in Marseille altogether.¹⁰³ Armenian trade must already have been strongly established by this time for it to have been perceived as such a serious threat to local interests. The restrictions cannot have led to the complete exclusion of Armenian trade from Marseille, as in 1629 Louis XIII granted a letter patent allowing Persians and Armenians to trade in France through the agency of Louis Frejus, an important Marseillais Levant merchant, and Antoine Armenis, an Armenian who had lived in Marseille since 1612 and become a naturalised citizen in 1625. Their patent was reconfirmed in 1645.¹⁰⁴ In 1635 Richelieu reversed the restrictive policy and allowed free trade to "Armenians, Julfans and Persians", in spite of the protests of

100 B. Carré, *The Travels of the Abbé Carré in India and the Near East (1672-1674)*, trans. Lady Fawcett, 3 vols. paginated as 1, London, 1947-1948, 8.

101 Abrahamyan, *Hamarot urvagits*, I, 298.

102 Y. K'iwrtéan, "Jughayets'i Khōjay Safar u Khōjay Nazar ew ijents' gerdastaně", *Bazmavēp*, 1976, nos. 1-2, 65.

103 Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 12-13; Macler, "Notices de manuscrits", REA, II, 1922, 9-20; Bergasse and Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, IV, 64-68; Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 281f.

104 Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 22-25; Macler, "Notices de manuscrits", REA, II, 1922, 60-62.

Marseille merchants,¹⁰⁵ but following his death in 1642 protectionist measures were reintroduced. After 1650 Armenian trade at Marseille was made increasingly difficult by a series of increases in duty: in 1658 a bale of silk paid 112 livres in duties at Marseille whereas in 1634 it had paid only 16 livres. There were other impediments too, with the result that by the end of the decade the Armenians were said to have completely abandoned Marseille in favour of Livorno.¹⁰⁶ French policy changed again under Colbert, who made Marseille a free port in 1669, with the result that many Armenians returned from Livorno and Amsterdam, and by 1680 there was a colony of some three to four hundred there.¹⁰⁷ The Armenian tombstone of 1662-1663 held in the Musée Borely in Marseille was probably brought to the city from Amsterdam at this time.¹⁰⁸ Savary claimed that the profits of the Livornese and Dutch ship owners had declined sharply since the creation of a free port, and that most of the silk trade had returned to Marseille.¹⁰⁹

After Colbert's death in 1683 restrictions on Armenian trade at Marseille were reintroduced. This time they seem to have affected Ottoman Armenians rather than the Julfans, who were by now the strongest element in the community and who enjoyed a privileged position thanks in part to contemporary French interest in cultivating relations with Iran.¹¹⁰ An Iranian consul was appointed in Marseille according to the terms of the 1715 Franco-Iranian treaty, the post being filled (at least until 1725) by an Armenian named Yakobjan.¹¹¹ Even the Julfans, however,

105 Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 14-15; Macler, "Notices de manuscrits", REA, II, 1922, 9; Bergasse and Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, IV, 68.

106 Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 15-19; Macler, "Notices de manuscrits", REA, II, 1922, 9, 40-41; Bergasse and Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, IV, 68-69.

107 Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 19-21, 27-28; Bergasse and Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, IV, 503-504.

108 Macler, "Notices de manuscrits", REA, I, 1920-1921, 415-417; Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 37-38.

109 Savary, *Le parfait negociant*, vol. 1 part 2, 398-399.

110 Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 53-54; Macler, "Notices de manuscrits", REA, II, 1922, 9-10.

111 Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, *Correspondence politique, Perse*, V, f. 132-133, 228b; VI, f. 236-237, 386-387. Yakobjan's signature in Armenian survives on one of these documents: *Akoboan di tēri jan ghōsul* (consul) *dō p'ērs* (Perse) *ay* (à) *Mrch'il* (Marseille) *ay*.

had to pay the twenty per cent import duty levied on foreign merchants and in the eighteenth century their trade again declined and there was a new exodus to other European ports, especially Amsterdam.¹¹²

Amsterdam

Regular Armenian trade at Amsterdam must have followed the permanent establishment of the Dutch in the Levant, at Izmir, thanks to the capitulations of 1612. Sarukhan believes it was probably a ban on importing Eastern goods to Holland in foreign ships that prompted the Armenian Levant merchants to set up permanent branches in Amsterdam where they had ready access to Dutch shipping.¹¹³ The first record of Armenian merchants in Amsterdam is considerably earlier: several jewel merchants visited the city in 1560-1565, but it is not until the seventeenth century that there is evidence of regular contacts.¹¹⁴ Armenians were dealing on the Amsterdam stock exchange in early 1617 and by 1627 at least two merchants, Khoja Sarhad (Godge Sarhad) and Hovhannes Zak'aria (Jan Sacharis) were permanently based at Amsterdam. From the same year there is a contract between a Dutch ship's master and six Armenians to freight the latter's goods from Amsterdam to Livorno.¹¹⁵

By the mid-seventeenth century the colony was firmly established. Sarukhan believes there were seventy Armenian firms in 1660 but his source states only that there were seventy Asiatic houses, so it is probable that not all were Armenian.¹¹⁶ Julfans were prominent, if they did not form the majority,¹¹⁷ and in the early eighteenth century a member of the Khaldarean family was permanently based in Amsterdam.¹¹⁸ As with the colonies in Italy and France the main Armenian import was raw silk, the chief exports woollen cloth and bullion, with Baltic amber also

112 Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les arméniens", 56, 58.

113 Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerë*, 13-16.

114 *Ibid.*, 45-46.

115 *Ibid.*, 48-49.

116 *Ibid.*, 49-50.

117 Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerë*, 61.

118 Z. Ptukean, "Holanta kokhuats 18rd daru hay metalner", *Bazmavēp*, 1977, nos. 3-4, 734, 750; NJHV, 109.

in high demand.¹¹⁹ Amsterdam possessed certain advantages over Marseille, Venice or Livorno. First there was the strength of Dutch capital which made it possible for the Armenian merchants to receive prompt payment in cash and to place orders for their return cargoes of cloth as soon as they arrived, so that by the time they had sold their silk the woollens were ready and waiting. Often the same Dutch merchant handled both the silk purchase and the cloth sale. Moreover, English as well as Dutch cloth was readily available in Holland as there was an English firm in Rotterdam which sold English woollens as cheaply as in England.¹²⁰ The main drawback of Holland compared to the French and Italian ports was its distance from the Levant, which made communication more difficult.¹²¹ Like many other seventeenth century visitors, the Armenians seem to have been more impressed by Amsterdam than by any other city. Zak'aria Agulets'i exclaimed: "The peerless city of Amsterdam, whose like does not exist!",¹²² and his admiration is echoed by Ghukas Vanadets'i: "Today Amsterdam is renowned throughout the whole world."¹²³

London

London does not seem to have had a resident Armenian trading community until late in the seventeenth century, though merchants had certainly visited London by about 1640.¹²⁴ By the beginning of the 1690's there were as many as forty Armenian merchants in London and at least one of the principal Julfa families, the Ghalandarean (known as the Calendar family in English sources), who at that time had a commercial agreement with the English East India Company,

119 *Ibid.*, 54-55.

120 Anonymous "Mémoire et relation", in Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 351. On the Amsterdam Armenian colony, see also: F. Macler, *Quatre conférences sur l'Arménie... suivie d'une note sur la Hollande et les arméniens*, Paris, 1932; S. Van Rooy, "Armenian merchant habits as mirrored in 17th-18th century Amsterdam documents", REA, new series, III, 1966, 347-357.

121 Anonymous "Mémoire et relation" in Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 351.

122 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Öragrut'yunë*, 15.

123 Ghukas Nurijanean Vanadets'i, *Gandz ch'ap'oy, k'shroy, twoy ew dramits'...*, Amsterdam, 1699, 43.

124 R.W. Ferrier, "British Persian Relations in the Seventeenth Century", PhD dissertation, Cambridge University, 1970, 117 n. 56, 154 n. 7.

maintained a permanent representative there.¹²⁵ The British Library holds about half a dozen letters relating to the London Armenian community at the end of the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century. Most are from Armenians in Amsterdam, which suggests that the London colony was an offshoot of the more important Dutch settlement.¹²⁶

The establishment of all the West European outposts of Julfan trade was connected with the silk trade and with the Julfans' efforts to maximise their profits and control of the trade, diversify their sales outlets (rather than being forced to barter with European merchants in the Levant) and improve their access to the markets for return commodities.

Russia

Armenian trade in Russia dates back before the development of either Julfa or the Iranian raw silk trade.¹²⁷ The second half of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries witnessed a vigorous development of bilateral Irano-Russian trade, facilitated by the creation of a common border following the Russian conquest of the Kazan and Astrakhan khanates in the 1550s.¹²⁸ The principal commodities traded between the two countries were Iranian and Indian textiles, silk yarn, dyestuffs and spices in exchange for Russian furs, leather and bullion. Russia did not possess a significant silk manufacturing industry until the mid-eighteenth century so raw silk was not a significant import on the Russian market.

The Irano-Russian trade was carried on by merchants of several nationalities: Russian, Shirvani, Gilani, Indian and Armenian,¹²⁹ and a significant part of it was in the form of royal

125 IO, E/3/92, f. 109-110, 147.

126 BL, Harleian MS 7013, F. 32, 112, 114, 117-120.

127 B.V. Miller, "Ob armyanskikh nadpisyakh v Bolgarakh i Kazani", *Izvestiya Rossiiskoi Akademii Istorii Material'noi Kul'tury*, IV, Leningrad, 1925, 65-80; L.S. Khach'ikyan, "Hayerë hin Moskvayum ev Moskva tanogh chanaparhneri vra", *Banber Matenadarani*, XIII, 1980, 7-107.

128 M.V. Fekhner, *Torgovlya russkogo gosudarstva vo stranami vostoka v XVI veke*, Moscow, 1956, .

129 Fekhner, *Torgovlya*, 48; Kukanova, *Ocherki*, 60; K.A. Antonova, N.M. Goldberg and T.D. Lavrentsova (eds.), *Russko-indiiskie otnosheniya*, Moscow, 1958; S. Gopal, "A brief note on business organization of Indian merchants in Russia in the seventeenth century", *JESHO*, XXIX/2,

trade,¹³⁰ in which Julfans participated (see Chapter 3). As in the trade with Western Europe, it was, however, the raw silk trade that provided the impetus for Julfan commercial expansion into Russia. In the sixteenth century it was the English Russia Company that had secured the transit right for trade through Russia to Iran. In the last third of the seventeenth century it was the Julfa Armenians who won this concession.

The history of the agreements between the Julfa Armenians and the Russian government in 1667, 1673 and 1676 has been told several times.¹³¹ What is particularly pertinent here is that the central purpose of the agreement, as understood by both parties, was to secure the raw silk trade to Europe. This is a point which emerges very clearly both in the record of the negotiations leading up to the agreements and in the texts of the agreements themselves. For the Julfans the Russian route offered a viable alternative to the Levant, which was expensive because of the numerous duties levied in the Ottoman Empire and which, in the 1660s and 1670s, was threatened both by war in the Mediterranean and by the perceived likelihood of war between Safavi Iran and Ottoman Turkey. For the Russian government the silk trade was attractive because of the revenue it would bring in. This incentive was sufficient to outweigh both the normal protectionist policy adopted towards foreign merchants in Russia and the vociferous protests of the Russian merchants.

The first agreement of 1667 proved abortive, since Stepan Razin's rebellion cut off Irano-Russian trade links for several years, and in the 1673 agreement the Russian government bowed to pressure from its own merchants and withdrew the Julfans' transit privilege. This was restored only in 1676 when the Armenians' position was supported by the Dutch ambassador in Moscow.¹³² Astrakhan and Moscow were the two principal centres for Armenian traders on the Russian route;

1986, 205-212.

130 Fekhner, *Torgovlya*, 43f., 98f.; Kukanova, *Ocherki*, 44f.

131 Parsamyan, *Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke*, editor's introduction and documents *passim*; Kukanova, *Ocherki*, Chapter 2; Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*, Chapter 3; NJHV, 15-65.

132 B. Coyet, *Posol'stvo Kunraada fan' Klenka k tsaryam Alekseyu Mikhailovichu i Fedoru Alekseevichu*, trans. and ed. A.M. Lovyagin, Saint Petersburg, 1900, LXXVI-LXXVII, CXLVI-CLVI, 444 and n.3.

there is evidence of regular visits by Armenian merchants to Moscow as early as the sixteenth century and of an established colony in Astrakhan early in the seventeenth century.¹³³ Travellers' descriptions of Astrakhan in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries leave no doubt that this was a flourishing commercial city with a substantial Armenian community,¹³⁴ but it is more difficult to clarify the position of Julfan merchants elsewhere in Russia at this time. The fact that in 1667 they accepted the services of an English broker in Moscow suggests that they cannot have been very well-established there.¹³⁵

In the eighteenth century, however, there is no doubt of the important place of Julfans in the Armenian communities in Russia. Following the Afghan invasion and during Nādir Shah's reign many Julfans emigrated across the Caspian, mostly to Astrakhan but also to Moscow.¹³⁶ In the eighteenth century we find Julfa Armenians, among them the prominent Lazarean family, based in Russia, but still playing a leading role in the Caspian silk trade, and also in developing Russia's silk and cotton textile industries.¹³⁷

133 Fekhner, *Torgovlya*, 48; A. Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung der Muskwöitischen und Persischen Reise*, Schleswig, 1656 (reprinted Tübingen 1971), (128).

134 J. Struys, *Les voyages de J.S. en Moscovie, en Tartarie, en Perse...*, Amsterdam, 1681, 165; P. Avril, *Voyages en divers états d'Europe et d'Asie*, Paris, 1693, 79-81, 95; C. de Bruyn, *Voyages de Corneille le Brun par la Moscovie, en Perse et aux Indes Orientales*, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1718, I, 94. On the social composition of the Astrakhan colony, see A.I. Yukht, "Armyanskie remeslenniki v Astrakhane v pervoi polovine XVIII v.", *Teghekgagir*, 1958, no. 1, 37-54; *idem.*, "Astrakhani haykakan gaghutli bnakch'ut'yan sots'ialakan kazme 18-rd daru arajin kesum", *Teghekgagir*, 1957, no. 7, 47-60.

135 Parsamyan, *Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke*, 58-60.

136 Petros di Sarkis Gilanentz, *The Chronicle of P.d.S.G.*, trans. and ed. C.O. Minasian, Lisbon, 1959, 5-6.

137 NJHV, 100-114 and chapter 3; *Datastanagirk' Astrakhani hayots'*, ed. F.G. Poghosyan, Erevan, 1967, editor's introduction; Hanway, *An Historical Account*, II, 31; A.I. Yukht, "Russko-armyanskaya kompaniya "persidskogo torga" v seredine XVIII veka", PBH, 1983, 2-3, 224-239; *idem.*, "Torgovlya Rossii s Zakavkaz'em i Persiei vo vtoroi chetverti XVIII veka", *Istoriya SSSR*, 1961, no. 1, 131-146; *idem.*, "Uchastie armyanskogo kupechestva vo vnutrennei torgovle Rossii (20-40.e gody XVIII v.)", PBH, 1979, no. 3, 112-128; *idem.*, "Vostochnaya torgovlya Rossii v 30-40 godakh XVIII veka i rol' v nei armyanskikh kuptsov", *Teghekgagir*, 1956, no. 8, 43-62.

India and the Indies

The extension of Julfan trade South and East into India, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean presents a more varied and complex pattern than the trade with Western Europe via the Levant and Russia. In the case of India it is impossible to isolate a single commodity as the basis of the trade. Iranian raw silk, as well as silk fabrics, was exported to India in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and the Julfans may first have entered the Indian trade as silk merchants.¹³⁸ Document 21 in Part 3 shows that Armenian merchants were still exporting raw silk to Surat even in the eighteenth century, but silk was not a significant factor in Irano-Indian trade and is scarcely mentioned by contemporary commentators.

The most important commodities in Iran's trade with India were not the exports, which were few (dyestuffs, horses, dried fruit and European woollen textiles - the last coming via the Levant trade), but the imports (spices, sugar, dyestuffs and textiles).¹³⁹ Although the subject remains almost wholly unresearched, there is little doubt that Iran's import of Indian textiles expanded greatly in the second half of the seventeenth century and was a principal reason for the dramatic increase in the number of Indian merchants in Iran.¹⁴⁰ An anonymous late seventeenth century Persian description lists numerous caravanserais in Isfahan where Indian merchants sold textiles.¹⁴¹

Thanks to the silk trade the negative trade balance with India was offset by the positive balance with the West. The balance of trade deficit with India did mean, however, that Iran had to export large amounts of bullion and in the later seventeenth century the overall balance of trade went

¹³⁸ T. Pires, *The Suma Orientalia*, ed. A. Cortesao, 2 vols., London, 1944, I, 20; D. Barbosa, *The Book of D.B.*, trans. M.L. Dames, 2 vols., London, 1918, I, 93; Tucci, *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien*, 11; R. Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report of an Englishman...*, London, 1612 (reprinted Amsterdam, 1971), 76, 78; P. Texeira, *The Travels of P.T.*, trans., W.F. Sinclair, London, 1902, 252.

¹³⁹ R.W. Ferrier, in CHI, VI, 480-484; K. Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade 1620-1740*, Copenhagen-The Hague, 1958, 158f.

¹⁴⁰ Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 14, 187.

¹⁴¹ In Gaube and Wirth, *Der Bazar von Isfahan*.

into considerable deficit, leading to severe currency problems.¹⁴² So great was the export of bullion through Iran's principal port for the India trade, Bandar 'Abbās, that Fryer suggested its name was derived from the Iranian silver coin the 'abbāsī.¹⁴³ The dynamic created by Iran's positive trade balance with the West and negative balance with the East and the resulting continuous flow of bullion through the country struck contemporary observers forcibly. Raphaël du Mans and Thévenot both compare Iran to a caravanserai with two gates, money coming in through one and going out through the other.¹⁴⁴

The responses of the Safavi government to the export of silver were mostly ineffectual or counter-productive: embargos on the export of coin, devaluation of the currency and setting artificially low prices for silver at the mints only accelerated the export of good coin, provided incentives for contraband trade and eventually drove merchants out of Iran to Basra where conditions were more relaxed.¹⁴⁵

The bullion trade is the key to understanding the connection between the western and eastern halves of the Armenian merchants' commercial network. Although they were heavily involved in the indigo, textiles and jewel trades,¹⁴⁶ it was the silk trade that provided the Julfans with large quantities of bullion - and since this could be more profitably invested in India than in Iran it was natural to extend their activities eastwards. The Julfans' involvement in the export of bullion from Iran was noted by numerous commentators.¹⁴⁷ The account book of Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan reveals what was a typical trading pattern for Armenians in the Persian Gulf trade. Hovhannes worked inland in India, buying indigo and textiles for export from Surat to Basra and Bandar 'Abbās. His partner handled the Persian Gulf side of the operations, sold the Indian

142 Ferrier, in CHI, VI, 484-485; Fragner, in CHI, VI, 528; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 60f.; Matthee, "Politics and Trade", *passim*.

143 Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 173. The port, like the coin, was of course named after Shah 'Abbās I.

144 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 192; Thévenot, *Voyages*, II, 146.

145 Sanson, *Estat present*, 169-161; Matthee, "Politics and Trade", *passim*.

146 F. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: the Remonstrantie of F.P.*, trans. W.H. Moreland and P. Gey, Cambridge, 1925, 15-18; HTD, *passim*.

147 Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 55-56; Matthee, "Politics and Trade", 241-244.

commodities in the Middle East, and made his returns to India entirely in silver piasters.¹⁴⁸

Once established in India the Julfans rapidly diversified their interests and became involved in a wide range of commodities and routes, many of them unconnected with Iran. In this respect their activities in the Indian Ocean area differed from those in the West, where they remained first and foremost intermediaries between Europe and Iran, and closely associated with the silk trade.

Reconstructing the Julfan commercial network in the East is more difficult than in the West. This is partly because the sources are more scattered and partly because in India the Armenians were not concentrated in a few major ports as they were in Europe. The scraps of evidence suggest that by about 1600 Armenians were settlers and regular visitors along the routes to India and in the major commercial cities of Indian trade. There were Armenians in Shiraz and Lār,¹⁴⁹ and in Hormuz their trade was important enough for the Catholicos to intercede on their behalf over the rate of duty charged by the Portuguese customs officers.¹⁵⁰ In India itself there is evidence of even earlier Armenian trade. There are records of visits to the Coromandel coast as early as 1517,¹⁵¹ and in Agra (where Akbar actively encouraged Armenian settlement¹⁵²) there is a Julfan gravestone dated 1557.¹⁵³ Linschoten saw many Armenians in Goa in the 1580s,¹⁵⁴ and as early as the second decade of the century Pires had listed Armenians among the nations who had settled in Malacca, which they reached in Gujarati boats from Cambay.¹⁵⁵ We cannot be certain that all these Armenians were Julfans, but in view of the connection between

148 HTD, *passim*; A. Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the decline of Surat c. 1700-1750*, Wiesbaden, 1979, 72-73.

149 Gouvea, *Relation*, 49, 70.

150 Teixeira, *The Travels*, 168; J.H. van Linschoten, *The Voyage of J.H. van L.*, eds. A.C. Burnell and P.A. Tiele, 2 vols., London, 1885, I, 47; Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 276, 281.

151 S. Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500-1650*, Cambridge, 1990, 96; M.J. Seth, *Armenians in India: from the earliest times to the present day*, Calcutta, 1937 (reprinted 1983), 579.

152 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 2.

153 *Ibid.*, 110.

154 Linschoten, *The Voyage*, I, 223.

155 Pires, *The Suma Orientalia*, I, 46; II, 268-269.

the silk trade and the trade with India, it seems likely that many of the Armenians trading in India were Julfans.

Agra and Northern India

In the seventeenth century we find Julfa Armenians active in the trade with India both overland via Qandahar and Lahore¹⁵⁶ and in Hormuz, Bandar 'Abbās and Surat.¹⁵⁷ One of their first commercial settlements in India was Agra, the first Armenians there entering the service of Akbar as officials, soon to be followed by merchants. At the end of the seventeenth century there was apparently a "principal of the Armenian merchants at (the Mughal) court".¹⁵⁸ By mid-century the Armenian community in Agra possessed a church and a caravanserai.¹⁵⁹

The Surat colony is very ill-documented. As Surat was the principal Indian port for the Gulf trade we would expect it to have had one of the earliest Armenian settled communities in India, but the date of its foundation and most of its history remain a blank. The fact that the oldest dated tombstone in the Surat Armenian cemetery is that of a priest's wife who died in 1579 indicates that already by this time there was a well-established colony.¹⁶⁰ Hovhannes spent two months in Surat on his arrival in India in 1683 and one and a half months there a year later, seeing to the despatch of cargoes for Iran and Basra and doing business with other Armenians there. From his account it is clear that there was a thriving colony at that time.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ Steel and Crowther, in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous*, IV, 273, 275; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 173; Dunlop, *Bronnen tot*, 562; Chardin, *Voyages*, II, 349; PNJ, I, 158; Seth, *Armenians in India*, 201.

¹⁵⁷ N. de Orta Rebelo, *Un voyageur portugais en Perse au début du XVII^e siècle*, ed. J. Verissimo Serrão, Lisbon, 1972, 47, 93; India Office Records, E35462; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 177; C. Lockyer, *An Account of the Trade in India*, London, 1711, 257.

¹⁵⁸ Seth, *Armenians in India*, 1-135 *passim*; J. Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689*, ed. H.G. Rawlinson, London, 1929, 241.

¹⁵⁹ HTD, 18; S. Manrique, *The Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique 1629-1643*, 2 vols., eds. C. Eckford Luard and H. Hosten, Oxford, 1927, II, 152.

¹⁶⁰ Seth, *Armenians in India*, 225-230, 259-261; Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants*, 82 and n. 1; Hakobyan, *Hishatakaranner 1641-1660*, 851, 869.

¹⁶¹ HTD, see *Surat* in index.

Inland from Surat there were Armenians in Burhanpur from early in the seventeenth century - Finch camped in their yard in 1610.¹⁶² Burhanpur was a major centre for cotton textile manufacture and export and had a large enough Armenian community to support a church.¹⁶³ There was also a community at Ahmadabad.¹⁶⁴ Sironj further to the north was another major cotton textile centre with a resident Armenian community,¹⁶⁵ and Aurangabad had a resident community around 1680.¹⁶⁶ Armenian merchants made annual visits to the indigo producing areas of Bayana, Aligarh and Khurja.¹⁶⁷ Peter Mundy found Armenians at Patna in 1632¹⁶⁸ and Carré saw them trading in the caravanserais of Bijapur in 1673.¹⁶⁹ The experiences of Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan suggest that Julfan merchants traded freely wherever they chose in Mughal India.¹⁷⁰

Southern India, Bengal and the Indian Ocean

The Julfans were equally active in the maritime trade of the Indian Ocean and established settlements in most of the major ports of India in the course of the seventeenth century. Their establishment in the Bombay, Madras and Calcutta East India Company factories was actively encouraged by the Company in the later part of the century, since the directors saw this as a means of promoting trade and manufacture.¹⁷¹ Armenians were established at Bombay in the second half of the seventeenth century¹⁷² and at Calicut in the early eighteenth century,¹⁷³

162 W. Finch, in *Early Travels in India*, ed. W. Foster, London, 1921, 138.

163 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, II, 28-29; HTD, 77, 79; Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, I, 66.

164 N. Withington, in *Early Travels in India*, 206.

165 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, II, 31; HTD, see *Srinch in index*; Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, I, 68.

166 HTD, see *Ovrankapat in index*.

167 Pesaert, *Jahangir's India*, 15-18, HTD, 81-83.

168 P. Mundy, *The Travels of P.M. in Europe and Asia 1608-1667*, eds. R. Carnac Temple and L.M. Anstey, 5 vols., London, 1907-1936, II, 159.

169 Carré, *The Travels*, I, 270.

170 HTD, *passim*. See the map on page 284 for his travels in India and Tibet.

171 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 281-192; Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 49-50; Arasaratnam, *Merchants*, 158-159.

172 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 294.

173 Lockyer, *An Account of the Trade in India*, 270.

and had a flourishing trade in Coromandel (at Madras, Pondichery, San Thomé and Arcot).¹⁷⁴

In Bengal, though the tombstone in the Calcutta cemetery dated the year 15 in the Azaria calendar (1630 AD) almost certainly belongs to a later period, there were Armenians settled at Chinsura (Hugli) as early as 1645,¹⁷⁵ and they were well-established at Saidabad in the second half of the seventeenth century.¹⁷⁶ Armenians were also closely associated with the establishment of the English trade at Calcutta.¹⁷⁷ In the eighteenth century they played an important part in the commerce and industry of Dacca.¹⁷⁸

Tibet, Burma, Indonesia and the Philippines

The Julfans' trade network also extended beyond the borders of India, both by overland and maritime routes. In Tibet, where musk, precious stones and Chinese gold could be traded for Indian textiles, amber and pearls, there was a settled Armenian community.¹⁷⁹ There were Armenians in Burma as early as 1612, their principal trade there being the export of rubies from Tenasserim.¹⁸⁰ Armenians based in Coromandel played an important part in the trade with the Philippines, where Indian textiles were traded for New World bullion.¹⁸¹ There are several

174 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 579, 607-608; Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, IV, 181; Arasaratnam, *Merchants*, 158, 169, 200, 208, 221.

175 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 304; A. Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies (1688-1723)*, ed. W. Foster, 2 vols., London, 1930, II, 11.

176 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 325.

177 *Ibid.*, 419-420; S. Chaudhury, "Bengal merchants and commercial organisation in the second half of the seventeenth century", *Bengal Past and Present*, XC, 1971, 182-216.

178 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 571f.; A.I. Chicherov, *India: economic development in the 16th-18th centuries: outline history of crafts and trade*, Moscow, 1971, 130. I am grateful to Mr S. Digby for bringing to my notice Davidson's description of the Armenian church in Dacca in the early nineteenth century: C.J.C. Davidson, *Diary of Travels and Adventures in Upper India*, London, 1843, 96-103.

179 HTD, 25-27; Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 322-324; Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, II, 439-440; B.C. Colless, "The traders of the pearl", *Abr Nahrain*, XV, 1974-1975, 12-14.

180 Aghassian and Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien", 158; Colless, "The traders of the pearl", XIV, 1973-1974, 7-11; Hamilton, *A New Account*, II, 22-23.

181 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 581; Arasaratnam, *Merchants*, 208; P. Chaunu, *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des Ibériques*, Paris, 1960, 23; S.D. Quinson, *English Country Trade with the Philippines 1654-1765*, Quezon City, 1966, 37-42, 50-51, 62-65, 85, 88-90, 93, 108

references to Armenians and Armenian ships in seventeenth century Batavia in the Dutch records,¹⁸² and the colony in Malacca continued in existence throughout the seventeenth century.¹⁸³

There is no doubt that the Julfan trade network in the East was remarkably extensive. Tavernier reckoned the Julfans were involved in the trade of all Asia except China and Japan.¹⁸⁴ Tēr-Yovhaneants' lists dozens of centres of Armenian commerce in the East mentioned in Kostand Jughayets'i's late seventeenth century merchant handbook: Multan, Lahore, Sarhind, Delhi (*Janapat*), Agra (*Akbarabad*), Khurja, *Hndvan* (?), Bengal, Bihar, Patna, Benares, *Movn* (?), Ghazipur, Jalalpur, Shahzadpur, Khairabad, Daryabad, Dawlatabad, Sironj, Burhanpur, Surat, Gujarat, Aurangabad, Shahgarh, Hyderabad, Masulipatnam (*Mushlibandar*), Pegu, Java, Bhutan (i.e. Tibet), ^{Cathay} (*Khat'ay*) (?), Cotta (*Khut'ay*), *Ch'irpat* (?), Cochin, *Senan* (?), Malacca, Batavia (*Jap'at'r*), Tmat' Amboina, Macassar, Timor, Ceylon (? *Sihorn*), Manilla, Thailand (*Sharinov*), Ethiopia (*Habashstan*), Balkh, Bukhara, Qandahar, Ghaznah, Kabul, Attock, Peshawar, Kashmir.¹⁸⁵ While there can hardly have been settled colonies in all these places, the fact that Kostand was even able to list them is indicative of the Julfans' deep penetration of the Indian commercial world by the late seventeenth century. When the Safavi government was overthrown by the Afghans and particularly during the last years of Nādir Shah's reign and the ensuing interregnum, many emigrants from Julfa made their way via Basra to India and settled there permanently.¹⁸⁶

n.124, 139-140, 144-145, 171-172.

182 Colless, "The traders of the pearl", *Abr Nahrain*, XI, 1971, 15; Y. Yordananean, *Netrlandakan Arewelian Hndkastanay hay gaghut'i patmut'iwne skzben minch' mer orerē*, Jerusalem, 1937, 15-16.

183 Lockyer, *An Account of the Trade in India*, 75; F. Macler, "Notes sur quelques inscriptions funéraires arméniennes de Malacca", *Journal Asiatique*, XIII, 1919, 560-568.

184 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, but a few decades later, in 1724, the Armenians were competing with the EIC for tea purchases in Canton (K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean*, Cambridge, 1985, 105).

185 PNJ, I, 159-160; Seth, *Armenians in India*, 613.

186 PNJ, I, 185-190; Seth, *Armenians in India*, 588, *Archive des Affaires Etrangères*, Paris, *Mémoires et documents*, *Perse* 4, f. 82.

The Julfa merchants' trade network bears witness both to the Armenians' enterprise and skill, and to the openness and vitality of the intercontinental trade circuits of the period. The Julfans started up as a small community fortuitously located on the way from Iran's silk-growing regions to the Mediterranean. Within only a few decades they were able to turn this slender advantage into a virtual monopoly of the Iranian silk export trade to Europe, and in a not much longer period of time to diversify and expand their activities from the Atlantic coast of Europe to the edge of the Pacific. The underlying economic dynamic for this expansion was the bullion price differential between Western Europe, the Middle East and India; this provided the commercial opportunity that the Julfans seized with both hands.

PART TWO

THE COMMERCIAL ORGANISATION OF THE JULFA MERCHANTS

CHAPTER THREE

THE FAMILY, THE COMMUNITY AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Part 1 of this study described the history of the New Julfa Armenians and their trade network. Part 2 will focus more closely on the institutions and techniques of trade, looking at the structure and operation of the Julfan commercial system. This will tend to produce a static picture, but the intention is not to suggest that Armenian commercial organisation was fixed or immutable; on the contrary, a number of the techniques discussed (most obviously those borrowed from India) must have been fairly recent innovations in the seventeenth century. The sources so far studied are, however, too few and chronologically too closely grouped to allow us to chart development or evolution within Julfan trading practice.

This chapter will consider the central institutions of Julfan society - family, community and church - from an economic perspective, while specifically commercial and financial features will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. The objective is relatively simple: to understand how institutions which we might consider as primarily social, cultural or religious contributed to the Julfans' commercial system. There are, of course, dangers in this approach. An economic focus may distort the picture of institutions whose economic aspects were not necessarily their most important ones. The same is true of patterns of behaviour. Take, for instance, pious donations. On strictly economic criteria, viewed as investment options, this obviously appears less profitable than trade or banking. Yet such behaviour may be justifiable even on economic grounds in the context of a society in which a merchant's credit was his most valuable asset and which, in evaluating credit, took into account not only commercial performance, but also social standing and reputation for honesty, morality and piety.

Any analysis of the Armenians' commercial system that judges it against modern economic priorities will inevitably fail to understand the system's internal logic. Only a thorough investigation of the values of the Julfa merchants would enable a real understanding of the significance of behaviour such as pilgrimage and pious donations. Such an investigation is beyond

the scope of the present study, but clearly it would be anachronistic to assume that such behaviour was essentially directed towards increasing a merchant's material prosperity by enhancing his credit. Economic, social and religious values were mutually reinforcing in a way that can only be hinted at in the brief section in this chapter devoted to the merchant ethos.¹

This chapter has proved more difficult in terms of sources than the others, and some preliminary discussion of this question may be useful. For the structure of the Julfa family one of the principal sources has been the Astrakhan Lawbook,² which provides the theoretical framework for inheritance law and the mutual responsibilities and liabilities of family members. To substantiate the theory, use has been made of descriptions of Armenian society (some from a much later period and concerned with rural society in Armenia itself) and of a relatively small number of wills, settlements relating to inheritances and references to the family scattered in commercial documents. Although these have allowed a reconstruction of the family firm and some insight into how it operated, numerous gaps remain. By no means all of the available wills or settlements (the latter often extremely complex) have been examined, nor have contracts connected with marriages, which should detail the size of dowries and bride-prices and the terms attached to them. There are also collections of correspondence between partners in two of the major firms. Sh.L. Khach'ikyan has worked on the Lazarean correspondence from the mid-18th century but the Shahrimeanean letters in the Venice State Archive remain virtually unexplored. In addition there is undoubtedly a great deal of information on the principal Julfa families contained in colophons but as the Armenian Academy of Sciences' comprehensive collection of seventeenth century colophons only covers the period up to 1660,³ this valuable source gives out at the date where the Julfa documents so far studied begin, leaving no possibility of using these sources jointly. A

1 On related issues in other historical contexts, see C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian society in the age of British expansion 1770-1870*, Cambridge, 1983, chapter 10, "The Family"; S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 5 vols., Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1967-1988, volume 1, "The Family"; I. Origo, *The Merchant of Prato*, London, 1960 (first edition 1957), part 2, chapter 2, "La Famiglia".

2 *Datastanagirk' Astrakhani hayots'*, ed. F.G. Poghosyan, Erevan, 1967. See Part 3, Introduction to the Documents.

3 *Hayeren dzeragreri 17 dari hishatakaraner*, 3 vols., Erevan, 1974, 1978, 1984. Following the recent upheavals in Armenia the continuation of this series now appears to be in doubt.

detailed study of the gravestones in the New Julfa cemetery would also yield considerable information about members of Julfa merchant families.⁴ Finally it must be noted that the sources examined shed little light on several important questions relating to the family firm. For example, none of the wills examined contains a probate or valuation of all of a firm's liquid and fixed assets, or of how its capital was invested; nor do we have a continuous set of accounts for the central fund of a major firm, which would give a much clearer picture of the internal workings of the firm than it has so far been possible to piece together.

However, the sources used here do allow us to form an idea of the basic structure of the family and how it worked as a commercial entity. For the community the situation is considerably more difficult. If any systematic record survives of the operation of the Julfan communal institutions, it must be in the Julfa cathedral archive, and is therefore out of reach. The Astrakhan Lawbook is much less help in this area, since the political and judicial environment of the eighteenth century Russian Empire was very different from that of Safavi Iran and the communal institutions were adapted correspondingly.⁵ We are therefore dependent on a few scattered references, some in European sources, others in Armenian documents. These are insufficient to create a full picture of the community and how its institutions worked, and this section is one of the least well-documented parts of the dissertation. On the subject of the church the scope of the investigation has been narrowly restricted to cover only the direct involvement of the church and priests in commercial affairs, as notaries, witnesses, repositories for documents and so on. The important role of the church as principal guardian of the values of the community is discussed only in a general way, since to cover it in depth would call for a thorough investigation of the cultural and intellectual history of the New Julfa Armenians - a far more ambitious undertaking than this dissertation can attempt, particularly in view of the general lack of studies of the Armenian church from a social and cultural perspective.

⁴ A brief study has been published by L.G. Minasean: *Nor Jughayi gerezmanatune*, New Julfa, 1985.

⁵ A.I. Yukht, "Pravovoe polozhenie astrakhanskikh arman v pervoi polovine XVIII veka", *Tegheka gir*, 1960, no. 2, 47-60.

A final section of the chapter deals with the Julfans' commercial relations outside the community. This explores how far family and community provided the framework for commercial activity, and how far a merchant's trading activities brought him into contact with outsiders. The question of the Julfans' commercial relationship with the Safavi elite is discussed in this section, as are their links with other trading groups and other states. It has already been noted that the role of the state has dominated historical debate on the economies of Safavi Iran and its neighbours. The Julfa documents contain very little information on this subject. The lack of evidence on relations with the Safavi elite can be attributed in part to the fact that available documents date only from the late seventeenth century, by which time the Julfans' former close relations with the court had deteriorated. It is also likely that these relations, which so struck contemporary observers, actually represented only a small fraction of Julfan commercial activity. There is the same dearth of information when it comes to the economic relations with non-Armenian merchants, and this section also has been assembled from a limited number of scattered references and individual cases.

The Family

Any description of pre-modern Armenian society must begin with the family, the central institution in forming both the individual's social identity and relationships, and his or her economic status and potential. This is not a point which would require emphasis, were it not for the fact that the few comparative historians to discuss the Julfa Armenians have paid little attention to the family. Steensgaard's Armenian pedlar has no strong family ties,⁶ while Curtin, though he mentions the Julfans' preference for family members as trading partners,⁷ is principally concerned with the Armenians as a trade diaspora. Braudel too focuses on other aspects of Armenian trade than the specifics of its internal social structure, while his discussion of the family firm draws exclusively

⁶ N. Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century. The East India Companies and the decline of the caravan trade*, Chicago-London, 1973, 23-26.

⁷ P.D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*, Cambridge, 1984, 192. Aghassian and Kévonian also note, without elaboration, the importance of the family in Julfan trade: "Le commerce arménien dans l'Océan Indien aux 17^e et 18^e siècles", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques dans l'Océan Indien et la Mer de Chine 13^e-20^e siècles*, eds. D. Lombard and J. Aubin, Paris, 1988, 155-181.

on West European examples.⁸ In view of this it is necessary to stress the central role of the family in New Julfa society as the principal vehicle for the mobilisation of capital and the dominant form of association between merchants.

In the context of European history the importance of the family in economic as well as social organisation has long been recognised thus:

Throughout the West, in the Middle Ages, commerce and banking depended ultimately on the family. At first, and sometimes for several generations, the most usual type of commercial association was quite naturally one in which brothers joined, and where nephews were subsequently included.⁹

And:

[Venetian] family partnerships were often basically household partnerships arising from the joint obligations of brothers who lived together, and embracing all the inherited patrimony. When one or two of the brothers went abroad to reside in other trade centres, the family partnership easily, and perhaps without much forethought on the part of the brothers, developed into a complicated business organisation.¹⁰

Research into the evolution of forms of business association from the "natural" family partnership through various contractual forms to the joint stock company has occupied an important place in the study of the history of capitalism,¹¹ and this doubtless accounts for the mass of studies relating to the countries of Western Europe. For the rest of the world there are fewer sources and far fewer studies. The conclusions about the central role of the family in economic life derived from the European experience have occasionally been given universal application:

⁸ F. Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century*, trans. S. Reynolds, 3 vols., London, 1981-1984, II, 122-124, 148-157, 434-438.

⁹ J. Heers, *Family Clans in the Middle Age: a study of political and social structures in urban areas*, trans. B. Herbert, Amsterdam, 1977, 216.

¹⁰ F.C. Lane, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice 1418-1449*, Baltimore, 1944, 87.

¹¹ Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 433-444; R.S. Lopez and I.W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World*, London, 1955 (reprinted New York, 198), . Both note the derivation of the word *company* from Latin *cum panis*, those with whom one shares bread, i.e. the household.

In most societies, at most times, it has been the great family, which by its wealth, power, prestige, and presumption of permanence has been the outstanding institution in private economic enterprise.¹²

Or:

Since the merchant profession could not do without a network of reliable go-betweens and associates, the family offered the most natural and sought-after solution.¹³

What evidence there is does appear to confirm this view both for the early medieval period,¹⁴ for the period during which the Julfa merchants flourished,¹⁵ and indeed into the modern age as well.¹⁶

The earliest scientific accounts of the traditional Armenian family date from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and describe the dominant place of the extended patriarchal household in every aspect of Armenian village life. A father exercised complete control over the family's wealth and indeed over the income of all family members. He and his sons, over whom he possessed total authority, formed the basic agricultural labour unit. He took all important economic decisions, represented the family in all contacts with the world outside, and settled internal disputes. If there were other grown men in the family he might consult them over important questions, but decision and authority belonged to him alone. Children had no economic independence and very restricted personal freedom. When sons married (marriages were arranged by the senior members of the two families for mutual economic and social benefit) they continued

12 F.C. Lane, "Family partnerships and joint ventures", in *Venice and History*, Baltimore, 1966, 36-37.

13 Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 150.

14 Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, I, 180-182; A.L. Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit in Medieval Islam*, Princeton, 1970, 122-123, 218.

15 A. Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants du Caire au XVIII^e siècle*, 2 vols. paginated as I, Damascus, 1973-1974, ; *idem.*, "Les sources de la richesse urbaine au Caire au dix-huitième siècle", in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, eds. Naff and Owen, Illinois, 1977, 184-204; D.L. White, "Parsis in the commercial world of Western India, 1700-1750", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, XXIV/2, 1987, 183-203; H.-D. Evers, "Chettiar moneylenders in Southeast Asia", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques, 199-219*; S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740*, Delhi, 1986, 282-285, 292-293; S. Gordon, "Burhanpur: entrepot and hinterland", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, XXV/4, 1988, 437-438.

16 Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, chapter 10.

to live in their father's household with their wives and children, and continued to owe their father unquestioning obedience in all matters. Households might be between twenty and fifty strong, and all members of a single generation considered each other as brothers and sisters. Daughters lived in the parental home until marriage, when they moved into their husbands' households, where initially they occupied a very low status. The patriarch's wife directed all the women's work and activities and could exercise very considerable influence in the family's affairs. There was a strict hierarchy within the family, with all members ranked according to gender and seniority. The extended family generally inhabited a single house, or several closely grouped, adjoining or interconnected houses. A family lost prestige in the community if it split up, so there was considerable pressure to keep the extended family together.¹⁷

While no detailed accounts of the structure of the Armenian family in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries survive, there are descriptions which indicate that it was essentially similar to that of some two hundred years later. Cartwright, for instance, gives the following account of the rural Armenian family in the early seventeenth century:

Their families are very great; for both Sons, nephews and nieces do dwell under one roof, having all their substance in common, and when the father dyeth the eldest son doth govern all the rest, all submitting themselves under his regiment. But when the eldest son dyeth, the government does not pass to his sons, but to the eldest brother. And if it chance to fall out that all the brethren do die, then the government doth belong to the eldest son of the eldest brother, and so from one to another.¹⁸

For an Englishman the striking features were the extended nature of the household and the succession of the senior male of the senior generation, rather than a system of primogeniture. Cartwright's description is borne out by the story of Paron Ayvaz related by the late seventeenth century historian Zak'aria K'anak'ertsi. Ayvaz, a merchant and landowner from Karbi in Armenia, had three sons. Dawlat' Beg, the oldest, succeeded him, and all three brothers and their wives and children continued to live together in a single household, which by now comprised more than 30 people. Dawlat' Beg's two brothers both died before him, so leadership passed to his eldest son,

¹⁷ M.K. Matossian, *The Impact of Soviet Policies in Armenia*, Leiden, 1962, 3-6.

¹⁸ J. Cartwright, *The Preacher's Travels*, London, 1611 (reprinted Norwood, New Jersey-Amsterdam, 1977), 24.

another Ayvaz, who thus became the patriarch of a family that included not only his wife and children, brothers, unmarried sisters and fraternal nephews and nieces, but his first cousins and their offspring as well. The women of the house obeyed the matriarch, Ayvaz's mother Mariam.¹⁹ The surviving sources confirm that the New Julfa family was similar to its contemporary rural counterpart.

From the Lawbook of the Astrakhan Armenians we learn that it was obligatory to leave at least one third of one's estate to one's legitimate heirs if these numbered four or less, or one half of one's estate if there were more than four heirs. The remainder of the estate could be disposed of at will. Heirs were divided into three categories: 1) sons and daughters and their descendants to the sixth generation; 2) parents, brothers and sisters and their descendants; 3) grandparents, great grandparents, great uncles and aunts, and their descendants. If there were heirs of the first category then those of the second category had no claim, and so forth. According to the Lawbook all sons and daughters should receive equal shares in a parent's estate, though a woman's children had no claim to their maternal grandparents' estate if she (the mother) predeceased them, since she represented the only link to the maternal household.²⁰ Documentary evidence indicates, however, that in Julfan practice daughters were merely provided with a dowry, or received smaller shares than sons, if any at all. A will written in 1700 makes the preference for the male line explicit,²¹ while in another daughters are left a share of one eighth the size of those left to sons.²² During their parents' lifetime children did not inherit from grandparents. Children could only be disinherited for a good reason which had to be demonstrated in the will. The Lawbook illustrates the system of inheritance by means of an example reproduced in diagrammatic form below:

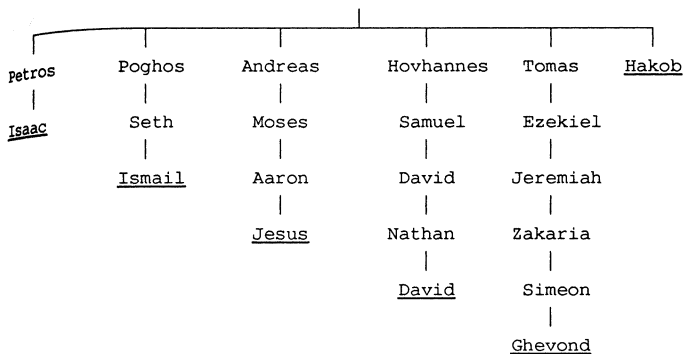
19 Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, trans. M.O. Darbinyan-Melikyan, Moscow, 1969,

20 *Datastanagirk'*, 57-63. In Bagratid and Artsrunid Armenia estates were divided equally among heirs (J.M. Thierry, in *Histoire des arméniens*, ed. G. Dédéyan, Paris, 1982, 259.

21 PNJ, I, 117.

22 PNJ, I, 145.

Abraham



The names underlined are the oldest surviving descendants (all only sons) in each of the six lines descended from Abraham. All will inherit equal shares in his estate, but any offspring of theirs would have no claim in their lifetimes. In this way the equal sixfold division of the estate among the six lines is maintained, regardless of the passage of generations.²³

The same concern with preserving the male line underlies the entire section of the Lawbook devoted to the subject of adoption. This deals exclusively with adopted sons (*hogevoirdi*) (there is no equivalent provision for adopting a daughter). A childless man could adopt someone as his son by exchanging written agreements with him. A candidate for adoption had either to be independent (owing to the death of his natural father or legal separation from him (see below)) or he could be adopted on the instruction of his father, in which case he owed obedience to his natural father until his death, and thereafter to the adopting father. An adopted son had to be at least eighteen years old, and no more than half the age of his adopted father (a provision which clearly shows that adoption was not intended to find homes for orphans, but to allow the incorporation of adult males into existing family households). A man could not leave his property

²³ *Datastanagirk'*, 61-62, 67-68.

to an adopted son in preference to a natural son unless the latter had been disinherited on valid grounds. If someone adopted a son and subsequently had natural children, then all were treated as heirs on an equal footing.²⁴ In the one recorded case of adoption encountered in the research for this dissertation, the adopted son is indeed put on equal terms with the father's natural children, though he is also required to incorporate his own capital into the family funds. In one respect this case seems to contravene the provisions of the Lawbook, in that the father already had children of his own when he made the adoption. The adopted son was a relative - the father's first cousin - and so they were already part of the same family, with shared economic interests.²⁵

The system of inheritance and the practice of adoption demonstrate the concern to maintain the patriarchal family and involve all the (male) descendants equally in the patrimony, but in themselves these do nothing to guarantee the continuity of the extended family following the death of the patriarch, nor to prevent the fragmentation of wealth and property among a series of nuclear households. Indeed, the absence of the principle of primogeniture is often given as one reason for the lack of family fortunes lasting several generations in many non-European societies.²⁶ It was the strict hierarchy of the Armenian family structure, and the obstacles placed in the way of an individual attempting to achieve independence and split off from the extended family with his share of the inheritance that held the Armenian family household together from one generation to another. Again the Lawbook is a valuable source, particularly in the sections dealing with the separation of fathers and sons, and of brothers. That a son's personal and economic freedom was severely restricted during his father's lifetime emerges very clearly. During his father's lifetime, for example, a son could not pledge anything as security for a loan, act as a guarantor for someone else's debt without his father's authorisation, write a will, contract to buy anything without his father's permission, or receive capital from someone on a *commenda* contract without his father's permission; nor was he liable for any debt.²⁷ There were only two routes through which he

24 *Datastanagirk'*, 192-194.

25 BLL 1048, f. 212. This document will be discussed in detail below.

26 Thierry suggests that such was the case in Armenia in earlier centuries (*loc. cit.*).

27 *Datastanagirk'*, 26, 41, 46, 53, 123, 143.

could achieve personal and economic independence: his father's death, or a deliberate act of separation.²⁸

A son achieved independence on his father's death only if he had himself reached the age of maturity, which according to the Lawbook was twenty-five.²⁹ An immature son was placed under the care of a guardian, whose authority was as complete as that of a father.³⁰ The other route to independence was if a father decided to separate (*bazhanel*) a son by immediately giving him his share of the inheritance and recording the act in a special deed of separation (*bazhanagir*).³¹ Once separated from his father a son gained the following:

1. personal independence (*andznishkhan*);
2. the right to trade (i.e. to enter into contracts of all kinds in his own name);
3. the right to mortgage or pledge his property as security;
4. the right to act as a guarantor for someone else's debt;
5. the right to make a will;
6. the right to direct his own work and reap the benefits of it (*ashkhatank iwr tirel ew vayelet*).³²

A separated son whose father was still living continued to owe him divinely ordained filial duties.³³

These provisions give an idea of the authoritarian patriarchal principle governing father-son relations within the family, but it is the following chapter of the Lawbook, on the separation of

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 194.

²⁹ Documentary evidence indicates that there was a degree of flexibility on this point. One will confirms it as twenty-five (BLL 1048, f. 212), while another makes it eighteen (PNJ, I, 116).

³⁰ *Datastanagirk'*, 79f.

³¹ I have not come across any examples of *bazhanagirs*, but a Russian translation of an eighteenth century *bazhanagir* is published in A. Hovhannisyan and V.K. Voskanyan (eds.), *Armenio-russkie otnosheniya v XVIII veke*, 3 vols., Erevan, 1964-1978, III, 217-218 (cited in NJVH, 84 n. 138).

³² *Datastanagirk'*, 194-195.

³³ *Ibid.*, 196.

brothers, that provides a clue to the continuing cohesion of the household from one generation to the next.

Even after a father's death his sons did not automatically become economically independent; on the contrary, unless they had separated during their father's lifetime they remained united in a single household with full mutual liability and responsibility. They could not separate until they reached the age of maturity and even then separation between brothers, as between fathers and sons, could be achieved only by drawing up a special written deed.³⁴ Zak'aria Agulets'i records in his diary his separation from his nephews following his brother's death. The entire family property is inventoried and divided between the two branches of the family, and the separation is ratified by all the available sources of authority:

I brought a judge (*ghazi*), I divided up (*jokets'i*) the shares and wrote it in a document; I brought in a *vardapet* and officials (*dōlat'awork'*) and we separated (*bazhanets'ak'*). Each of us is master of his share, to build, to destroy, to sell or to keep.³⁵

Separation was a momentous act, not a routine development in a family's life. The crucial aspects were the division of the patrimony and the ending of full mutual liability. The Lawbook is very clear on these points, emphasising that in a case where two brothers were left nothing by their father and one of them grew rich while the other ran up debts, not only was the rich one liable for the pauper's debts, but the poor brother was equal co-owner of all the rich brother's wealth. In short, everything the household owned belonged in equal shares to all brothers. Separation may have been frowned upon, but the Lawbook does make it clear that it was a mature brother's right to demand separation, and that the community judicial authorities were obliged to assist him in obtaining his share of the patrimony.³⁶

The same chapter spells out the hierarchy of authority among brothers: "For as long as there is no separation among brothers, a younger brother must respect and honour the older brother like his father, and serve his pleasure without complaint or excuse". In the event of a younger brother's

34 *Ibid.*, 196-198.

35 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Ōragrut'iwnež*, Erevan, 1938.

36 *Datastanagirk'*, 196-197.

disobedience, the older brother could separate him and send him away with his share of the inherited patrimony, but without a share of any addition to the family's wealth accruing since the father's death.³⁷

That the provisions of the Lawbook applied in Julfa is confirmed in other sources. Pietro Della Valle, for example, noted that the three sons of the *kalāntar* Safar all continued to live together in the family home following their father's death,³⁸ and Chardin was the guest of the five Shahrimean brothers at a feast given in their splendid mansion.³⁹ Gabriel de Chinon remarked on the rigid hierarchy of the Julfa family:

Sons of good family never see their parents without showing, through their speech and their countenance, that they recognize them as their masters, on whom they depend ... Brothers also show great respect towards one another, especially the younger towards the older ones. The former do not even dare to drink in the presence of the latter without lowering their heads and even turning away, which is the greatest sign of deference and submission.⁴⁰

This form of extended household partnership occupied the central place in Julfan commercial organisation as well. As a trading institution we may call it a family firm or company, but it is important to remember that the Armenians themselves made no clear distinction between the family as social unit and the family as economic entity, and that the mutual powers and liabilities of a firm's partners were established by their kinship, not by any formal agreement. There is not even a specific word for "family firm" in the Julfa dialect. Patriarchs (the firm's directors or senior partners) normally signed letters, contracts and documents in their own names; there was no need to indicate that the capital they controlled was that of the entire extended household. So close was the association of the firm with the person of its current patriarch that, while family firms generally took the name of their founding patriarch as their surname, they were also often referred to by the name of their current patriarch.⁴¹

37 *Ibid.*, 198.

38 P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 2 vols., Brighton, 1843, II, 89.

39 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 178 f.

40 [Gabriel de Chinon,] *Relations nouvelles du Levant*, Lyon, 1671, 281-283.

41 NJHV, 116.

In one important respect Julfan practice seems to have been at variance with the precepts of the Lawbook. The latter states unequivocally that unseparated brothers were full co-owners of the whole of the family's wealth (including their own earnings since their father's death), whereas documentary evidence shows that among the Julfans unseparated brothers did possess capital of their own, in addition to being joint equal shareholders in the family's inherited wealth. It was therefore necessary to distinguish between the central common fund of the family and the private capital belonging to individual partners. The former consisted of the inheritance from the father (and often the mother) and is therefore frequently referred to in accounts and other documents as *hayrenik'* (paternal inheritance) and *mayrenik'* (maternal inheritance) as distinct from *hatuk* (private) funds or accounts.⁴² Another term used to distinguish between the firm or household and its individual members is *sarkār*, which is derived from the Persian *sarkār*, itself a compound of *sar* (head) and *kār* (work), possessing a wide range of meanings. Steingass suggests: chief, superintendent, agent; a title by way of respect given to a person present or absent; a workshop; a king's court; government; estate; property.⁴³ In Safavi chancery usage *sarkār* was used to refer to a department or subdivision of the royal or state treasury.⁴⁴ The closest parallel to the Armenian usage comes, however, from India where *sarkār* was used to denote noble establishments or households.⁴⁵ This parallels the way it is used in Julfa documents to refer to merchant households or firms.⁴⁶ Like *hayrenik'* and *mayrenik'*, this term was used only to distinguish between the firm and its members, not as a generic term for firm or to describe the firm by outsiders.⁴⁷ They would have referred simply to the name of the senior partner or

42 ASVA, 30th Nakha 106; ASVT, xix 87.1.

43 F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 1872 (7th impression London, 1984).

44 [Samī'ā, Mīrzā], *Tadhkirat al-mulūk: a manual of Safavid administration*, trans. and ed. V. Minorsky, London, 1943 (reprinted Cambridge, 1980), 105 n., 174; B.G. Martin, "Seven Safavid documents from Azarbayjan", in *Documents from Islamic Chanceries*, first series, ed. S.M. Stern, Oxford, 1965, 194 and note.

45 M. Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab, 1707-1748*, Delhi, 1986, 38, 170, 192 n.

46 BLL 1048, ff. 84,92, 94, 111; ASVA, Account book of Murat's son Yakob.

47 Petros di Sargis Gilanents' refers to the *sarkar* of the Dutch and English East India Companies in Isfahan. Minasian translates this as "chief" and "agent", but in the context the term could perhaps be better translated as the "establishment" or "factory" of the companies. Even on this reading *sarkar* is not being used as a generic word for firm or company.

whichever partner they were doing business with, or possibly to the family name.⁴⁸ In a single instance the term brotherhood (*eghbayrut'iwñ*) occurs, a close parallel with the Italian (*fraterna*), but this is also in connection with one firm's internal affairs. It occurs in a power of attorney written in Livorno by Murat's son Petros Shahrimeanean, authorising his brother Yakob, who was just setting off for Isfahan to act on his behalf in all dealings with his brothers in Julfa. "Brothers" is here used in the broad sense to include cousins and all partners in the family firm, and Petros is careful to authorise Yakob to deal with them not only acting jointly as the family firm (*eghbayrut'iwñ*) but also in any other respect (presumably he has in mind any dealing with one or more brothers acting in their private capacity).⁴⁹

Having established the basic features of the Armenian family firm, it is time to consider its qualities as a commercial institution. First, the family possessed both the cohesion and the clear pattern of authority that were essential for the successful operation of international trade. In long-distance trade, when partners were often out of touch for long periods and when there was no concrete obstacle to one partner absconding with another's capital, complete trust was essential. Kinship is not, of course, a guarantee against betrayal, and there are recorded cases of discord within Julfa merchant families,⁵⁰ but by and large the ties of blood seem to have been effective in binding the members of Julfan family firms together. The family also provided more material incentives to loyalty. Since partners were all shareholders in a patrimony held jointly in Julfa and controlled by the current patriarch or senior partner, any partner who felt tempted to make off with the resources entrusted to him would have had to weigh his immediate gain against the loss of his share of the patrimony. The fact that wives and children almost invariably stayed at home in Julfa when a merchant travelled abroad provided an additional incentive for a merchant's eventual return.

⁴⁸ Khach'ikyan interprets one document as referring to partnerships between the members of one family and other firms (*sark'ar*), but I believe the reference is to *commenda* partnerships within a single firm (NJHV, 87-88, citing BLL 1048, f. 298, not 1047, f. 312 as cited in Khach'ikyan's note on page 86)

⁴⁹ ASVA, 22nd Shbat' 102, Part 3, Document 8.

⁵⁰ For an extreme example see C. de Bruyn, *Voyages de Corneille le Brun par la Moscovie, en Perse et aux Indes Orientales*, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1718, 238.

The extended household was able to provide all the necessary personnel to operate the firm, from the patriarch controlling operations in Julfa to the young man setting off on his first business trip - like Zak'aria Agulets'i, who in 1647 at the age of seventeen left Agulis with his first cousin Nikoghos, each of them charged with transporting a single bale of silk to Izmir.⁵¹ Zak'aria's professional life can be traced from his diary and gives some idea of how a merchant's activities changed as he grew older and assumed an increasingly important place in the family hierarchy. On his first trip, mentioned above, Zak'aria travelled on from Izmir to Istanbul, and did not return to Agulis until June 1649.⁵² After some ten years' constant travelling between Agulis, Istanbul, Tiflis, Tabriz and Isfahan, and still only in his late twenties, he set off on his longest trip which took him to Venice and Amsterdam.⁵³ By the mid-1660s, however, Zak'aria, now in his mid-thirties, had more or less settled down in Agulis and thereafter his trips became less frequent and mostly only local. Presumably by this time he was entrusting his long-distance goods to younger relatives or agents.

The size and longevity of several of the major Julfa families is itself indicative of the success of the family in providing the necessary cohesion for effective commercial organisation. The family history of the Shahrimeaneans can be traced, albeit with gaps, from the emigration from Old Julfa at the turn of the seventeenth century over seven generations to the end of the eighteenth century, by which time the family was living in the Palazzo Sceriman in Venice.⁵⁴

The fifth generation, active in about 1700, comprised some eighteen cousins, sons of five brothers, themselves great-grandsons of the founding patriarch Murad. Judging by the number of signatories on letters sent to the firm's Venice branch, up to sixteen family members were based in Julfa at any one time; others ran the permanent offices in Venice, Livorno and Surat or travelled on the

51 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Oragrut'yune*, 85.

52 *Ibid.*, 29-33.

53 *Ibid.*, 50-56.

54 Now home to Venice's central telephone exchange. On the history of the Shahrimeanean family see PNJ, I, chapter 19; NJHV, 69-81; D.M. White, *Zaccaria Seriman 1709-1784 and the viaggi di Enrico Wanton*, Manchester, 1961, introduction.

firm's business or based themselves temporarily in centres such as Tabriz, Erzerum and Izmir.⁵⁵

Several other Julfa families survived and thrived for many generations, among them the Ghazareans (Lazareans), the Velijaneans (or Khoja Poghoseans) and the Sarfrazians.⁵⁶ One family that was remarkable for its fecundity even by contemporary standards was the Karasmankants' family, earning its name from the number of babies in the household - *karasun* (forty) *manuk* (baby, infant).⁵⁷ According to Chardin, some Julfa families counted as many as 500 members, and he also notes that these families survived for centuries.⁵⁸

Apart from its inherent capacity to combine a large number of associates in a tight-knit and effective unit, the other strength of the Armenian family as a vehicle for commercial activity was its ability to concentrate capital. The practice of continuing association among brothers following a father's death allowed large concentrations of capital to be maintained intact over several generations, while the principle of obedience to the senior male in the household facilitated the effective mobilisation of capital when the ability to take rapid decisive action was of crucial importance.

Unfortunately it is not yet possible to trace the financial fortunes of any of the major families over a long period. We can nevertheless be sure that the wealthy Julfa merchants were very rich indeed, whether by European or Asian standards. Many travellers remarked on the Julfans' wealth, and not a few attempted to quantify it. Della Valle asserts that the richer merchants each traded as much as two or three hundred loads of silk in a year (worth at least 800 to 1,200 tumans

55 ASVA, Shahrimeanean letters. The earliest letters, from around 1700, are signed by ten to sixteen partners. Some twenty years later letters from Isfahan bear only two or three signatures, indicating the Shahrimeanean's gradual withdrawal from Julfa. Surprisingly the number of signatories on letters from Venice and Livorno remains constant at about two or three. The two letters from Surat, dated 1720, bear six signatures.

56 PNJ, I, chapters 17, 18, 20; NJHV, 100 f.

57 PNJ, I, 149.

58 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 178.

at cost price in Iran).⁵⁹ From about the middle of the seventeenth century we have Raphaël du Mans' statement that several Julfa merchants had fortunes of 10-20,000 tumans,⁶⁰ while Tavernier writes that:

At length these Armenians became so exquisite in Trade, that several of them have left Estates of two, some of twenty thousand Tomans. But the richest among them was Cotgia, or Monsieur Petrus [Velijanean], who left forty thousand Tomans in coyned Money, besides his Houses, Furniture, and Lands in the Country, his Jewels and Plate; all which are never reckoned a Merchant's Estate, but only the ready Cash with which he trades.⁶¹

According to Chardin, Aga Piri, the *kalāntar* who converted to Islam, was one of the wealthiest Julfans, with a fortune of over two million livres (40,000 tumans); he also states that within thirty years of the founding of New Julfa there were more than sixty Julfa merchants with fortunes of between 100,000 and two million écus (12,000-240,000 tumans).⁶² Fryer believed there were many New Julfa merchants worth 100,000 tumans.⁶³ For once the extravagant figures of the travellers were close to the mark. Zak'aria Agulets'i records that the estate of a Julfa merchant who died in Izmir in 1667 was worth 300,000 piastres (20,000 tumans), and that two Tiflis Armenians who died in Izmir in the same year left 700,000 piastres (47,000 tumans) in cash, silk and cloth.⁶⁴ Another merchant, Grigor Khaldarean, died leaving 10,500 tumans invested in *commenda* partnerships (we have no record of his other assets).⁶⁵ At the Afghan sack of Julfa in 1722 the Kardelans (?) were said to have lost 12,000 tumans and the Shahrimeaneans 7,000 tumans, sums indicative not only of their general wealth but also of the liquid assets at their disposal.⁶⁶ The Shahrimeaneans were undoubtedly one of the wealthiest families: a Carmelite missionary reckoned their fortune at 70,000 tumans in 1682.⁶⁷ The will of Sarhad's son Margar

59 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, (437-8).

60 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, ed. C. Schéfer, Paris, 1890, .

61 J.-B. Tavernier, *Les six voyages...*, 2 vols., Paris, 1682, I, 379-380. English translation from *The Six Voyages...*, trans. J.P., 2 parts, London, 1678, I, 159.

62 J. Chardin, *Voyages de Chardin...*, ed. L. Langlès, 10 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1811, III, 144.

63 J. Fryer, *A New Account of the East Indies and Persia...*, ed. W. Crock, 3 vols., London, 1909-1915, II, 258.

64 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Ōragrut'yuně*, .

65 PNJ, I, 161-162.

66 J. Hanway, *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea...*, 4 vols., London, 1753, III, 120.

67 [H. Chick (ed.),] *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia*, 2 vols. paginated as 1, London 1939, .

tells us that his grandfather Shahrimeanean and great uncle Nazar had invested a total of 720,000 ducats (72,000 tumans) in Venetian bonds.⁶⁸ Whether this was in addition to the 200,000 ducats (20,000 tumans) which the Shahrimeaneans are said to have donated to Venice for the war against the Ottomans is unclear,⁶⁹ but the sum must have been separate from both the firm's working capital and from any investments in property. It is therefore not hard to believe Chardin when he states that each of Sarhad's five sons was worth 400-500,000 livres (8-10,000 tumans),⁷⁰ nor Berchet when he calls them one of Europe's major commercial houses.⁷¹ To put these figures in some kind of perspective, wealthy Venetian firms of the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries had fortunes of 125,000 to 250,000 ducats.⁷²

Equally striking was the speed with which fortunes would be made. Zak'aria Agulets'i mentions an Agulis orphan who left 3,000 tumans having started out with nothing,⁷³ and a Julfan built up a fortune of 23-24,000 tumans, also from nothing.⁷⁴ The two Margarean brothers turned a capital of 27,550 rupees (1,400 tumans) into more than 2 million rupees (100,000 tumans) in the course of thirty years' trading in Madras.⁷⁵ But if international trade could be extremely profitable, it also involved high risks. Poghos Velijanean made a will in 1652 which lists very considerable property; he was subsequently ruined, but rebuilt his fortunes after managing to attract the attention of Shah Sulayman in the Maydān-i Shāh in Isfahan and secure a 1,000 tuman loan.⁷⁶

While there is little evidence concerning patterns of investment among Julfa merchants, it is clear that in addition to commercial investments the wealthy families had extensive property interests.

68 PNJ, I, 111f.

69 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 438.

70 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 178.

71 G. Berchet, "Del commercio dei veneti nell'Asia", *Atti dell'Ateneo Veneto*, second series, I, Venice, 1864, 13.

72 Lane, "Family partnerships", 37, 40.

73 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Oragrut'yune*, 85.

74 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse*, 183.

75 PNJ, I, 180-183; M.J. Seth, *Armenians in India. From the earliest times to the present day*, Calcutta, 1937 (reprinted 1983), 305-306. The figure of 2 million rupees is given by Seth, but he does not show how he calculated it, so it should be viewed with caution.

76 PNJ, I, 129.

This suggests that commercial property was a not insignificant element in at least some firms' operations, perhaps providing a low risk counterbalance to high risk investments in international trade. In 1708 the Sarfrazians owned two houses in which members of the family lived, plus a number of income-producing properties,⁷⁷ including the Julfa central square, orchards, baths, bazaars, an icehouse, two streams (one of which drove a watermill) and a number of rented houses.⁷⁸

How family firms managed their trading capital varied according to their size. In the case of a small firm consisting of only a father and sons, the arrangement was probably very simple, with the father, and the sons acting on his instructions, carrying out most business in person, buying, selling and transporting goods themselves and drawing credit or cash on the firm's funds as the need arose.⁷⁹ The larger firms required more complex organisation, since they often comprised several generations and large numbers of partners, and were involved in extensive international trading operations requiring permanent representatives in a number of countries. There are a number of interesting questions here: whether partners were paid salaries or just a share of the profit, perhaps in the form of some kind of regular dividend; whether the more experienced and able were better remunerated and if so by what mechanism; how the firm allocated its resources to its various members, bearing in mind that all had unlimited liability for the others' debts. We have no conclusive answers, but can offer some likely solutions.

The first point to make is that partners did not devote themselves exclusively to the firm's business, but also traded extensively on their own accounts.⁸⁰ Indeed, the sources suggest that private trade far outweighed business conducted in the firm's name. Yet since the firm's capital was held centrally under the control of the senior partner, the question arises of where the other partners found the funds for their private operations. A man might acquire some personal capital through his maternal inheritance or through his wife's dowry, but these would usually have been

77 *Daramat'i milk'*, from Persian *darāmadī milk*.

78 PNJ, I, 93 n.

79 Khach'ikyan, "Shahvelu vordi Sarhadi hashvematyanē".

80 Khach'ikyan, *Nor Jughayu*, 105-106.

small sums, certainly by comparison with the resources of the major firms. The partners must, therefore, have been able to draw on the firm's central funds for their private trade, probably at a favourable rate of interest.⁸¹ It is also possible that some transactions recorded in the name of an individual were actually company business.

There is firm evidence of one kind of transfer of funds between the firm and its partners, and that is by means of *commenda* contracts (see Chapter 4). These allowed the firm to advance capital to a partner, who employed it in trade and on termination of the contract received a specified share of any profits, while the firm recovered its investment plus the remainder of the profits. For the firm this represented a convenient form of commercial investment requiring very little active management, while for the partner it provided a means of financing his own trade as well as benefitting the firm to which he belonged.

It is probable that firms also used their partners as commission agents (see Chapter 4), again providing themselves with a convenient commercial investment and the partner with a means of increasing his personal wealth.

Such arrangements provided the flexibility that appears to be lacking in the structure of the Armenian family partnership. Selective loans, *commendas* and commission agencies allowed the senior partner to invest the firm's funds with those partners who showed the most ability and the partners to benefit directly from their own labours. Once it is appreciated how much independence was possible, it becomes easier to see how partners could accumulate considerable private fortunes, while remaining part of a household firm whose capital was, in theory at least, held in a common pool shared equally by all partners of the same generation. Thus children were shareholders in a paternal inheritance which consisted of the father's personal wealth as well as his share in his patrimonial inheritance.

⁸¹ The same is true of the structure of European family firms (Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 429).

Partners also frequently entered into individual personal contracts, loans and agreements with one another, using their private capital. The question of dowries, bride-prices and maternal inheritances adds to the complexity of the economic ties binding families together. Some of the family settlement documents bear this out; without the aid of full accounts it is impossible to trace what has happened, for example, to a dowry invested in a firm's trade twenty-five years earlier and now to be withdrawn, with profits, by the widow.⁸²

Several of the documents that reveal most about the operational structure of Julfa firms relate to a single family, the Khoja Minaseans (also known as the T'arkhaneans).⁸³ The founder of the firm, Panos's son Khoja Minas, was a successful merchant of the later seventeenth century. He was active in the trade with India, much of his commercial activity being organised from Surat. He owned a number of ships, and must by 1671 have been one of the richest and most prominent citizens of Julfa, since his name appears among the twenty-three signatures to a letter sent to the Russian Tsar by the *kalāntar* and leaders of the community.⁸⁴ In 1674 Khoja Murad, an Armenian merchant who established himself at the Ethiopian court, travelled from Surat to Malacca on a ship *De Hoop* (The Hopewell) owned by Khoja Minas,⁸⁵ and the Abbé Carré informs us that in 1672 Khoja Minas owned four large ships, one of which was captained by an Englishman, Thomas Quin.⁸⁶ Boxer states that at the height of his fortune he owned seven or eight ships, among them the Hopewell, the Selimony and the Saint Michael.⁸⁷

82 A good example is ASVT, xix, 87.1.

83 The principal sources on the family are the BLL Armenian Mercantile Papers; PNJ, I, chapter 22; and a colophon in the New Julfa Cathedral manuscript collection (S. Tēr-Awetisean, *Ts'uts'ak hayerēn dzeragrats' Nor Jughayi Amenap'rkich' vank'i*, I Vienna, 1970, 247-248. Khach'ikyan has used all the above for her account of the family (NJHV, 81-100). Further information is contained in C.R. Boxer, "A Portuguese document of 1670 concerning Khwaja Minaz", *Indica*, XIII/1-2, 1976, 83-92; B.G. Gokhale, *Surat in the Seventeenth Century*, London-Malmö, 1979, 126.

84 NJVH, 82.

85 E.J. van Donzel, *Foreign Relations of Ethiopia, 1642-1700: documents relating to the journeys of Khodja Murad*, Leiden, 1979, 44.

86 B. Carré, *The Travels of the Abbé Carré in India and the Near East (1672-1674)*, trans. Fawcett, 3 vols., London, 1947-1948, 92-93.

87 Boxer, "A Portuguese document", 84. See also Seth, *Armenians in India*, 293-294.

Khoja Minas wrote a will in 1700, a year before his death.⁸⁸ We learn that he had five sons and four daughters⁸⁹ and that he had previously promised each of his sons a portion of 3,000 tumans. The oldest son K'ahnán had enjoyed his father's particular trust: "he was in my house, and close to me, and all my trade and everything I had was in his hands, and I did not check his trading account". K'ahnán was apparently being groomed to take over as head of the family, but he had other ideas and separated from the household (*i tanēs jokvets'aw*). It subsequently came to light that he had made off with 7,000 tumans instead of the 3,000 that were his legitimate share. Khoja Minas's fortune seems to have survived this blow,⁹⁰ for in the will of 1700 he left 500 tumans to endow a charity hospital whose construction he had already undertaken, plus another 100 tumans for other pious and charitable works. The remainder of his liquid assets (the total value is not specified) he divided into 36 shares, eight each for his four unseparated sons (K'ahnán had died in 1697) and one each for the daughters. All his other property he left to the same four sons.⁹¹

A deed of settlement which was drawn up following a meeting of the senior partners of the firm on 24th July 1739⁹² contains valuable information on the history of the firm following Khoja Minas's death. The purpose of the meeting was to review the family withdrawals account (*vardashti khēsap*) over the last four decades, draw up a balance, and settle the account. We read that Khoja Minas had built a house for Sēt'-Agha, left the family house to Sarfraz and Ēliaz, and promised Ēmniaz money to build himself a house. From the time of Minas's death until December 1702 or January 1703, however, the four brothers had all continued to live together in

88 See Part 3, Document 1.

89 See Family Tree of the Khoja Minaseans.

90 According to Boxer's sources Minas was declared insolvent in 1677, but his will, and the family's continuing prosperity indicate that any setback was only temporary. Doubt is cast on the veracity of the Portuguese sources by the report, cited in Boxer's postscript, that Minas died in Diu in 1687. Boxer, "A Portuguese document".

91 NJHV, 82-85, citing PNJ, I, 144-145. Khach'ikyan is mistaken in thinking that Minas actually left each of his surviving sons 3,000 tumans. He states that he had promised to do so prior to K'ahnán's defection, but the will specifies only the shares allocated to each member of the family; it gives no valuation of the whole estate, nor of individual shares.

92 NJVH, 85-88. The document is BLL 1048, f. 298, not BLL 1047, f. 312 as cited by Khach'ikyan.

the same house and to share all expenses.⁹³ Then Sēt'-Agha and Ēliāz moved into the house which Khoja Minas had built for the former. In 1706/7 Ēliāz returned to the principal family home, dying there some five years later. Shortly after this Sarfraz bought or built a house of his own, but apparently his family did not move into it until after his death in 1717. Sēt'-Agha had also died two years before in 1715. By the time of the meeting, therefore, the only surviving son of Khoja Minas was Ēmniāz. We may presume that he was still living in the original family home, together with the descendants of Ēliāz, while the descendants of Sēt'-Agha and Sarfraz each occupied a separate house. There were ten sons (and an unknown number of daughters) in the third generation, probably all born before the 1739 meeting and several of them grown men with wives and children of their own. Until that point the firm had met the household expenses of the whole extended family, which had continued to function as a single economic unit.

The 1739 meeting was attended by the heads of each of the four filial lines: Minas's son Ēmniāz (the current patriarch), Sēt'-Agha's son Grigor, Sarfraz's son Aghamal, and Ēliāz's son Tsatur, all acting as representatives of their respective households. These four checked the accounts, calculated the sums owing to the central fund by each of the branches of the family,⁹⁴ and agreed that after these debts had been cleared, each of the four branches of the family would in future take responsibility for its own house and household expenditure. This was not a minor adjustment in the firm's housekeeping arrangements but a reorganisation of far-reaching consequences. The crucial clause states that: "hereafter each of us is owner and master of his own house, and in respect of these houses we have no right, demand, or claim on one another". By the act of establishing separate households the four branches were taking an important step towards becoming four separate family firms, without mutual powers or liabilities. The deed falls short, however, of being an act of separation (*bazhanagir*), since it does not represent the final dissolution of the original firm, or the splitting up of the original patrimony; rather it reaffirms that the four partners, as heads of their respective branches of the family, were equal shareholders in

⁹³ De Bruyn gives a detailed description of the Khoja Minasean house (De Bruyn, *Voyages*, I, 233).

⁹⁴ Sēt'-Agha's family owed 450 tumans; Sarfraz's family 970 tumans; Ēliāz's family 300 tumans; and Ēmniāz's family 150 tumans.

the original firm.⁹⁵ Indeed the four partners agreed that the firm should continue to pay each of the households a fixed expenditure allowance of fifty tumans per annum.

Two surviving *commenda* partnership contracts dating from 1742 and 1744 give an insight into the way the Khoja Minasean firm operated after the 1739 settlement.⁹⁶ In both contracts the investors are the same four senior partners who drew up the 1739 agreement, each of whom contributes a quarter of the total capital invested. Had the Khoja Minasean firm still been functioning as a single entity, we would expect to find the signature of only the single senior partner, the patriarch of the household; had it actually been dissolved we would not expect to find the four separate nuclear firms joining forces to invest scrupulously equal shares in the same *commenda*. It seems, therefore, that following the 1739 settlement the Khoja Minasean firm was operating under a joint directorship, with its capital still held in common, but with the heads of each of the four independent households now having an equal say in its disposal.

Another interesting feature of the 1739 settlement is its recognition of partners' existing private interests. While it states that all investments made by partners of the firm prior to the 1739 agreement should be considered joint commitments, it excludes those made by a partner solely in the name of himself and his descendants. It also recognises partners' rights to their share of the profits on any existing *commenda* partnerships with the firm or with outsiders.⁹⁷

A third document sheds light not only on the Khoja Minasean firm, but on the whole ethos of the Armenian family firm. This is the will of Sēt'-Agha's son Grigor which, although written in Madras in 1737, two years before the 1739 settlement, already looks forward to the evolution of

⁹⁵ This aspect of the document presents difficulties in interpretation. Khach'ikyan takes the view that the firm was broken up and that the partners did take possession of their respective shares, but I believe she is mistaken on this point.

⁹⁶ BLL 1048, f. 283, 285. See also NJHV, 90, 99 (where the folio citations are again incorrect).

⁹⁷ This clause also is open to various interpretations. Khach'ikyan takes *sark'ari* to refer to other firms, but I believe it refers only to the Khoja Minasean's own firm, which is contrasted with *otar*, referring to partnerships with outsiders.

the old Khoja Minasean firm into its constituent family units.⁹⁸ Like his grandfather before him (and in accord with the precepts of the Astrakhan Lawbook) Grigor left his four sons equal shares of his estate, but in addition he made Ēliaz's son Minas a fifth and equal heir, writing that, "because he has behaved like a son towards me I have made him my son".⁹⁹ The capital of the new firm was to consist of Grigor's wealth, all of Minas's capital, and any private funds belonging to Grigor's own older sons Mik'ayēl and Petros (presumably the younger ones had not yet acquired any capital of their own). Grigor then expresses the hope that the five will live together in a single household following his death. He recommends them to combine all their inherited wealth in a single capital fund and to run the firm on the familiar principle of "the obedience of the younger to the older". He also forbids his sons to separate from the new firm until they have reached the age of twenty-five.¹⁰⁰ His aspirations for the future are summed up in a statement which shows how completely his ideas of happiness and prosperity are bound up in the ideal of the extended family:

In the love of God, place everything together in my (i.e. the family's) complete fund. Live all of you together in one house, with love and without selfishness (literally: without mine and yours), and keep everything together in one place... When you act thus, God's mercy will be always upon you. If one brother is away on a journey see to all the expenses of his wife and family, so that if news reaches him on his travels he will be glad. When it is thus, then by God's will love will increase among you.

The three Khoja Minasean documents provide a rare insight into how a family firm could develop and transform itself. Khoja Minas's will marks the transition from the first stage in the firm's life, from the nuclear household of its self-made founder (nicknamed Minas the Jew on account of his miserliness¹⁰¹) to the extended family firm embracing the founder's sons and grandsons. The

⁹⁸ NJHV, 89. The document is BLL 1048, f. 212, not BLL 1047, f. 212 as cited by Khach'ikyan.

⁹⁹ One can only speculate about his reasons for adopting Minas. Probably Grigor hoped that Minas (who we know was a successful merchant) would be an effective director for the new firm and a good influence on Grigor's own less experienced sons. It may well be that Grigor and Minas were very close to one another; we have already noted that the Set'-Agha and Ēliaz branches of the family had shared a house for several years. There is further confirmation of Grigor's attachment to Minas in another document (BLL 1047, f. 214, identical copy f. 212).

¹⁰⁰ Khach'ikyan misinterprets this clause, taking it to mean that the firm is to last for a minimum of twenty-five years.

¹⁰¹ NJHV, 83 n., citing Gh.M. Alishan, *Hay-Venet*, Venice, 1896, 473.

1739 settlement represents the beginning of the dissolution of that firm, as the several households began to assert their independence. Finally Sēt'-Agha's son Grigor's will marks the formation of a new firm, built around the nuclear family of one of the founder's grandsons, but incorporating also another grandson. The firm's original capital, much of which had already been accumulated by the 1670s, was thus kept intact until about 1740. Thereafter the firm restructured itself into smaller units, which nevertheless appear to have maintained close economic as well as familial links.

Up to this point we have considered the family firm in terms of its internal structure and capitalisation, but it would be a mistake to think of the firm as consisting only of the partners who had an inherited stake in the patrimony. On the contrary, the great Khoja families had links with a large number of outsiders. Khach'ikyan has examined records of the Lazarean family in the mid-eighteenth century, when the firm had already transferred its centre of operations from Julfa to Moscow. She has found that the firm had close ties with one or more resident merchants in Rasht, Derbent, Astrakhan, Saint Petersburg and Amsterdam.¹⁰² Most of these merchants seem to have received capital from the Lazareans in the form of *commenda* contracts and loans, and were in addition expected to act as agents in Lazarean family business (whether or not for a commission is not made clear).¹⁰³ Often they worked for the Lazareans for years, even decades. In his account book and letters Yarut'iwn Lazarean frequently refers to these agents as "our Herapet", "our Edgar" and so on; he clearly viewed them as at least temporary members of the family and sometimes he criticised them with all the freedom of a father addressing a miscreant son.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the agents resident in the principal centres along the Russian transit route between Iran and Holland there were a considerable number (at least twenty by Khach'ikyan's reckoning) of itinerant agents to whom the Lazareans had loaned money for trade (whether in the form of straight loans or *commendas* she does not specify) and a large number of lesser agents and factors who were advanced short term loans - often for a year - or were employed for a particular limited purpose, for example the transportation of a consignment of

102 NJHV, 109.

103 NJHV, 109-111.

104 NJHV, 110-111.

goods from one place to another.¹⁰⁵ Such investments in outsiders were usual for the major firms. The Khoja Minaseans also had numerous agents, some of whom served the firm for more than a decade.¹⁰⁶ Grigor Khaldarean had a total of 10,520 tumans invested in twenty-six separate *commenda* partnerships at the time of his death,¹⁰⁷ and the Shahrimeaneans were reported to have one hundred commercial employees at the end of the seventeenth century.¹⁰⁸

It is interesting that most of the merchants encountered in the Julfa sources seem to be either partners or agents of one of the large Khoja firms. There are very few independent small merchants trading with their own capital. (Shahveli's son Sarhad's firm was on a *commenda* contract with two big Julfa merchants; Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan was the *commenda* agent of two others.) While further evidence is required to confirm this impression, Julfa commercial life does seem to have been dominated by a small number of large and powerful firms, each surrounded by a galaxy of agents and affiliated smaller firms, which either had insufficient capital to trade independently or preferred the advantages of attachment to a major family. The agents often cooperated with one another. Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan for example maintained contact throughout his travels in Iran, India and Tibet with other agents of the same Julfa Khojas. One of these, Avetik, was permanently based in Agra where he provided a range of commercial and financial services to other agents of the same firm. Hovhannes also loaned and borrowed money, entered into partnerships and exchanged commissions with his fellow agents, whom we can often identify by the fact that they are referred to as "our". Hovhannes was a member of an extensive organisation with a far-flung network of agents which he exploited to the full.¹⁰⁹ Steensgaard's assertion that "there is nothing in the sources to indicate the existence of comprehensive coordinated organisations - of an Armenian, Turkish or Persian version of a Fugger, Cranfield or Tripp" must be disputed.¹¹⁰ In many ways the Khoja firms bear a striking resemblance to the family firms of medieval and early modern Europe; and when it comes

105 NJHV, 111-112.

106 NJHV, 97-98.

107 PNJ, I, 161-167.

108 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 485.

109 HTD, *passim*.

110 Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 30.

to capital, membership, extent of operations and longevity they compare not unfavourably with their European counterparts.

Khach'ikyan's research into the Lazarean papers has also revealed that the major firms occasionally cooperated with one another. Yarut'iwn Lazarean (in Moscow) sometimes acted on behalf of Yarut'iwn Shahrimanean (in Julfa), though he wrote that he could not enter into any written agreement or accept any fee. The arrangement seems to have been one of informal cooperation, since Ėstep'an Shahrimanean returned the favour when it came to Lazarean business in Venice.¹¹¹ The Lazareans also cooperated with Yovhan Khaldarean in Amsterdam, with the Khoja Minasean firm and with several other wealthy Khojas. In some cases the arrangement was an informal exchange of favours, in others the Lazareans charged a fee or commission.¹¹²

Links between the prominent families must frequently have been cemented by marriage alliances. Relatively few records of such marriages have come to light but an examination of colophons, the inscriptions on gravestones and other social records would undoubtedly reveal many more such marriages between and even within Khoja families.¹¹³

Occasionally unrelated wealthy merchants and firms entered into formal partnerships with one another, but such arrangements were always on a temporary basis in order to pool resources for a particularly capital-intensive operation. There are several instances of such partnerships for the purchase of expensive gems.¹¹⁴ The proposed, but unrealised agreement of 1693/4 between five prominent Julfa merchants for the purchase of the English East India Company's entire import

¹¹¹ NJHV, 107-108. For informal cooperation (*ibdā'*) between merchants in the early medieval Islamic world see: Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit*, 103; Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, I, 164-169.

¹¹² NJHV, 108-110.

¹¹³ Seth, *Armenians in India*, 244, 346. I have come across one instance of a marriage between first cousins once removed. For family trees showing both male and female lines see J. Emin, *The Life and Adventures of Joseph Emin 1726-1809*, second edition Calcutta, 1918 (reprinted no place or date).

¹¹⁴ PNJ, I, 165-166; Seth, *Armenians in India*, 259-560; NJHV, 119; Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 221-222.

of cloth was also of this type.¹¹⁵ Such agreements were invariably short-lived and there was never an established Julfa Armenian commercial company in the European sense (see Chapter 4).

Community and Church

The extended patriarchal family may have been the central institution in Armenian commercial organisation, but it was not self-sufficient. It drew on the services of non-family agents and factors, cooperated and intermarried with other similar families, and had need of legal services, arbitration and representation that could not be supplied internally. This section will examine how all of these were provided by the New Julfa community, its administrative institutions and the Armenian church.

The association between long-distance trade and specialist merchant communities is probably as old as long-distance trade itself.¹¹⁶ It was certainly well-established in the pre-modern Middle East and Indian Ocean region. One of the distinctive features of the ports of Asia was the throng of merchants of different nationalities, trading together yet maintaining their separate identities.¹¹⁷ The advantages enjoyed by a specialist trading community were essentially the same irrespective of location, and can be summarised under the headings mutual aid and self-defence.¹¹⁸ In the Middle East and South Asia political traditions tended also to allow minority communities a considerable degree of autonomy, which allowed groups like the Armenians to develop trading standards and practices which could be uniformly maintained over an extensive international network.

The Armenians were especially suited to take advantage of these opportunities. In Armenia itself they were weak and surrounded by potential enemies; experience taught them that the wider society and its institutions could not be relied on. In the face of events like the Great Deportation

¹¹⁵ R.W. Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company in Persia in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century", *Economic History Review*, second series, XXVI/1, 1973, 38-62.

¹¹⁶ Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade*, 2-3.

¹¹⁷ K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean*, Cambridge, 1985, .

¹¹⁸ Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 165.

it is not difficult to see why they tended to look inwards and minimise their dependence on the kings and courts of the Islamic world. For commercial purposes this enforced self-reliance provided "a solid and ready-made network"¹¹⁹ of merchants and factors, united by religion, language and culture as well as by suspicion of the outside world.

It is significant that Julfa remained a relatively small and tight-knit community and that until about 1700 most merchants' families were based in the suburb itself; even merchants who spent many years trading abroad returned there eventually. In the trading environment of seventeenth and eighteenth century Asia the choice of associates was crucial to a merchant's success and there was no substitute for personal knowledge when evaluating a potential partner or agent.

Do not start on a journey alone. Do not sit and sleep with one whom you have not known and tried; perhaps he may murder you on the way and plunder all your goods. Take provisions from your own pantry and a companion from your own house... Do not trust an unknown person with a parcel.¹²⁰

This advice provides an insight into the risks taken by long-distance merchants and why the Julfans preferred always to keep business relationships within the family, or failing that, the community. Julfan society, with its limited number of Khoja families with their satellite agents and smaller firms, all living in close proximity, provided an excellent medium for checking on someone's credentials. Perhaps the most important contribution of the community was as a network - a pool of personnel and an information service - which extended to all the outposts of trade that maintained their links with the mother colony.

It is difficult to assess how completely the Julfa merchants kept their dealings within that network. Doubtless it depended on the nature of the trade and the individual's connections in the community as well as on his personal disposition and willingness to take risks. It should not be forgotten that at the beginning and end of every set of transactions goods had to be purchased from producers and sold to consumers, neither of whom were usually Armenian. This fact

119 Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 167.

120 Kostand Jughayets'i's merchant handbook, cited in Seth, *Armenians in India*, 613-614. For an almost identical statement from another merchant handbook see Aghassian and Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien", 174.

notwithstanding the overriding impression gained from contracts, bills, account books and letters, is that the majority of a Julfa merchant's business relations were with fellow Armenians and that this was equally true in Italy, India, Russia or Iran. Moreover, although it is not always possible to identify an individual's place of origin, it appears that most associates were other Julfans. At any rate Armenians from Western Armenia, the Ottoman Empire and Poland appear only rarely in the Julfa sources. The network seems to have consisted predominantly of Julfans with a limited participation by Armenians from other Safavi towns: Tabriz, Agulis, Erevan, Shamakha, Tiflis, Hamadan.

The Julfa community also performed more specific functions. Arbitration of disputes between merchants was probably the most important of these. Unfortunately the subject of the judiciary in Safavi Iran is neglected, but a rough outline is needed in order to understand the significance of Julfa's judicial autonomy.

European travel accounts, the only sources so far studied in any detail, are almost universally condemnatory of the Safavi judicial system in the later seventeenth century. As far as the Christians were concerned the *sharī* courts were inherently discriminatory since the testimony of non-Muslim witnesses carried only half the weight of that of Muslims. *Shar'ī* courts were in any case cumbersome even for Muslim merchants, as they recognised the validity of written contracts only if drawn up in the presence of a *sharī* judge.¹²¹ The '*urfī* or *dīvānbeḡī* courts were not much better, having a reputation for venality (not necessarily a disadvantage for a wealthy Julfa merchant), but they were preferred by merchants.¹²²

For a Julfan, any dealing involving an Iranian or converted Armenian Muslim might result in a case in a *shar'ī* or '*urfī* court. We have no evidence of intra-Armenian cases being heard in Iranian courts (except those involving converts to Islam) but we do find important documents:

¹²¹ Chardin, *Voyages*, VI, 71-74.

¹²² Chardin, *loc. cit.*; N. Sanson, *Estat present du royaume de Perse*, Paris, 1694, 194-196; R.P. Matthee, "Politics and Trade in Late Safavid Iran: commercial crisis and government reaction under Shah Soleyman (1666-1694)", PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991, 137.

noting that they were drawn up, or the legal formula (*šīghah*) pronounced, in Arabic, Persian and Armenian,¹²³ which represents an attempt to validate the agreement in a manner recognised in all the courts that might hear a subsequent dispute. Thus Zak'aria Agulets'i explains that when he separated from his nephews and divided the patrimonial estate with them, he brought in a *shar'ī* judge (*ghazī*), an Armenian archimandrite (*vardapet*) and a state official (*dawlatawork*).¹²⁴ Quite apart from the corruption and discrimination of Iranian courts, any legal system was likely to involve cost and delay, so the preference for arbitration by one's fellow merchants was natural.¹²⁵ Of course, the Julfa merchants sometimes had no choice but to contend with local justice - and some systems operated on principles very different from the notions of testimony and evidence common to both Muslim and Christian justice. In Tibet, for instance, Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan lost a case on the throw of a dice, to his understandable chagrin.¹²⁶

It is also clear that no sophisticated system of international trade with formal contracts, systems of accounting and provisions for recovering debt or dealing with bankruptcy could operate by adapting to local law in every port of call. The community was the only possible forum for establishing and enforcing accepted standards of commercial practice.

That the Julfa community did provide a judicial tribunal for merchants is beyond question. Without the possibility of recourse to a court of some kind the mass of surviving documents, contracts, agreements, witnessed statements, bills, powers of attorney and accounts would have been worthless. The Astrakhan Lawbook confirms that there was an established code of commercial law among the Julfa Armenians which, it states, was borrowed from the commercial law of the Persian merchants.¹²⁷ It defines in some detail the legal status of documents such as merchants' account books, and gives examples of the correct way to draw up documents of

123 ASVT, xix 87.1; BLL 1048, f. 298.

124 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Ōragrut'yunž*, 117-118.

125 Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, 286f.

126 HTD, 49-50; L.S. Khachikian, "The ledger of the merchant Hovhannes Joughayetsi", *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, VIII/3, Calcutta, 1966, 177.

127 *Datastanagirk'*, 7.

various kinds (see Chapters 4 and 5). All this helps to confirm the existence of a system of customary commercial law, but sheds little light on how it was administered.

The only scholar to have studied documents emanating from the Julfa tribunal is Tēr-Yovhaneants'. Unfortunately, he gives only scanty information, merely stating that disputes were settled by the *kalāntar* and assembly of merchants. They issued written statements of their decisions which were kept in the Cathedral archive. Such decisions followed a set formula, at least in their opening phrases, which Tēr-Yovhaneants' records as: "The merchants' ruling is..." (*sōvdagari dasturn ays ē ...*) or: "And so we judge thus concerning this matter ..." (*Ew t'e mek' vash aysr gortsoy ayspēs gitemk'*).¹²⁸

Tēr-Yovhaneants' also published a document relating to a case referred to the Julfa tribunal by a merchant in Surat, whose partner had reneged on an oral undertaking for the joint purchase of a diamond. (The details of the partnership are given below in Chapter 4.) This suggests that some cases at least were referred back to Julfa rather than being settled locally.¹²⁹ In another case concerning an unpaid bill of exchange (see Part 3 Document 26), an appeal for witnesses was addressed to the Saidabad Armenian community (*jumiat'*) so that the bill could be returned to Isfahan for settlement.

Such documents show how important the legal and arbitrating function of the Julfa community was, providing merchants all over the trade network with an established procedure for settling disputes without having recourse to local courts. Until further research into the Julfa Cathedral archive is carried out it is impossible to be more specific about the composition of the tribunal in Julfa. Tēr-Yovhaneants' makes no mention of priests serving on it but Sarukhan suggests, without providing evidence, that a priest fulfilled the role of arbitrator in an Armenian community in

128 PNJ, I, 183.

129 PNJ, I, 165-166.

Amsterdam,¹³⁰ and in 1735 a Madras court appointed a team of merchants and a priest to settle a dispute between an Armenian *commenda* agent and his principals.¹³¹

The only documentary records of the operation of a Julfa Armenian tribunal is preserved in the State Archives in Venice and relates to the Venice tribunal.¹³² In this case the tribunal consisted of four merchants who describe themselves as arbitration judges (*judits'i arbit'ri*). They record that the parties to the dispute came before them and were required to take the oath, and that witnesses were called on to verify that accounts submitted as evidence were in the handwriting of the father of one of the parties. They describe the particulars of the case and their decision on the amount owed by one party to the other, which they note was also recorded in their *daftar*, suggesting the existence of a tribunal register of cases. The arbitrators also note that their decision was recorded in three copies, one each for the two plaintiffs (in whose favour they found) and one which they deposited in the Surb Khach' (Santa Croce) Armenian church in Venice.

The community also had a role as representative of the Julfa merchants in dealings with the outside world. The role of the *kalāntar* as intermediary between the Safavi shahs and the Julfans in respect of administrative and fiscal matters has been discussed in an earlier chapter, but there were also occasions when the *kalāntar* acted for the community in commercial matters. Khoja Nazar seems to have been particularly active in this role. In 1618-1619 he negotiated with French missionaries in Isfahan with a view to getting the ban on Armenian merchants at Marseille lifted.¹³³ In 1620 he requested the assistance of the East India Companies for Armenians travelling to India,¹³⁴ and in 1629 successfully negotiated trading rights for Julfa merchants in the papal dominions in return for his promise to help Catholic missionaries in Isfahan.¹³⁵ On other occasions the *kalāntar* might even act as a commercial agent for all the merchants. The

130 A. Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerē XVI-XIX darderum*, Vienna, 1926, 52.

131 Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, 289.

132 ASVA, April 1697.

133 Schütz, "An Armeno-Kipchak document", 281.

134 R.W. Ferrier in CHI, VI, 469.

135 Y. K'iwrtēan, "Jughayets'i Khōjay Safar u Khōjay Nazar ew irents' gerdastanē", *Bazmavēp*, 1976, nos. 1-2, 65.

Dutch sources inform us that in 1630 Nazar negotiated an annual purchase of 1,000 bales of silk from the governor of Gilan on behalf of all the Julfa merchants.¹³⁶ Three years later he was negotiating with the VOC agents and another three years later we find Khoja Safar in the same role.¹³⁷

On other occasions the merchant community might unite to achieve a particular goal. In the reign of 'Abbās I the Julfans had responded effectively to the danger of persecution by threatening to warn their fellow merchants to hold up the return caravans from the Levant.¹³⁸ On another occasion the Julfans failed in a concerted attempt to hold down the price of raw silk bought from the Shah.¹³⁹

Overseas outposts of the Julfa trade network might also combine to advance or defend their mutual interests. Sarukhan published a lengthy petition to the Estates General of the Netherlands from the Izmir Armenians in 1658 or 1659.¹⁴⁰ The petition lodges a protest about the behaviour of a new Dutch consul who is treating the Armenians less favourably than his predecessors. In the Lansdowne collection there is an appeal to the Venice and Amsterdam communities (*jumiat'*) to intercede to obtain the assistance of the EIC over the confiscation of an Armenian ship in the Bay of Bengal by the Royal Navy.¹⁴¹

On occasions when collective action was required it was the community leader, or a group of prominent merchants, who acted as representatives, but it would be a mistake to view this as a formal arrangement. Like other aspects of Julfa's constitution the procedure seems to have been *ad hoc*, according to the needs of the moment. Occasionally we find individual merchants taking it on themselves to represent all their fellows. Such was the case when Panos Calendar

136 H. Dunlop (ed.), *Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis der Oostindische Compagnie in Perzië*, The Hague, 1930, 357, 371.

137 *Ibid.*, 503, 623.

138 Aṛakel Davrizhets'i, *Girk' patmut'eants'*, Amsterdam, 1669, (166); *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 257; Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 215f.

139 Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 333.

140 Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerē*, 19-25.

141 BLL 1047, f. 153.

(Ghalandarean) signed the 1688 agreement with the East India Company on behalf of "himself and others of the Armenian nation". In the event the others proved unwilling to abide by the terms.¹⁴² In 1609 there was an extraordinary - and unrealised - initiative by Khoja Shahvēli Shahrimeanean to buy the island of Qishm from the Shaykh of Hormuz to use as a settlement for the Armenian and Syrian Christians of Iran (and presumably as a by-pass for Portuguese Hormuz).¹⁴³ Another such initiative, and one that bore fruit, was Philippe de Zagly's agreement with the Duke of Courland for transit rights for Armenian merchants. In this case the Julfa merchants were quick to avail themselves of the new opportunities.¹⁴⁴

The best documented case of collective action, however, concerns the negotiations for the transit right through Russia. This episode has been discussed by several historians,¹⁴⁵ but as it has given rise to misconceptions, certain points, which are illustrative of the haphazard nature of Julfan collective action *vis à vis* a foreign state, will be considered again here.

The first significant contact between Julfa merchants and the Russian crown was the presentation in 1660 of the famous Diamond Throne. It was presented to Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich by Sarhad's son Zak'aria Shahrimeanean, and is generally described in secondary works as a gift from the Julfa Armenians to the Russian throne. In fact an order for the throne, or at least for unspecified luxury goods (*uzorochnye tovary*), had been placed by the Tsar three years earlier when two agents of Zak'aria's father, Grigorii and Stepan Matveev (as they are named in the Russian sources), had gone to Moscow.¹⁴⁶ The placement of a royal order suggests that the Shahrimeaneans were trading in Russia as royal merchants (see below) and that the Matveevs were treated in Moscow as the Shah or vazir's commercial agents. This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the fact that on his agents' return to Iran, Shahveli (as Zak'aria's father is known

142 R.W. Ferrier, "The agreement of the East India Company with the Armenian nation 2nd June 1688", REA, new series, VII, 1970, 427-443.

143 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 171.

144 R. Gulbenkian, "Philippe de Zagly, marchand arménien de Julfa, et l'établissement du commerce persan en Courlande en 1696", REA, new series, VII, 1970, 361-426.

145 See Chapter 2 above for a description of the Julfans' development of the Russian route and associated bibliography.

146 V.A. Parsamyan, *Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke*, Erevan, 1953, 21.

in the Russian documents) informed the I'timād al-Dawlah, who then commissioned him to prepare a throne to present to the Tsar.

The throne was constructed in secret by skilled masters in the Shahrimeanean house, jewels for the purpose having been specially purchased in India. When, however, the vazir asked Shahveli to show the throne to the Shah he failed to comply (probably fearing that the Shah might keep it for himself). Instead he arranged for the throne to be secretly transported to Russia in his son Zak'aria's charge, while reassuring the vazir that the throne was still not finished and would be sent separately at a later date.

The above narrative is taken from Zak'aria's own account to the Russian court, and it may be that he exaggerated his father's independence.¹⁴⁷ It thus appears that the Shahrimeaneans were originally involved in the Russian trade as royal merchants, but that with the presentation of the Diamond Throne they attempted to break out of this role and further ingratiate themselves at the Russian court by making the presentation look like a personal gift. The Russian sources, however, leave no doubt that Zak'aria was received not as a private merchant but as an agent of the vazir and Shah. He is described as "the Shah's privy councillor, the I'timād al-Dawlah's agent, the Armenian Zakaria" (*shakhova dumnogo diyaka Atmadovletya prikashchik armyanin Zakarii*) and "The qizilbāsh Shah's intimate, the I'timād al-Dawlah's merchant, Zakarei" (*kizylbashskogo shakha blizhnego cheloveka Ikh'tomo Devletev kupchina Zakharei*).¹⁴⁸ All this suggests that the Diamond Throne episode should be seen in the context of the well-established royal gift-exchange trade between the Safavi and Romanov courts, rather than as an individual or collective Armenian initiative (though the exceptional splendour of the throne may have owed something to the Shahrimeaneans' initiative).

The next important episode was the visit to Moscow in 1666 by two Julfan merchants, Mushegh's son P'anos Ėramadanēnts' and Marut'ē's son Grigor Lusikēnts', who delivered a letter to Tsar

147 Parsamyan, *Armyano-russkue otnosheniya*, 25-26.

148 *Ibid.*

Alexei Mikhailovich from Zak'aria Shahrimean (who had continued to supply the Tsar with luxury goods and even Armenian craftsmen in the meantime). The letter contained a proposal that Armenian merchants should be permitted to transport silk to Europe across Russia. The details of the negotiations and their outcome need not concern us here, but the question arises of who sent Panos and Grigor to Moscow. There is nothing in the sources for the 1666-1667 negotiations to suggest that they were considered royal agents; on the contrary, the Russian documents refer to them as the envoys of the Armenian company or companies.¹⁴⁹ Even Grigor and Panos ^{apparently} use the word ~~company~~, signing their petition "*mer kumpanots' ěruskhat'ovn*". This use of the word company had been enough to create a fully-fledged Armenian joint-stock company in the minds of several historians, who frequently talk about the Julfa Armenians' trading company without ever stopping to examine what the term could mean in its historical context. In an article published in 1980, Sh.L. Khach'ikyan unravels this problem.¹⁵⁰

The Russian sources on the 1666-1667 negotiation provide little clue as to the nature of the "company" but a later letter of authorisation of 1671, issued to Grigor when he returned to Moscow for further talks, bears the signatures of twenty-two or twenty-three prominent Julfans. Khach'ikyan identifies these signatories as the *kalantar* of Julfa and other leading merchants (perhaps the *kadkhudas*). In another document, moreover, she finds a reference to them as the *kalantar* and *kupanek'n*. As she notes, the fact that the Armenian version of the word company occurs always in the plural form indicates that we are dealing not with a single company but rather with companies, perhaps even with companions. The signatories are not the board of any permanent commercial organisation, but the *kalantar* and leading Julfa merchants acting in unison to secure a benefit for the community as a whole.

Khach'ikyan's work is important not only in clarifying the question of the mysterious Armenian trading company, but also in showing that on rare occasions the Julfa merchants could take

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

¹⁵⁰ Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, "1667 t'. hay-rusakan arewtrakan paymanagirě ew Nor Jughyi ink'navar marminnerě", *Haykazean Hayagitakan Handěs*, VIII, Beirut, 1980, 259-288. This article appears with slight modifications in NJHV.

positive collective action (rather than merely reacting to a crisis) in order to secure a desired aim. One question that remains puzzling is why the word "company" was used at all. It is not of frequent occurrence in the Julfa dialect and when it does occur it generally refers to one of the European trading companies. The most likely explanation must be that the Julfans deliberately presented themselves to the Russians as representatives of a company or companies, probably hoping thereby to enhance their status and achieve the kind of commercial treaty they had seen European companies negotiate in Iran and elsewhere. Priests, bishops and Catholicoi also occasionally acted to represent the Armenians' interests to outside powers, but the clergy's most important commercial function was notarial. All important documents were witnessed by priests as well as merchants and in not a few cases the signatures and seals of the Archbishop of Julfa and the Catholic Bishop of Isfahan appear on documents. Priests feature as the copyists of a very large number of documents, and we not infrequently find documents written by priests on behalf of illiterates (in most cases women). In all of these functions it must have been felt that a priest had a certain moral superiority over a secular witness or copyist and doubtless his word would have carried greater weight in court.

In this respect Armenian practice offers a close parallel to Islamic tradition.¹⁵¹ As in Islamic society, clerics and merchants seem to have been closely connected socially, both sharing a level of education and being interdependent: the merchants for spiritual and notarial services, the priests on pious donations.¹⁵² According to Chardin the Julfa clergy were made up of members of merchants' families who lacked the resources to enter trade.¹⁵³ Such family ties are amply attested by the large numbers of merchants with clerical fathers or brothers, and priests themselves also invested in trade.¹⁵⁴ An additional function fulfilled by the church was as repository for commercial documents. The best example of this practice is, of course, the archive of the Julfa Cathedral whose collection of commercial documents was originally assembled through merchants depositing copies of important contracts in the safest place they knew. Julfa documents contain

151 Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit*, .

152 Aubin, "Marchands de la Mer Rouge", 89-90.

153 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 105.

154 Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 271.

occasional references to the practice of entrusting important papers to priests or the church.¹⁵⁵ Churches in overseas outposts also fulfilled the same function (see above).

It was, therefore, important for merchants abroad to have the services of a priest and, if possible, a church. A 1654 colophon tells us that priests were sent to such places as Venice deliberately to serve the merchant community,¹⁵⁶ and a number of letters between priests and merchants overseas have survived.¹⁵⁷ Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan's account book provides ample evidence that there were Armenian priests even in some fairly remote parts of India, often serving small communities, or perhaps itinerant like many of the merchants themselves.

The role of the church and religion in the working lives of the Julfa merchants went deeper, however, than the forms of direct contribution described above. Piety was one of the cardinal virtues of the Julfa merchant, being expressed through donations to the church and charitable causes, through pilgrimage and through fasting. All these forms of self-denial or self-mortification confirmed not only a merchant's respect for religion but allowed him also to demonstrate his wealth, austerity and ability to undergo hardship; qualities that were essential for an international merchant. The will of P'anos's son Khoja Minas¹⁵⁸ provides evidence of the considerable sums a wealthy merchant might spend on charitable and pious donations. Petros Voskanean (who died in Madras in 1730) left even larger sums: 400 tumans to support the poor in Julfa, 1,000 tumans to found a school, and a further 60 to buy a building for the school.¹⁵⁹ Further evidence is provided by the churches of Julfa, most of which were decorated and restored through merchants' donations, individual khojas often contributing great sums for such works.¹⁶⁰ Such donations were by no means restricted to the very wealthy. The account book of Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan contains numerous debits for small donations to priests, churches and the poor, and

155 BLL 1047, f. 142.

156 Hakobyan, *Hishatakaranner 1641-1660*, 619.

157 British Library, Harleian MS 7013, f. 112.

158 Part 3, Document 1.

159 PNJ, I, 135-136.

160 PNJ, II, *passim.*, contains numerous references to merchants' donations to Julfa's churches.

documents survive recording donations of a few tumans from Armenians in Bengal to the Amenap'rkich' monastery in Julfa.¹⁶¹

Such pious donations from abroad also demonstrate the importance of the church in reinforcing the links between the mother colony and its offshoots. These ties were so strong that several merchants arranged to have their bones, or in one case heart, returned to Julfa for burial.¹⁶²

A Julfan merchant handbook advises the reader to donate one tenth of his profits to the priests and the poor.¹⁶³

Pilgrimage was another visible expression of piety, and was particularly suited to the life of the travelling merchant. Jerusalem was the ultimate pilgrimage, which bestowed on the pilgrim the title *mahdesi* (from Arabic *maqdisī*).¹⁶⁴ Undoubtedly the Islamic imprint went deeper than the name and the example of the *Hajj* as the perfect occasion to combine commerce and piety exerted an influence on the Armenian pilgrimage tradition.¹⁶⁵ But Jerusalem was not a major commercial centre and for most merchants pilgrimage was something to be fitted into business itineraries. For the silk merchants entering or leaving Iran via Erevan there was an almost obligatory stop at Echmiadzin, which generally lasted several days,¹⁶⁶ and an additional visit could be made to the Shrine of St Stephen by a detour between Nakhichavān and Julfa.¹⁶⁷ Zak'aria Agulets'i's diary records his numerous visits to monasteries and shrines.¹⁶⁸ In this respect merchants travelling in the Near East obviously had more scope than those in India, or other countries with few Christian associations, but as we have seen from Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan's account book, if pilgrimage was not available then charity offered an alternative outlet for pious expression.

161 BLL 1048, f. 67, 88.

162 Carré notes that Iranian *shī'īs* as well as Armenians had their bones returned for burial from India (Carré, *The Travels*, III, 795 n.).

163 Aghassian and Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien", 174.

164 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Öragrut'yunë*, 40; Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, 222.

165 Compare Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, I, 55.

166 Alexander de Rhodes, *Divers voyages...*, Paris, 1653, 229-230; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 24; Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, 112; Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation*, II, 332.

167 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 38-39.

168 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Öragrut'yunë*, 39 and *passim*.

Fasting was another feature of Armenian religious observance which merchants seem willingly to have adopted. Several European commentators remark on the length and severity of the Armenians' fasts: according to Gemelli Careri more than half the year was given over to fasting,¹⁶⁹ while De Bruyn was struck by merchants' strict adherence to a fast that allowed no flesh, fish, butter, eggs nor milk, not even on a journey.¹⁷⁰ The Marseille merchants, however, took a dim view of this practice, considering the Armenians to be "avec une forme de vivre si porque que la plupart du temps, ils ne mangent que les herbes...".¹⁷¹ The habit of fasting was indicative of the general frugality of the Julfa merchants at least during their commercial travels. Many commentators remarked on this quality,¹⁷² but none at such length or so vividly as Tavernier:

And indeed the Armenians are so much the more fit for trading, because they are a people very sparing, and very sober; though whether it be their virtue or their avarice I know not. For when they are going on a long journey, they only make provision of bisquit, smoked buffaloe's flesh, onions, baked butter, flour, wine and dried fruits. They never buy fresh victuals, but when they meet with lambs or kids very cheap in the mountainous countries; nor is there one of them that does not carry his angle to fish withall, when they come to any ponds or rivers. All these provisions cost them little carriage. And when they come to any town where they are to stay, they club five or six together, and lie in an empty chamber which they furnish themselves; every one carry his mattress, his coverlet and his kitchen instruments, which is a great piece of thrift. When they travel into Christendom, they carry along with them saffron, pepper, nutmegs, and other spices; which they exchange in the country towns for bread, wine, butter, cheese, milk-meats, and other provisions which they buy of the poor women. When they return out of Christendom, they bring along with them all sorts of mercery ware, and pedlary ware of Nuremburg and Venice; as little looking glasses, trifles of tin enamelled, false pearls and other things of that nature; which pays for the victuals they call for among the country people.¹⁷³

Frugality was one of several qualities viewed as national characteristics by contemporaries, which we may prefer to view as reflecting a commercial culture or merchant ethos that was deliberately cultivated in Julfan society. Attitudes towards money and those who made it were as ambivalent

169 Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, ?, 145.

170 De Bruyn, *Voyages*, II, 398. See also Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 282-286.

171 L. Bergasse and G. Rambert, *Histoire du Commerce de Marseille*, IV, Paris, 1954, 65.

172 Struys, *Les voyages*, 308; Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 249.

173 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 378; quoted from the English translation of 1678, vol. I, 159.

in Medieval Armenia as in Western Europe and it is not rare to encounter sentiments very hostile to merchants and their activities. For example: "Who loves gold sees not knowledge and who collects it (gold) grows stupid".¹⁷⁴ Such sentiments had not by any means disappeared in the seventeenth century: a 1605 colophon blames Julfa's violent destruction on its inhabitants' materialism. "All this came upon us for our sins, for they had forgotten God, they had great and innumerable goods, much gold, silver and property...".¹⁷⁵ Even merchants would condemn excessive devotion to material gain, as is shown by Khoja Minas's derogatory nickname "the Jew" and by Zak'aria Agulets'i's censure of a very rich merchant who had made his fortune at others' expense.¹⁷⁶

There was also, however, a developed and clearly expressed bourgeois ethos that celebrated the merchant and his work. The Julfa popular poet Baghērōghli wrote:

The Julfa merchant travels,
Throughout the world from East to West,
Bringing gifts from the four corners of the globe,
To satisfy the poor, the blind and the crippled.¹⁷⁷

Armenian merchant handbooks emphasise the Christian propriety of trade, provided it is carried out honestly and in a Christian spirit and that the merchant pays God His due through prayer and pious offering.¹⁷⁸

The Armenians' own ambivalence towards merchants and commercial skills is matched or even surpassed by European commentators. Their verdicts on the Julfa merchants range from the panegyric: "The Armenians are the best people in the work, civil, polite and full of good sense and probity",¹⁷⁹ and: "They seem all to be inspired with principles of honesty, thrift, diligence

174 F.C. Conybeare, *A Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, London, 1913, 298.

175 Hovhanissyan, *Hishatakaraner 1601-1620*, 194.

176 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Ōragrut'yunē*, 72.

177 PNJ, I, 160.

178 Afgassian and Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien", 174.

179 Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation*, II, 389. Quoted from the English translation of 1741, volume 3, page 227.

and wisdom in their affairs",¹⁸⁰ to more guarded praise: "Civil and industrious",¹⁸¹ and: "Plain dealing people",¹⁸² to the hostile or even vitriolic: "A people in themselves despicable ... educated in all the servilities of Asia and understanding how to accommodate themselves to indignities which the genius of a free nation will hardly submit to",¹⁸³ and: "There is no greedier nation in the world".¹⁸⁴

Whether hostile or admiring, however, most Europeans recognised the Armenians' skill as merchants which consisted not only in what was seen as their national character but also in their thorough knowledge of commodities and prices, kept up to date through their international network of correspondents, and in their expertise in languages and other commercial skills, such as arithmetic and bookkeeping.

Fryer suggested that the Julfans were "addicted to learn languages",¹⁸⁵ but their knowledge of foreign languages was a result rather of their position as a minority and of deliberate education. The Julfans were said to speak Persian, Turkish and Armenian and many knew French and Italian as well, either as a result of travels in Europe or through attending the Catholic missionary schools set up in Julfa.¹⁸⁶ Fryer adds Syriac to the list of "native" languages and says they used Lingua-Franca to communicate with Europeans.¹⁸⁷ The Julfa commercial dialect itself bears witness to the merchants' receptivity to foreign languages, being replete with loan words from a range of other languages. According to Sarukhan the first Armenian merchants to come to

180 India Office Records, London, Original Correspondence, E/3/92, Governor and Council to Agent and Council in Persia 29/2/1692.

181 J. Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689*, ed. H.G. Rawlinson, London, 1929 (first edition 1696), 133.

182 W. Biddulph, in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous*, VIII, 274-275.

183 Hanway, *An Historical Account*, II, 31.

184 Bergasse and Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, IV, 65, citing a 1623 petition from the Marseille consuls to the King of France.

185 Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 260.

186 Daulier-Deslandes, *Les beautez de la Perse*, 27; Struys, *Les voyages*, 309; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 381; *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 378, 1076-1077.

187 Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 288.

Amsterdam had to rely on a Jewish broker to translate, but within a short period and after some had lived in *pension* with Dutch families, they were able to get by in Dutch themselves.¹⁸⁸

The East India Company was so impressed by the Armenians' commercial skills and linguistic aptitude that they decided to send some of their junior factors to lodge with Armenian families in Julfa to learn Persian and Armenian as well as the system of accounting used by the Julfa merchants. This was one of the few attempts at cooperation which achieved some result and Mr Bruce, a future chief of the Isfahan factory, lived for some time in the house of Khoja Āghā-Pīrī Callendar (Ghalandarean).¹⁸⁹

It is interesting that the other skill that the East India Company hoped their visiting students would acquire was the Persian or Armenian system of arithmetic and accounting. The surviving Julfa account books certainly bear witness to merchants' expertise in this area and Julfan merchant handbooks all devote considerable space to applied arithmetic.¹⁹⁰ The Astrakhan Lawbook also lays heavy emphasis on the importance of literacy, numeracy and bookkeeping for the merchant,¹⁹¹ though it does also stipulate how to draw up a *commenda* partnership contract with an illiterate agent.¹⁹² The surviving documents suggest that an illiterate merchant was a rarity. The high level of literacy, the generally legible merchant handwriting and the proficiency in arithmetic and bookkeeping all point to some kind of formal education or training for Julfa merchants. According to Ter-Yovhaneants', in the second half of the seventeenth century there was a school for merchants' sons in Julfa run by Kostand Jughayets'i, author of the earliest of the extant merchant handbooks.¹⁹³ Fryer confirms that there was some element of formal education in a Julfa merchant's upbringing, writing: "to which Exercise (trade), after they themselves have been brought up, they train their children under the safe conduct of Experienced

188 Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerē*, 50-53.

189 R.W. Ferrier, "The agreement of the East India Company with the Armenian nation, 22nd June 1688", REA, new series, VII, 1970, 437; *idem.*, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 51; Seth, *Armenians in India*, 287-288.

190 Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens", 201 and notes.

191 *Datastanagirk'*, .

192 *Ibid.*, 131.

193 PNJ, I; Seth, *Armenians in India*, 613-614.

Tutors, who instruct them first to Labour for a Livelihood, before they are permitted to Expend".¹⁹⁴

Lastly, their Christianity undoubtedly helped the Armenians in developing their international trade links. In an age when European power was growing, simply to be a Christian gave an Asian merchant a significant advantage in any dealings in Europe or with Europeans. This factor may in large measure account for the growing importance of Christian (and Jewish) merchants in the Middle East in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.¹⁹⁵ The Armenians were well aware of the advantage their Christianity gave them in trade with Europeans, and they exploited it to the full in negotiations for trading rights in Italy, Russia and elsewhere. There is no doubt that it was easier for an Armenian than for a Muslim Iranian or Turk to do business in West European ports which, with the exception of Venice, were less accustomed than their Asian counterparts to hosting indiscriminately merchants of any nationality and faith. In Iran and India European merchants generally preferred to employ Christian brokers and translators. The close contacts that grew up between, for example, Khoja Panos Callendar (Ghalandarean) and members of the East India Company would have been inconceivable for a Muslim merchant. The common ground of Christianity, whatever the doctrinal and ritual differences, played a large part in forging links between the Julfa Armenians and the East India Companies, and was thus significant in encouraging Julfan commercial expansion and later emigration to India.

Economic Relations Outside the Community

While the Julfans preferred to do business within their own community whenever possible, the world of commerce was inevitably integrated into other economic structures. In order to export silk the Armenians had to buy it from Shīrvānī or Gīlānī producers or from the landowners, governors and officials who controlled production. They then had to sell the silk, usually to

¹⁹⁴ Fryer, *A New Account*, II, 259.

¹⁹⁵ R. Mantran, "Foreign merchants and the minorities in Istanbul during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries", in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Braude and Lewis, 2 vols, New York-London, 1982, I, 127-137; *idem.*, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle*, Paris, 1962, 603-607.

European merchants in the Levant. On the return journey, imported western goods (woollen cloth, mirrors, clocks and watches and other luxuries), had to be delivered to the Iranian consumers. This necessitated contacts with the court and retail outlets in Isfahan and other cities.¹⁹⁶ Even billion imports had eventually to be converted into local currency and reinvested, either in Iran or in India. The Julfans also relied on others for transport and certain specific financial services. This is a crucial area for investigation, since understanding the Julfan commercial relations with outsiders helps to build up a picture of how the commercial economy integrated into other sectors of the economy. The Julfan sources so far examined are less than informative on these matters, but supplemented by non-Armenian sources we can begin to trace some of these relationships.

Of the Julfans' commercial relations with outsiders the one that attracted most comment from contemporaries was that with the Safavi shahs and court elite. For the shahs the Julfans were ideal agents - capable and possessing an extensive trade network, yet posing no political threat. For the Armenians the benefits of royal patronage in terms of commercial opportunity and protection are self-evident. Della Valle draws an analogy between the symbiotic relationship of the shahs and Julfans and that of the Spanish crown with the Genoese.¹⁹⁷

If the special relationship between the Safavi court and the Julfa merchants is not hard to understand, its precise nature and mechanics are less obvious, and require an understanding of the nature of Safavi royal trade itself. The latter may be subdivided into several categories: the sale of crops and goods extracted from the purchasers as revenue (the royal raw silk trade is a case in point); the (compulsory) purchase of rare imports (and occasionally other goods) and their sale in the domestic market;¹⁹⁸ the sale of goods produced in royal workshops (*karkhānahs* or *buyūāt*);¹⁹⁹ royal trade with foreign courts, generally taking the form of ritual gift

196 See Chapter 1 on the Julfans' shops and warehouses in Isfahan.

197 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 215.

198 Della Valle, *Delle conditione*, 38f.

199 M. Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life in the Later Safavid Period*, Berlin, 1982, 164-173.

exchange.²⁰⁰ Trade was often one of the most important purposes of embassies,²⁰¹ which were generally accompanied and often led by merchants.

To illustrate the scale of this trade we need only consider the embassy sent by Shah Tahmasp I to congratulate Sultan Murad III on his accession. In the train of the ambassador were 250 *qizilbāsh*, 500 camels carrying valuable manuscripts of the Quran, Shahnamah and other works, carpets, costly fabrics, jewels and weapons.²⁰² Detailed inventories of such gifts, their valuations and the goods sent in return have survived in the case of Irano-Russian exchanges.²⁰³ For merchants joining embassies offered significant advantages: royal goods were duty-free²⁰⁴ and merchants attached to embassies could often evade customs charges on their own goods as well. Moreover, members of embassies were generally better treated by officials than private individuals.²⁰⁵ This doubtless explains the size of ambassadors' retinues,²⁰⁶ and led to the frequent abuse of ambassadorial privilege.²⁰⁷ Merchants would even attempt to avoid Iran's internal tolls by attaching themselves to the suite of a foreign envoy and his *mihmāndār*.²⁰⁸ In Central Asia merchants would actually pay khans to send an envoy to China to whose suite they would then attach themselves.²⁰⁹

Merchants who were genuinely accredited to act as Safavi royal agents received a letter patent. Chardin was made a royal merchant in 1666 and gives a translation of 'Abbas II's letter patent,

200 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 168.

201 *Ibid.*, II, 41; Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 113-114.

202 Falsafī, *Zindigānī*, 117.

203 M.V. Fekhner, *Torgovlya russkogo gosudarstva so stranami vostoka v XVI veke*, Moscow, 1956, 96f.; N.G. Kukanova, *Ocherki po istorii russko-iranskikh torgovykh otnoshenii v XVII-pervoi polovine XIX vekam*, Saransk, 1977, 44f.

204 The Captain at Hormuz's refusal to exempt 'Abbās I's goods from duties was one source of friction between 'Abbas and the Portuguese in the early seventeenth century (*Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 103).

205 Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 113-114; P. Avril, *Voyages en divers états d'Europe et d'Asie*, Paris, 1693, 220.

206 CHI, VI, 472; *Tārikh-i 'ālam-ārā*, 472.

207 J.A. Burton, "Bukharans in Trade and Diplomacy 1558-1702", PhD dissertation, Manchester University, 1986, 218; G.F. Gemelli Careri, *Giro del mondo*, 6 vols., Naples, 1699, II, 123.

208 Chardin, *Voyages*, II, 138.

209 Avril, *Voyages*, 88.

noting that the title of royal merchant (*marchand du roi*) was a considerable one in the East.²¹⁰ There were various Persian titles for royal merchants, the most common being *tājir-i* (or *sawdāgar-i*) *khāṣṣah-yi sharīfah*.²¹¹

Each type of royal trade might be made more profitable for the crown through combination with monopolies, artificially inflated or depressed price levels, sudden currency debasements and so on. Interference in the market was one of the perquisites of power and was widely practised also by authorities at the local level. 'Abbās I's predecessors had engaged in this kind of activity (Tahmasp seems to have been particularly unscrupulous in his manipulation of the market²¹²), but 'Abbās I pursued his economic activities on a grander scale than other shahs. His commercial activities were so widespread that one of the Carmelites described him as the "prince of traders"²¹³ and Della Valle called him "the greatest, rather the only, merchant in his kingdom" and noted that one could even buy royal onions in the markets of Isfahan.²¹⁴

The Armenians' involvement in royal trade under both 'Abbās I and his successors was related to two areas in particular. First, they were involved in the export of raw silk belonging to the crown and second, they were often employed as royal merchants and envoys to foreign courts. These two might overlap, since raw silk was sometimes included among the gifts to foreign courts.

The first reference to the use of Julfans as envoys or ambassadors comes as early as 1572, when d'Alessandri met two Julfans in Qazvīn on the way to Venice with a special mission from Shah Tahmāsp to the Doge.²¹⁵ 'Abbās I sent Julfans to Venice in 1590-1591,²¹⁶ in 1607,²¹⁷

210 Chardin, *Voyages*, I, 2; V, 289.

211 Falsaff, *Zindigānī*, 1986; H.D. P'ap'azyān, HZhP, IV, 255; L. Fekete, *Einführung in die persische Paläographie. 101 persische Dokumente*, ed. G. Hazai, Budapest, 1977, 454-455, 462; J. Aubin, "Marchands de Mer Rouge et du Golfe Persique", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatique*, 88.

212 V. d'Alessandri, in *A Narrative of Italian Travels in Persia in the 15th and 16th Centuries*, trans. and ed. C. Grey, London, 1873, 218; U. Tucci, *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien, Andrea Berengo (1553-1556)*, Paris, 1957, editor's introduction, 11, and letter no. 86.

213 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 201.

214 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 41.

215 Baiburtyan, *Armyanskaya koloniya*, 29, citing Alishan, *Sisikan*, 386.

216 Fekete, *Einführung*, documents 82 and 83.

and 1609.²¹⁸ All the missions for which information is available combined diplomatic and commercial functions. There were several kinds of royal licence: that granted to an envoy setting out on a mission to a foreign court was different from that given to a privileged merchant like Chardin. It has been suggested that the *kalāntar* of Old Julfa, Khoja Khach'ik, had a letter patent from 'Abbās I,²¹⁹ and Tēr-Yovhaneants' gives a translation of one given to his son Nazar, later to be *kalāntar* of New Julfa, dated Jamāḏ'al-avval 1001/1593²²⁰ There is no record of this document surviving in the Julfa Cathedral Archive, but from Minasean's brief descriptions it is likely that several similar letters patent do survive.²²¹ It has been mentioned that the Shahrimaneans and their agents were treated as royal merchants in Russia in the 1660s and there were doubtless many others of whom no record survives. All the evidence confirms that the Julfans were indeed favourite envoys of the Safavi shahs from the time of 'Abbās I (perhaps even from Tahmāsp's reign) to the early years of Ṣafī II/Sulayman. They were particularly preferred for embassies to Christian states.

The involvement of the Julfans in the royal silk trade presents greater complexities. We know rather little about how any aspect of the trade worked in practice or about 'Abbās I's ten year monopoly.²²² European commentators often state that 'Abbās advanced silk (and money) to the Julfans, demanding payment only after their return from the Levant, which suggests a commission trade. This may well have been how at least part of the trade operated, particularly

217 G. Berchet, *La Repubblica di Venezia e la Persia*, Turin, 1865, ??

218 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 192; L.B. Zekiyān, "Xoga Safar ambasciatore di Shah 'Abbas a Venezia", *Oriente Moderno*, LVIII/7-8, 1978, 357-367; Falsafi, *Zindigani*, 1239-1240. On Irano-Venetian relations in this period see also M.-F. Tiepolo (ed.), *La Persia e la Repubblica di Venezia, Mostra di documenti...*, Tehran, 1973.

219 NJHV, 21, citing Ter-Avetisyan, *Gorod Dzhuga*, Tiflis, 1937.

220 PNJ, I, 158-159.

221 Minasean, *Divan*, 108-113. The *farmāns* concern: Khoja Suk'is in 1046/1636; Khoja Safar in the same year; Khoja Sarfraz in 1052/1642; Petros in 1053/1643; Kirakos and Awet (dated 1043?/1633 by Minasean but we know from other sources that they were royal merchants of Safi II [Seth, *Armenians in India*, chapter 19]. Ter-Yovhaneants' gives a translation of what must be the same *farmān* [PNJ, I, 48-49], and another document, dated 1076/1665, concerning Khoja Kirakos also survives); Yovhannēs in 1077/1666. No such documents survive for the years after 1077/1666, which is perhaps indicative of the Julfans' declining status at court.

222 L.K. Steinmann, "Shah 'Abbās I and the Royal Silk Trade 1599-1629", PhD dissertation, New York University, 1986, has not been available to me.

in the early days after the Julfan resettlement in Isfahan. Yet we also read of the Julfans buying from the royal treasury and participating in the rigged auction of royal silk in 1619.²²³ Della Valle saw 'Abbas as a benevolent wholesaler who collected up all the silk produced by the small-scale farmers and then sold it in batches of two to three hundred loads to foreigners and the Julfans.²²⁴ If this is true, it still leaves us in the dark as to the method for procuring silk from the producers during the period of the monopoly. Only a part of the silk disposed of by the crown can have been collected as revenue, so presumably the rest must have been purchased from producers or landlords. An East India Company source sheds some light on this question:

['Abbas I] prohibited all men what nation soever to buy any silks unless from his hands and to this ende all should be collected and brought into his Magazenes, hee sent his owne servants with ready Money to all places where silks grewe to buy from the Countrey people ... att such rates as the owners could afforde itt with this silke thus gained hee complied yearlie with the English and Dutch nacons, sould part unto the Julfalleyne Armenians at ten Tomands the loade proffit which was transported by the way of Aleppo, some he adventured with them on his own proper account, and the rest hee hoarded upp in his Magazenes.²²⁵

This confirms that the Armenians both bought silk from the Shah and acted as his commission agents. The monopoly in any case had loopholes. Merchants could export silk privately on payment of a tariff of five tumans per load,²²⁶ and it was also evaded by some producers who sold clandestinely on the free market at prices lower than those set by the Shah.²²⁷

The monopoly certainly clashed with vested interests - among them the Julfans who were, it is said, in league with the greatest part of the nobles.²²⁸ Following 'Abbās's death they combined forces to get the monopoly rescinded.²²⁹ In about 1630 the Julfans were buying

223 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 56-61; Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 45.

224 Della Valle, *Delle conditione*, 41.

225 Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 46. See also M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, "The earliest relations between Persia and the Netherlands", *Persica*, VI, 1972-1974, 40. We may wonder whether these servants or officers were bureaucrats supplied with cash from the treasury, or merchants using their own capital, in effect, to farm the monopoly.

226 Della Valle, *Viaggi*, II, 59.

227 Meilink-Roelofs, *loc. cit.*

228 Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 385; India Office, E/3/13/1371, Isfahan to Company 26/9/1631, f. 71a.

229 Ferrier, "The Armenians and East India Company", 46.

large quantities of silk from the governor of Gilān in a period when the monopoly had come to an end and when the Shah's officials in Isfahan were finding it increasingly hard to secure supplies to the East India Company and VOC.²³⁰

There are two little-known sources on the silk trade in the early eighteenth century. One is Khach'ikyan's article on the account book of Shahveli's son Sarhad,²³¹ the other an account by Soimonov, a naval officer in Peter the Great's service active in charting the Caspian and in the Russian campaigns in the 1720s.²³² From Sarhad's accounts we learn that he often purchased silk in Shamakha, sometimes from the Khan (who had close links with the Armenian export merchants), sometimes on the open market (whether from middlemen or producers is not stated in Khachikyan's article and perhaps not in the account book itself). Soimonov stresses the flourishing state of Rasht and Gilān in the last years of Safavi rule. He remarks that silk is universally cultivated in the villages around Rasht, explains that raw silk could be procured only for silver cash, and comments that even the peasants in the villages have plenty of money. He also tells us that Julfa and Astrakhan Armenians played the principal role in the export of silk. Soimonov's account of the power structure at Rasht is worth giving in full:

Trade attracted great wealth, and so merchants were held in respect, and had an equal status with the nobility (*dvoryanstvo*). Merchants and all the principal bourgeois (*meshchanstvo velikoe*) played a part in the government. For although the Shah usually sent a governor (*vezir*) there, who ruled the town and province in his name, however he could not take any important measures without the agreement of the bourgeoisie.²³³

Soimonov's account suggests that merchants were a dominant element in a society where royal, indeed political, authority was weak, and where the producers themselves were active participants in the commercial economy. He also leaves some interesting questions unanswered, among them the precise identity of the people he calls the nobility (*dvoryanstvo*) and bourgeoisie (*meshchanstvo*).

230 Ferrier, *loc. cit.*; Dunlop, *Bronnen tot*, 357, 371.

231 Khach'ikyan is intending to publish the account book in full. Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, "Shahvelu vordi Sarhadi hashvematiyanē vorpēs hay-rusakan tntesakan kaperi skzbnaghbyur", PBH, 1978, no. 2, 93-108.

232 F.I. Soimonov, *Opisanie Kaspiiskago Morya i chinennykh na onom rossiskikh zavoevanii*, ed. G.F. Miller, Saint Petersburg, 1763.

233 *Ibid.*, 189.

The scattered sources on the silk trade thus provide a decidedly confused picture of the organisation of production and the mechanisms for transferring silk from the productive to the commercial sector. It is clear that in certain periods the Safavi political elite (either the Shah himself or local or central officials) controlled a considerable share of the silk for export and either sold this to the Julfans or commissioned them to sell it abroad. But it is also clear that part of the silk crop was always sold (sometimes in advance of the harvest) by producers for cash, either direct to exporters or perhaps to local middlemen. New sources and further research would probably throw fresh light on the relationship between the Julfans, the shahs and officials, and the producers themselves. The available evidence does, however, show that it is unwise to accept the notion of complete political control of the silk trade, with the Julfans merely playing the role of salesmen for the shahs and vazirs.

Relations with other merchants

Outside their own community, Armenians also had close economic ties with merchants of other nationalities. In 1731 for instance Manuk-Agha Lazarean entered into a *commenda* partnership with a Muslim named Hājji Ibrāhīm. Manuk-Agha was the active partner and contributed 300 tumans while Hājji Ibrāhīm invested 900 tumans, making this one of the largest recorded *commenda* contracts.²³⁴ The VOC agent Visnich was accused by colleagues of having business connections with several Julfa Armenians active in the Aleppo trade.²³⁵ Private trade with Company factors was probably widespread and but is yet to be researched.²³⁶ Both Tavernier and Chardin had commercial links with Julfa Armenians, though we know little about the precise details.²³⁷ Chardin seems to have been particularly close to the Ghalandarean family and was involved in their proposed cooperation with the EIC. In 1691 he wrote a bill for £50,000 on Agha-Piri Ghalandarean in Surat.²³⁸

234 NJHV, 128.

235 Dunlop, *Bronnen tot*, 297.

236 Ferrier, "The agreement", 436.

237 On Tavernier's Armenian connections see Gulbenkian, "Philippe de Zagly".

238 Ferrier, "The agreement", 436 and n.

Inside Iran close association with non-Armenians was unusual; abroad, especially in remote areas, Armenians could not be so choosy about their partners, and might in any case benefit from association with local merchants. In Marseille in 1629 a Catholic Armenian, formerly resident in Venice, entered a partnership with one of the principal local silk importers, and together they secured a royal letter patent from Louis XIII (confirmed by Louis XIV in 1645) to act as sole brokers for Armenian and Persian merchants in Marseille.²³⁹ There is also a record of a commercial agreement between some Armenian silk merchants and a Dutch Levant firm, while the first Armenian merchants in Amsterdam used the services of a Jewish broker and translator.²⁴⁰ It is more surprising to find an Englishman Thomas Brain appointed as the Julfa Armenians' broker in Moscow following the 1667 agreement.²⁴¹ Armenian merchants in Madras frequently traded in partnership with Coromandel Muslims and Hindus.²⁴² In Tibet the Armenian and Muslim Kashmiri merchants seem to have been quite close to one another, even combining forces to arbitrate disputes.²⁴³

More common than association on equal terms was the employment by others of Armenians as commercial agents and linguists. The relationship with the Safavi shahs is an example of this practice on the grand scale. The Europeans in Iran also made extensive use of Julfans' services. Travellers were often entirely dependent on the services of Armenians. John Mildenhall, for example, had an Armenian interpreter who served him for four years on his travels from Aleppo to Agra. When he left, Mildenhall was virtually helpless until he had spent six months learning Persian himself.²⁴⁴ The permanently established East India Companies also depended on the services of Armenians as interpreters, purchasing agents and to help them navigate the unfamiliar waters of Iranian commercial, and indeed social and political, law and practice.²⁴⁵ The VOC,

239 C.-D. Tékéian, "Marseille, la Provence, et les Arméniens", *Mémoires de l'Institut Historique de Provence*, VI, 1929, 22-24.

240 Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerë*, 49, 50-51.

241 Parsamyan, *Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke*, 58-62.

242 Arasaratnam, *Merchants*, 158.

243 Khachikian, "The Ledger", 176.

244 J. Mildenhall, in Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumous*, II, 302.

245 Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 45; Meilink-Roelofs, "The earliest relations", 39.

much more than their English rival (which persisted in trying to secure its silk supply through official channels), used Armenian merchants, particularly the *kaṭāntars* Nazar and Safar, as brokers for their silk purchases.²⁴⁶

The Julfa Armenians were more willing to have financial dealings with foreigners than to enter into trading partnerships with them. There are numerous references to loans and bills involving both Armenians and non-Armenians. While the Julfans were themselves no strangers to currency dealing, credit transactions and complex accounting, they also made extensive use of Hindu (*multānī* or *banya*) bankers who enjoyed a reputation for financial expertise. Hovhannes Ter-Dav'tyan opened accounts with local Hindu *ṣarrāfs* in all the major Northwest Indian centres he traded at, depositing his funds with them, arranging cash transfers through them (by *huṇḍī*), and using them as a kind of current account on which to draw money when required, while collecting interest at the same time. When he moved on to a new centre he settled the account and arranged for his funds to be transferred to his next destination. The Lansdowne collection contains a number of *huṇḍīs* for transfers between towns in Bengal arranged by Indian *ṣarrāfs* for Armenian merchants.²⁴⁷ The use of Indian *ṣarrāfs* was not restricted to Armenians in India: in Isfahan too Julfa families might keep an account with one of the many resident Indian banking firms.²⁴⁸ Occasionally Armenians had recourse to the *Multānīs*. Zak'aria Agulets'i became heavily indebted because of liabilities arising from his brother's death and was forced to borrow 300 tumans from *Multānīs* in Tabriz, mortgaging his land as security.²⁴⁹

The Julfans themselves often acted as moneylenders. This seems to have been considered a branch of normal commercial activity rather than a specialised profession. They lent considerable sums to the VOC in Iran,²⁵⁰ though they also borrowed from it on occasion.²⁵¹ In the later eighteenth century two Armenian merchants of Bengal loaned money to the French Comapagnie

246 Dunlop, *Bronnen tot*, 317, 329, 503, 614, 623.

247 BLL . An example is given in Part 3, Document 18.

248 A settlement document closing such an account is given in Part 3, Document 2.

249 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Oragrut'yunē*, 100.

250 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 282.

251 Meilink-Roelofs, "The earliest relations", 31.

des Indes in Basra.²⁵² Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan lent to Europeans in India and a number of surviving bills record financial transactions with Europeans.²⁵³

As the Indians were used by the Julfans for their expertise in finance, so the Europeans were relied on for shipping. This was true in the Mediterranean, where the Dutch Levant vessels frequently transported Armenian merchants and their goods to Livorno and Amsterdam,²⁵⁴ in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf,²⁵⁵ and on the last leg of the Russian route, from Archangel or the Baltic ports to Amsterdam.

Occasionally commercial and financial association gave rise to social relations. Chardin's description of the feast given by the Sarhads (Shahrimaneans) in honour of Thomas Rolt, the new EIC chief, was corporate hospitality rather than friendship,²⁵⁶ but there were also closer relations between the Julfans and Europeans resident in Isfahan and Julfa. The Dutch agent Visnich, mentioned above for his business links with Julfa merchants, also married an Armenian,²⁵⁷ and an Armenian married into Tavernier's family.²⁵⁸ According to Della Valle the Dutch in India often took Armenian, Indian (Christian) and Syrian (Christian) wives and later settled with them in Batavia.²⁵⁹ Della Valle himself entered Julfa society through his wife, who was a Syrian Christian, but though he describes Julfan social life in some detail he does not appear to have struck up a close friendship with any of the Armenians. In Erzerum in about 1700 the house of the English consul Prescott was the social meeting place for both the Armenian silk merchants and any passing Europeans.²⁶⁰

252 Archives Nationales, Paris, Séries colonies, F2^b 10.

253 HTD, *passim*.

254 Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew hayerĕ*, ; Chardin, *Voyages*, I, 10; Masson, *Histoire du commerce... XVII^e siècle*, 127.

255 Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 45; F. Martin, *Mémoires de F.M. fondateur de Pondicherry 1665-1696*, ed. A. Martineau, 3 vols., 1931-1934, II, 189.

256 Chardin, *Voyages*, VIII, 178 f.

257 Meilink-Roelofs, "The earliest relations", 25.

258 Gulbenkian, "Philippe de Zagly".

259 P. Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, ed. E. Grey from Havers's translation, 2 vols., London, 1892, , 24; Seth, *Armenians in India*, 260.

260 Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation*, II, 279.

Lastly in this section we will consider the Julfans' relations with the various European companies with which they came into contact. First among these were the Levant Companies, the principal buyers of the raw silk exported by the Julfans. The main markets were Aleppo and Izmir, where the silk exporters and importers bargained silk for silver, cloth and luxury manufactures. On the whole the Armenian and European merchants traded on equal terms, both at the mercy of unreliable transport, communications and political conditions.²⁶¹ There were few if any long-term relationships between these two interdependent parties, but probably the uncertainties of the trade precluded firm precommitment. If relations between the Julfans and the European Levant merchants were not close, they seem to have been uncomplicated and business-like.

The situation with European companies trading to Iran itself was significantly different, for here Armenians and Europeans found themselves in direct competition. The Russian and East India Companies' silk exports and woollen textile imports threatened the Armenians' trade in the same commodities. So it is not surprising to find that the Armenian merchants' attitudes to any Europeans trading into Iran was suspicious if not openly hostile.²⁶² This attitude was reciprocated by most Company agents in Iran.²⁶³

There were, however, some areas of common interest and some periods when the Armenians and their European competitors were drawn together. First, as has already been mentioned, the Julfans made extensive use of European Company shipping in the Gulf and Indian Ocean and also had business relations with Company agents in their private capacity. The companies were also in a position to provide another very valuable service to the Armenians, owing to the privilege which allowed them to trade duty free without having their bales of goods examined by customs officers. These were advantages which they or their servants were often willing to extend to Armenian

²⁶¹ Davis, *Aleppo*, 34, 146.

²⁶² F. Pétis de la Croiz, "Extrait du journal du sieur Pétis, fils", in *Relation de Dourry Effendi ambassadeur de la Porte Ottomane auprès du roi de Perse*, ed. L.M. Langlès, Paris, 1810, 147-148.

²⁶³ Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 38, 46-48, 55; Hanway, *An Historical Account*, I, 22, 35-36.

merchants, colouring their goods to save them customs duties, and smuggling coin, whose export was forbidden, across the frontier.²⁶⁴

The English East India Company was very much interested in the idea of cooperation with the Julfa Armenians whom its directors (if not the agents in Iran) saw as powerful potential allies and probably the only group who could increase English woollen textile sales in Iran. The Armenians' interest in the Gulf route, however, never proved sufficiently long-lived to overcome the barriers that separated the parties, and the two agreements reached between the Armenians and the EIC were never activated, at least as far as trade in Iran was concerned.²⁶⁵

Cooperation between the Armenians and the East India Company proved more fruitful in India, where the Armenians' services as interpreters, brokers and intermediaries were as useful as in Iran. In addition, they served as soldiers and in other capacities in the Company's factories and forts.²⁶⁶ The EIC was for a time interested in attracting Julfa Armenians to settle in its outposts in India, in the expectation that they would bring with them good craftsmen and a thriving commercial life. It was decided that a quarter of the native town at Madras should be set aside for them, and that they should be permitted to construct a church there. The quarter was to be named Julfa.²⁶⁷ For the Armenians the EIC provided not only shipping but protection and secure bases for their trade. In the eighteenth century, as the Company's political presence developed and security for foreign merchants in much of India declined, this became an increasingly important consideration.

Even in India, however, the Company and the Armenians were always potential competitors and clashes of interest continued to occur. As the military and political power of the English grew, so did their ability to get the best of the Armenians in any conflict.²⁶⁸

264 Matthee, "Politics and Trade", .

265 Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company"; *idem.*, "The agreement".

266 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 228-229, 419-428; Ferrier, "The Armenians and the East India Company", 54; CHI, VI, 469.

267 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 282-287; Arasaratnam, *Merchants*, 158, 200.

268 Seth, *Armenians in India*, 360-382; Colless, "Traders of the Pearl", *Abr Nahrain*, XIII, 1972-3, 9-11.

In Russia the Armenians' attitude towards the two English attempts to establish trade on the Caspian was unrelentingly hostile, but they cooperated willingly with the Dutch who in 1676 helped them recover the right to the transit trade.²⁶⁹ The initial reaction of the Russian merchants to the Armenians' commercial privileges was also predictably negative, but in the eighteenth century the Armenians began to establish themselves in Russia and found ways to cooperate with local merchants as well as officialdom in organising and funding the Caspian trade and some of Russia's first ventures in manufacturing industry.²⁷⁰

269 See Chapter 2.

270 NJHV, 189 f.

CHAPTER FOUR

PARTNERSHIP AND AGENCY

There are many substantial Merchants of Armenians, who inhabit Julfar, a Town near Ispahan, and they send Factors all over India to carry on Trade; and some come to Europe on that same Account.¹

This chapter deals with the various forms of partnership and agency employed by the Julfa Armenians. These can be divided into four main types: *commenda* partnership, true partnership, commission agency, and representation. A number of variants existed within each of these, and sometimes forms were adopted that incorporated elements of more than one of these types, so clear-cut distinctions cannot always be made. The Lawbook also divides commercial organisation into four basic types, but its fourth type is individual trade, which it deals with in detail in the previous chapter on the laws of sale. Representation is not included, probably because this was perceived primarily as a legal rather than a commercial form.

The Commenda

The *commenda* contract was, to judge by the documentary evidence and its prominent place in the Astrakhan Lawbook, the principal contractual form of commercial association or partnership. The Lawbook devotes almost a third of the chapter on commercial organisation to the *commenda* - a total of fifty-eight articles.² These, together with surviving examples of contracts, provide detailed information about the *commenda* and how it worked.

The *commenda*, as historians have noted, defies straightforward definition; it incorporates features of partnership, of loan, and even of employment contracts. The initial definition of the *commenda* given in the Astrakhan Lawbook emphasises the loan aspect:

¹ A. Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies (1688-1723)*, 2 vols., ed. W. Foster, London, 1930, I, 71.

² *Datastanagirk' Astrakhani Hayots'*, ed. F.G. Poghosyan, Erevan, 1967, 131-146. On the *commenda* see NJHV, 121-138.

When someone gives money to another to work, the capital and two out of three parts of the profits go to him, and the third part goes to the worker. Or according to some other arrangement which may be agreed between them.³

But as we will see, the obligations between the partners in a *commenda* were far stronger than those between lender and borrower in a loan, so that *commendas* seem, to a large extent, to have replaced employment contracts among the Julfans.

There were two basic kinds of *commenda*: the unilateral and the bilateral. In the first, the whole capital was provided by one partner (the sleeping partner or investor), and the labour by the other (the active partner or agent). In the bilateral type, the active partner also contributed a part of the capital, and received a correspondingly greater share of the profits. The Armenian term used for *commenda* was *ženkerut'iwn*, a generic term applied to all forms of partnership. The verb *enkeranal*, to form a partnership, was likewise used for both *commendas* and other types of partnership. In the Julfa dialect, the "sleeping" partner or investor was known as the *agha* (TP. *âqâ*) or master, and the active partner as the *ženker*, partner or agent.⁴

According to the Lawbook, a *commenda* contract should always be drawn up in writing (though an oral contract was valid, as long as it was properly witnessed). Two *commenda* contracts are given in Part 3, (Documents 3 and 4), and will be used to illustrate the usual terms and conditions of the Armenian *commenda* and their permutations.

Document 3 is a typical example of Julfan unilateral *commenda* contract.

After the initial blessing, the *ženker* or agent writes his name, and affirms that he has entered a partnership and received a capital (*sarmaeay*) of a specified amount from the *agha* or master. The purpose of the *commenda* is sometimes stated though rarely in any detail; in the given example the agent merely affirms that he will use the capital in trade. The share of any profits due to each party is then given, usually in terms of proportions of the original capital. In the given example the capital is 210 tumans so the profit division is also expressed in factors of 210, the master

3 *Ibid.*, 130.

4 *Ibid.*

receiving 140 tumans (plus his original capital), the agent 70 tumans. The following clause is an optional one, committing the agent to invest in the *commenda* any profits that may accrue to him from other quarters. The agent then commits himself to terminating the partnership on demand and to surrendering the capital and full accounts of the partnership to him. Finally the date and place of the contract are given, and, in this case, as the agent does not possess a seal, he affirms that the contract is written in his own hand. The contract is signed by five witnesses, but in the unilateral *commenda* the master was not obliged to make any written commitment.⁵ Some of these clauses are standard, while others show considerable variation among contracts examined. Table 1 records information from the eight surviving *commenda* contracts to have been studied to date. In only one is there more than a single agent, and in that case the three agents are a father and his two sons (who agree to subdivide their 25 per cent share of profits among themselves in the proportions 67 per cent to the father, 27 per cent to the older son, and 7 per cent to the younger son). In four of the contracts there is more than one investor (in two cases two investors; in two cases three investors; and in one case the master is the Lazarean firm). There was no minimum or maximum investment in a unilateral *commenda*, but it is unlikely that an agent would have taken on the obligations of a *commenda* without the incentive of a share in the profits on a substantial capital. The capital in the eight contracts ranges from 200 tumans to 900 tumans, with an average of over 500 tumans. Even 200 tumans was a considerable sum by the standards of the day. The currency in which the capital was paid varied according to place. All of the contracts have their capital expressed in tumans, but this was a money of account and does not indicate the actual form the capital took. Normally the denomination of the actual payment is also specified: *sk'ay abasi* (*sikkah*, or new-minted, 'abbāsī); *nor abasi* (new 'abbāsī); *yafīōnki abasi* (Nādir Shah's *haft dāngī* 'abbāsī). As two of the contracts were written in India (one in Hugli, Bengal, the other in Chinapatnam - Madras) it is surprising that their sums are not expressed in Indian currency, as was usual among the Armeians trading in India. In the Coromandel example, however, the tuman:hun exchange rate is given. Capital might not be given in the form of cash at all; in three of the contracts it was supplied in the form of goods: in one European cloth (*londra*), in another Dutch goods, and in the third unspecified goods.

5 *Ibid.*, 131.

Table 1 Unilateral *commenda* contracts

| Source | Date | Place | No. investors | No. agents | Capital in tumans | Profit split |
|-------------------------|------|-----------|---------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Khach'ikyan, "Shahvelu" | 1712 | Isfahan | 3 | 3 | 900 | 75:25 |
| HTD, 67 | 1682 | Isfahan | 2 | 1 | 250 | 75:25 |
| PNJ, I, 161 | 1719 | Julfa | 3 | 1 | 600 | 78:22 |
| NJHV, 124 | 1711 | Astrakhan | | 1 | 660 | 67:33 |
| ASVA, 30th Hamira 95 | 1711 | Hugli | 1 | 1 | 210 | 67:33 |
| ASVA, 1st Nadar 79 | 1694 | Isfahan | 2 | 1 | 480 | 75:25 |
| BLL 1047, f. 249 | 1736 | Madras | 1 | 1 | 210 | 67:33 |
| BLL 1047, f. 157 | 1714 | Julfa (?) | 1 | 1 | 630 | 71:29 |

In most of the contracts the purpose of the *commenda* is given, if at all, simply as "for trade". One specifies the agent's destination as India, while another, drawn up in Astrakhan, goes into greater detail, stipulating that the agent should sell the Dutch goods consigned to him in Iran, and use the proceeds to buy Iranian goods for Astrakhan. More detailed instructions could, of course be given, or sent, to a *commenda* agent by letter of instruction (*ōrdnagir*).

The division of profits between the master and agent shows considerable variation. Fryer stated that the agent's share was a quarter,⁶ while the Lawbook gives it as a third (or otherwise by agreement). Of the eight contracts examined, there are three in which the agent's share is a quarter, three in which it is a third, one in which his share is two-sevenths, and one in which it is less than a quarter (thirteen-sixtieths - or barely more than a fifth). Sh.L. Khach'ikyan speculates that the variation in profit share may reflect the degree of responsibility and

⁶ J. Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia during Nine Years' Travels, 1672-1681*, 3 vols., ed. W. Crocke, London, 1909-1915, II, 249.

independence enjoyed by the agent, but it may equally well have been determined by his personal credit and experience, as well as by the current state of the credit and labour markets.⁷

The clause in which the agent commits himself to invest in the *commenda* any profits from other sources is less straightforward. It occurs in slightly varying forms in nine out of seventeen *commenda* contracts (unilateral and bilateral), while its definite absence can be established for only three (several of the contracts are incomplete, or not recorded in full). In several of the contracts it is clearly stated that any profits from other sources accruing to the agent should be divided in the same way as the *commenda* profits. The difficulty lies in establishing where such profits might have come from. It would have been highly disadvantageous for an agent to have to share any profits accruing his private capital on this basis, and it seems unlikely that this is what was intended. At the same time it clearly was foreseen that agents might attempt to renege on the obligation imposed by this clause; the Lawbook stipulates harsh penalties for those who did so,⁸ but gives no indication of what profits might be included in this category. It notes that inclusion of the clause is optional, and that it does not apply unless explicitly stated. It states, furthermore, that the master of an agent bound by this clause had more extensive responsibilities with regard to the agent's business debts to third parties than otherwise.⁹ This suggests that the additional profits came from an agent's business activities, such as commission agency, that did not directly utilise the *commenda* capital, but in which he may have been able to participate only because of his enhanced status as the agent of a major firm with capital at his disposal.

Most *commenda* contracts contain a clause committing the agent to termination of the contract on demand, communicated either as a written instruction to return home, or on presentation of the original contract or an authenticated copy by the master or his representative. This commitment is often reinforced by the catch-all waiver "I will make no excuse" (*uzr ch'berem*, from P. 'uzr) - which frequently occurs in documents of other types as well. According to the Lawbook, an

7 NJHV, 126.

8 *Datastanagirk'*, 139.

9 *Ibid.*, 140.

agent who failed to return home as instructed forfeited his share of any profits and became liable for any losses.¹⁰

In the unilateral *commenda* given in Part 3 (Document 3) it is actually stated that the agent is obliged to provide an account. This clause is usually omitted, but the Astrakhan Lawbook makes it clear that keeping a full and accurate double-entry account book (*k'atayëruznama*) was one of a *commenda* agent's most serious obligations. Failure to present such an account was punishable by imprisonment for up to a year.¹¹ The account book was so important because it formed the basis for calculating profit and loss, and the sums due to the investor and agent. Agents travelling abroad must have had ample opportunity to defraud their distant masters. The only concrete impediment to this was careful scrutiny of the accounts at the end of the partnership, and accounting and checking accounts were taken very seriously indeed (see Note on Accounting), as is apparent from the following line from the Julfa popular poet Ghukas Bagher Oghli: "The masters could split a hair with an account book (*divan*)".¹² According to the Lawbook an agent returning home at the end of a *commenda* had to present to his master not only goods and accounts, but everything he had brought with him, including clothing and personal luggage.¹³ Once he had received the accounts, it was the master's responsibility to check them quickly and terminate the *commenda* by drawing up a summary account called a *t'õmar* in two copies; these the agent and master signed and exchanged. The original contract was also signed and dated by the master with a note stating that a *t'õmar* had been drawn up and both parties had received their due. The contract was then returned to the agent, and neither party had any further claim on the other.¹⁴ Instead of writing a summary account the master and agent could simply exchange a document of quittance, called a *ghat'yilaghagir*, which, with the return of the original contract and signing of the agent's account, also brought the *commenda* to an end.

10 *Ibid.*, 133-134, 141.

11 *Ibid.*, 132-133.

12 PNJ, I, 164.

13 *Datastanagirk'*, 133-134.

14 *Ibid.*, 134-135.

A number of other standard features were not usually expressed in the contract but are explained by the Lawbook. The most important of these was the arrangement for the liabilities of the two parties, which was one of the distinctive features of the contract. In normal circumstances the agent was not responsible for any losses to the *commenda* capital, except those caused by his own fault.¹⁵ The only exceptions to this rule were, either where there was a clause in the contract specifying that the agent was to bear a proportion of any loss - (and that proportion could not be greater than the agent's share of any profits), or where the agent was sent written instructions by the master and a loss or diminished profit resulted from his failure to comply with them.¹⁶ It was integral to the *commenda* that the agent received no remuneration if the *commenda* failed to realise a profit, and that the master's liability was limited to the amount of his original investment. He had no liability for his agent's dealings with third parties, unless they had been undertaken on his instruction.¹⁷

The Lawbook sheds light on several other aspects of the *commenda* that are not made explicit in the surviving contracts. It notes, for example, that the degree of an agent's independence of action was variable. At one extreme, a master could give an agent full responsibility in writing, in which case the agent could act on his own judgement in all matters, and the master could not afterwards blame him or demand his reasons for his actions. At the other extreme, a master could write his agent detailed instructions, which the agent must obey in every particular.¹⁸ The greater an agent's freedom, the greater his ability to take advantage of opportunities that presented themselves, but with a young or experienced agent the master might feel that it was safer to restrict his activities to simple transactions. In any case, an agent was obliged to keep his master informed of all his dealings with third parties, and was not allowed to give or send anything to third parties (thereby depleting the capital) without first informing his master.¹⁹ Certain kinds of activity were altogether forbidden: an agent could not use the *commenda* capital to invest in

15 *Ibid.*, 135, 137, 139.

16 *Ibid.*, 132, 137-8, 143.

17 *Ibid.*, 135-136, 138.

18 *Ibid.*, 132.

19 *Ibid.*, 133.

other partnerships, place it on deposit (*amanat'*), or give it out as a loan, without his master's permission.²⁰

A master had certain unwritten obligations towards his agent. On an agent's request, a master had to look after his family and provide them with sufficient money for their needs, the sum to be repaid with interest by the agent on his return.²¹ According to the Lawbook, a master was also obliged to pay for his agent's daily subsistence. Surviving *commenda* account books contain debit items for food and clothing, so it seems that these were considered part of the running costs of the partnership and would automatically be included in the final calculation of profit.²² If an agent died abroad his master was obliged to send immediately to recover his accounts, deliver them to his heirs and settle accounts with them promptly.²³

The main difference between the unilateral and the bilateral *commenda* was that in the latter the active partner or agent contributed a share of the capital. The Lawbook deals with the two types simultaneously, and most of what has been said about the unilateral *commenda* applies equally to the bilateral. In the Julfa dialect the bilateral *commenda* was known as the *ēnalmalī ħnkerut'iw*n (P. 'ayn al-māl).

In the example given in Part 3, Document 4, the initial capital put up by the investor was 510 tumans. The capital invested by the agent was 40 tumans and the investors added a further 80 tumans as a deposit (*amanat'*), bringing the total to 630 tumans. Thus the agent contributed rather more than one-sixteenth of the total *commenda* capital. His share at the final division was to be a third of any profits, plus the return of his investment. In the contracts examined the proportion of the capital invested by the agent varies considerably: from less than a twentieth, to more than a quarter (see Table 2). Profits on a bilateral *commenda* were calculated on the basis of the agent receiving the full profit on his own investment, plus a share of the profit on the investor's

20 *Ibid.*, 146.

21 *Ibid.*, 133.

22 *Ibid.*, 136-137.

23 *Ibid.*, 137.

investment. However, since that share was variable (just as in the unilateral *commenda*) there was not an exact correlation between the proportion of the capital contributed by the agent and his share of the profits. In two of the contracts, where the agent put in only a small share of the capital, he received only a third of the profits - no more than might be received by the agent in a unilateral *commenda*. The Astrakhan Lawbook gives an example where an agent contributes a quarter of the capital and receives a half of the profits (i.e. the full profit on one quarter, and a third of the profit on the other three quarters), and two of the surviving contracts show the same pattern.²⁴ In all the bilateral *commenda* contracts examined there is only one agent, and only one investor in all but three (see Table 2).

Table 2 Bilateral *commenda* contracts (based on NJHV, 131, table 1)

| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I |
|---|------|----------|-------|-----|-----|-------|------|-------|
| 1 | 1731 | Rasht | 900 | 300 | | 1,200 | 25.0 | 50:50 |
| 2 | 1742 | Saidabad | 510 | 40 | 80 | 630 | 6.3 | 67:33 |
| 3 | 1744 | Julfa | 1,100 | 100 | 300 | 1,500 | 6.6 | 67:33 |
| 4 | 1740 | Bengal | 345 | 15 | | 360 | 4.2 | 64:36 |
| 5 | 1744 | Saidabad | 340 | 75 | | 415 | 18.0 | 61:39 |
| 6 | 1741 | Madras | 375 | 50 | 60 | 485 | 10.3 | 64:36 |
| 7 | 1736 | Calcutta | 300 | 70 | | 370 | 19.0 | 61:39 |
| 8 | 1741 | Bengal | 300 | 20 | | 320 | 6.7 | 70:30 |
| 9 | 1712 | Tabriz | 5.1 | 1.9 | | 7 | 27 | 50:50 |

Columns: A - No.; B - Date; C - Place; D - Investor's capital (*sarmaeqy*) (in tumans); E - Agent's capital (*ēnalmal*); F - Deposit (*amanat'*); G - Total; H - Agent's capital as percentage of total; I - Profit split.

Sources: 1 - NJHV, 128; 2 - BLL 1047, f. 283; 3 - BLL 1047, f. 100; 4 - BLL 1047, f. 75; 5 - BLL 1047, f. 156; 6 - BLL 1047, f. 78; 7 - BLL 1047, f. 228; 8 - BLL 1047, f. 205; 9 - Eghia Karnets'i, *Divan*, 314.

²⁴ *Datastanagirk'*, 131-132. Compare the typical Mediterranean bilateral *commenda*, in which the agent contributed a third of the capital and received a half of the profits. R.S. Lopez and I.W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World*, London, 1955, 175.

Three of the contracts contain, in addition to the investor's capital and the agent's capital, a further investment described as *amanat'* (P. *amānat*). *Amanat'* will be discussed more fully below, but within the bilateral *commenda* the term had a particular meaning. When it came to dividing the profits on the *commenda* the *amanat'* was treated in the same way as the capital contributed by the investor.²⁵ *Amanat'* seems to have been distinguished from that capital in representing a show of goodwill on the part of the investor in response to the agent's investment of his own capital in the *commenda*; this explains why *amanat's* occur only in bilateral contracts. It is also probable that the *amanat'* could be withdrawn before the termination of the *commenda* contract, in which case interest would have been paid on it, as it was on any sum surplus to the original capital held by the agent, and indeed on any part of the investment capital that was withdrawn or temporarily suspended from the *commenda* by either investor or agent.²⁶ A separate document concerning the *amanat'* given in one of the bilateral *commenda* contracts (Table 2, no. 3) discusses the payment of interest on the sum.²⁷

Origins of the Armenian commenda

Khach'ikyan draws attention to the close resemblance of the Armenian *commenda* to the medieval Italian version, and suggests that the form may have been adopted by the Armenians through their trading contacts with the Italians in Cilician Armenia.²⁸ The similarities between Mediterranean and Armenian *commendas* are certainly strong,²⁹ but the European version was not the only one from which the Armenian could have developed, and was itself probably based on earlier Byzantine and Islamic.³⁰ In fact contracts of the early Islamic period, from Fatimid Egypt and from Ottoman Aleppo bear a closer resemblance to the Armenian *commenda* than do European

25 Khach'ikyan suggests that such *amanat's* were given at interest (NJHV, 140-141), but the documentary evidence shows that this was not always the case.

26 *Datastanagirk'*, arts. 22-26, 56.

27 Lansdowne 1047, f. 212 (copy on f. 214).

28 NJHV, 121-122.

29 Lopez and Raymond, *Medieval Trade*, 174-184, give examples of typical European *commenda* contracts.

30 *Ibid.*, 174.

contracts.³¹ The Islamic *commenda*, generally termed *mudhārabā*, is similar in most essentials to the European, but while the latter was essentially an instrument of maritime trade, and limited in most cases to a single voyage, (in the case of the equivalent form for overland trade - the *societas terrae* - to a fixed period of one, two or three years),³² the Islamic and Armenian *commenda* was generally open-ended, and might last for many years.³³ The Islamic term occurs occasionally in the Julfa dialect in forms derived from Persian: *muzarbay*, *muzarabat*. It seems unlikely, therefore, that the Armenian *commenda* was a medieval borrowing from Europe, rather it had probably been a part of Armenian commercial practice at least from the early Islamic period.

The role of the commenda in Julfan trade

The *commenda* was in several respects ideally suited to the long-distance trade in which the Julfa Armenians specialised. It was, as we have seen, a means of combining the capital of one partner with the labour of another, against an eventual division of the profits. This allowed the rich to invest in long-distance trade without having to undertake its hazards or rigours. In a *commenda* the investor did not have to try to control the activities of an agent who might be hundreds or even thousands of miles away. Nor did he have to pay him a salary. In short, the investor took no part in the day-to-day running of the business, and had no liability for any debts the agent might incur with third parties. His risk was limited to the amount of his initial investment. He could, moreover, feel confident that the agent would exert himself to conduct trade profitably, since his only remuneration was a share in the profits.

There were equal advantages for the agent. The *commenda* provided a way for a young man with no resources of his own to enter into trade. All he needed was a degree of literacy and numeracy

31 Udovitch, A.L., *Partnership and Profit in Medieval Islam*, Princeton, 1970, 170-173, 194-195; Goitein, S.D., *A Mediterranean Society*, 5 vols., Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967-1988, I, 169-172; Masters, B., *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: mercantilism and the Islamic economy in Aleppo, 1600-1700*, New York, 1988, 50-53.

32 Lopez and Raymond, *Medieval trade*, 174-175, 185-186, 188-189.

33 Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit*, 199, 246-248; Goitein, *A Mediterranean society*, I,

(sufficient to keep an account book), and the good name or good fortune necessary to convince an investor of his creditworthiness. Thereafter the only constraints on his success were his abilities, his energy, and his luck. The level of his earnings depended entirely on the degree of his success. If through accident or other unforeseen circumstance the business failed and he made a loss, at least he was only back where he started (whereas the recipient of a commercial loan was obliged to repay principal and interest regardless of his success or failure). An additional attraction must have been the degree of independence enjoyed by a *commenda* agent. It was impractical for the investor sitting at home in Julfa to attempt to control the operations of an agent travelling in Bengal or the Mediterranean, so the agent could conduct affairs as he saw fit. The *commenda* agent probably also enjoyed a higher status than a mere employee. There was, nevertheless, a wide gulf separating the wealthy capitalist from the humble agent, as the use of the term master (*agha*) for the investor suggests. Numerous articles in the Astrakhan Lawbook are devoted to the obligations of the *commenda* agent, while the master's responsibilities towards the agent were generally of a paternalistic character.

The *commenda* was above all a flexible device. If we look at the surviving contracts, we find one example with a capital of only 7 tumans, while another is for 1,500 tumans. A unilateral *commenda* between a powerful Julfa family firm and an agent might be tantamount to a contract of employment. The evidence suggests that most agents of big firms were on *commenda* contracts. The twenty-six agents of Grigor Khaldarean were almost certainly *commenda* agents, as the amount of capital invested with each is recorded in Grigor's will of 1708/9. The individual investments range from 100 to 820 tumans, and while 24 of the investments were to individuals, the two largest were to partnerships, one of them to Petros, Yakobjan and Dawit' Shahrimeanean.³⁴ *Commendas* of the latter kind, in which the active partner was himself a wealthy merchant must have been closer to a form of commercial loan. Two of the bilateral *commenda* contracts have prominent merchants in the capacity of agents - Manuk Lazarean in one,

34 PNJ, I, 161-162.

and Eliazi vordi Minas Khoja-Minasean in the other. It seems therefore that in the Julfans' trading world the *commenda* partially fulfilled the functions of both employment contracts and loans.³⁵

The flexibility of the *commenda* allowed a wide variety of permutations. The Astrakhan Lawbook covers the possibility of an agent signing *commenda* contracts with more than one investor simultaneously, and of an agent reinvesting *commenda* capital in other *commendas* in which he would be the investor.³⁶ One of the bilateral *commenda* contracts examined is of this type. The original contract signed in Saidabad, Bengal, in 1744 was between Muk'ēli vordi Sēt'agha (investor) and Gaspari vordi Markos (agent). Two years later, however, the contract had to be terminated because Sēt'agha had received instructions to return and settle accounts with his own masters in Isfahan. As the capital he had invested in the *commenda* with Markos had been drawn from capital he had himself received on *commenda*, he was obliged to recover the money and his share of profits in order to be able to return and settle his own accounts.³⁷

Acting as agent in a *commenda* did not necessarily keep a merchant fully occupied. A 1729 document of quittance terminating a *commenda* formed in 1717 between Mkrtumi vordi Yovanjan and the Sharimanean firm records that Yovanjan was originally consigned two lots of goods worth 250 tumans as *commenda* capital. These he took from Isfahan to Tabriz, where he despatched one batch to the Sharimaneans in Europe, and sold the other. While in Tabriz he received two more batches of goods, quite independent of the *commenda*, one from the Sharimaneans in Isfahan and the other from their agent in Mashhad. These also he sold as instructed. At one point Yakobjan entered 178 tumans 700 *dians* of his own capital into the partnership before making a business trip to Moscow. The document is not sufficiently detailed to give a full account of Yakobjan's activities, but from the information given above, it is clear that during the twelve years of the partnership he handled consignments of goods for the Sharimaneans that were not related to the original *commenda* capital. He seems to have been acting as their general agent in Tabriz handling goods in transit between Europe, Russia, Khurasan, and Isfahan. What remuneration he

35 Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit*, 184; Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, I, 169-170.

36 *Datastanagirk'*, 139-140, 146.

37 BLL, 1047, f. 156.

received for this is not stated. It may be that as the Shahrimeaneans' *commenda* agent he was obliged to handle their business without charge. Alternatively he may have received a commission. The fact that he could invest capital of his own strongly suggests that he was making a good living through his activities.³⁸

The examination of further *commenda* contracts, and of account books written by *commenda* agents will clarify some of the unsolved questions about the practical operation of the *commenda*, but the existing evidence is sufficient to demonstrate the great flexibility and wide range of applications that made the *commenda* such a popular instrument among the merchants of New Julfa.

True Partnership and Informal Cooperation

Other forms of partnership were also employed by the Julfa Armenians. In the Lawbook true partnership - in which all partners contribute to the capital, all participate in the activity of the partnership, and profits or losses are divided in proportion to each partner's investment - is treated as the second form of commercial organisation. It is distinguished from the *commenda* by the term *ēnkerakts'ut'iwn*, "association" (as opposed to *ēnkerut'iwn* for the *commenda*). The terms *ēnkerakits'*, "associate", or *ēnkerk' mimeants'*, "mutual partners" are used for its partners.³⁹ In normal usage, however, the terms *ēnkerut'iwn* and *ēnker* were applied to both *commenda* and true partnerships. Judging by the scarcity of extant examples of true partnership contracts, and by the relatively few articles devoted to it in the Lawbook, it seems that the true partnership was much less widely used than the *commenda*. The reason for this is doubtless that in Julfa Armenian society the family operated as a tight-knit economic unit without the need for any written agreement between its members, and this, to some extent, rendered superfluous the development of institutionalised family partnerships similar to the medieval Italian *fraterna compagna*. The Julfan true partnership fulfilled a different function from the long-term family partnership. It was generally a short-term association for the attainment of a specific economic objective, very often

38 ASVA, 30 Aram 113.

39 *Datastanagirk'*, 130, 146-149.

the purchase of an expensive item, or consignment of goods. The articles in the Lawbook define the essential characteristics of true partnership as follows: mutual obligation to abide by the terms of their agreement; joint liability for the loss of goods or money owned jointly; mutual obligation to abide by an agreement to buy something jointly, and not to buy it individually instead, nor to attempt to back out of the agreement; obligation to carry out any duties agreed in the contract, and loss of any agreed fee in the case of non-compliance; termination or settlement of accounts on the death of a partner, or on the loss of the partnership's capital.⁴⁰

No actual contracts of partnership have survived, but Document 5 in Part 3 reproduces a contract recorded in a merchant's accountbook. Elsewhere in the same account book we can follow the course of another such partnership. On 6th Aram 68 (31st December 1683) Hovhannes and Baba (both agents of the same masters in Julfa) left the city of Agra on a business trip to Khurja to buy indigo. The account book does not give details about the trip, but by the time Hovhannes returned to Agra on 16th Nirhan (11th March, 1684), the indigo had already arrived there and been sent on to Surat by Avetik - another associate. In Agra Hovhannes, Baba and Avetik (who was acting on behalf of a fourth associate Poghos's son Yovan) agreed to divide the ownership of the 92 *charms*⁴¹ of indigo (16 *charms* for Hovhannes, 42 *charms* for Baba, and 34 *charms* for Yovan) but to handle the whole consignment jointly as far as Surat. Hovhannes refers to the goods as the "partnership" (*ĕnkerōvi*) indigo. On 22nd Nirhan (17th March 1683) they settled the account in Agra, calculating the cost per *charm* as far as Surat (i.e. including transport and tolls) to be 210.75 rupees. They agreed to draw lots to divide up the bales of indigo into their respective shares when they were all in Surat. Hovhannes arrived on 11th Shams 69 (10th April 1684), after stopping briefly in Sironj on the way. In Surat it came to light that one *charm* of indigo had been stolen at Broach. This was deducted from Yovan's share, the other two partners paying him compensation proportionate to their share of the consignment (Thus Hovhannes' share came to 40 rupees). The division of the indigo between the partners and settling the business of the stolen

40 *Datastanagirk'*, 146-149.

41 1 *charm* = 23 kg.

goods brought the partnership to an end, and each merchant made his own arrangements for shipping the indigo on to Basra or Bandar 'Abbās.⁴²

In the above case the benefits of the partnership were that handling the indigo as a single consignment simplified operations and probably reduced costs; that the risk of loss was spread (when the *ch'arm* of indigo was stolen each partner bore a loss of one-ninety-second of his share; whereas had Hovhannes lost a *ch'arm* from his own share it would have amounted to a sixteenth of his investment).

Another partnership formed between two merchants in Surat in 1670 for the joint purchase of an expensive diamond (costing 11,000 tumans) led to a dispute between the partners. One of them tried to change the terms of the original agreement to bring in a third partner, and when the other refused to accept this, he secretly bought the diamond without him, telling him that he had returned it to the seller. The information about this case comes from a formal letter of complaint sent to Julfa by the second partner in order to secure a judgement in his favour and compensation. From his statement it emerges that the partnership was an oral agreement, not a written contract.⁴³ The five prominent Julfa merchants who negotiated with the English East India Company in the 1690's to handle the Company's imports to Iran must either have been in partnership, or have been considering forming one. As the project fell through, their partnership never came into operation.⁴⁴

On the basis of the limited data available true partnerships seem mostly to have been short term, but longer term associations were not unknown. The will of Margar's son Yovsēp, who died in 1704, records that he traded in partnership with his brother Hovhannes for thirty years, from 1666/7 until the latter's death in 1697. The fact that the partnership was between brothers, and so represented a formalisation of the family firm probably explains its exceptional longevity. It

42 HTD, 81-82, 93, 97-98, 298-302.

43 Tēr-Yovhaneants', *Patmut'iwn Nor Jughayu*, I, 165-166.

44 Ferrier, R.W., "The Armenians and the East India Company in Persia in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century", *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, XXVI/1 (1973), 54-56.

did, however, differ from the typical family firm as is shown by the fact that, rather than simply trading as equal partners using their inherited patrimony, the brothers deliberately formed a partnership with a capital of 27,950 rupees, of which 18,000 rupees belonged to the older. The unequal shares, and the formal act of partnership suggest that before then the brothers had been trading individually, not as a family firm. As the text of the will puts it: "We formed a partnership and pooled our capital in Hyderabad, then went to Mylapore (Madras)".⁴⁵

A large part of the account book of Ter-Dawt'i vordi Hovhannes is devoted to the twelve years he spent in Tibet. Throughout this period Hovhannes remained the *commenda* agent of his masters in Isfahan, but the capital for the Tibet venture was not simply the original *commenda* capital, but was constituted as a new partnership capital to which Hovhannes contributed one half (presumably consisting of his original *commenda* capital and any profits made on that) and the other partner, Poghos's son Yovan the other. The text of their agreement is given in Part 3 (Document 5). The first section is a straightforward partnership agreement, with equal investment and equal profit division. The second part, however, introduces a number of complexities. It is evident that the two partners already had business dealings with each other. We have already encountered Yovan as one of the partners in the indigo deal of two years earlier mentioned above. That was the first recorded contact between Hovhannes and Yovan, but thereafter their relations grew steadily closer. Hovhannes took out a loan on Yovan's behalf, as well as paying a debt of his to a Hindu broker in Surat. He also sold a small consignment of Iranian goods on Yovan's behalf without charging commission. Yovan was performing equally valuable services for Hovhannes in shipping his Indian goods to Basra and Iran and selling them there. Yovan likewise did this without receiving any fee or commission.

At this stage the two future partners do not appear to have had any formal partnership or agreement, but were nevertheless cooperating closely, with Hovhannes handling the Indian side of the trade, and Yovan the shipping and the Middle Eastern end. On the 21st December 1684

⁴⁵ PNJ, I, 180-181; see also the slightly variant account in M.J. Seth, *Armenians in India from the earliest times to the present day*, London, Calcutta, 1937 (reprinted 1983), 304-306.

their relationship was established on a more formal footing when Hovhannes made an agreement with Avetik (again acting on Yovan's behalf) to go to Khairabad to buy textiles. This set up a partnership in which Yovan and Hovhannes each had a 50 per cent stake.⁴⁶ A pattern now emerges of Hovhannes operating from Agra to buy Indian commodities for the Iranian market, while Yovan travelled between Surat and the Persian Gulf ports, Isfahan and Basra, handling the sale of the goods and sending cash remittances back to Hovhannes. Paron Avetik acted as the coordinator of the two itinerant merchants, despatching goods onwards to Surat, and receiving the remittances from Yovan. He was also Hovhannes's main source of credit, a vital role, and the one from which he must have received his remuneration in the form of interest payments and transfer charges.

It was on the basis of this already established working relationship that the partnership of February 1686 was formed. The partners already knew each other well, and had tried each other's competence and reliability over a number of years. Formal partnership had been preceded by a long period of informal cooperation and short term partnerships. Just as the family firm existed without any formalised structure, so the relations between unrelated merchants could also be maintained without formal contracts and agreements. Bonds of trust had to be built up slowly through mutual favours, before merchants would commit themselves to contractual association. Even in the case of Hovhannes and Yovan, the eventual partnership may have been formed only because of the remoteness of the destination of their last joint venture. The fact that they were likely to be out of direct contact for several years, without any possibility of checking accounts, distributing profits and settling any disputes may have prompted them to enter a formal partnership.

46 HTD, 95, 99, 107, 108f., 113, 116.

Commission agency

In Europe *commenda* contracts gradually lost their popularity in the later Middle ages, and were replaced by a system of long-distance trade based on resident commission agents.⁴⁷ By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries most European merchants trading in the Levant were commission agents for firms in Venice, London, Marseille or Amsterdam.⁴⁸ There is no evidence of any similar development in the commercial organisation of the Julfa Armenians. The *commenda* partnership seems to have remained the most popular form of association for long-distance trade, but the Julfans certainly were not ignorant of commission agency, and the available evidence suggests that it too was widely used.

To employ someone as a commission agent, a specific contract was not required. It was sufficient for the merchant giving the commission to send a letter of instruction (*ōrdnagir*) explaining what he wanted done.⁴⁹ In the introduction to the chapter on commercial organisation the Lawbook describes commission agency as the third basic method of trade:

When someone sends something to someone to sell, and to buy something else in exchange for it, and send that to him, in the vernacular they are called *amanat 'k'ar*, which is a Persian word, and means the manager of entrusted things and affairs (*kařavarogh yandznarakan irats' ew gortsots*).⁵⁰

In the articles devoted to commission agency the Lawbook avoids the vernacular terms, and employs circumlocutions: "When someone gives something to someone else to sell ...", for commissioner; or finds equivalent Armenian terms: *awand* and *pahest* for goods sent on commission, and deposit; but there can be no doubt that the Julfa Armenians' commission agency and deposit was identical to the *amānat* of contemporary Iran. The Islamic *amānat* has often

47 R.S. Lopez, "Les méthodes commerciales des marchands occidentaux en Asie du XI^e au XIV^e siècle", in *Sociétés et compagnies de commerce en Orient et dans l'océan Indien*, ed. M. Mollat, Paris, 1970, 346-348; F.C. Lane, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice 1418-1449*, Baltimore, 1944, 93.

48 N. Steensgaard, "Consuls and nations in the Levant from 1570-1650", *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, XV (1967), 47; the *commenda* was, however, still widely used by sixteenth century Marseille merchants, (R. Collier and J. Billioud, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, III, Paris, 1951, 308-309).

49 *Datastanagirik'*, 149.

50 *Ibid.*, 130.

been described as a rudimentary form of deposit banking,⁵¹ but it is a mistake to consider it as essentially a financial arrangement. Armenian *amanat*'s might consist of cash, or goods, or even documents. They might be given for safekeeping and eventual return, or to be employed in commerce, so that the concept involves elements of both deposit and commission. The distinguishing feature of the arrangement was that it involved entrusting something to someone else, regardless of what was entrusted, for what purpose, or on what terms.⁵²

The Lawbook states that the Armenian commission agent had to follow his principal's instructions exactly, though if the principal had given him full authority he could not demand an explanation for the agent's actions. A commission agent was not allowed to act also as the purchaser of a consignment of goods that he was selling on commission, nor could he sell to his principal goods of his own: such transactions would have been tantamount to an invitation to defraud.

According to the Lawbook, a commission agent who deliberately defrauded his principal was punishable as a thief, but he could not be held responsible for goods lost, unless the loss was the result of his negligence or failure to follow instructions. Even if a merchant had only sent an instruction to buy and send goods but no actual money or goods, if the goods purchased were lost, the agent was not held responsible. An agent could recover from his principal any losses suffered through official extortion (and as the Lawbook remarks, official extortion was extremely common in mid-eighteenth century Iran). A merchant buying and selling through a commission agent could specify the prices at which he was prepared to buy and sell, or the goods he wished to invest in. An agent who failed to keep to such instructions and who sold too cheap or bought too dear or sent the wrong goods was liable for the difference, unless he had demonstrable good reason for his actions. If a merchant sent an agent instruction to buy goods without supplying funds, the agent could charge interest on what he laid out for the purchase. Similarly, if an agent kept funds received from his principal for a period of time he had to pay interest. Agents could be

51 *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, I, eds. T. Raychaudhuri and I. Habib, Cambridge, 1982, 346.

52 Thus deposit and commission are considered in the same group of articles in the Lawbook. In Medieval Europe likewise the concepts of deposit and commission were closely related, Lopez and Raymond, *Medieval trade*, 212-214.

commissioned to carry out financial as well as commercial transactions, such as paying debts, making loans, and recovering money.

The Lawbook states that any commission fee should be specified in the original letter of instruction. The term used for commission is *prvzhon* (Italian *provvigione* [?]), but in commercial documents *hakhč̄say* (P. *ḥaqq al-saʿī*) is used. If the commission fee was not agreed in advance the most the agent could charge was one per cent on sales and purchases (when the commissioned goods had been delivered to him by the principal), and two per cent when the commissioned goods had been sent to him. The distinction seems to be between a commission agent acting in the same place as his principal, and one acting in a distant place. A fee could only be charged for sales and purchases, not for delivering and receiving goods or money.

Commission agents were less closely tied to their principals than *commenda* agents to their masters or true partners to each other, and they were not obliged to reveal their personal account books.⁵³

Deposits or commissions (*amanat'*) could be given under a variety of terms and conditions. At its least formal a deposit was simply something which someone agreed to look after, not for any fee but "out of love and friendship". In such cases, the holder of the deposit was not responsible for any loss. If, however, he contracted to be responsible for loss or was paid a fee for holding the deposit, he became liable. Similarly, if someone was given something on deposit and subsequently employed it in trade, he became responsible for any loss. The holder of a deposit had certain responsibilities: he could not reveal the contents of a sealed document, nor could he release from deposit goods whose ownership was disputed. Cash deposits formed a special category. They could be of two types: a sealed deposit given for safe keeping which the holder could not open and invest;⁵⁴ or a deposit of money to be employed in trade or lent at interest, in which case the depositor received interest.⁵⁵

53 *Ibid.*, 149-168.

54 In commercial documents, a sealed deposit is referred to as *amanat' sarbēmōr* (P. *amānat[-i] sar bih muhr*). HTD, 69; BLL, 1047, f. 189.

55 *Datastanagirk'*, 159-165.

From the above it can be seen that *amanat'* covered a very wide range of meanings, from simple safe keeping on behalf of a friend to professional commission agency and commercial loans at interest. Documentary evidence survives for a number of commission agency and deposit arrangements. An example is given in Part 3, Document 6. The term *amanat'* itself was only applied to goods or money entrusted to someone, so in cases of commission agency where the agent acted solely on his principal's instructions, and settled accounts with him later, there was no *amanat'* in the strict sense. In such cases the letter of instruction is generally referred to as an *ōrdni* (Italian *ordine* ?) or *ōrdnagir*. The Lawbook states that these terms refer to the written instructions sent to an agent, but in the commercial documents *ōrdni* is also applied to the agent himself. The great majority of bills, for example, state that the sum is to be paid to so-and-so "or his *ōrdni*", meaning someone acting on his instructions - his agent. Another term used apparently synonymously is *shabēp'arē* (derivation obscure).

In Hovhannes Ter-Davtyan's account book there are several examples of *amanat'*. On one occasion Hovhannes's associate, Yovan, gave him an *amanat'* consisting of a variety of Iranian goods ('*attār*, rosewater, tobacco, quince seed, etc.) to sell. Hovhannes performed this commission without charging any fee because, as he explains, "he (Yovan) took my goods to Basra" (i.e. he was returning a favour).⁵⁶

On an earlier occasion, Hovhannes made substantial purchases of textiles in the town of Sironj. Another Armenian, Aghazar, who seems to have been permanently based in Sironj, acted as Hovhannes's agent in arranging for the purchase, dyeing, and other processes involved. Although the term *amanat'* is never used in the account of their relations, it is clear that this also was a kind of commission agency, though an agency to purchase rather than to sell. At this time Hovhannes was new to India and may not have had sufficient knowledge to deal with the business on his own. In the account book Hovhannes states that he made the purchases "by Aghazar's hand" (*Aghazari dzernovn*). After completing the purchases and despatching the goods to Surat, Aghazar

56 HTD, 95, 97, 102-103.

received his fee, calculated at two per cent of Hovhannes's outlay of 1,250 rupees, or 25 rupees.⁵⁷

The meaning of the term *amanat*' in bilateral *commenda* has been discussed above; a similar kind of *amanat*' was that which served as a means of making a small investment in trade for non-merchants, such as women and priests.⁵⁸ In such cases the investor effectively made a loan to a merchant who either calculated the profits on the investment or repaid the *amanat*' with interest. Other *amanat*'s were on a grand scale: Sarhad's son Murad Sharimanean's will describes the family's investments in Venice, totalling 720,000 ducats, placed at interest in various banks or bonds which he describes as *amanat*'.⁵⁹ Grigor Khaldarean's will records another *amanat*' consisting of a large quantity of jewels, worth some 30,000 tumans, deposited with Poghos's son Petros.⁶⁰

Representation

The final form of commercial organisation to be considered is that of the *vak'il* - a deputy, proxy, or authorised representative. This is essentially a legal rather than a commercial term, but it had very wide application - as Jennings remarks of seventeenth century Kayseri, "anyone may choose a vekil, for virtually any purpose."⁶¹ It was doubtless this quality that allowed it to integrate so readily into the commercial sphere. In seventeenth century Iran the commercial *vakil* was so familiar that Chardin gives this as the normal term for a merchant's agent or factor.⁶²

According to Jennings there were two main types of *vekil* in Ottoman practice: the general or universal (*vekil-i cem'-i umur*, ~~*cem'-i husus*~~ or *mutlak*), and the *vekil* appointed for a specific purpose.⁶³ The same distinction existed among Armenian commercial *vak'ils*, the terms

57 HTD, 77, 90, 292.

58 NJHV, 139-140; BLL, 1048, ff. 234, 261, 264, 267.

59 PNJ, I, 111-115.

60 *Ibid.*, I, 163.

61 R. Jennings, "The office of vekil (wakil) in seventeenth century Ottoman sharia courts", *Studia Islamica*, XLII (1975), 148.

62 Chardin, J., *Voyages de Chardin...*, 10 vols., ed. L. Langlès, Paris, 1811, V, 273.

63 Jennings, "The office of vekil", 150-152.

mut'lagh (P. *mutlāq*) and *hamaybab* (P. *hamah-bāb*) designating the general representative. Appointment was by power of attorney known as a *vak'ili* or *vak'ilagir*, often qualified as *mōt'abar* (P. *mu'tabar*), authentic.

A number of such powers of attorney have survived, and two are given in Part 3 (Documents 8 and 9). The example of a full power of attorney was written in Livorno in 1717. Murati vordi Petros Sha^hrimanean empowers his brother Yakob, who is returning to Julfa, to act on his behalf in all matters, and even to delegate his powers to another representative.⁶⁴ In a similar power of attorney, Eliazi vordi Tsatur Khoja-Minasean appointed as his own and his brother Minas's (who had previously made Tsatur his representative) authorised representative the three other senior partners of the firm: Khoja Minasi vordi Emniaz, Set'aghe vordi Grigor and Sarfrazi vordi Aghamal. The power of attorney authorised whichever of these was in Isfahan at any time to act on their behalf in all commercial and financial affairs connected with the firm, or with outsiders. When Tsatur's brother Minas returned to Isfahan he would assume authority (*sahab akhtiar lini*). The document also commits the representatives to paying 50 tumans per year for the expenses of Tsatur and Minas's household. These documents suggest that it was usual for a partner in a family firm to authorise another member or members to act on his behalf during his absence. In matters affecting the whole firm, it was important that all members' interests were represented, so the appointment of a general *vak'ils* reduced the risk of discord.⁶⁵

Specific powers of attorney might be for almost any purpose. Of surviving examples, the majority are for the recovery of debts. Part 3, Document 9 concerns the appointment of a *vak'il* to recover a debt that has arisen from an unpaid bill. In another example two women appoint a *vak'il* to recover a claim from their brother in Bengal. The *vak'il*, Nazar's son Ohannes, was only going as far as Madras, so he in turn authorised someone else to pursue the women's claim in Bengal.

64 Part 3, Document 8.

65 See also ASVT, xix 87.1; NJHV, 90-91.

While it is never discussed in the sources, there seems to have been a considerable area of overlap between the specific *vak'il* and the *ōrdni*. The former, however, was more closely linked to the person giving the powers - in all the cases examined general *vak'ils* were blood relatives. The actions of a *vak'il* had the same force as the actions of the person him or herself. A number of documents record the appointment of *vak'ils* by women, doubtless because women's ability to pursue their own interests and claims was in practice severely restricted. There is no record of *vak'ils* receiving payment, and it is likely that it was an office usually undertaken out of family loyalty or friendship.

Representation, together with the other forms of partnership and agency described above, provided a variety of forms of business association that allowed the family firm to incorporate outsiders on a short or long-term basis, and provided a number of ways for merchants to combine resources and spread risk. The impression gained from the sources is that merchants rarely operated in isolation; they were inter-related with other merchants through kinship, through community, and through informal and formal associations.

CHAPTER FIVE
CREDIT AND FINANCE

The merchants of New Julfa employed various forms of credit in their trading operations. In the previous chapter we noted that the *commenda*, although generally described as a form of partnership, is closely related to the loan. This chapter will consider the other principal forms of credit employed by the Armenians: the loan, the exchange contract, and their variants. A considerable number of promissory notes and bills of exchange are preserved in the British Library and Archivio di Stato collections of Armenian documents, and these are the most valuable source on this subject. The Astrakhan Lawbook is again useful in setting out the legal framework, while the account book of Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan allows us to see how a merchant used commercial credit to finance his activities.

The moral and theological issue of credit and usury lies outside our scope, but it is essential to give something of the background. Both medieval Armenian Christian canon law and Islamic *shar'ī* law forbade usury, defined as the lending of money in expectation of certain gain (uncertain gain, i.e. a charge levied for the lender's risk of loss was not generally considered usurious).¹ The prohibition of usury on religious and moral grounds has been almost universal in human society, but the evasion of such prohibitions has been scarcely less widespread. Many of the European travellers to Safavi Iran noticed both the ban on usury and its widespread practice.² Chardin remarked that lending money at interest was practised by Hindus and Jews in particular, but also by Muslims. In theory it was sufficient for a borrower to refuse to pay interest for him to be released from any obligation beyond the principal of the loan, but this provision was evaded by including the interest with the principal in the initial loan. The lender showed the money to

1 Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, NJHV, 150-151. For a general discussion of usury, see: B.N. Nelson, *The Idea of Usury*, Princeton, 1950.

2 A. Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung der Muskowitischen und Persischen Reise*, Schleswig, 1656, (reprinted Tübingen 1971), 675; J.-B. Tavernier, *Les six voyages de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier...*, 2 vols., Paris, 1682, I, 382-383; J. Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia during Nine Years Travels, 1672-1681*, 3 vols., ed. W. Crocke, London, 1909-1915, III, 109-110.

the witnesses, stating that it was a certain amount, and the borrower accepted it as such, and gave a promissory note to repay that amount, but the actual sum was less than the stated amount.³ Raphaël du Mans describes another legal subterfuge (*hīlah-yi shar'ī*) by which the principal of the loan was given interest-free, while at the same time the borrower bought some worthless object from the lender at a price equal to the interest for the period of the loan.⁴ Jennings's work has revealed that in seventeenth century Ottoman Kayseri "interest was regularly charged on credit, in accordance with sharia and kanun, with the assent and approval of the kadi's court, the ulema, and the sultan", and that loans were given by all classes of society, including the *'ulamā*, without any stigma attaching to them.⁵ In Ottoman Aleppo, by contrast, interest was invariably concealed.⁶

Khach'ikyan suggests that the Julfa merchants employed similar devices to disguise usurious loans,⁷ but while this may sometimes have been the case, the documentary evidence suggests that in Julfan practice interest-bearing loans were generally made quite openly. The Astrakhan Lawbook has a chapter on interest that deals frankly with the subject:

Although it is altogether forbidden by both divine and secular laws to take interest, or any fee for a money loan, however, everywhere and always it has been the universal custom among merchants to give and take interest.⁸

This open acknowledgement of the practice of usury may have something to do with the fact that the Lawbook was written in Russia, where interest was legal, but the documents likewise indicate that charging interest could be practised quite openly.

3 J. Chardin, *Voyages de Chardin...*, 10 vols. and atlas, ed. L. Langles, Paris, 1811, VI, 122-123. The same practice was common in Medieval Europe, R.S. Lopez and I.W. Raymond, *Medieval trade in the Mediterranean world*, London, 1955, 157-158.

4 Raphaël du Mans, *Estat de la Perse en 1660*, ed. Ch. Schefer, Paris, 1890, (reprinted Farnborough 1969), 173-174.

5 R. Jennings, "Loans and credit in early 17th century Ottoman judicial records - the sharia court of Anatolian Kayseri", *JESHO*, XVI/2-3 (1973), 169, 183-185.

6 B. Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: mercantilism and the Islamic economy in Aleppo, 1600-1700*, New York, 1988, 160-161.

7 NJHV, 151-154.

8 *Datastanagirk' Astrakhani Hayots'*, ed. F.G. Poghosyan, Erevan, 1967, part 1, chapter 7, article 2.

The Loan

The chapter on the promissory note (*sanad*) in the Lawbook lays down the correct form and necessary clauses of such a document. The note, written by the borrower, should begin with the phrase "I have received and owe" (*yink' ari ew partem*), and end "I will pay" (*vacharem*) or "I will give" (*tam*). It must state the period of time for which the loan is given, the sum lent, and the rate of interest. According to the Lawbook a bill containing any additional clauses was not considered a promissory note (*sanad*) but a contract (*shart'namay* or *dōgovor*), but this distinction does not emerge clearly in the documents. If the borrower himself did not write the bill, then he had to affix his seal to it in the presence of witnesses. The Lawbook gives five model promissory notes, which differ only in being for open or fixed payment periods, and in being interest-free, or interest-bearing from the date of the loan, or interest-bearing from the payment date (i.e. in case of late payment). When a debt was repaid in part or in full, the creditor had to write the sum received on the back of the promissory note, or give the debtor a receipt (*ghavz* or *kvitants'i*).⁹

The Lawbook stipulates further that the maximum interest that could be charged on a loan was 0.5 per cent per month (6 per cent per annum), but this limit was established by the Russian imperial decree of 1754, and is unrelated to Julfan practice.¹⁰ Some European travellers speak of interest rates in Safavid Iran as high as 15 to 30 per cent per annum,¹¹ but the evidence of sixty-eight surviving promissory notes indicates that such rates were far above the norm for commercial loans. Interest (*shah, mudat'*) is almost invariably expressed as an amount per month, for example "I will give 100 *dians* interest in the tuman per month" (*fī t'umanin amsēn min Ch. dian shakh tam*), or "The interest will be reckoned at one rupee per 100 per month" (*fī ch.-in amsēn min ʔrp'ōvn mudat' hasab lini*) both equivalent to 1 per cent per month or 12 per cent per annum. The rates vary between 0.5 per cent per month (6 per cent per annum) and 2 per cent per month (24 per cent per annum), but there are few examples at the extreme ends of the scale. In only one case does the rate of 2 per cent occur, and that is for a loan of only 7,000 *dian* (0.7 tuman) between two women. There are three examples of rates of 1.5 per cent per month (18 per

9 *Datastanagirk'*, 32-39.

10 *Ibid.*; NJHV, 157 and n. 19.

11 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 382-383; Fryer, *A New Account*, III, 109-110.

cent per annum) but again none appear to be normal commercial loans, and in all of them the sum is a small one, and women and priests figure as lenders or borrowers. The commonest interest rate in loans is 1 per cent per month - twenty-nine of the sixty-eight bills are at this rate - but again it is uncertain whether this was the typical rate for commercial loans. No fewer than thirteen of these loans were made in the course of a three year period by a single Julfa Khoja to one woman (probably his first cousin), all were for very small sums, and in two cases the purpose of the loan was to pay tax (*t'övu jahatan*), so there can be little doubt that these loans were made during her husband's absence to help her meet her household and other expenses. Several of the other 1 per cent per month loans involve women as lenders or borrowers. This also seems to have been the standard rate charged by Hindu moneylenders in Calcutta and Dhaka in the mid 1740's (the six promissory notes for loans by Bengali Hindus are all for either 1,000 or 2,000 rupees, and are all at the rate of 1 per cent).¹² In loans between Julfa merchants, however, the rate of 0.75 per cent per month (9 per cent per annum) emerges as the norm. There are twenty-four promissory notes for such loans, twelve of them at 0.75 per cent per month, four at 1 per cent, one at 0.875 per cent, three at 0.6 per cent, and two at at 0.5 per cent. That 0.75 per cent was the standard commercial interest rate is confirmed by both Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan's account book (in which interest on credits and debits on account with other merchants is invariably calculated at this rate), and Kostand Jughayets'i's handbook.¹³ A Carmelite friar also reported the same standard rate in Iran in the mid 1650's, while Chardin, describing a period a decade or two later, suggests a commercial rate of 1 per cent, with the common people paying double.¹⁴

No clear correlation between the rate of interest and the size of the loan or its payment period emerges from the examples examined. The two largest loans recorded (of 466.5 tumans and of 3,000 *unkri* = approx. 450 tumans) were both given at the rate of 0.6 per cent, but as both were between members of the Shahrimeanean family the low rate may have as much to do with the kinship as with the size of the loan. In any case another loan of 300 tumans between members

12 BLL 1047, ff. 103, 118, 129, 132, 134-135; 1048, f. 196. The lenders names are given as Kalu Saraf, Eruzch'and Khoshalch'and, Gughamal Saraf, Eram Eram Sark'ar, Mut'iram Sah. 13 HTD, *passim.*, NJHV, 158 n.21.

14 *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia*, 2 vols. paginated as 1, [H. Chick, (ed.)], London, 1939, 403; Chardin, *Voyages*, VI, 122.

of the same family was charged at a rate of 0.75 percent.¹⁵ The five loans at 0.5 per cent do not share any distinctive characteristics - they are for sums of between 2.4 and 40 tumans, and no particular relationship between borrower and lender can be inferred.

The payment period (*vaday*) for loans could vary from a single month to as long as five years, or could be left open. Of loans with a specified payment period, one year is the commonest period, but almost half of the promissory notes examined are payable "on demand" (*erb vor uzi*) or "at any time" (*nerk'oy t'areghēn inch' yants' kay*), and a number make no mention at all of when the bill is payable (although according to the Lawbook such a promissory note was invalid).

Khach'ikyan believes that on bills with a specified payment period interest was payable only after they fell due, and that this was a device used to disguise interest by making it appear as a charge for late payment.¹⁶ The fifth of the model promissory notes in the Lawbook contains an explicit clause to the effect that interest is payable only after the expiry of the payment period,¹⁷ but Khach'ikyan's interpretation is not supported by the bulk of the evidence. It seems most improbable that loans given with a five year payment period were interest free until that time elapsed, and in any case there is an example of a promissory note containing the clause that it will be paid punctually at the end of the three month period *with interest*.¹⁸ In another case a loan of three tumans given on a one year payment period at a rate of 1.5 per cent per month was repaid after three years seven and a half months. Repayment was made in Indian currency, and came to 100 rupees (equivalent to 5 tumans) from which it can be calculated that interest was paid for the full period, and not only for the period after the expiry of the specified payment period.¹⁹ The purpose of the specified payment period was probably to give the borrower a guarantee that the loan would not be reclaimed in advance of the specified date, whereas loans without a fixed payment period could be reclaimed at any time. In Kostand Jughayets'i's handbook there are a number of examples illustrating the method for calculating interest, and for determining the

15 ASVA, 5 Ovdan 101, 20 Aram 104.

16 NJHV, 152.

17 *Datastanagirk'*, 38.

18 BLL 1047, f. 194-195.

19 BLL 1047, f. 122.

proportions of principal and interest in a given sum.²⁰ No examples of compound interest have been found, and it is specifically forbidden in the Lawbook.²¹ The size of loans varies from insignificant sums of less than a tuman to several hundred tumans.

From the documents examined, it appears that lending and borrowing was practised by a wide cross-section of Julfa society. Some individuals who can be identified as prominent khojas figure among the lenders, but none of them so frequently as to appear to be a specialised banker or moneylender. Members of the big families appear frequently as borrowers as well as lenders, and sometimes the lender in one bill is the borrower in another. Women appear among the borrowers in twenty-seven of the sixty-eight bills, and as lenders in fifteen of them. Although many of the promissory notes signed by women are for very small sums, probably borrowed to cover household expenses during their husbands' or sons' absence, this is by no means a general rule, and two of the three largest loans were made to a single woman, Shahrmani dust Bēkum, who borrowed 466.5 tumans on 15th January 1700, and 300 tumans on 29th July 1721. Clearly Bēkum was taking an active part in her family's business. Priests figure as the lenders in four loans (but never as borrowers), the sums involved never exceeding ten tumans. In three of these cases the borrower is a woman, so the loans probably do not represent commercial investments. As was mentioned above, Hindu bankers or merchants acted as the lenders in six bills written in Bengal, but Muslims never appear as either lenders or borrowers (which may indicate that there was no interaction between the openly interest-bearing loans of the Armenian [and Hindu] environment, and the "interest-free" loans of the Muslims). One bill from the Venice collection, written in an unusual dialect, has a Ghapants'i and an Istanbul Armenian as the two parties, but the great majority are between Julfa Armenians. Loans featuring more than one lender or borrower are rare.

20 NJHV, 154.

21 *Datastanagirk'*, 52.

The Bill of Exchange

Braudel described the bill of exchange as "the key weapon in the armoury of merchant capitalism in the West".²² The special significance of the bill of exchange in the West was due in part to its composite character: an exchange transaction necessarily also involved a credit transaction (since a bill could not be paid immediately). In medieval Europe the credit aspect of the bill was crucial, since ordinary loans at interest were forbidden as usurious. In the bill of exchange the interest on the credit transaction could be concealed in the exchange rate for the two currencies in the exchange transaction. Many bills of exchange were really disguised loans, in which the exchange transaction was purely fictional.

The bill of exchange was also important in Julfan commerce, but as interest-bearing loans were an accepted part of their credit system they had no need to use the bill of exchange to conceal ordinary loans. To the Julfans the credit aspect of the bill of exchange was certainly valuable, but perhaps less so than its use in facilitating complex business operations in distant locations without the risk and expense of transporting and exchanging cash. The discounting of bills, the European development that did most to expand commercial credit in early modern Europe, did not, however, occur on a large scale in Julfan practice.²³

Regarding the origins of the bill of exchange, it has been suggested that the European version developed from Islamic prototypes: the *suftaja* and the *hawāla*,²⁴ and though the subsequent history of the Islamic versions is largely obscure, we do know that bills of exchange were widely used in the medieval Islamic world. In India bills of exchange were called *hundis*, and their use

22 F. Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century*, 3 vols., trans. S. Reynolds, London, 1981-4, III, 66.

23 On the European bill of exchange, see Lopez and Raymond, *Medieval Trade*, 162-167; R. de Roover, *L'Évolution de la lettre de change XIV^e-XVIII^e siècles*, Paris, 1953; *idem.*, *Money, banking and credit in medieval Bruges*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1948, chapter 4.

24 Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 556; J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law*, Oxford, 1964, 149.

is said to have been expanding in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²⁵ The use of bills of exchange in Safavi Iran is also attested; Tavernier gives a detailed description of their operation:

It remains for me to speak of bills of exchange, and of how they work in Persia. There sometimes arrives at Gomron (Bandar 'Abbās) such a quantity of vessels that there is more merchandise than money, and the merchants at once give notice to Lār, to Shiraz, and to Isfahan and other cities of Persia. Those who have ready money and who are in commerce do not fail to despatch to Gomron. From the day when one takes money one is obliged to repay at the end of three months, and the exchange fee is from 6 to 12 per cent. When the merchandise has arrived in Isfahan or some other place, the merchant cannot touch it until he has repaid the sum borrowed, unless his creditor, trusting in his good faith, permits him to open his bales. If it is a Persian merchant who does not live in Isfahan and who wishes to carry his merchandise further, he again borrows money to pay what he owes, and repays it at the place he is going to. There are some Turkish and Armenian merchants who borrow money in Surat to repay it in Bandar 'Abbās, where they borrow more for Isfahan, and they do the same thing in Isfahan for Erzerum or Babylon (Baghdad), paying the old with the new that they borrow in each place. The money one borrows in Erzerum is paid back in Bursa, Constantinople or Smyrna. That which is borrowed in Baghdad is paid back in Aleppo; and as there are some Armenians and even a few Turks who, being in Constantinople or Smyrna, wish to go to Leghorn or Venice, they borrow money in these two former cities to repay their previous bills of exchange, and repay them in the two latter when they are in Italy. I have always reckoned in my voyages that to borrow money in Golconda for Livorno or Venice, after all the exchanges the money would cost 95 per cent at best, but more often 100 per cent.²⁶

There is no doubt that the use of bills (*barāt*) in a broader sense was of fundamental importance not only in commerce, but to the whole Safavi political economy, for the salaries of state servants were generally paid in the form of paper drafts or assignments on the revenue from a specified source, which it was then the responsibility of the holder of the draft to collect.²⁷

Some form of bill of exchange was certainly in use among Armenian merchants in the fourteenth century,²⁸ but there are no extant examples of Armenian bills earlier than the Julfan

25 T. Raychaudhuri and I. Habib (eds.), *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1982- , I, 346, 362-363.

26 Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 623-624; see also Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 153; C. de Bruyn, *Voyages de Corneille le Brun par la Moscovie, en Perse et aux Indes Orientales*, 2 vols. paginated as 1, Amsterdam, 1718, 251.

27 V. Minorsky (trans. and ed.), *Tadhkirat al-mulūk. A manual of Safavid administration*, Cambridge, 1943, (reprinted 1980), 152-153.

28 NJHV, 169-170.

documents of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Astrakhan Lawbook devotes a chapter to the bill of exchange: it opens with the definition:

Bill of exchange (*barat'* or *barat'agir*) is the term for a letter of obligation (*partakanut'ean gir*) by which someone takes money from someone else, to be repaid in another place by either himself, or someone else instead of himself, to the lender, or to someone else on his (i.e. the lender's) instruction.²⁹

This describes the distinctive features of the bill of exchange: the credit transaction, the exchange (repayment in a different place), and the involvement of up to four parties in the transaction. One element that was of crucial importance in the medieval European bill of exchange, the conversion from one currency into another (allowing the concealment of interest), is not mentioned, since this was not a consideration in the Armenian milieu. The close relation between the bill of exchange and the loan is emphasised in the following article, which states that the bill of exchange (*barat'*) has the same force as the promissory note (*sanad*), and that what has been said about the latter applies equally to the former. Indeed the transaction governed by the bill of exchange is described as a loan (*p'okh*), and the same acknowledgement of debt is made in the bill of exchange as in the promissory note: "I have received and owe".

In the Lawbook the four parties in an exchange transaction are referred to as the loan-taker (*p'okharu*), who receives the money and gives the bill, the loan-giver (*p'okhatu*), who gives the money to the loan-taker and accepts his bill, the loan-payer (*p'okhavchar*), who repays the money on presentation of the bill, and the loan-demander (*p'okhapahanj*), who is sent the bill and claims the money from the loan-payer. The terms debtor (*partakan*), creditor (*partatēr*), debt-payer (*partavchar*), and debt-demander (*partapahanj*) are also encountered. A fifth party, the loan-buyer (*p'okhagnogh* or *gnogh partuts'*), who buys the bill from the loan-giver/creditor or loan-demander and himself becomes the creditor, is involved only in the case of endorsed or discounted bills.³⁰ In the following discussion the English terms taker, deliverer, payer and payee will be used.³¹ It was not unusual for the same person to act as both taker and payer, or deliverer and payee. In

²⁹ *Datastanagirk'*, 172.

³⁰ *Datastanagirk'*, 173.

³¹ Roover, *Money, banking and credit*, 53; *idem.*, *L'Évolution de la lettre de change*, 43-44.

rarer instances the roles of taker and deliverer, or of payer and payee, might be taken by the single person.

The name of the payee had to be given either in the bill itself, or in a letter of instruction (*brdnagir*) or other letter (*barewagir*) written by the deliverer. The bill could not be claimed by someone who was not designated in one of these three ways. If the payee was named in a separate letter he was obliged to surrender that, as well as the bill, to the payer.³² The procedure for claiming a bill was for the payee to present it to the payer, who had either to write his acceptance on the bill (whereby he became solely responsible for the debt) or to write his refusal (*nkāl arnel*) (in which case responsibility reverted to the taker). The payee had to get the payer's written acceptance or refusal (or a witnessed statement of the payer's refusal to give either) within one month of the payment date written on the bill. If he failed to do so the bill was invalidated, and the payee was obliged to pay the sum to the deliverer. If the taker was the investor (*agha*) in a *commenda* contract, and the payer his agent (*ēnker*), and the latter accepted a bill but then failed to pay, the obligation reverted to the taker. Normally, however, once the payer had accepted a bill, the taker was absolved of any further obligation. A person who was holding money or goods belonging to someone else could not, without good reason, refuse to honour a bill drawn on him by that person.³³ For a bill of exchange, as for a promissory note, the payment period had to be specified in the bill. It could be calculated from either the date of the initial transaction, or from sight of the bill by the payer.³⁴

On the subject of the profit or charge (*shah*) on a bill of exchange, the Lawbook remarks that some write the profit and the principal sum jointly (doubtless a hangover from a period when such usurious charges had to be concealed), while others write the principal only, and specify that it is to be paid with profit.³⁵

32 *Datastanagirk'*, 175.

33 *Ibid.*, 175-179, 185-186.

34 *Ibid.*, 174.

35 *Ibid.*

The Lawbook gives eight examples of bills of exchange, and advises the merchant to follow these models closely and not to omit any words or phrases. As will be seen, these eight examples do not cover the full range of types used by the Julfa merchants, and the differences between them are mostly so minor that they should rather be considered as variants on a single basic form. The first example is given below in translation:

I Artavelets'i (i.e. Ardabili) Andrias's son Yohannes received from and owe to the late T'eodos's son Paron Melk'iset' Jughayets'i five hundred rubles, half of which is two hundred and fifty rubles. I gave this bill (*barat'*) that, God willing, on a usance (*vaday*) of sixty-one days from the below-written date, on the payment date (*sarvadin*), in Gilan, I Yohannes or my agent (*Ørdni*) will pay the above sum (*mablagh*) in new-minted (*sk'ay*) full-value (*sagh*) Persian money to the above-mentioned Paron Melk'iset' or his agent. Without excuse (*biØzr*). I wrote the bill in two identical copies (*min mazbun*³⁶). When I settle (*k'arsazi arem*) on one (of the copies) the force (*huk'm*) of the other becomes void (*bat'il*). Written in Astrakhan, in the year 1760, sixteenth of May. The above-written is in my, Yohannes's, handwriting, and is acceptable to me, Yohannes.³⁷

The other examples differ in naming specific individuals and/or their agents as payer and payee, in including a clause on interest payable in the case of early or late payment ("Whether the payment is after or before the payment date, interest (*mudat'*) will be calculated (*hasab lini*) at one half per cent per month"), or a clause stating the taker's obligation in the case of non-payment by the payer ("If this bill is refused (*nkal eghats*) or returns (*manzarov*), then the obligation for the above sum is mine, on a one week payment period, with a fifteen per cent charge"). In only one example is the charge for the bill openly stated as 20 per cent, and in another the exchange rate between the two currencies is specified.³⁸

There are a total of 139 bills of exchange in the Lansdowne and Archivio di Stato collections. They date from 1711 to 1747, with no discernible development over the period. There is a greater variety of types than is suggested by the Astrakhan Lawbook. The most basic form is barely distinguishable from the the simple promissory note - a further indication that the Julfans openly acknowledged the bill of exchange as a form of loan. An example of this type of bill is illustrated

36 *Maghbun* in the printed edition is almost certainly a misreading by the editor. The letters "z" and "gh" in Julfan handwriting are easily confused.

37 *Ibid.*, 181.

38 *Ibid.*, 181-184.

in Part 3, Document 16.³⁹ The bill does not describe itself as a *barat* or use any of the other terms employed for bills of exchange, and the only difference between it and a promissory note is the clause stating that repayment will be made "in India or wherever I am". In very few bills of exchange do we find the word *barat* (used generically for bills of exchange in the Lawbook), and in at least one example the bill is referred to as a *sanad* (the term for promissory note in the Lawbook).⁴⁰ By far the commonest term for bill of exchange in the documents examined is *avak* (also *awak*), derived from the Hindi *āvāk* which in the Indian context is usually described as a bottomry or *respondentia* contract.⁴¹ Whatever may have been the Indian practice, among the Julfans the term was synonymous with *barat*, and usually appears with one of both of the descriptives *zmēi* (derivation and meaning obscure - see Glossary), and *bijuk'am*, unsecured, (literally Persian or Hindi *bī* without, and Hindi *jokhim* or *jokham*, security or insurance).⁴²

Other terms are also encountered. Bills circulating between Indian cities, usually drawn through the service of local Hindu merchants, *ṣarrāfs* or *dallāls* are called *hēndvi* (or *hēndwi*) from the Hindi *hundī*, bill of exchange.⁴³ The *hundis* in the Lansdowne collection all come from Bengal in the 1740's, but the account book of Hovhannes Ter-Dav'tyan contains frequent references to his use of *hundis* in northwest India in the 1680's. One bill of exchange drawn in Isfahan on Venice or Livorno describes itself as a *bijuk'am kampi* (from Italian [*lettera di*] *cambio*).⁴⁴ There is, however, no significant difference between these variously named bills, in fact all correspond closely to the types listed in the Lawbook, and contain most of the same clauses in roughly the same order. Disregarding the differences in nomenclature we can recognise all of these as the simplest and commonest (130 out of 139 examples) form of bill of exchange.

39 Similar examples are: Lansdowne 1047, f. 52, 53, 67, 82; 1048, f. 208, 238.

40 BLL 1047, f. 90, 101; 1048, f. 65.

41 H.H. Wilson, *Glossary of judicial and revenue terms and of useful words occurring in official documents relating to the administration of the government of British India*, Calcutta, 1940, 62; *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, I, 347.

42 See Part III, document .

43 See Part III, document ; other examples, BLL 1047, f. 42-44, 93, 99, 105; 1048, f. 198.

44 ASVA, 25 Shbat' 111.

Typically such bills open with the name of the taker or takers, then give the place, then the statement of debt, "I received and owe", or "I took a *bijuk'am avak*". This is followed by the name of the deliverer or deliverers, the amount of the bill, the usance or payment period, and the place where payment is to be made. Next the names of the payee and payer are given, followed by the rate of interest and the statement that the bill has been written in two identical copies. Finally the bill is dated, and the taker or takers state that they accept the terms of the bill.⁴⁵

In very few of the bills is there any mention of a charge, or a statement of the exchange rate between the currencies involved that might conceal a charge. The great majority express the sum received by the taker in terms of the currency of the place where the bill is to be repaid, and then simply refer back to "the above-mentioned sum" (*veroy mablagh*). Even where exchange rates are stated, they appear to have been standard ones, for example twenty rupees for one tuman in bills drawn in Isfahan or Basra to be repaid in India. The examination of a wider sample of bills involving a greater variety of places might reveal more about exchange rates. The absence of any clear statement of the charge in most bills suggests that most merchants followed the practice described in the Lawbook of writing both the principal and the charge as a single sum, which may have been a habit left over from the days when such charges had to be concealed. In a few bills it is stated explicitly that the sum includes both "profit and principal" (*shah ew mayeay*).⁴⁶ The very rare examples that do specify the charge suggest that it could be considerable. On bill for 12.5 tumans drawn in Isfahan and payable as 250 rupees in Bengal (or wherever the taker happens to be) at six months usance states that the profit will be 25 per cent per annum - (i.e. 12.5 per cent if the bill is paid on time).⁴⁷ Another bill for 10 tumans drawn in Isfahan is payable in Basra with a charge of 20 per cent twenty-one days after sight of the bill.⁴⁸ A third example does not specify the charge for the initial bill (of 1 tuman 3500 *dian* drawn in Isfahan on Basra) but contains a clause stipulating that if the payer refuses to honour the bill, another payer (the taker's husband) will pay 34 rupees in Bengal or Madras (at an inflated exchange rate of 25 rupees to the

45 NJHV, 173-179.

46 BLL 1047, f. 81.

47 BLL 1048, f. 65.

48 BLL 1047, f. 196.

tuman), and that if he doesn't pay either, the taker will have to pay the 34 rupees plus an additional 30 per cent charge in Isfahan. In this case, however, the charges should probably be seen rather as penalties for failure to meet the original terms than as typical rates for an exchange contract.

In contrast to the paucity of information about the charges for bills is the almost universal (119 out of 139 examples) inclusion of a clause stating the rate of interest. The rates range from 0.5 per cent to 2 per cent per month, but the only rates to occur frequently are 0.75 per cent (82 instances) and 0.5 per cent (28 instances). This gives further confirmation that 0.75 per cent per month (9 per cent per annum) was the standard rate of commercial interest.⁴⁹ The rate of 0.5 per cent seems to have been usual, though not invariable, for bills involving only members of a single family firm.⁵⁰ In the light of the lack of evidence for charges on bills, and the near universal inclusion of the clause on interest rates, it is tempting to interpret the interest as the charge for the exchange contract itself. It was demonstrated above that interest on loans was charged for the duration of the loan, although the Lawbook stated that it should be payable only from the expiry of the payment period. This might be true of exchange contracts as well, but there are two serious objections to this hypothesis. First, if the stated interest rate represented the charge on the exchange transaction it would mean that exchange contracts were no more expensive than ordinary loans, which seems unlikely since they must have involved the creditor in a higher degree of risk. Second, the interest charges are much lower than the charges specified in the few examples cited above, or the charges recorded by Hovhannes Ter-Dav't'yan (who paid between 1 per cent and 8 per cent on *hundis* with usances of between forty-one and seventy-five days in northwest India).⁵¹ In the case of only one bill, however, it can be clearly established that interest was paid not for the period up to the payment date (a usance of five months), but only for the period from its expiry until payment (a further fourteen months).⁵² On balance it seems likely that the interest rate was separate from the charge for the bill, and that the latter was

49 NJHV, 182-184.

50 *Ibid.*, 180.

51 HTD, 79-82, 85-86, 90-91, 103-104, 109-111.

52 BLL 1047, f. 248 (v).

normally included in the face value of the bill; a conclusive answer to this question must await the results of further research.

The usance or payment period for a bill of exchange varied broadly according to the distance between the place where the bill was given and the place where repayment was to be made. The usance between any two places was not rigidly fixed, but certain norms were accepted. The majority of the bills examined were drawn in Isfahan or Basra to be repaid in Bengal, Madras, or, more rarely, Surat. The normal usance on all such bills was five months (surprisingly the usance from Isfahan was no greater than that from Basra, and the usance to Bengal no greater than that to Surat, in spite of the much greater distances involved). Bills at a usance of two, three, four, six, seven and eight and a half months, as well as open-ended bills, are also found. Between Isfahan and Basra the usance was sixty-one days, and between Isfahan and Venice or Livorno eight months. Between Moscow and Amsterdam 105 days (three and a half months).⁵³ It is interesting to note the much greater usance between Isfahan and Venice than between Isfahan and Bengal in spite of the fact that Bengal was actually further away. This suggests that Iran was better integrated into the Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean trade and communications network than the Mediterranean. Occasionally the usance on bills is given as a certain period (usually twenty-one or eleven days) after sight of the bill. The usance for *hundis* between Indian cities also varied with distance. Between Dhaka and Calcutta the usance was forty-one days, or fifteen days after sight. Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan's *hundis* have usances of twenty-one and forty-five days between Sironj and Surat, seventy-five days between Agra and Surat, and forty-one days between Agra and Aurangabad, but as these are mostly individual bills these cannot be taken as standard usances.⁵⁴

It is impossible to generalise about the typical face value of bills of exchange on the basis of the examples to hand. Most of these are in rupees, and by making a rough conversion to rupees of the other bills we obtain a breakdown of seventeen bills of one hundred rupees or less, thirty-seven

53 NJHV, 175.

54 HTD, *loc. cit.*

bills of 101-500 rupees, forty-four bills of 501-2,000 rupees, thirty-four bills of 5,001-10,000 rupees, and seven bills of over 10,000 rupees. The mean value is just under 3,000 rupees.

The great majority of bills are between Julfa Armenian merchants. In four of the Bengal *hundis* the deliverer and payee are Hindus, and in one of them the payee is a Dutchman (*mnher Fndrovin Meneer van de Ruyven* - ~~Meinher Van Ruyven~~). In just two of the 139 bills are the deliverer and payee Muslims. In one bill one of two payers is a European Jesuit (?) missionary (Severen do Patri Fre Severen ?), and in another the payer is the agent of the French Compagnie des Indes in Basra (musi P'urt'iken - Monsieur Perdrian⁵⁵).

In all the other bills, all the parties are Armenians, and from the language of the documents all appear to be Iranian, doubtless mostly Julfan, Armenians. By no means all, however, are merchants. In eleven the taker is a priest (in three of these the priest is also the payer), and in four the deliverer is a priest. Women appear very frequently as takers (forty-nine bills), but only rarely as deliverers (six instances, in four of which the taker was also a woman). In just one case there is a woman payee and payer. In thirty-eight of the forty-nine bills with a woman taker, the payer is her close male relative, generally husband or son. Although women occur somewhat more frequently than average as the takers in bills with a value of 500 rupees or less (45 per cent of bills with women takers are for 500 rupees or less, while overall such bills make up 38 per cent of the total), they were by no means restricted to the smaller transactions. Sultanum's wife Anam, for example, appears as the taker for eight bills, including the largest recorded example of 56,113 rupees, as well as for two others of over 20,000 rupees. In all between 6 Februaury 1746 and 1 October 1747 she drew a total of 120,730 rupees in Isfahan, all to be paid by her husband in Madras, Pondichery or Bengal.⁵⁶

In twenty-nine bills the taker is also the payer (or one of the payers), and in thirty-four the deliverer is also the payee (or one of the payees). In only one bill does the same person act as

55 Perdrian's correspondence is preserved in the French Archives Nationales, *Serie Colonies*, F^{2b} 10, "Correspondence de M. Petro de Perdrian".

56 BLL 1048, f. 20, 22, 24, 26, 38, 110, 158, 160.

both payer and payee - the taker has an account with him, from which he is instructed to transfer the sum to himself. No examples have come to light where the roles of taker and deliverer are taken by the same person though this combination was also possible in theory.

On the basis of the sample examined there is no evidence of any specialised moneylenders or bankers among the Julfa Armenians. Of sixty-seven deliverers (excluding women, priest, and non-Armenians) only ten appear in more than two bills, and eight of those ten are members of the Khoja-Minasean family. One man, Sarfrazi vordi Aghamal Khoja-Minasean, acts as the deliverer in a total of thirteen bills. From other sources we know that the Khoja-Minaseans were a major merchant and ship-owning family; financial and credit operations represented just one branch of their activities.

So far we have considered only the ordinary bill of exchange, but the Julfa Armenians also employed the type of exchange contract usually termed sea or maritime exchange, or *respondentia* in the European context. In the Julfans' Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean trade these, like the bill of exchange, were called *avak'*, but were distinguished as *juk'ami* (secured), *ek' gushi* (one way ? - the derivation of *gushi* is obscure, though the broad meaning of the term is clear from context), and *dō gushi* (two way ?).⁵⁷ Khach'ikyan has discovered examples of similar contracts for the Caspian trade, where they were known as *eōlborji* (from Turkish *yol borj*, way loan). The principal difference between such contracts and the ordinary bill of exchange was that while the latter was repayable regardless of circumstances (*biōzr*, without excuse), in the *respondentia* contract the loan was secured against a specified item in the cargo of a ship (referred to in the Armenian documents as the *juk'am*, security, or *putikat* ~~(derivation obscure)~~, and was repayable at a specified period after that item was unloaded at its destination. If, therefore, the ship was wrecked, or the security lost through piracy or other cause, the bill did not have to be repaid, and the loss was borne by the deliverer.⁵⁸ *Respondentia* contracts, therefore, operated as a form of insurance, and allowed merchants to take out a commercial loan without bearing the full risk if

⁵⁷ See Part III, documents 22, 24.

⁵⁸ For the European *respondentia* contract see, Lopez and Raymond, *Medieval Trade*, 168-173; Roover, *Money, Banking and Credit*, 50.

the venture failed through circumstances beyond their control. That contracts of this type were used in both the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean trades in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is well-known.⁵⁹ The Julfans clearly considered such contracts a variety of the bill of exchange, and the two types of contract are very similar in form, as well as sharing the same name. The majority of *respondentia* contracts are either *juk'ami* or *ek' gushi avak's*, and there is no discernible substantive difference between these two types.⁶⁰ In form they differ from the ordinary bill of exchange in including a section along the following lines:

Lord God do not give loss (*juk'am*), the security (*juk'am*) is on the ship (name of ship) and on my goods freighted [on her]. God willing the ship will weigh anchor from (name of port) harbour, and will sail safely, and will drop anchor in (name of port) harbour, and the security will be taken off. At a usance of twenty-one days after taking off the security, on the payment date, I will pay, etc.⁶¹

The rate of charges for *respondentia* contracts is no easier to establish than for ordinary bills of exchange. Only a few of the examples include the clause on interest, and in these few that rate is no higher than for ordinary bills so it cannot represent the charge. Two of the *respondentia* contracts state that the face value includes both the principal and the charge and this was probably the usual practice. Hovhannes's account book contains a record of three *juk'ami avak's* and the charges he paid for them. In two Hovhannes was the taker: one for 1,000 rupees drawn in Surat and payable by Hovhannes's masters in Isfahan at 105 days usance after the security was unloaded, with a charge of 26 per cent; in the other the charge was 20 per cent for a 1,000 rupee bill also drawn in Surat, but repayable in Basra by Hovhannes's associate Yovan. In the third contract Hovhannes acted as deliverer, charging 27 per cent on a bill for 50 rupees to be repaid by the taker to Hovhannes's masters in Isfahan.⁶²

The examples of the *respondentia* contracts of the type called *eḍlborji* all specify the charges. These bills are for sums ranging from as little as 0.2 to as much as 577 tumans. The charges

59 *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, I, 347; S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740*, Delhi, 1986, 278-281; *Histoire du Commerce de Marseille*, 5 vols., Marseille, 1949-1957, IV, 588; V, 125.

60 ASVA, 1 Hamira 96; BLL 1047, f. 8, 48, 59, 106, 124, 204, 219, 232; 1048, f. 106, 223, 297.

61 BLL 1048, f. 297.

62 HTD, 92-93.

range from 17 to 40 per cent, with an average of about 25 per cent. Khach'ikyan gives some details (though no full examples) of twelve of these bills: three were drawn in Nizābād, four in Shamakha, and five in Rasht. All were payable in Astrakhan.⁶³

Two of the *respondentia* contracts represent variants on the basic type. One for 85 rupees drawn in Basra to be repaid in Madras describes itself as a *ek' gushi bi juk'am avak'* - i.e. although payment is contingent on the safe arrival of the ship, there is no item designated as the security for the loan, probably because in this case the taker acted also as payer, so payment would be made as long as he himself arrived safely.⁶⁴ The other, which calls itself a *ek' gushi zmēi avak'*, differs in a more fundamental way, since it does not appear to be a true *respondentia* contract, but is rather an ordinary bill of exchange for 2,450 rupees drawn in Isfahan on Surat, payable unconditionally (*biōzr*) at 150 days usance. None of the typical clauses of the *respondentia* concerning the security, the ship, or the voyage are included, but the bill does differ from an ordinary bill of exchange in that the payment is secured against a consignment of raw silk.⁶⁵ In this case it seems that the security is in fact serving as insurance for the deliverer, guaranteeing repayment, rather than for the taker as in a true *respondentia* contract.

The *dō gushi avak'* was similar to the *ek' gushi* except that it was for a return voyage. Two examples of this type of contract are preserved in the Lansdowne collection,⁶⁶ and Khach'ikyan has identified further examples in the *Diwan* of Eghia Karnets'i and the unpublished account book of Shahvelu vordi Sarhad.⁶⁷ The charges for both of the Lansdowne bills are specified: 18 per cent (fixed by English East India Company regulation) for the round trip Madras-Manilla-Madras, and 23 per cent for Chandarnagar (Bengal)-Jeddah-Chandarnagar. Both specify that the return voyage was to be made during the same season.

63 NJHV, 166, table 2.

64 BLL 1047, f. 59.

65 ASVA, 1 Hamira 96 Part 3, Document 21.

66 ASVA 1047, f. 62, Part 3, Document 24.

67 NJHV, 167 and notes 40-41; Karnets'i, E., *Eghia Karnets'u divanē*, ed. A.G. Abrahamyan, Erevan, 1968, 330.

The normal usance for *respondentia* contracts was twenty-one days after unloading the security, but usances of eleven and fifteen days are also found. In many of the contracts the nature of the security is not specified, or is given simply as goods (*aprank'*) or as fine goods (*t'it'ew aprank'*), i.e. jewels.⁶⁸ In one bill the security is specified as pearls (*margarit'*). It is likely that the goods specified as security would often have been purchased using the money drawn on the bill.

Securities and Mortgages

Both bills of exchange and simple loans could be secured against the borrower's property (like the *ek' gushi zmēi avak'* cited above), so that in the event of non-payment the creditor had recourse to selling the security to recover the debt. The fifth chapter of the first part of the Lawbook deals with this subject. Moveable or immovable property could be pledged as security (*graw*) for a loan, and a universal pledge of the whole of a person's property was also permitted.⁶⁹ Several European travellers remarked on the use in Safavi Iran of various types of mortgage to secure loans.⁷⁰

Several of the surviving promissory notes and bills of exchange were secured in this way, and there are examples of houses, shops (the rent from which might be used to pay the interest on a loan), caravanserais, orchards, and even *commenda* contracts and other mortgage or security contracts (*grawagir*) being pledged as security.⁷¹

Alternatively a note or bill could be guaranteed by a third party who agreed to pay in the case of default by the debtor. This is also covered in the Lawbook, where the guarantor is termed the *erashkhor*.⁷² Documentary examples are rare, and only two bills guaranteed in this way have come to light. In one a priest acts as guarantor.⁷³

68 NJHV, 185.

69 *Datastanagirk'*, 39-41, 179-180.

70 Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, 674-675; Raphael, *L'Estat du Perse*, 37; Tavernier, *Les six voyages*, I, 383-383; Fryer, *A New Account*, III, 110.

71 ASVA, 30 Nakha 106; BLL 1047, f. 15-17, 122, 138, 142; NJHV, 155-156, 187-188.

72 *Datastanagirk'*, 44-47.

73 BLL 1047, f. 163; 1048, f. 63, 157.

More frequent are separate documents known as *shart'namays* (Persian *sharṭ-nāmāh*, contract) or clauses (*shart's*) in bills of exchange dealing with the eventuality of default by the payer. The Lawbook indicates the correct form for a payer to write his refusal to honour a bill.⁷⁴ Typically a *shart'* or *shart'namay* contained a commitment by the taker to pay the face value of the bill plus interest in the event of its being returned.⁷⁵

Endorsing or discounting bills of exchange and promissory notes (the practice of making over a bill written in favour of one person to another, effectively the buying and selling of bills) was not unknown among the Julfa Armenians. As noted earlier in this chapter, the Lawbook included a "loan-buyer" among the possible parties to a bill of exchange. The Lawbook gives several acceptable formulas for endorsing bills, and a number of examples of endorsed bills have survived.⁷⁶ From the small number of such bills, and from the fact that very few bills are payable to the bearer, rather than to a named individual, it appears that endorsing bills was not common practice among the Armenians. There was, however, a considerable degree of flexibility in the Armenian bill of exchange, since the payee was often specified as an individual or his agent (*ōrdni, shabēparē*), which allowed the named payee to sell the bill and designate the buyer as his agent. There is no way of telling how widespread this practice was, but there is nothing to suggest the continuous circulation of discounted bills passing from hand to hand as in contemporary Europe.

The Function of Bills of Exchange and Respondentia Contracts

The bills of exchange examined rarely give any indication of the purpose for which the bill was drawn, but it is sometimes possible to guess the probable purpose, particularly where the same people are involved in a series of bills. In cases, for example, where the taker also acts as the payer, while the deliverer and the payee are different, it is more than likely that the taker-payer

74 *Datastanagirk'*, 186.

75 Examples of *shart'namays* are: BLL 1047, f. 163 (refers to the bill on f. 166), 168 (refers to the bill on f. 164); 1048, f. 139 (refers to the bill on f. 145). Bills of exchange containing *shart's* are: BLL 1047, f. 60, 87; 1048, f. 193, 201, 207.

76 *Datastanagirk'*, 184-185; BLL 1047, f. 245; 1048, f. 175, 219, 227, 228, 287.

was a small merchant borrowing money to finance a business trip, while the deliverer was a rich and established merchant, with a branch of his family firm or business associate in the town to which the taker-payer was going; for the deliverer the bill worked as an investment, and as a means of transferring funds to his distant partner.

The four bills drawn in Basra by Poghos's son Muk'el between 15 Tira 132 (12 October 1747) and 10 Hamira (6 December) of the same year are a case in point.⁷⁷ The total value of the bills was only 35 tumans, and all were to be repaid by Muk'el in Madras in five or six months time. The deliverers were different in each bill, one being a Khoja-Minasean, another a Shahrimeanean. In all the bills payment was to be made to a third party, in three cases described simply as the deliverer's agent (*ordni*), in one a named individual, presumably an associate of the deliverer. It is not hard to identify Muk'el as a small merchant raising capital for a commercial venture in India, and his creditors as prominent khojas interested in commercial investment.

In other examples the taker and the payer are clearly close relatives or business associates, and the bills are drawn to finance their trading operations between the two cities in which they are based. An illustration of this situation is found in the seven bills drawn by Ēliāz's son Zēni between 18 Ovdan 131 (12 February 1747) and 20 Aram 132 (15 January 1748).⁷⁸ Three of the bills were drawn in Isfahan during a ten day period in February 1747, one was drawn in late August 1747, and three in Basra during a three week period between the end of December 1747 and mid-January 1748. Six of the bills were to be repaid in Madras or Pondichery, and in five of these Zēni's father Ēliāz and Zēni himself are designated payers, while in one another man, Sinan's son Paron Ovanes (presumably an associate or creditor of Ēliāz and Zēni) and Ēliāz are named as payers. From this we can infer that Zēni was travelling regularly between Coromandel and the Persian Gulf, while his father was permanently based in Coromandel, in all probability preparing consignments of cotton textiles for the Middle Eastern market. In one bill repayment was to be made in Bengal by a certain Simon's son Panos, presumably another business associate, perhaps

77 BLL 1047, f. 53; 1048, f. 189, 208, 238.

78 BLL 1047, f. 155, 231; 1048, f. 10, 154, 164, 271, 278.

supplying Bengal textiles to the Ēliāz and son partnership. Three of the five deliverers named in these bills can be identified as among the few regular lenders on the bills of exchange examined, two of them being Khoja-Minaseans. Two names occur twice as deliverers in these seven bills. It seems, therefore, that Zēni was able to attract regular investment by prominent Julfa merchants. The face values of the bills range from as little as 100 rupees (roughly 5 tumans) to over 2,000 rupees (100 tumans). In February 1747 Zēni drew over 4,000 rupees, and in December 1747 to January 1748 nearly 3,000 rupees, which indicates that his trade was on a significant scale. It is possible that the credit raised on these bills was used by Zēni to supplement the capital possessed by the family, but it is equally likely that the bills were more in the nature of bridging loans: for example, Zēni may have arrived in Basra or Isfahan with consignments of Indian goods to sell, but, wishing to send return goods or cash to his father by the next sailing, he borrowed money on bills of exchange to enable himself to do so, anticipating the proceeds from the sale of the Indian goods.

In all the examples cited above, the essential purpose of the bill of exchange was to raise commercial credit, either for a single business trip, or for an ongoing commerce between two remote cities. In other cases, however, the bill of exchange operated rather as a means of transferring funds from one place to another. The great majority of bills drawn by women on their male relatives abroad fall into this category. Such bills are often for very small sums, and in all probability were required to finance household expenses or, as is occasionally specified, to pay the household's taxes.⁷⁹ When Sultanum's wife Anam drew sums of tens of thousands of rupees it suggests that she either played an active role in at least the financial side of her husband's business, or perhaps that Sultanum was winding up his business interests in India and remitting his assets home prior to his return to Julfa. The Bengal *hundis* also probably represent transactions in which the transfer rather than the credit element was foremost. All but one are to be repaid in Calcutta (already an important centre of Armenian trade in the mid-eighteenth century).

79 For examples see: BLL 1047, f. 20, 95; 1048, f. 2, 190, 193.

Transfers could also work the other way round, that is, rather than the taker drawing funds by bill of exchange to transfer money to him or herself, the deliverer might pay the taker money in order to transfer it to the payee. The distinction may sound a minute one, but is none the less real. For example, when Yakobjan's son Avet took 1 tuman from Gērak's son Yarut'iwn, to be repaid by Grum's wife Aziz to Yarut'iwn's wife Azat in Isfahan it is unlikely that Avet was raising 1 tuman commercial credit by drawing on a woman in Isfahan. Almost certainly, the real purpose of the transaction was for Yarut'iwn to transfer the sum to his wife Azat in Isfahan by using the good offices of Avet and his friend or more probably relative Aziz.⁸⁰

Within a big family firm bills of exchange might be used to transfer sums from one account to another following a calculation of profit and loss and of the dividends due to various members. Interesting examples of this are found in the Lansdowne documents. Six bills written in Isfahan on 25th Ovdan 128 (19th February 1744) for sums of between 665 and 13,333 rupees have exclusively members of the Khoja-Minasean family as takers, deliverers, payers and payees. All are payable to members of the firm in India (all but one to Ēliaz's son Minas), and most have the senior members of the other three branches of the firm as takers (see Chapter 3, on the Khoja-Minasean family firm). All specify that the sum is to be paid from either the firm's (*sark'ari*) account or money, or from the capital (*sarmayeay*), or from the profits (*shakhik'*) of one of the members.⁸¹ The explanation must be that there had been an examination of the firm's accounts in Isfahan, and the bills represent the payment of sums due to Minas for his operations in India using the firm's capital and the private capital of other family members. A similar series of five bills written in Isfahan on 24 Dama 131 (20 November 1746) involves another set of payments between the firm's (*sark'ari*), the patrimony (*hayrenik'*), and private accounts.⁸²

The functions of the *respondentia* contract were broadly similar to those of the ordinary bill of exchange. Raising commercial credit was probably the usual purpose, but there are exceptions. A *juk'ami avak'* drawn by a priest in Basra for 110 rupees and repayable by the same priest in

80 BLL 1047, f. 90.

81 BLL 1048, f. 90, 92, 94, 96, 98, 100.

82 BLL 1048, f. 78, 80, 82, 84, 88.

Bengal probably represents his travel expenses which he was intending to repay out of his stipend in his new parish in Bengal. Caution may have prompted him to draw the money on a *respondentia* contract rather than a simple bill of exchange.

Deferred Payment

One other form of commercial credit requires consideration before turning to the actual operation of the Julfans' credit system. Comparatively little information concerning techniques of sale and purchase has been preserved in the Lansdowne and Archivio di Stato collections, though doubtless further research, particularly the careful study of account books, would shed light on this matter. Even on the scanty evidence available, however, it is possible to question Fragner's assertion that:

Commerce in Iran was conducted solely in cash, with the clumsiness that this entailed .. The beginnings of non-cash transactions, which evolved in the pre-Mongol period, seem to have been forgotten.⁸³

The promissory notes and bills of exchange considered above show that these forms of credit were thoroughly understood by the Julfa Armenians, and there are grounds for supposing that sale and purchase on credit were also familiar. There is evidence, for example, that merchants made advance payments to producers and manufacturers in order to allow them to buy the necessary tools and raw materials, and to secure guaranteed supply.⁸⁴

The Astrakhan Lawbook has an interesting section on sale and purchase, which it holds can be carried out in seven different ways:

- 1) By word (*baniv*): a simple oral agreement to the transaction without immediately performing it, or specifying when it will be performed.
- 2) By money (*dramov*): cash purchase.
- 3) On time (*zhamanakav*): sale on deferred payment, whereby the buyer takes the goods and pays for them at the end of the agreed period.

83 P. Jackson (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. VI, 527.

84 See R. Mathee, "The East India Company trade in Kerman wool, 1658-1730", forthcoming; Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 221. Compare also the Indian practice as described in Chaudhuri, K.N., *The Trading World of Asia and the East India Company 1660-1760*, Cambridge, 1978, 256-259.

4) By deposit (*rimonov*, derivation obscure): the buyer gives the seller a deposit to guarantee the future purchase; in effect partial advance payment.

5) By exchange (*p'op'okhmamb*): barter.

6) By order (*grov*): buying something for someone else on his written instruction.

7) By agreement (*paymanav*): purchase subject to agreed conditions, such as valuation of the goods by a third party, or payment following the sale of the goods by the purchaser.⁸⁵

Advance payment and deferred payment, both of them forms of credit transaction, are covered in this list. The value of these techniques to a merchant were in allowing him to use cash in hand in securing future purchases at a predetermined price, and allowing him to make purchases at an opportune moment even when he did not have sufficient cash in hand.

The Operation of the Julfan Credit System

In order to see the various forms of commercial credit as they were used by a typical Armenian merchant of the late seventeenth century, we will follow the trading activities of Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan for his first three years in India. It is questionable whether a Julfa merchant operating in Iran rather than India would have found such fully developed credit facilities as Hovhannes in India, but given the fact that the great majority of Hovhannes's contacts were Armenian, and that Indian *şarrāfs* and *dallāls* were widespread in Iran it is unlikely that the situation there was markedly different, at least in the sphere of long-distance trade.

Hovhannes set out for India from Isfahan in December 1682 as the *commenda* agent of two brothers, the merchants Gerak's sons Zak'aria and Emprum-Agha. The *commenda* contract was for 250 tumans to be divided in a ratio of 3:1 between the investors and the agent. The greater part of the sum was invested in eighteen European woolen cloths (*lontrinay*). Hovhannes also took a 29 tuman bill payable to him by Paron Avetik in Shiraz (en route to Bandar 'Abbās), as well as 2.85 tumans in cash.

85 *Datastanagirk'*, 119-120.

The overland journey to Bandar 'Abbās and the voyage onward to Surat, where he arrived on 19th March 1683, passed uneventfully. In Surat Hovhannes left ten of his cloths with Baghdasar's son Nazarēt' to sell on his behalf, and proceeded with the remaining eight cloths to Aurangabad (arrived 27 May 1683). A month later he sold the eight cloths to Navarsat's son Bargham for 2,288 rupees with payment deferred for three months, and in mid July left Aurangabad carrying neither goods nor cash, other than a small sum for his travel expenses. At this point, therefore, Hovhannes had divested himself of all his goods, but had yet to receive anything in payment for them. It might be supposed that this temporary lack of capital would hamper his activities, but on 9th August he arrived in Sironj and three days later drew a *hundi* for 2,200 rupees on Bargham in Aurangabad, with *dallāl* Supa acting as the taker on his behalf in Sironj, and *ṣarrāf* Dinenat' acting as deliverer. Bargham was the payer, and a certain Shai Beg in Aurangabad the payee. Hovhannes did not actually take the cash, but left it on account with the broker Supa, making withdrawals from time to time when he needed money. Between 11th September and 16th October Hovhannes made substantial purchases of textiles in Sironj, acting through the agency of another Armenian, Aghazar, who appears to have been resident in Sironj. In the meantime Hovhannes also communicated with Paron Avetik (possibly the same Shirazi Armenian merchant who had paid Hovhannes's 29 tuman bill when he was coming from Isfahan to Bandar 'Abbās; Avetik too was an agent or associate of Zak'aria and Emprum Agha). Avetik was established in Agra, from where he agreed to send on Hovhannes's behalf a *hundi* for 1,000 rupees to his agent in Khayrabad (a certain Urdikhan's son Muradkhan), as well as instructions to him to use the money to buy *dergazi* textiles. In exchange Hovhannes paid 1,000 rupees into Avetik's account with Aghazar to use for textile purchases in Sironj.

On 24th November 1683 Hovhannes settled accounts with Supa, finding that he had drawn a total of 950 rupees cash from his account with the broker (he claimed an additional percentage on this sum since the coin was *chalni*, under weight, while the rupee of account was equivalent to the *sikkah*, mint, rupee [see Note on Currencies]), as well as the 1,000 rupees he had transferred to Avetik's account with Aghazar. This left just 250 rupees out of the 2,000 rupees he had drawn on Bargham in Aurangabad. He consigned this sum to Aghazar to use in completing the purchase and processing of his textiles.

The same day Hovhannes left Sironj for Agra, which he reached on the 30th November. On 29th December 1683 he drew another *hundi*, this one for 3,250 rupees on Nazarēt' in Surat (the merchant with whom Hovhannes had left ten of his cloths). Again an Indian broker, a certain Birju, acted as taker on Hovhannes's behalf, and the deliverer was another Indian, Garsu Damdas Shamdas who worked in the merchant Valapdas's Agra office; Valapdas himself was the payee in Surat.

On the last day of December Hovhannes left Agra in the company of another of his masters' agents, P'anos's son Baba. The two travelled to Khurja where they bought 92 *ch'arms* (2,116 kg) of indigo for the partnership involving the two of them and a third agent of Zak'aria and Emprum-Agha (discussed in Chapter 4). Hovhannes's share was 16 *ch'arm* costing 3,372.25 rupees inclusive of all expenses as far as Surat. Hovhannes had taken 1,000 rupees cash to Khurja, and had had a futher 1,200 rupees remitted there by Birju. Some 500 rupees he had left on account with Avetik in Agra. During his absence from the Mughal capital the *dergazi* textiles arrived there from Khayrabad, and Avetik dealt with them for him. When Hovhannes returned to Agra on 11th March 1684 he had some fairly complex accounting to do with Avetik. A week later he left for Surat, having established that he was 660 rupees in debt to Avetik after they had balanced all their mutual claims and liabilities. Hovhannes agreed to pay this amount into Avetik's account with Aghazar in Sironj, on his way to Surat.

At this point, therefore, Hovhannes had drawn the 2,200 rupees for the eight cloths he had sold in Aurangabad and invested the money in two roughly equal parts in textiles of Sironj and Khayrabad (the latter consignment having been purchased without any active participation by Hovhannes himself). He had also drawn 3,250 rupees in expectation of the proceeds from the sale of the other ten cloths, left behind in Surat at the start of his Indian travels. There is no indication that Hovhannes had received any information about these, but he was clearly able to use them as a sufficient security to draw this sum in Agra. The 3,250 rupees, or a little more, he had invested in Khurja indigo. Overall he had laid out more than 500 rupees more than he had drawn, this sum being his outstanding debt to Avetik. When Hovhannes left Agra on 19th March 1684 he again carried no money, and it appears that his goods had been despatched to Surat ahead of him.

On 23th March he arrived in Sironj and arranged for a book transfer of 660 rupees from his account with Aghazar to Avetik's. This left him 901.75 rupees in debt to Aghazar, a sum that Hovhannes promised to remit from Surat. He left Sironj the next day and reached Surat on 10th April. In Surat he promptly opened an account with another Indian broker, T'rik'am, and began drawing small sums from him. On 20th April T'rik'am settled Hovhannes's account with Nazarēt', which came to some 3,600 rupees for the bill Hovhannes had drawn on him in Agra (Nazarēt', it turned out, had not sold Hovhannes's remaining ten cloths). The broker also handled the financial side of the freight and despatch of Hovhannes's Indian goods, all of which he was shipping to the Middle East. At this stage Hovhannes's financial position appears to have been extremely precarious. Since his arrival in India he had sold only some 2,200 rupees worth of goods, but he had already spent over 5,000 rupees on purchases and was now committing further funds to despatching those goods to distant markets. He owed 900 rupees to Aghazar, and also owed T'rik'am the 3,600 rupees he had paid Nazarēt' as well as the money he was laying out every day in arranging the shipment of his goods. If such a situation caused Hovhannes any anxiety, this finds no reflexion in his account book. He met his obligations by renewed borrowing. On 20th and 24th April he drew two 1,000 rupee *juk'ami avak's*, or *respondentia* bills, one on his masters in Isfahan, with the goods despatched to them as the security (provided the goods reached them safely they would be able to pay the bill out of the proceeds of the sale, and if the goods did not reach them the debt would be cancelled), and the other on Yovan, his partner in the indigo business, to be paid in Basra (Yovan was supervising the shipping and delivery of Hovhannes's Indian goods to the Iranian Gulf ports and Basra). By this means Hovhannes was able to draw without risk on the proceeds from the sale of his Indian goods long before they reached the market. All the parties in the *respondentia* contracts were Armenian, except that Hovhannes, the taker, was as usual represented by his current Indian broker, T'rik'am, who entered the amounts directly into Hovhannes's account.

In addition to the *respondentia* bills, Hovhannes also took out some ordinary loans. On 15th May he borrowed 1,600 rupees (500 rupees of which was on Yovan's account) from Hovannes's son Mkrtum, and 780 rupees from Nazarēt'. The same day he settled his account with T'rik'am, and also paid him the 500 rupees on Yovan's account. On 23rd May he borrowed a further 1,000

rupees, which gave him sufficient funds to act as the deliverer in a small *respondentia* contract for 50 rupees, in which the taker was another Armenian merchant travelling to Isfahan, where he would repay the money to Zak'aria and Emprum-Agha. In the course of a month Hovhannes had raised nearly 5,000 rupees credit on the strength of his reputation, the goods he had despatched to the Middle East, and the cloths still in his possession.

On 27th May 1684 Hovhannes remitted the 900 rupees he owed to Aghazar, and left Surat for Aurangabad the same day, taking with him the ten cloths unsold the previous year, but as usual carrying no cash beyond a small allowance for expenses. He reached Aurangabad on 5th June, and a week later sold his cloths to the same Navarsat's son Bargham who had purchased the previous year's consignment. The terms were a price of 2,850 rupees with payment deferred for four months. Eighty-seven days before the payment date, however, Hovhannes took from Bargham the 1,050 rupees he needed to repay the 1,000 rupees he had borrowed in Surat. On 11th October he took the remaining 1,800 rupees, and immediately advanced it to Baba (who had accompanied him on the indigo-buying trip to Khurja the previous year), taking his bill for repayment in Agra. Baba then reloaned 600 rupees to a European, Musi Margarit' (Monsieur Margarite), on similar terms. Hovhannes finally left Aurangabad on 8th November (it is uncertain what occupied him for the four months he spent there), and travelled to Agra (arrived 11th December). There he again had dealings with Paron Avetik, and after only ten days left for Khayrabad and Lahore to buy *bardar* textiles. Avetik remained in Agra and handled that end of the business, as well as the financial side of the operation. The absent Yovan was again a party to the deal, with Avetik acting as his representative.

The day book does not record the ten months that Hovhannes spent in Khayrabad, but he returned to Agra on 31st October 1685 with 102 bales of textiles, fifty of which were his own share. In the meantime Yovan had returned from Basra to Surat, bringing the proceeds from the sale of the Indian goods sold there in the form of silver coin (*march'il*, piasters). Yovan changed the coin into rupees (realising 5,120 rupees). In Basra he had already paid Hovhannes's *respondentia* bill for 1,000 rupees, and in Surat he also paid Hovhannes's two loans of 1,600 and 780 rupees. In

the course of the year Yovan twice remitted sums of 1,000 rupees to Hovhannes's account with Avetik.

On his return to Agra Hovhannes settled his account with Avetik, a complex operation involving the expenses for the textile purchases of the previous ten months, the sums remitted by Yovan, the 1,200 rupees repaid by Baba, the 600 rupees repaid by an associate of Musi Margarit', and a further 892 rupees owed to Hovhannes by Avetik.

Hovhannes's example illustrates the flexibility of the credit system operated by the Armenians. On the basis of the *commenda* capital, his own reputation, and his status as the agent of a prominent Julfa firm, Hovhannes had no difficulty in raising commercial credit, often unsecured, up to and beyond the value of his actual capital. Many, but by no means all of his financial associates were members of the same firm. All his major creditors were Armenians, although Indian brokers and bankers often carried out money transfers, and Hovhannes usually opened an account with an Indian when he was doing business in a city for any length of time. It is clear that the senior and resident agents of the firm played a particularly important role in financing the activities of the younger itinerant agents. Hovhannes had extensive dealings with Nazarët' in Surat, with Aghazar in Sironj, and most important with Avetik in Agra. He was able to draw on them when he was doing business up country, and they also received and credited to his account any remittances arriving during his absence.

The available evidence indicates the existence of a sophisticated and flexible system of commercial credit, with a variety of specialised instruments developed to meet the requirements of international trade. This system was integral to the Julfans trading practices - merchants could apparently be confident of being able to raise credit at affordable rates even in remote locations, and planned their trading activities accordingly - and demonstrates the unity, in at least one important respect, of the extended commercial world within which the Julfans moved.

CONCLUSION

The remarkable commercial success of the Julfa merchants can be attributed to a number of factors. It was the economic policies and ruthless methods of 'Abbas I that led to the creation of New Julfa, and his patronage and active involvement in trade that gave the Julfans their privileged position as a virtual extension of the royal *khassah* establishment. Royal patronage also allowed them their religious freedom and considerable administrative and judicial autonomy; these privileges, however, also created jealousies and tensions with the wider society.

The Julfans' position was not self-sustaining, but depended on the active protection of the court. When that patronage began to wane, the colony's security from exploitation and discriminatory treatment also diminished, a process which can be detected as early as the reign of 'Abbas II. Nevertheless, the benefits derived by both the court and the Julfans from their association were real and continuing, which gave a certain stability to an otherwise fragile relationship. This survived even the fall of the Safavis in the early eighteenth century. After the Afghan conquest the Julfans rapidly found accommodation with the new rulers, and though they initially suffered oppression and extortion, the evidence suggests that their established system of international trade continued to function throughout the first half of the eighteenth century.

The last years of the reign of Nadir Shah, however, represented a complete breakdown in the symbiotic relationship between the Iranian court and the Julfa merchants. Nadir's relentless tax demands and brutal oppression destroyed the bases

of private property and personal security in Julfa. Unrestrained extortion continued during the interregnum following his assassination so that over a period of about ten years all the major merchants abandoned Julfa for their established outposts in Iraq, India, Russia or the Mediterranean.

Political events thus dictated the chronology of New Julfa's rise and fall - the period of the Julfa merchants' greatest success followed their forced resettlement in Iran at the time of the Great Deportation, while the colony's demise, at least as a centre of international trade, was a consequence of Nadir Shah's violent tyranny.

The creation of the Julfans' international trade network was also related to significant developments in the world economy in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Their commercial rise can be dated to the second half of the sixteenth century - a period when Europe's trade with Asia received a stimulus from the influx of quantities of American silver into Western Europe and a consequent imbalance in the purchasing power of precious metals between Europe, the Middle East and South Asia. Europe's demand for many Eastern commodities grew rapidly; one such commodity was Iranian raw silk, the trade in which experienced strong and continuing growth from the mid-sixteenth through the seventeenth centuries. Old Julfa, a town on the main route West from Iran's silk-growing regions, already participated in the silk trade alongside Muslim Turkish and Iranian merchants, but as Christians they were natural intermediaries in the trade with the European Levant merchants, and as the latter's share of the silk trade grew, the Julfans were able to take an increasing share of the expanding trade, and prospered accordingly.

The silk trade with Western Europe also led the Julfans to extend their activities to Europe's main silk ports - Venice, Marseille, Livorno, Amsterdam - and even to

Russia and the Baltic, which offered the possibility of a more economical route than the way through the Ottoman Empire. The Julfans' involvement in the trade in silk for bullion with Western Europe also provides the key to understanding their eastward expansion -since the Julfans acquired large amounts of bullion through the silk trade they were able to take advantage of the bullion price differential between the Middle East and South Asia and gain considerably by exporting silver and gold East and importing Indian and East Indies goods to the Middle East.

Out of the opportunity presented by Europe's increased demand for raw silk the Julfa merchants were able to build an extensive and diverse network of international trade. If political and world economic developments created the opportunity for the Julfa merchants' success, its vehicle was their social and commercial organisation. A strong patriarchal family household provided the basis for both the accumulation of capital and the permanent association of relatively large groups of merchants. A developed system of partnerships and agencies extended the family firm in terms of both personnel and investment opportunities. The self-governing community provided the forum for merchant families to interact and form associations; it also provided the institutions which upheld a sophisticated system of commercial law. The community also formed the broader cultural and ethical milieu in which the merchants' values and standards of behaviour were shaped.

Finally the Julfans possessed a highly-developed system of finance and credit without which it would have been impossible to maintain the momentum of international trade in a system dictated by the limitations of existing transport and communications over long distances as well as by seasonal factors, for example the monsoons.

Among the factors that contributed to Julfa's commercial success, some were specific to place and period - the foundation of the colony and the forging of the special relationship with the Safavi court were the work of one man, 'Abbas I; the imbalance in world bullion prices in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries presented a unique economic opportunity for long-distance trade. Other factors, however, link the Julfans into wider systems - the space allowed to self-governing communities in the political tradition of the Middle East and South Asia allowed the Julfans to duplicate their commercial structure in overseas outposts and retain the unity of their system of mercantile law. Nor were the contracts and credit instruments employed by the Julfans exclusive to themselves, but belonged to a wider system shared with other groups of long-distance merchants. Other aspects suggest even wider ranging comparisons. The Armenians' family structure has many similarities with the merchant household of Medieval Italy and nineteenth century India, and the merchant ethos of honesty, piety, thrift and hard work likewise spans chronological, geographical and cultural boundaries.

Sophisticated commercial techniques, the relationship between social organisation and cultural tradition and the interaction between political power and economic activity came together in the seventeenth century to create the conditions in which the Julfans built a dynamic, tight-knit and highly successful merchant community.

PART THREE

DOCUMENTS

ADDITIONAL ABBREVIATIONS USED IN PART 3

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| (A) | Arabic. |
| (AP) | Arabic word occurring in Persian or Arabic-Persian compound. |
| (Arm) | Armenian. |
| DAH | F.G. Poghosyan (ed.), <i>Datastanagirk' Astrakhani hayots'</i> , Erevan, 1967. |
| Dihkhudā | A.A. Dihkhudā, <i>Lughat-nāmah</i> , Tehran, 1325-1350. |
| (Eng) | English. |
| (Fr) | French. |
| GhV | Ghukas Vanandets'i, <i>Gandz ch'ap'oy, k'shroy, t'woy ew dramits'...</i> , Amsterdam, 1699. |
| (H) | Hindi. |
| <i>Hobson-Jobson</i> | H. Yule and C. Burnell, <i>Hobson-Jobson</i> , 2nd edition, reprinted London, 1985. |
| (I) | Italian. |
| Kévonian | K. Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens au XVII ^e siècle", <i>Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique</i> , XVI/2, 1975, 199-244. |
| Malkhaseants' | S. Malkhaseants', <i>Hayerēn bats'atrankan barāran</i> , 4 vols., reprinted Tehran, 1361. |
| Mu'īn | M. Mu'īn, <i>Farhang-i fārsī</i> , 6 vols., Tehran, 1342-1343. |
| (P) | Persian. |
| Platts | J.T. Platts, <i>A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English</i> , Oxford, 1930 (reprinted 1982). |
| Redhouse | J.W. Redhouse, <i>Redhouse's Turkish Dictionary</i> , London, 1880. |
| Rubinchik | Yu.A. Rubinchik <i>et al.</i> , <i>Persidsko-russkii slovar'</i> , 2 vols., 2nd edition, Moscow, 1983. |
| Sarukhan, | A. Sarukhan, <i>Hollandan ew hayerē XVI-XIX darerum</i> , Vienna, 1926. |
| Steingass | F. Steingass, <i>A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary</i> , 1872 (7th impression, London, 1984). |
| (T) | Turkish. |
| (TP) | Turkish word occurring in Persian or Turkish-Persian compound. |
| Wilson | H.H. Wilson, <i>Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms...</i> , Calcutta, 1940. |
| ZA | Zak'aria Agulets'i, <i>Oragrut'yuně</i> , Erevan, 1938. |

INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCUMENTS

*The Sources*¹

Four major collections of Julfa armenian commercial documents are currently known. The biggest collection is that of the Julfa Cathedral Archive, which was used by the nineteenth century historian Ter-Yovhaneants', but which has hardly been explored since. Minasean's brief guide to the Cathedral Archive's holdings suggest that there is a mass of valuable uncatalogued material there, an impression confirmed in the course of a brief visit to Julfa in 1987.² In addition to the archive, the Cathedral's manuscript collective contains several valuable works for Julfa commercial history, among them the original of Kostand Jughayets'i's merchant handbook. Outside Iran the principal collections are those in the British Library,³ in the Venice Archivio di Stato⁴ and in the Lazaryan collection in Moscow⁵. Each of these three collections relates mainly to the activities of one major Julfa family firm: the Khoja Minaseans in the British Library collection, the Shahrimeaneans in the Venice collection and the Lazareans in the Moscow collection.

The British Library Lansdowne collection comprises some five to six hundred documents, foliated but uncatalogued and currently pasted into two large volumes

1 On the sources for Julfa commercial history see L.S. Khach'ikyan and H.D. Pap'azyan's introduction to HTD; Sh.L. Khach'ikyan in NJVH *passim*; K. Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens au XVII^e siècle. A propos d'un livre arménien publié à Amsterdam en 1699", *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, XVI/2, 1975, 199-244; M. Aghassian and K. Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien dans l'Océan indien aux 17^e et 18^e siècles", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, 155-181.

2 L.G. Minasean, *Diwan S.A renap'rkich' Vank'i 1606-1960*, New Julfa, 1983; E.M. Herzig, "Report on research visit to Iran", *Iran*, xcv, 1987, 165-167.

3 Lansdowne MSS 1047, 1048, *Armenian Mercantile Papers*.

4 *Documenti armeni*, 3 busti.

5 See NJHV, 100 f.

(which makes the verso of some documents hard to read, and is less than ideal in respect of preservation). This collection has been used by Sh.L. Khach'ikyan for her *Nor Jughayi hay vacharakut'yunē*,^{an} as well as for the present study.⁶

The Archivio di Stato collection is neither catalogued nor foliated, and has been used for the first time in the present study.⁷ The collection comprises several hundred documents, held loose in three large packets. A number of the documents are in poor condition, and will soon disintegrate unless steps are taken to preserve them. Because this collection is unfoliated documents have been identified by date.

The Moscow Lazarean collection has been extensively utilised by Sh.L. Khacki'kyan. In addition to these four major collections there are a number of individual manuscripts and documents held in other libraries. The Erevan Matenadaran contains several interesting manuscripts, among them copies of Kostand Jughayets'i's works,⁸ and the account book of an early eighteenth century silk merchant.⁹ The British Library contains several documents in addition to the Lansdowne collections: the account book of a late eighteenth century merchant,¹⁰ a merchant's itinerary,¹¹ several letters from Armenian merchants and priests in Izmir and Amsterdam to merchants in London.¹² In addition the India Office Records contain several of

6 Khack'ikyan's copies of the Lansdowne documents are apparently out of order, with the result that many of her volume and folio references are incorrect.

7 For a brief description of the collection, see E.M. Herzog, *The Armenian commercial documents in the Archivio di Stato in Venice*.

8 K. Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens", 200-201 and notes 16-19.

9 Sh.L. Khach'ikyan, "Shahvelu vordi Sarhadi hashvem'yanē vorpes hay-řusakan tesakan kaperi skzbnaghbyur", PBH, 1978, no.2, 93-108.

10 BL, Or. MS 4553.

11 BL, Sloane MS 4090(17); published by A. Matevosyan, "Chanaparhats'uyts' Jughayets'i Petrosi vordi Hakobi", *Banber Matenadarani*, VIII/8 1967, 285-289.

12 BL, Harleian MS 7013.

documents relating to Julfans' relations with the EIC in the late seventeenth century.¹³

The first thorough study of a Julfa commercial document was into the account book of Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan, the manuscript of which is held in the Portuguese National Archive in Lisbon.¹⁴

In addition to documentary material a number of literary works are of direct relevance for the study of Julfa Armenian trade, notably the merchant handbooks and other works of Kostand Jughayets'i and Ghukas Vanandets'i.¹⁵ The diaries of Zak'aria Agulets'i and the *Divan* of Eghia Kaṛnets'i also contain valuable information though their authors were not Julfans.¹⁶

A particularly important source is the Law book of the Astrakhan Armenians,¹⁷ a codification of the customary law of the Astrakhan Armenian community. As the authors of the book acknowledge, the section on commercial law is based on the customary law of the Armenians of Iran.

The above-mentioned sources combine to form an exceptionally rich research resource for the history of Armenian trade and commercial organisation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Research into the Armenian commercial sources is, however, still at a very early stage, with none of the major collections catalogued, and the most important one unutilised for over a century. Further

13 India Office Records, E/3/51/6043, f. 80; E/3/51/6193.

14 HTD, 9.

15 See Kévonian, "Marchands arméniens".

16 Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Oragrut'yunĕ*, Erevan, 1938; Eghia Kaṛnets'i, *Divan*, Erevan, 1968.

17 F.G. Poghosyan (ed.), *Datastanagirk' Astrakhani hayots'*, Erevan, 1967.

research will undoubtedly clarify many of the unresolved questions about Julfan commercial organisation.

The Language of the Documents

The Julfa commercial documents are written in a highly irregular and variable form of Armenian, which defies categorisation as a particular dialect. Some writers, particularly priests, make concessions to classical usage; others appear to be completely ignorant of, or unconcerned about rules of grammar and orthography.

The language of the Julfa documents is further complicated by the fact that the New Julfa community incorporated Armenians from many other places of origin than Old Julfa, so there are wide variations between the dialect forms used by different writers, some showing more of the characteristics of western than eastern dialects. Inconsistencies occur also within documents, variant forms of declension or conjugation occurring side by side within a few lines of each other, and various spellings of the same word, or even of the writer's own name.

A large part of the vocabulary is not Armenian, though foreign words are often declined and conjugated as if they were. Persian is the source of the greatest number of loan words, indeed provides most of the legal and commercial terminology, and even exerts an influence on syntactic forms. A number of loan words from other languages: Hindi and other Indian languages, Turkish, Italian (or Lingua Franca) occur in Julfan commercial documents, while merchants travelling abroad often use terms and phrases particular to a given locality, especially for commodities or locally specific phenomena. In this respect the Julfa documents are a rich source of

information on the semantics and pronunciation of other contemporary vernacular languages, particularly Persian.

It will readily be seen that the Julfa commercial documents present a serious linguistic challenge. Existing studies of the Julfa dialect are not of much assistance, since they are, for the most part, based on nineteenth century or later written vernacular texts. Patkanean's use of the eighteenth chronicle of Petros di Sarkis Gilanents' is an exception, but as C.O. Minassian has noted, Gilanents' Armenian is not typical of the Julfa dialect. The most useful study has been the brief section in Khack'ikyan and Pap'azyan's introduction to HTD.

The many linguistic difficulties notwithstanding, it should be borne in mind that these were functional documents, written to convey information accurately and concisely. Many of the difficulties in understanding the documents are caused by our ignorance of their context, either in the broad sense of the system of laws, conventions and practices that operated in the Armenians' commercial world, or in the narrow sense of the background information to individual letters, bills and contracts, information that was known to all parties and, therefore, did not need to be spelt out.

It is not possible to list all the irregularities, but among the commoner phonetic changes are:

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| A for E | e.g. <i>arasun</i> for <i>eresun</i> |
| A for U | <i>agharkel</i> for <i>ugharkel</i> |
| Ē for AY | <i>ēl</i> for <i>ayl</i> |
| ĒL for EAL | <i>gnats'el</i> for <i>gnats'eal</i> |
| I for E | <i>irek'</i> for <i>erek'</i> |
| O for A | <i>goy</i> for <i>gay</i> |

Many pairs or even sets of three letters are almost interchangeable in certain positions or in particular words:

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| b <-> p | e.g. <i>mablagħ, maplagħ</i> |
| b <-> p' | <i>yep', erb</i> |
| j <-> ch' <-> ch | <i>mēj, mēch', mēch</i> |
| k' <-> g | <i>k'arasun, garasun</i> |
| kh <-> h <-> y | <i>khet, het, yēd</i> |
| v <-> w | <i>avak', awak'</i> |
| t <-> d | <i>ēt, ayd</i> |
| f <-> b | <i>zaft (from AP. žabŭ)</i> |
| b <-> m | <i>mazbun (from AP. mazmūn)</i> |
| o <-> ō | <i>egħrarov, egħrarōv</i> |
| gh <-> v | <i>jugħab, juvab (from AP. javāb)</i> |
| ds <-> ts' | <i>vadsun, vats'un</i> |
| s <-> sh | <i>sapip'arē, shabep'arē</i> |
| n <-> l | <i>ēřuznama, ēřuzlama</i> |
| s <-> ts' | <i>mahdesi, mahdets'i</i> |
| ō <-> u | <i>ōzr, uzr</i> |

Initial H is often dropped (*Ěndustan* for *Hēndustan*), and the prothetic H is also common (*Hēspahan* for *Ěspahan*).

Y (rarely H or Kh) often follows any vowel (most frequently A) occurring in the middle of, or at the end of a word (*Aghay* for *agħa*; *t'araydut'* for *taradut'*).

R is occasionally dropped (*yep'* for *erb*), and initial R or ST is usually preceded by Ě (*ěrajj* for *rajj*; *Ěstep'annos* for *Step'annos*). Ě is often inserted between consonants, especially where words break across two lines (*uzěr* for *uzr*).

Irregular grammatical forms occur frequently. E.g. *Ěntits'* as an ablative plural form from *ayn*; an ablative singular ending in *-ints'* (e.g. *Anamints'n*), often occurring alongside regular ablative endings in *-ē*. The form *grêrumn* is met as a ^{plural} ~~singular~~ locative for *gir*. Words ending in vowels, particularly proper nouns, often take *-ē* as their ending in all the oblique cases. In some common names the form in *-ē* has also taken over the nominative (*Zak'arē*, *Mirzē*).

The demonstrative-definite suffixes *s*, *d* and *n* are attached to the endings in all the oblique cases. There are also a number of distinctive verbal forms and usages:

arek for *ekaw*

aret ^{Medieval *eret*, he gave.}
for *arar*, but in certain contexts closer in meaning to *etu*, ~~he gave.~~

elnel (also *elanel* and its participle form *elats*, which is often used nominally) has a wide range of meanings, among them: to happen, to arise, to become, and (in financial context) to accrue, to be gained. E.g. (1) *Shat hetewets'ink' vor elats ghalatut'iwnn histakink'*, we investigated thoroughly to clear up the error which had occurred (ASVT, xix 87.1); (2) *Maplaghs Paron Petrosin voghormats hogi mōr T'aguhē elatsin ur samnay*, this sum is his share of Paron Petros's late mother T'aguhī's accrued wealth (?) (ASVA, 24th Nakha 99); (3) *Ghayel ch'elaw*, he did not consent (ASVA, 20th Aram, 104); (4) *Sark'ari inch' t'araydut' vor Frankstan ... kam ayl tegh elēlay*, whatever trading (profits) the firm has made in Europe ... or elsewhere (ASVT, xix 87.1).

yants'

the verb *yants'* (*hants'*) *kananal*, to pass (of time). *Yants'* is apparently derived from *ants'anel*, to pass or flow, with the addition of a **prothetic** (shortened form of i- 'ants')
y/ E.g. (1) *Nerk'oy t'areghēn inch' yants' kay*, however much time elapses from the below date (BLL 1048, f. 55); (2) *Ignatios goyinch' vor hants' lini kats'ēl iwr mudat'ovn tay*, Ignatios will come and pay [the sum] with interest for however much time has elapsed (ASVA, 24th Nakha 99); *K'ani tari a inklizin flamengin franksisin khet akhbor pēs yants' ank' kats'uts'ēl*, for several years we have lived in a brotherly way with the English, Dutch and French (Sarukhan, 24).

yink'

the verb *yink'* (*hink'*) *arnul* is the usual Julfa dialect term for to take or receive money, as in promissory notes and bills of exchange.

gnel

has a range of meanings and usages extending far beyond those found in dictionary definitions. See documents 5, 7, 9 and 13 below for examples.

Technical Aspects of the Documents

The contracts, bills of exchange and account books of the Julfa merchants were documents with legal force and their technical aspects reflect this. Documents of the same type generally conform closely to a pattern and often include standard phrases. It is, nevertheless, often difficult to determine whether a given term is being used in a precise legal sense or more loosely to convey a general idea. Certain phrases show a close parallelism with Safavi Persian documents: for example, the standard opening phrase: *Patchē? groys ays ē vor*, "the reason for this document is this, that", is surely derived from the Persian: *Gharāz az taqdīr-i īn kalamāt īn ast kih*.¹⁸ Our knowledge

18 Persian document in ASVA collection.

of Safavi Persian terminology for commercial documents is, however, too slight to explore this question in detail.

Many kinds of document had to be authenticated by witnesses, who made a brief statement, signed and affixed their seal. Priests generally signed in the left margin of documents, while merchants signed at the bottom. Priests' seals were often square or octagonal in shape and bore Armenian inscriptions, while merchants' seals more often conformed to European and occasionally to Persian patterns. In view of the number of seals found on some documents it is easy to believe Chardin's statement that the legal force of a document increased incrementally with the number of seals.¹⁹ Tearing the seal out of a document invalidated it.²⁰ It was usual to keep a very straight left margin and to continue the line of writing right up to the edge of the page in order to discourage later alteration of documents; the last line was also generally ruled off for the same reason.²¹

All important documents, including contracts, letters and bills of exchange were written in two, or occasionally three, copies to guard against accidental loss. This was announced by a standard phrase: *Girs erku grets'i min mazbun*, I wrote this in two identical copies (literally: I wrote this text twice, one contents).²² Bills of exchange also include the phrase: *Minovn vor tam, miwsn huk'mn bat'il lini*, when I pay on one bill the force of the other will be annulled.

19 Chardin, *Voyages*, VI, 96; see also II, 230-233, 291-295.

20 ASVA, 1st Nadar 79; Chardin, *Voyages*, IV, 171.

21 See Zak'aria Kanakerts'i, *Khronika*, 180.

22 *Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 635; Chardin, *Voyages*, VI, 97; Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, II, 410.

Most documents open with the abbreviation \bar{E} (for *Vor eñ*, [He] who is, i.e. God) at the top of the page, and important documents such as partnership contracts also often have a pious invocation.

The handwriting of the Julfa documents is generally a legible *notrgir*, though some letters can be confused: Sh and Gh; S and O; B and T'; Zh and \bar{T} . Documents generally contain no punctuation or paragraphs, and capitals are rarely used. The word *Dardzeal*, written with an initial capital substitutes for punctuation or a paragraph break to indicate a major change of subject. Individual words are sometimes separated by dots, but word breaks are often erratic.

Numerals are generally written in the form of Armenian letters: A-T' give 1-9; Zh-Gh give 10-90; Ch gives 100 and R gives 1000. Multiples of hundreds and thousands are written by combining the symbols for units or tens with the symbols for 100 or 1000. E.g. TsGR \bar{E} ChLS = 53,837. The difficulty in distinguishing between B and T' and Zh and T' causes considerable problems in reading numbers, since they represent units (2 and 9), and tens (10 and 50) respectively. Sometimes sums are given in words, or in a combination of words and numerals. It is the general practice, following any number, to write half the sum as a guard against accidental mistakes or alteration.²³ The Julfans also sometimes used European style Arabic numerals. Fractions are in base four, and consist of quarters, sixteenths and sixty-fourths. They are represented by a combination of vertical (quarters and sixty-fourths) and horizontal (sixteenths) bars, e.g. B II \equiv I = $2 \frac{2}{4} \frac{3}{16} \frac{1}{64}$. Where a column of numbers or fractions is not required it may be shown by a dot, e.g. ECh.G..II = $503 \frac{2}{64}$.

²³
249 n.

Chardin notes that the Iranians had the same practice: *Voyages*, III,

Names are generally in the form Ēliaz's son Minas (*Ēliazi vordi Minas*) though sometimes the order is reversed and we find Simon son of Tsaturi (*Simon di Tsaturi*). Family names are very rarely used, but occupations, rank, etc. are often indicated (e.g. archimandrite - *vardapet*; *kalāntar* - *k'alant'ar*; the pilgrim - *mahdesi*). In addressing others a wide range of titles are employed in various combinations: *paron*, *agha* and *sahap* being the most common.

Dates are usually given in the Azaria calendar, whose era began 21st March 1616, though sometimes also in the Great Armenian calendar and sometimes in A.D. Dates have been converted on the basis of the tables on pages 274-275 of A.G. Abrahamyan, *Hay gri ew grch'ut'yan patmut'yun* (Erevan, 1973). Abrahamyan's Julian dates have been converted to Gregorian. In the rare instances where documents give dates in more than one calendar the correlation is often different from that obtained by use of Abrahamyan's tables.

Conventions

- () - explanatory material
- expansion of contractions
- [] - material inserted by the editor
- { } - material inserted erroneously
- + - represents a seal impression
- (+) - represents a mark on a copy of a document showing where there had been a seal impression on the original.

Armenian numerals, which appear in the text as lower case letters marked with the *pativ* symbols are given in upper case in transliteration.

SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTS

| <u>No</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Reference</u> |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Will | PNJ, I, 144-145 |
| 2 | Settlement | ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114 |
| 3 | <i>Commenda</i> contract | ASVA, 30th Hamira 95 |
| 4 | <i>Commenda</i> contract | BLL 1048, f. 283 |
| 5 | Partnership contract | HTD, 132 |
| 6 | Commission agency | BLL 1047, f. 77 |
| 7 | Instruction | BLL 1047, f. 9 |
| 8 | Power of attorney | ASVA, 22nd Shbat' 102 |
| 9 | Power of attorney | BLL 1048, f. 48 |
| 10 | Receipt | BLL 1048, f. 73 |
| 11 | Receipt | ASVA, 10th Shams 104 |
| 12 | Payment instruction | ASVA, 20th Nadar 103 |
| 13 | Payment instruction | ASVA, 14th Ghamar 114 |
| 14 | Bill (Promissory note) | ASVA, 20th Aram 104 |
| 15 | Bill (Promissory note) | BLL 1047, f. 22 |
| 16 | Bill (Intermediate) | BLL 1048, f. 238 |
| 17 | Bill (<i>Barat'</i>) | BLL 1047, f. 101 |
| 18 | Bill (<i>Hundi</i>) | BLL 1047, f. 93 |
| 119 | Bill (<i>Avak'</i>) | ASVA, 1st Ghamar 111 |
| 20 | Bill (<i>Avak'</i>) | BLL 1047, f. 248 |
| 21 | Bill (<i>Avak'</i>) | ASVA, 1st Hamira 96 |
| 22 | Bill (<i>Avak'</i>) | BLL 1047, f. 219 |
| 23 | Bill (<i>Avak'</i>) | BLL 1047, f. 59 |
| 24 | Bill (<i>Avak'</i>) | BLL 1047, f. 62 |
| 25 | Security | BLL 1047, f. 15 |
| 26 | Certified statement | BLL 1048, f. 43 |
| 27 | Certified statement | ASVA, 24th Nakha 99 |
| 28 | Account | BLL 1047, f. 188 |

Yami mardeghut'ean p'rkch'in RĒCh. ěst hramani (2) srboy Ařak'eloyň Poghosi, es P'anosi vordi Minass andardz (3) ktak arari, vor yet mahuan imoy hastatun lits'i As-(4)tutsov. Ays ě vor im hogětun inch'pěs himnarkěl (5) em, im vordik'n t'amamen ew katar hasuts'anen ya-(6)menayniw. Ew yet t'amameloyň hing hariwr t'uman ayl (7) naght p'ogh im hogětans vakhm arari, vor norin shahn (8) teghin kets'oghats'n mustěghal lini, ays ECh t'umanis (9) vak'il ew akhtiar arari hazir Ařajnord mer, ew (10) erku Astuatsasěr K'ědkhuday, vor erek'noy maslaha-(11)t'ovň shahov tan, ew tarěts' tari shahn ařnun ew hogě-(12)tan nstogh(a)ts'n nafagha tan; apa ECh t'(uma)nin vor vakhm (13) arari voch'um akhtiar ch'uni vor sarmayin (14) dakhl aři Astutsov k'ani vor mer vank'n hastat (15) ě, ays ECh t'(u)m(a)ns ayl anpakas hastat lini, voch' imots'n ew (16) voch' yětarats'n ays ECh t'umanis dakhl ch'linin; t'ogh zays, (17) yisun t'uman ayl tan mer vank'in tasn t'uman mer (18) ekeghets'un, hing t'uman kanants' anapatin, hing t'u-(19)man ayl Jughayu hasarak ekeghets'eats'n, erek' t'uman (20) Erewants'ots' hasarak ekeghets'eats'n, im ghulugharar (21) Aghsaberin tan tasn t'uman, im erek' ghulk'n a-(22)zat linin, ew mardn erek' erek' t'uman ayl p'ogh tan iw-(23)reants'n salamati, vor jamn lini inn t'uman, im t'ořn (24) Albert'in law řazi anen, im harsn Urughlě (25) tan tasn t'uman, A t'uman im kharak'ver aghjik Ma-(26)riamin tan. Yařaj k'an zays es im vordwots'n erek' erek' (27) hazar t'uman ěi asats'ěl, erek' hazar t'uman es im (28) kamaws tvi im vordi K'ahnaniň, ěl im tans ěr, ew im měts (29) ěr, ew im aměn ařturs, ew zinch' vor uněi t'amamin iwr (30) dzeřnumň ěr es nora ař ew trin hasapn tesěl ch'em, a-(31)pa erb vor im taněs jokvets'aw, lsets'i ew tesi t'ě eět'n (32) Ř t'(u)m(a)ň uněr ěn eět'n Ř t'umanin GR t'umann es im ka-(33)maws em tvěl, iwrň halal lini ew awelin im kamawn ch'ě, (34) ew ayl im baghi mnats'ats p'oghň ew ayl inch' vor unim, (p. 145, line 1) ut'n sam Sět'aghěs ut'n sam Sařrazin; ut'n (2) sam Ēliazin, ew ut'n sam Ēmniazin, A sam im mets (3) aghjik Nanajanin, vor ew yařaj tvěl em, gir ew mazar (4) unim, min sam Zarifkhanin, min sam Zibě, min (5) sam andzlěin im tořn Jakhat'unn ew Grigorn erb As-(6)tutsov psakum linin nots'a lěv shorěr ka-(7)ren, ew khaljn mijěni lini, im shěshiek'n vor (8) indz kukhasani im ch'ok' vordwots'n

hini; ew ayl inch' vor unim (9) im ch'ok' vordots'n ē, ēl voch'um yilaghay ch'unenay;
se-(10)t'aghēn indz hamar law hark anē, t'ē pashtōni, t'ē pa-(11)taragi, t'ē aghk'atats', inch'pēs
vor arzhan tesnu, zays (12) ews khndrem vor im vordik'n misht im hogētan maramat'n (13)
anen vor shēn mnay. Ays ēr im ktaks zor grets'i zi (14) pahōghk'n ew katarōghk'n ōrhneal
linin yAstutsoy ew a-(15)menayn srbots' nora, isk voch' pahōghk'n ew katarōghk'n kta-(16)kis,
zstats'uatss zor aṛeal en ew aṛnun, voch' vayelun (17) manawand t'ē partakan lits'in hogwoy
imoy yawurn da-(18)tastanin K'ristosi Astutsoy meroy, vor ē ōrhneal ya-(19)witeans amēn.
Grets'aw t'ivn RChKhT⁺ yunisi Ē, verj.

DOCUMENT 1 WILL

PNJ, I, 144-145

Translation

In the year 1700 of the salvation of mankind, according to the command of the holy apostle Paul, I P'anos's son Minas made my irrevocable will; God willing let it remain unaltered after my death.

It (my will) is that my sons should finish and bring to completion my hospital, as I have founded it. And after its completion I have made an endowment for my hospital of five hundred tumans in cash money; the interest on which is to provide the maintenance of the residents. I have made the present Bishop and two pious *kadkhudās* the empowered administrators of this 500 tumans to invest at interest as they think best, and year by year to receive the interest and provide subsistence for the residents of the hospital. Furthermore, noone has the right to appropriate the capital of the 500 tumans which I have endowed. God willing as long as our monastery survives, may this 500 tumans also remain undiminished, and let neither mine (i.e. my relatives) nor outsiders misappropriate this 500 tumans.

Let them give fifty tumans also to our monastery, ten tumans to our church, five tumans to the nunnery, five tumans to the other ordinary Julfa churches and three tumans to the Erevan (quarter) ordinary churches.

Let them give ten tumans to my servant Aghsaber. Let my three slaves be free and let them be given three tumans each for their well-being, which in total is nine tumans. Let them make my grandson Albert' well satisfied, and let them give ten tumans to my daughter-in-law Urughlu and 1 tuman to my ^{father's sister's daughter} ~~Kharak' ver (?) - gir~~ Mariam.

Before this I had promised my sons 3 thousand tumans each. Of my own free will I gave three thousand tumans to my son K'ahnān; and he was in my house and was close to me, and all my trade and everything I had was in his hands, and I did not inspect his trading account. Then, when he separated from my house, I heard and saw that he had 7,000 tumans. 3,000 of those 7,000 tumans I gave of my own free will, let it be lawful to him, but the extra is not by my will.

Furthermore, my remaining money and everything else I own: eight shares to Sēt'agha; eight shares to Safrāz; eight shares to Ēlīāz; eight shares to Ēmniāz; 1 share to my oldest daughter Nanajan, which I have already given her, and have a note and receipt (?) (for it); one share to Zarīfkhan; one share to Ziba; one share to Andzļō. When, God willing, my grandchildren Jakhatun and Grigor get married, let them make fine garments for them, and let the cost be shared (by the whole family). Let my "one-sixth", which will come to me [from my wife's estate], go to my four sons. And anything else I have is for my four sons, and noone else has any interest in it.

Let Sēt'agha perform my (funeral) services well: the ceremonies, the offerings and the prayers, as he sees fit. I also wish that my sons should always keep my hospital in good repair.

This was the will, which I have written. Let those who keep it and abide by it be blessed by God and all his saints, and those who do not keep or abide by this will, let them not enjoy what they have taken and shall take from my property, nay let them be answerable for it to my soul on the Day of Judgement of Christ our God, who is forever blessed. Amen. Written in the year 1149 (1700), 8th June. The end.

Notes

This document and the Khoja Minasean family are discussed in Chapter 3. The original of the document has not been available to me, so the transliteration is from the published version, which includes punctuation and capitalisation that would doubtless have been absent or different in the original.

Page 144

Line

4 hogētun (Arm) Literally house of the soul. Charitable foundation, hospital for the sick or poor.

Page 145

6 lēv Julfa dialect for *law*, good, well.

15 The following lines are pointedly aimed at K'ahnan's descendants (K'ahnan himself having died in 1697).

19 The date is given in the Greater Armenian calendar, rather than the Azaria calendar generally used in commercial documents.

Ë

k'at'ani vordi Lach'iramn t'ivn AChZhD avelats' B ěsp(a)h(a)n vshui vordi bulch'andin
 ghandaharē vordi ch'andrbanin ew k'at'ani vor(2)di valiramin sarafut'ean khsēpanin vor
 azēftday t'areghēn vor khōjay sarhadi vordi p(a)r(o)n muratin ew iwr vordik' marhumk' (3)
 p(a)r(o)n nazarin p(a)r(o)n sharimanin p(a)r(o)n sarhadin ew p(a)r(o)n yakobin yet arturin
 ar(a)rēl kam t'ē ōnas varēsnum khet tvēlin arēl (4) minch'i t'ivn ChZhD inch' dad ěst'at' vor
 sarafut'ean elēlēr d(a)ft(a)rōv bat'lay grērōv kam dasti khsēpanōv kam sanadōv (5) ew
 barat'ōv bētamn(a)mn ch'un m(a)sk(u)rk' bulch'andin ch'andrbanin valiramin khsēpanun
 khamar es k'at'ani vordi lach'irams mōt'ab(a)r (6) vak'lay grōv eki ěsp(a)h(a)n yisheal
 khsēpanin bētamn(a)mn aval yakhir inch' babat' khsēp vor kēr voghormats hogi p(a)r(o)n
 murati vordi (7) p(a)r(o)n yakobin ew sayil zk'ur ōnas varēsnots' khet bk'ōzizi t'amamn
 mudat'anōvn khsēpn tesi inch' t'(a)l(a)p vor veroy khsēpanēn d(8)us arek bētamn es maskur
 lach'irams ěsp(a)h(a)n p(a)r(o)n yakobēn p(a)r(o)n Datosēn yink'aři vor khasav indz lach'irams
 ēl mnbad amēn(9)ewin veroy yisheal khsēpanots' jahat'tan kam ēn jahat'tan vor grums ghēt
 ch'ē hakh t'(a)l(a)p khsēp gōft gu ew vordum baghi ch'mn(a)ts' (10) inch' sanad asnad barat'
 dftar bat'lay ew sarēshtēk' vor dus goy huk'mn bat'ilay ew khalial vēj at'iat'an veroy
 yishealanots'ēn (11) kam ěntits' vor grums grvēl ch'ē apits' kam farits' maskurk' bulch'andin
 ch'andrbanin valiramin kam sots'ay sayir varēnots' (12) min hakh t'alap khsēp gōft gu ew
 vordum baghi lini mnats'ēl es valirami akhbēr lach'irams vor ver(o)y yishealanots' mōt'abar
 (13) vak'lay grōv vak'ili sōhl ew habay ar(a)ri m(a)sk(u)r p(a)r(o)n yakobin ew p(a)r(o)n
 datosin vets' ghzar di(a)n naght min gh(i)tr shayi k'arn yistak ts'or(14)ēn sōlin ew habin sōl
 ew bēl ar(a)rink' erku ghzar di(a)n naght p'ogh ew kēs ghitr shayi k'arn yistak ts'orēn
 maskurk' vēj sōl naght jnsērnl (15) p(a)r(o)n yakobēn p(a)r(o)n datosēn yink'aři vor khasav
 indz lach'irams seghay ats'ink' D(a)rdz(ea)l veroy maskur khsēpanin vor m(a)sk(u)r lach'iramn
 (16) mez yakobis datosis khet ar(a)r dristay mez yakobis datosis ēl yakh t'alap khsēp gōftgu

ch'mn(a)ts' bulch'andin ch'andr(17)banin valiramin khet aht'iat'ën t'ë tesimal khsēpanumn mez
min hakh t'alap khsēp ew gōft gu baghi lini mn(a)ts'ël mek' ya(18)kobēs datosēs danēst'ay sōl
ew habay ar(a)rink' k'at'ani vordi lach'iramin vets' gh(a)z(a)r di(a)n p'ogh min gh(i)tr shayi
k'arn yistak ts'orēn (19) vēj sōln lach'iramēn yink'ařink' vor kh(a)sav mez yakobēs datosēs
seghay ats'ink' girs erku grvets'av min mazbun minn lach'iramn (20) dastkhat' ar(a)r mez aret
muisn mer dastkh(a)t'ōvn mrets'ink' tvink' urn grv(e)ts'(a)v t'ivn p'ok'r min Ch tasn ch'ok'
avel(ea)ts' erkk'umn verj ver(21)oy greayln indz murati vordi yakobis ěnduneliay + veroy
grealn nazari vordi datosis (22) ghabulay +

margari vordi manuēls vk(aye)m +

DOCUMENT 2 SETTLEMENT

ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114 (29th March 1729) Translation

In the name of God

K'at'an's son Lach'iram, 2nd Avelyats' 114 (28th March 1729) in Isfahan. (Concerning) the banking accounts of Vshui's son Bulch'and, Qandahari's son Ch'andrban and K'at'ani's son Valiram, from the commencement date from which they have had dealings with Khoja Sarhad's son Paron Murat and his sons the late Paron Nazar, Paron Shariman, Paron Sarhad and Paron Yakob, or have had dealings with the female heirs, up to the year 114, in full, whatever transactions there have been, whether (recorded) in account books, letters of cancellation, in hand accounts or in promissory notes and bills. Because I K'at'an's son Lach'iram came to Isfahan with a full power of attorney for (settling) the account of Bulch'and, Ch'andrban and Valiram, I, together with the late Paron Murat's son Paron Yakob and the other male and female heirs, inspected the above-mentioned accounts in full, from first to last, every item in the accounts, *bk'özizi*, with full interest. I, the above-mentioned Lach'iram, received in full whatever claim there was from the above accounts from Paron Yakob and Paron Datos in Isfahan, and it came to me, Lach'iram.

And hereafter relating to the above-mentioned accounts and whatever is not included (?) in this document, no right or claim or account or contention or oath remains. The force of any promissory note or bill or account book letter of cancellation or records (?) which may (hereafter) appear is null and void. The end.

As a precaution, from the above-mentioned Bulch'and, Ch'andrban and Valiram or their other heirs, let one right, claim, account, contention (?) and oath remain. I, Valiram's brother Lach'iram, by the above-mentioned's general power of attorney, reached a settlement. I made a settlement payment to the above-mentioned Yakob

and Datos of six thousand dinars cash and one *man-i shāh* of stone-free wheat, and received from Yakob and Datos two thousand dinars cash and half a *man-i shāh* of stone-free wheat as settlement in cash and kind, which came to me Lach'iram. We pronounced the (requisite legal) formula (for a settlement).

Furthermore, the above-mentioned accounts which the above-mentioned Lach'iram settled with us, Yakob and Datos, are correct, and no right, claim, account or contention remains to us, Yakob and Datos, with Bulch'and, Ch'andrban and Valiram. As a precaution let one right, claim, account and contention remain to us on the inspected account. We, Yakob and Datos, made the settlement and settlement gift in full knowledge. We received six thousand dinars cash and one *man-i shāh* of stone-free wheat as a settlement payment from Lach'iram, and it came to us, Yakob and Datos. And we pronounced the formula.

This document was written in two identical copies. One of them Lach'iram signed and gave to us, the other we signed and sealed and gave to him. Written on the 3rd Avelyats' 114 Azaria (29th March 1729). The end. The above written is acceptable to me, Murat's son Yakob + The above written is acceptable to me, Nazar's son Datos +

I, Margar's son Manuël, am a witness +

Notes

This document is a form of settlement or mutual release, and bears a close resemblance to several other documents of a similar type (ASVA, 30th Nirhan 110; ASVT, xix, 87.1). It is unusual in that one of the parties to the settlement is a

consortium of three Indian bankers. The document terminates a banking arrangement between them and several members of the Shahrimeanean family. It is interesting to note that Islamic terminology and forms provide the framework for economic interaction between Christian Armenians (originating in Transcaucasia), and Hindu Indians (probably Multanis since one has Qandahari as his surname).

The document was apparently drawn up in two identical copies in Armenian, but it is most unlikely that Indians would have known this language, and since Lach'iram did not retain his copy of the agreement (which is the one preserved in Venice), it is likely that there was another version drawn up in Persian or whichever Indian language was used for commercial documents by Lach'iram's community. Apart from the usual linguistic and terminological difficulties there are several passages which defy comprehension even when the vocabulary and grammatical structure seem to have been established. We may note in particular the sentences referring to some kind of ritualized exchange of cash and wheat between the parties, and the clauses in lines 9-13 and 16-17, in which both parties appear to first renounce all further rights or claims with regard to the account, and subsequently to retain one, unspecified, right or claim. Similar passages occur in other settlements as well. Chardin experienced something similar: when he and the *nāzīr* finally agreed to a price for his jewels, the *nāzīr* immediately gave him two eighteen *sous* pieces as an earnest or deposit to clinch the deal (Chardin, *Voyages*, III, 152). Translation of the opening lines is rendered difficult by the complexity of its clause structure - there is no main verb until line 6.

Line

- | | | |
|---|----------------|---|
| 1 | vshui | Doubtful reading. Possibly <i>vlui</i> . |
| 3 | arturin ararēl | Julfa dialect for <i>aṛewtur en arareal</i> . They have traded. |

- tvēlin arēl Julfa dialect. A difficult construction, apparently comprising the past participle of the verb *tal*, to give, the auxiliary *in*, and the past participle of the verb *arnul*, to take. Probably a verbal form of the compound *aṛewtur* (or *tur ew ar*), trade, and synonymous with *aṛewtur arnel*, see above. They have traded.
- 4 dasti khsēpanōv *dastī* (P), (adj.) hand, + *hisāb* (AP), account, + Armenian nominal ending. Hand account (?), meaning obscure.
- 5 bēt'amn(a)mn Probably a scribal error for *bēt'amamn*, *bih tamām* (AP), in all, in full.
- 6 kēr Julfa dialect for *kar* (from *kananal*), there was.
- 7 bk'ōzizi Doubtful reading, perhaps *bk'ōshishi*. Unknown word.
- 9 ghēt Unknown word.
vordum Julfa dialect for *erdum*, oath.
- 10 khalial *khālī* (P), empty. The last two letters are indistinct, *al*, *oz*, or *ogh*. I have taken it as the first, being a scribal error for *ay*, is.
vēj Julfa dialect for *verj* (?).
- 11 ēntits' Julfa dialect ablative plural form for *ayn*, from those (?).
ghzar Julfa dialect for *hazar*, thousand.
- 14 jnsērnēl *jins* (AP), goods, kind (as opposed to cash). The ending is unusual. The final *ēl* may be Julfa dialect for *ayl*, also, "cash and also kind" (?).

4

~~Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a title or header.~~

Handwritten marginal notes on the left side of the page.

Main body of handwritten text in a medieval script, likely Latin or a Romance language.

Handwritten text at the bottom of the main body, possibly a signature or date.

Handwritten text at the bottom right, including a circular seal or stamp.

Document 3 Commenda Contract ASVA 30th Hamira 95

Ē

Kamivn amenay kalin ajoghut'e(a)mb surb vordun ew chshmartut'eamb surb hogun

Es safari vordi mēlik'ēs ēnkerats'ay sarmayeay yink' aṛi Khōjay (2) murati vordi p(a)r(o)n petrosēn vor zis khasav erku khērur tasēn (3) t'uman t'azay sk'ay abasi vor a(stuatso)v tanem t'ujarat' aṛem tēr a(stua)ts(4)ēn inch' shakh pargewi min khērur gaṛasun t'umani shakhēn veroy (5) erku khērur tasēn t'uman sarmayōvn im aghay p(a)r(o)n petrosin lini (6) ew akhtanasun t'umani shakhn im mēlik'is lini ew ayl inch' tegh vor t'aray(7)dut' aṛem inch' shakh lini veroy ēnkerut'e(a)n mējēn berem ew ayl (8) veroy sarmayēn inch' tegh vor urēnts' vak'il uzi ur hasapōvn tam (9) uzēr ch'berem tēr a(stua)tsēn shaṛ voch' tay khēr shaṛēn idzeṛin a(stutso)y ay (10) T'ivn GhE adam IĒ khasav vor grvets'av bandar yukli hamir(ay) (11) L ch'un mirh ch'unem ēs im mēlik'is dzeṛats'aygirēnay ew indz ghabulay.

Es tēr dawit's mēlik'in eghr(a)rovn vkayem verj +

Es tēr martiross mēlik'in eghr(a)r(o)vn vk(aye)m +

Es n(a)z(a)rēt'i vordi awets vk(aye)m +

petrosi vordi kh(a)ch'ikēs mēlik'in eghr(a)rōvn vk(aye)m +

Es yovanisi vordi k'anans mēlik'in eghr(a)rōvn vk(aye)m +

In the name of God

By the will of the Almighty, the favour of the Holy Son

and the truth of the Holy Spirit

I Safar's son Mēlik' entered a partnership and received capital, which came to me from Khoja Murat's son Paron Petros: two hundred and ten tumans in mint 'abbāsīs, which I will take and use in trade. Whatever profit Lord God bestows, one hundred and forty tumans profit with the two hundred and ten tumans capital will be for my master Paron Petros, and seventy tumans profit will be for me, Mēlik'. And also wherever I may traffic and whatever profit there may be I will invest in the above partnership. And also wherever his (Paron Petros's) representative may demand it I will give the above capital with its account. I will make no excuse. Lord God do not give evil. Good and evil are in God's hand. It (this agreemant) was reached on 28th Adam 95 (28th May 1710), and it was written in Bandar Hugli on 30th Hamira (26th December). Because I do not have a seal this (document) is in my, Mēlik's, handwriting, and it is acceptable to me.

I Tēr Dawit', with Mēlik's consent, am a witness. The end +

I Tēr Martiros, with Mēlik's consent, am a witness +

I Nazarēt's son Awet am a witness +

[!] Petros's son Khach'ik, with Mēlik's consent, am a witness +

I Yovanis's son K'anan, with Mēlik's consent, am a witness +

Notes

This *commenda* contract is discussed in chapter 4. It presents several interesting stylistic features. The opening with the name of God and a pious invocation is usual for partnership contracts and other important documents.

The document is in the handwriting of the agent, and gives an idea of the generally high standard of penmanship of Julfa merchants. It is also typical in its linguistic features, with elements of both classical (e.g. line 2: *zis* rather than *indz*) and vernacular mixed up together. The hand has certain idiosyncracies, among them even more arbitrary "word" breaks than usual (e.g. line 8: *urhasap ovn* for *urhasapovn*). It is unusual to find two dates as in this case. Possibly the contract was agreed verbally on 28th Adam but not put in writing until 30th Hamira, some seven months later (perhaps it was reached in a place where there were not sufficient witnesses to ratify the agreement). Alternatively the present document may be a replacement for an earlier one which had been lost or destroyed.

Ē

Arajnordut'eambn hogoy n srbun kamivn amenakalin y(isu)si k'(risto)si

Es tēr ghazari vordi sēt'ēs bankalay sēitabad s(a)rmayeay yink' ari ew yis kh(a)s(a)v
 voghormats (2) hogi khōjay minasi vordi im aghay mahdsi s(a)h(a)b ēmniazēn j(a)mn(a)y
 AChIĒ ER di(a)n voghormats hogi sēt'(a)ghē (3) vordi im agha s(a)h(a)b grigorēn jamn(a)y
 AChIĒ ER di(a)n voghormats hogi sarfrazi vordi im agha S(a)h(a)b (4) aghamalēn j(a)mn(a)y
 AChIĒ ER di(a)n voghormats hogi Ēliazi vordi im agha s(a)h(a)b tsaturēn j(a)mn(a)y AChIĒ
 ER (5) di(a)n ch'ok' d(a)fay s(a)rmayis jamn elaw EChZh t'um(a)n ōkhtn dangi abasi ew es
 sēt's ēnalmaal mēch' beri (6) j(a)mn(a)y k'arāsun t'um(a)n ew veroy aghinis ēl veroy
 ghar(a)rōvn s(a)m am(a)nat' tvin j(a)mn(a)y uts'un t'(u)m(a)n erek' d(a)fay (7) s(a)rmayis
 ēnalmaal ew am(a)nat'in j(a)mn(a)y vets' khērur arasun t'(u)m(a)n kēsna y GChZhE t'(u)m(a)n
 ōkhtn dōngi abasi (8) verī vor a(stutso)v t'ujarat' t'(a)raydut' aṛem inch' t(ē)r a(stua)tsn shakh
 p(a)rgewi erek' sam aṛemk' erku sam (9) shakhn veroy EChZh t'(u)m(a)n s(a)rmayōvn ew
 uts'un t'(u)m(a)n am(a)nat'ōvn veroy s(a)h(a)b aghinots' lini ew min s(a)m sh(a)khn veroy (10)
 k'arāsun t'(u)m(a)n ēnalmaalōvn indz sēt'is lini ew ayl inch' teghats' kam inch' kerpiv vor
 t'(a)raydut' aṛem (11) veroy s(a)rmayis mēch'n berem a(stutso)y tvats shakhn veroy gh(a)rārōvn
 sam aṛemk' t(ē)r a(stua)tsn shaṛ voh' tay khēr (12) i dzeṛin a(stutso)yē veroy s(a)rmayēs
 am(a)nat'n ew ēnalmaIn fi t'(u)m(a)nin IG ṛ(u)p'ōvn madrasi sk'ay j(a)m(na)y ZhDRDChGh
 (rup'i) (13) kēsna y ĒRBCkKhE ṛ(u)p'i madrasi sk'ay veroy s(a)rmayēs ew am(a)nat'n
 voghormats hogi sarfrazi vordi (14) p(a)r(o)n agha minasēn ew s(a)h(a)b agha ēmniazi vordi
 p(a)r(o)n mēlik'nazēn indz kh(a)s(a)v ew ēs shart'sēl ar(a)rink' veroy (15) s(a)h(a)bk' aghinin
 akhtiar unen vor veroy sarmayēn ew am(a)nat'n inch' tegh vor uzenan khsēpōvn ew ur (16)
 a(stutso)y tvats sam shakhōvn t(a)m urēnts' kam urents' ar(a)rats vak'lin ōzr ch'berem
 ēnkeraygirs erku (17) grets'i min mazbun minn es sēt's mhrets'i im mhrōvn tvi veroy s(a)h(a)b

aghinots' ördnik' maskur p(a)r(o)n aghay (18) minasin ew p(a)r(o)n mēlik'nazin ew miwsn
veroy p(a)r(o)n agha Minasin ew p(a)r(o)n agha mēlik'nazn mhrets'in tvin indz sēt'is grvets'av
f'ivn p'rkch'in 1742 ew t'ivn p'ok'r AChIĒ d(a)may amsin t(a)sn ew mnumn sēidapat +

Groys möht'ab(a)r sav(a)tn tesi s(a)v(a)tits'n s(a)v(a)tēs hamem(a)t(ē)r es y(a)k(o)b v(a)rdapets
möhrets'i verj +

Es alvizē vordi t(ē)r kirakosēs p(a)r(o)n set'in eghrarōvén mhrets'i vkayem (+)

Bəghrami vordi t(ē)r zak'(a)rēs soray asln tesi savatis hamematēr mhrets'i (+)

Es alvizē vordi t(ē)r kir(a)kosēs soray asln mhrēli sav(a)ts aslin hamematēr mrets'i (+)

Soynpēs ew es poghos v(a)rd(a)pets h(a)mem(a)t möhr(e)ts'i verj +

möht'(a)yb(a)r s(a)v(a)din h(a)mem(a)d tesi sargsi vordi k'(a)l(a)nt'(a)r awet +

p(a)r(o)n sēt'in eghrarōvn vkay(e)m saf(a)ri vordi husēp' (+)

p(a)r(o)n sēt'in eghr(a)rōvn vkayem amirjani vordi harut'iwn (+)

p(a)r(o)n sēt'in eghrarōvn vkayem grigori vordi avets (+)

Savads aslin hamematay b(a)ghrami vordi yovsēp' (+)

Sav(a)ds aslin hamematay davut'kh(a)ni vordi mkrtum (+)

Savads aslin hamematay nazari vordi minas (+)

soray mōt'(a)p(a)r savatēn tesi sav(a)tis mafeghēr gaspari vordi oh(a)nnēs +

mökhtaybar sav(a)din hamem(a)t tesi haz(ar)mali vordi ēstep'(a)n +

savadēs aslin sav(a)din hame(ma)tē margari vordi k'amin(a)y avet kh(a)ld(a)rēnts' +

mökhtayb(a)r sav(a)din hamemat tesi yövnēsi vordi jamal +

DOCUMENT 4 COMMENDA CONTRACT

BLL 1048, f. 283 Translation

In the name of God

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the will of almighty Jesus Christ

In Saidabad in Bengal, I, Tēr Ghazar's son Sēt', received capital, which came to me, from the late Khoja Minas's son my master Mahdesi Sahib Ēmniaz, total 127 tumans 5,000 dinars; from the late Sēt'-Agha's son my master Sahib Grigor, total 127 tumans 5,000 dinars; from the late Sarfraz's son my master Sahib Aghamal, total 127 tumans 5,000 dinars; from the late Ēliaz's son my master Sahib Tsatur, total 127 tumans 5,000 dinars. These four items of capital total 510 tumans, in *haft dāngī 'abbāsīs*. And I, Sēt', put in my capital, total forty tumans; and my above-mentioned masters, on the same share basis as above, gave a deposit, total eighty tumans. These three items of (the masters') capital, (my) capital and the deposit total six hundred and thirty tumans, half of which is 315 tumans, in *haft dāngī 'abbāsīs*. I took this to trade and traffic. Whatever profit God grants we will split into three shares. Two shares of the profit, with the five hundred and ten tumans capital and the eighty tumans deposit will be for the above-mentioned masters, and one share of the profits with my forty tumans capital will be for me, Sēt'. Further, wherever and in whatever way I (gain through) traffic, I will invest in the above capital, and any profits God gives we will split on the above basis. Lord God do not give evil. Good is in the hand of God. The above capital and deposit (was exchanged) at 23 mint Madras rupees to the tuman, total 14,490 rupees, half of which is 7,245 Madras mint rupees. I received the above capital and deposit from the late Sarfraz's son Paron Agha Minas and Sahib Agha Ēmniaz's son Paron Mēlik'naz. And we also made this condition, that the

above Sahib masters have the right to the above capital and deposit, with its account and their share of the profit God gives, wherever they wish. I will give it to them or to their appointed representative, and I will make no excuse. I wrote the above *commenda* contract in two identical copies. One of them I, Sēt', sealed with my seal and gave to the above Sahib masters' agents, the above-mentioned Paron Agha Minas and Paron Mēlik'naz; and the other the above Paron Agha Minas and Paron Mēlik'naz sealed and gave to me, Sēt'. Written on 11th Dama in the year 1742 A.D., 127 Little Calendar, in Saidabad. (+)

I saw the authenticated copy of this document, this copy corresponds to those copies (*sic.*). I Yakob *vardapet* sealed it. The end +

I Alvizē's son Ter Kirakos, with the consent of Paron Sēt', sealed it and am a witness (+)

I Baghram's son Ter Zak'arē saw the original of this, it corresponded to this copy.

I sealed it (+)

I Alvizē's son Tēr Kirakos sealed the original of this, this copy corresponded to the original. I sealed it (+)

Likewise I Poghos *vardapet* sealed this as corresponding [to the original]. The end +

I saw [this] corresponded to the authenticated copy. Sargis's son Awet the *Kalāntar* +

I am a witness, with Paron Sēt's consent, Safar's son Husēp' (+)

I am a witness, with Paron sēt's consent, Amirjan's son Harut'iwn (+)

I am a witness, with Paron Sēt's consent, Grigor's son Avet (+)

This copy corresponds to the original. Baghram's son Yovsēp' (+)

This copy corresponds to the original. Davut'khan's son Mkrtum (+)

This copy corresponds to the original. Nazar's son Minas (+)

I saw the authenticated copy of this. It corresponded to the copy. Gaspar's son

Ohannēs +

I saw it corresponded to the authenticated copy. Hazarmal's son Ėstep'an +

This copy corresponds to the copy of the original. Margar's son the least [servant]

Avet Khaldarēnts' +

I saw it corresponded to the authenticated copy. Yōvnēs's son Jamal +

Notes

This is a more complex *commenda* contract of the type termed bilateral, since both the parties contribute capital to the partnership. The four sleeping partners or investors (*aghas*) are the senior partners of the Khoja Minasean firm (see Chapter 3). In addition to the 510 tuman *commenda* capital (*sarmaeay*) they also invest a further 80 tuman deposit (*amanat'*), while the active partner (*čnker*) puts in 80 tumans capital (*ēnalmal*) of his own. For a discussion see Chapter 4.

The document is a copy of a copy, and contains numerous examples of the kinds of statements made by witnesses to authenticate documents. It also provides an illustration of the diversity of spellings and abbreviations found in Julfa documents: the word *mōt'abar*, for instance occurs in five different witnesses' statements in no fewer than four different variant forms.

Line

5 *mēch'* Julfa dialect for *mej*. *Mej berel* is the usual Julfa dialect term for to invest.

Tēr astuats khērn u barin aṛajnordests'ē, amēn

T'jvn RChLE ew p'ok'r t'ivn Azari H, ovdan amsin ZhE-umn, (2) Hēndustan, Ēkray, es, tēr Dawit'i vordi Yovanēsēs, ēnkerats'ay mah(3)dasi Petrosi vordi paron Avetkin khet, vor gēnam But'ant, mer khritn (4) p'ishazin t'areghs ay elēl, mek' t'ik'n ēs t'areghums drink', ch'un vor ovdan ZhĒ(5)-umn Ēkroy dus clay dapi P'at'anay. Maskurin jahtan, paron Avetik'n sarmaeay mēj iber Poghosi vordi Yovanin janpē, jamēn DRZChDzE, (7) es Yovanēsēs sarmaeay mēj beri, jamēn DRZChDzE-i, vor claw B jamēn, (8) T'RGChH. Ēs jamēn es, Yovanēsēs, khrit arari, veṛi gēnats'i. Inch' vor as(9)tuats shakh tay, im, Yovanisis ev Yovanin mijōvi lini. Dardzeal, es (10) Yovanēs paron Avetkin khet gharar unim, inch'pēs vor mer min zminu (11) tvats grumn grats ay, vor im janpē Ts. khak khēraypati ev min bandri (12) am ēṛavanay ararēl Surat'n, khasani Yovanin dzern, ēkhtiar uni (13) Surat'umn tsakhē, kam t'ē tani Ēspahan tsakhē. Inch' vor part'k lini ve(14)ray tay, maybaghin ur jamumn pakhē. Ev ayl im, Yovanisis janpē, p'i(15)shazin Yēndustanay agharkats aprank'i t'ah'imay unim paronats' (16) mōt, inch' ew its'ē, ēn ēl jamay birē im jahtan, B ghalamn, ur sarmaēn (17) baday, inch' vor ur janpē gnē, miaypēs t'araydzi aṛē, minch'ew hogin sur(18)bēn kamakits' lini, es But'antay yet gom Yēndustan kam t'ē Ēspahan, (19)yortegh vor Yovann tesnum, mer khēsēpn min zminu khet tesnunk', ya(20)mēn mart' ur hakhin tēr ay, ur khēsēpōvn.

DOCUMENT 5 PARTNERSHIP CONTRACT

HTD, p. 132 Translation

Lord God guide [us] in goodness and virtue.

On the 15th Ovdan 1135 (of the Great Armenian calendar), and 70 of the Azaria Calendar (8th February 1686), in Agra in India, I, Tēr-Dawit's son Yovhannēs, formed a partnership with *Mahdasi* Petros's son Paron Avetik for me to go to Tibet. Our purchases have already been made, and we finalised the matter on this date because on the 17th Ovdan I left Agra for Patna. Paron Avetik invested a capital of 4,685 rupees in the above-mentioned [partnership] on behalf of Poghos's son Yovan, [and] I Yovhannēs invested a capital of 4,685 rupees, which two sums total 9,370 rupees. I, Yovhannēs, [had already] made purchases for this amount. I took them (the goods purchased) and departed. Whatever profit God gives will be shared by me, Yovhannēs, and Yovan. Furthermore, I, Yovhannēs, made an agreement with Paron Avetik, as is written in the document we exchanged with one another, that he will deliver to Yovan the 50 bales and one bundle of Kherabad [textiles] that I have sent to Surat, and he (Yovan) is authorised to sell them in Surat or take them to Isfahan to sell. Let him pay whatever costs there may be, and keep the rest (i.e. the profit) in his total. And also on my, Yovhannēs's, account, I have something left over with my masters for the goods sent previously from India. Let him (Yovan) take it, whatever it is, on my behalf. Let him balance up the 2 items, excluding the capital and whatever it gains (?), until the Holy Spirit consents that I should return from Tibet to India or Isfahan. Then, wherever I see Yovan, we will inspect one another's accounts, and each of us (literally each man) will be master of his due, with its account.

Notes

This document is not the actual contract itself, but a record of it written in a merchant's account book. The two investors, Hovhannes and Yovan, invest equal sums in a long-term partnership to finance a trading expedition to Tibet. The two were already in business together exporting indigo and textiles from Northwest India to the Middle East (see Chapter 4). The partnership contract thus represents the formalising of an existing relationship, perhaps necessitated by the risks and uncertainties involved in Yovhannes's forthcoming trip to Tibet. Since Yovan was not in Agra he was represented by Avetik, another business associate. In the transliteration the published version has been followed for punctuation and use of capital letters. The initial pious invocation marks the opening of a new section in the account book.

Line

- | | | |
|---|----------|---|
| 3 | But'ant | Bhutan, the name for Tibet in Julfan sources. |
| 9 | Dardzeal | Again, furthermore. Marks the introduction of a new topic. Equivalent to a paragraph break. See Introduction to the Documents. The partnership contract finishes here, and the rest of the document concerns other business involving both Yovhannes and Yovan. |

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff, featuring various note values and stems.

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff, including a large circular symbol at the end of the line.

Handwritten musical notation on a five-line staff, including a large circular symbol at the end of the line.

Vertical handwritten musical notation on the left margin.

Document 6 Commission Agency BLL 1047, f. 77

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Safari vordi andonis nerk'oy greal t'areghumn frāksisi k'ap'tan musē furnin Cha(2)rlō
 navumn gnamani jday p(a)r(o)n abrahami vordi vrats'i p(a)r(o)n karapetn min khak vorē
 ACh.. t'(u)m(a)n k'asari (3) shalbf ch'ak'lay amanat' tvētš' indz vor barts'i maskur navumn
 a(stutso)v indz het tanem jday kam mu(4)khay tsakhem inch' maplagh lini fi Ch..in khink
 hagsayi veřum mnats'eal p'oghn khalchē khalis inch' lini (5) berem kalkat'ay khasats'anem
 veroy p(a)r(o)n karapetin grvets'av t'ivn p'ok'r AChIE h(a)mir(a)y D k(a)lk(a)t'(a)y (+)

aharoni vordi tēr mkritch's khōjay andonē eghrarovn vka(ye)m vor min khērur t'um(a)
 shalbf ch'ak'lay ay (+)

Es tsaturi vordi zōrērs khōjay andonē eghrarovn vka(ye)m (+)

Ša)vatēs aslin het hamematay baghrami vordi yovsēp' +

savatēs aslin het hamem(a)tay davut'i vordi nuts'it +

In the name of God

On the below-written date, (I), Safa^{r's} son Andoni am going to Jeddah on the Frenchman Captain Monsieur Furnin's ship Charlō. Paron Abraham's son the Georgian Paron Karapet gave me bale, which is 100 tumans (worth) of *k'asari* shawls *ch'ak'lay* on commission, to lade on the above-mentioned ship and God-willing take with me to Jeddah or Mokha and sell. Whatever the sum (realised by the sale) I will take five per cent as commission. The remaining money, after costs, whatever it may be I will bring back to Calcutta and deliver to the above-mentioned Paron Karapet. Written on the 4th Hamira 125 (30th November 1740) in Calcutta (+).

I Aharon's son Tēr Mkrẏtich', with Khoja Andoni's consent, am a witness that 100 tumans (worth) of shawls are *ch'ak'lay*.

I Tsatur's son Zōrēr, with Khoja Andoni's consent, am a witness (+)

This copy conforms to the original. Baghrams's son Yovsēp' +

This copy conforms to the original. Davut's son Nuts'it +

Notes

Commission agency contracts are comparatively unusual. This ex^{am}ple has several interesting features. The agent has what appears to be the European name Anthony. He is travelling to Jeddah in a ship called the Charlō, captained by a Frenchman named Fournes(?). The merchant giving the commission is called "the Georgian", indication that he is an Armenian from Georgia, probably Tbilisi. Two of the witnesses also have unusual names: Zōrēr and Nuts'it.

1 *k'asari* Unknown word. I have taken it to denote a particular kind of *shālbāf*.

3 *ch'ak'lay* Unknown word.

Handwritten text at the top of the page, likely a header or title in an old script.

8
9

Main body of handwritten text, consisting of several lines of script.

Handwritten text at the bottom left, including a circular seal or stamp.

Handwritten text at the bottom right, possibly a signature or a specific instruction.

Document 7 Instruction or Authorisation

BLL 1047, f. 9

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s(a)h(a)p p(a)r(o)n agh(a)yminasin s(a)h(a)p p(a)r(o)n yōv(a)nēsīn s(a)h(a)p p(a)r(o)n sēt'in

Arz lini vor nerk'(o)y t'aregh(u)mn agh(a)y p(a)r(o)n ěmniazēn ew p(a)r(o)n grigorēn A f(a)rd
 (2) juk'(a)mi avak'(a)y grōv erku haz(a)r khink khērur k'san ěr(u)p'i avak'i veřēl (3) A s(a)r
 bmōr kap(a)ts m(a)rg(a)rit' putik(a)t'i tvēl vor a(stutso)v k(a)lk(a)t'ay p(a)r(o)n khach'ik (4)
 aghēn avak'in p'oghēn t(a)y putik(a)t'ēn yink aru at'iat'an ōrtnay (5) girēs dzer hr(a)m(a)n(o)ts'
 grets'i vor a(stua)ts mi(a)rasts'ē t'ē p(a)r(o)n khach'ikaghēn yazir (6) ch'e lini kam mōtkan(a)y
 voch' dzer hr(a)m(a)nk'n s(a)h(a)p akhti(a)r sak'(a)ri k(a)m vor minēt vor (7) hazir lini vor
 putik(a)t'ēn b^rānēk' ěruz nērkh tsakhek' khsēpn grēk' (8) ivel pkasēn ěsp(a)h(a)n veroy
 aghin(o)ts' yet avak'(a)y khsēp smjay gnemk' t'ivn (9) p'ok'r AChL. ad(a)m IE veroy tsakhsēn
 mazrōv lini ~~votte' hagh~~ ts(a)r(a)y marg(a)r (10) di agh(a)y ts(a)tur
 ot(:)r' hagh

khōjay mali vordi ptums agh(a)y m(a)rg(a)rin eghr(a)rōvn vk(a)y(e)m (+)

Savats aslin hamemat(a)y khōjam(a)li vordi ptum vor asln ěl mērēl am +

sav(a)ts aslin hamematay nik(o)ghosi vordi y(a)rut'iwn +

In the name of God

To Sahib Paron Agha-Minas, Sahib Paron Yōvanēs, Sahib Paron Sēt'. It is declared that on the below date I took a secured maritime loan of two thousand five hundred and twenty rupees from Agha Paron Ēmniaz and Paron Grigor, and gave a security of one sealed bag of pearls. God-willing it (the security) will go to Calcutta (where Paron Khach'ik Agha will repay the loan and receive the security. As a precaution I wrote this letter of authorisation for you (lit. your service), so that if, God forbid (lit. may God not do it), Paron Khack'ik is not there or nearby you (lit. your command) will have authority to settle it, or whichever of you is present may take ~~(?)~~ the security and sell it at the current price, write up the account of the surplus or deficit and we will settle the account in Isfahan with the above-mentioned Masters (*aghas*). 25th Adam 130 Little calendar (25th May 1745). Let the above sale be *mazrov*. Your ^{humble} ~~most-humble~~ servant Margar di Agha Tsatur.

I Khojamal's son Ptum, with Agha Margar's consent, am a witness (+)

This copy conforms to the original. Khojamal's son Ptum, who also sealed the original +

This copy conforms to the original. Nikoghos's son Yarut'iwn +

Notes

This document is the only one discovered to date that describes itself as a letter of instruction (*ōrdnagir*). It authorises the three merchants named at the top to sell the security (*putikat*) given on a secured bill (*juk'ami avak'*) should the designated payer of the bill be absent and unable to pay and receive the security as specified in the bill. There are a number of difficult terms and phrases in the document, and two abbreviations that have been impossible to identify.

- 2 khink Julfa dialect, *hing*.
 khē^u_χ Julfa dialect, *hariwr*.
- 6 sark'ari *sarkārī* (P). Payment, performance. Doubtful reading. The word is written indistinctly, but appears to be spelt *sak'ri*. For the context *sark'ari* seems the most likely reading.
- ~~7 banēk' Unknown word. Doubtful reading 'anēk'.~~
- 8 ivel Julfa dialect *aweli more*. *ivel pksen*, (lit.) more less, i.e. the surplus or deficit.
- 8 mazrov Unknown word. See *mazar* in Glossary.
- ~~votte' htgh Unknown abbreviations. Probably self-deprecatory polite
 otift' hugh Humble (lit. earth of the feet)
 qualifiers of *isaray*, servant.~~ The tone of this document is more deferential than is usual in Julfa financial/commercial documents, the style being more typical of Julfa letter writing.

Handwritten Armenian text, likely a legal document or contract, written in a cursive script. The text is arranged in several lines and includes some decorative flourishes.

Handwritten Armenian text, possibly a signature or a specific clause, followed by a large circular mark.

Handwritten Armenian text, possibly a signature or a specific clause, followed by a large circular mark.

Handwritten Armenian text, possibly a signature or a specific clause, followed by a large circular mark.

Document 8 Power of Attorney ASVA 22nd Shbat^e 102

Patchar groys Ays ē vor ch'un t'areghums im murati vordi petrosis ekhb(2)ar p(a)r(o)n yakop'n a(stutso)v gnalēts' elav ěsp(a)h(a)n im petrosis koghmanē v(a)k'(i)l ew (3) ahtiar shinets'i p(a)r(o)n ekhbars vor mer ekhbarut'ean k(a)m t'ay ayl kogh(4)manē ahtiar unents' im hasin tiranay ew k(a)m inch' khēriat' tesne (5) urishn v(a)k'(i)l aḡelōv k(a)m ayl vo(r)p(es) k(a)men(a)y ur tesats khēriat'n indz ěnd(6)uneli ay girs petrosis dzeḡats' girnay ew mirsay indz ghabulay (7) Eghew livoḡnay t'ivn p'ok'r ACh.B shb(a)t' IB-umn verj (+)

Es ohannēs ērēts's k(a)m(ō)k'n p(a)r(o)n petrosin knk'ets'i (+)

Es mēlk'sēt' k'(a)h(a)nays p(a)r(o)n petrosin kamōk'n vk(aye)m (+)

asln tesi savatēs aslin h(a)mem(a)t(a)y zak'arē vordi sargis +

DOCUMENT 8 POWER OF ATTORNEY (VAK'ILAGIR)

ASVA, 22nd Shbat' 102 (21st June 1717) Translation

The reason for this document is this, that because on this date my, Murat's son Petros's brother Paron Yakop' was departing for Isfahan, I made him authorized representative on behalf of myself, Petros, so that in respect of our brothers, whether as family firm or any other capacity, he has authority to control my share and, if he sees fit, to appoint another representative or whatever he wishes. What he sees fit is acceptable to me. This document is in my, Petros's handwriting and this is my seal. It is acceptable to me. Livorno 22nd Shbat' 102 Little Calendar. The end. (+)

I Ohannès the priest am a witness according to the wishes of Paron Petros (+)

I Mèlk'sèt the priest am a witness according to the wishes of Paron Petros (+)

I saw the original; this copy corresponds to the original. Zak'aria's son Sargis +

Notes

This is a general power of attorney, giving the bearer very full powers. It was given by Petros Sharimanean, who was then based in Italy, to his brother Yakop', who was on the point of returning to Isfahan, authorizing him to act as his representative in all dealings with their "brothers" (here certainly used in the broad sense to include all the current partners in the family firm). Yakop' is not only given full control over Petros's share in the firm, he is even empowered to delegate this authority to someone else if he sees fit. The only limitation seems to be that the authority is restricted to dealings with other members of the family firm.

The document is a copy of the original, which Petros himself had written, and which had been witnessed by two priests. The authenticity of the copy is attested by only one witness, which seems surprising in view of its apparent importance.

| Line | | |
|------|---------------|--|
| 2 | gnalēts' elav | A highly irregular construction, which appears to consist of an irregular participle formed from the infinitive of the verb <i>gnal</i> , to go (perhaps a scribal error for <i>gnats'ēl</i> , Julfa dialect for <i>gnats'eal</i>) + the aorist of the verb <i>elnel</i> , to go out. I have translated it as: was departing, in the sense of, was on the point of departure, which seems to fit the context. |
| | koghmanē | Literally, from the side (of). Here the sense must be, in respect of, relative to. Compare Persian, <i>az jānib-i</i> , or, <i>az taraf-i</i> . |
| | t'ay | Julfa dialect for <i>t'ē</i> . |

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a signature or part of a document, located in the upper right section of the page.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, continuing from the previous section, located in the middle right section of the page.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, located in the middle left section of the page, possibly a date or a specific reference.



Main body of handwritten text in a cursive script, occupying the lower half of the page and extending across most of its width.

Ë

Menk' Sarfrazi vordi minasēs Ēnniazi vordi yarut'iwns Grigori vordi petrosēs (2) mez vak'il ew akhtiar ar(a)rink' voghormats hogi ēliazi vordi p(a)r(o)n agha minasin vor yakobjani dustr (3) ew p(a)r(o)n sult'anumin koghakits' anamints'n mer sark'ari t'(a)l(a)pn vor d(a)vut'khani vordi ew maskur (4) anamin kenakits' p(a)r(o)n sult'anumin veray maskur anamn bar(a)t'ēr grēl vo(r)p(es) mablaghn b(a)r(a)t(a)y (5) grērumn zk'ray hisheal p(a)r(o)n agha minasn a(stutso)v madrasn kh(a)s(a)nelēn mer sark'(a)ri t'(a)l(a)pn ur (6) khsēpōvn maskur p(a)r(o)n sult'anumēn yink' aṛu vo(r)p(es) menk' minasēs yarut'iwns ew pet(7)rosēs gnemk' yink' aṛēl ew p(a)r(o)n agha minasin tvats ew gr(a)ts ēṛēsīdn vo(r)p(es) menk' gnemk' tvēl (8) ew grēl ew mer vak'il p(a)r(o)n agha minasin khasatsn ēṛēsīt tvatsn grats ew bat'latsn vo(r)p(es) t'ē (9) mez maskurk' minasis yarut'iwnis ew petrosis gni kh(a)sēl menk' gnemk' ēṛēsīt tvēl (10) grēl ew bat'lēl mez ghabulay ew ēnduneli grvets'av t'ivn p'ok'r AchLB t'ir(a)y Zh. p(a)sray + + +

Mn(a)ts'(a)k(a)ni vordi tēr a(stua)tsayt(u)rs p(a)r(o)n minasaghē p(a)r(o)n yarut'inin p(a)r(o)n petrosin eghr(a)rōvn vk(aye)m +

p(a)r(o)n(a)ts' agh(a)y minasin agh(a)y y(a)rot'inin ew petrosin eghr(a)rovn vk(aye)m Agh(a)ym(a)li vordi Ts(a)tor +

p(a)r(o)n agha minasin p(a)r(o)n harut'inin p(a)r(o)n petrosin ighr(a)rōvn vk(aye)m voskani vordi petros +

P(a)r(o)n(a)ts' agha minas agha yarut'iwn ew petrosin eghr(a)rovn vkayem m(a)hd(e)si p'ir(a)yt'(a)mi vordi mn(a)ts'ak(a)n +

DOCUMENT 9 POWER OF ATTORNEY

BLL 1048, f. 48 Translation

In the name of God

We, Sarfraz's son Minas, Ēmniaz's son Yarus'iwn and Grigor's son Petros made the late Ēliaz's son Paron Agha Minas our authorised representative in respect of our firm's claim from Yakobjan's daughter and Paron Sultanum's wife Anam, [the claim] arising from the bill which the above-mentioned Anam wrote on Davut' Khan's son and Anam's husband Sult'anum, the sum as mentioned in the bill. God-willing after the above-mentioned Paron Agha Minas's arrival in Madras he will receive our firm's claim from the above-mentioned Paron Sultanum, with its account, just as if we, Minas, Yarus'iwn and Petros had received it. And the receipt given and written by Paron Minas [will be] just as if we had given and written it. And [what is] delivered to our representative, Paron Agha Minas, and the receipt given and written by him, or his annulment [of the claim will be] as if it had been delivered to the above-mentioned Minas, Yarus'iwn and Petros or as if we had given and written the receipt and annulled [the claim]. This is acceptable and agreeable to us. Written on 10th Tira 132 Little calendar (7th October 1747) in Basra +++

I Mnats'akan's son Tēr-Astuatsatur, with Paron Minas Agha, Paron Yarus'iwn and

Paron Petros's consent, am a witness

With Paron Agha Minas, Agha Yarus'iwn and Petros's consent, I am a witness

Aghaymal's son Tsator +

With Paron Agha Minas, Paron Harut'iwn and Paron Petros's consent, I am a witness. Voskan's son Petros. +

With Paron Agha Minas, Agha Yarus'iwn and Petros's consent, I am a witness.

Mahdesi P'irayt'am's son Mnats'akan. +

Notes

This power of attorney is of the restricted type, empowering the representative to act only in connection with a single specific matter in the recovery of a claim arising from a bill. The representative, and the three people giving the authority are all members of the Khoja Minasian family firm, and the claim is on behalf of the firm (*sark'ar*).

The document presents considerable linguistic interest, lines 6-10 containing what, from the context, seems to be a special irrealis tense consisting of the past participle of the verb *gnel*, to buy, purchase, acquire, as an auxiliary.

lus(a)y hogi pitrosi vordi p(a)r(o)n mirzēn lus(a)y hogi aghay ēliazi (2) vordi p(a)r(o)n aghay
 minasin ōrdniēr tvēl vor indz yarut'iwni vordi (3) avak'is p'ogh tay ew indz ōrdniēr tvēl vor
 hink' arum khrid (4) aṛem tanem bankalay bnay barin es avak's dafahat'ōv (5) erku khērun
 vadsun t'uman pasru ēṛaij yink' aṛi (6) ēṛsids grets'i tvi p(a)r(o)n aghay minasin vor
 bank(a)lay p(a)r(o)n mirzē (7) khsepum mujray tay; ew ghēri p(a)r(o)n aghay minasin tvatsn
 p(a)r(o)n (8) mirzē ōrdnōvn erku khērun k'san ew vets' t'uman ew irek' (9) hazar irek' khērun
 di(a)n ēl p(a)r(o)n simēon di eghnazarits'n hink' (10) aṛi min jok ēṛsid grets'i tvi p(a)r(o)n
 simēonin ew eghew t'ivn (11) AChLB ar(a)m I.-umn basray im avak'is girnay ew im mirhn +

Mn(a)ts'(a)k(a)ni vordi tēr a(stua)tsayt(u)rs p(a)r(o)n awak'in eghr(a)rovn vk(aye)m +
 p(a)r(o)n avak'in eghr(a)rōvn vk(aye)m shērim(a)ni vordi zak'(a)rēs +
 p(a)r(o)n avak'in eghr(a)rovn vk(aye)m baghr(a)mi vordi petros +
 p(a)r(o)n avak'in eghr(ar)ovn vk(aye)m petrosi vordi sark'is +

DOCUMENT 10 RECEIPT

BLL 1048, f. 73 Translation

The late Petros's son Paron Mirzē instructed the late Agha Ēliāz's son Paron Agha Minas to give money to me, Yarut'iwn's son Avak'; and he instructed me to take [the money], make purchases and take [them] to Bengal. Therefore I, Avak', on a number of occasions have taken [a total of] two hundred and sixty Basra current tumans. I wrote this receipt and gave it to Paron Agha Minas, so that Paron Mirzē can transfer it into his (Minas's) account in Bengal. And apart from the [money] given by Paron Agha Minas, on Paron Mirzē's instruction I also took two hundred and twenty-six tumans, three thousand three hundred dinars from Paron Simēon Eghnazarean and wrote and gave a [separate] receipt to Paron Simēon, 50th Aram 132 (25th January 1748) in Basra. This is my, Avak's, writing and seal.

I Mnats'akan's son Tēr Astuatsatur, with Paron Avak's consent, am a witness. +

With Paron Avak's consent, I am a witness. Shērیمان's son Zak'arē. +

With Paron Avak's consent, I am a witness. Baghrām's son Petros. +

With Paron Avak's consent I am a witness. Petros's son Sark'is. +

Notes

This document has been classified as a receipt, since it describes itself as such, but it is considerably more complex than the simple receipt illustrated in Document 11. The receipt is for money payed by one merchant, Paron Agha Minas (in Basra), to the agent, Paron Avak', of another Paron Mirzē (in Bengal) according to instructions sent by Mirzē to the other two. The money was to be used by Avak' to buy goods in Basra and ship them back to Bengal. The receipt specifies the amount of money Avak' has taken from Minas, and on the basis of it Mirze in Bengal will transfer funds

into Minas's account (the two must already be business associates). In addition to the money taken from Minas (a member of the Khoja Minasian family), Avak' writes that he has also taken money on Mirzē's instructions from Paron Simeon, a member of the Eghnazarean or Lazarean family, for which he has written a separate receipt. Avak' must have been a trusted agent, for he has drawn the considerable sum of nearly 500 tumans from the two merchants.

The document is the original. Avak's handwriting and his use of language are clear and typical of Julfa documents, though his word breaks are even more eccentric than usual. His seal is of the style generally used by priests.

Handwritten text in an ancient script, likely Sumerian, consisting of several lines of cuneiform characters.



Document 11 Receipt ASVA 10th Shams 104

Handwritten text in an ancient script, likely Sumerian, consisting of several lines of cuneiform characters.



Document 12 Payment Instruction ASVA 20th Nadar 103

5

Handwritten text in an ancient script, likely Sumerian, consisting of several lines of cuneiform characters.



Document 13 Payment Instruction ASVA 14th Ghamar 114

DOCUMENT 11 RECEIPT

ASVA 10th Shems 104 (10th April 1719) Transliteration

T'(i)vn p'ok'r ChD sh(a)ms amsi Zh-umn (2) muradi vordi p(a)r(o)n yakobēn (3) min t'(u)m(a)n
 khasaw indz zak'arē (4) dustr murasēs es oh(5)anēs ērēts's murasē eghr(a)r(6)ōvn grets'i
 vk(a)y(e)m +

DOCUMENT 12 PAYMENT INSTRUCTION

ASVA 20th Nadar 103 (6th September 1718) Transliteration

Arz lini mer agh(a)y s(a)h(a)p p(a)r(o)n shariman(2)in vor ōkhtn R di(a)n vor kēsni lini
 G(3)RECh di(a)n vorē avetin glkhaymal(4)nay tas shaghavat' ares ta(5)s vor indz zak'arē dust
 mur(6)asis ghabulay es ohanēs ēr(7)ēts's murasē eghr(a)rōvn grets'i (8) t'(i)vn min ChG
 n(a)d(a)r amsi I-umn +

DOCUMENT 13 PAYMENT INSTRUCTION

ASVA 14th Ghamar 114 (12th August 1719) Tansliteration

Avetēs arz lini s(a)h(a)b p(a)r(o)n yakobin (2) ghulughumn vor erek' t'(u)m(a)n ch'ok' (3)
 ghzar di(a)n tas s(a)h(a)b p(a)r(o)n yov(4)anēsini vor mer khsēpumn (5) mujray gni grvets'aw
 tivn (6) AChZhD gh(a)m(a)r ZhD +

DOCUMENT 11 RECEIPT

ASVA, 10th Shams 104 Translation

10th Shams 104 Little calendar (10th April 1719). One tuman came to me, Zakarē's daughter Murasē, from Murad's son Paron Yakob. I, Ohanēs the priest, with Murasē's consent, wrote this and am a witness. +

Notes

This simple receipt gives nothing but the essential information: the names of the people involved, the date and the sum of money. Julfan women, though often involved in financial transactions, were generally illiterate, or at any rate, their documents were always written for them, usually by a priest. Only very simple documents involving small sums are unwitnessed as in this case.

DOCUMENT 12 PAYMENT INSTRUCTION

ASVA, 20th Nadar 103 Translation

It is submitted to our master Sahib Paron Shariman that you should have the kindness to pay 7,000 dinars, half of which is 3,500 dinars, which is [for] Avet's poll tax. This is acceptable to me, Zak'arē's daughter Murasē. I, Ohanēs the priest, with Murasē's consent, wrote this on 20th Nadar 103 (6th September 1718) +

Notes

This simple payment instruction demonstrates that the master in a *commenda* contract was expected to concern himself with the welfare of his agents' family during his absence. In this case we can assume that Avet is away on business and his wife turns to his employee or master Shahrinan Shahrinanean to pay his head tax (*jizyah*).

The scribe twice repeats himself: in lines 3-4 the phrase *vorē avetin gkхайmalnay* contains the Armenian copula verb twice: once in the standard form *ē* and once in the Julfa dialect form *ay*; in lines 4-5 the verb *tas* is repeated in the phrase *tas shaghavat' ares tas*, (lit.) give, be so kind as to give.

5 dust scribal error for *dustr*.

DOCUMENT 13 PAYMENT INSTRUCTION

ASVA, 14th Ghamar 114 Translation

I, Avet, submit to Sahib Paron Yakob (lit. to Yakob's service) that you pay three tumans four thousand dinars to Sahib Paron Yovanēs to credit to our account.

Written on 14th Ghamar 114 (12th August 1719) +

Notes

This simple payment instruction asks for Yakob to pay money on Avet's behalf to Yovanes. It is likely that Yakob is either the master or a close associate of Avet, or perhaps owes him money, while Avet in turn has an account with, or owes money to Yovanes.

5 mujray gni mujray - see Glossary. This is an interesting example of the use of the verb *gnel* (to buy, purchase) apparently as a substitute for *ar̄nel* in a compound verb.

Ē

Es shērim(a)ni dustr bēkums p(a)rtim khōjay murati vordi p(a)r(o)n petrosin ch'ok' (2) harur vats'un ew vets' t'(u)m(a)n GRT'ChKE di(a)n vor kēsney BChLG t'(u)m(a)n ART'ChDzBl di(a)n fi (3) t'(u)m(a)nin amsēn vats'un di(a)n mudat' tam nerk'oy grialc tareghēn min tari vaday (4) mablaghs p(a)r(o)n petrosin voghormats hogi mōr t'aguhē elatsin ur samnay (5) vor t'ōmarōv indz řēju claw eghew t'iwn Ch.D arim I. verj.

Es movsēs vardaypets bēkumin ighr(a)rōvn mhr(e)ts'i verj (+)

f'alant'ar zak'arēs vk(ay)em (+)

Es margar ērēt's nurvalē vordi grets'i bēkumin eghr(a)rōvn vk(a)y(e)m

Es voskani vordi marg(a)rs vk(a)y(e)m (+)

Es barghami vordi petrosēs vk(a)y(e)m (+)

Savats aslin hamematay tēr yohannisi vordi tēr grigor +

Questa copia conforme all'originale Fra Filippo ... di St Agostino Carmelito Scalzo ... in

Persia +

s(a)v(a)ts aslin hamem(a)t(a)y muk'ēli vordi y(a)rut'iwn +

savats aslin yamematay muk'ēli vordi lion +

savadēs aslin hamem(a)d(a)y muk'ēli vordi Petros lēop'oldos +

Savats aslin hamemat(a)y Sarhati vordi yarut'iwn +

Savats aslin hamem(a)tay Saf(a)ri vordi A(stua)tsatur +

In the name of God

I, ^ēShāriman's daughter Bēkum owe Khoja Murat's son Paron Petros four hundred and sixty-six tumans 3,965 dinars, half of which is 233 tumans 1,982.5 dinars. I will pay interest at sixty dinars per tuman per month. The payment period is one year from the below[-written] date. This sum is Paron Petros's late mother T'aguhi's share of the profits [?] which was consigned to me with its account. 20th Aram 104. The end.

I Movsēs *vardapet*, with Bēkum's consent sealed [this]. The end (+)

I Zak'arē, the *kalāntar* am a witness. (+)

I ^rMaygān the priest, son of Nurvali, wrote this, and with Bekum's consent, am a witness.

I Voskan's son Margar am a witness (+)

I Bargham's son Petros am a witness (+)

This copy conforms to the original. Tēr-Yohannis's son Tēr Grigor +

This copy corresponds to the original. Fra Filippo ... di St Agostino Carmelito Scalzo ... in Persia. +

This copy conforms to the original. Muk'el's son ^uYarḡ'iwn +

This copy conforms to the original. Muk'el's son Lion +

This copy conforms to the original. Muk'el's son Petros Lēopoldos +

This copy conforms to the original, Sarhad's son ^rYarḡ'iwn +

This copy conforms to the original, Safar's son Astuatsatur +

Notes

In most respects this is a typical bill, though for an unusually large sum of money. The payment period and interest rate are both clearly stated. It is not so easy to work out how Bekum's debt has arisen, but like many of the ASVA papers it clearly relates to the internal finances of the Shahrimeanean firm.

Ē

Es yakobi vordi muratēs partem marum (2) nazari koghakits' ōvsanē tasn t'om(a)n vor kesēn
 (3) line E t'om(a)n; nerk'oy t'areghēn erku tari va(4)day ēndustan k(a)m inch' tegh vor
 safarum (5) linem sanats ovvor vor beri maplaghs anpach(a)ṛ (6) tam biuzr grets'av
 ēsp(a)h(a)n t'ivn AChIB t'ir(a)y ZhB-umn (+)

Safari vordi a(stua)tsayturs vk(aye)m (+)

Ēs aslin savatn(a)y grets'i t'ivn AChL. sh(a)ms L.-umn

savadēs aslin hamemadēr ohanēsi vordi tēr yarut'iwns +

savadēs aslin h(a)mem(a)dē martiros di a(stua)tsat(u)r +

DOCUMENT 15 BILL (PROMISSORY NOTE)

BLL 1047, f. 22 Translation

I, Yakob's son Murat, owe the late Nazar's wife Ōvsanē ten tumans, half of which is 5 tumans, on a payment period of two years from the date below. I will pay it to the bearer without excuse or pretext, in India or wherever I may be travelling. Isfahan, 12th T'ira 122 (9th October 1737) +

I, Safar's son Astuatsatur, am a witness (+)

This is a copy of the original. I wrote it on 30th Shams 130 (30th April 1745).

This copy conformed to the original. Ohanēs's son Tēr Yarut'iwn +

This copy conforms to the original. Astuatsatur's son Martiros +

Notes

This bill is slightly unusual, in that while its basic form is that of an ordinary promissory note, it resembles a bill of exchange in that it provides for repayment to be made abroad. The document is a copy, written eight years after the original, although the stated payment period was only two years.

5 ovvor vor Julfa dialect. Possibly a scribal error for *ovvok' vor*, he who, whoever.

Es poghosi vordi muk'ēls partem voghormats (2) hogi shērimani vordi p(a)r(o)n zak'arē
jann(a)y inn t'(u)m(a)n (3) vor kesn(a)y ch'ok' t'(u)m(a)n khink ghzar di(a)n a(stutso)v
t'areghēs (4) Z amis vad(a)y sarvadin madrasumn AChDz. d(a)n(a)y (5) madrasi sani hal sk'ay
ērup'i tam ur (6) ōrdnun et'ē vadits'n yet ew yařēch' tam (7) fi Ch.-in kēs (ēřup')i mudat'
hasap lini grets'i (8) bandari pasray t'ivn 132 t'ir(a)y ZhE (9) poghosi vordi muk'ēl +

p(a)r(o)n muk'ēlin eghr(a)rōvn vk(aye)m agh(a)yz(a)ri vordi ř(a)f(a)y(e)l +

I, Poghos's son Mukēl, owe the late Shēriman's son Paron Zak'arē, a total of nine tumans, half of which is four tumans 5,000 dinars. God-willing on the payment date of a six month payment period from this date, in Madras, I will give 180 Madras rupees of this year's minting to his agent. Whether I pay before or after the payment period the interest will be calculated at half a rupee per 100. Port Basra, 15th T'ira
 132. Poghos's son Mukēl +

With Paron Mukēl's consent, I am a witness. Aghayzar's son Rafayel +

Notes

This is a typical bill of exchange, drawn in one city in one currency and to be repaid in another city and a different currency. An exchange rate of 20 rupees to the tuman is normal. The merchant himself writes the last one and a half lines. From his handwriting it appears that he is barely literate, though he uses both Arabic and Armenian numerals.

⁴ danay *dānah* (P). Doubtful reading.

101
Handwritten text in a medieval script, possibly Latin or Old French, arranged in a column. The text is dense and difficult to decipher due to the cursive style and some fading.



172
MUSEUM
B. 103

(Recto)

Ē

amirj(a)ni vordi yarut'i(w)ns sēid(a)yp(a)t hink'a(2)ri voghorm(a)ts hogi safari vordi p(a)r(o)n
 yus(3)ēp'its'n jamnay min hazar min harur ěr(u)p'i (4) sk'ay vor kēsn lini EChTs. ěr(u)p'i
 barat'ēs tvi (5) vor a(stutso)v gnay k(a)lk(a)t'(a)y nerk'oy t'areghēn Zh. ōr v(a)d(a)y (6)
 voghorm(a)ts hogi grigori vordi p(a)r(o)n oh(a)nēsn veroy (7) m(a)bl(a)gh ARACH (ěrup')in
 sk'(a)y p'ogh k(a)lk(a)t'(a)y tay voghorm(a)ts (8) hogi sahaki vordi p(a)r(o)n minasin grets'i
 tivn (9) p'ok'r AChIZ nirh(a)n G-umn sēidayp(a)t +

(Indian script)

(Verso)

sanadis maplagh mer hakh ARACH sk'ēn p(a)r(o)n ohanisē khas(a)v minas di s(a)h(a)kis +

(Recto)

I, Amirjan's son Yarut'iwn took from the late Safar's son Paron Yusēp' in Saidabad, a total of one thousand one hundred mint rupees, half of which is 550 rupees, and gave this bill, which God-willing will go to Calcutta, and on 10 days usance from the below date the late Grigor's son Paron Ohanēs will give the above sum of 1,100 mint rupees to the late Sahak's son Paron Minas in Calcutta. I wrote [this] on 3rd Nirhan 126 Little calendar in Saidabad.

(Indian script)

(Verso)

The amount of this bill, our due 1,100 mint rupees, was delivered to me, Sahak's son Minas, by Paron Ohanis +

Notes

This bill of exchange is almost identical in form to the *hundi* (Document 18). It involves four separate parties - deliverer, taker, payer and payee. A considerable number of bills written in Saidabad and drawn in Calcutta are preserved in the BLL collection, probably because Saidabad was a major centre for the manufacture and purchase of silk and other textiles, while shipments of cash from the Middle East arrived at Calcutta. The bill gives no indication of the fee involved.

Handwritten text in a narrow column on the left side of the page, likely a marginal note or a separate entry. The script is dense and appears to be in a South Asian language.

Main body of handwritten text in a South Asian script, possibly Grantha or Tamil, arranged in several lines. The text is written in a cursive style with some decorative elements.

70.
13

Document 18 Bill (Hundi) BLL 1047, f. 93

(Recto)

Ē

Grigori vordi yōhannēss sēit(a)p(a)t yink'(a)ṛi saṛ(a)f (2) mēar(a)m dēar(a)mēn ch'ok' ghzar
 akhtanasun ēṛop'i sk'ay vor (3) kēsney BṚ.LE ēṛ(u)p'i hndvis tvi a(stutso)v gnay kalkat'(a)y
 (4) khas(a)nelēn GG ōr vaday veroy maṛlagh DṚ.H. (ēṛup')in IĒ (5) san sk'ay lusay hogi
 khōjamali vordi s(a)h(a)b khach'ikaghēn k(a)m (6) voghorm(a)ts hogi manuēli vordi p(a)r(o)n
 ēstēp'ann tay puri(7)mal dēvch'andin t'ivn AṚĒChKhZ nirh(a)n ZhE sēit(a)p(a)t +

(Indian script)

(Verso)

hēndēvus mablaghn sēiay ew khōjam(a)li vordi khach'ikis manuēli vordi ēstēp'anis ghabul t'ivn
 AṚĒChKhZ nirhan IĒ kalkat'ay

(Indian script)

(Recto)

In the name of God

Saidabad. I, Grigor's son Yōhannēs received from *sarraḡ* Mēāram Dēāram four thousand and seventy mint rupees, half of which is 2,035 rupees. I gave this *hundi*, which God-willing will go to Calcutta, and on three days usance after its arrival the late Khojamal's son Sahib Khach'ik Agha or the late Manuēl's son Paron Ėstep'an will give the above sum of 4070 rupees, 28 in current mint rupees to Puri Mal Dēvch'and. 15th Nirhan (11th March), 1746, Saidabad +

(Verso)

The amount of this *hundi* is correct and accepted by us, Khojamal's son Khach'ik and Manuēl's son Ėstep'an. 17th Nirhan 1746, Calcutta.

Notes

This *hundi* is similar in form to *barats'* of the kind shown in Document 17. It may be that it is classed as a *hundi* simply because the transaction is negotiated by Indian *sarraḡs*. On the verso (not shown in fascimile) the two payers note their acceptance

of the bill on its presentation to them in Calcutta, two days after it was written in
Saidabad. Doubtless the bill was surrendered to them when they made the payment.

4 GG The letter G, representing the number 3 is written twice in this
and several similar *hundis*. Probably this was intended to
provide a check on the number and prevent later alteration.

IE The function of the number 28 here is unclear.

Ē

menk' murati vordi yakop's n(a)z(a)ri vordik' d(a)tosēs bard(o)ghm(o)sēs (2) ew dustr
 t'ankmērs ew sarhadi k(o)gh(a)k(i)ts' azilz's ew dsterk' (3) ōvsanēs ew t'an[k]mērs ģsp(a)h(a)n
 bijuk'am awak' veřink' (4) khōj(a)y mik'ayēli vordik' p(a)r(o)n yarut'iwnēn ew p(a)r(o)n lionēn
 (5) tasn ew min ghzar erku kherur akhtanasun ew inn (6) korēnt' t(o)k(a)t vor k(ē)sn(a)y
 ER.ZCh.LT# korēnt' t(o)k(a)t nerk'oy gre(a)l (7) t'areghēn ut'n amis v(a)d(a)y van(a)tkumn
 k(a)m liōrnay mer (8) p(a)r(o)n akhbēr p(a)r(o)n ohanesn ew ařageli vordi p(a)r(o)n
 m(a)rg(a)rn (9) ver(o)y m(a)pl(a)ghn tan khōjay mik'ayēli vordi p(a)r(o)n dawut'in (10) et'ē
 vadits'n yet ew yařech' tan khērērin amsēn G p'ay (11) mudat' h(a)s(a)p line b(a)r(a)t'(a)y girs
 B grets'ink' min m(12)azbun mnōvn vor tan miusn bat'il line eghew t'ivn (13) p'rkch'in
 RĒChIZ yulisi Ē-umn ew t'ivn p'ok'r AChZhA gh(a)m(a)r amsin mnumn (14) ver(o)y grealn
 indz mur(a)ti vordi yakop'is ghabulay (+) (15) mez n(a)z(a)ri vordi datosis ew bard(o)ghmosis
 ew dustr (16) t'ankmēris ghabulay (+)(+) veroy grealn mez sarhadi (17) k(o)gh(a)kits' azzis ew
 dsterk' ōvsanis ew t'ankmōrs gh(a)b(u)l(a)y (+) (18) Es m(a)rh(u)m s(a)rh(a)di vordi n(a)z(a)rs
 voghormats hogi s(a)rh(a)di v(a)rsn(o)ts' eghr(a)rōvn gr(c)ts'i vk(aye)m (+)

Ohani vordi yakop'jans vk(aye)m (+)

Es muk'ēli vordi petrosēs vk(aye)m (+)

Es b(a)rghami vordi petrosēs ver(o)y grelots' eghrarōvn vk(aye)m (+)

Savatēs aslin hamem(a)tē zak'arē vordi sargis +

In the name of God

We, Murat's son Yakop' and Nazar's sons Datos and Bardoghmeos and daughter Tankmēr and Sarhad's wife Aziz and daughters Ōvsanē and T'ankmēr took from Khoja Mik'ayēl's sons Paron Yarut'iwn and Paron Lion on an unsecured bill eleven thousand two hundred and seventy-nine current ducats, half of which is 5,639.5 current ducats. From the below-written date, after a payment period of eight months, in Venice or Livorno, our brother Paron Ohanes and Aṛagel's son Paron Margar... will pay the above sum to Khoja Mik'ayel's son Paron Dawut'. Whether they pay before or after the payment date interest will be calculated at three quarters per hundred per month. I wrote this bill in two identical copies. When they pay on one of them the other becomes null and void. 8th July 1726 A.D. and 1st Ghamar 111 Azaria. The above-written is acceptable to me Murat's son Yakop' + [It] is acceptable to us Nazar's son Datos and Bardoghmeos and daughter Tank'mēr (+)
 (+) The above-written is acceptable to us Sarhad's wife Aziz and daughters Ōvsanē and T'ankmēr (+).

I, the late Sarhad's son Nazar, with the consent of the late Sarhad's heirs wrote this
 and am a witness (+)

I, Ohan's son Yakopjan, am a witness (+)

I, Muk'ēl's son Petros, am a witness (+)


I, Barghēm's son Petros, with the consent of the above-written, am a witness (+)

This copy conforms to the original, Zak'arē's son Sargis.

Notes

This is in most respects a typical bill of exchange of the *bijuk'am avak'* type. It is unusual for the large sum involved - 11,000 ducats - and for the large number of people involved - no fewer than seven takers. All the parties are members of the Shahrimeanean firm except one of the payers (Aragel's son Margar) so the bill doubtless relates to the firm's internal financial organisation.

- 2 azis scribal error for azizs
3 t'anmērs scribal error for t'ankmers
13 yulisi E-umn 8th July 1726 (Julian or Gregorian) does not correspond to the Azaria date given (according to Abrahamyan's tables).


In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

By the grace of God, I, the Patriarch of Constantinople, have received the petition of the above-named person.

And because the said person has shown himself to be a person of good character and of sound mind, I have granted his petition.

And I have ordered that the said person be allowed to do as he wishes in the matter of the said petition, and that he be free to go wherever he pleases, and that he be free to do as he wishes in all other matters. I have also ordered that the said person be allowed to receive the sacraments of the Church, and that he be free to do as he wishes in all other matters. I have also ordered that the said person be allowed to receive the sacraments of the Church, and that he be free to do as he wishes in all other matters.

69-80

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Unalaska Public Co
Vancouver
Seattle - Wash
J. J. J. J.

Document 20 Bill (Avak') BLL 1047, F. 248

(Recto)

Ē

Es m(a)r(hu)m n(a)z(a)ri koghakits' ew khōjay sarhadi (2) dustr ovsanēs ēsp(a)h(a)n zmēi
 bijuk'am (3) av(a)k' veři voghormats hogi khach'iki vordi t(ē)r (4) ohanisēn jamn(a)y hink
 harur tasn ēr(u)p'i (5) vor kēs'n lini BChTsE ēr(u)p'i a(stutso)v b(a)r(a)t's tvi gnay (6) madrasn
 ner'oy t'areghēn minch'i E amis (7) vad(a)y veroy m(a)pl(a)ghn sk'ayi madrasi sanih(a)l (8)
 ēr(u)p'i im vordik' p(a)r(o)n yovanēs ew grigorn (9) tan m(a)sk(u)r t(ē)r ohanisin k(a)m ur
 ōrdnun et'ē (10) vadits'n yet ew yařēj tan fi Ch.in G p'ay (11) ēr(u)p'i mod(a)t' has(a)b lini
 girs B grets'i (12) min mazbun vor mnovn vor tan miusn b(a)t'il (13) lini grets'av t'ivn p'ok'r
 AChIZ sh(a)ms amsin ZhĒomn verj

t(ē)r davt'i vordi t(ē)r k(a)r(a)yp(e)ts ovsanē eghr(a)rōvn grets'i vk(aye)m (+)
 ohanisi vordi khōj(a)m(a)ls vk(aye)m (+)
 Ēlazi vordi min(a)sē[s] ovs(a)nē eghr(a)rōvn vk(aye)m (+)
 S(a)v(a)ts aslin ham(e)m(a)t tesi zh(a)m(a)r(a)r ēstep'annos sargsean +

(Verso)

b(a)r(a)t'is mapl(a)ghn iwr khsēpovn j(a)mn EChHD ēr(u)p'i sk'i (2) ark(a)t'i vor m(a)pl(a)ghis
 kēs'n m(a)sk(u)r oh(a)nisin kont'ēn p(a)r(o)n ohanis (3) di khōj(a)m(a)lēn kh(a)s(a)v kēs'n
 m(a)sk(u)r grigorn kont'ēn p(a)r(o)n mu(4)k'ēl di grigorēn kh(a)s(a)v indz khach'iki vordi t(ē)r
 ohan(5)isis b(a)r(a)t'is mius asln k(a)m sav(a)d dus goy huk'(6)mn bat'ilay; t'ivn p'ok'r AChĒ
 d(a)m(a)y amsin ZhE veroy (7) gre(a)ln khach'iki vordi t(ē)r ohanisis ēnduneliay (+)

Ērēsids Aslin h(a)m(e)m(a)t tesi zh(a)m(a)r(a)r ēstep'anns s(a)rgse(a)n +

(Recto)

In the name of God

In Isfahan, I the late Nazar's wife and Khoja Sarhad's daughter Ovsanē, took a maritime loan *zmei bi juk'am avak* from the late Khach'ik's son Tēr Ohanis, total 510 rupees, half of which is 255. I gave this bill, which God-willing will go to Madras and at the end of a 5 month payment period from the below date my sons Paron Yovanes and Grigor will pay the above sum in mint, current year's Madras rupees to the above-mentioned Tēr Ohanis or his agent. Whether they pay before or after (the expiry of) the payment period, the interest will be calculated at 3/4 per 100 rupees. I wrote 2 identical copies of this bill. When they pay on one, the other will become null. Written 17 Shams 126 little Calendar (17th April 1741). The end.

I Ter Davit's son Ter Karaypet, with Ovsanē's consent wrote this and am a witness (+)

I Ohanis's son Khōjamal am a witness (+)

I Ēliaz's son Minas, with Ovsanē's consent am a witness (+)

I saw that this copy corresponded to the original. Ęstep'annos Sargsean, the priest +

(Verso)

The sum of this bill, with [†]in account, total 574 mint Arcot rupees, was given to me, Khach'ik's son Ter Ohanis, half the sum by Paron Khojamal's son Paron Ōhanis from the above-mentioned Grigor's account. If the other original of this bill, or a copy appears it is null and void. 15th Dama 127 Little calendar (11th November 1742).

The above-written is acceptable to me, Khach'ik's son Ter Ohanis (+)

I saw that this receipt corresponded to the original. Estep'annos Sargsean the priest +

Notes

This bill is of a very common type, called the *zmei bi juk'am avak'*. In this case the taker is a woman and the deliverer and payee a priest who is travelling to Madras. The payers are the woman's two sons, who are in Madras. The interest rate is specified as 3/4 per cent per month and from the verso we learn that the bill was finally settled 19 months after it was drawn, by which time the amount repayable had risen to 574 rupees. Although the bill specified that repayment was to be in Madras rupees the sum was paid in Arcot rupees. The repayment was made from the sons' accounts by two other merchants (one of whom might be a grandson).

խանութի մատուցել ինչ զի շինն ու միջի. զի ի՛նչ արքանցեաց մատ
դրանի. ապա ինչ անի արքի մեծաթիւ արքի վարիչ. զարիւ
մի արքի մեծաթիւնի. ապա ինչ արքի ծախի միջի. խառն ինչ
անի արքի անբախտի. զան անասն ինչուսաց արքի. առաջ
մի ինչ շինարարի. ինչ արքի դատարար յարմ. ինչ ինչ օ

ի՛նչ արքի արքի վարիչն զարիւն արքի մեծաթիւն զի՛նչ
մի անբախտի զարքի զի՛նչ անբախտի ինչի՛նչ զի՛նչ օ

ի՛նչ արքի անի արքի
մարտիան զի՛նչ օ

ի՛նչ ինչ ինչ անի արքի ինչի՛նչ
մեծաթիւնն անի արքի ինչի՛նչ
մեծաթիւնն անի արքի ինչի՛նչ
մեծաթիւնն անի արքի ինչի՛նչ



ի՛նչ ինչ ինչ անի արքի ինչի՛նչ
մեծաթիւնն անի արքի ինչի՛նչ
մեծաթիւնն անի արքի ինչի՛նչ
մեծաթիւնն անի արքի ինչի՛նչ



Document 21 (b) Verso Bill (Avak') ASVA 1st Hamira 96

(Recto)

E

Es sahaki vordi minasēs ēspahan ek' gushi zmēi (2) awak' veři lusay hogi kh(ō)j(a)y murati vordi p(a)r(o)n shar(3)imanēn erku R ch'ok' Ch yisun ēř(u)p'i vor kēsñ lini AṚ(4)BChIE ēř(u)p'i nerk'oy tareghēn min Ch yisun ōr vaday (5) sanats gnay surat'n es(y) minasēs k(a)m ovvok'vor im (6) minasis vak'il lini veroy maplaghn mer ēnker ner(7)sēsi vordi shirkhanin ew yakobi vordi muratin apr(8)shmi tsakhšin p'oghēn tamk' sahaki vordi abrahamin (9) et'ē minch'i sanatis sarvadēn maskur aprishu(10)mn tsakhvēl ch'lini veroy maplaghin ēřuzi n(a)khr (11) aprishum tamk' maskur abrahamin bi uzr et'ē het ew yařech' tamk' ēřup'in amsēn kēs mudat' ha(12)sap lini grvets'av t'ivn p'ok'r GhZ h(a)m(i)r(a)y A sanatēs (14) B grets'i min mazbun vor A-ovk' tamk' minn bat'il (15) lini ēs veroy grealn indz sahaki vordi minasis (16) ghabulay ew im dzeřats'ay girnay ew im mirsay (+)

Es Movsēs v(a)rd(a)p(e)ts minasin eghrarovn mōhrets'i verj (+)

savats aslin hamematay mik'ayēli vordi avet (+)

Es marut'ē vordi t'asalis vk(aye)m (+)

Es yovanis vordi grigors vk(aye)m (+)

Es mik'ayēli vordi avets vk(aye)m (+)

Es mēlk'umi vordi manuks vk(aye)m (+)

Es markosi vordi khach'iks vk(aye)m (+)

Es tsaturi vordi p'anosēs asln tesi savatis m(a)f(e)gh(ē)r mrh(ets')i (+)

Es yovanisi vordi nazarēt's asln tesi savatis mafeghēr (+)

Es p'anosi vordi yovanjans asln tesi savats mrhets'i (+)

savats aslēn veřats mōhtabar savatin hamemat(a)y m(a)rg(a)rē vordi manuēl ew yet kusin

dzeřdratsovn hamematay +

(Verso)

T'amaskis maplaghn t'ivn GhĒ sh(a)b(a)t' A minch'i n(a)kh(a)y T' ur ants'eal mu(2)dat'ovn
voghormats hogi sahaki vordi minasin ar(a)r(a)ts vak'il ěstep'a(3)ni vordi mirzaybĕkĕn urĕnts'
aprishmi tsakhsi p'oghĕn khasav indz (4) sahaki vordi abrahamis ch'un sanatn erku ay grvĕl
savat(5)övs p'oghn yink' aři t'ĕ vor aslĕrn dus goy yuk'mn bat'ilay (+)

Es grigori vordi vat'anĕs p(a)r(o)n abrahamin eghr(a)rövn vk(aye)m (+)

petrosi vordi mkrtums vk(aye)m abrahamin eghr(a)rövn vk(aye)m (+)

Es urtikhani vordi muratkhans vk(a)yam (+)

Ĕn yeresin savatĕn ew veroy dzerdratsĕn aslĕn veřats moyt'ayb(a)r sav(a)tin h(a)mem(a)t(a)y
m(a)hd(e)si z(a)k'(a)rĕ vordi möskövn +

Ĕn heresin ew veroy B d(a)f(a)y savadn aslĕn veřats möhdaybar savadin hamemad(a)y avetki
vordi z(a)k'(a)ray +

(Recto)

In the name of God

In Isfahan I, Sahak's son Minas, took from the late Khoja Murat's son Paron Shariman on a one-way *zmei* bill two thousand four hundred and fifty rupees, half of which is 1,225 rupees. On a usance of one hundred and fifty days from the below date, this bill will go to Surat, and I, Minas, or whoever is my representative will pay the above sum to Sahak's son Abraham out the money from the sale of our agent, Nersēs's son Shirkhan and Yakob's son Murat's silk. If the above-mentioned silk is still unsold when the payment period on this bill expires we will without fail give silk at the current rate to the above-mentioned Abraham. Whether we pay before or after [the payment date] the interest will be calculated at one half a rupee [per hundred] per month. On 1st Hamiray 96 Little Calendar, I wrote this bill in two identical copies, when we pay on one, the other will be null and void. The above-written is acceptable to me, Sahak's son Minas, and this is my handwriting and my seal. (+)

I, Movsēs *vardapet*, with Minas's consent, sealed [it]. The end (+)

This copy conforms to the original, Mik'ayēl's son Avet (+)

I Marut'ē's son T'asali am a witness (+)

I Yovannis's son Grigor am a witness (+)

I Mik'ayēl's son Avet am a witness (+)

I Mēlk'um's son Manuk am a witness (+)

I Markos's son Khach'ik am a witness (+)

I Tsatur's son P'anos saw the original; it conformed to this copy. I sealed [it] (+)

I Yovanis's son Nazarēt saw the original; it conformed to this copy (+)

I Panos's son Yovanjan saw the original; I sealed this copy (+)

This copy conforms to the authenticated copy taken from the original. Marzar's son Manuël. And it conforms to the statements [?] on the other side.

(Verso)

The amount of this bill, with the interest from 1st Sibat' to 9th Nakha was paid to me, Sahak's son Abraham by the late Sahak's son Minas's appointed representative Estap'an's son Mirzaybēk. Because the bill was written in two copies I took the money on this one. If the original appears it is null and void.

I Grigor's son Vat'an, with Paron Abraham's consent am a witness (+)

I Petros's son Mkrtum am a witness (+)

I Urtikhan's son Muratkhan am a witness (+)

The copy on the other side and the above statement (?) conform to the authenticated copy taken from the original, Mahdesi Zak'are's son Mōskōv +

The other side and the above 2 statements conform to the authenticated copy taken from the original. Avetik's son Zak'aray +

(Recto)

Ē

Ēmniazi vordi mēlik'nazs juk'(a)mi avak' ver(2)i t'arvzets'i haji avdöl vahatēn erku (3) haz(a)r
 ěr(u)p'i vor kēsna)y AR (ěrup')i tēr a(stua)tsn ju(4)k'am voch' tay juk'amn franksisi
 ch'antn(a)k(a)r (5) navin veray ay vor a(stutso)v ch'antn(a)k(a)r n(a)vn pasru (6) lankar gahēn
 lank(a)r veru navn nal(7)mal s(a)l(a)m(a)t' gnay b(a)nk(a)l(a)y ch'antn(a)k(a)r(a)y lank(a)r
 g(a)h(u)mn (8) lank(a)r gdzi juk'(a)mn ver kay IA ōr v(a)t(a)y sar(9)v(a)t(a)y lus(a)yhogi ěliazi
 vordi p(a)r(o)n agh(a)y min(10)asn kam ur ōrtni erku haz(a)r ěr(u)p'i (11) ark(a)t'i t'(a)z(a)y
 sk'(a)y ěr(u)p'i tay veroy haji av(12)döl vahatin grvets'(a)v t'ivn p'ok'r AChLA n(a)kh(a)y (13)
 ZhĒ-(u)mn pasray verj +

Naz(a)ri vordi minasēs p(a)r(o)n mēlik'nazin eghr(a)rōvn vkayam +

Agh(a)m(a)li vordi t'arkh(a)ns p(a)r(o)n mēlik'n(a)zin eghr(a)r(o)vn vk(aye)m +

lqrār va i'tirāf namūd khvājah malik-nāz valad-i khvājah imniyāz-i masīhī (2) bih-ānkih
 mablagh-i yak-šad tūmān zar-i safīd musāvī-yi du hazār rūpiyah az māl-i ... (3) hājī 'abd
 al-vahhāb tājir-i qazvīnī bar dast-i īn-jānib ast kih ... ravad (4) hājī mushār-ilayh bih
 bankālah khvājah mīnās-i masīhī vakīl-i khvājah malik-nāz-i maḡkūr (5) kārsāzī hājī
 mushār-ilayh ... mawqūf nadārad.

(signatures and seals)

(Verso)

(seal and signature)

sabah (?) tamām kamāl az dast-i khūjah mīnās valad-i khūjah iliyās sākin-i jūlfā vaṣīl-i īn jānīb ḥājī 'abd al-vahhāb shud bih-mawjib-i ḥavālah ... bīst duvvum-i shahr-i rajab al-murajjab (?) sannah-yi 1159 khūjah malik-nāz ... hargāh miṣl-i īn sanad zāhir shavad az darajah-yi i'tibār sāqit ast va khālī az vājh (?) ast dar bankālah rasīd +

K'anh(a)ni vordi oh(a)nnēsēs vk(aye)m vor haji avdōlvahabn asats' im hakhn t'(a)m(a)m k'(a)m(a)l ēliazi vordi p(a)r(o)n minasaghints'n indz khasav +

Petrosi vordi mirz(a)s vk(aye)m vor haji avdōl vahab asats' im hakhn t'(a)m(a)m k'(a)m(a)l ēliazi vordi p(a)r(o)n agh(a)y minasints'n indz ay khasēl +

(Recto)

In the name of God

I Ēmniāz's son Mēlik'nāz took 2,000 rupees (half of which is 1,000 rupees) on a secured bill from Haji Avdōl Vahat. Lord God do not give loss, the security is on the French ship Chand[ar]nagar. God-willing the ship Chand[ar]nagar will weigh anchor from Basra harbour and will go safely to Chand[ar]nagar harbour in Bengal and drop anchor there. 21 days after taking off the security, on the payment date, the late Ēliāz's son Paron Agha Minas or his agent will pay two thousand mint Arcot rupees to the above Haji Avdōl Vahat. written on 17th Nakhay 131 Little calendar in Basra.

The end. +

I Nazar's son Minas, with Paron Mēliknāz's consent am a witness +

I Aghamal's son T'arkhan, with Mēlik'nāz's consent, am a witness +

Khvājah Malik-nāz, son of Khvājah Imniyāz the Christian, consented and acknowledged that [he had received] the sum of one hundred tumans in silver, equivalent to two thousand rupees from the property of ... Hajji 'Abd al-Vahhab the Qazvini merchant ... the above-mentioned Hajji will go to Bengal and Khvājah Minas the Christian, the representative of the above-mentioned Khvājah Malik-nāz, will pay the above-mentioned Hājji ... he will not delay.

[Signatures and seals]

(Verso)

I K'ahnan's son Ohannēs am a witness that Haji Avdōlvahab said: "My claim was paid to me in full by Ēliāz's son Paron Minas Agha" +

I Petros's son Mirza am a witness that Haji Avdōl Vahab said: "My claim was paid to me in full by Ēliāz's son Paron Agha Minas" +

[signature and seal]

The correct amount (?) was paid by a transfer in full to me by Khūjah Mīnās, the son of Khūjah Iliyās, the Julfan ... on 22nd of Rajab al-murajjab (?) in the year 1159. Khūjah Malik-naz ... wherever a copy of this bill is presented it is null and void. It took place in Bengal +

Ē

Es sargsi vordi avets b(a)nd(a)ri p(a)sr(a)y ek gushi (2) bi juk'am avak' veri voghormats hogi
 ěstĕp'(a)n(o)s(3)i vordi p(a)r(o)n yovaygemĕn jamn(a)y uts'un khik ěr(4)up'i madrasi san(a)y
 kal sk'ay vor ě k(ĕ)sn(a)y KhBĭ ěr(5)up'i vor a(stutso)v navn pasru lankarg(a)yĕn lankar (6)
 veru a(stutso)v s(a)lamat' gnay madrasi lang(a)r gayumn (7) langar gĕdzi lankar gĕdzelĕn hbd
 ZhA ōr vaday (8) veroy sarvaydin mablagn DzE ěrup'in maskur (9) sargsi vordi avets t(a)m
 maskur voghormats hogi (10) ěstĕp'ani vordi p(a)r(o)n yovaygemi ōrtĕnun et'ĕ (11) vadints'n
 yed ew harĕj t(a)m fi Ch-in amsĕn min (12) mudat' hasap lini veroy avak'(a)y girs B grets'i
 (13) min mazbun vor mnovn vor t(a)m miusin huk'mn ba(14)t'il lini grvets'av t'ivn p'ok'r
 AChLA n(a)kh(a)y IĒ-umn (+)

maats'akani vordi t(ĕ)r a(stua)ts(a)yturs avetin eghr(a)rovn vkayam (+)

yakobjani vordi minas avetin eghr(a)rovn vka(ye)m (+)

parak'i vordi ovanĕss p(a)r(o)n avetin eghr(a)rovn vk(a)y(e)m (+)

Soray aslin mhrĕli s(a)v(a)ts h(a)m(e)m(a)tĕr mn(a)ts'(a)k(a)ni vordi tĕr a(stua)ts(a)yt(u)r +

savads aslin hamematĕr maydesi ts(a)tur di galuts' +

savads aslin hamematĕr yakobjani vordi minas +

In the name of God

I Sargis's son Avet, in Basra, took eighty-five Madras current year's mint rupees (half of which is 42.5 rupees) from Ėstep'anos's son Paron Yovaygem. God-willing the ship will weigh anchor from Basra harbour and God-willing will go safely to Madras harbour and drop anchor there. 21 days after dropping anchor on the payment date I, the above Sargis's son Avet, will pay 85 rupees to the agent of the above late Ėstep'an's son Paron Yovagem. Whether I pay before or after the payment date interest will be calculated at one per cent per month. I wrote the above bill in two identical copies. When I pay on one the other will become null and void. Written 27th Nakha 131 (26th July 1746) (+)

I Mnats'akan's son Tēr-Astuatsaytur with Avet's consent, am a witness (+)

I Yakobjan's son Minas, with Avet's consent, am a witness (+)

I Parak's son Ovanēs, with Paron Avet's consent, am a witness (+)

The original of this conformed to this sealed copy, Mnats'akan's son Tēr-
Astuatsatur +

This copy conformed to the original, Maydesi Tsatur, son of Galuts' +

This copy conformed to the original, Yakobjan's son Minas +

Nazari vordi yōvanēsēs dōy gushi avak' verī lusay hogi khōjamali vordi (2) im aghay
 s(a)h(a)p p(a)r(o)n yovanisēn khink khērur hun ch'lēn vor kēsnyay erku khērur (3) yisun hun
 s(stua)ts juk'am voch' tay juk'amn madrasē m(a)nilay gnalē trvēt(4)ur anmaniw navin veray
 vor madrasis lankar gayēn lank(a)r verū navn [n]alm(a)l (5) slamat' gnay m(a)nilay gavit'n
 lank(a)r gayumn lank(a)r gdzē juk'amn ver kay ēl (6) nun mōsumin manilu barīts'n lank(a)r
 verū navn nalm(al slamat' goy madrasis (7) lankar gayumn lank(a)r gdzē juk'amn ver kay IA
 ōr vaday veroy maplaghn fi Ch(8)-in ZhĒ-ōvn avak'i shakhōvn tam maskur im aghay
 s(a)h(a)p p(a)r(o)n yōvanisin kam ur ōrd(9)nun bi ōzr a(stua)ts vrar voch' tay vrar vamnin
 inch' pēs inklizi kunpanu das(10)turay ēnpēsay eghew madrasumn t'ivn 1736 nakh(a)y
 ZhB-umn +

Ēlazi vordi minasēs vk(aye)m +

Es yōsēp'i vordi m(a)rut'ēs vk(aye)m +

I Nazar's son Yōvanēs took five hundred *chalni* hun (half of which is two hundred and fifty hun) from the late Khojamal's son, my master Sahib Paron Yovanis. May God not give loss, the security is on the ship named Trvētur (Troubador ?) going from Madras to Manilla. May she weigh anchor from Madras harbour and *nalmal* go safely to Manilla and drop anchor in the harbour with the security upon her. And the same season let the ship weigh anchor from Manilla bar and *nalmal* come safely back to Madras and drop anchor in the harbour with the security upon her, and on a 21 day usance I will pay the above sum with a 28 per cent *avak'* charge to my above-mentioned master Sahib Paron Yōvanis or his agent. Without excuse. May God not give *vrar, vrar vamnin* is according to the English Company regulation.

Madras 12th Nakha 1736 +

I Ēliaz's son Minas am a witness +

I Yōsēp's son Marut'ē am a witness +

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Handwritten text block on the left side, below the second stamp.

Main body of handwritten text in the upper right section.

Main body of handwritten text in the middle right section.

Main body of handwritten text in the lower right section.



Document 25 Security BLL 1047, f.15

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Es ěmbrumaghē vordi dawut's partem ptumi (2) koghakits' ujrāt'in min t'(u)m(a)n khink R
 dī(a)n vorē kēsñ ĒRECh (3) di(a)n fi t'(u)m(a)nin amsēn K di(a)n shakh ew veroy maplaghin
 jah(4)at'an safari vordi margarin ěnkeray girn sanat(5)is khet tvi s(a)rbazan movsēs
 v(a)rd(a)p(e)tin k'shtin minch'i ver(6)oy mablaghn tam sanats ew ěnkeray girn yink'ařum (7)
 ew veroy mablaghn hafizayē eghew t'ivn AChD nakhay ZhZ(8)-umn verj (+)

Es Movsēs v(a)rd(a)p(e)ts mrets'i dawut'in eghr(a)r(o)vn (+)

Es A(stua)tsatur v(a)rd(a)p(e)ts sora asln tesi sawats hamematēr m(ō)hrets'i verj +

Soypēs ew es petros v(a)rd(a)p(e)ts m(ō)hrets'i verj +

Savats asln tesi hamemat grets'i es t(ē)r karapeti vordi ohan ērēts's +

Es zak'arē vordi savēls s(a)vats asln h(a)memat t(e)si mōrets'i +

Es ghewondi vordi tsaturs sanatis asln tesi savats yamematay mrets'i +

Savats asln hamem(a)t(a)y minasi vordi ěmniaz +

In the name of God

I Emprumagha's son Dawut' owe Ptum's wife Ujrat' one tuman 5,000 dinars (half of which is 7,500 dinars). The interest is 60 dinars per tuman per month. And for the above sum I gave Safar's son Margar's *commenda* contract with this note to Movsēs *vardapet* and when I repay the above sum I will take back this note and the *commenda* contract. And the above sum is in Huvayzah coin (?). 16th Nakha 104 (15th July 1719).

I, Movsēs the *vardapet*, with Dawut's consent, sealed [it] (+)

I, Astuatsastur *vardapet*, saw the original of this, the copy conformed [to it]. I sealed [it]. The end. +

Likewise I Petros *vardapet* sealed [it]. The end. +

I saw the original of this copy and wrote [this] correspondingly, Tēr-Karapet's son Ohan the priest +

I Zakarē's son Savēl saw that this copy conformed to the original and sealed [it]

I Ghewond's son Tsatur saw the original; this copy conforms [to it], I sealed [it] +

This copy conforms to the original, Minas's son Ēmniaz +

Pačar groys aysē vor t'ivn AChIĔ ovdan L.-ēn t'(a)r(e)gh lusahogi khōjay min(2)asi vordi
 s(a)h(a)p aghay ėmniazn ew lusahogi sēt'aghē vordi s(a)h(a)p aghay grigorn (3) ėsp(a)h(a)n
 m(a)hr(u)m yakobi koghakits' mēhrbanēn ew ur vordi p(a)r(o)n gērak'ēn B f(a)rd (4) min
 mazbun BChI. (ĕrup')i surat'i sk'ay b(a)r(a)t'in yink'arēl t'(a)r(e)ghēn vets' amis v(a)d(a)y (5)
 surat'umn lusahogi tēr nikghosi vordi p(a)r(o)n petrosn tay lusah(o)gi (6) ėliazi vordik'
 s(a)h(a)p aghay tsaturin kam s(a)h(a)p aghay minasin ch'un p(a)r(o)n petrosn (7) teghsēr
 barat'(a)y girn agh(a)rkēlin indz ėmniazi vordi yōvanēsis dzeṛn vor p(a)r(o)nēn (8) hink' arum
 t'(a)r(e)gh(u)ms es p(a)r(o)n petrosēn bar(a)t'(a)y grin m(a)bl(a)ghn uzets'i asats' tal(9)man
 ch'em mazar aray het agh(a)kir khndrumam s(a)h(a)p jumiat'ē ovvok'vor maskrin (10)gitakay
 B k'(a)l(a)m(a)y ur vk(a)yut'iwnn gri vor mazars gnay ėsp(a)h(a)n hakhbēh(a)khd(a)rn
 (11)hasani s(a)h(a)pns khēr dvay hasil lini t'ivn AChIT' ar(a)m Zh. sēitabad verj

b(a)r(a)t'in p'oghn p(a)r(o)n petrosn as(a)ts' im k'shtin p'ogh ch'k(a)y talm(a)n ch'em kamadōri
 vordi matt'ēos (+)

b(a)r(a)t'is kh(a)m(a)r p(a)r(o)n petrosn as(a)ts' indz het p'ogh ch'unen barat'n het agh(a)rkir
 s(a)f(a)ri vordi husēp' (+)

veroy hishe(a)l b(a)r(a)t'in p'oghin h(a)m(a)r p(a)r(o)n petrosn as(a)ts' im mōts nots'(a)y p'ogh
 ch'k(a)y t(a)lm(a)n ch'em khōj(a)m(a)li vordi ts(a)t(u)r (+)

sargsi vordi k'alant'ar awets sav(a)ds aslin h(a)mem(a)t tesi +

sav(a)ts aslin mafeghēr gaspari vordi oh(a)nnēs +

sav(a)ts aslin hamem(a)t(a)y h(a)z(a)rmali vordi ėstēp'(a)n +

savadēs aslin hamem(a)tē marg(a)ri vordi avet +

savats aslin h(a)memat(a)y yōvnēsi vordi jamal +

DOCUMENT 26 CERTIFIED STATEMENT

BLL 1048, f. 43 Translation

The reason for this letter is, that on the 30th Ovdan 128 (24th February 1744), in Isfahan, the late Khoja Minas's son Sahib Agha Ēmniaz and the late Sēt'-Agha's son Sahib Agha Grigor took 220 Surat mint rupees from the late Yakob's wife Mēhrban and her son Paron Gērak on a bill of exchange (written in two identical copies). At a usance of six months from that date, in Surat, the late Tēr-Nikoghos's son Paron Petros was to pay [the sum] to the late Ēliaz's sons Sahib Agha Tsatur or Sahib Agha Minas. Because Paron Petros was here they sent the bill to me Ēmniaz's son Yovanes to receive [the sum] from him. Today I asked Paron Petros for the sum of the bill, [but] he said I will not pay, he rejected it (?), [and told me to] send it back. I am requesting of the respected community that whoever knows about this should write a couple of words to testify [to it] so that this *mazar* (?) can go to Isfahan and be settled and my brothers recover their due. 10 Aram 129 (5th January 1745), Saidabad. The end.

[Concerning] the money on this bill Paron Petros said "I have no money to hand, I will not pay." Kamadōr's son Matfēos +

About this bill, Paron Petros said, "I have no money with me; send back the bill."

Safar's son Husēp' (+)

Concerning the money on the above-mentioned bill, Paron Petros said: "I do not have the money for that with me. I will not pay." Khojamal's son Tsatur

Sargis's son the *kalāntar* Awet, saw that this copy conforms to the original. +

This copy conformed to the original Gaspan's son Ohannēs +

This copy conforms to the original Hazarmal's son Estēp'an +

This copy conforms to the original, Margar's son Avet +

This copy conforms to the original. Yōvnēs's son Jamal +

[Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a legal or official document. The text is dense and fills most of the page's central area. It appears to be a formal statement or declaration, possibly related to the ASVA mentioned in the caption. The script is consistent throughout the main body of text.

[Handwritten text at the bottom of the page, including several circular stamps or seals. The text is less dense than the main body and appears to be a signature block or a concluding section. There are several circular stamps, some of which contain text or symbols, possibly official seals or signatures. The handwriting is similar to the main body but more varied in style, suggesting a signature or specific administrative notes.

Document 27 Certified Statement ASVA 24th Nakha 99

Ē

Patchar groys ays ē vor p'ok'r t'ivn GhT' adam ZhD voghorm(a)ts hogi franguli (2) vordi ignatiosēn shanbakhū barat'ēr ar(a)rēl iwr mayr barghami dustr (3) gulp'arē vor tay mnats'akani vordi tēr yovsēp'in nēsun t'um(a)n vor (4) kēsñ k'arāsun hing t'um(a)n ēspahan tay; es gulp'aris tvi voch' san(5)atn yeti agharkum; zak'arē vordi mer hayr p(a)r(o)n barghamn ghayel ch'el(6)aw t'ē zarar gni ews araweli bēdnami kulini es k'arzazin (7) kařem ch'uri a(stutso)v barov ignatiosn goy inch' vor hants' lini kats'(8)ēl iwr mutat'ovñ tay. es gulp'aris ēs girs tvi ēřaziam vor mer (9) hayr p(a)r(o)n barghamn veroy sanatn k'arsazin aři minch'i barōv igna(10)tiosn goy iwr m(u)d(a)t'(o)vn tay mer hayr p(a)r(o)n barghamin grets'aw t'ivn (11) p'ok'r GhT' n(a)kh(a)y ID (+)

Es murati vordi sharimans vk(a)yem (+)

Es mik'ayēli vordi y(a)k(o)bians vk(aye)m (+)

Es mik'ayēli vordi avets vk(a)yem (+)

Es mansuri vordi tēr nersēs vk(aye)m (+)

Es abdlm(a)s(i)hē vordi ohanēs ērēt's gulp'arē eghr(a)r(o)vn girs grets'i vk(aye)m (+)

Es voskani vordi poghoss gulp'arē eghr(a)r(o)vn vk(aye)m +

Es yovsēp'i vordi tēr y(a)k(o)bs asln tesi savats aslin h(a)mem(a)t grets'i ew mhrets'i

Es tēr petrosi vordi tēr mkčrt(i)ch'ēs savatēs aslin hamemat tesi vk(aye)m

Es zak'arē vordi y(a)k(o)b ērēt's savatēs aslin hamemat mrets'i verj (+)

Es aharoni vordi tēr mkrlich's savats asli hamematēr +

Es z(a)k'(a)rē vordi tēr zak'arēs savatēs aslin hamemat tesi vkayem +

savatēs aslin h(a)mematēr m(a)hd(e)si z(a)k'(a)rē vordi mōskōv +

savatēs aslin hamem(a)tay agha ts(a)turi vordi s(a)h(a)pmal +

savats aslin hamematēr mēlijani vordi simons vk(a)y(e)m +

—Dominici.....Ad.....(Latin script)

DOCUMENT 27 CERTIFIED STATEMENT

ASVA, 24th Nakha 99 (23rd July 1714) Translation

The reason for this document is this, that on 14th Adam 99 Little calendar (14th May 1714) the late Frangul's son Ignatios sent a *shanbakhu* bill of exchange to his mother, Bargham's daughter Gulp'ari, to pay in Isfahan to Mnats'akan's son Tēr Yovsep' ninety tumans, half of which is forty-five tumans. I, Gulp'ari, didn't pay. I was going to send the bill back. Our father, Zak'are's son Paron Bargham did not agree. [He said,] "It will be damaging and there will be much discredit. I will pay (the bill). God willing when Ignatios comes he will pay it, with interest for whatever time has elapsed". I Gulp'ari gave this document and am content that our father Bargham should pay the above-mentioned bill, until, God willing, Ignatios comes, and pays it with interest to my father Bargham. Written 24th Nakha 99 Little Calendar (23rd July 1714).

I Murat's son Shariman am a witness (+)

I Mik'ayēl's son Yakobjan am a witness (+)

I Mik'ayēl's son Avet am a witness (+)

I Mans^{ur}'s son Tēr Nersēs am a witness (+)

I Abdmasihi's son Ohanēs the priest, with Gulp'ari's consent wrote this document and am a witness (+)

I Yovsep's son Tēr Yakob saw the original and wrote this accurate copy of the original and sealed [it].

I Ter Petros's son Ter Mkertich' saw that this copy corresponded to the original and am a witness.

I Zak'arē's son Yakob the priest sealed this copy as corresponding to the original.

The end +

I Aharon's son Tēr Mkrkich'. This copy corresponded to the original +

I Zak'arē's son Tēr Zak'arē saw that this copy corresponded to the original and am
a witness +

This copy corresponded to the original. Mahdesi Zak'arē's son Moskov +

This copy corresponds to the original. Agha Tsatur's son Sahapmal +

This copy corresponded to the original. Melijan's son Simon. I am a witness +

.... Dominic (Latin script)

Notes

This document does not clearly belong to any specific type of formal contract or agreement, being rather a statement, certified by witnesses, explaining a situation.

The document provides an insight into a family's internal affairs. Bills drawn on each other by husbands and wives and parents and children are common, but in this case Ignatios clearly overstepped the mark, and his mother refused to pay the considerable sum of ninety tumans, and was intending to return the bill unpaid. Having a bill returned unpaid was damaging to a merchant's credit, so Gulp'ari's father Bargham stepped in and made the payment to preserve his grandson's reputation.

There are four changes of "narrator" in the document. It opens impersonally with Ignatios's actions described in the third person and Gulp'ari also in the third person. In line four it switches to a first person account by Gulp'ari, who talks about Bargham in the third person. In line six, however, we suddenly find Bargham speaking in the first person, before Gulp'ari resumes the narration in line eight.

The hatching of the blank paper surrounding the text in order to prevent interpolation is unusual, as is the use of punctuation marks. The document is a copy of a copy. The signature of the last witness is in Latin. The signatory is almost certainly a missionary in one of the Catholic orders active in Isfahan and Julfa; it is obvious from the son's name, Ignatios, that the family concerned are Catholic.

fivn 131: d(a)m(a)y IE t'ik' s(a)h(a)p aghay minasin khsēpn ark(a)t'i

TCh . . . /n(a)d(a)r B .-ēn 84: ör ZhĔ III=II. / ARECh . . / gh(a)m(a)r IZ: 90 ör LG III. . /

DChTsE II= /d(a)m(a)y B .-ēn 24: ör B II=II / dim(a)s' m(o)d(a)t'n(a)y IA II= . /

ARGChTsE II= /m(a)yeay m(o)d(a)t'nay IA II= / ZhB = /mn(a)s' az(a)fay mod(a)t'nay ZhB . =

AChTsZ II. /d(a)m(a)y IZ baghinay ark(a)t'i AREChZhB = /veroy jamnay

AREChZhB . = /veroy jamnay ark(a)t'i

// i ts(a)ṛ(a)y Avetēs

DOCUMENT 28 ACCOUNT

BLL 1047, f. 188 Translation

25th Dama 131. Closing Sahib Agha Minas's Arcot (rupee) account.

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------|
| 900 | 2nd Nadar | 84 days | 18.90625 | 1,500 | 26th Ghamar | 90 days | 33.75 |
| 455.625 | 2nd Dama | 24 days | 2.71875 | | | interest opposite | 21.625 |
| <u>1,355.625</u> | principal | interest | <u>21.625</u> | 12.125 | surplus interest | <u>12.125</u> | |
| 156.5 | 26th Dama | outstanding | Arcot | <u>1,512.125</u> | total of the above | | |
| <u>1,512.125</u> | total of the above | Arcot | | | | | |

from (your) servant Avet

Notes

This simple account records a loan, two interim repayments and the amount still outstanding on the closing date of the account. The balance sheet records credits on the left-hand side and debits on the right. Each side is further subdivided into two columns, with the principal of the sums loaned and repaid in the left-hand column and the interest accrued on these principals on the right. The figures are given in the usual Armenian notation, using the letters of the alphabet, and vertical and horizontal bars for fractions. The writer was also familiar with Arabic numerals.

The first line records the date of closing the account, 26th Dama 131 (22nd November 1746), the name of the account holder, Minas, and the information that the account is in Arcot rupees.

The second line records, on the debit side, the amount of the loan, 1,500 rupees, and its date, 26th Ghamar (24th August), and the interest accruing in the intervening 90 days up to the current date, 33.75 rupees. On the credit side it records a first repayment of 900 rupees, made on 2nd Nadar (30th August), and the notional interest accruing on that in the intervening 84 days, 18.90625 rupees.

The credit side of line three records a further repayment, of 455.625 rupees, made on 2nd Dama (29th October), and the interest for 24 days, 2.71875 rupees. The total of the notional interest on the two repayments, 21.625 rupees, (credit side line three) is transferred to the debit side, and subtracted from the total interest calculated for the loan over the full 90 day term (debit side line one).

In line four the credit side gives the totals for the principal of the two repayments, 1,355.625 rupees, and of the notional interest on these, 21.625 rupees, (the latter being entered on the debit side of line two). The debit side right-hand column gives the total reached by subtracting the notional interest on the two repayments from the interest calculated for the loan over the full 90 day term, which gives 12.125 rupees. This figure also appears in the left-hand column of the debit side, to be totalled with the sum of the original loan to give the full amount owing.

In line five the debit side gives the total of the principal and interest owed on the closing date, 1,512.125 rupees. The figure on the credit side, 156.5 rupees, is the amount still to be paid on the closing date. The word crossed out on the credit side seems to be *ērōk'ay*, cash (see Glossary).

Line six contains a credit side only, which totals the amount still to be paid with the previous repayments, thereby arriving at the same total as the debit side of line five.

GLOSSARY OF COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL TERMS
AND FOREIGN WORDS

The Glossary is arranged in Armenian alphabetical order (see Transliteration scheme). Bibliographic references are in abridged form - consult the Bibliography for full information. In the case of borrowings from Arabic and Turkish it has been assumed that most loan words from these languages entered the Julfa dialect via Persian, but there are also some Arabic and Turkish terms whose use in Persian is not attested. For borrowings from the Romance languages it is often difficult to determine whether a word has entered the Julfa dialect from Italian, French, Portuguese or lingua franca, and it is probable that in some cases the same word was borrowed from several sources. For Indian languages Platts' Urdū, Classical Hindī and English Dictionary, Yule and Burnell's Hobson-Jobson, and Wilson's Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms have been the principal sources. The Glossary does not attempt to specify which Indian vernacular was the source for a given loan word.

A

ABASI, see ABBASI.

ABBASI (also abasi) 'abbāsī (P). Iranian silver coin. See Note on Currencies.

ADAY adā' (AP). Payment, performance. E.g. IA ōr vadēn aday nadar IEumn t'alaps ay, usance 21 days, payment is due on the 25th Nadar. See HTD, Glossary.

AZ az (P). From.

AZAFAY izāfah (AP). Surplus, increment. E.g. Mnats azafay mōdat'nay ZhB. , the remaining surplus interest is 12,125 [rupees] (BLL 1047, f. 188, Document 28).

AT'AAAT' iṭā'at (AP). Obedience, observance. E.g. Piti manramasnabar ēs girs at'aat' arek', you must particularly observe [the provisions of] this document

(from a will dated 1700, PNJ, I, 123).

AT'AT'AN, see AKHTIAT'AN.

ALAHIDAY (also alada, alhada, ilata, etc.) 'alā-ḥidah (AP). Separate, distinct, apart. E.g. Alada amanat', separate deposit (BLL 1047, f. 78). See HTD, Glossary.

AKHIR ākhir (AP). Last, final, the end, finally. E.g. Aval hakhir, [from] beginning to end (ASVT, xix 87.1). See HTD, Glossary.

AKHT (also aght) 'ahd (AP). Declaration, agreement, contract, bond, security. E.g. Eghrar sharayi ew akht lazum berink', we make the legal (shar'i) declaration (of consent) and the requisite agreement (?) (ASVT, xix 87.1).

AKHTIAT'AN (also at'iat'an) iḥtiyāṭan (AP). Taking into account every eventuality, by way of precaution (Mu'in, Rubinchik. Not in Dihkhudā, Steingass). E.g. At'iat'an örtnaygirēs dzer hramanots' grets'i, as a precaution I wrote you this letter of instruction (BLL 1047, f. 9).

AKHTIAR (also ĕkhtiar) ikhtiyār (AP). Right, power, authority (to act). E.g. Indz vak'il ew akhtiar arari lusahogi Ēliazi vordi im sahap agha Minasin, I made my master the deceased Ēliaz's son Minas my authorised representative (i.e. with full power to act on my behalf) (BLL 1048, f. 47); Asats' G tari im akhtiarn im dzernumn a inch' kuzem ēnēnts' kařem, he said: "I have authority for three years and will do what I wish" (Sarukhan, 22); Ēkhtiar uni Surat'umn tsakhē kam t'ē tani Ēspahan tsakhē, he has authority to sell it in Surat or to take it to Isfahan to sell (HTD, 132). See HTD, Glossary.

AGHA (syn. paron) āqā (TP). Elder, master, title of respect, sleeping partner or investor in commenda contract, "In the vernacular the one who gives the money is called agha, and the agent ĕnker (DAH, 130). See HTD, Glossary.

AGHCH'AY aqchah (T). Ottoman silver coin. See Note on Currencies.

AGHT, see AKHT.

AMAD (also amat, ōmat) āmad (P). Credit, receipt. E.g. Kuli ōmat raftin t'amam ver(ay) hasu clank', we examined all the credits and debits (BLL 1048, f. 298). See HTD, Glossary.

AMANAT' amānat (AP). Deposit, charge, security, investment, consignment, goods bought or sold on commission. For a full discussion see Chapter 5. E.g. Inch' Frānkan Khrmāstan Ērūstan Iran Hindustan kam ayl tegh ēnkeranots' het sarmayeay amanat' mardumi khet sanadov bi sanad t'alap t'ankhay kay, whatever capital there is invested with (commenda) agents in Europe, the Ottoman Empire, Russia, Iran, India or elsewhere, and whatever credits there are with people, with or without bills (?) (ASVT, xix 87.1, line 24). Amanat' sarbhāmōr, sealed deposit (BLL 1047, f. 189). See HTD, Glossary.

AMANAT'AGIR Contract of amanat'.

AMANAT'K'AR amānat-kār (AP). Person to whom amanat' is entrusted, commission agent (DAH, 130).

AMLAK' amlāk (sing. milk) (AP). Property, estates, possessions, immobilia. E.g. T'ē naght t'ē jins t'ē amlak', whether cash, goods or property (ASVA, 30th Nakha 106).

AMR amr (AP). Order, command. E.g. Amr ek' tvel, you have ordered (Sarukhan, 20).

AYIANAY āyā nah (P). If not, otherwise. (BLL 1048, f. 294).

ANA ana (H). "The sixteenth part of a rupee ..., it is used either singly or in its multiples to denote proportional fractions of any article ..." (Wilson, 36). E.g. Ch.in ZhB anovn mudat' hśab lini, the interest will be reckoned at 12 anas per 100 (i.e. three-quarters of one per cent per month) (BLL 1048, f. 61).

ANALMAL, see ĒNALMAL.

ANPATCHAR (Arm). Without excuse or pretext. E.g. Sanats ov vor vor beri maplaghs anpachar tam, I will pay the sum without fail (excuse) to whoever brings this bill (BLL 1047, f. 22). Synonymous with bi ōzr (see ōzr).

ANVAL (?) amvāl (sing. māl) (AP). Goods, possessions, property. E.g. Paron Sarhadin k'ōl anvalin khsusan ts'ēnk'in p'oghin varisut'ēn dzeṛn veṛink', we took all of Paron Sarhad's property in particular in cash from the estate (?) (ASVT, xix 87.1).

ANPINION opinione (I). Opinion. E.g. Ēs khsēpumn Margaris khsēpin hamar erek'

hogus apinionn min ēr, in this account, concerning Margar's account, we three (souls) were of a single opinion (ASVA, 5th Adam 83).

APRISHUM abrishum/abrisham (P). Raw silk. E.g. Aprshmi tsaxsin p'oghēn, out of the money from the sale of the silk (ASVA, 1st Hamira 96, Document 21).

AJNAS ajnās (sing. jins) (AP). Goods, merchandise. E.g. Aynch'ap' tvets' Astuats vor t'ē tun t'ē mulk' t'ē ajhas (sic.) t'ē p'ogh GR t'umani tēr daṛaw, God gave so much that he became the master of 3,000 tūmāns, in house(s), in property, in goods and in money (ZA, 85).

ASALAT'AN ašālatan (AP). Originally, directly, in one's own right. E.g. Hazir varēsnis mer jahat'tan asalat'an ew miws varēsnum jahat'tan mōt'abar vak'alat'an, the heirs here present on our [own] behalf directly, and on behalf of the other heirs as authorised representatives (ASVT, xix 87.1).

ASL ašl (AP). 1) Principal, capital (as distinct from interest or profit, mudat, shakh). In the sense of capital ašl is synonymous with maya). Compare the Ottoman context: "The term for the principal of a loan and sometimes for credit is ašl-i mal. Rarely the abridged form ašl was used" (Jennings, "Loans and credit", 186). 2) Original (of document, as distinct from copy, savad). E.g. Es Yakob vardapets soray asln mōhrelī savats ēl hamemat ēr mōhrets'i verj, I vardapet Yakob put my seal to this authentic copy of the sealed original of this [document]. The end. (BLL 1048, f. 5). See HTD, Glossary.

ASL MIHR, see MIHR.

ASLANLU aslanlu (T). Ottoman silver coin. See Note on Currencies.

ASNAFK'AR ašnāfkār (AP). Artisan, craftsman. E.g. Vardapet, k'ahanay, asnafk'ar, tuk'antar, vardapet, priest, craftsman and shopkeeper (PNJ, I, 42 note 6).

AVAL avval (AP). First. For example see AKHIR above. See HTD, Glossary.

AVAK' (also avak') āvak (H). Bill of exchange, exchange contract, maritime loan, respondentia. E.g. Maplagh LD ērup'i Ch.in L. avak'i shakhov jet tam, I will repay the sum of 34 rupees with the exchange fee (profit) of 30 per cent (BLL 1048, f. 207). A number of distinct varieties of avak' existed: zmēi avak',

juk'ami avak', bi juk'am avak', ek' gushi avak', dōy gushi avak', zmēi bi juk'am avak', etc. See Chapter 5; Wilson; HTD, Glossary (where the derivation is incorrectly given as Armenian ?).

AVAK'AYGIR Contract of avak'. E.g. Avak'ay girs B grets'i min mazbun, I wrote two identical copies of the contract of avak' (BLL 1048, f. 151).

AVEL (also haveli) (?) aweli (Arm). More, exceeding, above, credit (as opposed to debit) (?). E.g. Haveli linem ... avel ch'ēnem, should I be in credit ... should I not be in credit (?) (BLL. 1048, f. 135).

ATT'ARI GHITR, see GHITR.

ARBIT'RI arbitri (sing. arbitro) (I). Arbitrator. E.g. Ch'ork' hogis judits'i arbit'ri, we four arbitrating judges (i.e. members of the Armenian community tribunal in Venice) (ASVA, 5th Adam 83).

ARZ arž (AP). Presenting, petitioning, expressing, (written) petition. E.g. Arz bandaki hasts'ē, your humble servant (polite or deferential phrase occurring in letters) (ASVA, 28th Ovdan 104). Arz lini parēnērats'n, [We] petition you gentlemen (Sarukhan, 20). Arzov kam lezuav, in writing or orally (DAH, 20). See HTD, Glossary.

ARKAT' Anchor (derivation obscure). E.g. Navn ekin Ispaniay, i k'aghak'n Kalis ark'at gdzets'ink', the ship came to Spain, and we dropped anchor in the city of Cadiz (ZA, 55). Synonymous with langar (q.v.).

AFĒRMŌ (also fermō, p'eremo) affermo (I). I affirm, confirm. E.g. Es Mnats'akans di Davt' afērmō inch'pēs vor veroy gratsay, I Mnats'akan di Davit' affirm as is written above (i.e. I confirm the above-written statement) (ASVA, no day or month 83).

B

- BABAT'** (also bat') bābat (AP). 1) Item (particularly in accounting). E.g. Ew ays ēr mer babat' babat' veraṛatsn, and these were our withdrawals, item by item (PNJ, I,). 2) Sort, kind. See HTD, Glossary.
- BABINDAN** (also babin dan) [dar] bāb-i in (P) ?. Concerning this. E.g. Ew ayl ēs babindan, and also concerning this (ASVA, 30th Nirhan 110).
- BADA(Y)** mā'adā (AP) ?. Not counting, excepting, apart from. E.g. Ur sarmaēn baday, apart from his capital (HTD, 132). See HTD, Glossary.
- BAZAR** bāzār (P). Market. E.g. Rup'i bazar sk'ay, mint bazar rupee (i.e. new-minted rupee current in the market) (BLL 1047, f. 105). See HTD, Glossary.
- BAZRKAN** (also pazrkan, bzrkan) bāzargān (P). Merchant. (ASVT, b.xix 86.1).
- BAT'**, see **BABAT'**.
- BAT'A** baṭṭā (H). Exchange discount, difference or rate of exchange, agio, percentage paid on exchange or other financial transaction. E.g. BCh shai mandrmēli shinets'i, ēstur bat'ay arek G, I changed 200 shāhī into mandermali (Nepalese currency), the difference on the exchange came to 3 (HTD, Glossary). See also Wilson and Hobson-Jobson.
- BAT'IL** bāṭil (AP). Vain, empty, void (particularly of bills, contracts, etc.). E.g. Huk'mn bat'ilay ew khalil, its force is null and void (BLL 1047, f. 179). Note also the verbal form bat'lel, to cancel, render null and void. (BLL 1048, f. 48, Document 9).
- BAT'ILAMĒ** bāṭil-nāmah (AP). Letter of cancellation, annulment, abrogation.
- BAZHANEL** (Arm). To separate. Also bazhanvel, bazhanumn, bazhanagir (DAH, 194-198). E.g. Es Zak'arēs vor im ekhpayr Shmawoni vordoyñ yet bazhanvets'ay, t'ē tun, t'ē ayk'i, t'ē ajhas (sic. for ajnas), I Zak'aria separated from my brother Shmavon's son, whether house(s), orchards, or goods (i.e. all these possessions were divided between them) (ZA, 115). See Chapter 3.
- BALNES** balanse (I). Balance (in accounting, etc.). Synonymous with t'araydzi (q.v.). See HTD, Introduction p. 59.

- BAHAM** bā-ham (P). Together.
- BAGHI** bāqī (AP). Remaining, rest, balance, arrears. E.g. T'awvju baghu jahatan ay, [it] is for the tax arrears (BLL 1048, f. 2). Mablaghs Zōgaghin sarmayin baghinay, this sum is the balance of Zōg-Agha's capital (BLL 1048, f. 104). See HTD, Glossary.
- BAND** band (P). Band, tie, bundle, batch. E.g. Min bandn ēl mhrets'i, I sealed them all up in one batch (BLL 1048, f. 2). See HTD, Glossary.
- BANDAKI** bandagī (P). Service. For example see arz.
- BANK'** bank (Eng). E.g. P'oghn dnen inklizin ēn bank'umn vor mudat' kt(a)y, let them put the money in that English bank which pays interest (BLL 1047, f. 153).
- BANKĒSAL** (Indian). Warehouse. E.g. BankĒsalin darvanin tvel am, I gave the doorman of the warehouse (HTD, 72). See Hobson-Jobson, "Bankshall"; Wilson; HTD, Glossary.
- BANJAL** banjārā (H). Merchant. See HTD, Glossary.
- BAR** bar (nautical) (Eng) (?). E.g. Nun mōsumin manilu barīts'n lankar veru, that [same] monsoon it will weigh anchor from Manilla bar (BLL 1047, f. 62).
- BARABAR** (also braybar) barābar (P). Equal, times (in multiplication). E.g. Braybar k'ashets'ink', we weighed it out equally (?) (HTD, Glossary).
- BARAT'** barāt (AP). Bill, draft, assignment. E.g. Hink' ari barat's tvi, I received [the above sum and] gave my bill [for it] (BLL 1047, f. 101). See Chapter 5 and HTD, Glossary.
- BARAK'AT'** barakat (AP). Bounty, profit, gain. E.g. Gharshvin mnats'eal barak'at' berin indz Sērnochum jamay brnets'i, I added the surplus remaining in the opposite column to my total for Sironj (HTD, Glossary, 368).
- BARBAST(I)** bārbastī (P) ?. Rule, order, system of doing business (in a locality), usance (on bills). E.g. Teghis yēndvun barbasti LA ōr ay vadēn Ōvrangkapat, here the usance on a hundi to Aurangabad is 31 days (HTD, 78). See HTD, Glossary.
- BAR**, see FARD.
- BARNAMAY** (see also TASVIL) bār-nāmah (P). Inventory. E.g. Barnamēn yis ay

khasel, the inventory reached me (HTD, Glossary).

BARK' barque (Fr). Boat. E.g. Navin bark'umn, in the ship's boat (Sarukhan, 22 note 3).

BZRKAN, see **BAZRKAN**.

BĒDNAMI badnāmī (P). Bad name, dishonour, discredit. E.g. Ews ar aweli bēdnami kulini, and there will be much discredit (ASVA, 24 Nakha 99).

BĒZARANAL bī-zār (P) + Armenian verbal ending. To grow weary, disgusted, fed up. For example see ēlt'maz.

BĒL badal (AP) ?. "The badal is the consideration for which a party agrees to an amicable settlement (sulḥ)" (Schacht, Introduction to Islamic Law,). For example, see sōhl.

BĒNABARIN, see **BNAYBARIN**.

BĪ bī (P). Without (frequently in compounds, e.g. biōzr, bijuk'am, see ōzr, juk'am). E.g. Bidamaghi ch'arek', don't be impatient (bīdamāghī P.) (PNJ, I, 123).

BINADAR (?). Merchant (?). E.g. Ays tarus Izmir 2 binadar vor 2-k'inn min tegh ēngerk' in ays 2 binadars vrats'i en azgaw hay, this year in Izmir, two merchants, the two of whom are partners together, and are Armenians from Georgia (?) (ZA, 72).

BNAYBARIN (also bēnabarin, bnabarin) banā-bar-in (P). Therefore. (BLL 1048, f. 73).

BRAYBAR, see **BARABAR**.

BRUZ burūz (AP) ?. Being clear, manifest, published (?). E.g. Bruz lini, let it be made clear (?) (ASVT, xix 87.1).

G

- GAH...GAH... gāh...gāh... (P). Sometimes...sometimes... (Kévonian, 205, n. 39).
- GART' gard (P). Advantage, profit. Garṭ' arnel, to reckon/calculate the profit (HTD, 111). See HTD, Glossary.
- GARSAZI, see K'ARSAZI.
- GLKHAYMAL glukh (Arm) (head) + māl (P) (wealth, property, money). Poll tax, jizyah. E.g. Ökhtn Rṣ dian vor kēsñ lini GRECh dian vor ē Avetin glkhaymal tas, Give 7,000 dinars, half of which is 3,500 dinars, which is Avet's poll tax (ASVA, 20th Nadar 103, Document 12).
- GUSHI, see AVAK'
- GUSHI K'AGAR Safavi official ?. E.g. T'iapumn kharch gnats' khanin, shabandarin, gushi k'agarin, In Tiap, paid to the Khan, the Shahbandar and the Gushi K'agar (HTD, 73). See HTD, Glossary. There was a tax called gūshī in Safavi Iran, so the gushi k'agar may have been the official responsible for its collection. (Emerson and Floor, "Rahdars", 321 n. 66).
- GUNAKH gunāh (P). Sin, crime, fault. E.g. Ama mer ēs banis gunakh ch'unink', But we are not at fault in this matter (Sarukhan, 23).
- GÖFT'GU guftugū (P). Talk, conversation, discussion, dispute, contention. E.g. Varisut'ēn jahat'tan hakh t'alap davē göftgu ew vordum ch'unenk', in respect of the inheritance we have no right, claim, demand, contention or oath (ASVT, xix, 87.1).

D

DADĚSTAD (also dad ěst'at') dādusitad (P). Buying and selling, transactions, trade. E.g. Mer hayrenik' daděstadin khsĕpn ew ur hatuk daděstadin khsĕpn, our firm's (literally, paternal inheritance's) trading account and his private trading account (ASVA, 30th Nakha 106).

DALAL dalāl (AP). Broker. E.g. Ur dalalin mōdn elats k'surin t'asfilay, an inventory of the effects is with his broker (BLL 1047, f. 79). See DAH, 170 and HTD, Glossary.

DAKHIL dākhil (AP). Entering. E.g. Vor Astutsov girs gnay Pasray dakhil lini Zha ĕrĕn het..., God-willing this bill will go to Basra [and] 21 days after its arrival... (BLL 1047, f. 16). See HTD, Glossary.

DAKHL (ARNEL) dakhl (kardan) (AP). To interfere, become involved, take possession. E.g. Voch'um akhtiar ch'uni vor sarmayin dakhil ari, noone has the right to appropriate the capital (PNJ, I, 144-145, Document 1).

DAMICH' Damage (Eng). (IO E/3/51/6043, f. 80).

DANAY dānah (P). Grain, used as a counting word between the number and the object counted. E.g. AChDz. danay madrasi sani hal sk'ay ĕrup'i tam, I will pay 180 (units) Madras rupees of the current year's minting (BLL 1048, f. 238, Document 16). See HTD, Glossary.

DANG (also dank, dōng, and dōnk) dāng (P). Share; sixth part; unit of weight equal to one-sixth of a dirham. In the Julfa documents this term is encountered in the name of an eighteenth century Iranian silver coin, the haft dāngī 'abbāsī, or seven dāng 'abbāsī. E.g. Ėkht'n dangi abasi (BLL 1048, f. 283); afdōnki abbasi (BLL 1047, f. 20). See Note on Currencies.

DANĚSTAY dānistah (P). Known, knowingly. E.g. Danĕstay ew fahmitay, in full knowledge and consciously (ASVA, 30th Nirhan 110).

DANK, see DANG.

DANSTAY, see DANĚSTAY.

DASTUR dastūr (AP). Instruction, rule, regulation. E.g. Dastur tvi vor

ishkhanut'iwn ew karoghut'iwn unenan, I instructed that they should have authority and power (PNJ, I, 119); Inklizi kampanu dasturay, it is the English Company's regulation (BLL 1047, f. 62).

DAVĒ (also davay) da'vā (AP). Claim, demand, plaint, lawsuit. E.g. Varisut'ēn jahat'tan hakh t'alap davē gōftgu ew vordum ch'unenk', in respect of the inheritance we have no right, claim, demand, contention or oath (ASVT, xix, 87.1); Inch' t'afaut' kam davē vor lini, whatever difference or claim there may be (PNJ, I, 122).

DARAMAT' darāmad (P). Income. E.g. Zshahn arnul ew zdaramat'n bolorel, to take the profit and collect the income (PNJ, I, 119). Daramat'i milk', income-producing property.

DARUGHAY dārūghah (P from Mongolian). A Safavi official (see Lambton, "The evolution of the office of Dārūghah" and Keyvani, Artisans and Guild Life, 136-138). E.g. Aysōr darughay ekaw Agulis, the Dārūghah came to Agulis today (ZA, 69-70).

DAFAY daf'ah (AP). Time, occasion; item. E.g. Veroy ZhG dafay savatn aslin mafegh ēr, the above 13 (items of) bills conformed to the originals (BLL 1048, f.2). See HTD, Glossary.

DAFAYATÖV daf'āt (sing. daf'ah) (AP). Occasions (+ Armenian instrumental ending). See HTD, Glossary.

DAFTAR (also davtar) daftar (AP). Book, record, register, journal, account book, ledger. In Julfan commercial usage daftar was used to describe account books in general and the merchant's master account book in which he recorded all transactions (HTD, Introduction, 58; DAH, 168). Zak'aria Agulets'i refers to his journal as davtar (ZA, 6). E.g. Paron Sharimanin ew Yakobin daftaranēn k'ani dafay tesēl ank' daftar ew t'ōmar ank' grēl, we have looked at several items from the account books of Paron Shariman and Paron Yakob, and have written a [separate] account (ASVT, xix 87.1). Confer k'at'a, ēřuzlama and tōmar. See also Chapter 5 and HTD, Glossary.

DIAN dīnār (AP). The smaller unit in the Iranian money of account. See Note

on Currencies.

DKHIL, see DAKHIL.

DRIŠT (also drēst) durust (P). Right, correct. E.g. Veroy grealn dristay, the above-written is correct (ASVT, xix 87.1). A verbal form drēstel, to correct, also occurs (HTD, 112, 115).

DÓGOVOR dogovor (Russian). Agreement, Synonymous with shart'nama. (DAH, 32).

DÓY GUSHI du gūshī (P) ?. Two way, return, there and back (of respondentia bills). See avak' and Chapter 5.

DÓT' dote ^(دوت) ?. Dowry. E.g. Paron Saradi koghakits' Azēzin dōt'n, Paron Sarhad's wife Aziz's dowry (ASVT, xix 87.1).

DÓLVAT' dawlat (AP). Power. In the Julfa documents this usually occurs in the title Sahap dōlvat' (šāhib-dawlat), which is often used at the start of letters, etc. (ASVA, 22nd Tira 100).

DÓNG, DŌNK, see DANG.

E

EAP'NCHI yāpanjī (TP). Felt cloak, felt fabric used for wrapping goods. See HTD, Glossary; Fryer, A New Account, 184 n. 2; Herbert, A Relation, 149; Raphaël, Estat de la Perse, 248; IO E/3/51/6010, f. 21.

EG, see EK'.

EGHRAR (also ighrar) iqrār (AP). Consent, agreement. E.g. Ēs eghrar ēr arari, this agreement was reached (BLL 1047, f. 87). One of the standard ways for a witness to ratify a document is with the statement: (Sarhadi) eghrarovn vkayem, with (Sarhad's) consent, I am a witness. In this usage it is synonymous with the less common Armenian term hawanut'iwn. See HTD, Glossary.

EK' yak (P). One.

EK' GUSHI ? yak gūshī (? P). One way, outward (in respondentia bills). See avak' and Chapter 5.

EK' VJUTI' ? yak vujūdī (P). ? Simultaneously, together (BLL 1048, f. 190).

EÓLBORJI (also eólborchi) yolborj (T). Maritime loan or respondentia bill (Eghia Kaṙnets'i, 305, 315). See Chapter 5 and NJHV, 165-167.

Z

- ZAHIR zāhir (AP). Manifest, apparent. See HTD, Glossary.
- ZAGHAT' zakāt (AP). Tax. See HTD, Glossary.
- ZAMINLAMA zamīn-nāmah (P). ? Land deed. (ZA, 99, 100).
- ZARAB (also zarav, zaraf) zarrāb (AP). Mint, minting. Also zarabi (zarrābī), zarabbashi (zarrāb-bāshī), zarafkhanē (zarrāb-khānah). (ZA, 56, 60, 81, 95).
- ZARAR zarar (AP). Injury, damage, loss. E.g. Zarar gni ews araweli bēdnami kulini, it will be damaging and there will be much discredit (ASVA, 24th Nakha 99, Document 27). See HTD, Introduction p. 59 and Glossary.
- ZARUR (also zarhur) zarūr (AP). Necessary, unavoidable. E.g. Er'ē im vēk'il paron Minasn zarur lini urish vek'il arēln arī, if it is unavoidable my representative, Paron Minas, will appoint another representative (BLL 1048, f. 47). See HTD, Glossary.
- ZAFT zabt (AP). Fisc, revenue service. E.g. Agulis Najafghuli khani zaftum nēr, Agulis was in Najaf-qulī Khān's tax district (ZA, 60).
- ZĒK'R, see ZK'R.
- ZMĒI ? possibly derived from the Arabic root zamma, e.g. zamīmah, addition, increment; or zamīna, e.g. zamīn, responsible, liable. This term occurs only in the compound zmēi avak' (q.v.), and must refer to a particular type of maritime loan or respondentia contract, perhaps an incremental avak' (i.e. one that bears interest or a fee), or a liable avak' (i.e. one that is payable unconditionally). See Chapter 5.
- ZNDAN zindān (P). Prison. (ZA, 102).
- ZK'UR zūkūr (AP). Male. E.g. Muratin zk'ur ōnas sayir varisēk'ts'ēn, from Murat's other male and female heirs (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- ZK'R (also ZĒK'R) zīkr (AP). Mention. E.g. Vorpēs mablaghn barat'ay grērumb zk'ray, as the sum is mentioned in the bill (i.e. the amount written in the bill) (BLL 1048, f. 48).
- ZÖLÖT'AY zloto (Polish). Gold. Name of a silver coin widely imitated and current in the Levant trade. See Note on Currencies and Mantran, Istanbul, 244.

ĒNALMAL (also analmal) 'ayn al-māl (AP). Capital, principal, stock-in-trade.

In Julfan usage this term has the specific meaning of the capital invested in a bilateral commenda partnership by the agent or active partner (ēnker). E.g. Ewes Sēt's ēnalmal mēch' beri, and I Sēt' put in my capital (BLL 1048, f. 283, Document 4). See also DAH, 131. It is also used for capital, funds or cash-in-hand in a general sense. E.g. Maplaghs im ēnalmalin kut'ē tay, let him pay this sum out of my capital account (BLL 1048, f. 78).

ĒJĒNT' agent (Eng). E.g. Patueli ējēnt', the respected Agent (IO, E/3/51/6193, f. 397). This term is used only as the official title of the chief representative of the English East India Company in Iran, not as a generic term.

ĒLT'ZAM iltizām (AP). Necessity, obligation; commitment. E.g. Mek' t'aghvaleants' tasnaki egheal zhoghovordk's ėlt'zam tvink', we the people of T'aghvaleants' tasnak gave a commitment (PNJ, I, 42 n. 6).

ĒLT'MAZ iltimās (AP). Beseeking, petitioning, requesting. E.g. Mek' ėl nach'arets'ank' gnalov galov ėlt'maz ařelov bēzarats'ank', we became fed up with having to request [permission] in coming and going (Sarukhan, 23).

ĒKHTIAR, see AKHTIAR.

ĒNKER (Arm). Comrade, partner. In Julfan commercial usage ėnker refers to partners in a true partnership (according to the Astrakhan Lawbok the terms ėnkerakits' and ėnker mimeants' were used for equal partners), and to the agent or active partner in a commenda partnership (DAH, 130, 146-149, 168). Note also the derived forms: ėnkeragir, partnership contract (BLL 1047, f. 75; DAH, 131); ėnkeranal, to form a partnership (HTD, 69, 119); ėnkerut'iwn, partnership (used for both true and commenda partnerships); ėnkerōvi, in partnership, jointly (HTD, 81; PNJ, I, 165).

ĒRAZI (also ėrēzi, razi) rāzi (AP). Content, agreed. E.g. Es gulp'aris ės girs tvi ėřaziam vor mer hayr paron Barghamn veroy sanadin k'arsazin aři, I Gulp'ari gave this document [stating that] I am content for my father Bargham to settle this bill (ASVA, 24th Nakha 99, Document 27). See HTD, Glossary.

ĒRAIJ (also ėřayich and řayich) rā'ij (AP). Current, in circulation (of money). The word rā'ij or rāyij was used as a countermark on coins minted in the reign of Shah 'Abbās II (Rabino di Borgomale, Coins and Medals,) E.g. T'uman ėřayich, current tuman, tuman in current coin (BLL 1047, f. 90). See Note on Currencies.

ĒRAKHTAR (also ėřahdar, ėřtar and other variants) rahdār (P). Rahdar, road guard. See Emerson and Floor, "Rahdars" and P'ap'azyan, "Ařevtrakan chanaparhneri pashtpanut'yunē". Note also the derived forms: ėřakhtaranay (rahdārānah), and ėřahdari (rahdārī), rahdar's due, toll. See HTD, Glossary.

- ĒRASAT' (also ĕrĕsat', rsat') rasad (P). Share. E.g. Paron Sarhadin ĕrĕsat' samĕn hink' arus, take [it] from the share of Paron Sarhad (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- ĒRASIT (also ĕrĕsit, ĕrsid) rasid (P). Receipt. E.g. Ērsit grets'i tvi, I wrote a receipt and gave [it to him] (BLL 1048, f. 71). See HTD, Glossary.
- ĒRAVANAY (also ĕravaynay) (ARNEL) ravānah (kardan) (P). To send, despatch. Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke, 70; HTD, Glossary.
- ĒRAFT raft (P). Debit. See Note on Accounting and HTD Glossary.
- ĒRĒZAY rizā (AP). Consent, agreement. E.g. Ērĕzay kats'ink', we gave our consent (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- ĒRĒZI, see ĒRAZI.
- ĒRĒJU, see RĒJU.
- ĒRĒSAT', see ĒRASAT'.
- ĒRĒSID, ĒRĒSIT, see ĒRASIT.
- ĒRĒSUM rusūm (sing. rasm) (AP). Dues, charges. See HTD, Glossary.
- ĒRGHAM ragham (AP). Letter, edict. (Armyano-russkie otnosheniye v XVII veke, 71).
- ĒRUZLAMA (also ĕruznama, ruzlama, ruznama) rūzāmah (P). Day-book, journal. In Julfan comercial usage the ĕruzlama is the account book in which transactions are entered in chronological order, as distinct from the k'at'a (q.v.) or ledger. See chapter 5 and HTD, Introduction p. 58 and Glossary.
- ĒRUSKhat' (ARNEL) rukḥṣat (AP). Leave, permission. E.g. Shay Sĕlemanĕn ĕruskhat' ĕrgham aret, Shah Sulaymān gave us leave (to depart on the embassy [and sent] a royal letter (Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke, 71). See HTD, Glossary.
- ĒRUP'I (also rup'i) rupayā (H). Rupee. See Note on Currencies and HTD, Glossary.
- ĒRŌK' (Indian). Cash, ready money, coin. E.g. Min khĕrur ĕrup'i arkat'i ĕrŏk' tvi, I gave one hundred Arcot rupees, in cash (BLL 1047, f. 128). See Hobson-Jobson, 767 and HTD, Glossary.
- ĒSKAYLĒ iskele (T). Landing stage, wharf; harbour, port. (BL, Sloane MS 4090

(17)).

ĖFTĖDAY (also ėftday, iftėday) ibtidā (AP). Start, beginning. E.g. Sarafut'ean
khsėpanin vor azėftday t'areghėn, the banking accounts, from the commencement
date (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114, Document 2). See HTD, Introduction p. 59 and
Glossary.

T'AZAY tāzah (P). Fresh, new. T'azay sk'ay (tāzah sikkah). Newly minted, mint. E.g. Veroy mablaghn ... t'azay sk'ay ěrp'i, the above sum ... in mint rupees (BLL 1048, f. 40). See also Note on Currencies.

T'AT'IMAY (also t'art'imay, t'aht'imay) tatimma (AP). Remainder, balance. E.g. Inch' Azēzis dōt'ēn ew ēnalmaalēn t'art'imay baghi t'alap mnats', whatever claim remained for the balance of my, Aziz's, dowry and capital (ASVT, xix 87.1). See also HTD, Introduction p. 59 and Glossary.

T'ALAP (also t'alab) ṭalab (AP). Demand, claim, money due to be paid. E.g. Ēs im t'alap ěr, this was owing to me (HTD, 89). See HTD, Glossary. T'alap tankhay, (ṭalab-i tankhwāh) civil lawsuit, claim for money. E.g. Inch' Fṛankstan Khṛmāstan Ēṛustan Iran Hndustan kam ayl tegh ěnkeranots' het sarmayey amanat' mardumi khet sanadōv bi sanad t'alap t'ankhay kay, whatever claims for money there may be with partners or with people for capital or investments, whether in writing or not, in Europe, the Ottoman Empire, Russia, Iran, India or elsewhere (ASVT, xix 87.1). See Minorsky, Tadhkirat al-mulūk, 50.

T'ALEGH (also t'alekh) ? ta'alluq (AP). Being dependent upon or connected with; dependence, relation. E.g. Ew Mashadēn im aghinun t'alegh tēr Petrosi vordi Baghtaysarn ēl aprank' ěr agharkēl T'arvēz vor ēl es tsakhem, and my masters dependent (or relative ?) sent goods from Mashhad to Tabriz for me to sell (ASVA, 30th Aram 113). See HTD, Glossary.

T'AKHEKH taḥqīq (AP). Verifying; inquiry, investigation. E.g. Dalalēn ēl t'akhekh arari vor yet ch'ēr tuēl, I also ascertained from the broker that he had not returned [it] (PNJ, I, 166).

TAHT'IMAY, see T'AT'IMAY.

T'AMAHI ? tamā'i (AP). Greed, covetousness. E.g. Mek ghazbēki pakas ch'em greal ew t'amahi ch'em arareal, I have not written one qazbegī too little, and I have not been greedy (i.e. stingy ?) (PNJ, I, 182).

T'AMAM tamām (AP). Complete, full. T'amam k'amal (tamām kamāl),

completely, in full. This is a set phrase used in settlements and receipts to confirm that payment has been made in full. E.g. Maskur t'ōmarin Azzis baghi t'alapn paron Muradi vordi paron Yakobēn ew marhum paron Nazari vordi Datosēn t'amam k'amal yink' ari vor khasav indz Azzis, I, Aziz, received in full and it came to me, the remaining claim on the above account from Paron Murad's son Yakob and the late Paron Nazar's son Datos (ASVT, xix, 87.1). The phrase appears to be a direct borrowing from Persian commercial usage: tamām kamāl (BLL 1047, f. 219, Document 22). Note also the verbal form t'amamel, to complete. See HTD, Glossary.

T'AMASUK tamassuk (AP). Promissory note, credit note, bill. In Julfan commercial usage t'amasuk is used as a generic term for any kind of promissory note or bill (confer sanad and barat'). E.g. Ayn t'amasukn vor Simonn tvel ēr Abasghuli Khani p'esay Zal Bekin, the promissory note which Simon had given to 'Abbās-Qulī Khān's son Zāl Beg (ZA, 87). See Chapter 5 and HTD, Glossary.

T'AMBĒH tanbīh (AP). Correction, reprimand, punishment (PNJ, 42 n. 6).

T'AMIZVEL tamīz (shudan) (AP). To become clean, clear. E.g. Ch'uri Ērusin erkirn t'amizvi, until Russia is cleared [of rebels] (Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke, 72).

T'AMGHĒ (also dēmghē) tamghā (TP). Tax, duty. E.g. Ēraygham tvin vor ... mer ashkhark'in t'uchayrēn goyhn Ērusēn mets t'agaworin t'amghēn inch'pēs gharar ank' ararēl tayn, let them give an edict that merchants from our country may come to Russia and pay the Great King duties as we have agreed (Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke, 71).

TAYEAR tayyār (AP). Ready, prepared. See HTD, Glossary.

T'ANKHAY tankhvāh (P). Money, cash; salary, assignment (of revenue); value, equivalent amount. E.g. Maplaghs paron Minasin sarmayin t'ankhin kont'ē ay, this sum is from Paron Minas's capital cash account (BLL 1048, f. 100). As in the given example the precise sense of this term is often hard to establish. See also Dihkhudā; Minorsky, Tadhkirat al-mulūk, 152 and n. 3; HTD, Glossary.

T'ANDZIL tanzīl (AP). Discount, reduction, rebate; percentage. See HTD,

Introduction p. 59 and Glossary.

T'ASLIM tašlīm (AP). Assenting to, accepting. E.g. T'aslim aṛem, I assent (BLL 1047, f. 156).

T'ASVIL (also t'asfil) tafšīl (AP). Explanation; details, particulars; inventory, list. E.g. Aprank' t'asvil aṛnel, to inventory the goods (ASVT, xix 87.1). See HTD, Glossary.

T'ASTEGH tašdīq (AP). Confirmation, attestation. E.g. K'ēt'khuday t'asteghōv, on the attestation of the kadkhudā (ASVT, xix 87.1). Compare the Persian usage: Muvāfiq-i tašdīq-i vazīr-i ārāmanah, on the attestation of the Vazir of the Armenians (Busse, Untersuchungen, 212).

TARAYDZI (ARNEL) tarāzū (kardan) (P). To balance. Confer balnes. See HTD, Introduction p. 59 and Glossary.

T'ARAYDUT' (also taradut', t'aradot') taraddud (AP). Coming and going; application, labour, exertion. The precise meaning of this term in Julfan commercial usage is uncertain. It occurs frequently in passages relating to trading and travelling (e.g. commenda contracts), and in this dissertation has generally been translated as "to traffic", but in some contexts it also seems to convey the meaning "to make/earn/accrue (money or profits)". E.g. T'ujarat' t'aradut' aṛem, I will trade and traffic (BLL 1048, f. 285); Astutsov ēl inch' teghats' vor t'aradot' aṛem ēl veroy ghararōv sam aṛem, and God-willing whatever I earn (?), in whatever place, I will split on the same basis (ASVA, 1st Nadar 79).

T'AREGH tārīkh (AP). Date. E.g. Nerk'oy t'areghēn khing amis vaday, on a usance of five months from the below[-written] date (BLL 1048, f. 177).

T'ART'IMAY, see T'AT'IMAY.

T'AFAUT' tafāvut (AP). Difference. E.g. Inch' t'afaut' kam davē vor lini, whatever difference or claim there may be (PNJ, I, 122).

TEK'RAR tikrār (AP). Repetition. BLL 1048, f. 74.

T'ĒMAN, see T'UMAN.

T'IK' tak (P). Bottom, end. T'ik' drel, to close (an account). See HTD,

Introduction p. 59 and Glossary.

- T'LAFI talāfi (AP). Compensation. See HTD, Introduction and Glossary.
- T'UMAN (also T'ĒMAN) tūmān (P). Tuman, the larger denomination in the Iranian money of account. See Note on Currencies.
- T'UCHAYR tujjār (sing. tājir) (AP). Merchants. For example, see t'amghē.
- T'UJARAT' tijārat (AP). Trade. E.g. T'ujarat' ew sōvdaygarut'iwn arem, I will carry on trade and commerce (BLL 1047, f. 75). See HTD, Glossary.
- TRAF taraf (AP). Side, party (in lawsuit). (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- T'ÖMAR (Arm). Account. In Julfan commercial usage t'ōmar was the term used for an account or balance-sheet drawn up at the end of a business association or series of transactions. E.g. Maplaghn paron Petrosin voghormats hogi mōr T'aguhē elatsin ur samnay vor t'ōmarōv indz rēju elaw, the sum is Paron Petros's late mother T'aguhi's share of the proceeds, which was consigned to me with its account (ASVA, 20th Aram 104). See Chapter 5; DAH, 134.
- T'ÖFEZI ta'vizi (AP). In exchange. See HTD, Glossary.

I

ILAGHA, see YILAGHA.

IGHRAR, see EGHRAR.

IJARA (also ijray) ijārah (AP). Price, hire, wages, income. (BLL 1048, f. 3).

See also HTD, Glossary.

IFTĒDAY, see ĒFTĒDAY.

L

LANKAR (also langar) langar (P). Anchor. Lankar veṛel (langar kashīdan/āvardan), to weigh anchor; lankar gdzel (langar andākhtan/afkandan), to drop/lower anchor. (BLL 1047, f. 48; 1048, ff. 233, 297).

LANKARGAY langargāh (P). Harbour.

LĒT'R KAMBIN lettera di cambio (I). Bill of exchange. (BL, Harleian MS 7013, f. 121).

LITR, see GHITR.

KHAZINĒ khazīnah (AP). Treasury. (Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke, 73.)

KHAT'ERJAYM khāṭir-jam' (AP). Confident, in peace of mind. (Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke, 73.)

KHAT'P'AK'I khaṭ-i pākī (AP). Letter or certificate exchanged on closing an account to prevent future disagreement (PNJ, I, 164). E.g. Ews inch' ghavz khat'p'ak'i sōlama vak'ilnama ew khsēpaygrēri vor urēnts' anumn mijumnay, and whatever receipt, certificate, settlement deed, power of attorney and account there is in their joint names (ASVT, xix 87.1).

KHALI khālī (AP). Empty.

KHALIS khāliš (AP). Clean, clear. E.g. Inch' vor kharjē khalis mnay, whatever remains, clear of expenditure (i.e. the net profit) (BLL 1048, f. 74).

KHALCH, and **KHALJ**, see **KHARJ**.

KHAS khāṣṣah (AP). Royal demesne land. E.g. E khas gēghn, 5 khāṣṣah villages (ZA, 112)

KHARJ (also kharch, khalj, khalch) kharj (AP). Expenditure, cost, outgoings. E.g. Veroy maplaghn ... tann mal ew khaljin jahtan ay, the above sum is for the tax and outgoings of the ... house (BLL 1048, f. 18). Note also the verbal form kharchel, to spend. See HTD, Glossary.

KHĒR khayr (AP). Good, goodness. E.g. Tēr Astuats khēr̄n u barin arajnordests'ē amēn, Lord God guide [us] in goodness and virtue. Amen (HTD, 132). See HTD, Glossary.

KHĒRIAT' khayriyyat (AP). Welfare, safety, advantage. (BLL 1048, f. 74).

KHĒSAP (also khēsab, khēsēp, khsap, hasab and other variants) ḥisāb (AP). Account. E.g. Sovdaygar hasabi, trading account (BLL 1048, f. 193). Note the variants khēsēpagir, (written) account; khēsap arnel, to write/keep an account; khēsēp ktreel, to close an account; khēsēp tesnel, to inspect/check an account. See HTD, Glossary.

- KHURUCH** khurūj (AP). Export duty. See HTD, Glossary and GhV, 35.
- KHRID** (also khērit, khrit, etc.) (ARNEL) kharīd (kharīdan) (P). Purchase; to buy. E.g. Vorn khridēr elēl, the purchases which have been made (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- KHSAB** (also khsap, khsēb, etc.), see KHĒSAP.
- KHSUSAN** khuṣūṣan (AP). Especially, particularly. E.g. Khsusan ts'enk'in p'oghin, especially in cash (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- KHŌSHHAL** khushhāl (AP). Happy. (PNJ, I, 169).
- KHŌJAY** khvājah (P). Rich merchant.

K

KAMPI (also kambi) cambio (I). Exchange, bill of exchange. E.g. bijuk'am kambi verink', we drew a bijuk'am (q.v.) bill of exchange (ASVA, 25th Sibat' 111)

KARMIR SHILAWOR (DAFTAR) (Arm). The red-covered (account book); the name given to a merchant's principal account book. Confer libro rosso (I), red book, the name given to a special account book for merchandise accounts in medieval Italy (De Roover, "Development of accounting", 124). E.g. Hagheghat'n karmir shilawor dëftarumn grats ay, the truth is written in the red-covered account book (HTD, 221). See Chapter 5 and HTD, Introduction p. 58 and Glossary.

KARTŌ quarto (I). Quarter. E.g. Min Ch-in ch'ok' erek' kartovn, four and three-quarter per cent (PNJ, I, 113).

KONT' (also kont'o, kont'ë) ? compte (F), conto (I). Account. E.g. Mablaghs im sarmayin kont'ë ay, the sum is from my capital account (BLL 1048, f. 152).

KONTS'ENTS' consenso (I). Consensus. E.g. Mer konts'ents'ovn, with our consensus (ASVA, 5th Adam 1146).

KOPI copy (Eng). (BLL 1048, f. 294.)

KORENT' (also korënt') corrente (I). Current, in circulation. E.g. Korent' tukat, current ducat (BLL 1048, ff. 247, 251; ASVT, xix 87.1).

KUMISHION commissione (I). Commission. E.g. Iwr khor kumishioni khsëpën, from his father's commission account (ASVA, 5 Adam 1146 [Great Armenian calendar]).

KUMPANI Company (Eng). E.g. Inklizi kumpani, the English [East India] Company (BLL 1047, f. 82).

H

HABAY habah, hibah (AP) ?. Gift, present, legally registered gift. E.g. Söhl ew habay arari, I made a settlement and [gave] the [symbolic] gift (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114, Document 2).

HAZIR (also yazir) hāzīr (AP). Present. E.g. Vorn vor Ĕspahan hazir linen, whichever of them are present in Isfahan (BLL 1048, f. 5).

HAL hāl (AP). Present, actual. This term is usually found in the compounds sani hal (q.v.) and hali sk'ay (see sk'ay), both meaning coin minted in the current year. See Note on Currencies; Wilson, 304-305; HTD, Glossary.

HALAL halāl (AP). Legitimate, lawful.

HALI, see HAL.

HAKH haqq (AP). Right, due. E.g. Ĕspahan hakhbēhakhdarn hasani, it will be settled in Isfahan (BLL 1048, f. 43, Document 26). Compare the Persian saying haqq bih haqq-dār mīrasad (Rubinchik) each will get his due (literally: right comes to the one in the right). For another example, see davē. See HTD, Glossary.

HAKHDAR, see HAKH.

HAGHEGHAT' haqīqat (AP). Truth. For example, see karmir shilawor.

HAGHĔSAI (also yaghēsai) haqq al-sa'ī (AP). Fee, commission, wages. E.g. Aghazarin urn yaghēsai tvi Ch-in B, I paid Aghazar his commission of 2 per cent (HTD, 90). Synonymous with prvzhon (q.v.). See HTD, Glossary and NJHV, 107.

HAMAYBAB hamah-bāb (AP). General, universal. E.g. Hamaybab vak'il, general representative (i.e. with full authority) (BLL 1048, f. 5). Synonymous with mut'lagh (q.v.).

HAMISHAY hamīshah (P). Always.

HAMSHARIK' ham-sharīk (AP). Partner. (PNJ, I, 169).

HANRĔBLĔD Honourable (Eng). E.g. Ĕs ghafēs Astutsov gnay Lōntray hanrēblēd yndustanay kumpnūn tūnn, God-willing this coffee will go to the Honourable East India Company's house in London (IO, E/3/51/6043, f. 80).

HASAB, see KHĒSAP.

HASĒ (also hasi) hiṣṣah (AP). Lot, share. E.g. Ahtiar unents' im hasin tiranay, he has authority to take control of my share (ASVA, 22nd Shbat' 102, Document 8)

HASĒL (also HASIL) hāṣil (AP). Receipts, income, import duty. See HTD, Glossary.

HAVALA (also yavala) havālah (AP). Transfer, assignment. See Wilson, 316-317; Schacht, Introduction, 148-149; HTD, Glossary.

HARKIZ hargiz (P). Never.

HĒNDIAVAN huṇḍāwan (H). Price paid for a bill of exchange, exchange fee. See Platts, Wilson, 329; HTD, Glossary.

HĒNDVI (also yēndvi) huṇḍi (H). Hundi, bill of exchange. E.g. Hēndvis tvi, I gave this bill of exchange (BLL 1048, f. 116). See Chapter 5; Platts; Wilson, 329; HTD, Glossary.

HĒSAB, see KHĒSAP.

HUZUR (also yuzur) huḏūr (AP). Presence, attendance. E.g. K'ayhnayits' ew sahab jumiat'i yuzurumn, in the presence of the priests and the community (tribunal) (BLL 1047, f. 79). See HTD, Glossary.

HUN hūn (H. from South Indian). Hun, pagoda, name of a gold coin current in South India. See Note on Currencies; Wilson; Hobson-Jobson, "Hoon".

HUK'M (also yuk'm) ḥukm (AP). Authority, effect. In Julfan usage huk'm is used in the sense of the force or authority of a contract or document. E.g. Huk'mn bat'ilay, its force is null and void (BLL 1047, f. 179). See HTD, Glossary.

- GHABALĒ** qabālah (AP). Bill of sale. E.g. Graw dri mer tan kpts mer aygu L. t'umani ghabalēn, I gave as security the 30 tuman bill of sale for the orchard next to our house (BLL 1047, f. 122).
- GHABUZ** (see also ghavz) qabuz (sing. qabz) (AP). Receipts. (BLL 1048, f. 135).
- GHABUL** qabul (AP). Consenting, accepting. E.g. Veroy grealn Nazari vordi Datois ghabulay, The above[-written] is acceptable to me, Mazar's son Datois (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114).
- GHABZĒGI** qabzegi (P). Iranian copper coin. See Note on Currencies.
- GHAZI** qāzi (AP). Qadi, shar'i judge. E.g. Gnats'ink' ghazin mōt mer p'oghñ bñnets'ink' yink' arink', we went to the judge and recovered our money (Sarukhan, 23). See also HTD, Glossary.
- GHAT'** qaṭ' (AP). Cutting off, terminating, concluding, settling. E.g. P'unt'i sark'ari khet voghjn ghat' elav, there was a complete break with the firm's fund (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- GHAT'YILAGHAYGIR** qaṭ'-i 'alāghah (AP) + gir (Arm). According to the Astrakhan Lawbook this was the Persian vernacular term, used also by the Julfa merchants, for a quittance drawn up at the termination of a partnership, whereby both parties renounce any further claim on each other (DAH, 142-143, 156, 169). Document 2 would appear to be such a quittance.
- GHALAT'** ghalaṭ (AP). Error, mistake. (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- GHAYIL** (also ghayel) qā'il (AP). Consenting, agreeing. E.g. Datosēn min ghalat'ut'iwn ēr ararēl vor voh'vorēs ghayil ch'ink', Datois had made a mistake, which none of us would accept (ASVT, xix 87.1).
- GHAVZ** (see also ghabuz) qabz (pl. qabūz) (AP). Receipt. Synonymous with kvitants'i (q.v.) (DAH, 34). (BLL 1048, f. 135). See HTD, Glossary.
- GHARAR** qarār (AP). Basis, agreement. E.g. Veroy gharaōvn sam aḡem, I will split it on the above-mentioned basis (ASVA, 1st Nadar 79, Document ???). See HTD, Glossary.

- GHAFAY qahvah (AP). Coffee. (IO, E/3/51/60043, f. 80).
- GHERI ghayr-i (AP). Except, other than. (BLL 1048, f. 73, Document 10).
- GHĒRI ghayrī (AP). Foreigner. (PNJ, I, 42 n. 6).
- GHĒRIEAY ghayrah (AP). Other, the rest. E.g. Khum aprishumōv gherieay aprank'ōv, with raw silk and other goods (Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v XVII veke, 71).
- GHĒSMAT' qismat (AP). Part, portion, lot. Ghĕsmat gĕdzel, to draw lots (HTD, 82). See HTD, Glossary.
- GHITR (also litr) (Arm). Used as a generic term for all "pound" units of weight, as well as for some others, including the Iranian man (equal to between roughly 6 and 12 kg depending on the variety). See GhV, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 19, 21, 31; HTD, Glossary.
- GHULUGH qulluq (T). Service. E.g. Arz bandaki hasts'ē veroy sahap aghinun ghulughumn, [may we] express our obedience to the service of the above-mentioned noble masters (ASVA, 28th Ovdan 104). See HTD, Glossary.
- GHULUGHARAR qulluq (T) + arar (Arm). Servant. (PNJ, I, 144).
- GHUNSUL Consul (Eng). (Sarukhan, 20).
- GHÖVL qawl (AP). Promise, compact. (PNJ, I, 115).

CH

- CHOT' chit (H). Bit, piece. E.g. Min chot' londrinĕn, one piece of londra (cloth) (HTD, 72). See HTD, Glossary.
- CHOT' chīnt (H). Chintz, cotton fabric.

M

MABAGHI mābaqī (AP). Remainder, the rest. E.g. Mabaghin naght tay, he will give the rest of the cash (ASVA, 5th Adam 1146 Great Armenian calendar). See HTD, Glossary.

MABLAGH, see **MAPLAGH**.

MAZAR (?) Possibly derived from the Arabic root 'azara, to excuse, e.g. ma'zūr. excused, exempted; or from the root zarra, to harm, impair. Malkhasean gives the meanings, obstacle, impediment, hindrance (argelk', khoch'ndot). In Julfan documents the term sometimes occurs when someone refuses to honour a bill of exchange (in which case it is synonymous with and perhaps a scribal error for manzar [q.v.]). E.g. ??? In one instance it appears in a different meaning: A sam im mets aghjik Nanajanin vor ew yaraĵ tvēl em gir ew mazar unim, one share to my oldest daughter Nanajan, which I have already given her, and which I have a written record and mazar (PNJ, I, 145, Document 1)

MAZBUN maẓmun (AP). Content, meaning, purport. Commercial letters, contracts and bills were invariably written in duplicate, or even triplicate, for security. The standard way of expressing this in the Julfa documents is by the phrase: Girs erku grvets'av min mazbun, this document was written in two identical copies (literally: this document was written twice [with] one contents) (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114).

MAZUL ma'zūl (AP). Retired, relieved of duty. (ZA, 62; PNJ, I, 119).

MATLAB (also mat'lap) maṭlab (AP). Subject, topic.

MAL māl (AP). Tax. Often in combination: mal u t'avĵin, maliĵhat', gkxhaymal. (ZA, 80, 94; ASVA, 20th Nadar 103, Document 12).

MAHDASI (also maghdesi) maqdasī (AP). Pilgrim, one who has performed the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. (BLL 1047, f. 8). See HTD, Glossary.

MAHRUM, see **MARHUM**.

MAYA (also mayay, maye) māyah (AP). Capital, principal of a sum. Synonymous with sarmaeay (q.v.) and with asl (1) (q.v.). E.g. Shakh ew mayay,

profit and principal (BLL 1048, f. 51). See HTD, Glossary.

MANZAR (?) Possibly derived from Arabic root nažara. The term occurs when a bill of exchange is not honoured by the payor and is returned to the drawer. E.g. T'ë ... maskur barat'n nkal lini kam manzarov yet goy, if the above bill is refused or returned with manzar (BLL 1048, f. 139, 207).

MAPLAGH (also mablagħ) mablagħ (AP). Sum, amount. E.g. Veroy maplagħn inch' vakht uzi ur ants'eal mudat'övn bi özr tam, I will pay the above sum with interest and without excuse whenever he requires [it] (BLL 1047, f. 11). See HTD, Glossary.

MARCH'IL (Julfa dialect). Marchil, marsillie. The name given to a wide variety of European silver coins current in the Levant and Indian Ocean. The word most commonly refers to silver piasters or dollars, but is also used for gold coins. The name derives from the name of the port Marseille, from where great quantities of bullion (especially Spanish and Mexican piasters) were exported to the Middle East. See Note on Currencies; HTD, Glossary; GhV, 26, 32.

MASLAYHAT' maşlahat (AP). Benefit; what is best; expediency. (BL, Harleian MS 7013, f. 116).

MASKUR mažkūr (AP). Above-mentioned. Synonymous with veroy hisheal (Arm). E.g. Im kenakits' maskur paron Barsegh, my husband, the above-mentioned Barsegh (BLL 1047, f. 95). See HTD, Glossary.

MASRAF maşraf (AP). Expenditure, outgoings. See HTD, Glossary.

MARAMAT' (also marhamat') marammat (AP). Repair, maintenance. E.g. Ews khndrem vor im vordik'n misht im hogetun maramat'n anen, and I ask that my sons always keep my hospital in good repair (PNJ, I, 145, Document 1).

MARIFAT' ma'rifat (AP). Knowledge. E.g. Sarhadin marifat'övn, with Sarhad's knowledge (BLL 1047, f. 135). See HTD, Glossary.

MARHUM (also mahrum and marum) Marhūm (AP). Late, deceased.

MAFEGH muvāfiq (AP). Conforming to, corresponding to. Synonymous with the commoner hamemat (Arm). E.g. Savatës aslin mafegħ ēr, this copy corresponded to the original (BLL 1048, f. 5).

MIHR, see MÖHR.

MIJOVI (also mijövi, mijöni) (Julfa dialect). Joint, shared. E.g. Khaljn mijöni lini, let the expenditure be shared (PNJ, I, 145).

MHREL, see MÖHREL.

MNBAD min ba'd (AP). Hereafter. (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114).

MUDAT' muddat (AP). Period, time; interest. E.g. Khererin amsën G p'ay mudat' hasap line, interest will be calculated at three-quarters of one percent per month (ASVA, 1st Ghamar 111. See DAH, 38, 48; HTD, Glossary).

MUZARABAT' (also muzarbay) mužārabat (AP). Commenda parntership. E.g. Voghjin mayek'ots'umn muzarabat'i ew mudat'i shakhërurn mez hakk ch'kay, We have no claim to any of the interest or partnership profits on any of the capital (ASVT, xix 87.1).

MUT'LAGH mutlaq (AP). Unrestricted, absolute, general, full. E.g. Vak'il mut'lagh (vakil-i mutlaq), general representative with full authority. (ASVT, xix 87.1). Synonymous with hamaybab (q.v.).

MULK' (also mlk') milk (AP). Property. For an example see ajnas.

MUNT' monte (I). Bond, as in Monte Vecchio. (PNJ, I, 121).

MUSHTARI mushtari (AP). Customer. (PNJ, I, 169).

MUNJARA, see MUJRA.

MUSHAKHAS mushakkhāş (AP). Defined, definite. E.g. Maskur Azzin hayrenik' mayrenik' p'oghën mushakhas ararink', we determined [the amount of] the above-mentioned Aziz's inherited money (ASVT, xix 87.1).

MUJRA (also mujara, mujray, munjara) mujrā (AP or H). Carried to account, credit, credited. E.g. Tvi paron aghay Minasin vor Bankalay paron Mirzē khsēpumn mujray tay, I gave it to Paron Minas to credit to Paron Mirzē's account in Bengal (BLL 1948, f. 73, Document ???)

MUSË monsieur (F). Monsieur, Mr. E.g. Frānskisi k'apt'an musē fuṛnin Charlō navumn, on the ^ship Charlo [commanded by] the French captain, Monsieur Fournes (?) (BLL 1047, f. 77, Document 6).

MUSTAMSAK mustamsak (AP). Held or bound to. (ASVT, xix 87.1)

MUSTĒĢHAL mustaghal (AP). A farm or estate which produces corn; source of subsistence. (PNJ, I, 144, Document 1).

MŌT'ABAR (also mōht'apar, mōt'aybar, mawt'abar, etc.) mu'tabar (AP). Honoured, creditable, true, authentic. E.g. Savats mōht'abar savatin het hamematēr, this copy corresponds to the authenticated copy (BLL 1048, f. 139). Mawt'abar vakalatan, as the credited/authorised representative (ASVT, xix 87.1).

MŌHR (also mir, mihir) muhr (AP). Seal. Synonymous with knik' (Arm). Note also the verbal form mōhrel (also mhrel, mērel), to seal. E.g. Ch'un Anamis asl mirn im vordi Shamirn tarēlēr barat's ēs mrovs mhrets'i verj, because my son Shamir had taken my main seal (asl mir) I Anam sealed this bill with this seal. (BLL 1047, f. 201). See HTD, Glossary.

MŌSUM mawsim (AP). Season, time of year; monsoon. (BLL 1048, f. 3). See HTD, Glossary.

MSAVI musāvī (AP). Equal. (BLL 1048, f. 285).

Y

YĔNDVI, see HĔNDVI.

YILAGHAY (also ilaghay) 'alāghah (AP). Interest, business, concern. E.g. Indz Petrosi vordi Sargsis ilaghay ch'i kay, I, Petros's son Sargis, have no interest [in it] (ASVT, xix 87.1). See also ghat'ilaghaygir. See HTD, Glossary.

YUZUR, see HUZUR.

N

NAGHT naqd (AP). Cash. E.g. Naght ew jins, cash and kind (BLL 1048, f. 5).
See HTD, Glossary.

NACH'ARANAL nāchār (shudan). To be forced to, to have no alternative.
(Sarukhan, 21)

NAFAGHA nafagah (AP). The necessary expenses for living; expenditure; stipend, maintenance. (PNJ, I, 144).

NĔKHR narkh, nirkh (AP). Rate, price. E.g. Ĕřuzi nkhr, the current rate (ASVA, 1st Hamira 96, Document 21).

NKAL nakl (AP). Breach, violation (of a promise or agreement). In Julfan usage this term is applied particularly to refusal to honour a bill of exchange. (BLL 1047, f. 60; 1048, f. 139, 193). See DAH, 176.

NŌKHSAT' nuskhah (AP). Copy.

NŌTAR (also nōdar) notario (I). Notary. (ASVA, 5th Adam 1146)

sāhib-i ictibār (AP).
 Possessor of esteem,
 trusted representative

SHABĒP'ARE (also sah bē paṛē, sabi p'arē, shay bē p'arē, sapi p'are, etc.)

~~Derivation and meaning obscure.~~ This term occurs frequently in the Julfa documents, ~~and it is clear from context that it is~~ ^{being} broadly synonymous with ōrdni, agent. E.g. Aghamalin ōrdnun kam sabip'arē, [I will pay] Aghamal's agent or deputy (BLL 1048, f. 7, 10, 86, 158).

SHATĒR shāṭir (AP). Messenger, runner, courier. (IO, E/3/51/6193, f. 397).

SHAHNADERI Shāh-nādirī (P). Coin minted during reign of Nadir Shah. See

Note on Currencies.

SHAGHAVAT', see SHAFAGHAT'.

SHANBAKHU, see BARAT'.

SHART' sharṭ (AP). Condition. Note also sharṭ'lama (sharṭ-nāmah AP), written agreement, contract. (BLL, 1048 f. 3).

SHARAN shar'an (AP). Conforming to the shari'ah. (ASVT, xix 87.1).

SHAFAGHAT' (also shēfayghat', shaghavat') (ARNEL) shafaqat (AP).

Indulgence, kindness, favour. In Julfa documents this is a usual term for asking someone to perform a service, such as to make a payment. (ASVT, b.xx, f. 31).

SHĒSHIEK' shish-yak (P). According to Tēr-Yovhaneants' this refers to the one-sixth of a woman's estate that went to her husband in Iranian practice (PNJ, I, 145 and note, Document 1)

U

UZR, see ÖZR.

CH'

CH'ALNI (also ch'lēn) chalni (H). Current, circulating (of coin). Synonymous with ērajj. See Note on Currencies and HTD, Glossary.

CH'UN chūn (P). Because. Also chunk'i (chūn-kih). (BLL 1047, f. 70). See HTD, Glossary.

P

PUTIKAT (also putikat') putikat (H). The security on a secured, or insured loan. "The putikat is given by the payee of a bill to the obligor who then (or after a specified interval) pays the amount of the bill" (Platts). In Julfan usage putikat and juk'am are interchangeable (BLL 1047, f. 8).

PRVZHON (also prvizhon) ^{provision (Fr)}
~~(provvigione (It))~~ Commission, fee. Synonymous with haghēsai (q.v.). (DAH, 167, 169).

J

JAHAṬṬAN (also jahtan, jat'tan) jihatdan (TP). Relating to, concerning. (BLL 1048 f.3). See HTD, Glossary.

JAM (also jamay) jam' (AP). Total. See HTD, Glossary.

JANIB (also janib) jānib (AP). Side; party. Ays janib (in janib), this party, i.e. I or me. See HTD, Glossary.

JINS jins (AP). Kind. See naht for commercial usage. See HTD, Glossary.

JUGHAP (also jughab) javāb (AP). Answer. (Sarukhan, 21). See HTD, Glossary.

JUMIAT' jamā'at (AP). Community. E.g. K'ayhnayits' ew sahab jumiat'i yuzurumn, in the presence of the priests and the community (BLL 1047, f. 79). See HTD, Glossary.

JUK'AM (also chuk'am) jokham (H). Security; property; enterprise, venture, risk; the thing risked or put to hazard (Platts). In Julfan usage this term is invariably used in the context of secured and unsecured bills of exchange. See avak'; Chapter 5; Wilson.

R

RAZI, see ĒRAZI.

RAKHTAR, see ĒRAKHTAR.

RAYICH, see ĒRAIJ.

RASAT', see ĒRASAT'.

RĒJU (also ērĕju) rujū' (AP). Returning, restitution, consigning. (ASVA, 20th Aram 104, Document 14)

RUZLAMA, Ruznama, see ĒRUZLAMA.

RUP'I, see ĒRUP'I.

RSAT', see ĒRASAT'.

SABIP'ARĒ, see SHABĒP'ARĒ.

SALAMAT' salāmat (AP). Safety, security, good health. (PNJ, I, 144, Document 1; BLL 1047, f. 62, Document 24).

SAHAP (also sahab) ṣāhib (AP). Owner, master; title of respect. The word sahap, often contracted to shp is very common in Julfa documents as a title of respect.

SAM ^{sum (Eng)}
~~summe (H)~~ ? Share, part. E.g. Veroy ghararovn sam lini, let it be divided up on the above basis (BLL 1047, f. 75)

SAYIL (also sayir) sāyir (AP). Other, remaining. E.g. Sayil zk'ur ōnas varēsnots', the other male and female heirs (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114, Document 2).

SAN san (H). A year (of an era or reign). Sani hal, this year's, current. Used of currency to specify coin minted in the current year. See Note on Currencies; Wilson.

SANAD (also sanat) sanad (AP). Document, order, promissory note. In Julfa commercial dialect, sanad is the usual term for a bill of hand or promissory note.

SARAF ṣarrāf (AP). Banker, money changer. See HTD, Glossary.

SARĒSHTAY sar-rishtah (P). Record, account. (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114).

SAVAD savād (AP). Copy, transcript.

SARBĒMŌR sar-bih-muhr (P). Sealed. Used particularly of deposits or consignments of money. (BLL 1048, f. 106). See HTD, Glossary.

SARMAYA (also sarmayey, sarmayĕk') sarmāyah (AP). Capital. In Julfan usage this term is used both generally for a merchant's capital or wealth, and in specific sense to refer to the initial investment made in a commenda partnership. See Chapter 3 and HTD, Glossary.

SARVADA sarva'dah (AP). End of a period, expiry (or payment) date. See HTD, Glossary.

SARK'AR sarkār (P). See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the use of this term in

Julaf commercial documents. Note also sark'ari and sark'arut'iwn.

SAFAR safar (AP). Travel, a journey. (BLL 1047, f. 22)

SEGHAY (ASEL) şighah (AP). Form, wording, formula. E.g. Seghay ats'ink', we pronounced the legal formula (ASVT, xix 87.1).

ŞĒI (also sēhi) şaḥīh (AP). Right, correct. See HTD, Glossary.

SK'AY sikkah (AP). Mint, new minted (of coin). See Note on Currencies.

ŞÖVDAGAR sawdāgar (P). Merchant.

SŌHL şulh (AP). Peace, reconciliation. (ASVT, 87.1). Also sōlama, quittance, deed of settlement. See HTD, GLOSSARY.

V

VADA va'dah (AP). Period, payment period, usance.

VARĒS vāriş (AP). Heir, beneficiary. (ASVA, 3rd Avelyats' 114, Document 2)

VAK'ALAT'AN vakālatan (AP). By authority, by power of attorney.

VAK'IL vakīl (AP). Agent, deputy, representative. Vak'ilagir, power of attorney.

T

TŌKAT ducat (I) ?. Ducat; European gold coin; exported as bullion to the Middle East and South Asia. See Note on Currencies.

P'

P'AY pa'ī (H). Quarter of an ana; and by extension fourth part of any unit.
Frequently used in accounts and bills, particularly to express interest rates.

K'

K'AT'A khātā (H). Account, ledger. See Note on Accounting.

K'AT'AYĒRŪZNAWA Double entry account book containing both a journal and
ledger. See Note on Accounting.

K'ALANT'AR kalāntar (P). Community leader, mayor. See Chapters 1 and 3 on
the kalāntar of Julfa.

K'AMAL, see T'AMAM.

K'ARSAZI (ARNEL) kārsāzī (P). To pay. (BLL 1048, f. 157).

K'ĒT'KHUDA kadkhudā (P). Headman, paterfamilias, community leader.

K'SUR kusūr (AP). Pieces, fragments, effects. (BLL 1047, f. 79).

K'AWL kull (AP). All, universal,

F

FARD (also fart, bard) fard (AP). One, unit, item. In Julfa commercial usage it refers particularly to an individual entry in account book.

Ö

ÖZR 'uzr (AP). Apology, excuse, objection. In Julfa documents this word appears very frequently in the phrases özr ch'berem, I will make no excuse (or raise no objection); biözr, without excuse, without fail, unconditionally.

ÖNAS unāş (AP). Female. For examples see zk'ur.

ÖRDNI Derivation obscure, possibly from ordine (I). In Julfan usage an ördni may be either a letter giving a merchant instructions, or it may refer to the merchant himself, meaning agent, commission agent, representative. See DAH, 32, 38, 152-153.

ÖRFI 'urfı (AP). Customary, civil or royal law, as opposed to shar'ı religious law.

NOTE ON ACCOUNTING

The extensive use of the *commenda* partnership in Julfan commerce has already been noted, as has the necessity in this type of partnership of an accurate and verifiable system of accounting on the basis of which profits could be calculated and split between the parties at the termination of the contract.¹ There is evidence from a number of sources of the existence in Safavi Iran of a developed system of commercial and official bookkeeping. Chardin writes, for example, that a merchant who had been robbed could make a claim for his loss from the local governor, provided he established the amount lost by oath and from his books.²

Concerning seventeenth and eighteenth century Armenian accounting, the Astrakhan Lawbook tells us that a merchant's account book had the force of evidence in law, so that it was not necessary to include in a will or probate any wealth or property recorded in an account book.³ The importance to merchants of knowledge of bookkeeping skills is further evident from the sections on practical commercial arithmetic contained in a number of contemporary merchants' handbooks and mathematical works.⁴ A considerable number of Julfan accounts of various kinds have survived, revealing a sophisticated system of double-entry bookkeeping with an extensive specialised vocabulary. The best introduction to this complex and little-

1 Chapter 4, p. 218 above. See also F.C. Lane, "Investment and usury", in *Venice and History*, Baltimore, 1966, 58; A.L. Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit in Medieval Islam*, Princeton, 1970, 237.

2 J. Chardin, *Voyages de Chardin* ed. L. Langlès 10 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1811, VI, 125. See also, L. Fekete, *Einführung in die persische Paläographie; 101 persische Dokumente*, ed. G. Hazai, Budapest, 1977, 462; 'Abd al-Fattah Fūmanī Gilānī, Mullā, *Tārīkh-i Gilān*, ed. M. Sutūdeh, Tehran, 1349, 199, 215-216; Zak'aria K'anak'erts'i, *Khronika*, trans. and ed. M.O. Darbinyan-Melikyan, Moscow, 1969, 107.

3 DAH, 53, 168.

4 M. Aghassian and K. Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien dans l'Océan Indien aux 17e et 18e siècles", in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, ed. D. Lombard and J. Aubin, Paris, 1988, 163-164.

explored subject is in Khach'ikyan and P'ap'azyan's introduction to Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan's account book.⁵

A merchant's principal account book was known as his *daftar* (or *karmir shilawor daftar*, red-covered account book, possibly a borrowing from the Italian *libbro rosso*⁶). Such account books comprised two sections: a day-book or journal, called *ēruzlama* in Julfa dialect (*rūznāmah* (P)), in which transactions were recorded in chronological order, and a ledger, known as *k'at'ay* (*khātā* (H)), containing accounts pertaining to individual people or consignments of goods.⁷ In some *daftar*s the two sections are continually cross-referred by page number. There is evidence that in addition to the day-book merchants generally also kept a note book (*eydasht* in Julfa dialect, from *yād-dāsh*t (P)) in which they jotted things down in rough before copying them into the *daftar* at a convenient time. It was on the basis of the *daftar* that the profits on a *commenda* were calculated, the ledger section also allowing for the calculation of profits on individual consignments of goods, though in a rather crude way, since only direct costs were recorded (e.g. purchase and sale price, processing costs, transport and duties), without any allowance for hidden costs such as time and labour.

The merchant's *daftar* was only one type of account, and there are numerous other terms to describe various other kinds: *hasab* (*ḥisāb* (AP)); *kont'*, (*conto* (It)); *hashiw* (Arm); *t'omar* (Arm, originally from Greek); *sarēsh*tay (*sar-rishta*h (P), record, account). It is often difficult to establish whether a given term is used in a generic sense, perhaps broadly synonymous with other terms, or whether it has a particular technical meaning - *t'omar*, for example, seems mostly to be used for a kind of summary account drawn up at the conclusion of a partnership or other association.

5 HTD, 58-60. See also PNJ, I, 163-164.

6 R. de Roover, "The development of accounting prior to Luca Pacioli", in *Business, Banking and Economic Thought: selected studies of Raymond de Roover*, ed. J. Kirshner, Chicago and London, 1974, 124.

7 HTD, 58; DAH, 132-133.

The same difficulty is met in other areas of accounting terminology, which is generally polyglot with Arabo-Persian terms predominating: *balnes* (*bilancia* (It), balance); *taraydzi* (*tarāzū* (P), balance); *jam* (*jam'* (AP), total, but in Julfan usage also meaning credit, the credit column of an account); *kharj* (*kharj* (AP), outgoing, expense, debit, the debit column of an account); *yires* (*eres* (Arm), face, side or sheet of an account); *fard* (*fard* (AP), one, unit, item, in Julfan usage a single account, or page or sheet of an account); *ghalam* (*qalam* (AP), pen, section, in Julfan usage an entry in $\frac{1}{n}$ account); *dafay* (*daf'ah* (AP), item); *babat'* (*bābat* (AP), item); *talik'* (Arm, debt, debit); *t'alap* (*ṭalab* (AP), claim, credit); *amat* (*āmad* (P), income, credit); *ḡraft* (*raft*, (P), outgoing, debit); *mujra* (*mujrā* (AP), carried to account, credited); *mabaghi* (*mābāghī* (AP), remainder, surplus, profit); *barak'at'* (*barakat* (AP), bounty, profit, gain); *ḡfteday* (*ibtidā* (AP), beginning [of an account]); *tik'* (*tak* (P), end [of an account]).

It has only been possible here to give a brief introduction to the system and terminology of Julfan commercial bookkeeping. A thorough investigation into Julfan accounting practice, its origins and relation to other accounting systems in the Middle East, Mediterranean and South Asia would undoubtedly be a worthwhile undertaking, and might reveal a great deal about shared features and cross-fertilisation among commercial traditions.

NOTE ON CURRENCIES

This note does not aim to provide a detailed description of the many coins and moneys of account mentioned in the Julfa documents. It will attempt only a general survey of some of the principal monetary terms encountered, and a list of the principal currencies with an indication of the general range of their values against the Iranian *dīnār*, as these are revealed in the Julfan sources.

Julfan accounts were invariably kept in moneys of account. In Iran the two denominations used were the *dīnār* (always called the *dian* in Julfan sources) and the *tūmān* (1 tuman = 10,000 dinar). Neither of these existed as a coin, but in theory the Safavi coinage was made up of multiples of the dinar, though the value of actual coins was not infrequently lower than their theoretical standard. In North India Julfa merchants seem generally to have kept their accounts in rupees (thus when Hovhannes Ter-Davt'yan arrived in Surat from Bandar 'Abbas his account book changed over from dinars to rupees), and in South India the *hun* was sometimes used.

Since the value of coins varied according to both age and the quality of the minting it was always necessary to express the exchange rate between the money of account and any debits or credits made in a particular species of real coin, or alternatively to specify what variety of coin was acceptable at its face value (i.e. with an exchange rate of 1:1 with the money of account). It is therefore usual in account books and bills to find coins precisely designated in terms of type, mint and age.

The principal Iranian coin encountered in the Julfa documents is the *'abbāsī*, of which several different kinds were minted at various times in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁸ Documents thus often specify *'abbāsīs* as *afdongi* (*haft-dāngī*), *shahnaderi* (from the reign

⁸ *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, "'Abbasi".

of Nādir Shāh), etc. It is comparatively unusual to find the mint specified in references to 'abbāsīs, which perhaps suggests that there was little, or at least no consistent, difference in quality between the output of different mints.⁹ Occasionally, however, coin from the Huwayza mint is specified. A number of terms are used to specify the age or quality of a coin: *sk'ay*, (*sikkah* (AP), mint) and *t'azay sk'ay* (*tāzah* (P), fresh, new) both indicate newly minted coin, probably meaning that only coin minted in the current year was acceptable. *Ėraj* (*vā'ij* (AP), current) and *bazar Ėraj* mean current (in the market), referring to the informally established standard of coin that was accepted in market transactions.

In India the conventions were slightly different. Merchants almost invariably specify both the mintage of the coin (Surat, Shahjahanabad [Delhi], Agra, Arcot, Maqṣudabad, etc.) and its age: using, in addition to *t'azay sk'ay*, *hali sk'ay*, and *sani hal* (*hāl-sāl* (H), this year's) to refer to new coin, and *ch'alni* (*chalani* (H), current, in circulation) for older coins still current at a discount.¹⁰

European silver coins of the piaster/dollar type are referred to as *march'il* (from Marseille, one of the principal ports in the export of bullion to the Middle East), a generic term covering a wide range of currencies, which is often further qualified by a variety of sometimes obscure terms.¹¹ Where it is possible to identify precisely which coin is being described by this all-embracing term, it generally turns out to be the Spanish or Mexican piaster, often called *flori* and *lak'ri march'il* respectively in the Julfan sources. Gold coins of the ducat/sequin type are generally referred to by the generic *tokat* (though specific terms such as *unkri* = *ungaro*, Hungarian ducat, and *ashrafi*, Ottoman ducat are sometimes met [though the Ottoman silver coin, the *aḳçe* never appears]). The adjective *korent'* (*corrente* (It), current, in circulation) is

⁹ See also, J. Chardin, *Voyages de Chardin...*, ed. L. Langlès, 10 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1811, III, 156 and n. 2.

¹⁰ T. Raychaudhuri and I. Habib (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. I, Cambridge, 1982, 361; Wilson, "chalani", "hal", "sikkah").

¹¹ Ghukas Vanandets'i applies the term *march'il* to most of the currencies of Western Europe, GhV, 26, 32.

sometimes applied to ducats. It is probable that the relative simplicity of the terminology for ducats indicates that the Julfa merchants did not encounter such a wide variety of coins of this type, a hypothesis that is supported by historical evidence that suggests that the Venetian ducat (*zecchino*) was considerably the most important coin of this type in Iran and the Indian Ocean. Occasionally, and confusingly, *tokat* is used for silver piaster/dollar type coins, and *març'il* for gold ducat type coins.

Iran

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| dīnār | money of account | |
| qazbagī | copper coin | 5 dinar |
| bīstī | silver coin | 10 dinar |
| shāhī | silver coin | 50 dinar |
| muhammadī (often called mahmūdī) | silver coin | 100 dinar |
| lārī | silver "coin" | 125-150 dinar |
| 'abbāsī | silver coin | 150-200 dinar |
| panj shāhī | silver coin | 250 dinar |
| dah shāhī | silver coin | 500 dinar |
| hazār dīnārī | silver coin | 1,000 dinar |
| tūmān | money of account | 10,000 dinar |

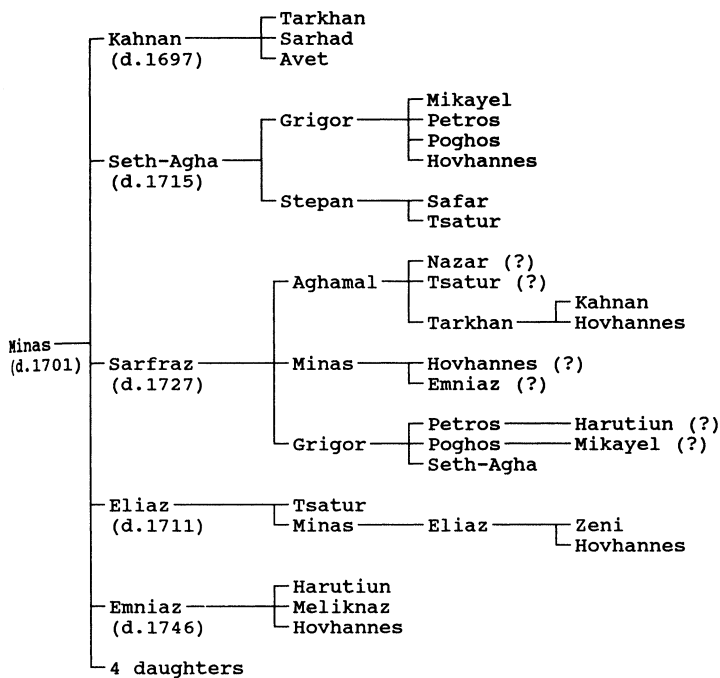
India

| | | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| rupee | silver coin and money of account | 370-550 dinar |
| hun (pagoda) | gold coin (of several varieties) | approx. 3-5 rupees |

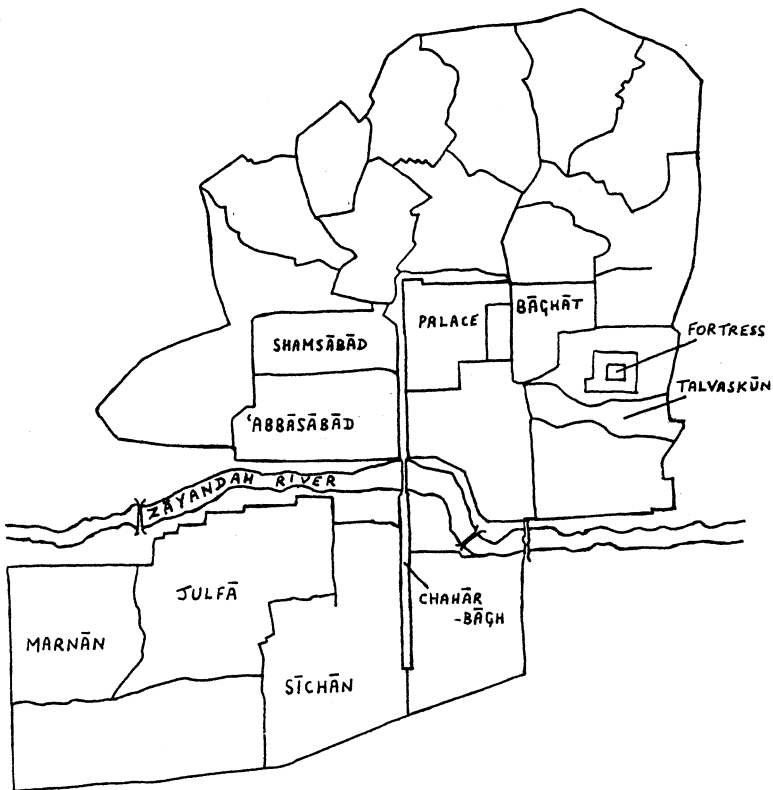
European coins

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---------------|
| Venetian ducat | gold coin | 1,600 dinar |
| Hungarian ducat | gold coin | 1,500 dinar |
| ashrafi | Ottoman gold coin | 1,400 dinar |
| zoloto (isellotte) | originally Polish silver coin ¹² | 450 dinar |
| piaster/dollar | silver coin (of many varieties) | 600-900 dinar |

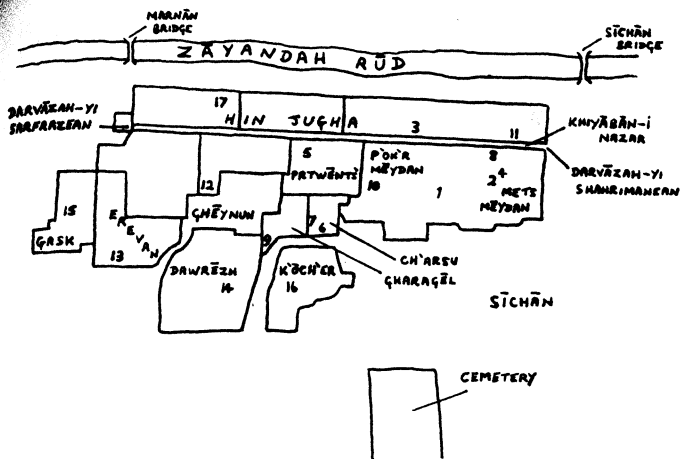
¹² In Julfan sources the *zoloto* is met chiefly in the trade of eighteenth century Basra, whose monetary system was a complex amalgam of Ottoman and Safavi elements, and where the *zoloto* was apparently used also as a money of account. Paris, Archives Nationales, *Série colonies*, F^{2b}10, Mémoires of Gilles Desforges and Petro de Perdrian.



Family tree of the Khoja Minasean family (male lines)



Map 2 Isfahan and New Julfa, showing the quarters with an Armenian population in the 17th Century (Based on P. Coste's map, published in 1867)

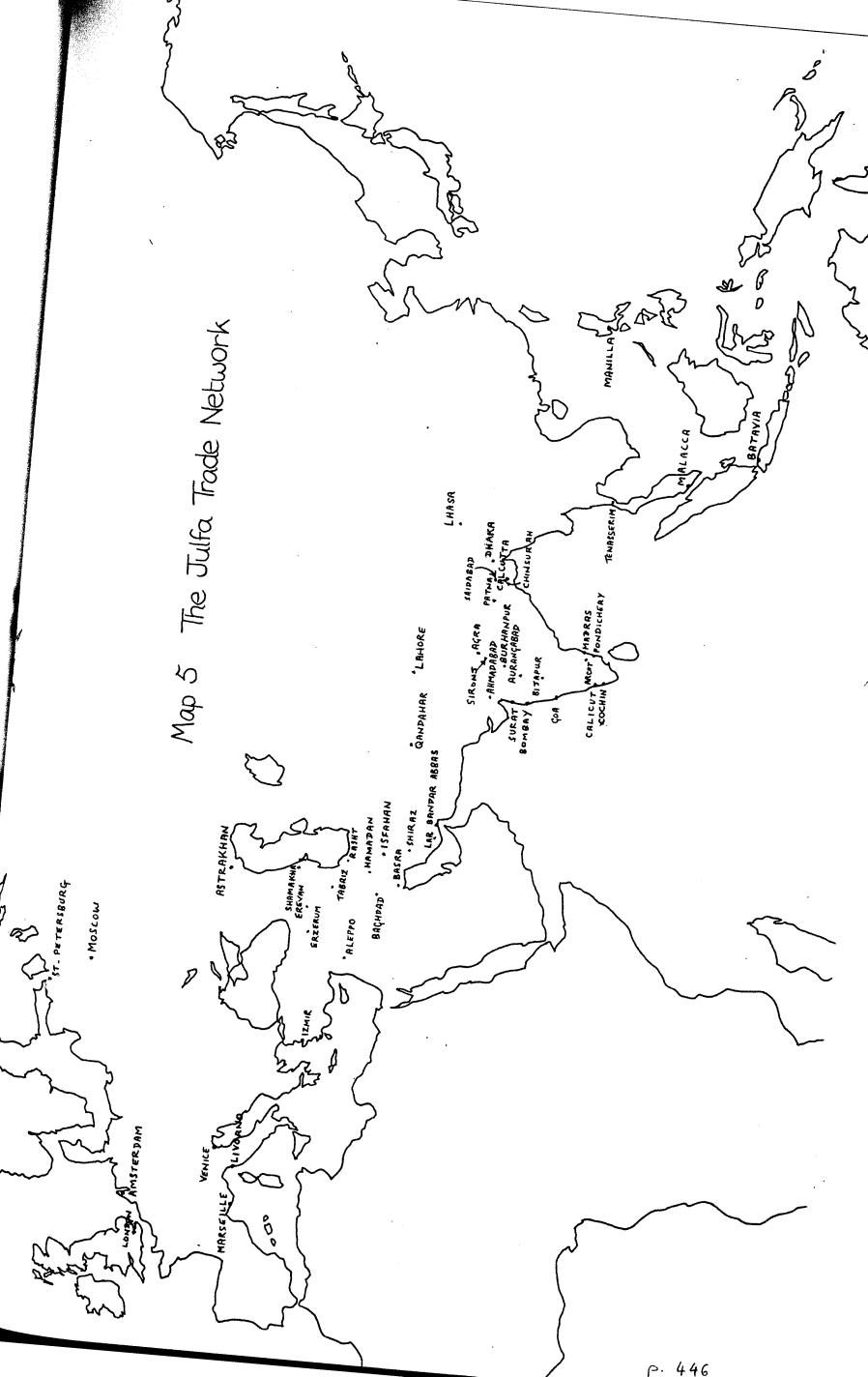


Key

| No. | Name | Quarter | Foundation Date |
|-----|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Amenap'rkich' Vank' | Mets Mēydan | 1606 ? |
| 2 | S. Yakob | Mets Mēydan | 1606 |
| 3 | S. Gēorg | Hin Juĝha | 1611/2 |
| 4 | S. Astuatsatsin | Mets Mēydan | 1613/4 |
| 5 | S. Step'anos | Prtwēnts' | not later than 1614/5 |
| 6 | S. Yovhannēs Mkrkich' | Ch'arsu | 1620/1 |
| 7 | S. Katarinē | Ch'arsu | 1623/4 |
| 8 | S. Betghehēm | Mets Mēydan | 1628/9 |
| 9 | S. Nikoghayos Hayrapet | Ğharagēl | not later than 1630 |
| 10 | S. Lusavorich' | P'ok'r Mēydan | 1633 ? |
| 11 | S. Yakob | Hin Juĝha | 1634/5 |
| 12 | Jezvit' | Ğharagēl | 1652 |
| 13 | Amenap'rkich' | Erevan | 1659/60 |
| 14 | S. Lusavorich' | Dawrēzh | 1659/60 |
| 15 | S. Yakob Baghat'ay | Erevan | 1666/7 |
| 16 | S. Nersēs | K'öch'er | 1667/8 |
| 17 | S. T'ōmay | Hin Juĝha | 1691/2 |

Map 3 New Julfa : Quarters and Churches
(based on Karapetian, Isfahan : New Julfa, fig. 4)

Map 5 The Julfa Trade Network



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