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### Armenian Merchants in the City of Jolfa and Their Role in the Flourishing of Trade in the Safavid State ( 1588-1629 )

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#### **Abstract:**

The reign of Shah Abbas I (1587-1629) was marked by several changes to the constants on which the Safavid state was based, which made his state a great political, commercial and economic power, although these changes eventually led to the fall of the Safavid state and its exposure to the Afghan occupation in 1722 AD, but The impact left by Shah Abbas the First, his actions and his decisions remains what made him worthy of the title given to him by historians, which is (Abbas the Great). The Shah took it during his reign because the Armenians had made the city of Isfahan In particular, and the Safavid state in general, a huge and prosperous commercial base because of the commercial potential of the Armenians and their intelligence, which they gained through their ancient city of Jolfa, which had a commercial location that made the Armenians natural traders, and the Shah treated the Armenians of Jolfa Aras in the way that made him win their loyalty, as well as the Shah's keenness not to make them feel In exile in the neighborhood that he built for them in Isfahan, which he named after their old city, and made housing there exclusively for Armenians. The Shah was also keen to practice their religious faith freely, and even built a huge church for them to practice their religious rituals, and this was not a strange thing for Shah Abbas The first whose era was characterized by extreme religious tolerance towards religious minorities in Iran.

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#### **The introduction**

The reign of Shah Abbas I 1588-1629 was marked by several changes to the constants on which the

Safavid state was based, which made his state a great political, commercial and economic power, state and its exposure to the Afghan although these changes eventually led to the fall of the Safavid occupation in 1722 AD, but The legacy left by Shah Abbas I, his deeds and decisions, is what made (him worthy of the title given to him by historians, which is (Abbas the Great.

tural heritage that made Shah Abbas I choose the city of Isfahan as the capital of his state, the decision to displace the Armenians and bring them to Isfahan was one of the best decisions taken by the Shah during his reign because the Armenians made the city of Isfahan in particular and the Safavid state in general a huge and prosperous commercial base because of the possibility The commercial Armenians and their intelligence, which they gained through their migration, made the Armenians natural traders, and the ancient city of Jolfa, which had a commercial location, Shah treated the Armenians of Jolfa Aras in a way that made him gain their loyalty. The Shah also made sure that they did not feel alienated in the neighborhood he built for them in Isfahan, which he did after their city. He made living there exclusively for Armenians, and the Shah was also keen to name practice their religious faith freely, and even built a huge church for them to practice their religious rituals.

gathered to choose the subject of the study, including the There are subjective and objective factors desire to see the reasons and factors related to the migration of Armenians to the city of Isfahan during and the the reign of Shah Abbas I, which became one of the most important and successful decisions most influential on the trade and prosperity of the Safavid state, as well as knowledge of the commercial conditions before the reign of Shah Abbas I and how they were made The Armenian commercial force that commercial convoys immigration from Isfahan and the Safavid state are a great commercial flock to from all sides, in addition to the desire to know the reasons for this migration, one of the most important reasons of which was protecting the Armenians from the danger of the Ottomans, who were 1 methods of violence and cruelty towards them during the rule of the Ottoman Empire practicing all over the Armenia plateau.

The problem of the study stems from the fact that there are many reasons that made Shah Abbas I them and benefit from their commercial expertise to revive attract the Armenians to his state to protect the trade of the Safavid state, which began with turmoil and deterioration as a result of the wars that led to the fall of the Safavid state went through against the Ottomans and Uzbeks, as well as the political turmoil was represented by the phenomenon of the intervention of the Qizilbash in The rule and the installation of the Shah over the country, which Shah Abbas was able to solve by eliminating the threat of the temporary and positive benefits for the Safavid state at the Qizilbash , although this decision carried some time, but it was one of the decisions that ultimately led to the fall of the Safavid state and its exposure to the Afghan occupation in 1722 AD .

ence of the presence of the Armenians to the The importance of the study stems from the importance of the Safavid state and how they contributed to the development and recovery of the Safavid trade because of their commercial experience, as well as the dealings of Shah Abbas the First with them, who was by religious tolerance with them, which constituted an important phenomenon in how distinguished countries deal with the minorities in them and benefit from their experience and deal with them with respect and not subjected to persecution tolerance So that the state can benefit from them and ensure that they are safe and violence.

The research included an introduction, four chapters , and a conclusion. The nature of the study necessitated reference to time sequences that preceded the emergence of the Armenians and their



down to the Persian Gulf, and from Diyarbakir the road diverges from Mosul to Aleppo and <sup>(2)</sup> Alexandria on the Mediterranean, as well as a land road that leads to Istanbul.

he Safavid state, the Aq Qwenlu, the establishment of t-over Al <sup>(3)</sup> And after Ismail's first victory stability of its political conditions, and the spread of security in Iran, trade flourished, but it did not rise to the level it was in previous eras, as trade routes departed from Tabriz through northern Iran to the, <sup>(4)</sup> the traditional Silk Road through Khorasan to Samarkand and from there to China (4east, following t as Iranian trade declined due to various political factors, including security turmoil and political and in the period that followed the collapse military conflict between the conflicting parties over the region and this was an obstacle to the development and prosperity of Iranian, <sup>(5)</sup> of the Ilkhanid Empire Safavi The period of the unification of Iran and the -trade, whose parts were reunited by Ismail Al he Safavids made important geographical discoveries that contributed in one way or emergence of t another to influencing Iranian trade, as global trade and its routes moved thanks to these geographical of the ancient world, to the oceans discoveries and their progress from the Mediterranean Sea, the heart <sup>(6)</sup> Atlantic and Indian) and newly discovered routes).

Shah Ismail I decided to take advantage of the Christian elements to activate trade in Iran, so the istians coming for trade or preaching in a Safavids treated the Christian subjects in Iran as well as Chr good way, in order to court the European countries to obtain their assistance in the struggle of Shah <sup>(7)</sup> Ismail with the Ottomans, as well as in order to stimulate Iranian trade and economy.

nt had a major role in activating the Safavid trade, where the Armenians were The Armenian eleme very skilled in trade and were famous for their intelligence and outrageous wealth, as well as their book Brief History of the great skill in industry. The Persian kings, as described by the author of the Armenians, whenever they wanted to rebuild their country, increase its fame, and provide prosperity for their people, relied on the Armenians for that. The author also refers to the religious freedom <sup>(8)</sup> Iran at different times enjoyed by the Armenians in. The Armenians belong to a geographical area located on the outskirts of the two states (the Ottoman and the Safavids), bordered to the west by Asia the south the northern plain Minor, to the east by Azerbaijan, the southern shore of the Caspian Sea, to of Mesopotamia, and to the north and northwest the Caucasus (9), so Armenia, since its inception, has state Therefore, <sup>and the</sup> been the focus of attention of the neighboring countries, such as the Safavid state ies sought, in their own ways, to extend their political influence over Armenia and all these countr attract it to its side, whether this attraction was done amicably or militarily, for several reasons, lurking across the opposite side, as including protecting its borders from the direct raids of the enemies well as increasing the strategic and military power through the exploitation of the land. Armenian <sup>(10)</sup> economy and the Armenian labor force in its favor.

ence after they found great favor in the Small groups of Armenian Christians joined the Safavid experi Shah's court since 1502, for the reasons we mentioned earlier, as they practiced their religious rituals and commercial activities in complete freedom, and they represented the Safavid court in some foreign or they were in charge of translation for foreign delegations visiting the court. The French, missions traveler Jean Chardin, who visited Iran during the Safavid era, estimated their number at two hundred <sup>(11)</sup> and fifty thousand people.

asic material in Iran's foreign trade, and merchants competed in buying and Silk was considered the b exporting it. In this field, the competition was intense between the Armenians, the Turks, and the state sold it raw to the English, and the Shah controlled trade, especially the silk trade if the Safavid Armenians and Turks, and the Armenians would barter raw silk for woolen fabrics from the Venetians.

who were sometimes paying 60 bales of wool in exchange for 70 bales of raw silk with 40 bales of merchants annually carried between 400 to 500 mule loads of Georgian silk, and some Armenian<sup>(12)</sup> coarse woolen fabrics.

between the Ottoman Turks and the Safavids decided the fate of the Armenians by finally<sup>(13)</sup> Galdiran of the Ottoman Turks and their fanatical dividing Armenia between these two empires, and the cruelty of dealings with the Armenians led to the tendency of the Armenians towards the Safavids and their preference to live in the vastness of the Safavid throne instead of living in the hell of the Ottoman<sup>(14)</sup> Empire.

a result of the good and tolerant treatment that the Armenians enjoyed from Shah Ismail, the status of the Shah increased in their eyes. Indeed, there were those who repeated European rumors that Ismail and in Lake Van after his mother, Maria, fled from Safavi was a Christian because he lived on an island Aq. Qwenlu, and according to Armenian sources, he was raised in an Armenian monastery there and received education from a Christian teacher, but this news remains unfounded because the Shah's disappearance became known, so he did not live in Van and did not contact circumstances of the Armenians, and these Armenian sources have changed the name of Umm Ismail Halima to Maria, she said that she suggested her relationship with her Christian mother, despite the Ottoman source<sup>(15)</sup> had remained on the Sunni doctrine of her father.

Thus, we see that trade flourished during the Safavid dynasty, because Shah Ismail I established safeguards of European fleets security in the state and greatly reduced conflicts. During that period, the war represented by the Portuguese who occupied Hormuz appeared, which became an important commercial station in the southern part of Iran, and a market. International goods coming from there selling them to new merchants who carry them to export to surrounding countries, to be re<sup>(16)</sup> European markets.

The second axis

Displacement of Armenians during the reign of Shah Abbas the Great 1578-1629

During the period that followed the rule of Shah Ismail I, Iran went through many disturbances, as well as the attacks of the Uzbeks and the Ottomans,<sup>(17)</sup> including the intervention of the Qizilbash affected the economy and trade of the Safavid on the borders of the Safavid state, which negatively bore the seeds of the phenomenon of rebellion in the<sup>(18)</sup> state, and the reign of Shah Tahmasp I<sup>(19)</sup> Qizilbash military institution, therefore, the state was in a turbulent situation until Abbas the Great who managed to eliminate the threat of the Qizilbash after their leaders were the ones who<sup>(20)</sup> came brought him to the Safavid throne after a struggle with his father, who was forced under the threat of his, who The balance of power was on his side and the Qizilbash to abdicate the throne to his son Abbas, the army abandoned his father after the threat sent by the Qizilbash leader, who supported Shah Abbas, to seize the property and wives of everyone who does not return to Qazvin and give up his<sup>(20)</sup> weapons.

Shah Abbas the first is considered the first to deal with European merchants from the Safavid family, To political and military.<sup>(21)</sup> indicating the conditions by which they can work under his throne exchange of goods between Iran and the countries cooperation to discuss commercial cooperation and Anthony Shirley was sent on a mission to establish relations between,<sup>(22)</sup> visited by these messengers him and Christian governments and open the way for Persia's silk exports without the intervention of

Turkish mediators, and when European delegates came to Isfahan honored and welcomed them and <sup>(23)</sup> allowed them religious freedom.

This was the policy pursued by Shah Abbas I to attract Christians and take care of them in anticipation of the opportunity to attack Armenia and the western regions of the Safavids, liberating the of the appropriate Christians as a first goal, and restoring the lands seized by the Ottoman Empire according to the peace <sup>(24)</sup> treaty of 1590 as a second goal.

that the opportunity had become favorable to achieve his goal, so he <sup>3</sup>Shah Abbas I found in 160 secretly initiated to equip his army and go under the pretext of hunting to Kilan, so he entered Iranian of the resentment of Azerbaijan and liberated Tabriz after surprising the Ottomans, taking advantage the inhabitants of those regions from the Ottoman Empire, in addition to exploiting the dispute that occurred between Ali Pasha, the ruler The Ottoman ruler of Tabriz and Ghazi Khan, the emir of the Abbas I, after entering Tabriz and pledging allegiance to him, Ottoman governor of Salmas , so Shah rushed to support Ghazi Khan, and forced Ali Pasha's forces to retreat and managed to defeat them, which led to the defeat of the Ottoman army, then he crawled to Nakhchivan, captured it and moved towards Eravan , the capital of Armenia. On his way, he passed the ancient city of Armenian merchants, Julfa, located on the left bank of the Aras River, on the way of international trade caravans in the 15th century AD, and Julfa became a gateway for coming from the east and west. Aras in the fourteenth century brought it to the peak of economic prosperity. D, and most of its inhabitants are Armenians who are indignant at the that they jumped on the Ottoman garrison and killed its members when they heard of the Ottomans, so <sup>(25)</sup> arrival of Shah Abbas I and prepared themselves to receive him.

Therefore, we see that the search for a safe place from the oppressive yoke of the Ottomans meant so the people of Julfa <sup>(26)</sup> facilitating and even welcoming the Armenians with their exodus to Iran went out with their luxurious clothes and luxurious ceremonies and received the Shah with joyful accompanied the Shah in a procession to the house ceremonies. He passed by it with carpets after they arrived at Khawaja Khajik , and the Khawaja presented him with golden dishes full of coins as a symbolic gift, along with the silver keys of the city and other gifts that were carried by all the administrators of the city, and with this wonderful reception, the Shah stayed in Julfa for three days and was greatly <sup>(27)</sup> impressed with the wealth and economic success of the Armenian merchants.

The army of Shah Abbas I The Ottoman army present in Armenia retreated in front of the advance of the and fortified itself in the castle of Ervan , so the Shah besieged it and could not enter it until after several months had passed because of the strength of the defense and the severity of the fortifications. the Ottoman army came to Erzurum , Shah Abbas felt that the two parties were unequal and that he was unwilling to confront that huge army on one front. Therefore, he preferred to and ordered the transfer of five thousand Armenians after forcing them to leave their <sup>(28)</sup> withdraw <sup>(29)</sup> Rud River. <sup>Zayandeh</sup> places of residence in Tabriz to the new city of Julfa near Isfahan on the shore of the brough Isfahan to the Arab / Persian From Tabriz to the Ottoman Empire and instead made it pass to the Gulf, and Shah Abbas benefited from their commercial activity by granting them a firman in which they were allowed to move freely throughout Iran, and at the same time Julfa became an important <sup>(30)</sup> missionary center in Iran.

The procedure for transferring the Armenians was to protect them from the Ottomans, who did not so the Shah ordered the deportation of the <sup>(13)</sup> hesitate to kill them for the most insignificant reasons and not to attack them and to evacuate and destroy that Armenian population to the Iranian border

area and burn villages, reeds and orchards and destroy the water channels so that they would be useless for the Ottoman forces. Thus, the opportunity would be favorable to pounce on the Ottomans, in addition to adding residents and taxpayers to his country, and most importantly, the prosperity of trade, which I hope the Armenians would practice in his country, so the Shah did not hide his admiration for <sup>(32)</sup> the skill and experience of the Armenians in trade.

Shah Abbas I learned that the Ottoman army led by Sinan Pasha had reached Nakhchivan, and he was afraid of not steadfastness and defeat at the hands of the Ottomans, and then losing that great booty so he ordered to speed up the crossing of the deported, represented by the population of Armenia Armenians by the Aras River, but the task of crossing the river was difficult and dangerous for its depth. The river and its full sides at that time of the year, in addition to the small number of boats, rafts, and against the background of the severity of the Shah's orders, the soldiers tried to drive the refugees to the other side of the river, and many of them drowned, and some cruel soldiers deliberately as they managed. Many of them managed to cross, and at the same time they threw some individuals into the river, while at the same time the survival of the deportees at the other end of the river was very difficult because the sparkle of swords made them feel fear and terror as they looked forward to an unknown fate, not <sup>(33)</sup> knowing what to do next.

Jaqasani attributes these brutal measures to the proximity of the Ottoman army and its pursuit of the retreating Safavids, which made them use various methods to get rid of the Ottoman persecution. They weakness, especially the elderly, women and men, as well as girls, boys and children, because of their children. They were swept away by the waters of the river and many drowned. Those who were able to <sup>(34)</sup> swim survived. commanders to take. After they crossed the river, Shah Abbas I ordered his army the deportees through rugged and difficult paths until the Ottomans despaired of chasing them, and <sup>(35)</sup> then they reached the Iranian cities while they felt safe and secure.

Shah Abbas's treatment of the deportees varied. He was careful not to harm the Armenians of Julfa. Compared to the Armenians of Iran, Nakhjuvan, and the order of their deportation was entrusted to Tahmasb Quli Bey, who hurried to go to Julfa and read to the people the orders of the Shah that they leave their homes and prepare for their departure. From their experiences and activities, and should leave when they left, the Safavid forces demolished and burned the city completely to deprive the Ottomans that death and murder would be the only way of benefiting from it, but at the same time they were threatened <sup>(36)</sup> inevitable end for everyone who begged him not to prepare to leave.

The people of Julfa prepared for their departure, and hastened to carry what was light in weight, and to hide all the tools that they could not carry in a safe place, hoping that the value increased over livestock, and that they would return to it again. The Safavid soldiers stormed the houses under the pretext of commanders expelling the people of Julfa from it. He treated them with kindness and ordered his army <sup>(37)</sup> to help them carry their luggage until they crossed the river.

Shah Abbas, during his deportation of people from Armenia, successfully completed his military routes in northern Iran, the operation against the Ottomans, and after providing protection for the deportees, Shah planned the process of distributing them in different regions of Iran, and the Shah wanted through this mass migration to evacuate some areas of population and construction to ensure in the border areas. His goal is militarily, while his political goal is to ensure the future security of the Safavi Iranian elements, and the economic goal of that migration focused on -weaken the areas inhabited by non-Muslims in the central, through the Shah on two axes, the first is to increase the number of the population of

sparsely populated areas through the interim period, and the second is the modernization of the city of Isfahan and the prosperity of the economic situation in the country, especially after The deportation of elieved that immigration would be an influential factor in bringing in Armenians to Julfa, because he b a number of professionals, industrialists, and merchants, and then Iran's international trade would <sup>(38)</sup> advance.

As for Armenia, from which the Shah withdrew, a treaty was concluded between the Ottoman states and the Safavid state in 1620, according to which the Ottomans gave up all of eastern Armenia, i.e. ( Atchmyazin ), and the Armenians Kadbagh region and Yerevan province, including the city of established autonomy in the Karabakh region under the supervision of Shah Abbas. The first, and the each region, who chose them <sup>over</sup> Shah divided it into five regions, and appointed an Armenian king <sup>famous families</sup> from the oldest and most.

### Third axis pain

#### Reasons for Armenian immigration to Iran

The differences between the Safavid state and the Ottoman state were among the main reasons that we know that both that made Armenia a target for the aspirations of both countries, especially if countries were keen on the flourishing of trade with them. Some of this silk was spun in Bursa, and the rest was received by Europe in its raw form, just as the Safavid state was an inland state that had no the Ottoman state arose in Anatolia, and it had in its hands the reins of shores overlooking Europe, and the transit trade from Eastern Europe, so the commercial ambitions of both countries as well as the e under its guise in hostility The sectarianism that the ruling authority of both countries used to hid order to encourage continued hostility despite the great common ties between the two countries, motivating each of them to secure their borders and attempt to seize Armenia, which has become <sup>(40)</sup> coveted by both countries.

ted that the stubborn and fierce fighting between the Safavids and the Ottomans focused mainly It is no Baghdad) . From the east or -Tabriz) and Iraq (Mosul -on some regions of eastern Anatolia ( Erzurum entrance, the roads leading to Istanbul and from the south to seize the plains of Anatolia, and from this the sea were heading, and Tabriz was the center of the roads leading north to Armenia and Anatolia, and the armies and merchants coming from Armenia or Azerbaijan when they were going to Anatolia ough Erzurum This was connected to Tabriz, and through it to Sivas, Diyarbakir, Mosul, had to pass thr Baghdad and Basra to the Gulf, and from Diyarbakir the Mosul road branched to Aleppo and <sup>(41)</sup> anbulIskenderun on the Mediterranean, and a land road branched from it leading to Ist.

the three main powers in the region, namely the Ottoman Turks, a bloody arena and theater for conflicts and wars between the Safavids, and the Russians . With arbitrariness and cruelty towards the villages and towns of d at Armenia, and the Ottoman state took taxes from them through threats and intimidation, and looke them with contempt for the background of their religion, as well as they were killed for the most trivial reasons, and their reference was not spared from aggression and exposure, and burdened their families s to pay what was imposed on them From an abscess, which with high taxes until they had to take loan <sup>(43)</sup> spread despair and frustration among them, and they could no longer live in their homeland.

The presence of the Armenian elites and their voluntary arrival to the Safavid state even before the military operations carried out by Shah Abbas I in Armenia revealed a clear Armenian tendency order in February 1593 providing for the towards the Safavid state, especially when the Shah issued an protection and support of the Armenian merchant Khawaja Nazr and decided not to allow any One of



the governors, workers and other workers in the government house from approaching his merchandise from it even if it is for the title of a gift. Ottoman in their areas, and carefully or taking any amount<sup>(44)</sup> listens to what they say.

The Shah also had good relations with the Armenians of Julfa Aras in the southern Caucasus before Armenian envoys as envoys to Europe and employed them as the treaty of 1590. He even sent some mediators in his relationship with European countries, desiring to regain the lands he had lost to the Ottoman Empire. His attraction to the Armenians later and the restructuring of the economy of his state, laid the necessity for him to remain in office instead of leaving, and as a result of the state in which he came to power, he faced many threats, including that most of the wealthy feudal Iranian nobles began thinking of restoring and controlling the merchants represented a threat to his authority, in the South Caucasus, that is, entering all Silk production areas are within his authority, which reduces his dependence on Iranian Muslim silk merchants to enhance the economy of his country, because many of them were of Turkish origin, and this gives enough legitimacy to blackmail him and makes him a powerless leader in the region, so he turned towards the Armenians as a neutral group, so he thought of not having a geographical advantage, and he moved them away from their homeland so that they would be forced to go along with the Shah who would be in their favor in order to protect themselves from the Muslim majority and influential forces.<sup>(45)</sup>

His conviction with Shah Abbas I in subjecting Qizilbash tribes and the Persian families also created the Safavid army to a deep reform process, and he followed a policy of balance of power in the civil and military administrations by introducing a third force in the state of Armenians, Georgians, and Circassians, i.e. the Caucasian elements who were named by Shah Tahmasp Ghulman or the servants of the Shah, and Shah Abbas I gave them an official definition as slaves of the royal court or honorable private boys.<sup>(46)</sup>

of the Safavid court, and the boys were called ( Quller ) The Turkish language was the language according to that language, and the person who was elected by the Shah to preside over them was called Quller Aqasi. . As for the Ottoman Empire, the army of boys was called "Kabi Qulari ," the servants of the Sublime Gate, and it was formed from prisoners. And since Shah Abbas meaning was keen to follow the conditions of his neighbors, especially the Ottomans, it is possible that he took the number of servants was about the idea of forming the boycotting army from the Ottoman lands people, and about 15,000 of them were always prepared for fighting, and the rest were used by 30,000<sup>(47)</sup> Shah Abbas to serve the Safavid court and the various state concerns.

the field of battle with horses, and their weapons were the The boys were all knights, as they went on spear, arrow, rifle, ax, and crescent sword, and before Abbas's rule, the state government had been enough allocated to the Qizilbash princes and they were called the Khan, but during his reign and through endeavor to weaken and reduce the ability of the Qizilbash leaders and their social standing , he lost He took away the above privileges from them and gave his servants the government of the states and at this point, but even the last privilege that the Qizilbash the title of Khan as well, and he did not stop enjoyed , represented by their being the only ones authorized to put the crown or the cap on their heads<sup>(84)</sup> ) as a grant to his servants, and he allowed them to put on their heads the Qizilbash crown.

Shah Abbas chose the distinguished boys for the highest military ranks that were specific to the leaders of the Qizilbash , and Shah Abbas took this privilege from them as he chose his boys to lead the army one of the most prominent examples of that is the leader and the government of the states, and

Allahwardi Khan, who is from the Armenians of the Kurds, and after he was included in the group of boys. Because of his fitness and skill, Shah Abbas chose him at first to lead the boys (Goller Aqa) and then installed him in the year 1004 AH in the government of the state of Fars to become the prince chief of the Iranian military forces. With his wife to -in-of the princes of that state and the commander<sup>(49)</sup> ordered his execution Shah Abbas in Khorramabad, as Shah Abbas o.

Imam Qoli Khan. As for the command of the army, he gave it to an Armenian boy from the people of Irvan. Teller Aqasi and then Subhsalar Iran, i.e. the commander of the Iranian army, because of his heroism, and that is why Shah Abbas chose him because of those administrative skill and his characteristics at the head of the government of Azerbaijan and the principality of the princes of that state and then over the government of Khorasan. Qarqqay Khan was very close to Shah Abbas. Shah always addressed him. Aqa = the Master" and this is evidence of the extent of the Shah's respect and praise for his loyal and brave leaders. On one occasion, Shah Abbas ordered the commander is growing popularity and for fear of his rivalry. Qarqqay Khan to kill his son Safi Mirza because of him. But Qarqqay Khan appeared before Shah Abbas kneeling and told him that the hand would not be appreciated at all. On the shedding of the blood of members of the royal family, and at this point he begged for Shah Abbas to issue an order to kill Qarqqai Khan, who had prepared himself for that, was waiting<sup>(50)</sup> but the Shah pardoned him and kept him in office.

Qizilbash sects (tribes). One of the most prominent examples of this was Daoud Khan the Armenian, removed Muhammad Quli Khan Qajar from the Karabakh government, to replace him as ruler after he who was known for -Karji -of Karabakh, in addition to heading the Qajar sect as well. Quli Khan also over the -er on Baghdad his heroism during the campaign of Hafez Pasha, the Ottoman command government of Arab Iraq and responsible for the holy shrines in Karbala and Najaf, just as Shah Abbas chose the Armenian leader Manujher Khan Ibn Qarqqay Khan for the government of Mashhad, and Jarkasi for the government of Astrabad, and the -Khan Al Feridun Khan after him chose Khosrow Jarkasi for the government of Shirvan and the Presidency of the Karamanlu -Cossacks of Khan Al Karji for the government of Abiurd Khorasan and the -Taifas And Khabushlu, and Jamshid Sultan Al<sup>(51)</sup> cy of a branch of the Afshar sect called Idlupresiden.

The Shah was thus able to advance the Safavid state, which for more than a decade showed its weakness and instability, while the Ottomans indulged in internal and external problems, and they exerted on their subjects in terms of taxes and religious and physical persecution forced pressure on them and the general -the feudal lords -the population, including the Armenians, Georgians, and Kurds to flee in the Safavid state after the public. To escape from their original lands in search of a new re<sup>(25)</sup> increase in its strength, seeking help from Shah Abbas I, seeking protection from the Ottomans.

The Shah felt the possibility of recovering the lands that he ceded to the Ottoman Empire, after conditions of the inhabitants of those regions and the persecution they were learning about the subjected to, through the words of Catholicos David the Armenian and Bishop Melik Sitt when they returned to Azerbaijan and came to Isfahan, as they urged the Shah to restore Armenia, Georgia, Kurdistan, Azarbaijan, and Tabriz, as they encouraged disaffected and displaced leaders near the Ottoman Empire, the Shah<sup>(35)</sup> welcomed the Armenian diversity and their service to him within the Safavid army.

The fourth axis

the Armenian immigration and the role of the Armenians The commercial conditions in Isfahan after

in the flourishing of the trade of the Safavid state

The displacement of Shah Abbas I in 1604 resulted in the birth of the Armenian community in Iran. When they crossed the northern cities, including Tarm, Khalkhal, Ahar and Mishkan, they settled for some time in Tabriz and the surrounding areas, but their stay there did not last long, so they were quickly transferred and distributed to cities and villages. And the reeds according to the political and economic plan of the Shah, so some of them lived in the city of Isfahan and the surrounding areas, and of Hamedan and the surrounding villages, and the rest of another part in Gilan, Mazandaran, the city of <sup>(54)</sup> the other Iranian cities.

In the year 1604, the Armenians obtained what was called the “royal lucky” status, and the Armenian court of the Shah. The Iranian judiciary population and their cities became directly linked to the royal court included the Armenian community of the <sup>(2)</sup> and according to Armenian Christian rules and provisions city of Isfahan and its surrounding areas, the deported people of Ararat and Jalfa Aras, and they are two parts: civilians and villagers. The Kaskis among them lived in the Farwaskan divided into neighborhood near Naryn Qala, and the Tabrizians and Nakhvans lived in neighborhoods named after different regions them and are sometimes called Shamsabad. A group of Armenians also moved from Armenians in some neighborhoods of the city of Isfahan, such as the Khoraskan -and mixed with non Banna neighborhood, and others. The joint existence between -neighborhood, the Sheikh Yusuf alicult due to religious conflicts, disagreements and Muslims and Christian Armenians was very difficult rivalry over ways of living and social customs, so tension became intense between the two sides, especially since the Armenians hold church services and ring the bells loudly during religious in addition to the usual use of alcohol, which disturbed the Muslims and made them The ceremonies Armenians complained to the court, but this complaint was not implemented until after fifty years, and 0 <sup>(55)</sup> resulted in the deportation of the Armenians from Isfahan

took place from Isfahan to the plain of Marnan, located on the southwestern edge of the new Jolfa, and that migration took place gradually, so that other quarters grew beside the new Jolfa, which made it first decades of the seventeenth century a small double in size and population after it was in the suburb, consisting of From nearly two thousand families or ten thousand people, most of them were wealthy merchants from the people of Jolfa Aras, Shah Abbas I brought them and gave them those on the Zayandeh Rud River and registered it in their name after it was a shahan property, lands located so he called it New Jolfa after their old city Jolfa, and it included a group of neighborhoods It grew and hich are five neighborhoods: Meydan developed during the Safavid era, the most prominent of w Buzurg neighborhood (the big square), Meydan Kochik neighborhood (the small square) and Jaharsu neighborhood (the four sides). The makers of the hussar, and its houses were like palaces. It was the richest of the Armenians, as he was buried after his death in this, named after Hagop Jan neighborhood. It is one of the neighborhoods of Jolfa, and its population is the poorest of the rest of <sup>(56)</sup> the neighborhoods.

they would not feel the change in the new Shah Abbas also built a large church for them so that climate in which they live, and restricted residence in their area to Christians only, and New Jolfa became an active Christian center in Iran, and it played an effective role in preserving the Christian in it and preaching Christian teachings, and this neighborhood remained Until late, teeming presence The Armenians of Nur Jilfa established an <sup>(57)</sup> with Christian missions and European merchants r, and this commercial network international trade network first, and then a multinational one late

became so important that the name (Kingdom of the Armenian Merchants of Nur Jalfa) was given to it.<sup>(58)</sup>

The Armenian merchants of Jolfa, Isfahan, practiced the largest part of Iran's foreign trade, or even the rest of it, as they were the merchants of the Shah, his financial experts, and his ambassadors, most general as well as the role of brokers and money changers. With the Ottomans, they managed most of their economic role in Isfahan was one of Iranian trade with India, Russia and Europe successfully, and these were the reasons for their emigration to it, as their experience and commercial capabilities stemming from their commercial history full of successes were used in their first home, and their distinction of strong ties with their mixing with foreigners and their knowledge of their languages and their awareness of genius, an European trade relations, And the presence of powerful and influential merchants among all of their migration was a strong pillar within immigrants proved to a large extent that compulsory Armenian immigration in the economic program of Shah Abbas I, in addition to accusing a minority that did not constitute a threat to him at all, so they were called the Shah's merchants, and the reasons for their success were due to their behavior with reason, wisdom, diligence, honesty and patience, and the also attributed common traditions among them that they were very skilled in preparing all the necessary materials that<sup>(59)</sup> they needed While traveling from their place of residence.

Merchants of Jolfa, Isfahan, owned large commercial companies that traded with most European countries. They were of a family nature that maintained the link with the center. For example, they maintained contact with the families' Shahrminian family company whose merchants in Amsterdam maintained companies and the business network in Isfahan by returning from time to time and bringing capital to Jolfa. whose merchants directly supervised the silk reserves, as well as the departments of the Toklian<sup>(60)</sup> commercial and diplomatic relations of Isfahan with Russia family company, the center.

the -India, India -As a result, the Armenians participated in commercial activities between Iran and Russia, competitor -Europe, Iran -the Ottoman Empire, Iran -Ottoman Empire, Central Asia Levant Company, the Moscow Company, and the English East India Company, as they constantly played the role of competitor to the English, and continued their activities through The Ottoman lands, secured a special advantage for them due to the presence because the sale of Iranian silk in Aleppo represented of the French and the Venetians, and a competition for the English and Dutch merchants who visited Isfahan alone. It is not in the interest of the Armenians to abandon the Aleppo trade. On the contrary the joint resistance on the part of the Levant and its partners among the Armenian merchants made the efforts of the English East India Company to divert the Iranian raw silk trade to no avail. The extensive networks of trade links from Sweden. Even Armenians also worked to distribute their agents within the China, and stretched from Amsterdam in the west to Manila in the east, and New Jolfa became the hub of the Iranian silk trade and its center, covering with its wide spread network half the world from the west to the Philippines and Indonesia in the east and from Narva in the north to the Amsterdam in<sup>(61)</sup> Coromandel coast in India and the Mulkas and Siam in the south.

Five The relations between the community of New Jolfa and the Safavid shahs contributed to the mass expansion of Isfahan's foreign trade. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, silk was for Asian trade what gold and silver were for South America, and Iranian raw silk was, above all, the second total European imports from it in the 1720s largest commodity imported from Asia to Europe. They were estimated at about 1,000,000 million pounds annually, or 100,000 (tomans), until its monopoly became the main source of wealth for the people of New Jolfa, and a source of income for the Shah's income more than doubled until he arrived at that time. To 9,000,000 nine Safavids, as the Shah million tomans annually, thus providing silk and its Armenian investors with an independent income

ide Iran, and enabling for the Shah, as well as the interests of their major merchants expanding out them to achieve other economic and political goals of Shah Abbas I. Direct European domination of the Iranian economy and the activation of the consular judiciary (immunity) have been delayed for at <sup>(26)</sup> least fifty years.

an merchants financed the Safavid state with silver revenues, and their suburb became the Armeni central role in Iran's political economy, as they facilitated the process of exchanging Iranian silk for of the royal family in selling and European silver and were partners in production with members exporting silk; Therefore, within this cooperation, the silver flowed into the royal treasury at their hands and turned into cash that was paid as salaries for the administration and the new army, and thus ndence on the feudal lords. It also worked to finance the Safavid project to build the ended the depe modern state, as Shah Abbas carried out extensive urban works that made Isfahan half the world and e rest of the regions, all of which the construction of roads and khans And bridges and other things in th the state reaped as a result of the silk trade, then it obliged Armenian businessmen to pay the loans taken from it to the public treasury in the form of gold and silver, by shahi decree, which increased the <sup>(36)</sup> e bullion even moreflow of thos.

Thus, the comprehensive plan of the Shah was implemented, as it became a stable Iranian community in the Safavid capital under his direct supervision, and having a close relationship with him providing wealth for them, and relying on him to continue enjoying his, constituted a source of support privileges, so they became a source of income and a major economic power in the Middle East, and the Shah Abbas I, Armenians were able to perform The pivotal role in economic life during the reign of and they enriched his financial treasury of gold and silver as dependents in trade. "The Armenians of the Shah of Iran are like the Genoese of the King of Spain. They cannot live without the king, and the <sup>(i)</sup>king cannot live without them." Shah Abbas I treated the Armenian community from Jolfa Aras well, until he banned their private religious ceremonies and cut them off the lands located on the Shah southern bank of the Zayandeh Rud River and allowed them to build churches. With the death of <sup>(64)</sup> Abbas I in 1629, they lost their biggest supporter.

But this does not mean that all Armenians enjoyed this special and good treatment from Shah Abbas the First, as the book History of Jolfa Isfahan mentions one of the incidents that took place there and to mix with people in disguise in order to see says in it, "Shah Abbas, who had a prudent mind, used and hear directly, so he came out of the Isfahan, as usual, in the year 1096 according to the Armenian date and 1629 according to the Gregorian date, and he went to the Feridun neighborhood to check the ions of the Armenians, then he arrived in disguise in the village of Warbin, so he met a woman condit and asked her if she had a chicken to buy, so she came to him with the chicken, so Shah Abbas said to ove the Shah." The lady answered him: "her: "Take this ten and do not ask for more Money if you l And what did the Shah give us so that I could sell my chicken for a cheap price?" Then Shah Abbas said: "What do you want from him after all that he has done for you? I wish he had not brought us A priest <sup>(65)</sup>ot displace us from our country and transfer us to this strange country." here and did n <sup>(66)</sup> enters to Islam.

## Conclusion

Through the information contained in the research, the importance of minorities in the existence and clarified. The presence of the Armenian community in Isfahan was the most prosperity of the state was important and best decision taken by Shah Abbas I during his reign because he made Iran a great

the Safavid state economic power after the period of political turmoil and dislocation that occurred in after The death of Shah Ismail I, the intervention of the Qizilbash in power and the inauguration of the Shah, as well as the external danger represented by the Uzbeks and the Ottomans, which affected all id state and made it retreat from the ancient commercial position of Iran this with the trade of the Safav during the era of the Ilkhanids and their rule of Iran.

Examining the causes of Armenian immigration to Iran brings us to a question, which is why did the e research has tried to answer this question by clarifying the harsh and Armenians rush to Iran? Th violent dealings, as well as the exorbitant and many taxes imposed by the Ottoman authority on the ich made the lands of the Armenia plateau during the period of their occupation of the region, wh Armenians live in a state of misery in their country, as well as the commercial and friendly relations that brought the Armenians together with the Safavid state since the era of Shah Ismail the First, and continued throughout the period of the rule of the Shahs who this good dealing with the Armenians came after him, and these relations were strengthened and became stronger thanks to Shah Abbas the h the First, who was very keen even before the Armenian immigration to maintain friendly relations wit Armenians because he knew the necessity of their presence and the importance This presence in his new capital, Isfahan, so the Armenian immigration was a phenomenon that complemented the Shah's vide the Armenians with everything they policy with the Armenians. The Shah was also keen to pro needed during their travels, despite the unfortunate incidents that claimed the lives of many of them due to the Ottoman pursuit of the Safavid army, which made the Safavid soldiers hasten to deport the .Armenians.

The interest of Shah Abbas the first in his capital, Isfahan, was one of the reasons that prompted him to deport the Armenians to it, and he built a neighborhood of their own as well as a church in order for The Safavids and not taking royalties from them, even as .them to freely practice their religious rituals a gift, which made the Armenians feel comfortable when they entered the lands of the Safavid state in order to practice their trade in it, as well as the Shah's keenness to follow up the news of the Armenians in the Armenia plateau and their living conditions and the extent of the strength of the Ottoman garrison that was present there, and the Armenian merchants communicated to him A lot of t important decision in the history of the news about the situation there, which made him take the mos trade of the Safavid state, and this decision is to deport the Armenians towards Isfahan.

The presence of the Armenians and their commercial experience constituted a unique phenomenon in ligious freedom that the Shah granted them, the Armenians returned this favor Isfahan. Thanks to the re to the Shah and dealt with all sincerity and integrity with the Iranians. Thanks to their being merchants or trade, which made the by nature, as their ancient city of Julfa was in an excellent location f Armenians enjoy great wealth, sophistication and great wisdom that enabled them to make themselves a mainstay of trade around the world.

sing Thus, Shah Abbas I and the Armenians were credited with the prosperity of Isfahan and its pas through its golden age, as this city flourished and became, as described by historians, Isfahan Nisf Jahan, meaning Isfahan is half of the world.

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