

Original Research Article

An Analytical Study on the Impact of Safavid and Qajar Governments' Cultural Policies on the Development of Women's Clothing

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Abstract Clothing and its surrounding areas, such as its related customs, aesthetics, and industry, are among the most important issues on which scholars and researchers have focused in cultural, social, and historical studies. The reigns of the Safavid and Qajar dynasties are two significant periods in the history of Iran, and the clothes that people wore during those periods are indeed unique and worthy of scrutiny. The reign of the Safavid dynasty was the beginning of a powerful Shia government, and the reign of the Qajar dynasty marked the initiation of Westernization in Iran. These two notions turn them into vitally important topics as far as historical and social explorations and inspections are concerned. Factors such as the travels of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar are among the features that influenced the way in which governmental preferences and propensities changed. The variety-seeking quality as well as the formal and typical developments of these two periods were mostly represented through women's clothing. The outside clothing of city women in the Safavid era included a white chador and veil (in Persian a ruband), which have remained almost unchanged over time. The clothing of Qajar women, however, underwent more change due to interactions and connections with Europe; nevertheless, they still had a black chador and a white ruband on. The research question is thus as follows: while transitioning from the Safavid era to the Qajar era, how has women's clothing changed? Given its quiddity, the present research is categorized as a qualitative study. The method used here is descriptive-analytical, assessing developments in the samples of the study with regard to the context of social and historical changes. The objective of the present research is to examine the impact of government policies on the development of women's clothing during the reign of the Safavid and Qajar dynasties. The investigations done as a part of the present research show that neither the tendency towards Shi'ism nor the spread of Westernization has been singly able to have a major impact on the development of the customs associated with inside and outside clothing of average women during the reign of Safavid and Qajar dynasties; and, features such as comfortableness, beauty, and protection of safety and privacy have indeed been the determining factors with regards to a variety of clothing. This matter can elucidate the constancy and consistency of the impact of introversion on women's clothing during the reign of the Safavid and Qajar dynasties, despite the existing positive and negative constraints.

Keywords Women's Clothing, Safavid Clothing, Qajar Clothing, Introversion, Fashion, Hijab.

Introduction Clothing and the technical and theoretical issues associated with it are among the topics on which Humanities and Art researchers have focused. The

alterations and developments of clothing in the analytical studies of various scientific areas, such as the social sciences as well as cultural, economic, ideological, and art studies, can provide one with significantly meaningful

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data by which to precisely understand the conditions of the topic under study. That is because every single one of the features that are to be studied in the aforementioned scientific areas does indeed impose certain positive or negative constraints on the usage, manner of usage, form, and role of clothing. Accordingly, the aspects that are to be under study must be determined (Saunders, 1990, 2). As one of the three basic needs—after food and shelter, in the category of physiological needs in Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, clothing has been significant from the very beginning of mankind's life on Earth. In many different periods of history, much like what is happening nowadays, clothing not only satisfied a need but also brought forth aspects of beauty and self-glorification among those strata of society that were on a higher level as far as societal well-being was concerned. On a larger scale, clothing is also representative of identity, culture, religion, and social level in any society. Clothing is known as a compilation of signs and marks that collectively form a unitary system based upon particular definitions—national, patriotic, historical, and mythical—by which to invoke a united definition and identity (Matin, 2004, 39). The Islamic era marked the beginning of vast changes in the preferences and propensities of the residents of those nations and realms it governed. Although religious teachings didn't contain instructions regarding positive constraints on creating works, the values and themes that were emphasized after a 200-year-long consideration led to the formation of a wide variety of colors and designs. The developments caused by Islamic teachings reached a pinnacle in the Safavid era and continued midway through the Qajar era (Farbod, 2009, 118). The victory of Ismail I against Alvand, the ruler of the Aq Qoyunlu, is usually considered the beginning of the reign of the Safavid dynasty in Iran (Morgan, 1994, 151). Upon dividing the history of Iran into different periods, as far as changes in social structures are concerned, the reign of the Safavid dynasty in Iran, from 907 to 1148 Lunar Hijri, was the continuation of the previous pseudo-feudalistic social conditions, but with more focus on and consistency in the political structure, as well as a greater effort made by rulers to put emphasis on Shi'ism (Mousavi Bojnoordi, 2014, 685). Brown believes that the Safavid dynasty once again turned Iran into a self-sufficient, united, competent "nation" that demands respect; moreover, he believes that the borders of Iran during the reign of Abbas I closely approximated those of the Sassanid Empire (Brown, 1965, 17). Rahimloo believes that, although the Safavid dynasty's contemporary Europe took great steps towards modernity, the Iranian society of that day and age didn't perceive the meaning of that movement and didn't willingly traverse the path that led to that ideology.

And, those instances of the superficial appearances of Modernity that entered Iran or were spread and echoed across the society mostly resulted from the pressure and innovations of the West and the passiveness of Iran, instead of a well-researched adaptation. Consequently, during the reign of the Safavid dynasty, Iran didn't enter a new era; it just underwent the waves and the storm of Western modernity (Mousavi Bojnoordi, 2014, 686). The transition from the Safavid era to the Qajar era coincided with great chaos which could only be placated during the reign of Karim Khan Zand in Shiraz. Entering the Qajar era was accompanied by important developments including the independence of the religious affairs of Shia scholars from the government.

In the 9th century of the Lunar Hijri calendar, members of the Qajar tribe were among the Turks of Anatolia; and, after the alterations in the timespan associated with the Turkmens of The Qara Qoyunlu and The Aq Qoyunlu, they immigrated to Northern Azerbaijan and Qara Baq¹ area. As the first period of close interaction with the West, the Qajar era is of prime importance. Clothing- especially women's clothing- underwent tremendous change in appearance under the impact of the connections with Europe as well as the advent of technology. The expansion of the interactions of foreigners and Western merchants with Iran, sending students to Europe, and numerous travels of Qajar kings- especially Naser al-Din Shah Qajar- were among the factors that affected the clothing of the people of that day and age. Consequently, despite its unique exterior, women's clothing in the Qajar era was influenced by Modernism and accompanied by the disordered world of that timespan's modernity. The revitalization of sericulture and silk industry led to luxurious knitwear for the royal court; and, Kerman wool replaced the products imported from Kashmir (Morier, 1812, 246).

The two dynasties of Qajar and Safavid are of tremendous importance in the developmental history of women's clothing. The Safavid era is considered the very beginning of the vast dominion of Shias in Iran; and, the Qajar era is the initiation of Modernism and looking up to the West throughout history. The present research is necessary given that it illuminates how women's clothing reacted to and was influenced by, these two periods with regard to two significant features, namely, religious belief and the ever-growing Western Modernism. Written materials, manuscripts of the Safavid era, photos and travelogues of the Qajar era, and the like were used as sources with which to conduct the present research.

It is important to note two issues, however. Firstly, as Hejazi (2009, 356) puts it, the aforementioned reports contain different information based on the social class

of the individuals with whom the authors of travelogues have interacted; therefore, one must be particularly meticulous if one wishes to refer to such cases. Accordingly, upon selecting and inspecting such samples, it has been tried to choose and explore items that are similar both in the historical reports of the authors of travelogues and in the scientific research which were published based on historical and archeological findings. Secondly, the present research focuses on the outside clothing of women as a social norm; and, the garments used inside one's house and in interaction with one's Mahaarem² is not discussed here. Given the rules surrounding the notion of Mahaarem, this subdivision of clothing contained a far wider variety that did not follow the social norms of the so-called outside world.

In the present research, the statistical population contains both the average people and the people from affluent groups associated with the royal court. The sampling has been done based on the existing sources and with a tendency toward the majority of samples. What was previously studied and researched about the Safavid era contains other aspects of this period such as the illustrations and the form of people's clothing in them. The profound depth of historical, political, and religious events of this era directed the researchers toward analyzing other aspects or features. In the previous versions of this research, the clothing of this era was not analyzed and compared with other periods; and, the same is correct for the Qajar government as well. Given that the Qajar era is the first period in which the Iranian king travels to the West, thus Iran faces western culture and civilization, the majority of such travelogue-based research has been composed about the attitude of Iranians towards the West and vice versa. Even those studies which focused on Qajar-era clothing did emphasize this very aspect.

Research Background

The historical documents used in the present research have been acquired from various travelogues which are the most solid documents created at the same time as the era under study. The travelogue of Pietro Della Valle (1991), Henry René D'Allemagne's *From Khorasan to Bakhtiari* (1999), the 4th volume of Jean Chardin's *Travels in Persia*, Chardin (1958), *The Way to Isfahan*, Loti (1993), *Travels into Muscovy, Persia, and part of the East-Indies* by Cornelis de Bruyn (1737) and *A Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor, to Constantinople, in the Years 1808 And 1809* by James Morier (1812) are the works whose authors have traveled to Iran in the intended period and have recorded their observations. Although the descriptions and analyses of

the authors of these works have not been focused on the matter of clothing, they are still of great research value as documented reports. The *Traditional Textiles in Iran* by Phyllis Ackerman provides a valuable compilation of Iranian clothing which is the result of the author's lengthy research in this regard. In *Islamic Textiles*, Patricia Baker focuses on various periods of Iranian textiles. The PhD thesis of Farinaz Farbod entitled *The Influence of Industrial Revolution on the Persian Textile Design of Qajar Period (From Pattern Design Aspect)* is indeed a valuable and comprehensive research about the history and developments of clothing and ornamental designs of the Qajar era and has been utilized in the present research as well. The Article "A Comparative Study of Qajar Women's Clothing before and after Nasser-Din Shah's Trip to Europe (Case Study: Women's Traditional and Modern Clothing)" by Mana Abazari and Habibollah Tayebi focuses on the inside clothing of women in this era and their changes and developments. Other historical research, focusing on said timespans or clothing-related culture and lexicon, have been conducted such as *Iranian Women's Clothing from the Oldest Instances to the Beginning of the Pahlavi Dynasty* by Jalil Ziaapoor, "Clothing in Iran" from the article series of *Encyclopædia Iranica*, "Iranian Women's Clothing from the Beginning until Today" by Abolqasem Aqa-Hussein-Shirazi and *A Dictionary of Clothes and Costume in Iran from the Ancient Times to the Begging of Pahlavi Era* by Nasim Campany. In the article "The Conditions of Women's Clothing in Safavid Era", Jafarpour and Nouri Majidi (2006) focused on the works of European and western authors of travelogues, exhibiting the hardships of accessing information about the features and the clothing of Safavid women; therefore, they described the findings of such authors and also provided instances of clothing associated with certain areas, religions, and professions. Upon studying the historical eras on which the present research focuses, the book *8000 Years History of Iranian People's Clothing* by Mehrasa Gheibi was also utilized as it is considered a documented compilation of historical works. Among the research published in various scientific journals, there are certain instances of comparative studies about the clothing of particular nations and people; however, given its statistical population and its subject matter, the present research proves innovative.

Theoretical Foundations

By way of a series of materialistic signs, clothing establishes a communication system between the members of society. And, decrypting the signs and understanding the meaning of this language by each group of society requires the understanding of that

group's, and that society's, social and cultural behaviors in addition to identifying the cultural systems that impact upon the formation of clothing's symbolic values (Bulookbashi, 2004, 17). In the present research, with an emphasis upon this ideology, the behaviors, and selections regarding women's clothing in aforesaid eras have been studied to understand how politics directed and was directed by, the target era's clothing. Additionally, one must consider the fact that clothing is a multifaceted matter. Accordingly, as Matin (2004, 21) quotes from Sounder, the editor-in-chief of Clothing Journal, one must first determine from which aspect this matter is about to be scrutinized. Wolfgang Bruckner categorizes the clothing-related research methods under four theories, namely, Diffusionism Theory, History of Development Theory, Social Function (or non-historical) Theories, and Ethnic Theories. In the History of Development theory, the development of clothing over time and the external factors influencing it are studied; and, in this regard, the impact of Arabic-Islamic culture on Iranian clothing is to be analyzed and elucidated (Elaahi, 2010, 9). The exploration of the impact of politics and policies on the development of clothing, which is the subject of the present research, is influenced by the History of Development theory.

Upon introducing policies and instances of policy-making, various features, and factors are mentioned; and, it has been introduced as 1)the area of action, 2)the general objective with which to reach a desired condition, 3)a recommendation for the furtherance of a program, 4)the area of the government's decisions, 5)an attempt at creating legal circumstances necessary for legalizing certain decisions, 6)the plan of action, and 7)that which governments wish to reach in practice (Kay, 2006: 7). In all of these definitions of policy, the very existence of general objectives or guiding principles is evident (Wilson, 2006, 153). Due to the variety of ideological, cultural, social, and political patterns that impact governments' policies, one cannot define a particular approach and method as the correct and standard way of conducting such efforts. Mo'ini Alamdari (2015, 143) also points to the fact that, along the path that leads to policy-making, governments express their political insights and priorities in the form of a series of procedural guidelines and plans of action. Akin to previous eras, in Safavid and Qajar eras, due to the royal method of governance and lack of constitutional laws and rules, the cultural policies simultaneously proceeded with negative and positive constraints resulting from the way in which the people were imitating the life of kings and members of the royal court with an emphasis on their expenditure in various areas. And, women's clothing, which is the subject

matter of the present research, is among the issues which based on the existing historical documents- was directly influenced by the propensities, preferences, and changes of the king and the royal court.

Research Methodology

The textual and descriptive data required by the present research was collected from travelogues and technical books and articles about the history of clothing. Upon selecting the visual materials related to the Safavid era, those items were used which were based on real models created in travelogues while the author was visiting a certain location. For the Qajar era, such information was gathered from photos and travelogues of this era. In each historical period, the statistical population of the research included the common clothing of the people in the society; and, the act of sampling was done based on the existing sources and resources and with a tendency towards the majority of samples.

Discussion

• Safavid era

In various historical eras, Iran has always been at the center of industrial and artistic developments, being an amalgamation of the achievements of different ethnicities. In a certain part of Iranian history which is associated with the Safavid dynasty, one can observe how most branches of art, including Textiles and Persian Miniature, tend to thrive. After centuries of dominance imposed by Arabs, Mongols, and Tatars, the Safavid dynasty brought forth a new era in Iranian art, one which took more than 200 years. Although they were extinct by Afghans, the characteristic features of this era's art are still existing in the art and culture of Iran. Compared to previous eras, there are far more documents and evidence left from Safavid and Qajar eras about clothing; and, this can signify the importance of this issue in this context. A certain poet named Mahmoud-bin Amir-Ahmad-Nizam Ghari (1980), under the pseudonym Abalagh-ol-Sho'araa, has composed a work named The Book of Garments in which he introduces and describes various items of clothing with a wide variety of recorded names associated with each item. As Diba (2004, 193) believes, despite the previous changes in clothing style and fashion, the main approach towards clothing and its related items in these two eras was based upon social traditions and religious regulations. Clothing and fabrics are among the noteworthy elements in Safavid miniatures; and, upon depicting the occurrences of a certain point in time, the artist committed to acknowledge and thank his powerful and affluent supporters and patrons (Fazl Vaziry, 2011, 1114).

- Women's clothing in Safavid era

In the 10th century of the Hijri calendar, the clothing of Iranian women undergoes fundamental changes. Tunban (or lower garment), which wasn't used by women in the previous centuries, tends to get prevalent. Upper garments with too many buttons and straps weren't used. Moreover, they tended to move from long items to shorter ones, thus using a large, white chador (as the item that covers all other garments) with which to cover the woman from head to toe in addition to ruband and socks. The headscarves, which were used as ornamental covers with various designs for women, weren't used in this period; and, instead, women used turbans (Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 71). In this period - aside from headscarves, turbans, hats, and rubands- other items of clothing were interchangeable among men and women. The information left from this era is mostly related to upper-class people; however, the general tendency and the desired style of clothing among people included various levels of minimalism (Diba, 2004, 196). Any attempt at wearing fashionable clothing in the royal court of Safavid kings was in accordance with European styles. In the harem, women tended to wear sleeveless, tight clothing without open collars (ibid., 209). But, there was no document to show the same tendency in average people's clothing. In a report left by Cornelis Le Bruyn, each profession had its particular clothing in this period. Moreover, there was a great variety between the clothing of the young and the old women as well as those of the married and the single women. He describes the clothing of men in this period as magnificent, with floral designs and rather similar to women's clothing; nevertheless, he believes that Turks are more modest when it comes to clothing, thus their garments are better understood and give them a manlier aura (Bruyn, 1737, 212). He also adds that Iranians never change their fashion and preserve the glorious atmosphere of the time of Alexander the Great (ibid., 213). Jean Chardin (1958, 209), who had traveled to Safavid Iran before Bruyn, points to the same issue in his travelogue and writes that the clothing of people of the East never followed the so-called fashion standards of the time; the color, shape, and details of the clothing items remain unchanged. He considers this feature to result from common sense and caution of Iranians and deems it a praiseworthy quality. An exploration of the long history of Iranian clothing and an observation of the variety of garments and their designs and ornamentations shows the extent to which this statement is a gross exaggeration, as Ziapour (1971, 354) has also pointed to it. However, one must not fully nullify the tendency toward preserving the traditional foundations of clothing in Iran. This continuity of taste

and products indeed has a great impact on the analysis and conclusion of the present research. As is obvious and discussed, the clothing of women in the royal court is considerably different from that of average women, varying based on the position and status of each woman's husband. For instance, in the head/hair ornaments of women whose husbands were of important status in the royal court, materials such as gold, ornamental jewels, precious stones, and feathers from black herons were used; additionally, their tresses were braided (Bruyn, 1737, 214). It is only natural to perceive a hierarchy-based on position in the royal court as well as military and financial status- according to which the quality, worth, and ornamentations of a woman's clothing would change. The clothing of the wife of a prince in the royal court is thus considerably different from the clothing of an average woman (Fig. 1).

Regarding the general clothing of Safavid women, Chardin (1958, 217) points to the fact that they never wore socks; moreover, their footwear included a sock-like, ankle boot from fabric that covered up to 5 to 7 centimes above the ankle. They fully covered their head and hair and also wore a garment known as a 'chargad' which reached their shoulders and covered their neck and chest from the front viewer. When outside the house, they wore a fully white chador through which only their pupils were visible (Fig. 2). The wives of military men or the aristocratic class wore silk lace or similar items over their clothes to give them additional beauty. And, middle-class women wore their clothes based on their status, profession, and resources (Fig. 3).

Next, the general day-to-day clothing of Iranian women during the Safavid era will be explored.

Tunban (Lower Garment): It similarly reaches the ankle; however, the part around the calf is longer and tighter, and thicker since women never wore socks (Jafarpour & Nouri Majidi, 2006, 53).

Shirt: A shirt known as Qamis was open from the neck to the navel (ibid., 52). The shirts worn by Iranian women are tighter than those of Turk women and don't seem as beautiful to me (Della Valle, 1991, 147).

Balapoosh: A coat-like garment that reached one's heels. This item for women was longer than its masculine counterpart, known as Kalijeh, reaching women's heels (Jafarpour & Nouri Majidi, 2006, 52).

Scarf: Regarding the scarves of women during the reign of Abbas I, Della Valle writes, "Women's scarves are like the same fabric used for women in Baghdad. The colors are different; and, these scarves have a tail that is dragged on the ground. A couple of strings of pearl, 5 to 7 centimeters, hang from their head ornament, moving in different directions as the woman moves her head.



Fig. 1. An Example of the Clothing Associated with the Wife of a Person of High Status in Safavid Dynasty. Source: Bruyn, 1737.



Fig. 2. The General Outside Clothing of an Iranian Safavid Woman. Source: Bruyn, 1737.

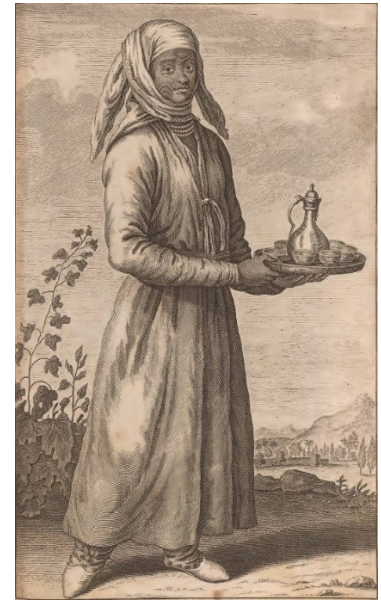


Fig. 3. An Example of the Clothing Associated with Servant/Maid in Safavid Dynasty. Source: Bruyn, 1737.

Moreover, two sharp locks of hair cover their faces from both sides, circling their visages.” (Della Valle, 1991, 147) Charghad: Iranian women fully cover their heads and hair. On top of it, they have a garment known as charghad which reaches the shoulder, covering one’s neck and chest from the front. But, when they want to leave the house, they wore a long white hijab that covers their face and body (Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 71).

Ruband and Chador: Women have four items of hijab two of which are worn at home and the other two are added to the previous ones when going outside. The first item is kind of a scarf that hangs from behind the body. The second item is charghad which goes past under the chin and covers the chest. The third item is a long, white hijab that covers the whole body. And, the fourth item is a cloth they place on their heads when visiting mosques or other religious sites. This cloth has a laced area in front of the eyes through which women can see (ibid., 72).

Ankle Boot: Women’s footwear is an ankle boot that covers up to 5 to 7 centimes above the ankle. It is either handmade or created from extremely previous textiles (Jafarpour & Nouri Majidi, 2006, 53). The footwear of Iranian women is similar to men; more specifically, its color is mostly green, red, yellow, or purple (Tavernier, 1982, 624).

Thin Belt: Women’s belts are rather thin and have a width of 3 to 5 centimeters (Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 71).

Waist Sash: The clothing items of Iranian women are not distinct and are worn on top of each other as one, given the opinion of some authors and researchers based on which there is no difference between the clothing of men

and women in this context, at times women were such as a part of their clothing, similar to men.

Hats and Head/Hair Ornaments: According to Tavernier’s travelogue, women used to wear small hats resembling towers; and, each person would ornament these hats with jewels based on her means, resources, and status. Some women wore a silk headscarf known as Maqna’a, hanging it from the back and adding to the beauty of their appearance (Tavernier, 1982, 627).

In all of the abovementioned items of clothing, variety in design and form is evident; and, based on the geography of one’s residence, various combinations can be observed. As is obvious and mentioned by Ziapour (1971, 339) as well, the tendency towards variety-seeking existed in Safavid women’s clothing similar to previous eras. Despite the establishment of new connections with the West and coinciding with the New Age, no recommendation from the royal court, or intentional change by people, towards Western standards of fashion and clothing developments can be seen. This tendency- which is called a chronically incurable disease by Rahimloo (Mousavi Bojnoordi, 2014, 686)- takes place in the next period, namely, the Qajar era.

• Qajar era

Qajar people were among Turk tribes originating from the Salor clan from around Transcaucasia. Around the 8th century of the Hijri calendar the members of this tribe- alongside other Turk clans of Transcaucasia- emigrated from this realm. Their language was Western Turkish. And, Safavid government had to migrate from Azerbaijan to Mazandaran, Gorgan, and the central part

of Iran. Qajar tribe was among the tribes which played a role in how Ismail I reached power and formed the Safavid dynasty. Naser al-Din Shah Qajar traveled to Europe three times. His era was the time when more attention was drawn to the West and the tendency to acquire the achievements of Western civilization increased. After Iran was repeatedly defeated by Russian forces during the reign of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar, the constant interaction of military advisors created a powerful tendency in Iranians- especially Abbas Mirza, the son of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar and the crown prince of Iran- to acquire and promote the military and non-military skills and industries of Europeans. In this period, Azerbaijan was the window through which Western civilization entered Iran. Therefore, the Modernism movement started in Azerbaijan, which shared a border with the Russian and Ottoman Empire and was also closer to Europe. And, Tabriz turned into an important center for military and political activities in Iran. As it was mentioned, the clothing of Iranians didn't change that much from the end of the Safavid era until the reign of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar. After a period of stasis, the glory of Safavid clothing was manifested in the kingdom of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar. In his travelogue, upon discussing the matter of clothing, James Morier (Morier, 1812) has described men's clothing during his travel. He points to the way in which the clothing of Iranians has changed compared to when Chardin visited Iran; moreover, he believes that the value and consistency of their clothing didn't reach that of Turks and this value was further lowered during his visit. In agreement with Bruyn's opinion about Iranians' attraction towards flamboyant glamor in clothing, he voices his astonishment upon noticing how the clothing of dark and gloomy colors has been accepted and spread. Furthermore, pointing to the widespread use of lighter colors in the garments of the Zand dynasty, he concludes that the disagreement of the Qajar court with the Zand dynasty must be the main reason for this use of darker colors and the sadness of Iranians. He describes the common colors of this era's clothing as brown, black, olive green, green, and dark blue. According to him, the color red is out of fashion even in Bukhara; the reason for this conclusion is the fact that the merchants of these cities, who travel to Bushehr each year to buy fabrics, weren't at all interested in red fabrics and would pay less for them (ibid., 244). This point-of-view, however, is different from the paintings left from the Qajar eras kings and princes as well as other such artworks. The reason for this issue is seemingly the use of chador as well as the notion of inside and outside clothing which will be discussed later. During his travels to Europe, Naser al-Din Shah Qajar was influenced by the clothing

of European women. And, upon returning, he ordered all the women of the harem to wear the same clothing. This manner of garments was initially spread among princesses and women of affluent families of high status; and, later on, it was spread among others as well (Yavari & Hakaak-bashi, 2019, 84). Additionally, Mostofi (2009, 511) points to the very fact that the fashion of women's clothing has always been influenced by that of the harem, moving from princesses and women of affluent families of high status to other women. The attention towards the lifestyle and clothing of Europeans started almost from the middle of the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar. Accordingly, many wealthy women who interacted with foreign women in Tehran used to imitate their shoes and dresses (ibid., 86). In this regard, Abazari and Tayebi (2017, 24) consider the clothing of the Qajar era to be the result of two components, namely, "tradition" and "governmental requirements and kings' initiatives".

- The clothing of Qajar women

Widespread developments in Europe and their coincidence with the Qajar era created a connection between Iran and the West, which marked the new beginning of fundamental changes in women's clothing in this period of history. After the long travels of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar (from 1868 to 1896) to Russia, Germany, France, Switzerland, and Austria, and as the relationships between Iran and Europe expanded, a new cultural wave entered the country. Before that, the clothing of people still bore a closer resemblance to those of the Zand and Afsharid dynasties. But, the adventures and adventurisms of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar created the foundation for cultural changes in the country. The women's clothing of this period can be divided into before and after the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar and his foreign travels. Observing the clothes of ballerinas in Saint Petersburg and washing their tight garments encouraged Naser al-Din Shah Qajar to change the dress code of the royal court (Mostofi, 2009, 511). The pinnacle of research and analysis of Qajar women's clothing can indeed be associated with this significant historical era. To understand the rate of changes in the clothing of Qajar women, one must consider the confrontation of modern and traditional cultures. The industrial revolution and the ideological developments of Europe and the tendency of Qajar rulers towards establishing cultural and political relationships in this regard created the path for the unilateral development of Western culture within the country. Needless to say, Qajar kings didn't have any particular understanding of intellectual and ideological developments of Europe and they only paid attention to their appearance and materialistic needs; otherwise, if this period was accompanied by the common sense and

strategy of the kings, tremendous cultural and economic changes were to be observed across the country (Alavi, 2012, 139). Based on whether she was inside or outside the house, a Qajar woman would wear two different styles of clothing. Additionally, she wore a black chador on top of her outside clothing. It seems that such a description is related to the common clothing of big cities such as Isfahan, as there was greater variety in color in other faraway towns and villages. Pierre Loti (1993, 63) discusses the clothing of women of the town of Kazeroon in his travelogue, pointing to the fact that the women of this town would cover their faces and body and were only seen in yellow or green Shaliteh garments or socks which mostly went up to their ankle. The women of the village Loti had visited didn't cover their faces; and, this is the first time he notices such a thing in the clothing of townswomen (ibid.). Edward Brown (2005, 261) points to the same fact that women of villages and tribal groups didn't cover their faces. In his book, D'Allemagne (1999, 415) considers the outside clothing of Iranian women among the ugliest and the most unbefitting of garments, depicting it akin to a mantle-like garment worn during the masquerade. This points to the head-to-toe black garment that covers the entire body and is accompanied by a white headwear which was used frequently in big cities; and, this statement is not related to the variety of the clothing underneath this very layer. As it was mentioned, this change which was imposed during the Qajar era was probably the result of the kings' desire to forget the traditions of the Zand dynasty.

- The inside clothing of Qajar women

The inside clothing is referred to as those articles of

clothing which are worn in one's house and among one's mahaarem. This category includes the following items.

Charghad: It was a thick, rectangular lace fabric which is folded into a triangle and worn symmetrically on the head so that the part with a right angle is placed behind them near their waist; and, the two parts with acute angles are placed on both sides of the head. These two parts with acute angles are then tied tightly under the chin and fixed together with a safety pin or such. By doing so, the two sides would fully cover the chest and belly as the two acute angles became one (Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 85), (Fig. 4).

Kalaghi: Some women would wear a large cloth, made from silk or other materials, over the charghad so that the hair that goes on their forehead cannot be seen even from under the charghad (Fig. 5). This cloth is called Kalaghi, which means crow-like since the color black used to be described as the color of crow's feathers. Even nowadays, this form of the garment is used among Lor and Kurd women (ibid.).

Shirt: Much like previous eras, women's shirt in this period was shirt and tight; and, it was mostly tailored from lattice or white muslin fabric with additional gold-woven or silver-woven parts (Fig. 6). Such a shirt had long sleeves which reached the wrist and had tiny buttons (Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 84).

Aarkhaloq/Arkhaloq/Arkhaeq³: Before coat-like garments were ubiquitous, women used to wear Aarkhaloq over the shirt (Fig. 7). It was a long coat that covered almost half of the body's length. Its frontal part was open and loose. Although it had buttons, the buttons weren't mostly done for one to show one's jewels



Fig. 4. Charghad.
Source: www. astiran.com.



Fig. 5. Kalaghi.
Source: www. iichs.com



Fig. 6. Qajari Woman Wearing That Era's Shirt. Source: Gheibi, 2006, 557.

and shirt. They mostly had triangular or pear-shaped cuffs which were called Sanboose. They were usually created from a fabric that was more precious than that of the Aarkhaloq. The area around it was usually woven with strands of metal and ornamental threads such as golabatoon. It was then folded and turned towards the forearm. Or, at times, it was let loose to hang freely from one's elbow (*ibid.*). Men wore Aarkhaloq under the robe; and, women wore it over the shirt. In the 18th century, women used to wear long collarless Aarkhaloqs with numerous folds below the waist. These garments gradually became shorter and started resembling vests more and more and rarely reached one's knees (Yusefi, 2004, 370).

Kalijeh/Shapkin: A form of garment worn over other items. It is collarless and open in the front. At first, it used to be long enough to cover one's ankle and even over one's footwear; but, its skirt-like section gradually became shorter until it turned into a form of coat-like garment (Fig. 8). These items were only tied with buttons, as clothes with large pockets make one's waist look considerably larger than normal (Gheibi, 2006, 559). **Skirt/Shaliteh:** In his travelogue, Henry René D'Allemagne writes that Iranian women use two or three short skirts at home which are inspired by the short skirts of European dancers. They wear them over one another, calling them undergarments. The skirt that touches the body is from stiffened cotton with many frills to such an extent that it puffs up. The skirt over the first skirt is of the same shape and material. These skirts do not have belts and are fixed with strings; moreover, they are fixed neither tightly nor precisely so that they constantly slide as a result of which parts of the belly must show up (D'Allemagne's, 1999, 553-554), (Fig. 8) Mounesi also emphasizes the fact that the clothing included a long frilly skirt that was tightened below the waist so that parts of the belly and navel were visible (Mounesi-Sorkheh, 2018, 64)

All in all, these Shalitehs were short skirts worn underneath Turbans with cotton fillings. Contrary to Tunban, they were open on the front. And, the edge of each one was ornamented by hand using black thread; by

doing so, if the edge of it popped out from under Tunban, it would have a beautiful appearance (Gheibi, 2006, 554). **Pants and Tuban/Skirt pant:** During the first part of the Qajar era up until the middle of the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar, pants were worn under long skirts or under long dresses which were the successors of the skirts from the Zand dynasty. And, since the skirts were longer than the pants, the pants couldn't be visible (Fig. 10). Accordingly, the loose legs of pants got tighter and were generally of not much importance. During a short period, long and loose pants were worn without skirts. That was until the second part of the Qajar era during which white, easy-to-stretch pants were promoted in the king's court by a French merchant and his wife. It was called Tonokeh Tunban a part of which was placed underneath Shaliteh. On the whole, during the second part of the Qajar era, women wore pants at home during the cold seasons (*ibid.*, 558).

Socks: During the winter, women used to wear white hand-woven socks with a black edge. And, during other seasons, they were mostly barefoot at home (Yavari & Hakabashi, 2019, 85), (Fig. 11).

Footwear: Affluent women used to wear delicate shoes at home, shoes the outmost part of which was from velvet or broadcloth with small pearls or Sermeh embroidery (*ibid.*). At home, the dominant footwear for women was velvet shoes which were meticulously and dexterously ornamented with pearls (Mounesi-Sorkheh, 2018, 64), (Fig. 12)

- The outside clothing of Qajar women

The outside clothing of women was completely different from what they wore inside and was based upon the agreed-upon dress code of the people. Despite their social status, women would wear a long, dark chador with a white ruband and loose pants. The chador was usually made from the canvas; and, in addition to the main black color, it was also available in either very dark blue or brown. The ruband would cover the entirety of a woman's face. The part which covered the eyes was laced; and, it was held tight using a clasp behind the head (*ibid.*, 64). When women exited the home, they would wear other items over their inside clothing, items such as prayer chador, chador, chaqchoor, and ruband. D'Allemagne (1999, 415) considers the outside clothing of Iranian women among the ugliest and the most unbecoming of garments.

Prayer Chador: Both chador and prayer chador had different kinds. Generally, however, prayer chador was for inside the house. And, women would use black chador for outside (Fig. 13). At time, affluent or aristocratic women would decorate the edge of their black chador with strands of silver thread and other ornamental



Fig. 7. Aarkhaloq. Source:Gheibi, 2006, 557.



Fig. 8. An Iranian Woman with Long Kalijeh and Charghad.

Source: Gheibi, 2006, 559.



Fig. 9. An Iranian Servant/Maid with Short Arkhaloq. Source: Gheibi, 2006, 557.



Fig. 10. Pants.

Source: Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 90.

threads such as golabatoon (Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 86).

Chaqchoor: It was a pair of loose and long pants worn over shaliteh and turbans. It had straps that could easily be fixed under one's belly. Since chaqchoor was very loose and frilly, all turbans could effortlessly fit inside of it. (Fig. 14) The color of chaqchoor was mostly chosen to be purple, dark blue, and white; and, those women descending from the Islamic prophet Muhammad- and thus considered Seyyed, used to choose green for the color of this item.

Ruband: To cover her face when outside the home in this era, a woman would wear ruband over her chador. It was made with a tall and white piece of rectangular fabric. And, a laced hexagonal part was in front of the eyes whose holes were sewn with great artistry (Fig. 15). At times, women would also use picheh or niqab/veil (Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 86).

As it is obvious, the preferences of the royal court, and especially Naser al-Din Shah Qajar, played a great role in determining the inside clothing of women in the Qajar royal court. And, given the fact that other women outside the royal court had developed a tendency to follow the same style, the same impact, and influence grew outside the royal court. The battle between tradition and Modernism, as far as the outside clothing of the Iranian women is concerned, was at times accompanied by certain contradictions such as the instance of a considerable lack of lower-body clothing in outside clothes at the same time as a mandatory covering of head and hair. This instance, more specifically speaking, can

be observed in what Mostofi reports about the conditions of women's clothing (Mostofi, 2009, 511). This contradiction is so pronounced that at times it has been addressed humorously in other countries (*ibid.*, 512). In the observation of D'allemagne during the excruciatingly hot weather, while traveling by train Russian railroad, he reported how Iranian's women had simultaneously covered their heads and faces while their legs were uncovered up to their thighs. Regarding this issue, Mostofi points to a rather significant matter; that is after the king's caprice was over, the transition of the garments towards getting shorter did stop, as prayer chador and coat-like covers "replaced this outrageous garment" (Mostofi, 2009, 511). This matter puts great emphasis on the extent to which prescriptive developments of women's clothing have been short-lasting.

An Analysis of Results and Findings

In Safavid era which marked the spread of Shi'ism as well as mystical ideologies in Iran, not much change was made in women's clothing. Although the first reason that comes to one's mind is the lack of new ideals and aesthetic approves which differ from the past, the studies show that such a statement cannot singly describe the circumstances; and, one must scrutinize this period more deeply. The more effective feature, which can be referred to based on the existing historical evidence, is the internalized and historical tendency of Iranians towards preserving their traditions, stylistic identity, and cultural wealth. Moreover, a certain factor, which functions as a powerful negative constraint, must also be taken into



Fig. 11. Socks. Source: www.seemorgh.com

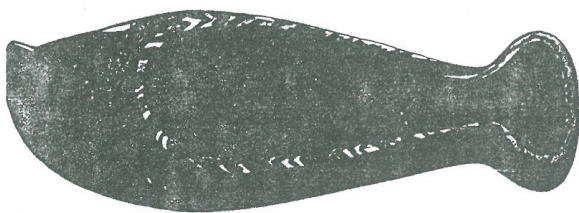


Fig. 12. Shoes Worn by Iranian Women during the First Part of Qajar Era. Source: Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 93.



Fig. 13. Different Chadors Worn by Qajar Women. Source: Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 94.

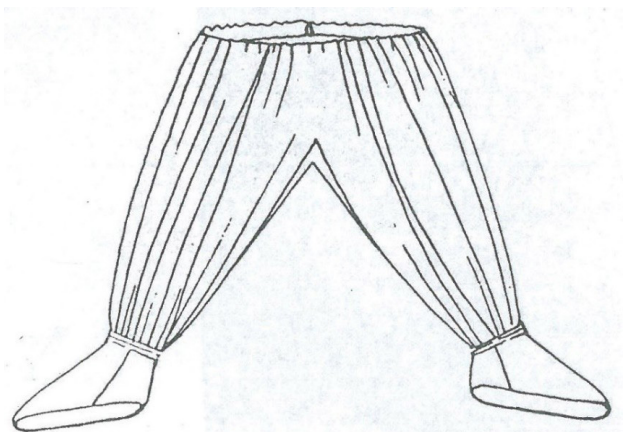


Fig. 14. A Design from Women's Chaqchoor during Qajar Era. Source: Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 92.

from one another. Accordingly, when stumbling upon new ideas and ideals, Qajar women didn't refrain from

account; that is, the doctrine of the new government didn't make any change to commonplace ideological teachings which could have led to a change in peoples' clothing. In simpler terms, the Safavid government- or, more correctly put, the tendency of its kings and its royal court- didn't proceed with an interventionist attitude toward determining the general dress code of the people. Moreover, the fact that no widespread international relationship was formed with European nations- which were hurriedly moving towards the New Age- was another factor that stopped new ideas and products from being introduced. The relatively similar climate of different parts of the central geography of the Iranian Plateau is another important context that led to a lack of considerable diversity in the preferences, propensities, and wishes of the people. The eventual outside clothing of the women, which was a white chador, encapsulated a combination of other articles. And, while being careful not to overstep religious boundaries, it wasn't antithetical to the intrinsic quality within women by the virtue of which they have a tendency towards beauty.

In the Qajar era, however, the circumstances underwent certain changes. In this timespan, given that the connection was expanded and the government's attitude towards connection with Europe had changed, the royal court had a tendency towards variety-seeking. And, stumbling upon the day-to-day traditions and clothing of Europe and Europeans had a tremendous impact on the eventual preference and desire of the governing body. Based on what is left from documents and sources, this change is the result of newly acquired desire and the propensity of the king as the center of power; and, given the fact that the women in the harem competed with one another to attract more attention, they too welcomed such a movement. The approach of bestowing proper form and shape to the clothing of a new style, much like the past, has been based on considering the natural proportion and formation of the individual who wears them in addition to the act of following traditions. To come up with a product that is of great quality and value and is in accordance with the level and status of who wears it, the materials used in such items of clothing had been of tremendous importance. In the innermost part of the Qajar harem, given the fact that all the staff members were female and there wasn't anyone who couldn't be considered mahram, these articles of clothing were used daily. But, the conditions weren't the same for other strata of society. Although there are reports of a considerable lack of lower-body clothing, it wasn't fully widespread due to the aforementioned reasons in addition to religious and conventional limitations. Therefore, the inside and outside clothing got separated

following the tendencies of European women and used those items by separating the location of usage based on the laws of mahaarem.

The separation of inside and outside space as a stylistic feature was first introduced by Pirnia (2010, 35) under the title "Introversion". Later on, it was considered a feature of Iranian architecture, especially with regard to the central section of the Iranian Plateau. He deemed the origin of this feature to be religious beliefs. Consequently, given the consistency and effectuality of this feature and the origin thereof, one can similarly expand Introversion to the features of Iranian women's clothing. In the clothing of the Iranian women, this Introversion is of even higher intensity the evidence for which are additional and repetitious articles such as chaqchoor and ruband which are worn over the main outside clothing even though it is already covering the body very adequately.

There is another issue that is of prime importance with regard to the development of Qajar women's clothing. A comparative exploration between the clothing of Iranian and European women shows that those articles of clothing in which qualities such as *ostentation* and *self-glorification* superseded qualities of *comfortableness* and *beauty* weren't accepted by Qajar women. Contrary to Europe in which a unitary set of aesthetic preferences—such as a narrow waist, slim body, and large breasts—impacted women's clothing both in the royal court and royal staff (as a result of which items which dictated certain forms such as corset, crinoline, and shoes used to make feet smaller were utilized) Qajar women didn't welcome such tendencies. The selection of New Age clothing for Iranian women was simultaneously focused on comfort, beauty, and function. Being instances of well-liked and yet agonizing fashion for women to such an extent that even the female staff of the royal court were even forced to use them, corset and crinoline didn't enter the list of clothing items used by Iranian women and weren't mentioned in any of the historical sources discussed in the present work. They even didn't wear underwear to such a widespread extent and would instead use a loose upper garment with an open front (Sorna, 1983, 74) which choose comfortableness over beauty. It is the same outlook that was later used, in another form, in the first wave of Feminism in the West and was later utilized by Amelia Bloomer (1818-1894) to render male and female clothing at work similar. In the same way that a European woman was agonized due to using hurtful articles of clothing to attract the attention of the European man, the Iranian woman equally agonized to preserve her creed, beliefs about mahaarem, and safety in outside clothing. Throughout the entirety of this era, however, she kept all of the religious, conventional,

aesthetic, and functional factors as her priorities in designing and creating items of clothing.

Those cultural developments of the Safavid and Qajar era which had a tendency towards the West as well as the interaction with the Christian world which was immersed amidst the waves of Rationalism could direct the attention of traditional Iranian governments towards opposing new preferences. But, as the aforementioned remarks and studies showed, at least as far as women's clothing is concerned, the governmental approach was to accept and welcome the inside clothing and trust the people to choose the outside clothing. During these two periods, what overshadowed the outside clothing of women like before was the geographical and religious conventions; and, even during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar wherein the preferences of the royal court had undergone tremendous change, no positive restriction was imposed on one's choice for general clothing. The wrongful policy which Reza Shah Qajar promoted, contrary to previous kings and dynasties, was to intervene and accelerate the attempt at rendering the general and conventional clothing of women similar to modernize the society, as a result of which severe societal challenges started; and, this was how he undermined his very own place among the people.

Conclusion

In scientific studies, such as those associated with Social Sciences, History, Archeology, etc., all of the achievements of research are not gained using the initial findings and results, nor do they stop at that level. A great part of historical science is related to a deeper analysis of the initial findings and results to which researchers have access through museums, books, written historical documents, manuscripts, and the like. As far as modern politics is concerned, such analyses can function as patterns by which to conduct correct acts of decision-making in similar conditions and for similar issues, thus reducing the necessity for paying certain prices of different natures such as economic, social, ideological, etc. The studies conducted in this research contain significant matters which can be useful in this regard. After Islam entered Iran, the diversity and variety of men's and women's clothing didn't change that much; and, people used to wear their local or traditional clothing which reminded them of the reign of the Parthian and Sassanid dynasties. Moreover, despite the appearance of Islam, the general limits and qualities of observing hijab in women didn't change to a significant degree and were only furthered with the addition of headwear. During the Safavid era which marked the beginning of Shi'ism's official and



Fig. 15. A Qajar Woman in Black Chador and Espejial Ruband.
Source: Yavari & Hakakbashi, 2019, 90.

widespread dominion over Iran, men's and women's clothing items were in accordance with traditions and with minimal alterations. The presence of various colors in different articles of clothing and using a white chador that covered all other items was the main characteristic of Safavid women. During the reign of the Qajar dynasty, getting familiar with the life and clothing of Europeans- which was per se due to two reasons, namely, travels of court members to the West and the presence of foreign travelers in Iran- led to the modernist tendencies of kings and princes. At the same time in great cities, however, women came out wearing a black chador that covered the entirety of the body and the white headwear veil that covered the face. As it seems, this strict change in style was promoted per instructions of the Qajar dynasty, creating a heterogeneous appearance with respect to the diverse clothing items of Iranian women across history. One of the foundations of Reza Khan's order was against necessitating the use of chador, ruband, and scarf in schools, universities, governments, and administrative offices based on law. The inside clothing of the Qajar era was accompanied by variety-seeking and new definitions

of clothing beauty which were used among various social strata. Based on the observations of foreign travelers, both the rich and the poor women of the Qajar period used to wear similar items of clothing which only differed from one another in the material, fabric, and handmade ornamentations done on them. The tendency towards Introversion in the area of clothing was that which saved the Iranian woman's love of beauty while at the same time elucidating her intrinsic and historical desire to preserve her privacy and her religious limitations.

Answering the research question regarding the developments of women's clothing in the transition from the Safavid era to the Qajar era, the results and findings of the present research- as a historical study about the developments of clothing in Safavid and Qajar eras- shows that neither the tendency towards Shi'ism nor the spread of Westernization has been singly able to have a major impact on the development of the customs associated with inside and outside clothing of average women during the reign of Safavid and Qajar dynasties; and, features such as comfortableness, beauty, and protection of safety and privacy have indeed been the determining factors with regards to a variety of clothing. This matter can elucidate the constancy and consistency of the impact of Introversion on the clothing of women during the reign of the Safavid and Qajar dynasties despite the existing positive and negative constraints. To expand it on a greater scale, one can expect interventionist instances of positive or negative constraints on clothing to impose short-term and superficial changes; but, in the fullness of time, the choice of the Iranian women has been based upon the aforementioned features and factors and will cause no conflict with religious beliefs and conventional common sense.

Endnote

1. Also known as Karabakh
2. Mahaarem is the plural form of Mahram. In Islam, Mahram, a Mahram or one's Mahram is a family member with whom marriage would be considered permanently unlawful. A woman does not need to wear hijab around her mahram.
3. From Turkish origin

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